2019 a Big Year

Grand Openings Share Stage with Anniversary

With major construction projects wrapping up and a big anniversary to celebrate, 2019 is shaping up to be a big year for NorthBay Healthcare.

It was 60 years ago that Intercommunity Memorial Hospital opened a “modern” 32-bed facility on 5 acres of land on Penn-

Open Staff to Give Preview of the Year’s Priorities

Open Staff meetings for 2019 kick off soon and employees will hear more about the year ahead for NorthBay Healthcare, accord-

During “NorthBay: The New You,” Konard will provide a construction update on NorthBay Medical

System Adds New Layer of Security

All the doors have been secured and now NorthBay Medical Center has its first-ever visitor badging system in place, raising security on the Fairfield campus to a whole new level, according to Jon Read, director of Security.

A trial of the new Envoy system began in December, with

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New AVP for Care Management — Page 3
Interim Hospice Director Decides to Stay

Jeanne Dennis has accepted the permanent role of executive director for Home Health, Hospice, Palliative Care and Adult Day Services. “Over the past eight months, Jeanne has demonstrated a wealth of knowledge in all things post-acute care,” said Wayne Gietz, vice president of ambulatory division, when making the announcement.

“This, coupled with her extensive leadership experience and thoughtful approach to bringing about positive and sustainable change, make her a perfect fit for this important role.”

Jeanne holds a bachelor’s degree in social work from the University of Iowa, and a master’s in social work from San Diego State University.

Jeanne Dennis
New AVP to Oversee Care Management

Tiffany Murdock has joined NorthBay Healthcare in the newly created position of assistant vice president, Care Management. “She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this new role,” said Vice President, Operations and Chief Quality Officer Nicole Brocato.

Tiffany served as vice president of clinical operations at Singing River Health System in Mississippi and chief nursing officer at Asante Health Systems in Oregon. She was executive area director of professional practice and innovation for two years at St. Joseph Health System in Santa Rosa before becoming CNO there.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Jacksonville University, and has master’s degrees in health care administration and business administration from the University of Phoenix. She earned a doctorate in nursing from University of San Francisco with an emphasis in executive leadership.

She will have responsibility for Case Management, Social Services and Utilization Management. “She will also work closely with Managed Care, Finance and Ambulatory Care as we continue our work on managing capitation and population health,” said Nicole.

Tiffany’s first day was Jan. 14, and her office is in the Annex building. Call her at (707) 646-4245 or email her at tiffany.murdock@northbay.org.

Family of Survivors Donates Infusion Bell

Cancer has left an indelible mark on the Dabeck family, but this resilient crew has found a way to celebrate victories and honor those who have fought the disease, according to Donna Dabeck, manager of nursing recruitment and retention.

“My husband, Rick Novosad, has survived kidney cancer. My father has survived melanoma. Rick’s mother had bone cancer, my grandmother had bladder cancer, and my grandfather had prostate cancer,” she explained.

Several years ago, Donna’s father, Walter Dabeck, found a ship’s bell on the shore of Lake Michigan, while working for the Department of Natural Resources. It was part of a shipwreck that had floated up on the beach. He gave it to Donna to use on her houseboat, and when it was time to sell the boat, the couple wondered what to do with the bell.

Donna had read about cancer centers using a bell in their infusion centers for patients to ring when they’ve completed their chemotherapy treatments.

“I thought it would be a cool idea to have it at our NorthBay Cancer Center,” she recalled. So Donna contacted Louise Henry, clinical practice manager for Oncology, to see if the Cancer Center would accept it.

For Louise, it was an easy answer: Absolutely yes.

“The bell has a new lease on life now, and that resonates for cancer survivors,” Donna said.

Since the bell was installed in the Cancer Center’s infusion room, it has been rung, on average, about once or twice a week, Louise noted.
Putting Patients First

New Position to Focus on Experiences

In keeping with NorthBay Healthcare’s goals to improve the patient experience, Art Smith has been named the organization’s first full-time Patient Experience Ambassador.

He previously served as a part-time Patient Advocate, where he actively rounded on patients at NorthBay Medical Center while also serving as an ambassador in the Welcome Pavilion, according to Jennifer Shoemaker, program manager for Patient Experience.

In this new role, Art will assist Jennifer in managing complaints and grievances, in addition to proactive patient rounding in both hospitals and the Emergency Departments.

“Art will work with department leaders to manage complaints and grievances that come to his attention, and the goal is to complete service recovery back to the patient or family member within one or two business days, but ideally the same day,” Jennifer explained.

