

Wellspring

25

STILL GROWING STRONG



17

Conquering the
Roller Coaster



18

A Love Story,
Undaunted



26

Right Call at
the Right Time



Hospital Fulfilled Vacaville's Dreams



Twenty-eight years ago what was then Intercommunity Hospital in Fairfield was ready to proceed with an expansion. But we knew there was an abiding yearning in Vacaville for a hospital there. We knew there was an unfulfilled need, but the state of California was in an era of "comprehensive health planning," which simply meant the regulators were not approving new hospitals.

Then a new governor was elected. He made it clear he had a different view about health planning. He opened the door to approving new hospitals. That was all the Board of Directors and top management of Intercommunity Hospital needed to hear.

So Intercommunity Hospital halted its plans for its Fairfield expansion as our leadership sought permission to build a hospital in Vacaville. In short order, we acquired land in an unincorporated part of the county, got it annexed to Vacaville, received permission from local and state agencies, arranged financing and began construction. Within three years, the job was done.

For those like Vacaville mayor at the time, Bill Carroll, and then-city manager Walt Graham, it was a dream come true. Finally, Vacaville would have a full-service hospital complete with emergency services.

I was present when VacaValley Hospital was conceived. I saw the hard work that was necessary to make it a reality. There was the fund drive led by Mayor Bill, which provided the money needed to seed the project. We had great support from both local newspapers. As we developed our case for local and state approval, there were thousands of letters of support from Vacaville residents. Fairfield and Suisun City leaders endorsed the project, a reflection of the united front for a common goal. Those memories still burn brightly for me.

VacaValley Hospital was the catalyst for the healthcare system we now know as NorthBay Healthcare. Intercommunity Hospital became NorthBay Medical Center. Health care in Vacaville and Dixon was now more accessible.

Twenty-five years is a relatively young age for a hospital. We have new dreams for our VacaValley Hospital campus. The 600-plus employee work force will grow when we soon unveil plans for a major expansion of services.

Happy birthday, VacaValley Hospital. And thank you, Vacaville, for making it possible for NorthBay Healthcare to be a part of your community. ☘

Gary Passama
President and Chief Executive Officer



Contents | Fall '12

Celebrating VacaValley

- 2 Memories and Milestones
- 12 Party Planning Drew Support
- 12 Donations Got Ball Rolling
- 13 Campus Geared toward Growth
- 14 New Joints = New Life
- 15 Experts Good to the Bone

Also on Campus

- 16 Healing Under Pressure
- 16 When Wounds Need Help
- 17 Taming the Roller Coaster
- 18 Love Story Despite Alzheimer's
- 20 Comfort in Shared Culture
- 22 Surgery Center Efficient Option
- 22 By the Numbers

NorthBay News

- 23 Girls Go Hollywood!
- 23 Welcome New Physician
- 24 NorthBay a Best Place to Work
- 24 Flu Shot is Healthy Choice
- 25 High-tech in Surgery
- 25 Accredited for Interventions
- 26 Doctor Made the Right Call
- 28 Time for Open Enrollment
- 29 Community Calendar

Find Wellspring online at
<http://wellspring.northbay.org>

26 The Comeback Kid

Thanks to a visit with the right doctor at the right time, a Fairfield boy's life is saved.



14 Hip to Have New Hips

Joint Replacement Program patients are thrilled to get their mobility back after surgery and a short rehab in our hospital.



20 Cultural Bridge

Dr. Alfredo Ovalle, a native of Guatemala, is eager to connect with Solano County's Hispanic Community.

Wellspring is published quarterly by NorthBay Healthcare, Solano County's locally based nonprofit healthcare organization.

Editorial Staff

Steve Huddleston
shuddleston@northbay.org

Diane Barney
dbarney@northbay.org

Marilyn Ranson
mranson@northbay.org

Sally Wyatt
Debbie Hooks

Publication Designer

Page Design Group

Photographers

Henry Khoo, Gary Goldsmith,
Diane Barney

It All Started in 1987...



Was it really only 25 years ago that a prune orchard in rural Vacaville gave birth to NorthBay VacaValley Hospital? Yes, time flies, when you're saving lives and advancing medicine.

In this issue of *Wellspring*, you'll meet some of the movers and shakers who were here at the beginning—including some who are no longer with us—but who made monumental contributions to the community.

You'll hear some of the lore—no fiction, only fact—about the early days, the milestones and the memories.

Not only do we offer a celebrated joint replacement program, but NorthBay VacaValley Hospital installed the first helipad in town and a modern, 10,000-square-foot emergency room facility ready to help you in your time of need.



The NorthBay VacaValley Hospital Campus opened in 1987, where acres of fruit orchards once grew. Back then, the hospital was still surrounded by greenery, but today, homes, a fire station and a shopping center are its closest neighbors. The front of hospital once featured a covered walkway.

& Milestones & Memories

VacaValley's Vibrant Past Remains Fresh
in Minds of Staff, Physicians, Volunteers



With 25 years under its proverbial belt, NorthBay VacaValley Hospital has a rich and storied past. Oh, if only the walls and halls could talk. They can't, but employees, administrators, volunteers and physicians can and did.

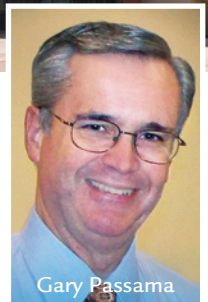
Here we share 25 recollections — some monumental, some just plain memorable — that comprise the pieces of the patchwork quilt that is VacaValley Hospital's history.

1 } When Climate Changed, VacaValley First in Line

The first memory actually predates the birth of the hospital. NorthBay Healthcare President and CEO Gary Passama recalls the political atmosphere in the 1980s wasn't friendly toward new hospitals. But when Gov. George Deukmejian was elected, an opportunity materialized.

"Deukmejian made it clear that he would be favorable to new projects. So in a two-month period, we put together a plan, gained local agency approval, and then made a mad dash to Sacramento. There were three of us from NorthBay, and we were joined by then-Vacaville City Manager Walt Graham.

"We didn't have an appointment, we just showed up unannounced on a director's doorstep in Sacramento one day and refused to budge until he saw us. His secretary kindly took our paperwork in for review. We waited two-and-a-half hours, but it was worth it, because his secretary popped out and said, 'He's approved it.'"



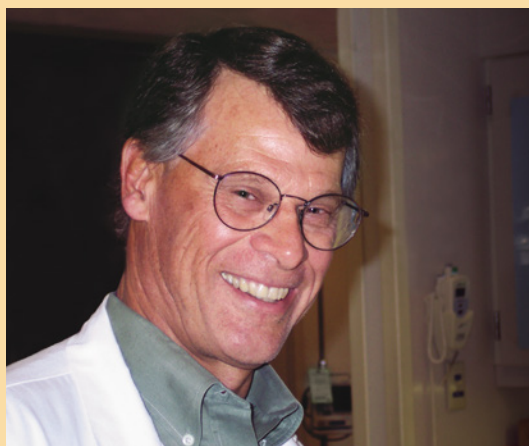
Gary Passama

2} Grand Opening Filled With Fun, Games, Races

The grand opening of the hospital stretched over three days and preceded the opening of the hospital, too. There were events for the public, senior citizens, board members, and new employees, including tours, gurney races, games for children, and speeches by local notables, including some who have since passed away: former Vacaville Mayor and Supervisor Bill Carroll, who was instrumental in getting the public campaign for the hospital up and running, and Manuel Campos, who was chairman of the NorthBay Healthcare Board of Directors at the time.



President and CEO Gary Passama gets a push on a gurney from then-administrator Allison Esparza during opening festivities.



3} Physician Gets to Create Emergency Department

Dr. Craig Dennis started his association with NorthBay Healthcare 30 years ago, and his first stint in Vacaville involved an urgent care center on Peabody Road, which was NorthBay Healthcare's way of dipping a toe into the Vacaville healthcare market. Both the trial balloon and Dr. Dennis were successful. He had a hand in creating the design of the Emergency Department and the privilege of working the first shift when VacaValley Hospital opened.

4} Tour Guide Needed a Little Guidance from the Surgeon

A memory of Patrick Garner, R.N., and administrative coordinator, also predates the opening of the facility, which occurred on July 1, 1987. Patrick was one of several nurses hired to staff the new facility. "One day we were meeting each other and learning about NorthBay standards and policies, the next day we were given the rundown on a facility we hardly knew. A week later, we were taking physicians, their friends and families on tours."

Patrick remembers taking a group that included surgeon Robert Takamoto and his family through the facility. When he reached the recovery room, he told the crowd, "And this is the room where you'll probably wake up after surgery."

"No," boomed Dr. Takamoto. "This is the room where you WILL wake up," he corrected the young nurse. "Be sure you're clear on that!"



5} A Time to Mourn; A Time for Compassion

A story of compassion out of the Emergency Department involved the death of a 2-year-old. It really hit home with Patti Bales, R.N., she says, because her own daughter was about the same age. “The little girl drowned, and despite our heroic efforts, there was just nothing we could do. The emergency room was really busy that day, every room was full and we had people in the waiting room, but I remember coming into the room, wrapping the little girl in a warm blanket and putting her in her mother’s arms. We just let her have her privacy. Her mother must have sat there for two hours rocking her and saying her goodbyes. I still get choked up thinking about it. Giving her the time and space was the right thing to do.”



6} Nurse Grateful to Staff that Saved her Life

Lynn McCurry, R.N., will never forget the day she almost died at work. It was July 2005, and the Emergency Department nurse wasn’t supposed to be on that day, but was asked to cover the shift of a co-worker. She was getting ready to discharge a patient when she collapsed at the bedside.

“If I had been at home when the heart attack happened, I’d be dead,” she says. Instead, her colleagues jumped to her aid, and the rest is history.

“I will always remember the professionalism of the team and especially of Dr. James Starr. I remember he leaned over the gurney and said to me, ‘You scared the heck out of me.’ It was so very human, and touching and comforting to me.”

