



A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue No. 6 - Spring 2009

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April 23	Northumberland Hills Hospital Volunteer Appreciation Event • Watch for details



## Polar Bear Dip Surpasses Last Years Success!

Once again the weather gods provided a challenge for our Polar Bear Dippers. Last year it was rain. This year it was chilling wind. The sun shone brightly, but it was just a tease. The wind was so brisk that the Fire Department tent took flight and had to be restrained and removed. The trusty Behan backhoe and its worthy operator had to clear the channel at least four times as the wind relentlessly drove the ice onto the beach.

But, undaunted, the dippers came as did their supporters and a goodly crowd of curious onlookers. At precisely noon, Town Crier Tom MacMillan proclaimed the event, the red string – held at either end by President Dale Hodge and Past President Patricia Fenner – was dropped and away they went.

They were Rhonda McMurray, Natisha Debutte, Jane Watt, Jennifer Daignault, Mike Anderson, Bruce Murray, Dave Avery, Rob Stevenson, Gord Krentz and Nick Hunt, and members of our hospital family.

There seemed to be a tropical theme this year as you can see from the pictures. Dr. Essak even provided his own beach chair and tropical (though unidentified) beverage. Drs. Stratford and Barrie were equally tropically

charming. Captain Polar Dip Burn recycled his costume and his pluck from last year. The Hospital/ Foundation family was completed by Carly Cunningham and Young Mee Kim as the Auxiliary's valiant standard-bearer, once again.

The end result was all positive. The firefighters were not called on to rescue, St. John Ambulance didn't have to resuscitate, there was plenty of hot chocolate supplied by Tim Horton's William Street location and, best of all, over \$7000 was raised to go toward our annual commitment of \$150,000 to purchase patient-focused hospital equipment.

Thanks go to volunteers and spouses who supported the event, including Jim Upper, Virginia Tetz, Lois Rye, the Foundation's John Russell as well as Alan Hodge (spouse) and Bob Fenner, (member and long-suffering spouse.) Our Fundraising Director Young Mee Kim's enthusiasm and participation gets better every year.

Can hardly wait for next year and the weather variation it will bring. Enjoy the photos!

*Photos Page 3 and 7*

**Board & Coordinators**

**Dale Hodge**  
*President*

**Janet Trevail**  
*Vice President*

**Patricia Fenner**  
*Past President*

**Donna Bright**  
*Director, Finance*

**Sharon Gerber**  
*Director, Ambulatory Care*

**Gayle Metson**  
*Director, Communication and Public Relations*

**Kathryan O'Malley Hamilton**  
*Director, Inpatient Care and Program Support Services*

**Young Mee Kim**  
*Director, Fundraising*

**Brenda Worsnop**  
*Recording Secretary*

**Dorothy Allen**  
**Liz Brock**

**Maureen Bronkhorst**

**Sandy Ducharme**

**Sally Duncan**

**Selena Forsyth**

**Yvonne Green**

**Margaret Grepe**

**Marg Hilborn**

**Pat Page Hoisak**

**Sylvia Lefebvre**

**Patti McGlone**

**Ruth Markle**

**Jane McIvor**

**Virginia Mitchell**

**Ruth O'Donnell-Konecny**

**Shirley O'Neil**

**Jean Orviss**

**Mary Park**

**Linda Sedgwick-Sharpe**

**Sandi Spencer**

**Eleanor Tryon**

**Jim Upper**

**Sandra van der Veen**

**Fran Varden**

**President's Report**

**Dale Hodge**

We are in the middle of interesting times for our health care system with demands for treatments and budgets that must be balanced. The vision for the Central-East LHIN is to have "one acute care network bringing improved and equitable patient access to an integrated hospital system that provides the highest quality of care" across the area. All hospitals will have to make decisions regarding services to their community according to their size and demands. Centres of Excellence will be set up for those needing more specialized services in vascular, thoracic, cardiac, mental health and paediatric care. A centralized network will also help find the best care in a timely manner through a "single point of entry" for access to emergency and other services. These changes are being created to give people the best care as close to home as possible so we must consider NHH to be part of the network created by our local Central-East LHIN.



One way that we, the Auxiliary, can assist NHH is by being advocates for Community Engagement. We must be informed to the best of our abilities and learn more about our Shared Challenge, Shared Solution budget balancing initiatives and to help the greater community to understand the challenges of today's health care and our local hospital.

