

HOMECARE

connection

A PUBLICATION OF THE RUTLAND AREA VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION & HOSPICE AND DORSET NURSING

The Home Care Experience

Fifteen years after joining the Board of Directors of Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice, Treasurer and Finance Committee member Tom Shortle got to experience RAVNAH in a whole new way – as a patient.

It's safe to say that Tom Shortle is familiar with Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (RAVNAH) and the many services it provides. Tom is a longtime board member, having served on RAVNAH's Board of Directors since 1998. But in September of this year, Tom got firsthand experience of RAVNAH's home care services as a patient.

About a year ago, Tom began noticing a difference in his hip. His movement was restricted, he experienced "not quite pain, but definite discomfort," and, despite his best efforts to disguise such discomfort, he developed a limp. When he finally decided to seek medical advice, his doctor informed him that the cartilage in his hip was gone, and what he was dealing with was essentially "bone on bone." Tom is a former avid runner and golfer who had been physically active all his life, so the news that he would need a hip replacement—which meant major surgery—was not well received. However, as Tom tells it, five minutes after meeting Dr. Lighthart from Vermont Orthopaedic Surgery and hearing what he had to say, he had full confidence in him performing the surgery.

The Procedure

Prior to the surgery, Tom attended a three-hour class intended to educate patients on what to expect from the entire process from start to finish. He learned how the surgery would be performed, how long the post-surgery rehab would be, and most importantly, what his level of commitment to his own rehabilitation needed to be.

As part of the surgery, Dr. Lighthart took the ball out of the hip socket, replaced it, and then anchored the ball down on the femur. The

procedure lasted around 35 minutes and Tom, anxious to return home, spent only one night in the hospital. That's when the real work began.

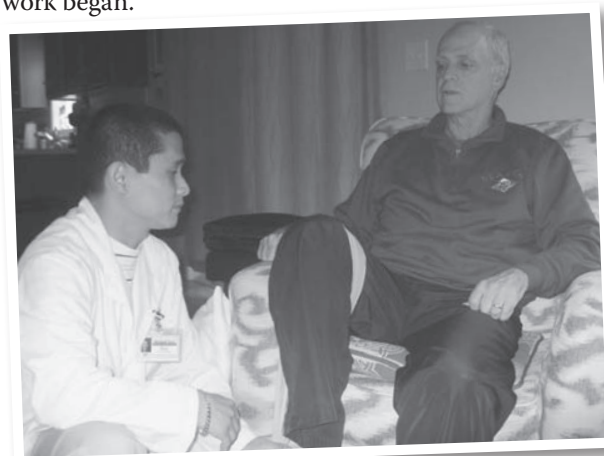
The Recovery

Even though Dr. Lighthart had advised that recovery time could range anywhere from four to six months, a friend had told Tom that he had undergone the same surgery and was back to his regular physical activity within four to five weeks. The relatively short procedure time misled Tom into thinking the surgery was less involved than it actually was: "With a procedure lasting such a short time, how extensive could the healing process be?" thought Tom. Tom set his own rehab goal to be about four to five weeks.

The RAVNAH Experience

At discharge from the hospital, Tom needed to choose a home care agency to continue the physical therapy necessary for his recovery. "Because of my relationship with RAVNAH I knew which home care agency I wanted to pick." Tom was discharged from Rutland Regional Medical Center on a Wednesday and RAVNAH was at Tom's home on Thursday.

Marty Locsin, PT, was assigned to Tom. Together they worked out a schedule for visits of two times a week and quickly fell into an easy routine. Marty praised Tom for his effort and willingness to perform the exercises he prescribed. "You have to have patience," Marty explained. "Tom was very compliant and willing to follow a careful regimen that



Tom Shortle, right, practices strengthening exercises with his physical therapist, Marty Locsin.

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Bennington Acquisition

Happy Fall!

As you may have heard by now, Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice is planning to acquire its counterpart in Bennington, the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of Southwestern Vermont Health Care.

The VNA & Hospice of SVHC has been serving the Bennington area for 43 years, and has achieved a level of success that closely aligns with RAVNAH's commitment to excellence. In 2007, the VNA & Hospice of SVHC was named one of the Top 500 agencies on the 2007 HomeCare Elite list, the very same honor bestowed upon RAVNAH in 2010. The HomeCare Elite list is a compilation of the most successful Medicare-certified home health care providers in the United States. Additionally, the VNA & Hospice of SVHC was awarded Vermont's First Gold Star Home Health Employer, which recognizes home health agencies that employ best practices for recruiting and retaining caregivers. By purchasing the VNA & Hospice of SVHC, RAVNAH will be able to expand its award-winning services across Bennington County.

