

The Bowes Family

Although Bonnie Bowes lived in Washington, D.C., as a young child, St. Mary's County is the only home she knows. It's the place where she married her husband, Mark Bowes, and where they raised their two daughters. It's also the place where she formed a close bond with MedStar St. Mary's Hospital - a bond with which the entire Bowes family can relate.

"St. Mary's Hospital has always been there for us," said Bonnie, "and we have given them some significant health challenges." From premature births to heart attacks to work-related accidents to preventative maintenance procedures to just acting like we were young again causing personal injuries, St. Mary's was always there, said Bonnie.

Through the years the Bowes family has had their share of bumps and bruises. But when Mark nearly severed his finger on the worksite and was transported to St. Mary's, Bonnie was more than impressed with the level of care and concern given to her family. Because of the severity of Mark's injury, he was sent by medivac to Union Memorial Hospital for specialized care. All of this was unknown to Bonnie who was out of town on business. "I'll never forget the nurse that called to tell me Mark had been injured," said Bonnie. "It was another amazing moment as far as the personal care we received." The St. Mary's nurse insisted she stay on the phone with Bonnie until every detail was given. "Everything she said would happen, happened like clockwork."

Bonnie's experiences at St. Mary's inspired her to give back by serving on the hospital's Foundation Board from 2003 until 2011, the latter two years serving as board president. During her tenure, Bonnie was greatly involved with planning the Annual Foundation Gala that raises more than \$100,000 each year to fund healthcare scholarships for local students. She was also the chairperson of the Capital Campaign - a campaign that raised funds to support The Grace

Anne Dorney Pulmonary & Cardiac Rehabilitation Center and establish the St. Mary's Outpatient Pavilion. Though she stepped down from her presidency last year, she is actively seeking another way to give back to the hospital.

Living in St. Mary's County since the age of two, Bob Bowes, Mark's father and Bonnie's father-in-law, has his own ties to the hospital. He moved to the county with his parents, Joseph F. and H. Audrey Bowes, after the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II when a surge of workers came to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station. He has lived in the county ever since, marrying his wife Patricia in 1961. Together the pair raised seven children - six of whom still call the Tall Timbers, Piney Point, Valley Lee and Leonardtown areas their home.

Patricia gave birth to five boys and two girls at St. Mary's starting in 1961, having her last baby in 1970. "It was a different time back then," said Bob. "Husbands were kept away from the experience - it was very tough on me." It wasn't until 1975 that the hospital permitted fathers in the delivery room.

When the next two generations of the Bowes family were delivered at St. Mary's beginning in 1985, times and practices had changed. "One of

our grandchildren was born with the umbilical cord around his neck and was flown to Children's [National Medical Center]," said Patricia. "I remember a time when newborns were carried by portable incubators to hospitals up the road."

"Overall they've [St. Mary's] been great," said Bob who laughed, "Although, I don't like being there." Instead he spends his time volunteering for the hospital as a driver during severe weather conditions. It's another family thing. One of Bob's sons, Tommy, and his wife, Joy, have even driven their tractor in a snow storm to get a nurse to the hospital. "We laughed that the 'big green limo' was on its way," said Joy.

No matter which generation, the Bowes family has had a connection to St. Mary's. Some have brought joy to patients as candy strippers, while others spent a summer or two learning the ins and outs of healthcare as an intern. A few have volunteered at the hospital and at Hospice of St. Mary's where Dr. Karen Bauer, Bob and Patricia's daughter-in-law, serves as the assistant medical director. And, Bob's brother, Dr. Joseph "Joe" Bowes practiced obstetrics and gynecological medicine for many years in the county.