Changes initiated at the LHIN level will create changes within the hospital and that will, in turn, create changes for both staff and volunteers. We must be prepared to accept these challenges and to make decisions that will allow our volunteers to give the best support to patient care in our hospital.

**Cobourg's Volunteer of the Year Award**

The volunteers and the staff of NHH applaud our Past President, Patricia Fenner, for her community services, especially with the Cobourg Public Library Board and the NHH Auxiliary, which has earned her the prestigious and much deserved award of Volunteer of the Year for the Town of Cobourg. She has been the driving force behind much of the Auxiliary's restructuring bringing our volunteer organization into present day policies and procedures. NHH Senior Management surprised Patricia with a presentation of a bouquet of flowers while she was preparing for, yet again, another meeting in the Auxiliary room. Congratulations, Patricia.



Helen Brenner, Elizabeth Vosburgh, Patricia Fenner, Jennifer Gillard, Robert Biron, Cheryl Turk

## Mary Catherine McGuire Ryan

*Written by Patricia Fenner*

In an organization as large as the Auxiliary, there is always a danger in choosing to single out one of our members either for recognition or remembrance. I'm going to take the chance that nobody will be offended by a few words about our Mary Ryan who died on January 25 at NHH, a short two months after receiving a diagnosis that was not promising.

I knew Mary for a relatively short time, but I knew things about her that others who knew her longer will recognize as 'true facts.' She was passionately committed to her family, far and wide; she thoroughly disliked George Bush; she believed in the nobility of the nursing profession in which she was a star; she was not only optimistic and forward-thinking, but committed to putting new ideas and processes in place. She was equally committed to all aspects of our Auxiliary mission and spared no effort in furthering that cause. She loved our Student Volunteers. She also loved silly hats and stuffed animals. She knew how to throw a good party.

The last thing Mary said to me was "I'm going to beat this." In a way she did. She went with dignity on her own terms and left us richer for having known her and poorer for her passing.



## Petticoat Lane

### *Lorrie Phipps*

The beginning of 2009 was cold and snowy, but nothing could stop the donators from bringing in their goods to Petticoat Lane. Eight new volunteers joined the team and two retired from the store with promises of returning if they became "bored". The introduction of two new round racks helped free up much needed floor space by taking the place of five straight racks. This enabled the storage room to become more functional.

Sales were up from last year. Petticoat Lane was very proud to fulfill its pledge of \$55,000.00 and exceeding it by another \$30,000.00. This was made possible by the numerous donations, customers, and above all, the approximately 2,100 hours worked by volunteers and the dedicated guidance of the team leaders. A job well done as always.

The Saints came marching in as St. Valentine's week and St. Patrick's week sales helped clear out the overabundant amount of winter clothing. Petticoat Lane is looking forward to a prosperous Spring.

The sudden passing away of Mary Ryan brought sadness to many people. Mary was responsible for igniting my passion for Petticoat Lane and I will always be thankful for having met her.

## Student Volunteers at NHH

### *Shirley O'Neil, Margaret Hilborn and Pat Page Hoisak*

Sadly, the Student Volunteer Programme lost its dedicated and very special Mentor, Mary Ryan, who passed away after a brief illness in January. Her memory and influence live on in the contributions made to the Hospital by the students she trained and supported. Mary had the foresight to recruit and train adult volunteers to help her with the programme. They have now taken responsibility for the Student Programme and, as a result of continuing applications and orientation sessions, are pleased to have a full team of young people working after school and on weekends in the Medical/Surgery, Complex Care/Rehabilitation wings and in the Emergency Department.

Currently, we have over two dozen students, drawn from six area High Schools, working at the hospital. All of them lead very busy lives with heavy school commitments, part time jobs, volunteer activities, and extra curricular sports, and yet, they find the time to help

out at our hospital. Their presence and cheerfulness are much appreciated by patients and staff.

Recently, three of our Student Volunteers who are also members of the NHH Youth Cares Committee were recognized for their efforts in raising money in support of the hospital. Distinguished Civic Awards in Community Service were presented to Sarah Arthur, Erin Fernhout, and Sheilagh Jones. Our congratulations go to all three volunteers! Sheilagh Jones, who is also involved with Habitat for Humanity, Canadian Blood Services, the NHH Foundation, The Northumberland Youth Advisory Committee, and Big Sisters Big Brothers, was also a recipient of the Cobourg Rotary Club's Outstanding Youth Award. We salute our Award winners and all of our valued Student Volunteers. Northumberland Hills Hospital and, indeed, the community at large, is justly proud of all of them.

