

# JOURNEYS

*Because it is in the process, as much as the progress, that we measure each journey.*

**Autumn 2018**

*A publication of  
St. Mary's Home.*

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*We provide quality, specialized care within a homelike environment for children and adults with severe disabilities, so each person can achieve his or her fullest potential.*



**H**akeim, 5, zooms through the air on a zip line on St. Mary's new playground. (photo by Tony Cece)

## Donors' Support Means New Way for Kids to Play

**T**he children and young adults have a new fun space on the grounds of St. Mary's with the addition of a playground featuring a zip line, a swing and a collection of chimes, drums and metallophones set up so children in wheelchairs have plenty of room to make music.

Thank you to donors Paul Michels, who gave in memory of Allyson Rapp, Team Hoyt VB and Ferguson for making the playground possible.

The project began two years ago. Julie

Clyburn, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist at St. Mary's, asked about having an open outdoor space for the kids to play in addition to the interior courtyards. As Julie began researching companies and equipment, the idea evolved into the playground.

"The new playground is a space where the kids can interact and socialize with their family, staff and friends," Julie said. "It is a space where the kids can develop social skills, motor skills and cognitive skills, and experience a variety of ... stimulation through play."

*Continued on page 6*

# Donors Enjoy Fun Evening, Support Children

**T**hank you to the Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home for putting on a wonderful 13th Annual St. Mary's Home Gala and Auction this spring. Thank you also to the many generous sponsors, supporters and guests who helped make the event a success. Because of you, the children and young adults will enjoy more field trips and benefit from much-needed equipment, including a new van for transportation.

The Gala at Founders Inn and Spa in Virginia Beach raised about \$50,000. For the eighth year in a row, presenting sponsor Checkered Flag Auto Group donated a car for the Auxiliary to raffle off at the end of the event.

A highlight of the evening was a moving speech by Christina McCullough, whose four-year-old identical daughters April and Autumn live at St. Mary's. Their triplet, who does not share their rare genetic disorder, lives at home along with a baby sister.

"We are so thankful that a place like St. Mary's exists in our area," Christina told the guests. "It really is a home and not an institution. We rest easy every night knowing that our girls are receiving the best care possible in a loving, homelike environment. Your donations make all that possible."

Special guests included Isaiah and Silas, who live at St. Mary's, and students from three high schools who collaborated with children at the Home to create three art pieces that were up for bid during the live auction.

Our master of ceremonies once again was former WVEC TV personality Joe Flanagan, who spoke of his special connection to St. Mary's. A friend's two sons used to live at the Home.

Additional Gala sponsors were PRA Group, Kerneos Inc., TowneBank, PF&A, Marsh & McLennan Agency, Ameriprise Financial Planning, James & Patricia Kramer, Mercer, Power Electric, Roof Engineering Corporation, Vandeventer Black and Thompson, Siegel and Walmsley, LLC. A donor wishing to remain anonymous also supported the event.

For more photos from the Gala, see: [saintmaryshome.org/news/events/auxiliary-auction/](http://saintmaryshome.org/news/events/auxiliary-auction/)

Read *The Virginian-Pilot's* front-page story about Christina McCullough and her family at: [saintmaryshome.org/news/news-coverage/](http://saintmaryshome.org/news/news-coverage/)

**Save the Date: The dedicated women of our Auxiliary Board are busy planning another great Gala for you on Feb. 23, 2019, at Founders Inn and Spa. To sponsor or for info: (757) 446-6780 ext. 381**



## Make a Difference for St. Mary's While You Shop

**W**hen you shop, like Iker, at Whole Foods Market with reusable bags, you get a credit of five cents per bag that you can keep or donate through the **Nickels for Nonprofits** program. Through Sept. 30, all bag donations at Whole Foods Market in Virginia Beach will come directly to St. Mary's Home. Thank you!

## Congratulations to Car Raffle Winner!

**A**s a teen, Pepe Yanez of Norfolk volunteered at what was then St. Mary's Infant Home. The former linebacker and fellow members of Norfolk Catholic High School's football team spent several weekends a year at the Home, painting, cleaning and raking the yard.

This spring, Pepe became reacquainted with St. Mary's when he and his wife, Margie, picked up their new car. Pepe purchased the winning ticket for a raffle by the Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home. The seller was longtime Auxiliary Board member Betty Bade, whom Pepe knows through Blessed Sacrament Church.

"It's incredible," Pepe said about St. Mary's after touring the building. This was his first visit to the current St. Mary's, which opened in 2005 and is bigger and brighter than the old building he remembered in downtown Norfolk.

Happy driving, Pepe and Margie, and thank you for supporting the children and young adults of St. Mary's Home and The Albero House. And thank you to Checkered Flag for so generously donating the new Toyota Corolla LE!



# In the News Coverage

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

**June 17**

Mackenzie was among some of the littlest kids at St. Mary's Home who went strawberry picking with their friends in the community as part of the Peer Play Pals program.

**May 20**

Front-page article about April and Autumn, identical siblings who live at St. Mary's Home, and their family.