She was back to work within two months and continues to work in the Emergency Department. She still has the uniform that was cut off of her that day. “Whenever I think I might be having a bad day,” she says, “I just look at it and give thanks for my incredible co-workers and my good fortune.”

7} VacaValley Ready to Blaze New Territory

Janice Marsh, R.N., and administrative coordinator, was there on Day 1 and remembers that the first surgery was a cholecystectomy, followed by a hemorrhoidectomy, both of which were planned. The third case was a surprise, because the family involved didn’t realize the hospital had opened and had driven to NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield. They were thrilled to transfer to Vacaville to be closer to home, remembers Janice.

“We were all so excited on that opening day,” she recalls. “Wearing our white uniforms, starched and pressed, we were ready to go! We didn’t know how many patients we would admit or how sick they would be but we were prepared and eager.”

“There were some minor inconveniences,” she remembers, “but they did not dampen our spirits. The chart holders and filing cabinets had not yet arrived. We utilized cardboard boxes under the nursing station to hold the charts and other documents. We didn’t seem to have any hot water, and there were no TVs installed yet in the rooms. The patients didn’t mind. They were happy and excited to be in a brand new, beautiful hospital.”

All private rooms were each equipped with a bathroom and shower, and there was carpet throughout, including the hallways, so there was a reduction in noise. Each room was decked out in cool mauve and pink colors, says Janice, “and we had a state-of-the-art call light system and presence lights in each room to ensure we always knew where the nurses were located.”



Janice Marsh, R.N., and administrative coordinator, has been with NorthBay VacaValley Hospital since Day 1.

8 } Remembering Days of Starched White Uniforms and Employee-Bonding Dinners

Dee Steggall, R.N., now director of NorthBay Health at Home, was hired in the summer of 1987, but didn't actually start on 1 West (the in-hospital moniker for the downstairs patient wing of the hospital) until the fall. She was immediately struck by the family atmosphere.

"Since there was no history, nobody was right, nobody was wrong; we just all came together as a team. We found our own way and we worked together as friends."

Those were the days before nurse staffing ratios, and she remembered that the patient population fluctuated wildly. Sometimes she'd have to call on extra nurses, other times she'd have to send folks home. And sometimes, she'd just have to deal with a surprisingly high number of patients. "It was not unusual for us to have 10 or 12 a night." Still, when possible, a considerable number of staff would gather each night in the cafeteria for dinner together. "No one ever sat alone," remembers Patrick Garner, R.N. We'd just shove another table into the mix and add another chair."

Respiratory Therapist Sunny Weist remembers that in those days, it wasn't uncommon to be a one-person department. "You had no partners



Dee Steggall, R.N., then and now.

on the job, but you had friends in every part of the hospital. Those dinners were great bonding opportunities." "Yes," agrees Dee. "It was like the bar, Cheers: Everybody knew your name."

Dee also remembers the white, starched uniforms that were mandatory on 1 West

when the hospital opened. "But we realized later, the Same Day Center and the Operating Room nurses all had colorful scrubs. Why not us?"

It wasn't a matter of just going out and buying them. A vote had to be taken, and even after that the only color that was allowed, more or less, was pink, because "the uniforms had to match the bedding." Today, of course, all sorts of colorful outfits are worn by nurses throughout the hospital.



Jeanne Velade, R.N., is able to plug in electronic data about her patient at bedside.

9 } Typewriters are Gone; It's All Electronic Now

A lot has changed since the old days, remembers Diane Irby, R.N., and director of Performance Improvement. "When I started, we didn't have computers. We used typewriters, and had to fill out forms in triplicate. Eventually we got a computer—I had the only computer on the wing, so everyone wanted to use it."

Even though the old-fashioned way was slow, some nurses had a hard time letting it go, hiding some of the paper forms in their lockers when NorthBay migrated to an electronic health record in 2008, remembers Ellen Tortorete, R.N., clinical care manager of the ICU/Step Down Unit. "They were sure it wouldn't work." But it did, eventually. Doctors, however, didn't make the changeover until 2010. "They let the nurses break in the system first," says Ellen.

10} Big Year for New Digs for ER, Pharmacy, Lab

In 2007, VacaValley Hospital celebrated its 20th anniversary with a trio of new accomplishments. First, in April, ribbons were cut to open a new laboratory and new pharmacy at the hospital, allowing both departments to more than double in size. They were built side-by-side on the second floor of the hospital, in vacant, shelled-in space just waiting to be used when the time was right. The pharmacy featured a state-of-the-art IV Clean room, which allows pharmacists to make IV solutions in an absolutely sterile environment. Pneumatic tubes connected to the Emergency Department for quick delivery of urgent medications. Video monitoring systems were installed to allow pharmacists to visually check IVs at a much faster rate, as well.

A few months later, the hospital christened a 10,000-square-foot Emergency Department, which featured 16 exam-treatment rooms and state-of-the-art equipment and furnishings and tripled the size of the previous space.

11} 'Brand-new' Facility Keeps Up with Technology

Diagnostic Imaging Supervisor Carmon Watson remembers that VacaValley Hospital felt like a full-service hotel when her department moved in. "We had a brand-new hospital, brand-new equipment, stylish colors, and were ready to serve. It was pretty slow at first, but that allowed the staff to get to know each other. We were able to treat patients as guests of our extended family."

On opening day, there was a CAT Scan Suite, but no CAT Scanner. That was purchased by the NorthBay Guild a few months later. In 25 years the "A" was taken out of CAT Scan and it is now called a CT Scanner.

"The 'A' stood for axial," explains Carmon, "and that doesn't accurately describe the highly technical CT Spiral design anymore. CT exams that used to take over an hour or more can be done in five minutes or less. We can do so many exams now that used to have to be done invasively in surgery and would require a hospital stay."

"In 25 years, we have upgraded all of our equipment every few years to enable us to provide the best care in the market. We no longer have film processors or chemicals, we are completely digital. No view boxes. No x-ray file rooms."



12} Joint Replacement Program Keeps Patients on the Move

Cynthia Giaquinto, R.N., (above) has been with NorthBay Healthcare in various capacities for 25 years, but only with VacaValley Hospital's Joint Replacement Program as clinical manager since it opened in 2007. The program's first full year was in 2008, when 97 patients were served. In 2011, that number increased to 130 patients a year, and the 2012 schedule should see 150 served.

"We no longer do elective joint replacement at NorthBay Medical Center," explains Cynthia. "Instead, we have focused on building the best patient experience at VacaValley Hospital. That program includes having patients walk to 'Lake Tahoe' or 'Yosemite'—posters in the hallways as part of their therapy. It also includes a "graduation" dinner with family and friends and staff, a real celebration."

"We have had no deep vein thrombosis or pneumonia since the start of the program," says Cynthia proudly. "Our patient satisfaction is very high with many patients returning for second and third joint replacements and referring many family members."



Carmon Watson,
Diagnostic Imaging
Supervisor



Gretta Iglesias (left) and Mary Beth Wilkins share one of their scrapbooks from their years in the VacaValley Intensive Care unit.

13} The Day the ICU Hosted a Wedding

ICU Nurse Mary Beth Wilkins has hundreds of special memories from her years at VacaValley, and she has a scrapbook to prove it, filled with thank you cards from patients and their families, photos of staff wedding and baby showers, postcards from doctors on vacation, and even newspaper clippings. She points to one letter to the editor that ran in *The Reporter* thanking VacaValley staff for allowing a special occasion to occur in the ICU in May 1995.

"The patient was supposed to be the best man in his brother's wedding," recalls Mary Beth, "but he had fallen ill. The family decided to bring the wedding to him, bride, groom, minister and all. Staff had the chance to be unofficial witnesses."

14} Inmates Appreciated Pleasant Environment



One thing that took a little getting used to was the presence of inmates from California Medical Facility on the wing, says Dee Steggall, R.N. The facility was built with four special rooms on the west end, complete with reinforced windows and special cameras and monitors. Inmate patients required one guard when they were in these rooms, but two if they were in regular rooms. "I remember once having as many as 16 guards down the hall and it did get a little noisy. We never had a problem with the inmates, though," says Dee. "They were actually quite happy to be in a pleasant environment where they were treated well and got good meals."

15} A Lot Changed Since Unique Patient's Surgery Began

NorthBay Hospital Group President Deborah Sugiyama remembers the story of an inmate who was accompanied to VacaValley Hospital by two correctional officers for a surgical procedure. During the surgery, she explains, he was suddenly released from his sentence. "If it was expected, they didn't tell us. The guards didn't even wait for him to come out of surgery, they just left." She remembers staff expressing their concern: "Gee, he was such a bad guy when he came in here that he needed two guards, but now he isn't?"

16} No Surprise that a Walk-Away Wasn't Hard to Spot



Security Supervisor Bryan Berggren has worked at NorthBay Healthcare since June 1995, and only remembers one instance of trouble involving a state prisoner/patient in Vacaville. An out-of-area correctional team had a prisoner in one of the reinforced VacaValley rooms but apparently the officer at the monitor wasn't as attentive as he should have been, and the inmate-patient walked away. "Fortunately, he was arrested shortly after that in Vacaville," recalls Bryan.

It undoubtedly is hard to blend in when you're wearing a hospital gown.

17} Patients Much Sicker In the ICU of Today

Ellen Tortorete, R.N., and clinical manager for NorthBay's ICU/Step Down units, has come a long way since her days as a candy stripper. She was recruited to VacaValley Hospital 25 years ago, and hasn't looked back. What she loves about NorthBay, she says, is the chance to always improve her skills and experience.

"They really encourage you to grow and try different things," she says. So after getting her start on 1 West, she moved into the ICU at VacaValley where she stayed for 15 years. Now, as clinical manager, she is responsible for units at both hospitals.

She says that on the whole, patients seem sicker these days. In the old days, someone could check themselves in for back spasms. Now, because of the cost of health insurance, people are waiting until they're critically ill to come to the hospital.



Ellen Tortorete, R.N.



18} Adult Day Center Inspired Volunteer

Bob Panzer has donated more than 1,000 volunteer hours to NorthBay Guild, spending much of his time these days at the desk of the Alzheimer's Resource Center, just past the lobby in VacaValley Hospital.

