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NORTH BAY™
Center for Women's Health

Day of Dance®

F O R Y O U R H E A L T H

Saturday, February 26, 2011 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Westfield Solano Mall

Bring your friends and family to dance, learn simple ways to stay healthy and participate in free health screenings.

Health Screenings: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Let's Dance: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Dance demonstrations & lessons:

- Zumba • Tap • Hip Hop
- Jazz and more!

Learn Your 5 Lifesaving Numbers:

- Total Cholesterol (until supplies run out)
- Blood Sugar (until supplies run out)
- Blood Pressure
- Weight (learn your BMI)
- Waist Measurement and more!

Solano County will offer free vaccinations, while supplies last, for:

- Seasonal Flu and HiNi
- Whooping Cough
- Pneumonia (65+)

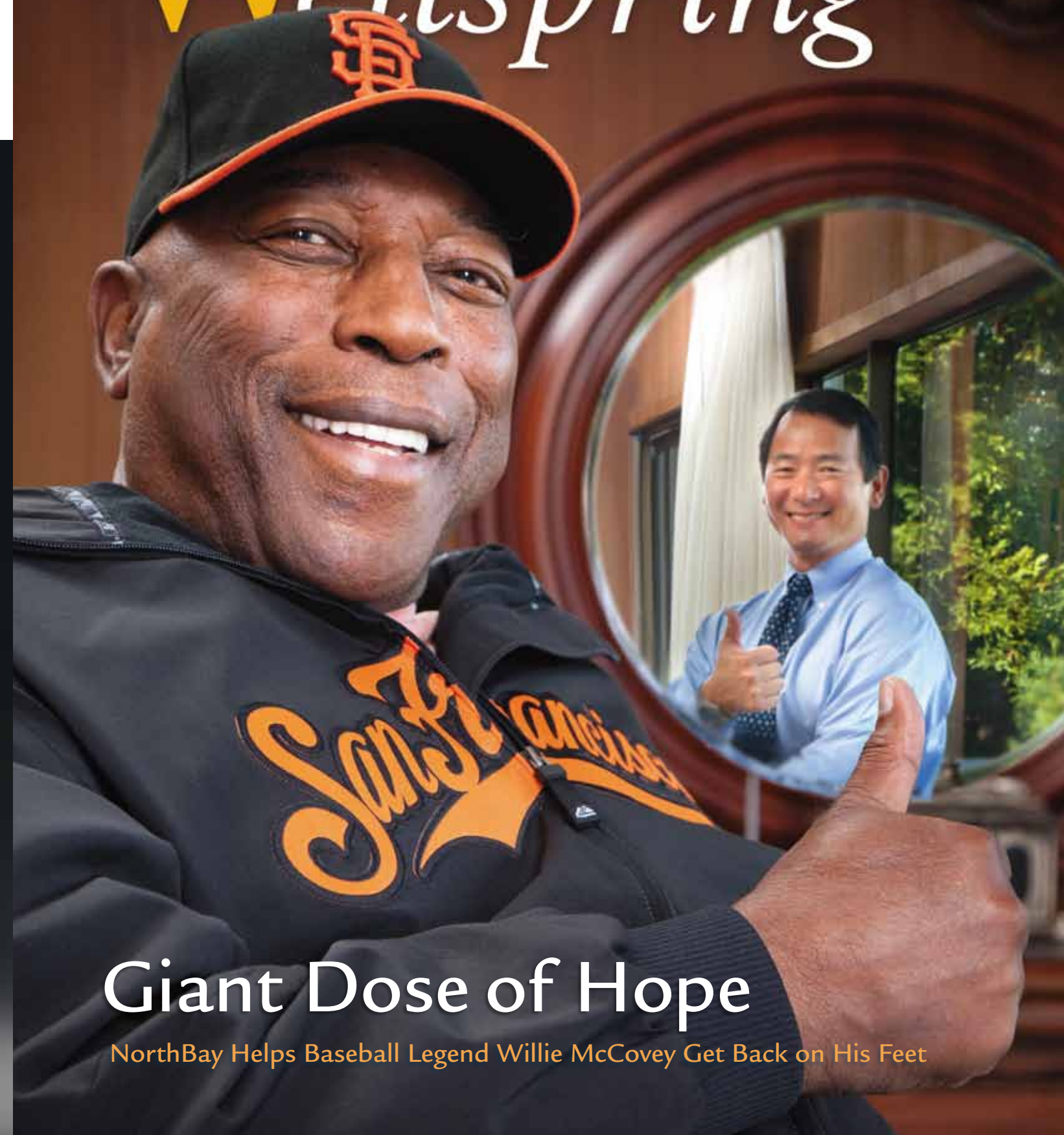
For further information, visit
www.NorthBaywomen.org

Day of Dance® for Your Health is powered by Spirit of Women®, a national network of hospitals and healthcare providers across the United States that ascribe to the highest standards of excellence in women's health, education, and community outreach.

Spirit of
Women®

Westfield
Solano

Wellspring



Giant Dose of Hope

NorthBay Helps Baseball Legend Willie McCovey Get Back on His Feet

3 On the Cover:
A Giant Dose of Hope

Baseball legend Willie McCovey found hope and tremendous relief from back pain following surgery by Charles Sonu, M.D. McCovey invited NorthBay to spend a morning with him in his tri-level Woodside home where he talked about his recovery and plans for the future. *Photography by Kent Lacin.*



8 Nurse Back on Duty
Cathy Svetz returned to nursing just four months after hip replacement surgery.



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

Hope Thrives Here

Our cover story focuses on a very famous Bay Area legend who came to NorthBay Healthcare looking for a little hope.

Even when he was swatting long fly balls over the right-field fence, San Francisco Giants great Willie McCovey struggled with back problems. In recent years, the Hall of Famer's pain was getting to the point he could not navigate through his tri-level home. So he sought out one of the region's most recommended specialists, Dr. Charles Sonu, M.D., at NorthBay Medical Center last summer.

Now, he has high hopes he'll be able to spend spring training again in Arizona with the rookies, who seek his advice. His is just one example of how advanced medicine practiced at NorthBay Healthcare can deliver better health, and hope for a better lifestyle.

When it comes down to it, our organization is all about hope. Pregnant mothers find hope in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit when their babies are born too early. One of our own nurses can move about her busy work after a hopeful hip replacement. Even our volunteers are having an impact, both at home and a world away.

This issue of *Wellspring* celebrates the hope that lives at NorthBay, in every treatment, every surgery, every encounter. No, not every outcome is a complete success, but in every case there is hope. And sometimes that makes all the difference. 🦋



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NorthBay Healthcare Foundations' Dream of a Lifetime program made a number of wishes come true in 2010, and one of the most poignant was that of 26-year-old Gino Goodman.



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Make that Col. Jane Prather, our service line director for the Center for Women's Health, who deployed to Afghanistan in January for a year-long mission.



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On a trip to Kenya, North-Bay Guild volunteer Shahane Everett met a little girl named Maggy who changed her life.

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Offering a Reason to Believe

Sometimes, hope can be the best medicine we can prescribe. So we do just that.

One day, my brother called to say his 78-year-old friend had been diagnosed with a form of leukemia and was told he had two months to live. This man had a well-known health plan and a physician who said because of his age, because he was a diabetic and had a grave prognosis, no further treatment would be provided.

My brother's friend frantically sought a second opinion from a cancer specialist not connected to his health plan. He was trapped in a dilemma too common in America today. He was a victim of a cost-benefit analysis, which concluded that expending additional resources on him was futile and a waste.

Contrast his case and that of my mother, who learned her cancer had spread and there was little that could be done. When my mom asked how long she would live, she was told three to six months. Fortunately, though, she escaped the cold, financial scrutiny my brother's friend endured.

When her oncologist saw the impact the diagnosis had on her and my family, she was asked if she were willing to try two rounds of chemotherapy. Medicare would pay for it. The specialist made it clear treatment would be primarily palliative, not a cure. It probably would only slightly extend her life.

That bit of hope was all my mother wanted, so she underwent chemotherapy. She died just six months after her diagnosis, but she had hope for much of that time. She also had a sense she was fighting a battle she needed to fight.

This issue of *Wellspring* is all about hope. And it begins with what we call a "Giant Dose of Hope,"

featuring a Hall of Fame baseball legend we were able to help at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield.

Willie McCovey came to Dr. Charles Sonu, who heads our spine program, after hearing of his work with other athletes. His condition was worsening; Willie simply wanted hope he could walk again and make it back to spring training as the Giants begin the defense of their championship.

Not only did he get hope, but he was able to walk onto the field and throw out the first pitch of the World Series. And, of course, he was able to ride the streets of San Francisco and make his way to the podium when the Giants celebrated their first World Series victory since coming to the City by the Bay. Our premier spine surgeon has given Willie hope to lead a more independent life in retirement.

