

JOURNEYS

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

Winter 2015 - 2016

*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.*

Artists' Hard Work on Display at St. Mary's Home



KoKo and some of the other members of St. Mary's Art Club create their masterpieces with hand-over-hand assistance from volunteers. They make decisions about color and subject matter. (photo courtesy Karen Hibbard)

For more than a year, the members of St. Mary's Art Club have been meeting weekly to paint with acrylic. And now the halls of St. Mary's are brighter, with the kids' colorful masterpieces on display.

We celebrated the grand opening of our St. Mary's Artists-in-Residence Gallery in November with a party for the artists that included a toast with sparkling cider, plus cake for Isaiah and Jorge, who had birthdays that same week. Guests included Angela West, the reigning Miss Wheelchair Virginia and a friend of the Home.

With the artists and friends gathered in the gallery space for a ribbon-cutting, Art Club President Jorge shared a few words: "Thank you St. Mary's, for all of the workers working hard." He added to Shirley Justice, our community liaison, who started the Art Club and came up with the idea for the gallery, and artist Karen Ludwig, who volunteers with the club, "And thank you for helping me, making my dreams come true."

Karen said all the artists take a lot of pride — and joy — in their work. "The passion that they have for painting becomes another way they can communicate," she said.

Special thanks to Ashley Williams, visitor services coordinator at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art in Virginia Beach, who advised us on how to create the gallery and taught us how to hang and label artwork just like they do at the museum. See more great photos of the gallery opening by Auxiliary Board member Karen Hibbard: facebook.com/StMarysHome

Watch a video of Jorge cutting the ribbon to open the gallery: <http://bit.ly/Jorgecutstheribbon>



Art Club President Jorge with some of his pieces hanging in the newly dedicated St. Mary's Artists-in-Residence Gallery. (photo courtesy Karen Hibbard)

For Veteran, Volunteering is All About Family

by Katie McCarthy, marketing communications intern

It's a rarity to meet genuinely kind people who not only give 100 percent to their family, but also to others. Two of those people are retired Navy Capt. Emmett Smith and Randy Smith, the grandfather and father of 14-year-old Aidan, who lives at St. Mary's Home. The love they have for Aidan and gratitude they have for St. Mary's radiates from them, and their involvement with St. Mary's goes way back, before Aidan even came to live at St. Mary's.

In 1975, while Emmett was stationed in San Diego, he met Gary Lisota. Today, Lisota, CEO of Valkyrie Enterprises, LLC, is a generous donor to St. Mary's. When Emmett retired from the Navy after 28 years, he began working with Lisota at AMSEC LLC, where he also met Carl Alberro, a St. Mary's Board member and main



benefactor of The Alberro House, which St. Mary's opened in 2013 to care for adults. Through them, Emmett's involvement with St. Mary's began, donating holiday gifts for the kids.

Since Aidan came to St. Mary's in June 2013, Emmett has been even more involved with the Home. Almost every Tuesday, he drives up from his home in the Outer Banks to volunteer with the maintenance staff. He wanted to do work that may be difficult to fill by the typical volunteer. Emmett said, "I can't imagine a better place to do it — Aidan's home."

Randy visits his son regularly, even dropping by during his lunch breaks from his longshoreman's job at Norfolk International Terminals. He also attends many events in which his son participates, such as a trip to iFLY Va Beach, an indoor skydiving facility. Aidan was among six kids from the Home who got out of their wheelchairs to fly inside a vertical wind tunnel this spring.

For the events that Randy can't attend, he generously donated to the Home a GoPro camera for action videography. He wanted to be able to see the expressions on his son's face when Aidan runs in races with Team Hoyt VB, a group that helps people with disabilities become active members of the community. Randy also wanted to give parents who don't live near St. Mary's the opportunity to see the great things their kids are doing.

Emmett and Randy said they feel love at St. Mary's and that it's impossible not to form relationships with all the kids at St. Mary's; they're Aidan's buddies. Emmett and Randy are happy that Aidan is in a good place with good friends.

