

# JOURNEYS

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

Spring 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.*

## Oh, the Places They Go! Peer Play Pals Explore *the* Community



**M**aking art at the  
Children's Museum  
of Virginia.

**T**he littlest kids at St. Mary's play a lot, enjoying activities in a colorful classroom designed to stimulate their senses as part of our Infant and Toddler Program.

Fridays, though, are different. That's when they go on field trips: to the new Slover Library in downtown Norfolk, the Children's Museum of Virginia in Portsmouth, the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, and even the Busch Gardens amusement park an hour away in

Williamsburg, to name just a few places they've been.

Fridays are when Iker, Mackenzie, Jeremiah and Anthony explore their community. Coming along for the fun are their young friends who don't have disabilities.

All these adventures are part of Peer Play Pals. The program began as a pilot project in June 2014 as a way for kids at St. Mary's to play with other kids their own age, in places they'd

*Continued on page 2*

## In the News Coverage

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Feb. 26

*Kid2Kid, St. Mary's youth volunteer group, among leaders recognized by the The Virginia Beach Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities.*

Dec. 28

*When Melina and Katie visited the Dickens Christmas Towne display at Nauticus, a stranger paid for their photo with Santa. This act of kindness was featured in the "How Nice" column.*

DISTINCTION  
MAGAZINE

February Edition

*Feature article about pro golfer Marc Leishman and his wife, Audrey, mentioned their support for St. Mary's.*

INSIDE BUSINESS

March 7

*Board Vice President Sharon Goodwyn listed among the YWCA South Hampton Roads "Women of Distinction" honorees.*

Jan. 29

*St. Mary's mentioned in article about Cheryl McLeskey, a member of the 2016 Hampton Roads Business Hall of Fame and a supporter of the Home through the McLeskey Family Foundation.*

*For links to these and other media mentions of St. Mary's Home, go to: [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org)>News>News Coverage*

*Continued from page 1*

never been, said Nicole Hoskins Jones, our director of recreational therapy.

Nicole's initial idea to form a playgroup at her son's school evolved into a group based at St. Mary's, with several St. Mary's employees and their children, as well as both of Nicole's young sons, involved.

"They're all just being kids. Sometimes they share. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes there are tears," Nicole said. "Kids don't know disabilities. They're just kids. Everybody learns from this."

Today, there are two groups of Peer Play Pals, kids three and younger who go on field trips during the day on Fridays, and kids ages four to six who started with the program and are now in school but get together once a month or so.

The trips include activities, snacks and lunches at restaurants. Donors like you make the Peer Play Pals program possible by giving Visa gift cards that help pay for meals and gift cards to places like Build-a-Bear Workshop.



The kids took the Tide light rail to check out the new Slover Library in downtown Norfolk.

Enjoying a day in the sun at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront.



Sometimes the kids get together at St. Mary's, for example, holding a "Friends-giving" dinner around Thanksgiving. The kids shopped for the food and helped prepare a little feast.

Peer Play Pals is about peer modeling, said Erin Vicinski, who runs St. Mary's Infant and Toddler Program and facilitates Peer Play Pals.

"Kids learn from each other, learn through play," Erin said. "They can watch me play all day long, but it's not the same. They see what other kids are doing, how to play appropriately. It's about social development, to learn what's acceptable and not acceptable."

And it's about being free to be a kid – and to explore.



Playing in the Infant and Toddler Program classroom. (All photos courtesy of Peer Play Pals.)



# Beach Ambassadors Raise \$10,500 for Kids and Young Adults

**A**drian took a break from playing in a bounce house to greet our good friends from Beach Ambassadors. The group's Battle of the Beers event last October raised an amazing \$10,500 for our kids and young adults!

Beach Ambassadors supports local charities through community service projects, as well as social and sporting events. Members have volunteered at St. Mary's Home, helping children swim in a therapy pool, assisting with therapy dogs at the Home and decorating for a fall festival.