Bob's mother suffered from Alzheimer's in the final years of her life, he said, and was a client of the NorthBay Adult Day Center, which is also on the VacaValley Hospital campus. "It was a huge help for us," recalls Bob. After she passed, he wanted to give back. The resource center was established 1996 to help the families of those with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia find much-needed resources and reference materials on diseases.

Bob also facilitates the monthly caregiver support group, which he began attending in 1999. The Alzheimer's Resource Center is open Tuesday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information, call 624-7971 or 624-7970.

19}



First Baby Born Here Must Remain a Mystery

Vacaville didn't have—and still doesn't have—labor and delivery rooms. There's a whole floor at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield dedicated to the mother-baby experience. But sometimes babies and their moms just aren't that picky. Patrick Garner, R.N., remembers when the first baby was born in the emergency room, he was quick to ask the mom for a photo consent.

He snapped the photo before she and her healthy baby son were whisked away for recovery at NorthBay Medical Center. But hours later, she had second thoughts and rescinded permission, which is why we're not naming names or showing a photo of VacaValley's first baby.

20} The Fix-it Team Is Always on Call

Engineering Mechanics Tony Molina and Larry Stinnett are proud to be a part of the “Fix-it” Team. “A lot of people think about the hospital as this safe, sanitary place where everything is sterile, and it is, but keeping it that way is our job,” explains Tony.

“If anything goes wrong—a toilet backs up, burned popcorn triggers the smoke detector, the air conditioning or heater isn’t working—we rush in. We’re on call 24/7. Sometimes it’s as simple as a phone call, other times we have to drop everything and go to work until the crisis is over.”

Tony remembers one particularly challenging day—the rain just kept pounding and the streets in Vacaville were flooding. “We had to put on rain gear and wade out there and unclog the storm drains,” he recalls. And then came hours filling and strategically placing sandbags. “It was exhausting, but we got it done,” he says.

A lot of the engineers’ time is spent on the “pent-house” floor, the third floor that most patients and employees never see, says Larry. It’s where access to all the various heat and air systems reside. The team



Tony Molina and Larry Stinnett

has a special key to be able to take the elevator to the third floor, and to call for an elevator when they come down.

Every once in a while, an unsuspecting nurse and patient are summoned up to the third floor. “Sometimes, when those doors open, they just aren’t prepared to see two big guys holding tools,” smiles Larry. “I remember one nurse who just wouldn’t stop screaming.”

“Fortunately, most folks have a good sense of humor,” adds Tony. “I know one time the doors opened and we were standing there holding big tools and I said, ‘We’re ready for your surgery.’ Thank goodness the patient laughed.”

Don Dickson, a cook with Nutrition Services, is always happiest when he’s delivering meals to patients.

21} Every Interaction a Chance To Leave the Patient Smiling

Don Dickson, a cook with Nutrition Services, is happiest when he’s made a patient’s day. That’s why some of his favorite memories involve special anniversaries. There have been a number of times when staff has discovered a patient is about to celebrate a big anniversary.

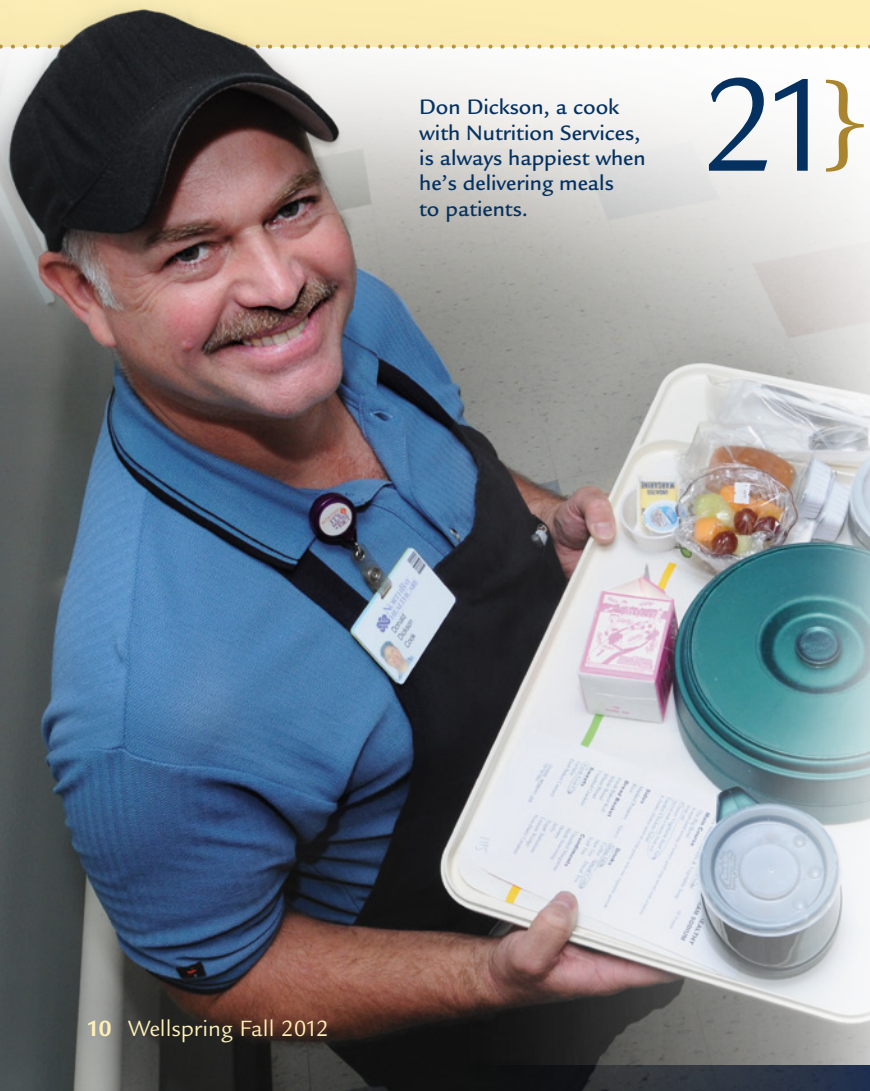
“We try to help them have a good experience. No one wants to be in the hospital, but there’s no reason they can’t have a special memory,” he says.

It begins with an anniversary card. “We try to create a restaurant experience. We have flowers, candles and a really nice dinner for them and a loved one,” says Don.

But Don goes beyond anniversaries and works to make every day special. “I always try to go into their room smiling. I don’t just drop off the tray, I take the plastic lids off their cups, take out their silverware and talk to them and make sure they have everything they need.”

He’s always surprised when he runs into someone in the community and they remember him from their hospital stay.

“You’re the one who was always smiling,” they tell him. “And that makes me smile.”



22} Advent of Hospitalists Signaled End of Era

In the early days, local physicians were responsible for just about everything at the hospital. Even after they'd spent a full day with their own patients, and making rounds at the hospital, they would be on call for emergencies. It was exhausting for them, and difficult for staff because they'd have to track down a doctor whenever help was needed. That all changed in 2001, when NorthBay introduced hospitalists at both VacaValley and NorthBay Medical Center. Hospitalists are physicians who specialize in working only in hospitals.

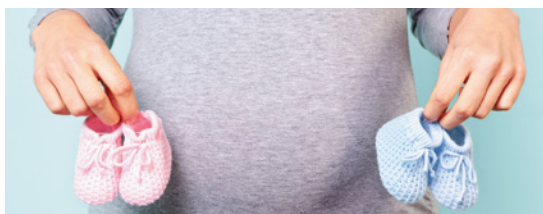
NorthBay Healthcare Group President Deborah Sugiyama remembers it was a welcome change for everyone. "The doctors were relieved, the staff always had a go-to physician, and the patients were covered 24/7." In 2008, the use of intensivists was introduced, which put physicians specifically trained in critical care medicine on the 24/7 schedule for NorthBay's ICU.

24} Respecting a Patient's Culture, Even in Death



Despite the efforts of the Emergency Department team, a Native American patient passed away, remembers former ER nurse Patti Bales, who now works at the NorthBay Wound Center. "His tribe wanted permission to come on to the campus and perform a special ritual, so that his spirit could be at peace," she says. "What impressed me is that our hospital officials made it work so his culture could be respected."

25}



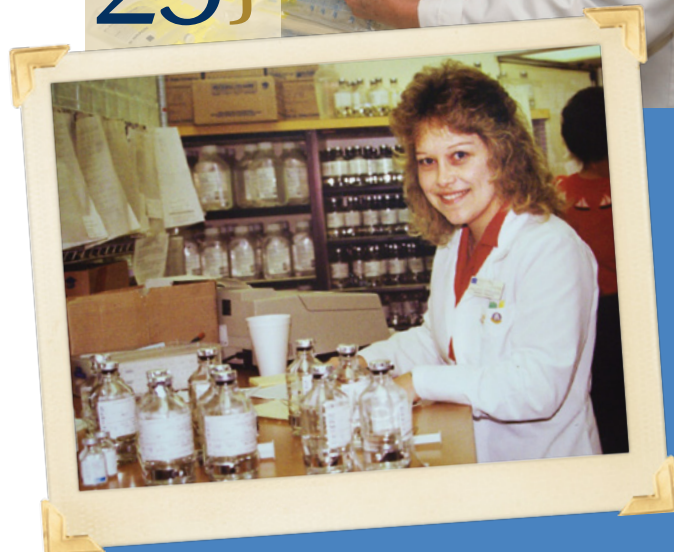
Pain Turned Into a Bundle of Joy

In more than 30 years as a physician at NorthBay Healthcare (and 25 at VacaValley Hospital) Emergency Department Physician Craig Dennis, M.D., thought he had seen it all.

That was, until last year, when a 22-year-old woman came in to the VacaValley Emergency Department with abdominal pain. She couldn't be pregnant, she insisted, because she was on birth control pills. On exam, it was readily evident a baby was on the way. "Well, we quickly transferred her to NorthBay Medical Center where she delivered a 6-pound healthy boy about 45 minutes later." ❧



Carol Damman enjoys the improvements new technology has brought to her department. She well remembers the old days (below) when breakable glass bottles were used.



