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# BRIGHTLOOK



A publication for NVRH employees, volunteers, Corporators, & Board members

September 2025

## NVRH Stories



## Doubling down on the West Wing!

On Friday, August 22, NVRH rolled the dice on its 17th Annual Gala—and what a jackpot it was! Hosted at the stunning home of Marion and Garry Cairns on Joe's Pond, the night sparkled with a Black & White Casino Night theme that had guests buzzing from the moment they arrived.

From the lively casino tables (where “Funny Money” flowed as freely as the laughter) to the elegant black-and-white décor, the Gala was filled with excitement, energy, and community spirit. Guests mixed, mingled, and tried their luck—all while enjoying fabulous food and entertainment.

The best part? Together we raised a record-breaking \$117,000 (and counting!) for the West Wing Project. That's right—our community came through in a big way, helping ensure that NVRH continues to provide top-quality care for years to come.

A huge THANK YOU to our gracious hosts, generous sponsors, dedicated staff, and amazing volunteers who made the night seamless and unforgettable. Your efforts didn't just put on a great party—they helped strengthen the future of healthcare in the Northeast Kingdom.

This Gala wasn't just a fundraiser—it was a celebration of generosity, teamwork, and joy. Thank you to everyone that helped make this possible!

**It's not too late to support the West Wing Project! Visit [nvrh.org/support-nvrh/westwing](https://nvrh.org/support-nvrh/westwing) to make your gift today.**

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# “We all have hope”

NVRH volunteers give back, help out, and strengthen community ties

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NVRH volunteers do everything from Reiki massage therapy and visiting with service dogs to assisting patients in finding their way around the hospital during construction. Left: Linda Caamano visits NVRH with service dog Bristol. Right: Volunteers Cathy Browne and Pam Comeau organize items for an employee recognition event.

From organizing medical supplies and staffing the front desk to making visits with service dogs, playing the piano, and escorting patients to appointments, NVRH depends on a corps of volunteers to welcome patients and their families with care and compassion.

Under the guidance of Pat Forest, NVRH Director of Entrance Operations and Volunteer Services, over 119 community members volunteer their services at NVRH on a regular basis. They bring a wide range of skills, talents, and experience to their work at the hospital, including playing music, giving Reiki massage, crafting, sitting with dying patients, and so much more.

Rick Johnston started volunteering in November 2020. He takes special inspiration from seeing how other patients and their families handle difficult diagnoses.

“I do it mainly for selfish reasons,” he says. “It makes me feel good. It gives me purpose. As a cancer patient myself, I’m inspired by how patients deal with cancer. We all have hope.”

Barbara Byrne of North Danville has volunteered at the hospital since 2017 and wanted to use her skills to provide comfort care to dying patients. “I love having the opportunity to do this and wish I were more available.”

*(continued on next page)*

Todd Rambo of St. Johnsbury has been volunteering since the summer of 2021. "I was looking for more involvement with the community and for a new start with something different." A frequent presence at the desk in the main lobby, he enjoys greeting and interacting with the people who come in and being a friendly face for visitors.

Cathy Browne of Peacham started volunteering this spring when she saw a local notice looking for volunteers. Retired from a career in education, she was looking for something new and NVRH felt like a good fit. "My family has spent a good deal of time in hospitals in the past ten years and without exception every person with whom we had contact was kind, helpful, skilled, and incredibly hard-working," she says. "It's a small way to give back for so much excellent care."

Her favorite part of volunteering? "The people!" She enjoys the positive atmosphere at the hospital and getting to know the hospital culture from a new perspective.

When volunteer Rosina Greenwood's father was hospitalized in 2010, he took comfort from a prayer shawl crafted by an NVRH volunteer; now Greenwood crochets shawls for patients. "I know that patients feel comfort both from the shawl and from knowing that someone cared enough to knit or crochet for twelve hours to bring them joy and peace in our hospital."

