Many Events, One Team,
GETTING SOCIAL

From Cinco K to the Fiesta Days Parade, from March for Babies to NorthBay Appreciation Meals, NorthBay Healthcare will unite with a single event T-shirt.

This year’s theme is #NorthBay and the slogan is “Let’s Get Social,” as in social media.

The T-shirts will be sold for $5 at events, including at all NorthBay Appreciation Meals in May, and online for $6.24 (convenience fee included). They are black with white print. Order at http://NorthBaytshirts.eventbrite.com or call Jessica Johnson ext. 3303 to place your order and See SOCIAL, Page 9

PROMises, PROMises

Girls were invited to pose for a photo once they’d found the perfect prom dress. A sign in front of the dressing rooms (inset below) says it all.

Nearly 80 teenagers from schools around Northern Solano County turned to Operation PROMises to make their dreams come true Saturday, March 12.

At the days end, 75 “princesses” went home with the perfect prom dress. Many also found a matching pair of shoes, a clutch a wrap and jewelry.

And it was all free for these girls who otherwise couldn’t afford to attend their proms, thanks to a partnership between NorthBay Healthcare and Soroptimist International of Vacaville.

It is the third year the non-

See PROMISES, Page 14
HR Night Owl
Visit March 25
HR Service Manager Diane Urbano will visit NorthBay Medical Center and VacaValley Hospital from 1 to 5 a.m., on Friday, March 25.
She will be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding employment and benefits.

Core Wellness Offers Salad Demos
There are still two opportunities to sign up for the CORE Wellness Salad Dressing Shake-Up in March, according to Jamie Boasso, certified wellness coach.
It’s worth 50 points in the CORE Wellness program if you attend either half-hour presentation, starting at noon Thursday, March 24 at GVAC, Room 154 or at noon Tuesday, March 29 at Hilborn Administration Center, Room 229 A&B.
Just log on to acicorewellness.com. Don’t have an account? use company code NBHC654. Select “Upcoming Events” on the dashboard and “Salad Dressing Shake-Up.”
March 19 is Certified Nurses Day. Take a moment to congratulate a certified nurse for his or her commitment to professional growth. As of Jan. 1, NorthBay has 255 certified nurses.

“When nursing professionals take the extra step to become nationally certified in their specialty, they become more informed team members to nurses, physicians, pharmacists and other clinicians,” said Donna Dabeck, manager of nurse recruitment and retention. “And they are also better patient educators to our patients and families.”

The Magnet Champion Council has established the goal to increase that number of certified nurses by at least 1 percent this year.

If you are interested in becoming a certified nurse, please see General Nursing Policy #925 for the support that NorthBay can provide to assist you.
FairWarning Will Help Prevent Privacy Breaches

News about breaches of patient information have become almost commonplace and are a matter of concern for health care providers as well as for patients, says Sharmini Cassady, manager of Corporate Compliance and NorthBay Privacy Officer.

Patients who lack confidence in the ability of their provider to keep their information safe may not share all the information the provider needs to deliver the best care possible.

“At NorthBay, we protect patient data not only because of federal and state laws that mandate that we do so, but because it helps us provide better patient care,” said Sharmini.

That is why NorthBay has contracted with FairWarning, a data privacy consultant, for an automated privacy monitoring program.

The technology that FairWarning uses will allow NorthBay to proactively detect unauthorized or inappropriate access to the electronic health record.

For example, FairWarning will alert NorthBay when:

- An employee looks at a co-worker’s medical record without a business purpose;
- A VIP’s medical record is viewed inappropriately;
- There is unusual access that may indicate identity theft.

“Together we strive to provide better care by only accessing a patient’s information for legitimate business reasons. It is essential that our patients trust our commitment to protect their privacy,” said Sharmini.

NorthBay Administrative Policy #836 specifically states that employees may only access PHI for approved business-related purposes.

“We take our obligation to protect patient information seriously and will discipline employees found to be in violation of this policy,” said Sharmini.

Questions? Call Sharmini at ext. 5754.

Grant Will Fund Cancer Screens

One of the best weapons in the fight against cancer is an early diagnosis, and the earlier the diagnosis, the better the prognosis.

The prognosis just got a bit brighter for some NorthBay Healthcare patients without access to some vital cancer screenings. Thanks to a grant provided by Genentech, NorthBay Healthcare now has additional funds available to provide lung, colorectal and breast cancer screenings for patients whose insurance may not cover them, or is insufficient.