Time Brings Many Changes for Pharmacy

When Carol Damman, pharmacy technician/support specialist and lead, started working for the VacaValley pharmacy in 1990, there was only one computer that printed IV labels, and all patient orders were hand-written. Everything was located in a cramped space that was only about 800 square feet.

"The pharmacy retrieved the orders from the nursing station every hour, and had to transcribe them by hand onto patient profile cards," she recalls. All IV solutions were in glass bottles, which made it harder to store and deliver. "If you dropped one, it shattered glass everywhere. And after hours, meds were stored in little baggies on each nursing station." When the nurses used them, they would stamp the patient name on the baggie and pharmacy would gather them each morning and manually charge the patient and replace them to the nursing units.

"I'm so thankful that our computer systems and automated dispensing machines of today help with our patient safety goals," says Carol.

Donation Campaign Got the Financial Ball Rolling

Party Planning Drew Community Support

VacaValley Hospital was built with a lot of community support, and its opening ceremonies were planned with community support, as well.

A 20-member council was established to help plan the opening ceremonies and to assure various local groups were involved in the grand opening festivities.

The VacaValley Advisory Council included such Vacaville residents as David Fleming, Danny Gomes, Kathleen Heffernan, Don Huffman, Jill Hunter, Lynn Kessler, Gerald Mahaffey, Frank McKevitt, Tom McNunn, Martha Orr, Randy Osborn, Jim Redman, Nathaniel Richman, Louise Rossacci, Cathy Schell, Helen Stephenson, John Thompson and Virginia Kloppenberg.



Guild volunteers and community members participated in opening celebrations for the hospital.

VacaValley Hospital would not exist without the 3,500 businesses, volunteer groups, medical center employees and individuals, who helped raise more than \$1.2 million to help get the facility built.

Back in 1984, a contingent of local business people and citizens gathered to form “Vacaville Partners in Progress,” a fund-raising campaign committee. The committee was led by then-Mayor Bill Carroll, who was also a member of NorthBay’s board of directors, as well as Tom McNunn, who was chief executive officer of the Vacaville Chamber of Commerce.

Other committee members agreed to tackle the fund-raising job by focusing on various sectors of the community, according to a story published in *The Reporter* in 1987. Then-Vacaville Fire Chief Bob Powell tackled the local government and education sectors; then-Councilman Mike Conner agreed to cover business and commerce; and business woman JoAnn Neal was in charge of the professional sector. Business owner Angelo Vierra contacted public service organizations, while Gregg Werner, city planning director, and Chamber of Commerce supporter Jack Jenkins sought out community groups.

Much of the financing to build the Vacaville facility and expand NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield came from tax-exempt municipal bonds sold through a joint-powers agreement between Vacaville and Fairfield, *The Reporter* story noted.

Contributors were many and from all sectors of Vacaville. Businesses gave from \$100 to \$100,000. Other firms showed their support by donating much-needed services or equipment. NorthBay Medical Center employees raised \$76,000 for the




Fairfield City Manager B. Gale Wilson (left to right) then-administrator Allison Esparza and then-Vacaville Mayor Bill Carroll on hand for opening day festivities.

Back in 1984, a contingent of local business people and citizens gathered to form “Vacaville Partners in Progress,” a fund-raising campaign committee.

campaign, and the NorthBay Guild pledged \$400,000.

“A hospital in Vacaville has been greatly needed by the community for a long time,” noted John Bowman of Bowman Stationers Inc., and a Partners in Progress donor in *The Reporter* story. “We were very happy to support the project any way we could.”

“The town is maturing into a solid community, not just a small town,” added Eldon Ray, retired businessman and hospital supporter. 

VacaValley Campus Geared Toward a Future of Growth




Plans in the Works for Fitness Center

What will the NorthBay VacaValley Hospital campus look like in 2020? That's what the NorthBay executive staff and boards of directors are deciding this fall and an announcement is expected soon. One thing is for sure, the undeveloped ground of the campus will be transformed with facilities to meet the needs of Solano residents.

NorthBay leaders are considering a plan to construct an 82,000-square-foot medical fitness center, an anchor for what NorthBay Healthcare President/CEO Gary Passama calls a "Health Village." The center could include an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a therapy pool, rehabilitation services and cardiac rehabilitation.

"A medical fitness center is very different from the typical 24-hour gym or health club," Passama explained. "It serves a different population and will have a medical director and a trained medical fitness staff that offers guidance to patients. Many of those who use the center have a physician's prescription to be there (cardiac rehab, orthopaedic physical therapy, etc.)."

And, tentative plans call for the NorthBay Cancer Center to move from the Gateway Medical Building in Fairfield to the VacaValley Hospital campus.

More details will be available later this fall when these plans are sent to the boards for approval. When complete, VacaValley Hospital will be known for orthopedics and cancer care. 

The center could include an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a therapy pool, rehabilitation services and cardiac rehabilitation.

Five Years, 500+ Patients New Joints Mean a New Life

James Kuiper, 67, dreamed of dancing with his wife again. Lee Mitchell, 76, just hoped for pain-free days. For both men, hip replacement surgery made their hopes and dreams become a reality.

As an art history professor at Chico State University, James spends a lot of time on his feet. It's what artists do, he says. "I would stand at least 25 to 30 hours a week when teaching, even more when not." But a painfully degenerated hip joint made standing

difficult. It also prevented him from fishing with friends and dancing with his wife, all favorite pastimes.

Lee, of Woodland, says his debilitating hip pain was the result of old age and wear and tear. "The pain was just nibbling away at me, and I was taking more pain killers than I really wanted to take." The pain was also preventing him from participating in favorite activities, such as bike riding and donating his time serving as Santa Claus at schools and holiday parties.

Both men had friends who recommended the Joint Replacement Program at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital, after experiencing successful surgeries with one of the Joint Replacement Program surgeons.

NorthBay's Joint Replacement Program (JRP) is now in its fifth year at VacaValley Hospital. The program has helped improve the lives of more than 500 patients during that time, by offering hip and knee replacement surgeries with a two- to three-day hospital stay, according to Cynthia Giaquinto, clinical manager. "Prior to

opening the JRP, average length of stay was six or more days," she explains, and the shortened hospital stay and large number of

success stories can

be attributed to the program's innovative team-healing approach.

Before having surgery, patients attend a class, tour the facility and meet other people who will have replacement procedures on the same day. Post surgery, the focus is on getting them up and walking, with friends or family members — as well as other JRP patients — serving as "coaches."

James Kuiper (left) and Lee Mitchell take a stroll with Joint Replacement Program clinical manager Cynthia Giaquinto.





"I was well prepared for the surgery by the staff," James notes. "They meet with you before intake, it's not frantic or frenetic, and they help you understand what goes on and emphasize that you will get better."

Both James and Lee had their hip surgeries on a Monday in December 2011, and developed a good fellowship during their recuperation. "I had my right hip done and I called James the left hip guy," Lee says. "I was up and walking on Tuesday. The fact that other people are right beside you and going through the same thing helps you out psychologically."

"Because we're in small groups, we developed a camaraderie," says James. "My recuperation was exactly as described. I was in physical therapy for two weeks, and in short order I was walking and back to working." Having a hip replaced wasn't a bad experience, he emphasizes. "In fact, I had a good time. The nurses were fantastic, Lee was upbeat and positive. I told people I got my new hip at the spa!"

"The JRP has grown each year and improved the lifestyle of many patients," Cynthia says. "I often have patients call or come see us with great stories about how much better their life is, due to joint replacement. Our patients have returned to activities that they were unable to do because of pain, such as horseback riding, golfing, playing basketball, traveling, coaching soccer, swimming, hiking and dancing."

"How did people get along without hip replacements?" Lee marvels. "They must have suffered, limped around and died in pain. If I could have had this at age 50, I would have." ❧

Good Experts at Home on Vacaville Campus to the Bone

Make no bones about it, the bulk of NorthBay Healthcare's ever-growing orthopaedic program is firmly rooted on the NorthBay VacaValley Hospital campus. Whether you're looking for the highly acclaimed Joint Replacement Program (based at VacaValley Hospital) or an expert in sports medicine, spinal surgery or hand surgery, (just a few steps away in the adjacent health plaza), it's all in Vacaville.

And for good reason, says Jane Prather, service line development director for orthopaedics. "We want to centralize our services in a facility where the program can grow, and best serve the patients."

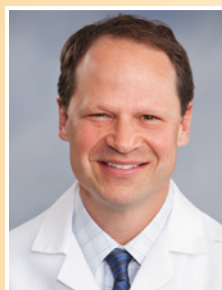
Looking for help in sports medicine? NorthBay's team of physicians offers sophisticated surgeries that patients in the past had to go outside the county to academic centers to receive. What's more, NorthBay's physicians do their own surgeries, without relying on medical residents or students.

Dr. Stephen Franzino has helped athletes — both weekend warriors and professionals — get their moves back. As an orthopaedist for the San Jose Sharks and the San Jose Saber-cats, he's seen about every possible sports injury and has performed thousands of arthroscopic shoulder and knee procedures.

Sharing the office on the ground floor of the VacaValley Health Plaza is surgeon Charles Sonu, M.D., who specializes in spine surgery and serves people of all ages as well as many professional and competitive amateur athletes.

Struggling with a hand problem? The same office includes Dr. Daniel Birkbeck, who completed a fellowship in hand and musculoskeletal microsurgery reconstruction at the State University of New York in Buffalo and a fellowship in upper extremity trauma at University Hospital in Bern, Switzerland.

Also in the VacaValley Health Plaza is surgeon is Andrew Brooks, M.D., who serves as medical director for the Joint Replacement Program. He specializes in major joint replacement of hips and knees.