**May 20**

Navy veteran Richard Nebe has been donating batteries to St. Mary's Home twice a month for about the last 14 years.

**April 26**

St. Mary's children and local high school students collaborated to create artwork sold at the Auxiliary Board's Gala and Auction.

**March 18**

Broad Bay Point Greens Garden Club presented a \$2,500 gift to St. Mary's Home toward renovating St. Mary's staff break room as part of the "Care for the Caregivers" project.

WTKR TV

**March 29**

Norfolk Sheriff's Office brought the Easter Bunny to St. Mary's Home.

WVEC TV

**March 28**

Norfolk Sheriff's Office brought the Easter Bunny to St. Mary's Home.

SOUTHSIDE DAILY & HNN DAILY

**June 18**

Battle of the Beers will return to Hampton Roads and once again benefit St. Mary's Home.

DIRECTIONS magazine

**Spring 2018**

Suzanne Eason, St. Mary's supervisor of occupational therapy support services, wrote the cover article (about "Movement and Neuroplasticity") for the premier publication for the complex rehabilitation technology industry.



Special thanks to Gala Chair Karen Hibbard, right, and Janette Crumley, the unofficial co-chair, and the entire Gala Committee, for their hard work during the 13th Annual Gala and Auction. (All photos courtesy of Hampton Roads Photography.)

Silas and his mom check out a painting created by Isaiah, another child at St. Mary's Home, and Kid2Kid youth volunteer Jenna Crumley for the live auction.



Christina McCullough told Gala guests that the decision she and her husband made to place two of their daughters at St. Mary's was difficult, "but we have peace of mind knowing that they are cared for so well thanks to your generous donations."



**J**ohn R. was among the 16 newly minted, grinning grads who ended their commencement celebration on a high note.

## Do You Need a Speaker? We Can Help

**O**ur staff members enjoy speaking about St. Mary's Home and the exceptional care, education, therapies and recreational programs we offer for individuals with disabilities.

Our presentation includes a lively, professional, 10-minute video. Our speakers also are prepared for a short question-and-answer period.

To book a speaker from St. Mary's Home at no cost, please contact Sonja Barisic, APR, director of marketing communications, at [sbarisic@smhdc.org](mailto:sbarisic@smhdc.org) or (757) 352-2700.

See our video, "The Power of Touch," at: [saintmaryshome.org/about-us](http://saintmaryshome.org/about-us)



# New Grads Celebrate Good Times

**S**ixteen young people entered our Atrium to "Pomp and Circumstance." An hour later, they exited to "Celebration" by Kool & the Gang. St. Mary's graduation ceremony in early June definitely was "a celebration to last throughout the years!"

"With time, encouragement and love, these young people can move mountains," said Nichole Watson, one of several teachers who paid tribute to John F., Camille, Quamaine, EJ, Nate, Brittney, Zachary, John R., Katie A., Richard, Dylan, Laquesha, Hannah B., Kaleb, Broderick and Abigale.

Shannon Edsall, director of operational support at St. Mary's, congratulated the members of the Class of 2018 on their phenomenal accomplishment. "We at St. Mary's have watched you grow into amazing young men and women," she told them. "We can't wait to see what the future holds for you!"

Supporters like you help give our grads and other kids at St. Mary's Home a good life – and a bright future. Thank you!

# Visit to Lantern Asia Exhibit Lights Up Smiles



**A**ly and T.J., who live at The Albero House, were among the many visitors to the beautiful Lantern Asia exhibit this spring at Norfolk Botanical Garden. The exhibit featured colossal structures created by Chinese artisans to highlight traditional Asian themes such as nature, wildlife, architecture and ancient folklore. The exhibit has traveled around the world and to just a few locations in the United States.

## Garden Club Helps Care for Our Caregivers

**W**e're working on a "Care for the Caregivers" project to renovate our employee break room. And we're halfway to our fundraising goal because of the generosity of the Broad Bay Point Greens Garden Club. The club donated \$2,500, proceeds from their Bunco Night, and club member Mary Guimond and her husband, Norm, matched the gift! "We really appreciate all you do," Mary said of the staff. "You notice their dedication and attention. It's touching."



### Join Our FAMILY

Subscribe to our periodic  
email newsletter at  
[saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org).

Find us as StMarysHome on:



Check out our blog at:



[saintmaryshome.org/  
news/blog-2](http://saintmaryshome.org/news/blog-2)

Plus, find our Auxiliary Board  
as StMarysAuxBoard on:



# Donors' Support Means New Way for Kids to Play

*Continued from front*

St. Mary's worked with the company Sparks@Play, which provided guidance and created a wonderful design. Sparks@Play partners with top playground manufacturer Landscape Structures Inc. Installation of the playground started in late May.

Julie and a team of staff members made sure each piece of playground equipment was appropriate for all ages, as well as our young adults in wheelchairs, and for the children at the Home who are ambulatory.

The project also includes a poured-in-place rubber and polyurethane surface, fence surrounding the playground and grassy area around it and a concrete sidewalk so the children in wheelchairs can access the playground.



**S**ierra, 8, and Julie Clyburn, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist, share some swing time on St. Mary's new playground.