Early detection clearly saves lives, according to the American Cancer Society. If colon cancer is detected early, there is a 90 percent survival rate at five years post-diagnosis. As for lung cancer, symptoms do not appear until the disease is at an advanced state, so early detection — through a low-dose CT scan — can prove to be a life-saving opportunity.

NorthBay Healthcare held a lung screening event last December, in a joint venture with the Link for Life Foundation. During this one-day event, 13 patients who met the low-dose CT scan criteria received a lung scan, free of charge, and one patient was referred for follow-up care.

Genentech’s $10,000 grant will be put to good use, according to Teresa Langley, director, Oncology Services.

“We are invested in improving lung cancer survival rates for our community. With early detection the survival rate is more than 80 percent at 5 years.

Our lung screening program is designed to look for early stage lung cancers at the most curable stage,” she said.

HealthSpring Registration Fees to Kick In

Still haven’t signed up to be a charter member of NorthBay HealthSpring Fitness?

You’ll want to sign up now because after March 31, a registration fee will be implemented in addition to the monthly rates.

NorthBay Healthcare employees who want more information or to sign up for employee membership rates can visit HealthSpringFitness.org or call (707) 301-4075.
Nurse Camp Applications Due April 27

Applications are already arriving for NorthBay Nurse Camp, slated for June 21 to 24 at NorthBay Medical Center and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital.

Nurse Camp is designed to give high school students a first-hand look at the nursing profession, its rewards, challenges and opportunities. The camp is taught by registered nurses from a variety of hospital departments, including the Emergency Department, ICU, Labor and Delivery, Surgery, NICU, Med-Surg and the Trauma Center.

Thirty students selected from high schools throughout Solano County will attend the 2016 event. Tuition is $100. Full requirements and an application form are now available online.

Applications must be postmarked or date-stamped by April 27.

Students accepted to camp will be notified by May 15.

Questions? Call Donna Dabeck, manager of nursing recruitment and retention, at 646-3322 or send an email to NurseAcademy@northbay.org.

Putting Focus on Fitness

HealthSpring Fitness Director Mike Cole and NorthBay Healthcare Registered Dietitian Laura Hitt (above) get the audience up and moving during the March 10 Put Your Heart Into It advanced medicine lecture series, demonstrating core movements needed each day to maintain health. At left, Orthopedic Surgeon Robert Peterson, M.D., and Cole listen to a presentation on health eating by Hitt during the evening event.

Scholarship Applications on Tap

Guild scholarship applications are now available for any NorthBay Healthcare employee or Guild volunteer who is presently attending or who has been accepted to a school or college to further their education in the medical field.

For a scholarship application, email Donna Anderson, NorthBay Guild scholarship chairman at Donnaander@aol.com.

Be sure to include your name, email address, and your phone number.

The deadline for returning the application is Friday, April 22.
More employees are sharing stories of when they were able to make a connection, either with a patient, another employee or a member of the community, as part of the Creating Connections storytelling venture. “Connection Stories” are being shared on the ShareSpace site under “Patient Experience/Connection Stories.” To share yours, call ext. 5757, or email to connections@NorthBay.org, and it may appear in a future edition of FYI.

By Flo Aruejo, R.N.
Clinical Manager

We had a patient in 1-West who was with us on her birthday. Her nurse, Alden Canlas, R.N., asked Janice Marsh, the administrative coordinator, if it was possible to get something special from the kitchen, but the Nutrition staff had already gone home.

Janice found a piece of cake in the walk-in fridge. Perfect! (Her diet was for soft foods, as tolerated).

Alden made her a card and Shelley Avila, R.N., gave her one of Isabelle Johnson’s “Brighten Your Day” gift bags. About 10 of us assembled outside her door and went in singing “Happy Birthday.”

The patient was so surprised and her face lit up with a smile. She thanked us over and over and said, ”No one has ever done anything like this for me before.”

Isabelle’s “Brighten a Day” baskets are small, but thoughtful gifts that can mean a lot, especially to those who have been hospitalized for a long time, are dealing with a painful or frightening diagnosis or who have the misfortune of being hospitalized during a birthday, anniversary or other holidays. Isabelle created this special touch to help patients in these unique situations. She started collecting items for gift bags that she and her fellow nurses could deliver as a welcome surprise to these patients.