Emmett said he wished even more families knew about St. Mary's and had the opportunity to be there. He and Randy believe St. Mary's is the best place for Aidan because the staff can do things for Aidan that they can't do for him at home. Aidan, like many of the children and young adults who live at St. Mary's Home, is unable to speak and needs a wheelchair for mobility. Randy said, "Aidan has skyrocketed educationally here." Emmett elaborated, saying, "Aidan has excelled educationally, socially, functionally, everything." Not only do they believe the Home takes good care of Aidan, but they said, "They treat us like family here."

Feeling at home means being surrounded by people who love you. Emmett and Randy are able to give Aidan a home at St. Mary's and still be a big part of that home. With many years of service to the military and volunteering at Aidan's home, the family's legacy of doing for others continues with Aidan's twin sister, Kassidy, who wants to start volunteering at St. Mary's.

In the News Coverage

FLAGSHIP & other area military newspapers

Sept. 24

Feature about Aidan and his family for the Combined Federal Campaign insert

INSIDE BUSINESS

Week of Nov. 9

Sonja Barisic, St. Mary's director of marketing communications, earned national accreditation in public relations

Week of Aug. 10

St. Mary's added seven members to the Embrace Cabinet volunteer leadership group

TIDEWATER BIZ/DAILY PRESS

Oct. 19

Sonja Barisic, St. Mary's director of marketing communications, earned national accreditation in public relations

"NORFOLK NEWS NOW"

Sept. 15

City of Norfolk employees volunteer at St. Mary's Home for United Way Day of Caring, <http://bit.ly/smhdayofcaring>

MELANIE WASKO PHOTOGRAPHY BLOG

Sept. 1

Photographer Melanie Wasko wrote about her experience taking portraits of children and young adults at St. Mary's and their families, <http://bit.ly/melaniewasko>

For links to these and other media mentions of St. Mary's Home, go to: saintmaryshome.org>News>News Coverage

Kids Have Fun Field Day for Day of Caring

Children and young adults from St. Mary's Home and The Albergo House enjoyed a Field Day for the United Way of South Hampton Roads Day of Caring on Sept. 11. The kids played games and got fake tattoos and manicures as Brandon spun tunes in our Atrium. School Principal Terry Lyle was a good sport as Caitlyn and lots of other kids used a catapult to fling whipped cream at her face.

Many thanks to our volunteers from the City of Norfolk and the middle school at Norfolk Academy for making this event so much fun, and to Norfolk City Manager Marcus Jones and Deputy City Manager Wynter Benda, who stopped by to check in on Field Day and chat with Joe Younkin and other city volunteers.

Watch a "Norfolk News Now" story about Day of Caring at St. Mary's: <http://bit.ly/smhdayofcaring>



St. Mary's Principal is a Champion for Children

We're so proud of Terry Lyle, principal of the SECEP REACH program, which runs the school at St. Mary's Home. Terry was among eight Community Champions who were honored at the Champions for Children luncheon in October. The annual awards recognize champions who have demonstrated and exemplify the spirit of a community that cares for its children.

Congratulations, Terry!

Champions for Children is a nonprofit that works to prevent child abuse and neglect in Hampton Roads. Terry was nominated for the organization's Community Champion award in the education category by a parent of a child at The Williams School in Norfolk who volunteers at St. Mary's Home. The SECEP REACH staff later honored Terry as well, with a surprise party at St. Mary's.

Watch a short video interview with Terry: <http://bit.ly/terrylyle>



SECEP REACH Principal Terry Lyle with Virginia Lt. Gov. Dr. Ralph Northam, keynote speaker at the awards ceremony and a longtime friend of St. Mary's Home.

We'd Love to Speak to Your Group

Every club and organization faces the challenge of providing quality programs. We can help. Our staff members enjoy speaking about St. Mary's and the exceptional care, education, therapies and recreational programs we offer for children and young adults who have severe disabilities. Our presentation is designed to fit easily into your breakfast, lunch or dinner program format, at no cost, and includes a lively, professional, 10-minute video, "The Power Of Touch." Our speakers also are prepared for a short question-and-answer period.