The group also donated more than \$7,000 to St. Mary's with funds raised from the 2014 Battle of the Beers. Thank you to the Beach Ambassadors and to all who have made these events so successful. Be sure to stay tuned for details about the 2016 Battle of the Beers, scheduled for Aug. 6 at Hunt Club Farm in Virginia Beach.



## We'd Love to Speak to Your Group

**E**very 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 at no cost, contact Sonja Barisic, APR, director of marketing communications, at [sbarisic@smhdc.org](mailto:sbarisic@smhdc.org) or (757) 352-2700.



### Save the Date!

Spring isn't too early to start planning for fall fun.  
Please join us for our inaugural "It's Fall Y'all" celebration!

Friday, Sept. 23, 2016

5 p.m.-8 p.m. at St. Mary's Home

Info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793  
or [mhilton@smhdc.org](mailto:mhilton@smhdc.org)

Presented by: **PRA**  
Group

# Jo-Kell Continues Tradition of Support

Suzy Kelly, one of our good friends and CEO of Jo-Kell Inc. in Chesapeake, dropped by around the holidays to present St. Mary's with a fantastic gift of nearly \$17,000. We can't thank Jo-Kell enough for the company's ongoing generosity to the children and young adults! That's Suzy, second from left, with Martha Price Stewart, our director of development, CEO William C. Giermak and Mary Helen Hilton, our director of annual giving.



## Join Our FAMILY

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

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[saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org)  
(go to News>Blog)

## One Night. *A Lifetime of Change.*

You're invited

### *Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home 11th Annual Gala & Auction*

Saturday, April 16

Half Moone Cruise & Celebration Center  
One Waterside Drive, Norfolk

Reception & Silent Auction 6 p.m.

Dinner 7:30 p.m.

For tickets: [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org) or (757) 446-6793

Plus, win a 2016 Toyota Corolla courtesy of Checkered Flag!

Raffle tickets \$25 each or 5 for \$100

Thank you to our sponsors:



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From the President

Nancy Wilcox

## Celebrate Spring With Us at Our Auxiliary's Gala on April 16

Spring is just around the corner and things are blooming at St. Mary's Home! Our lobby has just been renovated and is so welcoming to families and visitors. Speaking of visitors, we love giving tours of the Home so grab a friend or two and come take a look at what makes St. Mary's so special.

The Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home is gearing up for the 11th annual Gala and Auction on April 16. After 10 years in Virginia Beach, the Gala this year has been moved to Norfolk. It will be held downtown at the beautiful Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center on the Elizabeth River. This elegant setting is the perfect place for an evening of fun and fundraising! The Gala is St. Mary's largest fundraising event of the year.

Thirty years ago, I was asked to join the Auxiliary Board, which started my love affair with St. Mary's. I remain on the Auxiliary Board in addition to serving as president of the Board of Directors, and I am proud to be working along side of these very dedicated women. A year of planning goes into the Gala, and those who attend have so much fun and come back every year.

If you have not attended our Gala, consider joining us this year! You can buy tickets online at [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org) or call Mary Helen Hilton at (757) 446-6793. We will have lots of goodies in our silent auction and some exciting offerings in the live auction. How about a trip to Provence, France? Or a weekend in the Big Apple? The evening will culminate with a drawing for a 2016 Toyota Corolla donated by Checkered Flag! You can buy raffle tickets online at [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org), or at the Gala.

As I complete my first year as your board president, I continue to feel honored to serve the special children and adults who call St. Mary's their home. St. Mary's works hard to provide them "a good life." See you at the Gala!



### St. Mary's Board of Directors

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Long Term Care of Virginia  
*The Albero House Medical Director*

## St. Mary's Welcomes Two Board Members

St. Mary's Home welcomes back **Michael E. (Mike) Duffy** to our Board of Directors.