Isabelle purchases items like decorative pens, notebooks, playing cards, note cards, mirrors, crossword books, hand sanitizers, and nail files and puts them in hand-made decorative bags. We deliver these baskets with a group of staff to recognize whatever celebration a patient is having that day. Isabelle is committed to keeping this project going and accepts responsibility to ensure these gift bags are available for our patients.

That’s the kind of staff we have on 1-West! So caring and always willing to go the extra mile!

Writing Team Seeks Connection Stories for Wellspring

Do you have a great Creating Connections story? We’d like to hear it. The Summer issue of Wellspring will share some of the very best, profiling our connections with our caring community, which includes patients, families, physicians, public safety partners, volunteers and more.

Email your Creating Connections story idea to Public Relations Specialist Sally Wyatt at SWyatt@NorthBay.org or call ext. 3305.
Breathe Easy, Dr. Ghods Has Answers

NorthBay Healthcare Facebook fans were breathing easier after their questions were answered by Ehsan Ghods, D.O., during the latest #NBDocTalk.

The March 9 live chat featured Dr. Ghods answering questions posted by NorthBay’s Facebook followers on allergies, asthma and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). Inquiries covered a range of issues including questions about the latest research on peanut allergies, concerns about asthma progression as a patient ages, and the doctor’s thoughts on what are the best medications for controlling allergies.

Dr. Ghods detailed the different symptoms for allergies and asthma, explaining that they have “similar symptoms and are very much related” but that COPD is a more serious lung condition.

“Allergy symptoms can include runny nose, itchy watery eyes, sneezing, coughing and wheezing. Asthma can cause coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath and chest tightness,” he noted. “A more serious lung condition would be COPD and the way you differentiate that from asthma is by a pulmonary function test.”

In all, eight questions posted for the half-hour chat, and there were also several of Ghods’ patients who took the time to post his praises.

Here’s a couple of examples of the questions and Dr. Ghods’ answers:

Q.: What do you think about early introduction of common allergenic substances, such as peanuts, to prevent allergies to those agents? I have a friend at Immune Tolerance Network who worked on a study involving peanut allergy reduction and it seems that early introduction to these substances resulted in lower allergic reactions later in life.

Dr. Ghods: Recent studies show that early exposure to peanuts has been helpful with prevention of allergy to peanuts. I suspect it may desensitize the patient to that allergen similar to allergy shots. I, however, do not recommend giving peanuts to people to treat their allergy to peanuts. I think this has to be done under care of an allergist.

Q.: I know someone with allergy-related asthma. If they can keep their allergies, mostly to tree pollen, under control, they can keep their asthma at bay. Why is that?

Dr. Ghods: Asthma and allergy are very closely connected. Allergy is one of the inflammatory causes of asthma and so it would make sense that if the allergy is controlled, the asthma is as well.

The full discussion with Dr. Ghods can be viewed on the NorthBay Facebook page at Facebook.com/NorthBayHealthcare and a transcript is online at NorthBay.org.

Dr. Ehsan Ghods discusses a response with Social Media/Online Specialist Robin Miller during a #NBDocTalk Facebook chat.

Dr. Ehsan Ghods discusses a response with Social Media/Online Specialist Robin Miller during a #NBDocTalk Facebook chat.

Dr. Archana Goyal discusses blood pressure issues.

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NorthBay’s live Facebook chat, #NBDocTalk, continues to attract attention. The chats are held every other Wednesday afternoon on the NorthBay Healthcare Facebook page. Each chat features a different doctor answering questions on a number of health issues.

The next chat is scheduled from 3:30 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23, with Archana Goyal, who will answer questions and post information about hypertension.

The last scheduled #NBDocTalk event will be at noon on April 6 with oncologist and hematologist J.D. Lopez, M.D.

Dr. Archana Goyal will discuss blood pressure issues.
Heartfelt Gratitude for All NorthBay Does for Schools

These two letters were received following a recent donation of athletic equipment to Fairview and Padan Elementary Schools by NorthBay Healthcare and Solano SWAT (Success is Working Together) girls baseball organization — Editor.

Dear NorthBay:

My heart cannot express enough my sincere gratitude for your generosity. Again and again I am so amazed at the continued kindness and dedication NorthBay has to Fairview Elementary. My students are thrilled to play with the new playground equipment. It is precious to see all their little faces light up with pure joy when they discover you have thought of them again. Thank you!