To book a speaker from St. Mary's Home, please contact Sonja Barisic, APR, director of marketing communications, at sbarisic@smhdc.org or (757) 352-2700.

Foundation Makes Promise of Camp Come True *for Kids*

Jorge loves attending Camp Horizon, where he can rap and sing with friends, among many other activities. Thanks to the generosity of the We Promise Foundation, the charitable arm of Chartway Federal Credit Union, Jorge and 15 other children and young adults from St. Mary's were able to attend Camp Horizon, a program of The Up Center, over the summer.

Chartway's We Promise Foundation continued its five-year support of St. Mary's with a \$25,000 gift, its largest thus far. The kids went on field trips and participated in therapeutic recreation and education programs, including working on art projects, listening to music and playing sports.

Jorge's favorite thing about camp was being able to perform for his buddies. He even choreographed performances for the other campers, winning the award for Camp Choreographer. He also complimented the food and enjoyed being free to express himself. "If you want to rap or tap, you can do that," Jorge said.

We Promise Foundation Chairman John Blum said



Isaiah and Jorge had a great time at the Children's Museum of Virginia in Portsmouth with members of Chartway's We Promise Foundation and Camp Horizon staff. Front row, from left: Ferhat Kakouche, assistant director, Camp Horizon; Isaiah, 16, who lives at St. Mary's Home and has been attending Camp Horizon for about a decade; Ilse Turner, Michael Mingo-Dabney and Kenneth Freeman, Camp Horizon staff; Jorge, 16, who lives at St. Mary's Home. Back row, from left: Jen Saunders, director, We Promise Foundation Board; Beth K. O'Toole, former vice chair, We Promise Foundation; Karen Lane, executive director, We Promise Foundation; Brandi Calica, events manager, We Promise Foundation.

Chartway's foundation once again was honored to provide full financial funding to support children and young adults who live at St. Mary's. "Our employees are deeply dedicated to supporting and strengthening our communities," said Blum. "Having been a proud supporter for so many years, we have been changed and uplifted to see the ways this summer program allows children and young adults to make meaningful connections and experience quality, spirit-lifting activities designed to help each person reach his or her fullest potential."

Since 2011, Chartway's We Promise Foundation has donated \$97,400 to provide children and young adults at St. Mary's the opportunity to attend Camp Horizon.

Grant Helps Kids Breathe Easier

Eric is one of many young people at St. Mary's Home and The Albero House who are breathing easier thanks to the generosity of our friends at The Miller Oil Foundation. A \$5,740 grant from the foundation made it possible for us to buy a VitalCough System by Hill-Rom that stimulates coughing to keep the lungs clear.

The machine gives kids a good, deep breath to get air in the lower portion of the lungs and "really helps clear those airways," Terri Flannery, CRT, respiratory therapist for St. Mary's Home and The Albero House, explained to Miller Oil Foundation board members JoAnne Miller and Mark Pryor during a recent visit to the Home.

The Miller Oil Foundation is the charitable arm of Miller's, formerly Miller Oil Company, a family-owned heating oil, HVAC and commercial fuels provider in Hampton Roads.

Eric is seated next to Shannon Edsall, St. Mary's project manager and development associate. Standing, from left, are St. Mary's CEO William C. Giermak; Terri Flannery, CRT, respiratory therapist for St. Mary's and The Albero House; and JoAnne Miller and Mark Pryor, members of the Miller Oil Foundation's board.