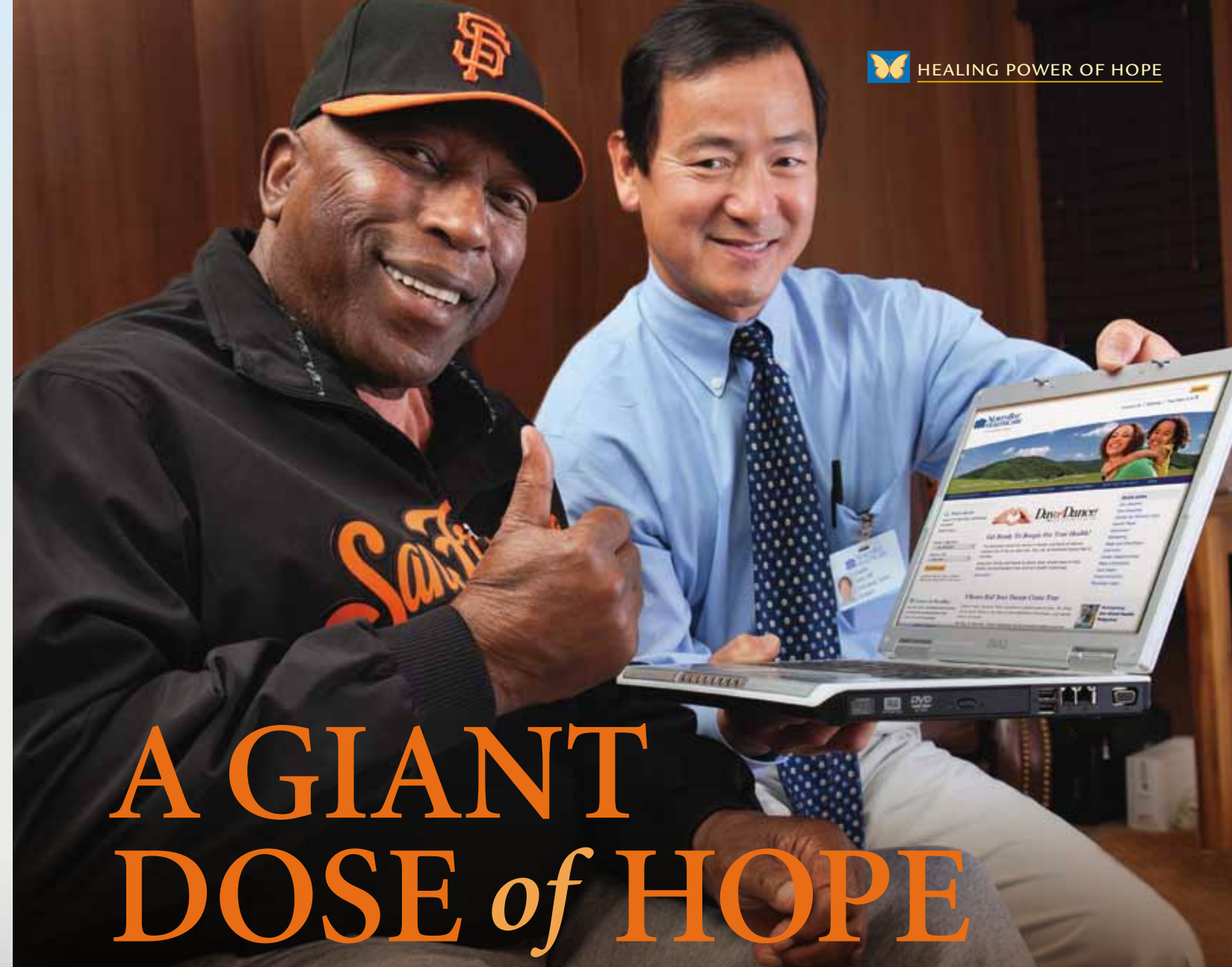
We add to his several other stories of hope.

There's Madeleine Burroughs of Fairfield, whose hope in her battle against cancer is to live each day to its fullest, regardless of the odds.

Holly McKee's wish is for her baby to live a healthy and normal life.

Our stories of hope, we hope, are an inspiration to others who face the prospect of serious medical conditions and who need a reason to persevere. We can offer compassionate care, advanced medicine, close to home. But we also can add a giant dose of hope.

Gary Passama
President and Chief Executive Officer



When the San Francisco Giants and their delirious fans finally tasted World Series glory for the first time in 52 years, Willie McCovey wasn't about to miss out on all the fun.

Against the odds, the Giants' legend was on the field at AT&T Park for a first-pitch ceremony to christen the series. And after his former team vanquished the Texas Rangers in five breathtaking games, he joined a raucous victory parade in the streets of San Francisco.

That McCovey, 73, was able to participate in the festivities was due in no small part to extensive spine surgery performed last summer by Charles Sonu, M.D., a spine surgeon at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield.

"I had to be there. It was too special to miss," McCovey says of last fall's World Series celebration. "But if I hadn't had the surgery, I probably wouldn't have been able to do what I did."

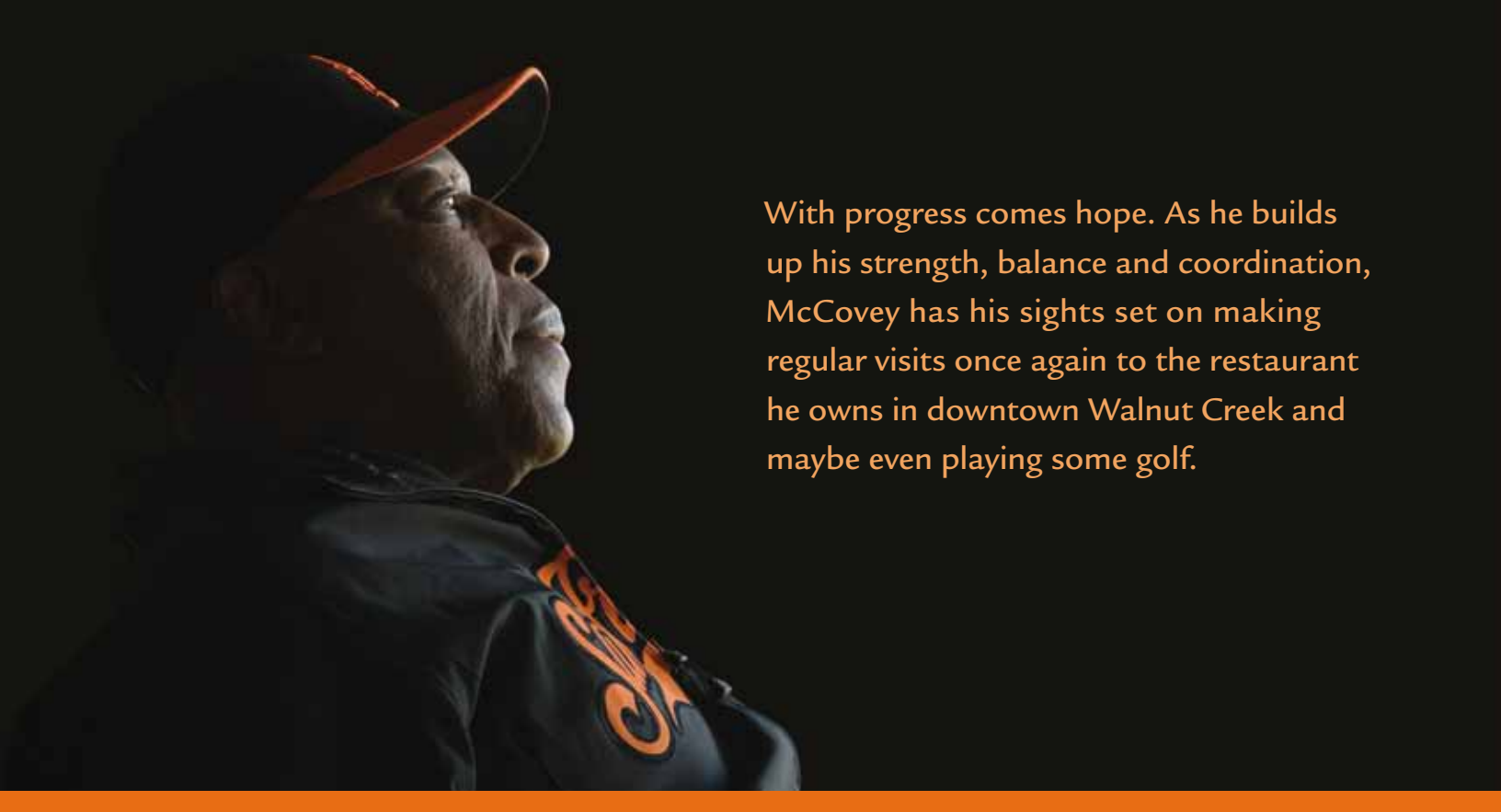
The man teammates called "Stretch" is seated in the master bedroom of the impeccably maintained Woodside home he built, having just reviewed follow-up X-rays with Dr. Sonu. On his nightstand is a card from the Hall of Fame signed by more than 30 baseball greats, including Bob Gibson, Lou Brock, Gaylord Perry and Rickey Henderson. "Get well soon," it reads. "We look forward to seeing you in Cooperstown next year."

If McCovey has his way, he'll make it there. And it would be quite a feat considering that, for much of last year, he was so hampered by debilitating back and leg pain that just making it around his tri-level residence proved to be a major struggle.

"I was deteriorating little by little," he recalls. "I'm used to being a very independent person."

Willie McCovey credits Charles Sonu, M.D., with helping him get back on his feet. Debilitating back pain had sidelined the baseball legend much of last year.

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With progress comes hope. As he builds up his strength, balance and coordination, McCovey has his sights set on making regular visits once again to the restaurant he owns in downtown Walnut Creek and maybe even playing some golf.

But it got to the point where I needed help. I couldn't drive anymore. I needed people to help me get up and down the stairs."

Early in 2010, McCovey was referred to Dr. Sonu by Dr. Arthur Ting, the team doctor for the San Jose Sharks and a renowned orthopedic surgeon. After conducting a series of MRIs, Dr. Sonu concluded that his patient was suffering from Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis (DISH) and spinal stenosis. "Try saying that fast three times," a smiling McCovey says, his sense of humor well intact.

DISH is a form of degenerative arthritis characterized by excessive bone growth along the sides of the vertebrae and spine. Dr. Sonu found the ligament calcification in McCovey to be so advanced that it was causing nerve compression severe enough to result in paralysis. "I saw the trouble he was in," says Dr. Sonu. "It was obvious what needed to be done."

McCovey is no stranger to operating rooms. During his 22 seasons in the big leagues, he constantly battled injuries, mainly to his knees. He endured so much pain that a sportswriter compared him to the Bible's Job.

"I lost count of how many knee operations I've had, but I probably hold the record," he says. "(Former Oakland Raider) Jim Otto and I used to tease each other about who had the most."

With that extensive surgical history, McCovey was in no hurry to undergo another one. And so he put it off to attend spring training and be near the team and game he loves.

"Spring training was a big priority for him, which I thought was amazing," Dr. Sonu says. "It sort of reflected that whole Giants spirit. For him, it wasn't about the individual. It was about the organization."

But McCovey couldn't hold out for long. In August, he was admitted to NorthBay Medical Center and underwent a grueling 12-hour surgery, during which Dr. Sonu worked to relieve the pressure on his nerves and fuse areas of instability. The procedure was made more complicated by the number of vertebral levels involved, the severity of scar tissue (from two previous operations) and the density of the bone spurs.

Dr. Sonu, who came to NorthBay in 2008 to develop its Spine Center, is accustomed to working with athletes. He's the official spine surgeon for the MotoGP (motorcycle championships) held annually at Laguna Seca Raceway, and cared for the U.S. gymnastics team during the 2007 nationals in San Jose. During his consultations with McCovey, he was abundantly impressed by the patient's attitude.

"He's easy to work with, very motivated," Dr. Sonu says. "We have an open communication with him. He's been very receptive to my advice regarding what I think he needs to do to get better."

In fact, Dr. Sonu jokes that the only minor difficulty he had with his patient came in the first couple of days post-surgery, when McCovey was intently focused on the TV in his hospital room, watching the Giants in their drive for the National League pennant. "I had to turn it off to get him to listen to me and take in what I

was saying," he recalled. "I had to tell him, 'Hey Willie: Eyes on me.'"