We are presently working on expanding the assignment of our Student Volunteers to include working at the Gift Shop and at Petticoat Lane. We welcome suggestions from other departments where student involvement (after school and on weekends) could be considered.

## Auxiliary Gift on Display

The customary Education segment of the February Board meeting was made livelier by a unique 'show and tell.' Bev Adamson, NHH Director of Support Services brought along a shiny new piece of equipment -- one of the ReTherm carts that had recently arrived and was being test-flown in patient food delivery. Bev explained the advantages of the new equipment which are not only safer from a health and safety point of view but offer advantages in terms of heat and freshness of foods being delivered to patients.

Bev explained that the old equipment had past its 'best before' date and was not only falling into disrepair, but unserviceable because the original manufacturer had gone out of business. The Auxiliary Board's decision last fall to dedicate our fundraising efforts to the purchase of patient focused, high priority equipment was a perfect fit.

Delivery of food is safer for staff with this new equipment and once the 'getting used to' stage was over, it was a perfect fit for them as well.

The pictures on page 6 show Bev demonstrating the equipment, having put Mary Park's head in the oven for having arrived a bit late. The muffins were excellent! Mary is fine. The cheque is in the mail! *Photos Page 6*

## Little Treasure Shop

*Linda Sedgwick-Sharpe & Dale Hodge*

The Little Treasure Shop continues to amaze our customers with its lovely vignettes and display groupings. New stock is gradually coming in and watch for a jewelry and accessories sale in May. Nancy Mood has accepted to become part of the coordinating team, bringing a wealth of experience with computers and will be a great asset to our shop. Sales for the shop have been fabulous for the majority of the year, although somewhat depressed recently with the downturn in the economy. The shop is in good hands with a great management team in place and, hopefully, we can all work together to keep the shop vibrant and successful, letting people know how important this fundraising shop is to patient care in the hospital.

## Nominations Committee

*Patricia Fenner*

As Chair of this committee, I've been very pleased that so many of our office holders have chosen to do the 'extra mile' on their term and that others have undertaken the responsibility of recruiting their own successors. This has made the work of the committee very much easier. At the moment, I can list the following 'open' spots for your consideration.

*Human Resources:* The position of Director, Volunteers is vacant and there are at least two other spots in the Human Resources structure of our Auxiliary Board to be filled.

*Inquiry Desk:* Resignation of Jane McIvor received with regret – no immediate succession in place.

*Med Surg/Maternal Child Care:* Virginia Mitchell has been working diligently on finding a replacement, but with no success as we go to press.

*Cardiology:* Yvonne Green has also been striving to replace herself, but so far without takers. This is a very small, but very important service area.

Nominations have been received for the positions of Coordinator, Diagnostic Imaging; Coordinator, HELPP Lottery; Coordinator, Lab Office; Coordinator, Day Surgery and Recording Secretary.

## Crafters and Patient Special Events

*Dorothy Allen*

A lively group of talented ladies continues to gather on Tuesday mornings to create items for sale at monthly bazaars held at NHH. The Crafters' work and creativity

has resulted in a donation to the Auxiliary of \$6000 for the fiscal year 08/09.

In addition to works for sale, they create works on demand. Examples include the delicate cushions for breast cancer patients, the 'socks' (some seasonal) for 'boots' used in the Dialysis Unit, legions of teddy bears (6000+) distributed to children in Emergency and tea cozies for the Poinsettia Tea.

Patient Special events have continued. The most recent special events were the parties for Valentine's and St. Patrick's Days. Crafters' centerpieces contribute to the festivity of these events.

## Notice To Membership: Communications

Approaching the date of our May 12<sup>th</sup> AGM, we have several pieces of information that should be transmitted to the membership.

We'll deal with the easy one first.

### *Annual Reports*

Each Coordinator has been asked to produce an annual report on the service area to be compiled in a document that will be available to members in attendance at the AGM, in service areas in the hospital and, in the Auxiliary Office. The deadline for submitting these reports remains at April 11.

### *Slate of Officers for 2009/2010*

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a report on the activity of the Nomination Committee. This will indicate positions open and positions filled at the date of going to press. While this will appear prior to our April board meeting, the slate needs to be approved at that meeting and then the completed slate will be brought to the AGM for approval.