Dr. Daniel Birkbeck



Dr. Andrew Brooks



Dr. Stephen Franzino

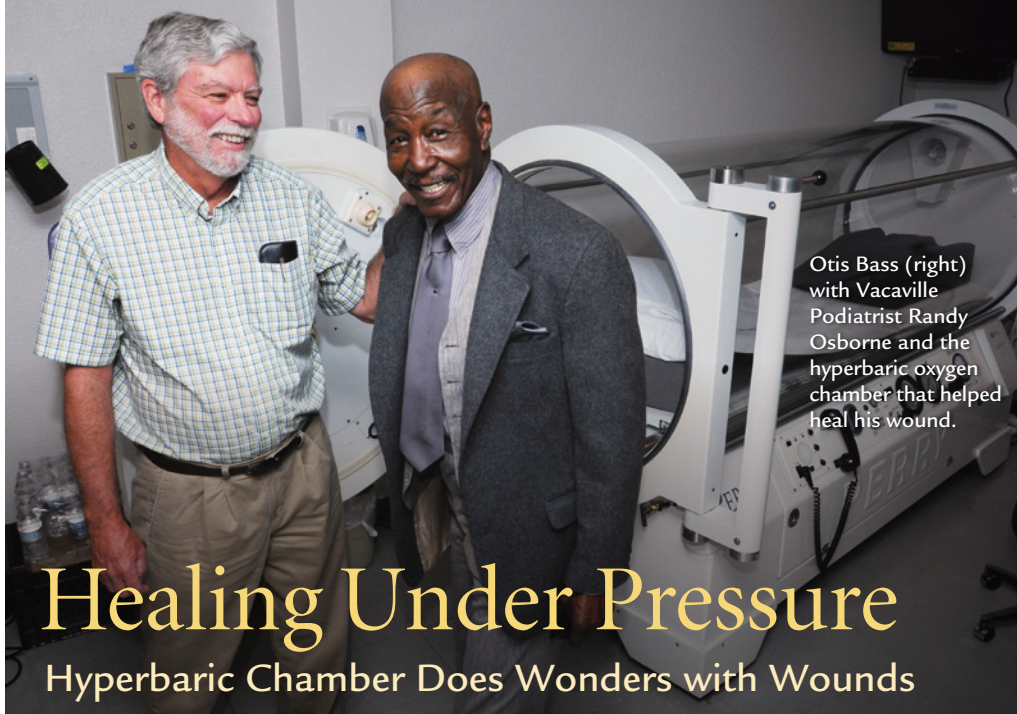


Dr. Charles Sonu

ALSO on CAMPUS

As Vacaville has grown, so has the VacaValley Hospital campus. The NorthBay Center for Endocrinology & Diabetes makes its home on the Vacaville campus, as does the NorthBay Center for Wound Care. And we now have a new Center for Primary Care office, as well as sports medicine specialists and orthopaedic surgeons who can deal with everything from torn ligaments to twisted spines.

The campus is also home to the NorthBay Adult Day Center, the only local facility that offers full day care to people with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia so their caregivers have some respite time. A gleaming surgery center, jointly owned by NorthBay and a number of local surgeons, is the place for the latest minimally invasive technology.



Otis Bass (right) with Vacaville Podiatrist Randy Osborne and the hyperbaric oxygen chamber that helped heal his wound.

Healing Under Pressure

Hyperbaric Chamber Does Wonders with Wounds

Otis Bass, 79, of Vacaville, knows all about the disabling complications of diabetes. In 2005, his right leg was amputated, and in 2009, he lost two toes from his left foot. To heal the wound after his toes were removed, Otis was referred to the NorthBay Center for Wound Care to undergo Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT).

"I remembered (the late) Michael Jackson turned to HBOT to heal a wound," Otis says. "So I was interested in seeing how it could help me."

Breathing 100 percent oxygen under pressure increases the oxygen concentration in all body tissues, even areas with reduced or blocked blood flow, which is often a complication of diabetes. HBOT stimulates the growth of new blood vessels to

locations with reduced circulation, and can actually prevent amputations. For Otis, the therapy healed his wound and has helped him avoid further loss of limb.

Otis underwent three months of daily, two-hour treatments in a hyperbaric chamber—a glass cylinder designed to hold a single patient and administer oxygen under pressure.

"You can just relax and watch TV during the treatment," Otis says. "They really took good care of me. The doctor and staff were marvelous."

While HBOT is considered the best evidence-based practice to treat diabetic wounds, the treatment also helps with other chronic, difficult-to-heal wounds. ❧

When a Wound Needs Extra Help to Heal

The NorthBay Center for Wound Care opened on the VacaValley Hospital campus in 2003. The outpatient center specializes in the treatment of chronic and non-healing wounds, using the latest techniques medical science has to offer. The team of medical professionals is able to heal more than 95 percent of the wounds they treat within 14 weeks with careful use of hyperbaric oxygen

therapy, wound-cleaning techniques, medicines, dressings, minor procedures and other support services.

The center offers the only civilian hyperbaric oxygen chambers in Solano County.

In 2010, the center expanded to include an outpatient infusion center that allows patients to receive their IV medications without a hospital visit.

Services include PICC insertion and PICC/Central Line dressing changes, IV hydration, IV antibiotics, and IV osteoporosis medications. They also perform blood transfusions and iron-replacement therapy.

The center is located in Suite 100 of VacaValley Health Plaza. For further information, please call program manager Karen Harris at (707) 624-7979.

Diabetic Tames His Roller Coaster

For Mark Reardon, 53, every bite he takes—and every meal he skips—is critical. Diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was in his late 20s, the Vacaville resident admits that he spent years in denial. “It was quite a shock,” he recalls. “It literally took me years to accept and I refused to take it seriously.” As a result, he suffered with lethargy, light-headedness, thirst and physical exhaustion—all symptoms of wildly fluctuating blood sugar levels.

“It was a real roller coaster,” he concedes. On a normal day, the general contractor would have to test his blood sugar four or five times, and more if he was doing a lot of physical labor or if he missed a meal.

“My day was structured around what I was eating and I felt like I had lost control of my life. If my blood sugar went too low, I’d be physically exhausted and it might take me a day to recover. If my blood sugar was too high, I’d think, ‘I’m killing myself.’”

As Mark got older, he wanted off the roller coaster, which brought him to the NorthBay Center for Endocrinology & Diabetes seven years ago, where he met Deborah Murray, M.D., and her team who have helped him change his life.

Diabetes is brought on by either an inability to make insulin (Type 1) or an inability to respond to the effects of insulin (Type 2), explains Dr. Murray, endocrinologist and medical director of the NorthBay Center for Endocrinology & Diabetes.

Insulin is one of the main hormones that regulates blood sugar levels and allows the body to use sugar (glucose) for energy, she explains. While most Type 2 diabetics can control their disease with just diet and exercise,

Type 1 diabetics—because their pancreas no longer makes insulin—must monitor their blood sugar levels throughout the day, and administer insulin to keep those levels normal.

“Type 1 diabetics like Mark must watch their blood sugar levels moment by moment, testing as often as six to 12 times daily, and giving themselves four or more insulin injections daily,” Dr. Murray says. “You never get to forget about it.”

Fortunately, Mark was an excellent candidate for an insulin pump, which delivers a continuous infusion of insulin through a tube that is inserted just under the skin.

“It’s the size of a pager,” Dr. Murray explains. “It’s a state-of-the-art device that delivers insulin in amounts determined by Mark’s blood glucose reading. He has a continuous glucose monitor that ‘talks’ to the pump electronically. This helps Mark and his medical team determine how to program the pump to deliver just the right level of insulin. He can basically eat like a person without diabetes.”

The NorthBay Center for Endocrinology & Diabetes

The NorthBay Center for Endocrinology & Diabetes opened on the VacaValley Hospital campus in 2004. The practice is led by Dr. Deborah Murray, a physician board-certified in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism, with more than 20 years of experience in diabetes management. The center’s team also includes Collette DaCruz, R.N., patient education coordinator and insulin pump trainer, as well as diabetes specialty nurse practitioners and dietitians. The center’s diabetes education program is accredited by both the American Diabetes Association and the American Association of Diabetic Educators. For further information, call the center at (707) 624-7999.

But, Mark can also override the pump settings by manually re-adjusting the insulin levels, based on exercise or size of a meal.

“The pump can’t predict the future, so Mark has to stay in control,” says Dr. Murray.

“It is so empowering,” Mark says of his insulin pump. “I don’t feel as if I’m a victim of the disease anymore.” ❧

.....
Dr. Deborah Murray
and Mark Reardon





Alzheimer's Resource Center

The Alzheimer's Resource Center opened at VacaValley Hospital in 1996. Staffed by NorthBay Guild volunteers, the center helps the families of those with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia find much-needed resources and reference materials.

All services are free at the resource center, which is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To reach the center, call (707) 624-7971.

Eugene and Laura Lyons
with NorthBay Adult Day
Center program manager
Sandy Perez.

A Love Story...

...Still Strong Despite Alzheimer's Disease

The love story of Eugene Lyons, 88, and his wife, Laura, 83, of Vacaville, continues even as they face a life changed forever by Alzheimer's disease. Today they are among the families who rely on the respite care provided by the NorthBay Adult Day Center on the VacaValley campus.

Married for 55 years, it was love at first sight. "When I met my wife I knew she was the one for me. She was beautiful, inside and out," Eugene says. "I told her I was 'already married to the Air Force' and she gave me her full support. We were married eight months later."

The couple moved to Vacaville in 1967 and raised three children. Laura was active managing a nursery school and teaching Sunday School at their church.

Four or five years ago Eugene noticed that something was not quite right with Laura. His warm and gentle wife was slowly changing before his eyes.

"I was seeing an entirely new person," Eugene remembers. When Laura became confused by ordinary tasks, Eugene took her to the doctor. Her diagnosis was Alzheimer's disease and it was progressing rapidly. Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible degeneration of the brain that causes disruptions in memory, cognition and personality.

A friend suggested Eugene contact the Adult Day Center and he found a safe haven that helps him keep his beloved wife at home. Laura now spends three days a week at the center.