McCovey, meanwhile, has pleasant memories of his two-week stay in NorthBay Medical Center. "All the nurses and staff were great. There wasn't any negative stuff at all," he says. "And nobody bugged me. Sometimes in a case like this you can have people running in and out, sneaking autographs. But it was all programmed that they weren't supposed to do that and they abided by the rules. There were certain (staff) people I voluntarily gave autographs to because I thought they were so nice to me."

The months since McCovey's surgery have been consumed by physical rehabilitation. He's logged plenty of miles on his deluxe exercise bike in front of an expansive window with a panoramic view of the East Bay and Mount Diablo. The lack of mobility can be frustrating for a man who clubbed 521 home runs and, at 6-foot-4, towered over the plate like, well, a Giant. But he's been down this road before, so he knows to be patient—and to cherish the incremental signs of progress.

Speaking of which, he points out that, although he needed a walker to get out on the field before the World Series opener, he did so without pain. "That was a big change in itself," McCovey says. "Before that, just to get out of my chair and stand up put me in excruciating pain."

With progress comes hope. As he builds up his strength, balance and coordination, McCovey has his sights set on making regular visits once again to the restaurant he owns in downtown Walnut Creek and maybe even playing some golf.

"That's where I'd like to be right now—making the turn on some country club course," says McCovey. "That's been my wish since I've been down and I don't think I'll be satisfied 'til I get to that point."

Baseball, of course, is in McCovey's plans, as well. When summer arrives, he hopes to return to his suite in the ballpark where mammoth home runs plunge into a body of water named after him.

But first things first: Spring training has just gotten under way this month and McCovey wants to be there in his regular role as a Giants' senior adviser. "I don't want to set a goal and be disappointed," he says. "But I know I'll be there... and I'll certainly be in better shape than I was last year."





Pain Reveals Hidden Danger



Nobuko McClellan (center) enjoys time with her daughter, Janet and her grandson, Duran, 2.

Nobuko McClellan, 60, tried to convince herself that she was just tired. After all, she had just moved into a new home in Vacaville, and she'd been in overdrive, trying to get everything fixed up just right. She'd painted. She'd carried in boxes. She'd put heavy books into the bookcase. It was just too much.

So she went to bed on July 24, 2010, trying to convince herself that she'd be fine in the morning.

By 2 a.m., she could hardly breathe. "It was painful to inhale, it was painful to exhale," she recalls.

She called a friend who took her to NorthBay Vacaville Hospital where they ran a battery of tests, specifically checking for heart issues, as she'd had angioplasty seven years earlier. Her heart was fine, but she wasn't. "My whole body was in pain," she says.

With pain medication, her symptoms receded, and she was released. But it happened again the next day, so she returned to VacaValley Hospital.

"This time, they did even more tests," recalls her daughter, Janet, who was camping and out of reach during the first ordeal.

"I called her to tell her that we got home safely, and she said she was in the Emergency Room!"

On the second visit, a CT Scan, EKG and MRI were all ordered, as doctors tried to figure out the source of McClellan's pain. While that remains a mystery, they did find something else, something potentially life-threatening: A splenic artery aneurysm.

"I didn't even know what a spleen was," says Janet. "So I started researching it. They used to remove spleens



Photo (A) shows the aneurysm branching off the splenic artery. (B) shows a catheter placed into the splenic artery aneurysm. (C) shows coils placed into the aneurysm which will clot the blood flow in the aneurysm. (D) shows a covered stent placed across the entry point into the aneurysm.

because they thought they didn't serve a purpose, but now they realize they filter infections."

While the aneurysm—approximately ¾" in diameter—wasn't threatening McClellan's spleen or her life, it posed a risk if it were to enlarge or rupture.

An aneurysm occurs when the walls of a blood vessel balloon outward, creating weakness in the vessel wall. In McClellan's case, it had formed in the splenic artery.

Although a splenic aortic aneurysm is the third most common type of abdominal aneurysm, they typically have not been treated at NorthBay Medical Center. In the past, patients were referred outside of Solano County for extensive abdominal surgery. But Seph Naficy, M.D., a vascular and cardiothoracic surgeon, thought McClellan's case might be a good candidate for an endovascular procedure.

Sending a wire catheter from the groin into the abdominal artery, then into the celiac artery and then into the splenic artery, he was able to place 10 wire coils and a stent graft across the neck of the aneurysm.

While either the coils or the stent graft may have been enough to prevent future problems, Dr. Naficy felt it best to take the "belt and suspenders" approach, going above and beyond to ensure the patient's safety, he says.

McClellan checked in to NorthBay Medical Center's Same Day Center around noon, and she was home by 5 p.m., ready to heal. "I was walking by the second day," she says. "It's amazing."

Dr. Naficy agrees, pointing out that the technology is key. "The CT scan showed us something we wouldn't have seen otherwise. She had no symptoms, but we were able to protect her from a possible rupture. And we were able to do it in a much less invasive way, so she's up and walking as soon as possible and back to living her life."

A Second Chance to Enjoy Life, Thanks to Palliative Care Team

In the fall of 2009, Dorothy Byrd was so sick, so delirious, and so unaware of her surroundings, her desperate family was losing hope. Today, things are very different for this lively and expressive 80-year-old Fairfield resident. Not only is she now up and out of bed, but she is walking, has rejoined her various club activities and is even driving again.

Dorothy's medical misery began about two weeks after hip replacement surgery in August 2009. She seemed to be healing well at a Fairfield rehabilitation facility until she developed a staph infection. Before long, "she was bed-ridden, withdrawn, unable to eat and didn't know where she was," reports her daughter, Charlene Rushing. "Everything went completely sour; it was a pretty scary time. We thought we were going to lose her."

"I don't remember anything and that is out of character for me. I became discouraged and thought I might just go join my husband, who passed away four years ago," Dorothy says.

The infection and other complications had worsened her condition, and she was readmitted to the Vallejo hospital where her surgery had been performed. For several weeks, Dorothy would be treated there and then released to the Fairfield rehabilitation center, only to be rushed back to Vallejo when another complication arose. "After six weeks of going back and forth," Charlene says, "I asked her doctor,

why can't we just go around the corner (to NorthBay)?" That's when Dorothy came under the care of Hospitalist Andrea Ngo, M.D., and Terrell VanAken, M.D., medical director for NorthBay Bridges, a palliative care program designed for patients who have chronic and difficult-to-manage health issues. "A lot of what we do is to communicate—between the



Dorothy with her daughters, Elizabeth Byrd (left) and Charlene Rushing.

patient, the medical staff, the family and care facilities," Dr. VanAken explains.

Palliative care uses an interdisciplinary team approach—with a clinical social worker, program administrator, chaplain and medical director—to work with the patient's physician to provide treatment that not only addresses pain and symptom relief, but also addresses any emotional, social, cultural and spiritual needs these patients and their families may have.

"She really turned a corner once Dr. VanAken got involved," Charlene recalls. "He actually listened to us. He's a real people person, just wonderful. He comforted our family."

A conference with family members and attending physicians helped create a plan of treatment. Dorothy's hip replacement device would be removed and an antibiotic spacer would replace it. In November, after her infections and complications were brought under control at NorthBay Medical Center, Dr. VanAken arranged for her to be transferred to a Vacaville rehabilitation facility. She spent two months "regaining strength and her appetite, and going through rehabilitation," Charlene says. "She really responded there, because there were activities for people to do; they actually expected her to get up and get out of bed for rehabilitation! She was able to come home on the weekends, and then was discharged in January."

Eventually, Dorothy opted to undergo a second hip replacement surgery, and Dr. VanAken helped the family find a surgeon who could handle her extremely complicated case. The surgery, performed in San Francisco, also came under the watchful eye of the NorthBay Bridges team. "My daughter introduced my surgeon there to Dr. VanAken as a 'person of interest,'" Dorothy recalls. "After that surgery, I feel so much better. I have a better diet, I am rehabilitating. Having all these people take an interest in me has helped a lot."





The Joint Replacement Program is a dedicated unit at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville. The physicians who participate in the program are all board-certified local orthopedic surgeons with years of experience performing joint replacement surgery. For a referral to an orthopedic surgeon, talk with your doctor.

For a list of surgeons participating in the program, or for more information about the NorthBay Joint Replacement Program, call Cynthia Giaquinto at (707) 624-7600.



Four Knees and a Friendship

Marlene Alonzo of Dixon and Yates Kendrick of Rio Vista got more than new knees from the NorthBay Joint Replacement Program last year. As they supported and cheered for each other after surgery, they and their families became fast friends.

Both patients credit orthopedic surgeon Robert Peterson, M.D., for their successful knee surgeries, and the staff of the Joint Replacement Program at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital for getting them quickly up on their feet and on the road to recovery.

Making the decision to have knee surgery was easy for Kendrick, 69. An avid hunter and fisherman, painful knees were interfering with his lifestyle. He had his first knee replacement in March. Two months later, as he was signing up for his second knee replacement, he met Alonzo, who was signing up for her first knee replacement. They had the

same surgeon and were having surgery the same day.

"I was apprehensive about having surgery," says Alonzo, 60. "But my knees hurt so badly I'd be in tears just trying to shop. Yates immediately started offering me encouragement."

Each had a spouse who worked as their "coach" through recovery. As Nancy Kendrick and Donald Alonzo cheered and coaxed their mates through their exercises, the bond of friendship between the couples grew.

The NorthBay Joint Replacement Program is based on the premise that patients recover quicker when they are part of a group sharing the same experience, says Cynthia Giaquinto, who has managed the program since its inception in 2007.

All patients are admitted to the hospital and undergo their procedures on the same day. This allows them to go through the recovery process as a group—eating and exercising together while providing encouragement and support to one

another. From surgery to discharge is usually four days.

"When you recover as a group, you encourage each other and share the ups and downs," Kendrick says.

Both patients agree that surgery is just the beginning of successful joint replacement. "It takes three months of hard work in physical therapy to recover and strengthen your new joint," Kendrick says. "They teach you the skills and exercises while you're in the hospital and expand on those skills in outpatient rehab—but your recovery really depends on how willing you are to work. It's important to set small goals and work toward them."

It was five months before Alonzo returned to have her second knee replaced. "Yates nagged me non-stop," she laughs. "But he also said he'd be there to support me and he was. He came every day." As soon as she recovers, the two couples plan to travel together.

Marlene Alonzo and Yates Kendrick

Nurse Only Disappointed That She Waited So Long to Have Surgery

A new hip joint at age 44? NorthBay VacaValley Hospital's Catherine Svetz, R.N., wonders what took her so long.