RAVNAH plans to maintain a strong presence in the Bennington community, including retaining the existing office location and utilizing the existing name, i.e., SVHC VNA & Hospice...an affiliate of Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice, Inc. This includes maintaining a full service line of home care and hospice services within Bennington County – no programs will be eliminated for three years. In addition, a local advisory/operating committee will be established to provide input and quality oversight for the services for at least a three-year period.

The VNA & Hospice of SVHC will also have a voice at RAVNAH. The VNA & Hospice of SVHC will have representation on the RAVNAH Board of Directors, and RAVNAH will work closely with Southern Vermont Health Care in the development of Accountable Care Organization initiatives within the southern Vermont region.

This acquisition is a win for both agencies. The industry will be facing proposed cuts in reimbursement of 14% over the next four years, and economies of scale will be important to help both agencies improve care coordination and reduce costs in preparing for those cuts. Additionally, having a larger geographic area prepares us for contracting with Accountable Care Organization.

RAVNAH and SVHC are now doing their due diligence and will seek Board approval in November. Additionally, the purchase is contingent upon receiving a Certificate of Need from the Green Mountain Care Board, an independent state agency charged with regulating Vermont's health system and promoting innovations to make health care affordable and improve the health of state residents.

Stay tuned for more to come in the months ahead. ☺



Ron Cioffi, CEO

“By purchasing the VNA & Hospice of SVHC, RAVNAH will be able to expand its award-winning services across Bennington County.”

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The Home Care Experience, continued from page 1

helped him recover quicker and easier.” Many times, if a patient is feeling good, they tend to think they can stretch themselves further, which can greatly increase the risk of swelling and therefore stall any progress that’s been made. Following Marty’s advice and taking the necessary precautions enabled Tom to make steady progress. Each day Tom gained strength and flexibility – working up to walking outside, improving his range of motion and faithfully continuing with resistance exercises that Marty had shown him.

Within two weeks, Tom had graduated from a walker to a cane and each day felt stronger, even able to go into his office a few hours each

day. Eventually, Marty was able to safely remove the staples from the incision.

“I have always believed that RAVNAH’s nurses and therapists provided high quality care,” said Tom. “And now that I’ve experienced it firsthand, I can personally recommend RAVNAH to anyone who needs medical care at home.”

Thanks to physical therapist Marty Locsin, and Tom’s commitment to his rehab, Tom was back to work as the Senior Partner at O’Brien, Shortle, Reynolds and Sabotka and looking forward to some R&R and a golf game in Florida. ☪

Nurse–Family Partnership Helps Guide New Mothers to Success

Nurse–Family Partnership’s maternal health program introduces vulnerable first-time parents to caring maternal and child health nurses. This program allows nurses to deliver the support first-time moms need to have a healthy pregnancy, become knowledgeable and responsible parents, and provide their babies with the best possible start in life. The relationship between mother and nurse provides the foundation for strong families, and lives are forever changed – for the better.

~nursefamilypartnership.org

“You don’t come with a manual on how to raise you!” Such outbursts can be commonly heard from exasperated new parents, often out of frustration and fear when parenting issues arise. However, for young, vulnerable first-time parents, there is a manual of sorts to provide guidance. The Nurse-Family Partnership is like an instruction book that gives eligible new parents the knowledge and positive encouragement to raise a baby. A nurse’s expertise helps guide first-time mothers through the emotional, social and physical challenges they face as they prepare for a healthy birth. Prenatal support is the starting point, but the nurse continues to serve her client after the baby is delivered, teaching parenting and life skills that foster positive growth for both mother and child.

The Nurse–Family Partnership aims to improve pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good preventive health practices, including watching their diet, and reducing their use of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances. The program also helps improve child health and development by helping parents provide responsible and competent care for their children. In addition to health and care services, the Nurse–Family Partnership also works



Julie Scott, MSN, oversees the Nurse–Family Partnership program.

to improve economic self-sufficiency for the family by helping parents develop a vision for their own future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education, and find work.

A Program Based in Science

Nurse–Family Partnership is an evidence-based program that communities can be confident in. Thirty Five years of research from randomized, controlled trials have delivered multi-generational outcomes that benefit communities and reduce the costs of long-term social service programs. The Nurse–Family Partnership is a well-defined model with noted rigor in its research and replication that produces proven results.