For Eugene, his wife's only caregiver, the respite time has saved his life. "Every day is a tug of war and I

have no time to rest at night," Eugene says. "I do everything I can for her, from a daily bath and moisturizing her skin to caring for her clothes and cooking healthy meals. I watch her as you would watch a 5-year-old child."

With Laura safely at the Adult Day Center, Eugene has time to unwind and take care of the ordinary details of life. "I feel so much more comfortable with Laura here," he says at the center. "This is a genuinely loving and caring place. You can call the staff 'aides,' but they are all angels to me. They do a fine job of looking after her."

Eugene has also found comfort at the Caregivers Support Group, which meets monthly at the center.

"We understand each other because we share the same problems," he says of the group. "We help each other cope with the stresses of dealing with this disease."

Roughly 5.4 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer's disease, according to the Alzheimer's Association. Every 68 seconds, someone in the United States is diagnosed with the disease. Family members caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease often experience high levels of emotional stress and depression. Support groups offer one way for families to learn ways to cope with their role as caregiver.

Although life is forever changed for the Lyons family, Eugene feels blessed to have his wife at home. "Our greatest joy at this stage in our lives is that we still have each other," Eugene says. "Things are not what they used to be, but you've got to enjoy what you have and make it work."

NorthBay Adult Day Center

Families caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia have been able to turn to the NorthBay Adult Day Center for respite care since the service opened on the VacaValley campus in 2003. The center offers a safe, structured setting where people with these diseases can enjoy group activities, which emphasize their remaining faculties.

It is the only facility in Vacaville that helps families keep their loved ones living at home, according to Sandy Perez, program manager.

Open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, the Center offers full-day, half-day and extended day visits. Financial help, in the form of a sliding scale for services and scholarships, is available.

The program includes exercise, music, arts and crafts, baking, gardening, hot meals and individual attention. The center's goal is to support each person in maintaining his or her highest degree of independence and functioning for as long as possible.

For further information, call the center at (707) 624-7970.

A World War II veteran and part of the Greatest Generation, believing in honor, valor, God and country, Eugene has one answer when people ask why he does this: "She's my wife. She would do the same for me." ❧

Finding Comfort



Dr. Alfredo Ovalle's Guatemalan roots help him to connect with patients in the Hispanic community.

One of the newest additions to the NorthBay VacaValley Hospital campus is the Center for Primary Care, a NorthBay Affiliate, which is on the second floor of the VacaValley Health Plaza. Since it opened in 2011, four doctors have set up practices, including one who specializes in pediatrics, one in internal medicine, and one in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine.

in Shared Culture

Starting a new life in a new country would be a big challenge at any age, but when you're in your 70s, finding the right doctor is key. That's why Evilio and Marina Osorio consider themselves very fortunate to be in the care of Dr. Alfredo Ovalle, who not only speaks their native language, but actually hails from their native land: Guatemala.

"That was so huge for them," explains their daughter, Maribel, of Green Valley. "They definitely feel at home, and instantly felt respect and trust with Dr. Ovalle. He's open and listens to their needs and concerns."

Dr. Ovalle, who is board-certified in family practice, just opened his practice at the Center for Primary Care in the VacaValley Health Plaza in 2011. He earned his medical degree from the University of La Salle, School of Medicine in Mexico City, and did a three-year residence at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Chicago. He says he hopes he can fill a need within the Hispanic community in Solano County.

"If you have a health concern, the last thing you want to do is struggle with the language," says Dr. Ovalle. "For my patients, to be able to communicate in their native language means they can concentrate on the message, and not on a translation. It puts them at ease and helps them focus on the matters at hand—their health."

Dr. Ovalle enjoys the opportunity to treat the whole family, not just individual patients. "As a family practitioner, I care for entire families, from babies to grandparents," he says. The goal, he explains, is to use education as the cornerstone for maintaining good health for all his patients.

Evilio, 78, was a rancher who also owned a transportation company in Guatemala City, where he and Marina, 75, raised seven children. Five of those children have migrated to the United States, where most of their grandchildren were born.

"They moved in with me and my husband in Green Valley to be closer to

family," says Maribel. "We were so happy to have them here because life in Guatemala had become challenging at best. I wanted them close, so I could help take care of them, and we could enjoy them."

After cataract surgery, Evilio experienced dizziness and was concerned. Dr. Ovalle took the time to listen, offer advice, and even printed out directions in Spanish for him to follow. "He followed everything that the doctor told him," reports Maribel. "He wants to get better and be healthy, and he trusts the advice."

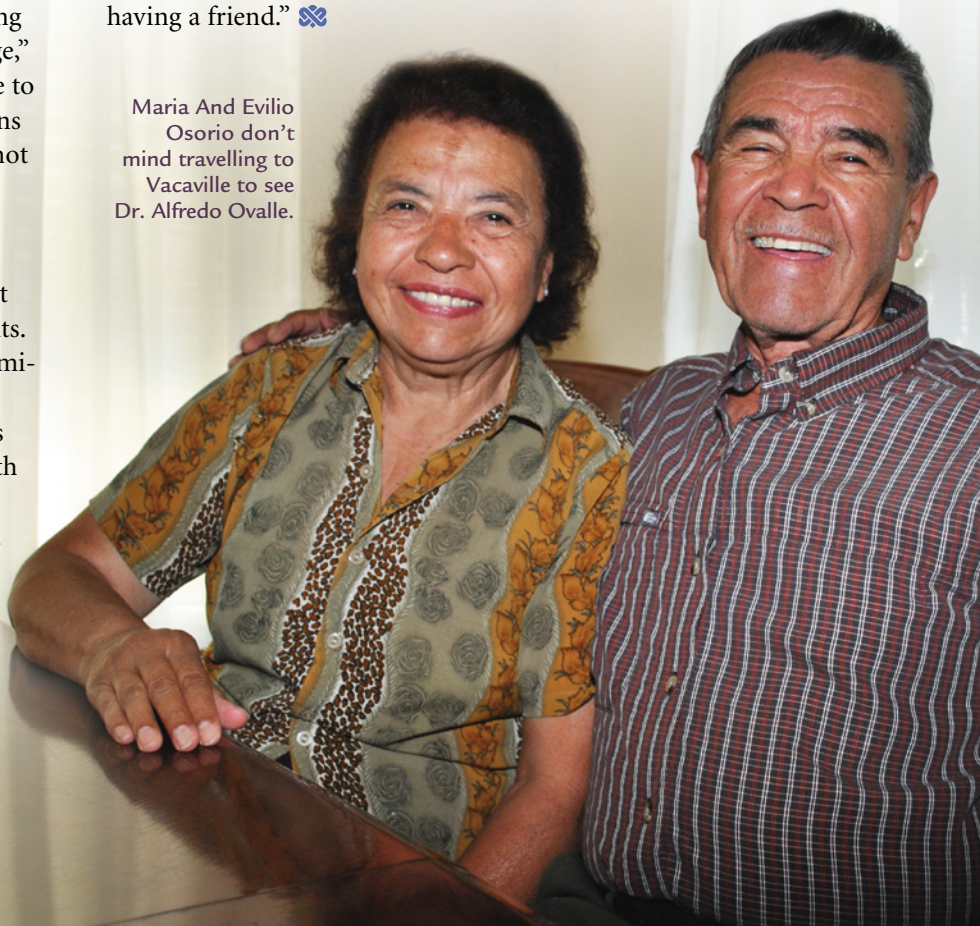
The Osorios don't mind the trip from Green Valley to Vacaville for appointments, says Maribel, because they are so happy with Dr. Ovalle's care.

"I feel that he's the best doctor I've ever had," says Evilio, with his daughter interpreting. "He really takes time to listen and understand and he asks questions. And then he calls with results to follow up. It's like having a friend." ❧

.....
"They instantly felt respect and trust with Dr. Ovalle. He's open and listens to their needs and concerns."
.....

— Maribel Osorio

Maria And Evilio Osorio don't mind travelling to Vacaville to see Dr. Alfredo Ovalle.



Surgery Center an Efficient Option

Tucked deep on the campus, past NorthBay VacaValley Hospital and the doctors offices of the VacaValley Health Plaza stands a gleaming tan building with a dramatic red tile roof slanting down.

It's the 12,000-square-foot Surgery Center at NorthBay VacaValley that has served the needs of thousands of patients since it opened in 2007. Whether it be a cataract surgery, a colonoscopy, a tonsillectomy or knee surgery, patients can have it done and be on their way before the sun sets.

"My patients really appreciate the ability to come to this facility instead of the hospital," explains Mounzer Al Samman, M.D., gastroenterologist, "because their surgeries can be scheduled more efficiently, and they can get in and out more quickly."

The Surgery Center is a joint venture between NorthBay Healthcare and 10 local physicians, including Dr. Al Samman, as well as podiatrists,



urologists, a general surgeon, ENTs, ophthalmologists and orthopaedists.

When the Surgery Center was built, it was designed to offer more comfort and privacy for less serious surgical cases, because hospitals are geared to treat the sickest and most injured patients first, explains Elnora Cameron, vice president of Strategic Development for NorthBay Health-

care and chairman of Surgery Center's operating committee. "The building has a lot of natural light, which also helps patients feel more relaxed."

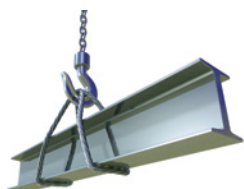
The Surgery Center has three operating rooms, two gastro-intestinal procedure rooms and two rooms specifically designed for pain management procedures. Pre-op rooms are completely private. ☒

By the Numbers

What it took to build VacaValley Hospital:



- ▶ 500,000 feet of electrical wire, or more than 83 miles



- ▶ 3,000 cubic yards of concrete for foundation and sidewalks, or 54,000 gallons



- ▶ 400 tons of structural steel (the weight of 14 city buses)



- ▶ 77,000 square feet of acoustic ceiling tiles (15 football fields)



- ▶ 1,400 gallons of paint (enough to fill a backyard swimming pool)

- ▶ Seven of 26 acres of available land used to build the hospital campus



In 1987

VacaValley Hospital opened with:

- ▶ 70,000 square-feet

- ▶ 50 beds

- ▶ Six ICU beds

- ▶ A cafeteria

- ▶ Diagnostic imaging, included a CT scanner and nuclear medicine

- ▶ Emergency Department

- ▶ Surgery, lab and pharmacy departments



Girls Go Hollywood!