"The spring is back in my step and I'm always smiling, literally!" she says. "I had been suffering for several years with hip pain, though I had no idea the pain I was experiencing was related to my hip. Unfortunately, I ignored the pain for quite a while and only mentioned it at a routine check-up and an x-ray revealed my right hip needed replacing."

She didn't immediately schedule surgery, but by the end of 2009 she was in so much pain she was limping

as she worked. "I'm a nurse and when your patients start asking you if you're OK you know it's time to do something," she says.

And for Svetz, the NorthBay Joint Replacement Program was just a walk downstairs from her nursing unit. From the moment she saw orthopedic surgeon Andrew Brooks, M.D., and scheduled her hip replacement surgery, the joint replacement team took her under their wing. "Everyone on the team helps make the journey as pleasant as possible," Svetz adds. "Even though I'm a nurse, my area of expertise is not orthopedics and I

have to admit I was scared to death to go through this major surgery."

The team eased her worries and had her looking forward to being pain-free. "They assured me the hip pain would be gone when I took my first steps after surgery—something that was so hard to believe—but they were 100 percent right! The hip pain I'd been living with was completely gone, just as promised."

Every step of the journey is carefully planned out and executed perfectly, Svetz explains. After leaving the hospital, a NorthBay Health at Home nurse visited her for dressing

changes and follow-up care and NorthBay's physical therapy team kept her exercising. When she was ready, she attended outpatient physical therapy.

"My post-surgical care was just as fantastic as my in-hospital care. I can't say enough about how impressed I was with the entire joint replacement experience," she adds. "And, I'm happy to report I returned to work only four short months after my hip replacement surgery. I feel wonderful and the pain is becoming a distant memory."

Looking back, she wishes she had done this a lot sooner. "I'm often asked how I knew it was time to have my hip replaced. My answer is this: When I realized I was missing out on many of the things I love doing, I knew it was time. My quality of life and happiness were being compromised by my hip pain. Dr. Brooks offered a solution and NorthBay's Joint Replacement Program made it possible. I'm glad to have the surgery behind me, but I would do it again in a heartbeat!"

Catherine Svetz, R.N.



Couple Faces Pancreatic Cancer

Strong Marriage, Solid Resources Keep Them Focused

In May 2009, Madeleine Burroughs of Fairfield had a monthlong stomach ache. That summer, thanks to the insistence of her husband, George Falley, she sought medical help and was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, the same cancer that took the life of actor Patrick Swayze much too soon.

“Doctors kept telling her to ‘go home and take an aspirin,’” says George. “Finally I got mad and stood up for my wife. We were in the ER and I said we weren’t leaving until we knew what was causing her pain.”

An MRI provided the answer just a few days later. A biopsy at UCSF Medical Center confirmed the diagnosis and the couple was referred to oncologist Brian Vikstrom, M.D., at the NorthBay Cancer Center. Pancreatic cancer is an aggressive form of cancer that forms in the tissues of the pancreas. Located in the lower abdomen behind the stomach, the pancreas aids in digestion.

While it was a diagnosis no one wanted to hear, the couple had the strength of their 40-year marriage to

help Madeleine tackle the disease. George took family leave from his job with San Francisco City Hall’s custodial department to spend months at his wife’s side.

“I cared for my grandmother and mother, so I’m well prepared to care for my wife,” says George. “The most important part of keeping Madeleine comfortable is pain management, and I’ve become an expert at scheduling her drugs.”

Now back at work, George sets out his wife’s medications each morning before beginning his commute to the city. He is always available if she needs him.

“George and Madeleine are both inspirations,” says Janet Black, R.N., clinical manager of medical oncology. “Madeleine is so positive and George is totally dedicated to her care.”

Still, the couple knows future plans are made by the day, not the year. “I told Dr. Vikstrom to always tell us the truth,” George says. “We’ll cry a little and then move on, but we always want the truth. He’s been very honest with us.”

Cancer Center Nurse Louise Henry, R.N., gives Madeleine a drink while her son, Julian Falley, looks on.



Holly McKee, right, and her daughter, Madyson, visit with ABC Clinic educator Kathie Thoming, left, and counselor Heidi Beck.

A Life-Changing Love for Her Baby

Baby Madyson glows with good health as she sits on mom Holly McKee’s lap in the NorthBay ABC (A Baby’s Coming) Clinic in Fairfield. Just 2 months old, she doesn’t know she inspired her mom to turn her life around at warp speed.

When Holly, 24, arrived at the ABC Clinic for prenatal care, she was homeless, using methamphetamines and smoking marijuana and tobacco. Her biggest fear was that her baby would be taken away from her.

“I needed help, but I was afraid to open up about my drug use,” Holly says. “As I came to my appointments I began to feel I was in a place where people not only cared about my baby, but for me too, and that I could trust them.”

At the clinic, she had regular check-ups and attended prenatal classes, all provided at no charge. The ABC Clinic provides prenatal care for more than 600 low-income mothers each year. Holly received care from Ann Marie Ziomek, the clinic’s certified nurse midwife.

“The more comfortable I became with Ann Marie, the more I was able

to open up and tell the truth about the changes I needed to make,” she says. “I was ashamed of myself and knew I had to tell on myself, no matter how hard it seemed.”

She finally discussed her addictions with Ann Marie, who suggested she and her boyfriend talk with Heidi Beck, the ABC Clinic’s counselor.

“Heidi helped me talk about the things I needed to change without judging me,” Holly says. “She also was there to help me and my boyfriend discuss any problems we were having with each other.”

Heidi referred her to the Solano County Substance Abuse Assessor who then referred her to Project Aurora in Vallejo, a substance abuse program that helps pregnant women become drug-free.

“I no longer felt alone in my battle and I got the help I needed to give myself and my baby a better and healthier chance at life,” Holly says.

She also completed the entire Prenatal Education Program taught by Kathie Thoming. “Through the classes I realized the harm I was

doing to my baby and it really helped me to care more about myself and my unborn child,” Holly says. “So I changed, and once I did, I was able to see how easy it could be to change. If you want something badly enough, you can turn your life around and make it happen. I wanted my baby more than anything and I was determined to keep her.”

She credits the Baby’s First/ABC Program for helping to change her life. “The best thing that ever happened to me was getting pregnant and being a part of this program,” she says. “They never forced me to do anything. They gave me the loving care and support I needed to see I had options and that I could be the decision-maker of my life for the better. I will always be grateful that I had their help. All they really wanted to do was help me take my child home.”

She and her boyfriend and their baby now share an apartment in Vallejo. “My life has never been better than it is now and I’ve never been happier, thanks to the way they helped me to help myself.”



Oh, the Stories NICU Parents Can Tell...

NorthBay Shares the Best
Tales of Babies' First Days

Last summer, to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of NorthBay Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), parents were asked to share their birth stories. All 17 stories can be read at wellspring.org.

Above: Twins Brianna and Alyssa Cahoon (photo courtesy of Cahoon family)

Twins Arrive Early and Need Special Care

Susan Cahoon and her husband were living in Vacaville when they got news of their first pregnancy. "My husband, who was originally from Vacaville, had just finished school to become a physician's assistant. I am a nurse and worked in NorthBay Medical Center's ICU/PCU. We were very excited to welcome our first child into the world. However, in December of 2004 we discovered we would not be welcoming one baby, but two!

"I was 33 and 1/2 weeks at the time of our delivery. We came to NorthBay at 10 p.m. on April 6, 2005. Alyssa was born first, to a room full of doctors, nurses, students, anesthesiologists, and the ever-important NICU nurses, to care for the girls. A team of nurses for each of my girls made me feel so much better about our early delivery. Alyssa was able to be passed to me for a short period of time before we prepared for Brianna. She was beautiful, so much more than I could imagine. She arrived vaginally weighing 4 pounds, 5 ounces, with no complications at birth. After Alyssa came, the nurses were already checking on Brianna to make sure she was head down for delivery.

"The doctor ruptured my fluid for Brianna and for a brief moment I could see the outline of Brianna's form through my skin before she was delivered. Brianna joined us exactly six minutes after Alyssa at 10:46 a.m. She was also born vaginally. Brianna weighing 5 pounds, 5 ounces, was also a beautiful baby, but was not as lucky as Alyssa and needed the tender, devoted care of her NICU nurses more. Brianna had premature lungs and ended up on CPAP for the first 24 hours and then was intubated for the second 24 hours.

"Because I am an R.N., I expected myself to respond to the situation as such. Being a first-time mom, I was not ready for the flood of emotions that came upon me as I saw my girls needing so much help to live! Each time the alarms would ring, they would remind me that I did not need to worry, that I was a mom, not a R.N. right now. They welcomed me to sit beside the girls the whole day if I wished. As the girls grew and improved, they encouraged our care of them more and more. I am certain that my husband and I would not have been as confident in our care of our twins were it not for the support of these ladies!

"Eighteen days after Alyssa and Brianna were delivered, we were able to take them home together! We have since moved back to Pennsylvania, but are so grateful to have delivered our girls at NorthBay. Today we are preparing them to start Kindergarten! They are five years old, and do not look like they were ever preemies."



"I was stunned. Really Stunned. That is the day my life changed. There is not a day that I do not look at my son and think about that day."

Transplant Patient Couldn't Believe the News

Jennifer Britton of Vacaville wanted to be a mom her entire life, but health problems made that dream unlikely. She found out at a young age that she would mostly likely not ever conceive. First, her periods were erratic. Second, at age 19 she received a liver transplant.

As she tells her story: "So after several years of marriage, I really was stunned when in 2004 my friends started telling me they thought I was pregnant. My chest was growing bigger, I was losing weight because I was always feeling ill, and I could drink a gallon of milk in about five minutes, and did, often at 2 a.m."

After undergoing routine tests related to her liver transplant, she received the startling news: Her pregnancy had already progressed five months.

"I was stunned. Really stunned," she wrote. So was her husband. Then she saw the ultrasound of her son. "That is the day my life changed," Jennifer says. "There is not a day that I do not look at my son and think about that day."

Tony Britton Davis was born a month early and spent three weeks in the NICU.

Jennifer received the news that she was pregnant after undergoing routine tests related to her liver transplant.



First Days in an Incubator

Maria Abueg of Vallejo gave birth to her son, Justin, above, by emergency c-section at a Vallejo hospital last year. Because of complications, including meconium aspiration, he was sent to NorthBay Medical Center's NICU for advanced care.

"It was dreamlike to go through the events so quickly," she wrote. "Wasn't I supposed to still be in labor? Instead I was looking at Justin lying in the transfer incubator. I hadn't touched him yet. The nurse in charge of the transfer reassured me that he would get to the NICU safely. For two days, as I recovered, Justin gained independence from his oxygen support, and the new daddy shuttled between two cities to make sure we were both okay. He was grateful to the NorthBay NICU department and grandparents who were allowed to guard our newborn and his oxygen helmet.