From the CEO

William C. Giermak

Thank You for Making Complex Care Possible Year-Round

Complex needs. Complex care. A complex organization. These phrases describe St. Mary's Home and The Albero House and the services that you make it possible for us to provide 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Many moving parts have to come together to meet the clinical, educational and social needs of the 100 people we are proud to care for:

- The registered and professional nursing staff provide expert medical care. They are greatly aided by the important work of direct support professionals, who use a person-centered model of care to help the children and young adults make meaningful choices about their daily needs and activities. Medical direction from Drs. Joseph Toland, Jean Shelton and Nabil Tadros ensures that clinical care is well-coordinated.
- Licensed physical therapists and physical therapy assistants establish an individualized therapy program for each resident and are involved in many aspects of daily care.
- The occupational therapy support services staff create and/or maintain most of the residents' equipment needs and work hard to make sure the children and young adults are comfortable.
- Many of the children go to school right here at St. Mary's, thanks to the wonderful teachers, teachers' assistants and administrators who work for the REACH Program of the SECEP public school consortium. In addition, several children go out to Norfolk and Virginia Beach public schools.
- Recreation therapists at The Albero House and St. Mary's Home help coordinate activities and field trips and community involvement opportunities for our residents.
- Since our doors never close, a wide range of support staff in housekeeping and maintenance, and security and food services and administrative services work hard to support our caregivers.
- St. Mary's Home is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors. The Home receives outstanding support from the St. Mary's Auxiliary. An all-volunteer Board governs the St. Mary's Foundation, which helps the Home stay financially strong, while committee members from the community help provide guidance in furthering our mission.
- We continue to strive to find ways to ensure that parents, family members and guardians of our residents stay involved with St. Mary's. Similarly, we work hard to engage the general public with St. Mary's Home and The Albero House in order to generate the community support that is so crucial to our ongoing operations.

Complex needs. Complex care. A complex organization. But for a relatively simple purpose: Provide the best care possible in a homelike setting so that each person we care for can achieve his or her fullest potential.

Thank you for all you do, all year long, to support the children and young adults of St. Mary's Home and The Albero House. If we can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Give the Gift of a Good Life

Salim lives a good life at St. Mary's Home. Last Christmas, he asked Santa to get his favorite nurse, Jenny Boyd, a new car.

Salim and other kids at St. Mary's visit with Santa every year, enjoying a favorite holiday tradition. Then they gather with families, staff and volunteers on Christmas Day to open gifts and celebrate the holiday together.

Your support makes possible so many of the activities, special excursions and everyday joys that add up to a good life at St. Mary's.

Please consider donating to St. Mary's Home during the holiday season. You can make your gift online or by calling (800) 237-6555. Thank you! Remember to make your gift by Dec. 31 to get your tax deduction for 2015.



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EVENTS

JAN. 8-10, 2016

Hampton Roads International Auto Show, Virginia Beach Convention Center. See the 2016 Toyota Corolla Checkered Flag donated to St. Mary's Auxiliary for a drawing and buy tickets to win the car.

FEB. 13, 2016

Valentine's Day Bash, 10:30 a.m. -1 p.m., St. Mary's Atrium, with arts and crafts, music and more. Free and open to the public. Info: Shirley Justice, (757) 622-2208 ext. 423 or sjustice@smhdc.org

MARCH 10, 2016

St. Mary's Day at California Pizza Kitchen, 200 Central Park Ave., Town Center, Virginia Beach; restaurant will donate 20 percent of sales from patrons. Info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org

APRIL 16, 2016

SAVE THE DATE: Auxiliary Board's 11th Annual Gala and Auction, at a new venue: The Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center on the downtown Norfolk waterfront. Info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org

Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Joins Albero House

Mary Landfair, CTRS, (seen here with Molly, left, and Amelia, right) is the new therapeutic recreation specialist for The Albero House. Mary, a former intern in St. Mary's recreational therapy department, is developing a program for structured recreation and leisure activities at The Albero House and out in the community. She also will be working with two speech and language pathologists to help the adults who live at The Albero House decide what activities they participate in.

Mary graduated from Old Dominion University and earned her professional certification in September. She said she really loved working with the kids at St. Mary's and was excited to get to know the adults at The Albero House. She loves to bake, which inspired her to get the adults at The Albero House cooking at least once a week.



Development Says Hello to Brittany Boylan, Farewell to Diane Zinn

Often after school, Isaiah drops by the administration area to visit with the staff, including Brittany Boylan, who has joined St. Mary's Home and The Albero House as the development department coordinator. Brittany recently worked for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northwest Florida in Pensacola.