Success by the Numbers

Family outcomes in the Nurse–Family Partnership randomized control trials include a 48% reduction in child abuse and neglect. By helping to break the cycle of poverty, the program plays an important role in helping to improve the lives of society’s most vulnerable members, build stronger communities, and leave a positive impact on this and future generations.

RAVNAH Nurse–Family Partnership Staff

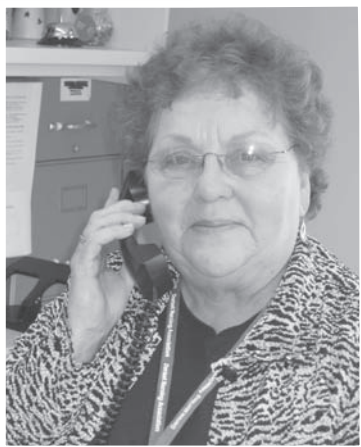
In October of 2012, RAVNAH received an award from the State of Vermont on behalf of the Nurse–Family Partnership. The grant of nearly \$942,000 covered the cost of implementing the program in Rutland and Bennington over a three-year period.

For information about RAVNAH’s Nurse–Family Partnership program for yourself or someone you know, please contact Julie Scott, MSN at 770.1502. ☪

Dorset Nursing News

Dorset Nursing Association (DNA), a branch office of the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice, is a not-for-profit Medicare-certified home health agency providing home health care services in the Dorset, Rupert, and Pawlet communities.

A Special Thank You to Libby Morey



DNA has been lucky to have Libby Morey in the office for the last four years. As the Dorset office receptionist, Libby has been right in the middle of it all: fielding phone calls, communicating with RAVNAH staff, and helping residents with needed services. She is an essential and integral part of the Dorset office, which is why the RAVNAH community is so sad to see her go. Libby has decided to retire and move to Florida to take a “much-needed breather.”

Libby is very community minded and fills her days with various activities. In addition to her job at DNA, Libby works part-time for the Manchester Health Service Thrift Shop, volunteers with the Neighbor to Neighbor Program where she provides such functions as driving families to appointments, and volunteers with the local Modern Woodmen of America chapter as the recording secretary.

Libby and her husband, David, who works as a delivery driver for NAPA, just welcomed their first great-granddaughter in August 2013. They also have four children and eleven grandchildren.

Libby is looking forward to life in Florida, which will give her a chance to kick her feet up and relax after being “stretched in every direction.” She’s also grateful that Florida will “keep David off roofs;” because community members often go to Libby’s husband for help with various chores, including the sometimes dangerous task of shoveling roofs in the wintertime.

Our thanks go out to Libby for her years of service, dedication and support. Libby, you will be missed! ☘

Visions Camp

Helping Young Women Strengthen Their Sense of Self-worth

Over the summer, the Dorset Nursing Association again held the highly successful Visions Camp for adolescent girls, which took place at the Manchester Elementary/Middle School (MEMS). In addition to participating in outdoor recreation activities, arts and crafts, and team building at the one-week day camp, they learned new skills such as photography, “smash” journaling, zumba, and drumming. The event culminated in a final party celebrating the week, where a reception was put on for families and friends. The girls planned and prepared healthy snacks for the reception, displayed the various projects they had created during the week, and put on a unique drumming performance which showcased the new skills they had learned. The “drums” consisted of 5-gallon water cooler tanks, donated by Misty Meadows Spring Water, and were decorated by the girls themselves.

The camp provided young females opportunities to expand their visions by strengthening their sense of worth, discussing how to make healthy choices, teaching them how to cope with social aggression, and exposing them to female mentors with diverse professional backgrounds who are willing to teach about their fields of interest. The camp was also an opportunity for the girls to create new relationships and forge bonds with each other. “The girls really reached out to each other,” explains Kathleen Jensen, who facilitated 2013’s camp. “New friendships were made, and the girls were able to pick up on each other’s strengths. It’s a wonderful thing.”

Partial funding for Visions Camp was provided by a grant from the Stratton Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life and sense of community in sixteen southern Vermont towns. ☘



Kathleen Jensen, right, and Laurie Sallisky left, facilitated the week-long camp.



Campers pose for a photo at a special presentation on their last day.

RAVNAH Gives Back to the Community

On June 22, 2013, RAVNAH employees participated in American Cancer Society's Relay for Life Event, raising both funds and awareness for cancer research. The event was an organized, overnight community fundraising walk, where teams of people camped out around the Vermont State Fairgrounds track

and members of each team took turns walking around the track. Food, games, and activities provided entertainment and helped the members stay energized throughout the night. RAVNAH's small but effective relay team managed to raise almost \$3,000 for the cause! 🍀



Stompers Sharon Bailey, left, and Joyce Humphrey



The RAVNAH Stompers pause for a fun photo during the event.