"Near the end of Day 3, I finally made it to the NICU. I held my baby for the first time along with all his monitoring wires."

Parents' NICU Stories Celebrate Children of All Ages

A Shocking Defect Revealed

Faith Seibert of Vacaville gave birth to her son, Ruger Troy Seibert, in 2009, at only 35 weeks. "Aside from being small, Ruger was beautiful and healthy," Faith wrote. "He didn't cry much and took to breast feeding very quickly. NorthBay doctors in the NICU were happy and even a little surprised by how well he was doing. At eight days old they agreed to let us do the overnighter at the hospital, and if all went well, he'd be going home the next day.

"As my husband and I prepared for the stay, the NICU doctors were doing their last physical check up of Ruger. The doctor wasn't sure, but he thought he heard a slight heart murmur. To be on the safe side, they called in the pediatric cardiologist. To everyone's surprise, there was indeed a problem. Ruger had a heart defect, transposition of the greater vessels, and he would need open heart surgery immediately."

Arrangements were quickly made and Ruger was picked up and transported to Children's Hospital in Oakland by helicopter.

"It was the hardest thing we've ever gone through, watching our son be flown away in a tiny incubator," she remembers. "As we gathered our son's few belongings from the NorthBay NICU, we received hugs and sweet words of support from all the shocked nurses and doctors.

"Ruger underwent open heart surgery at just 10 days old. The operation was successful but the road to recovery was long, hard and painful. While in Oakland the NorthBay nurses and doctors checked up on our family and even helped to get Ruger back to NorthBay for the remainder of his hospital time so that he could be closer to home."

An Early Start Doesn't Stop Her Boy From Thriving

Michelle Bence of Vacaville gave birth to her son, Nicholas, in 1986, two months early. "I was rushed to the hospital, for unknown reasons, my water was leaking," Michelle wrote. "It was explained that our baby would be born 'premature' and would need to go to the NICU after birth. Dr. David Johnson and Dr. Richard Bell soon arrived, explaining they would be caring for our baby in the NICU. When our beautiful baby boy was born on Nov. 12, my husband and I cried with tears of joy for our precious little boy.

"Dr. Bell, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Kramer and our wonderful nurses, Nancy, Mary Lou, Leslie, Sandy, Brenda and Jackie always explained what was happening and what to expect. They calmed our fears and worries with their

expert mannerisms and professionalism. We had nothing but positive encouragement from these very special people.

"From the moment we came home, our little boy grew and thrived and caught up to children his age very quickly. The milestones passed: crawling, walking, talking, preschool and friendships. Kindergarten, and then grade school with all the extra-curricular activities. High school came quickly with his driver's license, dances, friends and employment.

"Nicholas now stands six feet tall, attends Sacramento State University, has a fiancée and prepares to graduate with honors this coming May, 2011, and his wedding following in the summer. Nicholas is such a respectful, caring, loving, smart, funny young man bringing us so much love and joy. Our Nicholas is truly our miracle."

Driven to Get Diabetes Under Control

Jessie Salsman is a truck driver by trade. Throughout his career, he has been behind the wheel of big-rigs, heavy equipment and garbage trucks. "I've been in a cab since Day 1," he says. "My life depends on being able to drive."

Commercial drivers in good health are required to pass a physical exam every two years to have their licenses renewed. A few years ago, Jessie was thrown a curve when he did not pass that crucial exam.

The physical revealed he had high blood pressure and a blood test indicated diabetes. The diagnosis was shocking, Jessie says, but the results did help explain some things. "I had been feeling sluggish, not sleeping well, drinking a lot of water and going to the bathroom a lot. But, I had been feeling that way for so long, I guess I was accustomed to it."

His physician, through another health care provider, put him on blood pressure and diabetes medicine, but it didn't help get either under control. "It didn't seem like the medicines were doing anything and I still wasn't feeling well." Frustrated with the lack of progress, Jessie started bringing his wife of 28 years, Deanne, with him to all medical appointments for moral support. "They just kept giving me different prescriptions."

At his next physical exam, his blood pressure was still high and an A1C hemoglobin test was even higher—charting a stratospheric 12. Normal is below six. The test indicated that his average blood glucose level for the past three months was in the 300s.

Jessie knew his career was on the line. "I was in danger of having my license suspended if I couldn't get those numbers straight."

By this time he had changed medical providers and came under the care of Douglas Freeman, M.D., of the NorthBay Center for Primary Care in Fairfield in June.

Dr. Freeman referred Jessie to Deborah Murray, M.D., director of the NorthBay Center for Endocrinology and Diabetes in Vacaville. "They are two of the best doctors I've had my whole life. They actually have beating hearts, actually care about their patients," Jessie says. "Dr. Murray got me straightened out and helped me get my life back together."

Jessie was put on a strict, low-carbohydrate diet, instructed to start exercising and taught how to

check his blood sugar two or three times a day. He was also given the newest class of diabetes medicines to help regulate blood glucose.

He says he gladly stepped up to the plate because "Dr. Murray made me realize that if I didn't do this, I would be facing a big career change and a shorter life. She really woke me up."

In addition to Dr. Murray, Jessie says his team includes Collette DaCruz, R.N., certified diabetes educator; Terry Stowell, registered dietitian; and his wife, Deanne. He has been working with his team on nutrition education, goal-setting and support since July. "I was a big rice eater and loved noodles. Collette and Terry showed me how it was important to eat brown rice and special low-carb bread. My wife is my coach, my biggest supporter, and she helps out by making my meals." He also now finds a way to exercise every day, either by riding a bike, walking or playing with his children.

All the hard work has paid off, as Jessie was able to get his blood pressure and diabetes under control. His commercial license was renewed this fall and he is back on the road again.



Deanne and
Jessie Salsman

Pilgrim's Journey

'Hiker-gal Heidi'
Hits the Road for
a Good Cause

The Cathedral of St. James in Santiago, Spain, was the dramatic destination of Heidi Campini's pilgrimage.



In the final moments before she reached the Cathedral of St. James, Heidi Campini remembers lying down on the large square, Plaza Obradoiro, in front of the majestic, sun-washed structure and fully savoring the elation, sending up prayers of thanks. "Halleujah! Hallejuah!!!" she wrote in the subject line in an e-mail to friends and followers, telling them, "I've arrived," and "I'm thrilled. Sound the trumpets—beat the drums!"

It took 42 days and 500 miles, but she reached her goal Oct. 14, 2010, which was to walk the "Camino de Santiago de Compostela," across northern Spain with the famed, historic cathedral as her finish line. It was both a pilgrimage and a labor of love for the Vaca Valley woman and longtime NorthBay Healthcare supporter, who used the opportunity to raise more than \$30,000 for the NorthBay Center for Women's Health.

The history of "The Camino" is vast—pilgrimages have been recorded since medieval times. According to legend, St. James' remains were carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain, where they were buried on the site of what is now called Santiago de Compostela.

Whenever St. James' birthday—July 25—falls on a Sunday, it is declared a Holy Year,

or Jubilee Year, and attracts many more travelers than in other years, explains Heidi. That was one reason she wanted to make her trek in 2010.

Actually, paths to the cathedral start all over Europe, but all end at Santiago. Heidi set out on Aug. 28, starting in the Pyrenees Mountains, traversing woodlands, rolling hills, the high desert plains of the sublime meseta, several moderate mountain passes, winding through ranches, vineyards, villages, cities and farmlands, across rivers and ancient stone bridges, on 2,000-year-old Roman roads, making her way west to Santiago.

Her nightly accommodations varied greatly, from the dorm-style bunk beds of "albergues" to rustic mattresses on the floor, pleasant pensions, rural countryside bed and breakfasts, a spacious cell at a former monastery, active convents and even a five-star hotel, built on the orders of Queen Isabella in 1492, the oldest continually operating hotel in the world.

She explored the quaint village of Burguete, where Hemingway stayed and signed the piano in a local tavern, and visited the famed Pamplona where the bulls run every July. As she walked through history, she witnessed sweetly singing nuns, partied with the masses at the 1,100-year birthday celebration for the city of Leon, savored tapas along the way, helped

cook dinners for other hungry pilgrims, attended special masses to bless pilgrims, took shelter under huge chestnut trees in Galicia, marveled at the 125 majestic stained glass windows and a wedding in the Leon Cathedral, and hugged the precious stone dotted, solid gold bust of St. James in Santiago.

Her backpack weighed about 13 pounds, and she carried just one extra set of clothing, alternating and washing the other set each day.

She tried to keep her daily walks to 12 miles or less, vowing to take it slow, using her afternoons and evenings to savor the villages, cities, architecture, culture, art and cuisine along the way, and getting to know her fellow travelers.

And oh, the people she met. "Everyone has a story," she says, her eyes sparkling. She recounts some of them in her travel journal:

"Met a Korean woman and her 7-year-old son!!! Imagine that!!! Husband doesn't like to walk, thinks she's crazy to fly to Spain and do this loooong walk."

"Several Aussies and an Austrian man have so wanted to talk American politics!!! Not why I'm here, although that could be a terrific reason to pilgrimage. I listen to their lovely English or German, make a few comments in whichever language they speak... and change the subject as quickly as I can."

"Met a Canadian Mountie who hasn't had a vacation in 10 years. Her boss and co-workers forced her to take time off."

"A Hungarian pediatrician and her engineer husband, wanting to reconnect after a couple of years of being far too busy with their respective careers."

"Spoke at length with a British woman who is writing a book on self-realization, mysticism and self-discovery. She is totally expecting something otherworldly to occur or appear on the Camino and plans to include all her experiences in the book."

"A Brazilian gal told me she left her 4-year-old with her husband because she needed a break before embarking on her next chapter: getting pregnant this winter, starting art school in the spring and becoming a new teacher once the new child is old enough."

Heidi said other pilgrims were surprised that she was doing her walk as a fundraiser and said they doubted they would get such support back home. "I can't believe that, but I do know that there's an amazing amount of generosity in Solano County."



Heidi says she's thankful she made it to the end with "happy feet." No blisters, no bruises, no blown-out knees. "I saw many people who had those problems, so I feel very

blessed. I had great weather, I met wonderful people from around the world, and I managed to raise money for a good cause. It was very rewarding on every level."

She took more than 2,000 photographs along the way, and has assembled them into a video, which can be viewed on www.NorthBay.org and on Youtube. She also sent detailed e-mails about her journey to friends and followers, signing off as "Your Peregrina (Pilgrim) gal," and "Hiker Gal Heidi." (For detailed excerpts, visit wellspring.northbay.org.)