## EVENTS

SEPT. 15, 2018

**6th Annual 757 Battle of the Beers**, 1-6:30 p.m., Camp Pendleton, Virginia Beach. A portion of the proceeds from this Beach Ambassadors event benefits St. Mary's Home. Info: 757battleofthebeers.com

SEPT. 21, 2018

**It's Fall, Y'all**, 5-8 p.m., grounds of St. Mary's Home. Enjoy this family-friendly fun-raiser presented by PRA Group, with food generously provided by Baker's Crust. Info: Kristen Nelson, (757) 622-2208 ext. 328 or knelson@smhdc.org

OCT. 13, 2018

**Fall Festival**, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., St. Mary's Home. Games, crafts, popcorn, cotton candy and more. Free and open to the public. Information: Carlton Farmer, (757) 622-2208 ext. 423 or cfarmer@smhdc.org

OCT. 20, 2018

**Meet & Greet**, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., St. Mary's Home. Be a part of the good life! Meet with management staff to learn about a variety of open positions at the Home. We will offer tours and a limited number of interviews during this free event. Info: Nicole Hoskins Jones, (757) 622-2208 ext. 351 or njones@smhdc.org

FEB. 23, 2019

**Auxiliary Boards' 14th Annual Gala and Auction**, 6 p.m., Founders Inn and Spa, Virginia Beach. Info or to sponsor: (757) 446-6780 ext. 381

## Pizza Brings Together St. Mary's Kids, Supporters



**T**hank you to everyone who ordered from California Pizza Kitchen in Virginia Beach on June 12 or met up with some of us — including Salim and Isaiah — for dinner that night during a fund-raiser by the restaurant. Diners presented a special flier to have the restaurant donate 20 percent of their check to St. Mary's. Our Kid2Kid youth volunteer group was represented and many staff participated as well.



**I**saiah and Kid2Kid volunteers and sisters Morgan and Michaella Lynch with a llama from The Teeny Tiny Farm petting zoo that visited St. Mary's Home thanks to a letter Morgan wrote.

## Volunteer Wins Petting Zoo Party for St. Mary's

The children and young adults met a llama, a cow, a pig, bunnies and even a snake during a visit this summer from The Teeny Tiny Farm petting zoo, thanks to a young volunteer.

Morgan Lynch, a seventh-grader at Great Neck Middle School in Virginia Beach, wrote a letter to the farm's owners about why a donation of this unique party would bring joy to the children. Morgan is a member of St. Mary's Kid2Kid youth group (co-founded by big sister Michaella) and a Cadette Girl Scout. For the past seven years, she has been volunteering with these two groups at the Home, including co-leading a camp week in the summer of 2017.

"Petting the animals, feeling their fur in their hands, hearing the sounds and even smelling them would provide great sensory stimulation," Morgan wrote. "An experience with your animals would be so rewarding both socially and physically for these amazing kids."

Thank you to Morgan and The Teeny Tiny Farm for helping to give the children a good life, including fun experiences like this!

## Kids, Volunteers Celebrate Spring

Our kids, families and friends from the community had a great day during our annual Spring Fling! The event featured music, face painting, games, popcorn, crafts, snow cones, cotton candy and an egg hunt. Special thanks to the staff and to the awesome volunteers, like Salim's pal Janette Crumley, who helped make the event happen! Be sure to save the date for our Fall Festival, set for Oct. 13. As always, this event is free and open to the public.



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*A good life.*

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## Join Us for our Fall Fun-Raiser!

**H**elp us celebrate fall – and our kids – when *It's Fall, Y'all* returns on Friday, Sept. 21, from 5-8 p.m. on the grounds of St. Mary's Home. Enjoy live bluegrass from *More Perfect Jones*, food from *Baker's Crust Artisan Kitchen*, corn hole and other family friendly activities. Plus guests will get to see our new playground! PRA Group is our generous presenting sponsor. For tickets or more info: [saintmaryshome.org/news/events/its-fall-yall/](http://saintmaryshome.org/news/events/its-fall-yall/)

# Salim's Dream Team Creates LeBron James Pizza

Salim's favorite food is pizza, and his favorite basketball player is LeBron James. So when Chef Ron Badach of Ron Badach Callicoon Kitchen dropped by this summer to teach Salim how to make a vegan pizza, naturally they used some of the NBA star's favorite toppings. "So much fun visiting you guys," Ron said. "Big congrats to Salim. You were fabulous!" Watch the duo's video of their culinary adventure at [SaintMarysHome.org/salims-dream-team-makes-lebron-james-pizza/](http://SaintMarysHome.org/salims-dream-team-makes-lebron-james-pizza/). You also can check out more photos on Facebook, where you'll find us as [StMarysHome](http://StMarysHome).



## Thank You for Giving the Gift of a Good Life

You can help children and young adults with severe disabilities enjoy a good life and benefit from the specialized, well-rounded care they need. To donate:

- Go online to [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org)
- Call (757) 622-2208 or (800) 237-6555
- Send your gift in the envelope provided with this newsletter

*You make a difference. Thank you!*