I truly appreciate the opportunity my students get to experience kindness through your deeds. I love being able to teach them how to express thankfulness. Thank you for giving my students a focus. Many of them aspire to do well in school so they can grow up to be nurses or doctors. Thank you for being a role model to them.

Warmest regards,
— Mrs. Halferel
Second-grade teacher, Fairview

Excellent Staff in the ICU Helped Put Family at Ease

To administrators at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital:

This is a thank you note and congratulations on an excellent staff in your Intensive Care Unit. They are most professional, as well as very caring, about their patients and their families.

My wife received outstanding care while in their keeping. They also ensured I was well informed about her care and treatment.

Kudos to all of them.
— A patient’s husband

Retired Nurses Offers Some High Praise for Performance

To Rhonda Martin, Assistant Vice President, Nursing Operations:

In January, my sister was admitted to NorthBay VacaValley Hospital and discharged six days later.

It was a time of anxiety and stress and dread since she had two previous 911 trips to the Emergency Department for difficulty breathing in the past week.

Being a retired nurse and having been in charge of monitored units and working in ICU, I probably have higher expectations and tend to be more critical of nursing staff than the average visitor. I have had close relatives in many different hospitals where I have felt the need to intervene.

This experience was so totally different. I found the nurses, without exception, to be cheerful, competent, and believe me I watch, putting my fears at ease. After the first day I realized I could relax my vigilance, knowing she was in good hands.

(There were) so many wonderful people, from housekeeping, dietary, respiratory, discharge planners and more. Some stand out in my memory. Christque, Carmela, Martha, Ann, Gladys, Choedon, Maven, Ben. If I have forgotten someone, I am sorry. You were all so wonderful.

— A patient’s sister

Letters Policy

FYI publishes letters written to administration and staff of NorthBay Healthcare. Editors of FYI reserve the right to edit them for length and content. We suggest letters be limited to 250 words in length.

We typically withhold names of patients unless they specifically request to be named.

If you’ve received a letter you’d like to share, or want to write a letter to share with fellow employees, please e-mail it to mranson@northbay.org.

NORTHBAY HEALTHCARE
schedule pickup.

Not in the know when it comes to social media? The use of the hashtag (#) is for easy online searching. If you visit Google.com and search for #NorthBay, you’ll see all sorts of post across social media platforms, from Facebook to Twitter to Instagram.

The March is First

The first event coming up is April 23, when March for Babies participants will join in a three-mile walk at Solano Community College. The event raises funds for premature birth research and for the Barbara Lum Endowment for the NorthBay Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Participants are asked to donate $15 to the endowment, and NorthBay will cover the cost of the event plus T-shirts for every walker. Team walkers are welcome to collect any additional funds, which will go directly to support the NorthBay NICU through the endowment. Those who raise $25 or more will be eligible for prizes. Call Jessica Johnson at 646-3303 or e-mail Megan King at mtking@northbay.org for information or to register.

Cinco K Takes Off on May 1

The next event to use the #NorthBay shirts will be the Cinco K, a family-friendly run/walk that supports the Fairfield Police Activities League and the Matt Garcia Youth Center. This is the second year NorthBay Healthcare has fielded a team.

In fact, the first 200 NorthBay Healthcare employees and family members who sign up will have their registration covered to collect any additional funds, which will go directly to support the NorthBay NICU through the endowment. Those who raise $25 or more will be eligible for prizes. Call Jessica Johnson at 646-3303 or e-mail Megan King at mtking@northbay.org for information or to register.

Appreciation Meals Are Coming

If you don’t participate in the March or Cinco events, there’s still time to show your unity and buy your T-shirt during employee appreciation meals. Although dates and times have not been announced yet, there will definitely be appreciation meals in mid-May, says Kathleen Shafer, director of Nutrition Services.

All the great items — from barbecued steak and chicken — to ice cream and frozen desserts — will again be on the menu, served by management team members at three locations: NorthBay Medical Center, NorthBay VacaValley Hospital and Green Valley Administration Center. There will be a photo booth with plenty of social-media themed props, so plan to pose with your colleagues and friends.

Watch for details soon in FYI.