Heidi has dedicated her trip to the spirit of women everywhere. "I walked alone, but I met many people and heard so many fascinating stories. Some people have asked if I was afraid, my answer is no, I was excited about the unexpected. It was something I really wanted to experience and I was energized to keep exploring. It's important to tap into one's inner adventurer frequently, awaken a can-do, courageous spirit and go for it."

Her goal, she says, is to get other women to consider all the joys and adventures that life offers. Apparently, she's been successful in that regard, because she's already been told by a number of women that she's inspired them to tackle some serious challenges in their lives, as well as a few who now also plan to walk at least part of the Camino in 2011.

Donations can be made to celebrate Heidi's journey. Make checks out to NorthBay Healthcare Foundation, with the North Bay Center for Women's Health as the recipient. The nonprofit 501(c)3 number is 94-2995085.

For more information about donating, contact Colleen Knight at (707) 646-3131 or Tim Johnson at (707) 646-3132.

Proceeds will be used to help pay for healthcare for women who cannot afford it.

Her goal is to get other women to consider all the joys and adventures that life offers.



ROMEO, Doc 'n' Roll Join the Team

Meet the newest members of NorthBay Healthcare's high-tech stroke response team: ROMEO and Doc 'n' Roll. Those are the names that rose to the top during a "Name the Robots" competition, which elicited nearly 500 suggestions from NorthBay Healthcare staff and the community at large.

The winners—Dr. Chad Tartar and Susan Munroe—now have new iPads for their efforts. Dr. Tartar's suggestion was ROMEO, which stands for Remotely Operated Medical Examination Organizer. Susan, a dosimetrist at the NorthBay Cancer Center, suggested Doc 'n' Roll.

"While we love the names the panel selected, it wasn't an easy choice," says Diane Barney, director of Public Relations. "There were a lot of great suggestions; it was very competitive."

Names were submitted via e-mail, and also during meet-and-greet sessions held in both hospitals and at community events. A license plate bearing the names of ROMEO and Doc 'n' Roll will be created by InTouch Health, the maker of the RP-7, to be placed on both 'bots.

The two robots are slightly different in appearance, although both are wireless and mobile and allow for offsite neurological specialists at Mercy Neurological Institute of Greater Sacramento to examine patients and consult with NorthBay emergency room physicians at a moment's notice, explains Kathy Richerson, vice president and chief nursing officer.

ROMEO, the robot at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield, stands about five feet tall, is blue and moves on wheels. It is remotely controlled by staff at Mercy. Its "head" is a video screen which projects the image beaming in from Mercy. On top of the screen are two cameras, which allow the Mercy representative to "see" a wide-angle shot or close up.



The winners, Susan Munroe and Dr. Chad Tartar.

Doc 'n' Roll, the robot at VacaValley Hospital, has similar head gear, but is known as the desktop model. He lives on a metal cart and is easily pushed into action whenever called.

"We were really touched by some of the suggestions," said Barney. "Some folks mentioned on their entry that a loved one had died from a stroke, and that if our program had been in existence then, it would be a different story. There were many encouraging comments with the entries."

One individual suggested the robots be named Bob and Marley, after musician Bob Marley. He explained that he was inspired by a Bob Marley song that says, "Don't worry about a thing, every little thing is going to be all right." He suggested that was the way NorthBay patients should feel, thanks to the stroke robots.

Other robot names that the judging panel liked included: Dr. Techno, Botley, Brainiac, Well-bot, Medibot and Bunny—named after the original hospital established in Fairfield, which later became Intercommunity Hospital and finally NorthBay Medical Center.

A few folks suggested two names together that worked well, and judges considered them as a package deal: Nuts and Bolts, Mercy and Percy, Ola (Hawaiian for life) and Kokua (Hawaiian, meaning to help), Arty and Cora—"Coronary artery, get it?" the contestant wrote.

"The contest was a lot of fun and engaged both staff and community, which is just what we wanted," said Diana Sullivan, service line director for the Heart & Vascular Program. "Now we'll shift our focus to educating the community to recognize the signs of a stroke, so treatment can begin as soon as possible. Our staff is trained, the robots are ready, and we are here to serve."

Telltale Signs of a Stroke

- ! Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- ! Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- ! Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- ! Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- ! Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

If you or someone with you has more than one of these symptoms, call 911.

New Document Helps Patients Make Final Care Wishes Known



While many people may be familiar with an Advanced Directive, there is another form available now that clearly outlines a patient's life-sustaining care wishes, according to Terrell VanAken, M.D., medical director for NorthBay Bridges. The form is called a POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment), and it gives seriously ill people—or those in very poor health, regardless of age—a way to ensure that their care wishes regarding CPR, aggressiveness of medical care and artificial nutrition, will be honored when it comes to end-of-life medical treatment.

The POLST was originally created in Oregon to address the challenges that occur when frail, elderly or chronically ill patients are transferred from medical facilities to home or skilled nursing facilities. California adopted the POLST after California State Sen. Lois Wolk wrote a bill that was signed into law in 2009.

Filling out a POLST form is entirely voluntary, Dr. VanAken says, but California law requires that the physician orders in a POLST be followed by healthcare providers, such as emergency medical personnel, nurses and doctors. The POLST is signed by both a doctor and the patient, and the original stays with the patient

as he or she moves through care facilities. If the patient is in a hospital, nursing home, or assisted living facility, the form will be in the medical record or file. If the patient is at home, it should be displayed in a visible place, such as on a refrigerator or bedside table. It will be easy to see in either place, as the form is printed in pink.

For more information, contact Dr. VanAken at (707) 624-7500, or go to www.finalchoices.org. At this Web site you will be invited to view a 12-minute video that clearly explains the form and how it guides patients and their families toward making their care wishes known.



Judy Yang, D.O.
(above) and
Angela Lim, D.O.



Fourth Center for Primary Care Opens

The NorthBay Center for Primary Care is pleased to announce the opening of its second medical office to serve the residents of Vacaville and the surrounding communities. Family Practitioner Angela Lim, D.O., (lower photo) and Pediatrician Judy Yang, D.O., are now accepting patients in what will be a six-physician practice.

Same day appointments are available, as in all Center for Primary Care offices. In addition to Vacaville, the medical group has offices in Fairfield and Green Valley.

"This beautiful new center is focused around the patient experience," says Joelyn Gropp, director of facilities development for NorthBay Healthcare. Foremost in the plans were patient comfort and an efficient flow through the office.

The 8,400-square-foot center includes a spacious foyer filled with natural light and views of the trees outside. The overall interior design is composed of sustainable products that reflect the colors of nature and bring a sense of sophistication to the center.

Contractor is Mike O'Brien of O'Brien Builders. Architect for the project is Forrar Williams Architects, Hilton Williams and Donna Lucchio; contractor is Mike O'Brien of O'Brien Builders.

The new office is located at VacaValley Health Plaza, 1010 Nut Tree Road on the VacaValley Hospital campus. To schedule an appointment, call (707) 624-8500

Day of Dance[®] FOR YOUR HEALTH

Event is Set for Feb. 26

NorthBay Center for Women's Health and Spirit of Women will sponsor Day of Dance, Saturday, Feb. 26, at Westfield Solano shopping mall in Fairfield. This national event encourages women to get moving through dance to strengthen their hearts and improve their fitness. There will be dance demonstrations, dance lessons and a women's health fair.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Join us at the mall and learn how to reduce your risk for heart disease. For more information, call the NorthBay Women's Health Resource Center at (707) 646-4267.

Girls Night Out a Huge Success

Nearly 500 women (and a handful of men) made the first NorthBay Spirit of Women "Girls Night Out" a sell-out success Thursday, Oct. 28, at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre.

Master and Mistress of Ceremonies, Vacaville Mayor Len Augustine and Guild volunteer Christine Franklin, introduced a fabulous fashion show that featured gowns from Downtown Fashions and the NorthBay Thrift shop. It was standing-room-only in the theatre for nationally known comedian Diana Jordan, who is so busy she didn't know if she was in Victorville or Vacaville as she started her performance. But the non-stop laughter and standing ovation proved Oprah Winfrey right—Jordan is, without a doubt, one of the funniest people on the planet.

A portion of the proceeds from the night's festivities will help women in need get health checkups and mammograms.



Bringing Holiday Cheer to Local Children

NorthBay Healthcare employees brought holiday joy to more than 1,000 local children during their annual Adopt-a-School program and ABC Clinic Holiday Party.

This year, NorthBay adopted 57 classrooms at Fairview Elementary School in Fairfield and Padan Elementary School in Vacaville. Each class received the holiday gifts and parties requested by their teachers.

More than 200 children and their parents attended the annual ABC (A Baby's Coming) Clinic Holiday Party in the lobby of NorthBay Medical Center. The party featured teddy bears from Genentech, toys donated by NorthBay employees; interactive games and artwork, and refreshments.

PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT:

Santa Claus was a popular guest during NorthBay's Adopt-a-School holiday parties at Padan Elementary School in Vacaville Dec. 16.

NorthBay Healthcare Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Art DeNio popped out of a holiday-wrapped gift box to the delight of students at Fairview Elementary School in Fairfield Dec. 17.

Kimberly Rios, 3, holds up the gingerbread house she created during NorthBay Healthcare's annual holiday party for the families of the ABC (A Baby's Coming) Clinic Dec. 21.



Better Salute This GI Jane

As if launching the NorthBay Center for Women's Health in 2010 wasn't enough, Service Line Director Jane Prather started 2011 with a new task: She's now leading the Medical Task Force East—in Afghanistan.

Col. Prather—as she's known in her U.S. Army role—has embarked on a year-long mission, in which she'll oversee health care for about 60 percent of the U.S. Armed Forces in Afghanistan.

She's stationed in Bagram as the Deputy Commander of Medical Task Force East, a Joint Service-Coalition Forces Command, and will have responsibilities of coordinating U.S. medical assets as well as an Egyptian hospital, a Korean hospital and a Jordanian hospital in the area.

Some of these assets are an eight-bed, "Role 2" hospital in Salerno, which is a four-hour helicopter flight away from her base; dental, veterinarian, and preventive medicine teams; and several forward surgical teams, which can be dispatched to operate in a tent, if need be.

"I've really been looking forward to it. I've been training for 24 years to do this, and I'm good at my job," she said with confidence.

Still, the colonel has to temporarily leave her family, including a son who will graduate high school while she's away. "In truth, that's my one regret," she said.

Col. Prather was appointed service line director for the Women's Health Services in 2008. The NorthBay Center for Women's Health had its grand opening in January 2010, and soon joined Spirit of Women, a

national coalition of hospitals focused on promoting education around women's health issues.