Mike is a first vice president at Merrill Lynch, a division of Bank of America. He began his career with Merrill Lynch in 1982. His practice includes foundations, endowments and insurance company assets primarily located in the Southeast.

Mike received his bachelor's of science degree in business administration from Old Dominion University and attended the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania Executive Management Program.



Mike has been a multi-decade supporter of St. Mary's on various levels, including Board president, vice president and treasurer. He and his wife, Sandy, reside in Virginia Beach.



**Christopher B. D'Surney**, a member of St. Mary's Foundation Board, has joined St. Mary's Board of Directors. He is director of human resources for The Port of Virginia. He holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration and a master's degree in business administration, both from Virginia Commonwealth University.

# Serving St. Mary's is Family Affair for New Embrace Cabinet Member



**A**ndrew Widman has become a member of the Embrace Cabinet, joining his father, Fred Widman, in this volunteer leadership group that guides St. Mary's in fundraising, marketing and other areas.

Andy's association with St. Mary's started when his younger brother, Christopher, became a resident in 1994. Andy began volunteering at St. Mary's when he completed his Eagle Scout Project for St. Mary's in 2004.

Andy earned a bachelor's of science degree in political science from Radford University. Following graduation, he was commissioned into the Marine Corps, where he served as an assault amphibian vehicle officer at Camp Pendleton in California. Andy now works for Cubic Global Defense and also serves as the director of business development and operations at TaccFour Defense.

## EVENTS

APRIL 8, 2016

### Friday Forums: "How Do We Make It Work?"

1-2 p.m., St. Mary's Atrium. Panel featuring parents of children with disabilities. Moderated by local journalist and former WAVY-TV personality Kerri Furey. Presented by Children's Specialty Group and The Camp Family Foundations. Free and open to the public. Registration or info: [saintmaryshome.org](http://saintmaryshome.org) or (757) 622-2208

APRIL 9, 2016

### Spring Fling, 10:30

a.m.-12:30 p.m., St. Mary's Home, with arts and crafts, a petting zoo and pony rides, music and more. Free and open to the public. Volunteer Zoey Vooss, a senior at Norfolk Collegiate, is organizing this as her senior project. Info: Shirley Justice, (757) 622-2208 ext. 423 or [sjustice@smhdc.org](mailto:sjustice@smhdc.org)

APRIL 16, 2016

### Priority Toyota Charity Bowl

to benefit St. Mary's and other local charities, 1-2 p.m., S.B. Ballard Stadium, Old Dominion University, Norfolk. Info: [prioritytoyotacharitybowl.com](http://prioritytoyotacharitybowl.com)

### Auxiliary Board's 11th Annual Gala and Auction

plus raffle for Toyota Corolla donated by Checkered Flag, 6 p.m., The Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center, 1 Waterside Drive, Norfolk. Tickets or info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or [mhilton@smhdc.org](mailto:mhilton@smhdc.org)

## Estate Planning Attorney Joins Planned Giving Committee



**T**odd J. Preti, a shareholder in the law firm of Midgett & Preti PC in Virginia Beach, is the newest member of St. Mary's Planned Giving Committee.

Todd is a graduate of Randolph-Macon College and earned his doctor of law degree from the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond. His practice includes estate planning, estate and trust administration, elder law, family business planning, commercial real estate and business law.

He is a member of the boards of the Hampton Roads Estate Planning Council and the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, and past president of the Hampton Roads

Chapter of the Financial Planning Association.

## Join Us for the First Program of 2016 in This Free Series!

Friday Forums at St. Mary's Home - "How Do We Make it Work?"

April 8, 2016 | 1-2 p.m. | Atrium at St. Mary's Home  
6171 Kempsville Circle, Norfolk

To register or for more info: (757) 622-2208 or [SaintMarysHome.org](http://SaintMarysHome.org)



A panel of parents will discuss what it's like to raise children who have severe disabilities. Featuring Lynnette Bolton, M.Ed., education specialist with SECEP REACH and mother of Brooke, 18; Brendon Allen, a science teacher and father of Cayden, 6, who lives at St. Mary's Home; Cynthia Mosely, an adapted music teacher and mother of Noah, 16; and Kimberly Adams, a human resources specialist and mother of Rachelle, 12.