Dress for “Hollywood Glamorous” and walk down the red carpet to the third annual NorthBay Spirit of Women Girls’ Night Out, set for Friday, Nov. 9, at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre.

The main event features the “3 Blonde Moms,” including comedians Kat Simmons, Joanie Fagan and Cathy Ladman. This is the second Girls’ Night Out appearance for Simmons, who has performed on Comedy Central and the Fox Comedy Network. Fagan, who originated the trio, has played Faith on “The Drew Carey Show” and appeared in several movies including Disney’s “Angels in the Outfield” and “Race to Space.” Cathy Ladman, “Nick at Nites’ Funniest Mom in America,” makes a special guest appearance at Girls’ Night Out. All three Moms have many theatre credits and long standup comedy resumes, but their most important role is that of being a mom, they say.

Doors open at 5 p.m. for boutique shopping, refreshments and fun. The popular photo booth is back, along with a costume closet. The show begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are now on sale at the NorthBay Women’s Health Resource Center in Fairfield and the VPAT box office in Vacaville. General admission is \$40 and \$35 for Spirit of Women members (membership is free, go to www.NorthBayWomen.org to sign up). For further information, please call (707) 646-4267.



Joan Fagan



Cathy Ladman



Kat Simmons



Welcome New Physician

Obstetrician/Gynecologist Margaret Cooper, M.D., has joined the Center for Women’s Health, a NorthBay affiliate, in Fairfield. Dr. Cooper earned her medical degree at Rush Presbyterian St. Luke’s Medical College and completed a residency in obstetrics/gynecology at Cook County Hospital, both in Chicago, IL. She is board-certified on obstetrics/gynecology. Prior to joining the Center for Women’s Health, Dr. Cooper practiced at the Desert Women’s Medical Group, Inc., in Palm Springs, Ca.

To make an appointment with Dr. Cooper, please call (707) 646-4100.



Ride to Defeat Diabetes

It’s not too late to sign up to cycle in NorthBay Healthcare’s first-ever Ride to Defeat Diabetes (R2D2) which rolls out of the NorthBay VacaValley Hospital parking lot on Sunday, Oct. 14.

The event aims to raise funds for the NorthBay Center for Diabetes & Endocrinology, and at the same time raise awareness in the community about the severity of the diabetes crisis in Solano County.

There are three separate rides, a 10-mile jaunt along Vacaville bike paths, just perfect for families and children, and a 25-mile and 60-mile ride for more serious cyclists.

Visit www.NorthBay.org/R2D2 for registration and donation information, or to sign up.

NorthBay Named Best Place to Work

NorthBay Healthcare is one of the Best Places to Work in the North Bay, according to the *North Bay Business Journal*. The announcement came in August as the *Journal* selected the best employers in a four-county region that includes Sonoma, Marin, Napa and Solano counties.

In all, 73 businesses and organizations are to be honored in its seventh-annual Best Places to Work in the North Bay competition. Winners were selected by the *Business Journal* editorial staff based on the results of an anonymous employee survey and a survey of each firm's diversity, job benefits and community involvement. The companies range in size from 20 employees—the minimum required—to 4,500. There were nearly 5,000 responses to the employee assessment. About half of NorthBay's employees responded to our survey.




"Our ability to serve our community is based upon having an effective and supportive corps of staff members who understand our culture and share our belief in a mission of delivering compassionate care, advanced medicine, close to home," said NorthBay Healthcare President/CEO Gary Passama. "With nearly 1,800 employees on three main campuses and four other venues, NorthBay employees are everywhere!"

He added, "It has been a goal to be recognized as a preferred employer and this is the first such recognition we have received. But it will not be the last. As an organization, we recognize

the great efforts of our staff by being fair and open with our employees. It is a commitment we reinforce every day. Thanks to our staff, we are now known as a 'Best Place to Work.'"

Ken McCollum, Vice President of Human Resources, has headed a steering committee that focuses on how to use best practices to improve the workplace. "It's not enough to just be a good place to work," says Ken. "We are proud to be a 'Best Place to Work,' as deemed by the *Business Journal*, and some day we hope to attain the label, 'A Great Place to Work,' on the Fortune 500 list.

Business Journal Editor and Associate Publisher Brad Bollinger added, "What was so clear about our winners is how hard everyone from management to the front line workers succeeded at maintaining an environment where people feel valued and can thrive even in challenging times like now." 



An annual flu shot is needed because flu viruses are constantly changing and the protection offered by a flu vaccine declines over time, depending on your age and health.

Annual Flu Shot is Healthy Choice

Autumn—the season of harvests, homecomings, Halloween—and, influenza vaccinations. Flu season is here and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend getting your annual flu shot as soon as the vaccine becomes available.

An annual flu shot is needed because flu viruses are constantly changing, according to Mercille Lock, R.N., an infection preventionist at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield. Also, the protection offered by a flu vaccine declines over time, depending on your age and health.

Each year, laboratories around the world collect flu viruses to determine what strains will be most active during the upcoming flu season. From this information three virus strains are selected for the flu vaccine that is offered in the fall.

The CDC advises everyone age 6 months and older to get a flu vaccine every year. It is especially important that certain people get vaccinated, including pregnant women, people age 50 and older or younger than 5, anyone with certain chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes and asthma, and people who live in or work in nursing homes or long-term care facilities.

It takes about two weeks for your body to build antibodies after you receive the shot. During that time you may still get the flu. Whether you get your vaccination early or late in the flu season, you will be protected for the entire year.

Talk to your physician about receiving this year's flu vaccination. The Center for Primary Care in Fairfield and Vacaville will offer free flu clinics in Fairfield and Vacaville.



Anesthesia technicians (left to right) Staci Dembski, Jo Apilado and Sarah Teitgen have been specially trained to use the new equipment.

NorthBay Medical Center Receives Chest Pain Center Accreditation with PCI

NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield has received full accreditation with PCI (percutaneous coronary intervention) from the Society of Chest Pain Centers (SCPC). “This accreditation marks another significant goal for NorthBay Healthcare,” says Kathy Richerson, vice president and chief nursing officer for NorthBay Healthcare.

“We have chosen to compare our programs to the highest standards and benchmarks available

to ensure we are providing the best care possible. We have now met the gold standard for providing excellence in care for patients experiencing a heart attack. I am especially proud of our staff and physicians who worked hard to achieve this distinction.”

The hospital first earned Chest Pain Center accreditation in 2009. Its new certification included an extensive review of how patients with blocked arteries receive interventional treatments (PCI) in its Cardiac Catheterization Lab.

Heart attacks are the leading cause of death in the United States, with 600,000 people dying annually of heart disease. More than 5 million Americans visit hospitals each year with chest pain.

SCPC’s goal is to significantly reduce the mortality rate of these patients by teaching the public to recognize and react to the early symptoms of a possible heart attack, reduce the time that it takes to receive treatment, and increase the accuracy and effectiveness of treatment.

In addition to being an accredited Chest Pain Center, NorthBay Medical Center has been designated a STEMI Receiving Center, meaning patients in Solano County suffering severe heart attacks are brought to this hospital alone.



Grant Funds Help Purchase Sophisticated Equipment

NorthBay Medical Center now has an extremely sophisticated piece of equipment that is helping surgeons provide the highest level of care to their most critically ill patients,

thanks to a grant from the Solano Community Foundation (SCF).

Called a CASMED Fore-Sight Tissue Oximeter, the device continu-

ously monitors oxygen levels in the brain during surgery, according to Filip Roos, M.D., director of Cardiac Anesthesia for NorthBay Healthcare.


The brain is extremely sensitive to variations and deficiencies in oxygen levels. “The oximeter is so sensitive, anesthesiologists can see in real time if there are any dangerous fluctuations,” Dr. Roos explains. “We can

then make instant adjustments and greatly reduce the risk of post-operative brain injury and prolonged recovery time.”

The hospital already has one of

these devices, but it is permanently affixed in the Cardiovascular Operating Room. Having a second device mounted on

a portable table allows surgical teams to quickly move it to the suite where it is most urgently needed.

The grant request was partially funded by the SCF’s Leslie Anderson and Virginia May Anderson Fund. NorthBay Healthcare Foundation made up the balance with funds raised during the NorthBay Guild’s Golf & Tennis Classic. 

Equipment is helping provide the highest level of care to the most critically ill patients.

Doctor Makes the Right Call

Just down the road from NorthBay VacaValley Hospital at 421 Nut Tree Road is the Vacaville Center for Primary Care, which opened in 2002 and now has nine physicians who specialize in everything from internal medicine and family practice to pediatrics and psychiatry. Here is a story of one of our primary care physicians.



Dana Aleman

Dana Aleman was beside herself with worry. Her 3-year-old son Levi was running a high fever. His dark brown eyes were bloodshot. Her active little boy was shockingly listless and would no longer eat or drink.

Although she had checked in with a doctor two days earlier, she and her husband, Omar, took Levi to the Emergency Department and where they were told he likely had tonsillitis. They were sent home with antibiotics. Only later would they discover that Levi's rare disease wouldn't be diagnosable until Day 5.

Two days later, Levi was no better. He could no longer cry tears or urinate. His lips were cracked and bright red, and his tongue was swollen up like a strawberry.

Desperate, Dana took him to see Dr. Shahzad Anwar in Vacaville at the Center for Primary Care, a NorthBay Affiliate.

The diagnosis was as shocking as it was rare: Kawasaki Disease.

What's more, Dana learned later, was that it was an extremely tricky diagnosis, because Levi wasn't exhibiting all of the symptoms usually connected with the disease.

Kawasaki's Disease is a condition that manifests by Day 5 of symptoms, says Dr. Anwar. "After consulting with pediatrician Dr. Matthew Heeren, I advised the Alemans to take their son to UC Davis Medical Center within two hours." That began a 14-day odyssey for the family, with Dr. Anwar, and his team in constant contact.