### *Constitution and Bylaws amendment*

As a result of our Strategic Planning deliberations and some housekeeping needs, there will be a few, relatively minor, amendments to the C&B. These too will be brought to the April 20 Board meeting for approval and passage to the AGM for vote. We would like to avoid a costly mailing to members of this information and would propose that after April 20<sup>th</sup>, these changes will be posted to the NHH website ([www.nhh.ca](http://www.nhh.ca)) and sent by e-mail to those members receiving information in that fashion. Print copies will be available in the service areas, at the Inquiry Desk and at the AGM.

## Auxiliary Gift on Display: ReTherm Cart



Bev Adamson, NHH Director of Support Services presents a new piece of equipment at the February Board Meeting

### A Message from Robert Biron

*President and CEO, Northumberland Hills Hospital*

Service. Volunteerism. Two values that resonate with our community and hospital in a profound way.

Northumberland Hills Hospital is blessed with a long history of community support through our active volunteers. You not only raise funds for hospital equipment, you raise the spirits of the staff and patients every day throughout the entire hospital. Your contribution is both valued and necessary, especially in times as uncertain as these.

Our hospital has faced many challenges over the years, and each time our internal stakeholders (staff, physicians and volunteers) have met those challenges while maintaining our core values and vision “to excel as a community hospital.” Today, our challenges are significant: an aging population with ever increasing demands on hospital services; reduced funding from the government; public expectations for improved access and quality services; an economic recession that may last years; and, a shortage of qualified and skilled health professionals.

To ensure we keep our hospital viable and strong for the future, and to ensure we maintain our core services “close to home,” NHH must change. And it must do so in an efficient and collaborative manner.

In December, I launched a collaborative budget strategy, referred to as Shared Challenge, Shared Solution, to address an operating deficit of \$2 million for the 2009/10 fiscal year. Left unchecked, a deficit this size will threaten this hospital’s future and, by extension, this community’s access to care. We have made good progress in identifying opportunities for efficiencies, but as we will share in our internal budget forums on March 30, and our media release later that day, we still have a lot of work to do. And once again we will be calling on the whole NHH family—staff, volunteers and patients—to work together to adapt to the new realities before us while keeping focus on our shared mission. As a committed volunteer organization now 600 strong, the NHH Auxiliary has an increasingly important role to play.

I hope that many of you were able to attend one of our budget forums on Monday, March 30 to hear first-hand about the Board’s decisions. I encourage you to pose your own questions and suggestions. In the days and months ahead, we will be bringing the story of our ongoing financial challenge to the community for more input and discussion. Change is certain in health care, but change isn’t a new concept for the NHH Auxiliary. As an organization with its roots in community engagement, I know that the NHH Auxiliary will play an important role in our own changes going forward, and NHH will be all the stronger for it.



## COMING EVENTS

April 23	Northumberland Hills Hospital <b>Volunteer Appreciation Event</b> • Watch for details
May 12	Northumberland Hills Hospital Auxiliary, <b>Annual General Meeting</b> at 12:00pm. <i>Location:</i> Columbus Community Centre, Corner Spencer & D'Arcy Streets, Cobourg <i>Speaker:</i> Robert Biron, President and CEO Northumberland Hills Hospital <i>Tickets:</i> On sale April 15 at the Little Treasure Shop & Petticoat Lane. <i>Cost:</i> \$15.00
June 8	<b><i>Calling All Northumberland County Ladies born in 1939!</i></b>  The year 1939 was a very significant one in the history of the world. A sad time for some parents who waved goodbye to their children, as they marched off to war. But, during that year, there were many households full of happiness with the arrival of a pink bundle of joy,  Those pink bundles will be celebrating their 70 <sup>th</sup> birthday in 2009. Auxiliary member Alma Draper and Bert MacMillan don't plan to let this anniversary slide by quietly! They would like to invite all ladies in Northumberland County who were born in 1939 to come on out and celebrate!  A SPECIAL lunch with entertainment is being planned, to be held Monday, June 8 <sup>th</sup> at the Cobourg Best Western. Do come and join the party. Call Alma (905) 372-5839 for more information or e-mail <a href="mailto:adraper8@cogeco.ca">adraper8@cogeco.ca</a> . Let us know by May 22nd so final arrangements can be made.
June 29	Watch for details of our third <b>Winetasting in the Park</b> on June 29, 2009 at the Lions' Tent in Victoria Park. Kick-start the holiday weekend by tasting interesting wines, sampling delicious foods, enjoying live music, taking chances on great prizes and supporting our fundraising commitment to NHH.



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS  
HOSPITAL  
AUXILIARY