Retirement is often the time when people look to volunteering. When Deb Davison retired and moved to St. Johnsbury to be close to her sons, volunteering at NVRH provided a sense of structure to her days and new friendships with like-minded people.

Some volunteers are pursuing careers in health care and volunteer as a way to learn more about the medical field.

"I had a great experience," says Jasmine, a UVM student who recently job shadowed at NVRH. "The physician was an amazing teacher. I saw what I was hoping to see and more. I learned a lot and got a lot out of my time at NVRH. The nurses were also very friendly and welcoming."



Front row (L-R): Volunteers Franny Crowder, Cindy Gordon.  
Back row (L-R): Dianne Lavigne, Dy Thresher, and Todd Rambo

Pat has run the volunteer program at NVRH for 18 years and many volunteers mention her as a source of wisdom and experience. In turn she is a devoted advocate and guide for the volunteers. "I have been inspired by the dedication of NVRH volunteers," she says. "Whether they're retired people or high school students, NVRH is richer because we have the community in our community hospital."

**Do you know someone who would be interested in volunteering at NVRH? To learn more, please call Pat at 802-748-7310 or visit [nvrh.org/volunteer/](http://nvrh.org/volunteer/).**

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# Friendly faces

NVRH Infusion Therapy Department offers a gentle environment for cutting edge treatments

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Infusion team members Stephanie, Norah, and Mackenzie--and their collection of cheerful gnomes!--strive to provide a relaxing, friendly environment for patients.

The Infusion Therapy Department has long been an integral part of NVRH, providing essential benefits for both our patients and the wider community. The services we provide allow patients to receive vital medications, treatments and other services that help manage complex and chronic illnesses close to home. This reduces the burden of travel, improves treatment adherence, and leads to better health outcomes.

The services provided by the Infusion Therapy Department help strengthen our local healthcare infrastructure, offering a trusted source of high-quality care and fostering a sense of community and support. Over the past 10 years, the demand for infusion services has grown significantly and so has our Infusion Department. Larger facilities such as Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) and the University of Vermont Medical Center (UVM) have come to rely on NVRH, knowing their patients will receive exceptional care without having to travel long distances.

Infusion provides a wide range of treatments for patients of all ages including:

- Biologic infusions for autoimmune diseases like Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, psoriatic arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and myasthenia gravis
- Iron infusions
- Osteoporosis treatments (e.g., Reclast, Prolia)
- Solumedrol infusions
- Hydration therapy
- Blood and platelet transfusions
- Antibiotic infusions
- Injections of various kinds
- Therapeutic phlebotomies
- Port draws
- Vascular access services: PICC and Midline insertions, as well as maintenance for PICCs, Midlines, and Ports

Whether we're infusing medications, maintaining long-term vascular access devices, or simply offering a gentle, welcoming environment and a friendly face during treatment, our mission is always the same: to provide the highest level of care with compassion and expertise—right here in our community.

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# Strengthening Suicide Prevention in the ED

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ED Nursing Director Sarah Christman and Community Health Improvement department Innovations Coordinator Andrea Willey recently shared with the Quality Improvement Patient Safety (QIPS) Committee of the Board how our ED is advancing suicide prevention. Since 2022, the team has built new approaches, including a universal screening process—every patient is screened for suicide risk, no matter their reason for visiting. This proactive step helps identify individuals at risk of suicide early, improves safety, and can save lives. Working closely with Northeast Kingdom Human Services, our ED ensures that patients in crisis receive timely mental health evaluations and coordinated support. Thank you to our ED team for leading this important work and strengthening our commitment to whole-person care. Watch a powerful [video](#) on how hospitals across Vermont are collaborating to strengthen suicide prevention efforts in the ED.