The first day, the Alemans were told Levi was in Kawasaki Shock. His blood pressure had dropped too low, and they were told to prepare for the possibility of cardiac arrest or heart failure.

"During this time, Dr. Anwar called almost daily to check up on us, explain things we didn't understand and give us pep talks," recalls Dana.

Some doctors go entire careers without seeing Kawasaki Disease, she points out. "Dr. Anwar's diagnosis was a judgment call and he made the right call. I choke up when

I think about what would have happened had Dr. Anwar not been my son's doctor. I am so grateful for everything he did. He listened to our questions and gave us options. He treated us like we were a part of the team and our input was valued."


Today Levi doesn't come close to resembling that lifeless little boy they carried in to the doctor's office. He's busy, bright, curious and stubborn. He likes to play with the family's new baby chicks as well as their dog, and is doted on by his big sister, River. Want to take his picture? Well, he just might cooperate, if offered a popsicle.

The Alemans learned that Kawasaki Disease is still a mystery in lot of ways. It is believed genetics plays a role, and environment can trigger it. "We learned how lucky we were that it was caught within 10 days, because he could receive medication. If it goes longer than that, the medication won't work," says Dana. "And of course the possibility of a heart attack or an aneurysm increases."

Dana knows that it's possible that there could be a recurrence. Levi will have to have an echocardiogram every five years for the rest of his life, just to be safe. But that's a small price to pay, she says.

Dr. Anwar praises Dana for following her instincts and the NorthBay team for the successful outcome. "The phlebotomist's ability to obtain adequate lab results within two hours on a dehydrated child was key," he said.

In addition, he noted that Maureen Debb, an expert in managing complex cases, arranged for Levi to have access to the appropriate specialist centers quickly, says Dr. Anwar.

"Our son is doing well now. His heart is fine and he's starting to resemble his old self," says Dana. "They say it takes a village to raise a child. I have learned it takes a team to save one." 

Rare Disease Threatens Toddler's Life

"They say it takes a village to raise a child. I have learned it takes a team to save one."

— Dana Aleman



Family practice physician Shahzad Anwar, M.D., enjoyed meeting up with a much livlier Levi Aleman (held by his father, Omar) during a visit with the family in Fairfield.

Choose NorthBay Healthcare During Open Enrollment


This fall during open enrollment, choose a health plan that lets you stay close to home while receiving care from the highly rated physicians at the Center for Primary Care, a NorthBay affiliate. With four locations, you're sure to find an office that is convenient for you and your family. And those physicians treat their patients at our local hospitals—NorthBay Medical

Center in Fairfield and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville.

NorthBay Healthcare offers an array of services available nowhere else in Solano County, including the NorthBay Heart & Vascular Center, a Chest Pain Center, and a wound center with the only civilian hyperbaric oxygen therapy chambers.

Major health plans that contract with NorthBay include Aetna PPO;

Anthem Blue Cross PPO; Blue Shield HMO, PPO and POS; Cigna HMO, PPO, POS and EPO; UnitedHealthcare PPO; TriCare Prime, Standard, Extra and TriCare for Life; and Western Health Advantage.

For further information about the many services offered by NorthBay Healthcare, visit our website NorthBay.org or call (707) 646-3280. 



Donna Rubin (above) a member of the Green Valley Country Club, takes a swing during the tennis tournament portion of the 29th annual NorthBay Guild Golf & Tennis Classic, which was July 16. The event, once again at Green Valley Country Club, was another sell-out success according to Jane Schilling, director of volunteer services.

A quartet of golfers (at left) including NorthBay Healthcare Foundation Board Members Dave Bast, Chris Sweeney, Candy Pierce and Dr. Lee Freeman were joined by some 165 other golfers and tennis players to fill the field. The Guild's biggest fund-raising event of the year had a "Let the Games Begin" theme, appropriate since it came just before the start of the Summer Olympics. Festivities and extra fund-raising opportunities were scattered throughout the golf course. The golfers were more than generous, all for the benefit of NorthBay's Trauma Services. "On behalf of the volunteers, I want to say how proud we are to host one of the most successful golf tournaments in Solano County," says Schilling. "This year's proceeds, of about \$42,000, mark the second year of a five-year commitment to NorthBay Trauma Services. We are proud to support a service that is so important to our community."



Community Health Education Classes

The Art of Breastfeeding • Learn the “how to’s” of breastfeeding. This class addresses the health benefits for mom and baby, the role of the father, the working mom and more. Cost: \$15. Call (707) 646-4277.

Brothers & Sisters To Be • Prepare children ages 3–9 for the arrival of a new baby. Cost: \$10 per family. Call (707) 646-4277.

C-Section Preparation • Individual counseling available to women delivering at NorthBay Medical Center who may require a C-section. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-4277.

Labor of Love • A six-week prepared childbirth class for moms and dads or coaches; register in fourth month of pregnancy or earlier. Cost: \$75. Call (707) 646-4277.

Labor of Love in Review • One-session childbirth refresher course for moms and labor partners. Pre-requisite: previous attendance in a prepared childbirth education course. Cost: \$20. Call (707) 646-4277.

Labor of Love —One Day Class • A one-day prepared childbirth class for moms and dads or coaches. Will be held on Saturdays. Cost: \$75 Call (707) 646-4277.

Prenatal Care • Expectant mothers learn important information about pregnancy. Topics include nutrition, exercise, fetal growth and development, “pregnancy do’s and don’ts,” and much more. It is recommended this class be taken as early in pregnancy as possible. Cost: \$10. Call (707) 646-4277.

Newborn Care • Expectant parents are instructed on daily care, nutrition, safety and development for the first few months of life. One-session course. Cost: \$15. Call (707) 646-4277.

Maternity Orientation and Tour • A tour of the NorthBay Medical Center’s maternity unit. Information about hospital registration, birth certificates, and available birthing options provided. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-4277.

Siblings’ Birthing Preparation • Parents who are considering having children present during delivery can have one-on-one counseling. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-4277.

Breastfeeding Support Group • A postpartum support group for moms meets every Tuesday, 12:30 to 2 p.m., in Fairfield. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-5024.

Help with Child Care • Are you looking for child care or help paying for it? Are you a child care provider in need of support? Call Solano Family & Children’s Services at (707) 863-3950.

PEACE (Parent Education and Custody Effectiveness) • Create an effective parenting relationship between divorcing and separating parents. Endorsed by judicial and parenting advocates. Two three-hour sessions on Saturdays. Cost: \$25. Call (707) 421-4155.

Caregivers’ Support Group • For anyone involved in caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or a dementia-related illness. Meets second Wednesday of month, 7 pm to 9 pm at the Adult Day Center. Cost: Free. Call (707) 624-7971.

Laugh Out Loud • A class on urinary incontinence. Do you control your bladder or does your bladder control you? Learn the latest treatment options, including pelvic floor exercises. Cost: Free. For class dates and to reserve your seat, please call: (707) 646-4267.

Grief and Bereavement Support Groups • Four adult support groups meet on a weekly basis in Fairfield. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-3517.

SAND (Support After Neonatal Death) • Friendship and understanding for parents experiencing grief for the loss of a pregnancy or infant. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-5433.

Teen & Children’s Bereavement Support Groups • NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement offers free bereavement support groups for children, middle schoolers, teens and young adults on an as-needed basis. Cost: Free. For a schedule and more information, call (707) 646-3575.

Bereavement Support Group for Adults Who Have Lost a Loved One to Suicide • Group meets every other Monday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Cost: free. Call (707) 646-3517.



Look Good, Feel Better • A program to help women currently undergoing cancer treatment cope with appearance-related side effects of treatment. To register, call the American Cancer Society, (800) 227-2345. Cost: Free.

Kick the Butts • Stop-smoking classes help adult smokers as well as smokeless users. Cost: Free. To register, call the Solano County Health Promotion and Education Bureau at (707) 784-8900 or (800) 287-7357.

Pulmonary Education Series • A three-session course that meets on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield. A new course begins each month. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-5072.

You’ll love our passion for compassion.



At NorthBay Healthcare, we believe that health-care should still care. That’s why we’ve created an environment that cultivates your commitment to compassionate care and allows it—and you—to flourish.

We offer opportunities in:

- Allied Health
- Clerical
- Management
- Nursing
- Service

For more information about us or our employment opportunities in Fairfield and Vacaville, visit www.northbayjobs.org. EOE

You’ll love it here.



be Hollywood Glamorous

dazzling

 **CENTER for
WOMEN'S HEALTH**
A NorthBay Affiliate
presents

Spirit
girls' night out
Your Best Health Now

Friday
November 9, 2012 • 7 p.m.
Doors open at 5 p.m. for boutique shopping,
refreshments and fun. Dress is Hollywood glamour.

Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre, 1010 Ulatis Drive, Vacaville

Featuring 3 Blonde Moms
\$40 General Admission
\$35 NorthBay Spirit of Women members*

(707) 646-4267 • www.NorthBayWomen.org

Tickets are now on sale at the NorthBay Women's Health Resource Center and VPAT box office.

*Spirit membership is free, go to www.NorthBayWomen.org



Cathy Ladman



Joanie Fagan



Kat Simmons



be Hollywood Glamorous

dazzling

 **CENTER for
WOMEN'S HEALTH**
A NorthBay Affiliate
presents

Spirit
girls' night out
Your Best Health Now

Friday
November 9, 2012 • 7 p.m.
Doors open at 5 p.m. for boutique shopping,
refreshments and fun. Dress is Hollywood glamour.

Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre, 1010 Ulatis Drive, Vacaville

Featuring 3 Blonde Moms
\$40 General Admission
\$35 NorthBay Spirit of Women members*

(707) 646-4267 • www.NorthBayWomen.org

Tickets are now on sale at the NorthBay Women's Health Resource Center and VPAT box office.

*Spirit membership is free, go to www.NorthBayWomen.org



Cathy Ladman



Joanie Fagan



Kat Simmons