Rutland Health Foundation Golf Tournament Marks its 20th Anniversary

Friday, September 20, 2013, marked the 20th anniversary of Rutland Health Foundation's popular golf tournament. The tournament featured a captain and crew format, continental breakfast, on-course lunch, a premium tee prize for sponsored

participants, and an award reception. The tournament benefitted RAVNAH's Pediatric High-Tech and Kids on the Move programs, which help children and families receive quality care and comfort in the familiar setting of their own home. 🍀



The RAVNAH RHF Golf Team



The Kinney Pike RHF Golf Team

Bella Notte Night of Giving – Featuring its First-Ever Roast!

The 5th Annual Bella Notte: A Beautiful Night for Giving fundraiser was hosted by Three Tomatoes Trattoria on Sunday, September 15, 2013. The event raised funds to benefit RAVNAH's Hospice program. Participants enjoyed a finely prepared Italian dinner, a spirited live auction, and an evening of fun that featured a roast of RAVNAH CEO Ron Cioffi! This year's event raised more than \$21,000 for the cause. A sincere thank you to all of our sponsors and to all who attended, donated auction items, and generously gave their time and energy to support RAVNAH's Hospice program. 🍀



Ron Cioffi, RAVNAH CEO, gives a speech following his roast.

November is National Hospice Awareness Month

Hospice Care – It Takes a Village

When a patient chooses to enter hospice care, he or she has entered a time in life that each person will travel at some point in their lives. It is a time of great transition: a time of writing the last chapter of life, summing up all that has happened during one's lifetime, and making an honest assessment of whether it has been a life well lived. It is a time of accepting the reality that physical life ends and a new essence begins. Last chapters bring the story together, answer unanswered questions, and reflect the richness of a story well written.

As with any story, the end-of-life story has a number of characters who give the story life, meaning, and focus. When a patient enters hospice care, a number of hospice team members step in to help the patient and the family write the last chapter and write it well. Nurses, the hospice medical director, social workers, a chaplain, a volunteer coordinator, and a bereavement coordinator comprise the team who come together each week to discuss the needs of a patient and the patient's family and support system.

The team, first and most importantly, discuss the physical state of a patient, presented by the patient's hospice nurse, focusing on issues of pain, discomfort, and disease progression. If a patient is not physically comfortable, then he or she cannot engage in other end-of-life tasks such as the emotional, social, and spiritual realities that emerge at life's end.

Once a patient's physical needs are addressed, social workers focus on the social, emotional, and financial needs of the patient and family, assist them with appropriate paper work such as advance directives for health care and financial choices, and assess the

resources that can be tapped to help the family cope with this major change. The hospice *chaplain* is available for patients and families who want to reflect on the meaning of their life, their relationship to their creator, and the spiritual questions that arise when someone dies.

The mission of hospice is to alleviate pain and hardship during the end of someone's life. Hardship often comes in the exhausting experience of caregiving for a loved one who is dying. Hospice utilizes many *volunteers*, trained and organized by the *volunteer coordinator*, to provide services such as caregiver relief so a caregiver can have time to do other things, companionship for the patient and/or caregiver, meal delivery and other necessary services that help make life easier.

Lastly, hospice provides bereavement services through a *bereavement coordinator* who provides support for the family as they adjust to life after the death of their loved one. Hospice keeps in touch with families for 13 months following a death, offering counseling, support groups, grief information, and a yearly memorial service to help families process their grief.

The hospice team is truly a unique group of people who have embraced a calling that many could not embrace. Underlying hospice work is an innate acceptance of the transitory nature of life; we all will die at some point in time, and each person will be in need of help to do the dying well. From physical care to emotional, spiritual, and social support, we all will need the support of a *village* or community to help us transition from one reality to the next, whatever that may be. ☸

Hospice Memorial Service

The Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (RAVNAH) will host their annual Tree of Remembrance Tree Lighting Ceremony and Memorial Service on Tuesday, December 3, at 6 p.m. at the Franklin Conference Center in Rutland. The Tree of Remembrance is a time for community members to gather with others to remember someone who has died.

The service will include music by Trillium; reflections by RAVNAH staff, clergy, and caregivers; and the reading of names of this year's hospice patients and other community members.

If you plan to attend and would like to have a name read at the service, please call 802.770.1516. ☸

Hospice Remembrance Ornament Project Taking a Hiatus

Usually the fall edition of Home Care Connection newsletter has an order form for Remembrance Ornaments. But this year is different. The committee that plans and implements the ornament sale has decided to take a hiatus on the project for this year, allowing some time to search for new ideas for a remembrance project.