And Then There’s the Parade

Who could forget the Fiesta Days parade, the crown jewel of Vacaville’s Memorial Day weekend festivities? The parade starts at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 27, and winds its way down Merchant Street, to the cheers of thousands of onlookers.

NorthBay has had an entry each year for the past decade and has even won awards from time to time. This year’s theme will have participants march in the #NorthBay T-shirts and carrying signs promoting our social media connections. There’s no charge to participate, and those who do will be entered into a drawing for prizes, says organizer Robert Armijo.

A parade committee has already been formed and is planning to decorate the purple trauma ambulance and host a spirit challenge.

Want to help with decorations or join the committee? Call Robert at 646-4460.
A Full Day to Put Skills to the Test

Practice makes perfect, times eight.
That’s how many drills were held in Labor & Delivery recently, as an entire day was set aside to simulate emergency scenarios that might occur before, during and after the birth of a baby.

The drills focused on a laboring patient, who developed respiratory distress that required a Rapid Response Team (RRT) call, and a maternal code and emergency C-section resulting in a newborn code.

More than 75 percent of Women’s and Children’s Services’ staff members participated in the drills that were held between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., according to Katie Lydon, director.

“Our laboring patient was played by the amazing actress/NICU nurse Corrina Renaud; we also had four anesthesiologists, four OBs, two RRT team members, and three respiratory care practitioners who rotated through the simulation. Dr. Gwiazdowski devoted his entire day to support the NICU resuscitation portion of the exercise and participated in all eight drills, and we appreciated the support of Natalie Correll-Yoder, CPM, who oversees the RRT, as well.”

The simulation was an opportunity for team members to learn together without judgment or discipline, Katie noted.

“Evidence has shown that interdisciplinary team training...
Putting Skills to the Test ... (From Page 12)

— including simulation — improves patient safety and communication by identifying system issues, while building trust in teams. We are continually focused on creating a culture of safety here, and our patients expect us to be able to perform in high-risk events. Simulation allows teams to practice without causing patient harm.” After all, she added, “top athletes don’t get to the SuperBowl or the World Series without practice.”

The drills were planned, organized, and implemented by a collaborative team that included Women’s and Children’s Services staff nurses Amy Ciraulo, Valerie Alenza, Laurel Nielson, Margaret Dorcy, Mary Quinn, Lisa Jacobs, Jana Parkinson; Heather Troutt, clinical manager; and Simulation Center Coordinator Lacy DeQuattro.

The idea developed because staff members said they would prefer to have more opportunities for hands-on training to reinforce and practice their skills, noted Heather, who added that drills will now be held every quarter.

“The feedback from those who participated was overwhelmingly positive,” she said. “In fact, even one of our anesthesiologists who had experience in extensive military simulations reported this was the best he had ever participated in. It was amazing, a huge success.”
Research a Big Part of Lean Project

NorthBay Healthcare’s Advanced Lean Training (ALT) team completed four rigorous days in the classroom and in the field, and soon will apply research findings to real-life processes, said Trish Hackemack, director of Performance Excellence.

Twenty leaders, broken into four groups, fanned out across the organization in March and deployed Lean tools to study two hospital and two medical office settings.

- One group, comprised of Dr. Kulbir Bajwa, Aimee Brewer, Nicole Brocato, Konard Jones and Sandy Piedra, spent two hours in the Emergency Department at NorthBay Medical Center, focused on the discharge process. During the process, one patient was moved to three different locations within 90 minutes due to space constraints. The group noted the tremendous care that staff and providers gave to patients in spite of the crowded workplace.

- Another group, Rhonda Martin, Shelley Johnson, Greg Duncan, Joelyn Gropp and Pam Venturi, went to nursing Units 1600 and 1700 to observe and document an admission process for a patient coming from the Emergency Department. “Even though I have seen many patients being admitted, the Lean tools helped me see the process with new eyes that revealed so much more detail and highlighted the challenges our staff face every day,” noted Rhonda.

- Outside the hospital, a group including Ed Ballerini, Teresa Langley, Diana Nalett, Ryan Seo and Chris Timbers explored medical oncology. They heard from oncologist James Long, M.D. how beneficial huddles are to better prepare for the patients coming in and to help him stay on schedule. Dr. Long, and his team (a medical assistant and a nurse navigator) sit side-by-side, which improves communication; this practice was developed in a previous Lean workshop at NorthBay. Although Dr. Long still has an office, his commitment to patient care has made his “flow-station” the workspace of choice.