## What our patients are saying

Read a sampling of the feedback we've gotten recently from our patients! The last one may be our favorite. ;-)

*"I'm one who takes care of others, never being the one who is 'taken care of' therefore, having the amazing staff of nurses and doctors being so attentive and comforting made me feel very comfortable and the fear of the experience was lessened. Thank you all so much."*

*"My stay was short, but the care was exceptional. Nurses were great, my doctor was superb, and the food was also good!"*

*"Dr. John Nesbitt and his team were outstanding!...He explains things very clearly so that you can understand...Dr. Nesbitt is a very compassionate and caring doctor. Thank you!"*

*"I was in the treatment room before my husband had a chance to park the car! Great immediate service."*

*"Dr. Spicer was very kind, professional and smart. Considered and explained all differential diagnosis and included me in my plan of care and decision making."*

*"The front desk staff go above and beyond to be helpful. My provider is kind, patient, generous with their time, attentive and caring."*

*"I was given an English muffin with butter, peanut butter and jelly after my procedure. Whoever made it for me understands the importance of putting butter on a PB&J. That level of detail is commendable, and they deserve a raise."*

# On the Calendar

- Save the date for the NVRC Member's Annual Meeting for Corporators and Medical Staff Members - December 2, 5:30 - 8:30PM
- National Midwifery Week - October 5 - 11
- October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Respiratory Care Week - October 19 - 25
- Paul J. Sweeney Coat Drive - Saturday, November 1, 9AM - 12PM, Good Shepherd Catholic School, St. Johnsbury. Coat Collection will be at various sites October 1 - 30. More details coming soon.

## NVRH In the News

- [Emergency Crews, NVRH Drilling Train Derailment with Mass Casualties Event](#)
- [County Sheriff to Increase Staffing at NVRH](#)
- [Discover NEK's Health Priorities: New Report Now Available](#)
- [Lown Institute ranks NVRH #1 critical access hospital in Vermont for social responsibility](#)
- [September-December Healthy Choices now available](#)
- [NVRH announces financial stability measures](#)

## Currently on Exhibit at the Gray Gallery



Artist **Mary Tapogna** will exhibit her mosaic work at the Charles M. and Hannah H. Gray Gallery at NVRH through November 10.

Mary's mosaics are constructed using found and recycled materials and span a range of religious and secular imagery. "Traditional mosaics—meticulously built from countless pieces of glass and tile—remain a source of inspiration," she says in her artist's statement "and I honor that tradition while incorporating contemporary, unconventional materials and subject matter."



Artist **Dawn Griffis** is a retired RN and NP whose artistic expression is influenced by her upbringing in England and her deep love of the natural world. Now living in rural Vermont, Dawn continues to create art despite a tremor and progressive vision loss from macular degeneration. You can see her artwork at the Gray Gallery through November 25, 2025.

25% of all exhibit sales directly benefit NVRH. To learn more, visit the Gray Gallery [webpage](#) or contact the gallery Curator Jennifer Layn at [j.layn@nvrh.org](mailto:j.layn@nvrh.org) or 802-748-7313.

# Employee News!



We're sharing two employee celebrations this issue! Leo "Rocky" Lacroix was named one of the 2024 Best in Class site managers by Securitas. Awardees were celebrated with a lunch in Hampton Beach, NH and an evening boat cruise. "His zest for life, strong sense of duty, and unwavering commitment to others make Leo a valued member of his community and the Securitas Team--a true example of what it means to be Best in Class," the award tribute states.

Clinical Dietician Coordinator Chad Proulx and his volleyball team "Sets on the Beach" won the annual Northeast Kingdom Beach Volleyball Summer Tournament on September 4! Congratulations, Rocky and Chad!

Thursday, September 18 was Employee Recognition Day, celebrating NVRH employees who have received certifications or attained education milestones and major service anniversaries. This year that includes RN Jan Oliver (seen here at left with COO Laura Newell) who's approaching her 50th year anniversary at NVRH! See [more great photos](#) of the day!



Brightlook is a quarterly newsletter, and comes out in March, June, September, and December. Looking to submit a story or a recognition, or have a piece of employee news to share? Contact Sarah Lydon at [S.lydon@nvrh.org](mailto:S.lydon@nvrh.org).



Choosing Health  
Northeastern Vermont  
Regional Hospital