# St. Mary's New Director of Social Work is a Familiar Face

**C**hristine Parker, MSW, left, is our new director of social work — the main liaison among St. Mary's, the children and young adults who live here and their families and legal guardians. She succeeds Melanie Pérez-López, right, who retired Jan. 29 after 28 years of outstanding service.

"I enjoy coming to work every day because I know the ultimate goal is to enrich the lives and the families of the young people we serve," said Christine, whose passion for working with children started at an early age through babysitting and volunteering for others.

Christine earned her undergraduate degree in human service counseling from Old Dominion University and her master's degree in social work from Norfolk State University.

She has been with St. Mary's for nearly 14 years, working as an activity assistant for six years before moving into the role of social worker under Melanie. Congratulations, Christine, on your promotion!



## & MORE EVENTS

April 20, 2016

**"How to Get Your Story to the Media"** lunch presentation, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., St. Mary's Atrium. Marketing Communications Director Sonja Barisic, APR will offer media relations tips and strategies as part of an education series offered by the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce. Info: [hamptonroadschamber.com](http://hamptonroadschamber.com)

April 28, 2016

**Individual Certification Workshop for the Dysphagia Disorders Survey**, 8:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m., St. Mary's Atrium. Led by Justine Joan Sheppard, Ph.D. The Survey is a clinical assessment tool for managing swallowing and feeding issues in children and adults with disabilities. Info: [nutritionalmanagement.org](http://nutritionalmanagement.org)

April 30, 2016

**Strikes for Tykes** bowling tournament to benefit St. Mary's, 1-4 p.m., Pinboy's at the Beach, 1577 Laskin Road, Virginia Beach. Organized by The Heat, a group of female officers, detectives, staff members and spouses of officers from the Virginia Beach Police Department. Info or to register: [acurrann@vbgov.com](mailto:acurrann@vbgov.com) or [eroys@vbgov.com](mailto:eroys@vbgov.com)

**Biffledinked 10X5K** to benefit St. Mary's Home, 8 a.m., CrossFit Unparalleled, 4924 Shell Road, Virginia Beach. Info: <http://bit.ly/biffledinked10x5kinfo>

## St. Mary's Vice President is a Woman of Distinction

**C**ongratulations to Sharon Goodwyn, vice president of St. Mary's Board of Directors, for being recognized as one of the YWCA South Hampton Roads 2016 "Women of Distinction!" Goodwyn, counsel with Hunton & Williams, LLP, was honored in the law category for exemplifying the YWCA's mission to eliminate racism and empower women.





*A good life.*

6171 Kempsville Circle  
Norfolk, VA 23502  
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saintmaryshome.org

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# Kids Toss Pigskin *with* College Football Players

**T**.J., who lives at The Albero House, was ecstatic to meet some talented young football players! James Church, left, of Priority Automotive, brought his son, James Church, Jr. from Norfolk State University, along with Jalyn Holmes from the Ohio State Buckeyes and Harry Freeman, also from Norfolk State, to St. Mary's and The Albero House for a visit. The guys spent some time signing autographs and tossing a football around with some of the kids. James Church organizes the annual Priority Charity Bowl football game. Thank you to Priority Automotive for donating \$10,000 to St. Mary's Home from last year's game, and for choosing St. Mary's to be among the charities that will benefit from this year's game, to be played April 16. We really appreciate you making our kids your priority!



**Yes, I WANT TO HELP**

**P**lease 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](http://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 founding member of The Guardian Society. For more information, contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at (757) 446-6797 or [mstewart@smhdc.org](mailto: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.