- The group of Jessica Coyne-Lowe, Traci Duncan, Susan Gornall, Adrian Riggs and Jerry Wilcox observed patient flow and nurse navigation as it pertained to the patient pre-operative preparation at the Ambulatory Surgery Center. The cohort discussed the pre-op process, patient prep, room readiness, anesthesia time, and OR turnover with nursing staff and a surgeon.

“By getting out in the field, leaders learned about and practiced observing waste,” explained Trish. “Lean helps us focus on activities that do not add value to our patients. They learned about how to help others organize their workplace so that they have everything they need, in the right amount and in the right place.”

With this foundational education, now the ALT Team will start to apply these tools with the help of staff in selected areas. Stayed tuned for details in future FYI reports.
Few Tickets Remain for Premier Event

Those inclined to procrastinate might lose out if they don’t act fast. Only a few tickets remain for the 29th Annual Solano Wine & Food Jubilee.

The April 23 event promises to be a gala like no other. The venue — the opulent Sunrise Event Center in Vacaville — only opened a few months ago, and is already collecting top reviews for ambiance. The Jubilee benefits programs of NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement.

Jubilee tickets, at $125 each (plus service fee) are available through Eventbrite and the Jubilee website: www.wineandfoodjubilee.org.

The event kicks off at 5:30 p.m. for VIPs and sponsors, and 6:30 p.m. for the general public. Ticket holders can sample foods, wines and brews offered by a number of Solano County’s most popular restaurateurs, breweries and wineries, or browse among an array of items — from exotic vacations to sports memorabilia — in the Jubilee Silent Auction. Dancing to the popular dance band The Rhythm Method 4 begins shortly after 9 p.m.

But, before that, the crowd will learn who has won the top prize in the Jubilee raffle. That lucky ticketholder can chose from one of three brand-new cars, offered by Rami Yanni of Vacaville Buick GMC, Vacaville Nissan, Vacaville Dodge and Vacaville Hyundai: either a 2016 Hyundai Sonata, Buick Encore or Nissan Altima.

In addition to the top prize, $10,000 in cash will be awarded that night, according to Wendy Jackson, raffle chair. There will be 12 winners of $125, 10 winners of $500, one winner of $1,000 and one $2,500 winner.

Raffle tickets are $50 each or buy two and get the third for free. They can be purchased by calling (707) 646-3133, purchased with a credit card by fax at (707) 646-3135, or in person at the NorthBay Healthcare Foundation office at 4500 Business Center Drive in Fairfield, or at Jackson Medical Supply on Main Street in Vacaville.

Presenting Sponsors are Al and Patt Shaw, Freeman Family & Cosmetic Dentistry, Rami Yanni of Vacaville Nissan, Dodge, Hyundai and Buick GMC, Financial Architects Partners, Western Health Advantage, and DPR Construction. For more information, call (707) 646-3133.

‘Forging Solutions’ is theme for National Social Work Month

This year’s National Social Work Month theme, “Forging Solutions Out of Challenges” rings loud in the ears of NorthBay Healthcare social workers. That’s because medical social work has changed at NorthBay during the past several years, according to Yolanda Nunez-Bonomo, licensed clinical social worker and manager of Social Services.

“Increased needs for the homeless, the elderly, and the mentally ill patient have challenged our social workers and have pushed them to ‘think out of the box’ to find resources and solutions,” she said. “They confront some of the most challenging issues facing our patients and families, and forge solutions that help people reach their full potential.”

Medical social workers provide psychosocial support to patients and families, helping them cope with chronic, acute or terminal illnesses. They advise family caregivers and patients, helping them plan for their needs during their hospitalization, and for their next level of care. Social workers collaborate with the in-patient and out-patient case management team to develop safe discharges, and to provide a positive, caring NorthBay experience to all of our patients and their families.

“NorthBay truly has awesome social workers who work very hard to provide quality social work service. Please honor them with a ‘thank you’ should you see one,” said Shelley Stelzner, director of Inpatient/Outpatient Case Management, Social Services.

NorthBay Social Workers can be found in many places within our organization from working with our youngest patients in the NICU to working in end-of-life situations in palliative care and hospice.
PROMises...(From Page 1)

profits have partnered to provide dresses for local teens, but the first time at Green Valley Administration Center.