In one year's time, she has hired staff, including a women's health coach, overseen plans for NorthBay's first Girl's Night Out, which opened to a sold-out crowd in October, established a Women's Resource Center, penned several introductions to NorthBay Healthcare's edition of the Spirit of Women quarterly magazine, and was just starting on plans for the Feb. 26 Day of Dance event before she had to ship out.

The Vacaville resident joined NorthBay Healthcare in 2001 as Wound Care Services Program Director. Her military career began in 1986, when she was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps, attending officer basic training in Texas. She started with a dental detachment, focusing on dental administration, and became a registered nurse in 1989. Since then Col. Prather has had a multitude of assignments in the United States and Europe.

Her last big tour of duty came in 2007, when she was in charge of a patient administration division at a hospital in Kansas. She likes to tell her friends she did nine months hard time in Leavenworth—"that's Fort Leavenworth."

This tour, she expects, will be a little more intense. Still, she plans to stay in touch as much as she can with her colleagues and patients at NorthBay, promising to post commentary on the NorthBay Center for Women's Health Facebook page—at least those experiences deemed appropriate by the U.S. Army.



For the Love of Maggy

NorthBay Guild Volunteer Raises Money for Kenyan Girl's Surgery

If Shahane Everett has her way, a 5-year-old girl in Kenya is going to have surgery very soon. Shahane, a NorthBay Guild volunteer and 19-year-old Vacaville High School graduate, managed to raise nearly \$1,000 last year, after meeting Maggy and her mother, Leah, during a summer trip in which she volunteered three weeks at an orphanage and special needs school in a rural African village.

Shahane, who dreams of some day becoming a pediatrician, is attending Napa Valley Community College, and volunteers one day a week for the

Guild in the NorthBay Center for Women's Health.

During her adventure, she lived with a host family with six brothers and sisters, and paid a young man with a motorcycle to get her to and from the school and orphanage.

The village where she stayed—Kakamega—is roughly the size of Vacaville, but doesn't bear much resemblance. There is but one real Americanized bathroom in the entire village, and that's in a new store. Most bathrooms in Kakamega consist of a shack with a hole in the ground, she explains with a smile.

Most of the families live in houses made from mud and dung. There are cows, chickens and goats in most yards, and vegetable gardens scattered about, recalls Shahane.

She paid \$300 to her host family, and for that she had a bed, a roof over her head and food for three weeks.

Most Kenyans speak a little English, at least enough to communicate, she says. Shahane learned a little Swahili and formed what she hopes will be a lifetime bond with many of the people.

But the one who really captured her heart was Maggy.

The child became ill with meningitis when she was 8 months old. Although she survived, it left her with permanent nerve damage on her left side. Her foot is curved around, and cannot bear weight. Doctors there have determined it is the most pressing of her health issues, and say \$550 will cover the cost of surgery.

It inspired Shahane to embark on a fundraising mission once she got back to California. Her story was reported in local newspapers, and she shared it with local service clubs. A local fire-



Leah holds Maggy, who is not shy with smiles.

fighter picked up the cause and taught a CPR class for free, offering the donations given to Maggy's cause. The money raised will ensure the surgery can take place this spring.

The initial surgery is only the first of many surgeries the girl will need, says Shahane. Her arm is also stagnant and she holds it tightly to her body, because stretching out causes pain. She was receiving therapy until her mother lost her job. The sessions have lapsed, but Shahane hopes the extra money can pay for more. It is important that Maggy stretch, so the muscles won't atrophy. She also has problems swallowing and speaking, and the drool has caused sores around her lips.

Doctors believe that with continued therapy she can be taught how to swallow and speak, which should clear up the skin condition. She also needs arm and leg braces.

"There's just so much that has to be done to help her," says Shahane. "When I met her and her mother, Leah, I was shocked at how positive they are, about how much they smile. They never asked me for money, it's just something I want to do."

The pair live with Maggy's grandparents, who operate the orphanage.

"I had a real connection with Leah," says Shahane. "And I could see how hard it is to take care of Maggy, but she's just amazing. She smiles and gets excited and beams with joy when you pay attention to her. I just want to give her a chance to have a normal life. I met many folks with great needs in Kenya, but Maggy really touched me and I felt I had to do something to make a difference."



Children at the Kenyan school for special needs thrive under a visitors' attention.

NEWS BRIEFS

Join the Run for Good in April

NorthBay Healthcare is pleased to sponsor the third annual "Run for Good 5K," Saturday, April 9, to benefit the Matt Garcia Youth Center in Fairfield.

For more information, visit www.runforgood5k.com.

A Day for Women Features Renee Rongen

Pamper yourself at NorthBay Healthcare's popular "A Day for Women," event set for Saturday, April 16, at the NorthBay Administration and Conference Center in Green Valley.

The event's keynote speaker is Renee Rongen, an internationally known inspirational humorist.

For more information, call (707) 646-3280.

Celebration for Cancer Survivors is June 5

Surviving cancer is certainly something to celebrate and survivors and their families around the nation will do just that on the first Sunday in June.

In Solano County, survivors will be feted at the 15th Annual National Cancer Survivor's Day "Celebration of Life," in Fairfield. The event is co-sponsored by NorthBay Cancer Center and the Solano Unit of the American Cancer Society.

For more information, call the American Cancer Society at (707) 425-5066.

A Perennially Classic Golf Event

The 27th Annual Golf & Tennis Classic, a popular fund-raising event organized by members of the NorthBay Guild, is always a sell-out and it benefits the programs of NorthBay Healthcare.

This year's Golf & Tennis Classic will be July 11, 2011 at the Green Valley Country Club.

To sign up for the event, contact NorthBay Healthcare Foundation at (707) 646-3133.

NorthBay Advanced Medicine Lecture Series

Three presentations designed to provide health information to the layman are planned this spring. All begin at 6 p.m., at the NorthBay Administration and Conference Center in Green Valley. For details, call (707) 646-3280.

MARCH 10 Pediatrician Michael Ginsberg, M.D., on ADHD

MAY 12 Dr. Nancy McAfee, a pediatrician and internal medicine physician at the NorthBay Center for Primary Care.

JUNE 9 Dr. Robin Price, family practice physician at the NorthBay Center for Women's Health.

DREAM of a LIFETIME In Their Final Days... Making Dreams Come True



Veronica Wertz
shares a hug with
Gino Goodman.

Chemo Kid's Dream Comes True

Editor's Note: Giovanni "Gino" Goodman passed away on Dec. 30, 2010, at his home. Here is the story of the fulfillment of his dream, just weeks before his death.

On Dec. 4, Giovanni "Gino" Goodman found himself huddled with his father and best friend amid the bedlam of Reser Stadium in Corvallis, Ore., watching his beloved University of Oregon Ducks crush their rival Oregon State Beavers, 37–20.

For Gino, who is battling non-Hodgkins lymphoma and just entered NorthBay's hospice program in November, being at the game was nothing short of a miracle. "It's been an adrenaline rush I haven't come down from yet," recalls Gino, 26.

Gino shared his dream with Veronica Wertz, NorthBay Hospice coordinator, who put the "Dream Team" to work. "It started out small—to see a game," Veronica says, "and it just blossomed, picked up velocity and

before we knew it, so many people, some complete strangers, were doing whatever they could to help."

And every part of the day seemed to supersede the moment before, Gino says. To finally be able to see the Ducks, and see them live in Oregon, in front row seats at the "Civil War," and then to get there by private jet; well, it was almost too much. And while all that was great, "the best trick was to be there with my two best friends: my friend, Mario Cortez, and my Dad. It means a lot to me."

Gino's day started at 7:30 a.m., when he and the entourage left Vacaville for Buchanan Field in Concord. He had been told they would fly to Corvallis in a private jet, and "I had two notions about that," he says with a sly smile. "In my head, I thought this could be a rinky-dink plane, or it could be something 'fancy-swancy.' And it was fancy. I was in shock. It was the smoothest, fastest flight. We got there in an hour!"

In Corvallis, a waiting van took the group to first pick up the game

tickets and then to the stadium. Even though the day was young, Gino was beginning to show signs of fatigue, Veronica recalls, but he refused a wheelchair or even a cane. That was no surprise, she says, as she has come to know this personable young man as one who has sought to live as normal a life as possible, despite his Stage IV non-Hodgkins lymphoma. "He's so even-keel, such a 'cool cat,'" she says, "always so appreciative and polite."

The group got to the field early enough to wander among tailgaters and soak in the pre-game atmosphere on a cool, crisp Oregon morning.

Then, in their front-row seats before kick-off, Gino was able to greet some players, shake hands and absorb the whole experience. Despite sitting amidst a sea of orange-and-black-clad OSU fans, they were gracious and Gino, decked out in his green and yellow Duck gear, stood out enough to earn some camera time on ESPN and even an interview.

When the National Anthem was played before the game's start, Gino's Dad, Guglielmo, says he found himself overcome with emotion. "I was bawling."

Despite fatigue, Gino stayed through the last play. "Sometimes the human spirit fuels us enough to just keep going," Veronica observes.

The game ended with a Duck victory, propelling the team on to the national championship game Jan. 10, which only added to the day's experience, Gino acknowledges.

And yet there was more. When the group reconvened at a nearby hotel, they were greeted by representatives from the Rose Bowl, Nike and several local politicians. But Gino's opportunity to pose with the Red Bull girls made him smile at the recollection.

The group then piled back into the van, headed to the airport and

back to California. "The experience was incredible," recalls Foundation Board Member Bob Dias, who as a Dream Team member served as chauffeur for the group.

"The whole day was a metaphor for a football game, where you're on the field, receive the ball, make a run for it despite all the obstacles, and get a touchdown."

The best part of the whole experience? "The anticipation before you go. I was wondering what it would be like to see the game, what it would be like to be in a private jet. It was a wonderful experience and I felt like royalty. Everyone treated me really well, I was touched," Gino says.

Gino's dream was the 15th to be realized by the Dream of a Lifetime program since it was begun in 2009. And, while his evolved into a logistical miracle thanks to many generous benefactors, most requests have had more simple outcomes: a family portrait, a catered meal, or a flight home for one last visit.

Goodman was almost 21 when he was diagnosed, and it came on the heels of losing his mother to cancer. In the past five years, he has undergone numerous chemotherapy treatments and two bone marrow transplants.

While seeking a donor for the second transplant, it was discovered that Gino's sister, Gabriella, was suffering from a rare disease which meant she could not donate, even though they were a perfect match.

Gino, a jazz musician and hip-hop artist, has turned to music to express his feelings throughout the experience. Called "The Chemo Kid," his music has been heard in clubs, on the radio and on YouTube. He hopes by sharing his story with others, it will help give them a different outlook in their battle.