Brittany graduated from the University of South Florida, where she studied mass communications and psychology. She is thrilled to have found a position with an organization committed to providing the absolute best care for individuals with disabilities and striving to enhance their quality of life.



Brittany succeeds Diane Zinn, who retired earlier this year after nine years at St. Mary's. Among Diane's many duties was overseeing a program in which you can support the Home by buying a paver or bench engraved with a loved one's name, a sentiment or expression of gratitude. As a parting gift, colleagues presented Diane with a paver of her own.

To order your own paver, please go to saintmaryshome.org/donate/pavers. Or, contact Brittany at bboylan@smhdc.org or (757) 622-2208 ext. 328.



Donor's Generosity Delights Kids' Senses



From left: Robin Geluso, a support coordinator at St. Mary's; Nancy Wilcox, president of St. Mary's Board of Directors; Jeremiah; Lynn Regna, a physical therapist assistant at St. Mary's; and members of the Oldfield family: Henry J. Oldfield, Lucy Oldfield, Dr. Edward C. Oldfield III, Stephanie C. Oldfield and Dona Oldfield.

Thank you to Lucy Oldfield, a longtime member of the Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home, for making it possible for children and young adults who have multiple disabilities to grow and flourish. Children like Jeremiah, whom Mrs. Oldfield and her family met recently during a tour of the new sensory room at St. Mary's. Mrs. Oldfield gave St. Mary's a generous gift for the sensory room, as well as for the purchase of a wheelchair-accessible van that will be used to take children and young adults on trips into the community.



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(go to News>Blog)

Wild Kratts Live, Right at St. Mary's

Chris and Martin Kratt of the popular PBS Kids TV show "Wild Kratts" stopped by St. Mary's before heading to Norfolk's Chrysler Hall for a performance of "Wild Kratts Live" in November. The brothers chatted with kids and handed out autographed photos. Special thanks to Haley's mom, pictured here with Haley and the Kratts, for arranging the visit!



SAVE THE DATE: Auxiliary Gala & Car Drawing



John and other kids in Classroom 10 were joined recently by some special guests.

Members of our Auxiliary Board were meeting at St. Mary's when they stopped by the student-run Sip o' Joe Cafe for a coffee break.

The Auxiliary is busy planning its 11th annual gala and auction, to be held April 16 at a new venue: The Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center on the downtown Norfolk waterfront. Items up for auction will include jewelry, sports memorabilia and a trip to France. The event will culminate with a drawing for a 2016 classic silver Toyota Corolla donated by our friends at Checkered Flag.

For information about the gala or to buy your raffle tickets for the car, contact Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org.



**St. Mary's
Home**

A good life.

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Questions or comments?
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or sbarisic@smhdc.org.

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Fabulous Fall Festival Full of Fun for Kids of All Ages

This donkey really seemed to love Shaniya. She stuck her muzzle right on Shaniya's lap during St. Mary's Fall Festival on Oct. 17. Kids of all ages from St. Mary's, The Albero House and the community had an absolute blast. We enjoyed gorgeous weather, yummy treats, great music and all sorts of activities, including a really popular wheelchair-accessible hayride. Special thanks to Shirley Justice, our community liaison, for organizing this great event.



**Yes, I WANT
TO HELP**

Please donate today to help children and young adults with severe disabilities have good lives and receive the best care, in a warm, homelike environment. You can make your gift online at saintmaryshome.org, or call (757) 622-2208 or (800) 237-6555, or send it,

with our deep thanks, in the envelope provided with this newsletter. Your tax-deductible contribution not only helps with essential medical care but also brightens the children's lives with adventures they treasure year-round.

You also are invited to create your legacy by making a planned gift, such as leaving St. Mary's in your will, and becoming a member of The Guardian Society. For more information, contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at (757) 446-6797 or mstewart@smhdc.org.

Thank you so much for gifts you have made to St. Mary's Home. Please consider a monthly recurring gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more to increase the power of your donation.