The first two years were hosted at Second-hand Rose Thriftique in downtown Vacaville, a thrift shop run by the NorthBay Guild.

“We just ran out of room there,” explained NorthBay Volunteer Coordinator Jane Hilliard. “Our new location allowed for extra dressing rooms and gave us room to spread out.”

The first year 30 girls walked away with prom dresses. Last year the number nearly doubled.

The conference room was a frenzy of activity despite a rainstorm outside. Girls arrived for appointments throughout the day and were partnered with a personal shopper to help them navigate from station to station. Some were NorthBay Healthcare employees, others were members of Soroptimists. Some were volunteers from the community.

A team of six seamstresses were busy all day long making alterations to dresses while the girls waited.

A team from Blake Austin College and a Mary Kay Cosmetics consultant offered makeup tips while a team from Talk of the Town showed girls how to style their hair.

Jasmine Wong, 17, of Rodriguez High School in Fairfield, was the first to find her dress.

“I didn’t expect it to be this amazing and...
I appreciate the Soroptimist club for putting this together with NorthBay Healthcare.”

The event is a perfect fit for Soroptimists, said longtime member Wendy Wasserman. “Our mission is to make the world a better place for women and girls and that’s what we’re doing today.”

Kayla Simmers, 17, a junior at the Public Safety Academy in Fairfield, was happy to find a lovely light blue dress to wear to her very first prom, in fact the first her school has ever hosted.

One mom who accompanied her daughter was so thrilled with the event that she posted a touching thank you note to Northbay Healthcare on its Facebook page. She wrote, “I’m very, very grateful for this program. As a single mom, it is impossible for me to financially afford all that is needed for prom. … With joyful tears, thank you with all of my heart.”

“And that’s exactly why we do this,” said Jane. “To make a difference.”

Although four girls did not find the perfect dress Saturday, Jane had some good news for them.

“We have four donor ‘angels’ who have agreed to purchase dresses if a girl is not able to find one here today. Of course the girls have to find that perfect dress in time for their proms.”
Lots of Reasons to Hug Our Haters

By Robin Miller

Part of my job here at NorthBay Healthcare involves monitoring social media sites for comments (positive or negative) and then getting those customers in contact with the appropriate department leader to try to address their concerns.

I sometimes imagine those department leaders opening their e-mail account, seeing a message from me and groaning, “Oh no, not again!”

But there is good reason for us to be aware and respond to what is being said about us out there in the cyber world.

We all learned the idiom when we were kids: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”

We all knew it was baloney. Words can hurt.

That’s true in the business world, as well. In particular, what people say about your business can hurt or help you and nowadays social media provides a platform for lots of people to take their potshots.

It would be easy to say “just ignore them,” and think we don’t have to respond to every comment about us that is out there in the cyber world. It would be easy, but it would also be wrong.

Online review site Yelp, alone, processes thousands of reviews every minute of every day and the statistics show that customers pay more attention to them than ever before.

And it’s not just Yelp. A study by the PWC Health Research Institute found one-third of U.S. consumers are using YouTube, Facebook and Twitter to find medical information, research and share their symptoms, and offer opinions about doctors, treatments, drugs, and health plans. That survey was done three years ago. The numbers have undoubtedly gone up.

So we have to care about what’s being said and we have to respond.

“There is nothing trivial about online reviews. The reviewer may be trivial (absurd, even), but the review is what matters,” explained Jay Baer, president of the digital marketing firm Convince and Convert.

Baer has coined a phrase that I like for the need to respond to complaints. He calls it “Hugging Your Haters.” Why?

First, it’s just good customer service. Ignoring a customer complaint is actually a response to it. It is a response that says, “We don’t care.”

In addition, responding to our haters is an opportunity. It’s a chance to connect one-on-one with those we serve and hopefully to turn a negative review into a positive review.

Responding can convert angry customers into loyal, raving fans. There is an old rule of thumb that says a typical unhappy customer will talk to five people about it, but a formerly unhappy customer that you win back will talk to 10.

Most importantly, caring is one of our cornerstones. Responding to complaints shows we care. Addressing the person’s concerns shows we care. In short, we are treating our customers the way we would want to be treated.

That’s the NorthBay Way.

The author is NorthBay Healthcare’s social media/online specialist and writes a recurring blog and column on social media.