"I hope to give other cancer patients a glimpse into what they could be doing, instead of what most are doing. They should be out enjoying life. It doesn't hurt to party once in a while."



Giovanni "Gino" Goodman (center) pauses to pose with his father, Guglielmo, and his best friend, Mario Cortez, before boarding a plane to Oregon.

DREAM of a LIFETIME In Their Final Days... Making Dreams Come True

Daughter Makes Special Video of Her Mom's Memories

Editor's Note: Nancy Orloff passed away Dec. 26, 2010. This is the story of the fulfillment of her dream.

Nancy Orloff, 93, may have spent her early years in Chicago, but her heart is in Front Royal, Virginia, the place she called home for more than 50 years. Nancy moved to Front Royal—a small suburb 60 miles southeast of Washington, D.C.—as a young bride shortly after World War II. The newlyweds soon put down roots in their new community, and raised their only daughter, Barbara, there.

Nancy ran several businesses in Front Royal, including one that served as a gas station, country store and diner. “Nancy did it all,” recalls Barbara. “She’d do oil changes and run the grill. But, she could clean up and look like a million dollars.” Nancy was also very involved with her church and in the community, as a businesswoman and member of the local chamber of commerce.

But, Nancy left her beloved Front Royal behind seven years ago, when she moved to California to live with Barbara. At that time, “she was still getting around, with a cane and then a walker,” Barbara says. Her health declined over the past two years, and she is now under the care of NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement. That’s when the Dream of a Lifetime team learned that Nancy wished for one more visit home.

It turned out to be a complicated dream to fulfill, as the Dream Team was faced with the frustrating logistics of traveling 3,000 miles with a patient in declining health.



During Virginia Visit

Not to be undone, the Dream Team kept working on various angles to bring Nancy’s dream to fruition. It was decided it would be best for Barbara herself to fly back to Virginia, to “visit the places and people that were important to Mom.”

Dream of a Lifetime then hired a Front Royal photographer to accompany Barbara and document the trip, and also provided Barbara with a camera and Flip video so she could record interviews and take pictures. The timing was fortuitous, as one of Nancy’s good friends passed away just days after being interviewed.

Barbara spent a total of four days in Virginia and two days with the photographer, who then compiled the pictures and videos on to a DVD. Nancy has since watched the six-minute video several times, and each viewing was emotional. “It’s very special, for her and for me,” Barbara says.

A ‘Beary’ Unique Gift

Nina Gaston, 54, was losing her eight-year battle with cancer but felt it was important to leave a special memory for her only grandchild, Jack. She and the three-year-old were close, says Nina’s husband, Jim.

Nina and Thrieza Zapanta, medical social worker for NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement, came up with an idea: a special teddy bear made just for Jack.

Veronica Wertz, Dream of a Lifetime coordinator for NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement, brought Nina pictures of various teddy bears available from Build a Bear in Fairfield, and she selected one. Nina, a native of Kentucky and an Air Force veteran, helped out by giving Veronica some of her clothes from which a special outfit would be fashioned by Hospice nurse Donna Lee. Donna is an expert seamstress and she volunteered to recreate a Kentucky T-shirt and hat for the tiny bear. An anonymous Dream Maker donated funds to purchase the bear and extra clothing, which included an Air Force uniform in honor of Nina’s service, and Build a Bear donated gift certificates so that Nina’s grandson could pick out other outfits, as well.

The bear was also equipped with a recording device so that Nina could leave a message for her grandson, but she was not able to record it before her health took a turn for the worse. “At first I was a bit upset about that,” says Jim, “but then I realized, what would you say?”

The special bear, dressed in its Air Force uniform, was delivered to Nina just hours before she passed away, and then the bear was given to Jack. “The Kentucky outfit is awesome,” Jim says. “They were really able to take the shirt and hat and size it down so that it fit the bear.”

Jack has asked about his grandmother in the months since, Jim notes, “and we tell him, ‘remember the bear? Remember the story about the bear?’”



A Luscious Luau Celebrates

Frances Demerin came under the care of NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement just a few months before her 90th birthday. As the matriarch of a large extended family, Frances’ loved ones held out hope that she would live to see this milestone, and that they could celebrate it with her. “We were told her time was very limited, and that she may not reach 90,” recalls her son, Ron. “But then she stabilized and we thought, let’s go for it. Let’s have a nice reunion, a celebration of life while she is still with us.”

Plans for Frances’ special party swung into high gear, with the help of NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement’s Dream of a Lifetime program. The biggest challenge was finding a venue large enough to accommodate the entire clan, as the guest list soon swelled to more than 100 people, says Veronica Wertz, Dream of a Lifetime coordinator for NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement.

After securing the Joseph Nelson Community Center in Suisun, the Dream Team prepared invitations and mailed them out. The Dream Team ordered a special cake and also made transportation arrangements to have Frances brought to the community center, as she was bedridden and unable to speak or communicate clearly.

Heritage, Spirit of Frances

“People came from all over—from Hawaii, Georgia, Florida,” as well as from all parts of California, Ron says. “All five of her children were there, her grandchildren, her brother, first cousins, second cousins.” In all, more than 120 people were able to gather that day. To honor Frances’ Filipino and Hawaiian roots, the family chose a luau theme—complete with roasted pig and leis for the guest of honor—and planned to make it a surprise for her.

On the day of the event, Frances’ granddaughter served as escort. As she was brought into the room by wheelchair, she greeted her guests with “Aloha!” and the crowd cheered and shouted with excitement, while Frances reacted with joy. “She remembered a lot of the people,” Ron says.

During the party, Frances’ younger brother serenaded her with a traditional Hawaiian song. “You could see his affection for her, so sweet and tender,” Veronica recalls. And, for a moment, “Frances was able to sing back.”

“It was tremendous for her,” Ron says of the day. “She couldn’t speak, but just cry. It was a good day for our family, a bonding moment for everybody. What a wonderful send off.”



2011 Solano Wine & Food Jubilee Returns to Nut Tree



Break out your fancy party attire, grab your favorite date and make sure you have secured a ticket to Solano County's biggest social event of the year: the 24th Annual Solano Wine & Food Jubilee. The gala, a perennially sold-out affair, is the primary fund-raising event for NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement programs, and it returns to the Nut Tree Complex in Vacaville on April 8, 2011.

The area's premiere food and wine tasting event offers ticket-holders an opportunity to spend hours tasting an array of sweet and savory foods from the region's most notable restaurants and food merchants, paired with pourings from hundreds of top-flight wineries and breweries.

It will be held under a large tent, through a joint arrangement with Total Home & Garden Show, which is scheduled to be at the Nut Tree after the Jubilee, from April 15 to 17. This large venue means there will be a wide selection of foods, wines, brews and desserts for ticket-holders to sample.

Jubilee organizers have also invited one of the area's most popular and in-demand dance bands to perform at the 2011 event. The Time Bandits, an eight-piece rhythm and blues and rock band, are well known for their mastery of irresistible dance tunes from the '70s to today.

For the first time, organizers are also offering a "VIP Table for Eight" package that includes many of the benefits afforded VIP ticket-holders—early admittance and some special treats on arrival, and access to the "VIP Lounge"—for \$1,000. This special reserved package must be purchased before March 15, 2011.

A Silent Auction features an array of items, from signed movie posters to a start-up wine cellar, from tickets to sporting events to exotic jewelry and art glass.

The Jubilee \$20,000 cash raffle is a highly anticipated part of the evening. This year, organizers are offering a "buy two, get one free" incentive to help boost ticket sales. Top prize is \$10,000 in cash, and there will be many other cash prizes for those lucky ticket-holders.

The Solano Wine & Food Jubilee's Presenting Sponsors for 2011 are Patt & Al Shaw, Dr. Lee Freeman, Burger King Restaurants, Gold's Gym and the Nut Tree. The event benefits NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement, which provides its services to all regardless of their ability to pay.

The Solano Wine & Food Jubilee, a black tie-optional affair, gets under way at the Nut Tree Complex beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tickets, for those ages 21 and over, must be purchased in advance and are \$75 each, or \$100 at the door, if still available. To purchase tickets, call (707) 646-3133, or visit www.wineandfoodjubilee.org.

NorthBay Healthcare Foundation Web Site Has New Look

NorthBay Healthcare Foundation unveiled its new Web site at <http://foundation.northbay.org>. The site has a new look and adds features that will make it easier to buy event tickets, make a charitable donation, and sign up to become a volunteer.

The site will use videos and slide-shows to offer visitors a glimpse into what it's like

to attend one of NorthBay Healthcare Foundation's fun, fund-raising events, such as the Solano Wine & Food Jubilee, or the Golf & Tennis Classic. Another special section provides visitors with a way to catch up on the latest NorthBay Healthcare Foundation news. Visitors can follow the Dream of a Lifetime events or sign up to be a volunteer.

All of NorthBay Healthcare Foundation's fund-raising efforts help support an array of programs and services at NorthBay Healthcare.

The foundation's efforts would not be possible without the tremendous support it receives from its cadre of volunteers. Visit <http://foundation.northbay.org> to learn more.



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.

Discipline is 1-2-3 Magic for Parents
Discipline is 1-2-3 Magic for Educators
Simple, effective discipline strategies for children 2-12. This program is easy to learn and it works. Cost: \$30 per couple/educator. Call (707) 421-4155.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP)
• Parent Education Preschool (2-5 Year Olds)
• Parenting Teenagers
For more information, call (707) 421-4155. These classes are offered through the Fairfield-Suisun Adult School.

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.

Caregivers' Support Group • Anyone involved in caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or a dementia-related illness is invited to participate. Monthly. Cost: Free. Call (707) 624-7971.

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

Grief and Bereavement Support Groups • Adult support group is on-going. Cost: Free. Call (707) 646-3575.

Teen & Children's Bereavement Support Groups • NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement offers free bereavement support groups for teens, age 13 through 17, and children age 6 through 12 on an as-needed basis. Cost: Free. For a schedule and more information, call (707) 646-3575.

PEACE (Parent Education And Custody Effectiveness) • Create an effective parenting relationship between divorcing and separating parents. Endorsed by judicial and parenting advocates. Classes meet on Saturday. Call (707) 421-4155.

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

The New Beginnings Stroke Support Group • Provides participants an opportunity to connect with others who have similar experiences associated with stroke. Group meets third Tuesday of every month. Topics include: impact on daily living, coping with challenges and stressors, treatment and available resources. Cost: Free. Call (707) 624-7015.

North Bay Mended Hearts • A support group for cardiac patients and their families. Monthly meetings rotate between Fairfield or Vacaville. For details, call (707) 646-5072.

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 to enroll.

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

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

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