Many thanks to everyone who has purchased ornaments in the past. Your support for the hospice program and the Remembrance Ornaments project at RAVNAH is greatly appreciated. ☸

RAVNAH Fundraising Event Draws Immense Community Support

Dancing with the Rutland Stars – A SOLD OUT HIT!



The 2013 stars with their partners

For the third year in a row, the Rutland Health Foundation put on its popular “Dancing with the Rutland Stars” performance, which pairs six local celebrities with six local dancing pros for a night of dancing and entertainment all in the name of a worthy cause – Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice’s Kids on the Move program.

The dancers spent over three months practicing for the live performance – an effort which clearly paid off. The sold out crowd showed its enthusiasm by cheering, laughing, and clapping throughout each performance and rooting for their favorites.

The couples included *Rutland Reader* Editor Jim Sabatasso and Ana DiTursi, private dance and ballet instructor; Roots Restaurant Mixologist Karri Barret and William Kelley, Ph.D., Owner Pyramid Fitness and Wellness; Kinney Pike Commercial Account Executive Adam King and Tracy Tedesco, Peak Performance Studio- All Star Cheer and Fitness; Best Western Plus Inn & Suites Director of Sales Dave Correll and Ilene Blackman, Dance Instructor; Green Mountain Power Vice President for Generation and Energy Innovation Steve Costello and Katye Robare Munger, Teacher at the Center for Dance Education and Director of Digital Media, Castleton State; Green Mountain Marketing and Advertising Inc.’s Bill Ackerman and Heather Brouillard, Miss Lorraine’s School of Dance and Attorney.

The event’s grand prize, a mirror ball trophy fashioned after the popular TV show’s model, was awarded to Bill and Heather, the couple chosen by this year’s three judges: David Allan, swim dance instructor; Emily Owens, college student and competitive dancer; and Kerrin Jeromin, Chief Meteorologist Fox 44 News and ABC 22 News. In a new addition to this year’s competition, audience members voted for a fan favorite, awarded to Karri and William, the couple who received the most texting votes throughout the evening.

While the entertaining nature of the event was certainly a draw for the dancers, most were compelled to participate in the performance

because of the important cause the event supports. All event proceeds benefitted the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice’s Kids on the Move and Pediatric Hi-Tech rehabilitation programs. Kids on the Move serves children with genetic and developmental disorders, orthopaedic injuries and diseases, and developmental delays. Physical, occupational, and speech language therapists work with children in the home and schools. Pediatric High-Tech is a program for children who need specialized nursing care at home. By bringing health care to the homes of thousands of area residents and children, these programs ensure that their patients receive quality care and comfort in the familiar setting of their own home.

Congratulations to all of the dancers for a job well done and a hugely successful night! 🎉



Winners Bill and Heather are given their trophy.



Fan favorites Karri and William

Letter of Thanks

"To the caretakers and hospice chaplain of the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association: Thank you for the loving care you have given my mother, Jane Alderman. It gave me great comfort to know that she was treated so lovingly since I live so far away in Tennessee and could not be with her as often as I wanted. You have my deepest appreciation. Thank you.

- Jane (Alderman) Janczewski

Thanks to You by Bernadette C. Robin, CFRE

Throughout 2013, the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association, Dorset Nursing Association and Kids on the Move have received an abundant outpouring of generosity for which we are tremendously appreciative and thankful.

The generosity of individuals throughout Rutland County and beyond was illustrated in many ways: through golf at the Annual Killington Pico Rotary Golf Tournament or the Rutland Health Foundation Golf Invitational; through the racing and walking feet of participants in the Martin Devlin Fun Run; through the generous auction donors and sponsors and spirited bidders at Bella Notte; through the dancing feet of the dance professionals and Rutland Stars who showcased their talents at Dancing with the Rutland Stars; or the hundreds making a small or large gift independent of our events.

We are thankful to our friends and supporters. Without each of you, we could not achieve our vision and mission. ☺☺☺

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TUNE IN TO RAVNAH'S CABLE SHOW...

HOME CARE CONNECTION With host, Harry Snyder

Program and event topics span a variety of subjects including RAVNAH's home and community health services, managing your health, prevention strategies, understanding Medicare, and much, much more

Watch on Channel 15 Mondays • 9:30 am Tuesdays • 2:00 pm Wednesdays • 7:30 pm

November Topic: The Role of Volunteers in Hospice Care • **December Topic:** Nurse-Family Partnership


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