“We are extremely happy with the impact Art has had on reducing patient grievances and putting smiles on the faces of patients, families and staff,” she added. “One of Art’s goals is to ensure every patient is having a positive experience and if they are not, he helps ensure that any issues get resolved before that patient leaves the hospital.

“During the first half of 2018 we reduced reportable grievance by 58 percent over the prior period and I think much of that can be attributed to Art proactively rounding on patients and families and resolving issues in the moment.”

Occ Health Manager Returns to NorthBay

Wanda Ellithorpe-Fletcher has returned to NorthBay Healthcare to serve in her former position as practice manager of Occupational and Employee Health.

“We are thrilled that Wanda returned to her role at NorthBay on Jan. 2,” noted Justine Zilikan, assistant vice president, Specialty & Surgical Services. “In true Wanda fashion, she has jumped back in and is positioning our team for another year of high-quality patient care, experience and top line growth.”

“We would like to share a heartfelt thank you to Occupational Health Supervisor Diana Moore for the great job she did as interim management support,” Justine continued. “Diana is a true collaborator who kept the continuity and high level of dedication to our clients unchanged during our time of transition.”

Wanda can be reached at extension 5928, as well as by email at WFletcher@NorthBay.org and via Vocera.

“I couldn’t stay away, I love it here too much,” Wanda said. “NorthBay is the best work family I have ever had in my life.”
New Director for Heart & Vascular

Adam Mace joins NorthBay Healthcare as director of Heart & Vascular Services.
He comes from Northern California Medical Associates, Inc. where he served as director of cardiovascular, endocrinology and pulmonary services for the past five years. NCMA is a 60-physician multi-specialty medical group in Santa Rosa.

Prior to working at NCMA, Adam was regional administrator of cardiology services for Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center in Camden, New Jersey.

He has a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences from Rowan University in New Jersey and a master’s in health administration from Saint Joseph’s University in Pennsylvania.

“Adam demonstrates a thoughtful, richly collaborative approach to 360-degree service line cultivation,” according to Justine Zilliken, assistant vice president, specialty and surgical services. “His focus on developing strong provider, team and colleague relationships is evident in his leadership style.”

Adam assumes his new role at NorthBay on Jan. 21.

Patient Ambassador Wins #HealthTipTuesday Drawing

Edie Machado, a Patient Access ambassador at NorthBay Medical Center, is the latest winner in the #HealthTipTuesday drawing for a $50 Amazon gift card.

Edie won the December drawing by posting a comment on one of the weekly #HealthTipTuesday posts on the NorthBay Facebook page (Facebook.com/NorthBayHealthcare). She worked for many years as a patient access ambassador at NorthBay Medical Center.

“Wow, this is exciting! I never win anything,” she said with a laugh as she got her card and posed for a photo for the NorthBay Facebook page.

Everyone who posts a comment and shares the weekly health tips on Facebook is automatically entered into the drawing for a gift card – employees included.

You could be the next winner. Comment on and share our Tuesday health tips and you will be entered in the January drawing. Comment. Share. Win!
Night Owls Swoop In Before Holiday

It was fun AND festive, when the “Night Owls” from Human Resources swept in to visit hospital departments at NorthBay Medical Center and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital on Dec. 18. Robert Armijo, Mary Dugbarty and Diane Urbano made up the HR contingent that visited between 1 and 5 a.m., armed with festive head-gear and other photo-friendly props. For a full gallery of images from the December Night Owl visit, check out My NorthBay, your employee portal.
Celebrations to Honor Memory of Art DeNio

Two celebration-of-life services will be held in memory of NorthBay Healthcare Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Art DeNio, who died suddenly Dec. 3, after a short illness.

Art’s family is planning a service at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 19, at the Sunset View Cemetery chapel in El Cerrito. Since seating is limited to 150 people, please visit Facebook and search for Celebration of Life Honoring Art DeNio to indicate that you are going.

NorthBay will host its own remembrance event at the Green Valley Administration Center at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 2.

NorthBay plans to publish a book with photos of Art, interspersed with remembrances.

Photos gathered so far on ShareSpace show everything from retirement celebrations to adopt-a-school events, including one at Fairview Elementary School in which Art dressed up as a Jack-in-the-box and popped out to surprise the students. He can be seen goofing around at employee appreciation meals, and participating in Patient Financial Services events.

Employees are welcome to send a paragraph of no more than 500 characters, describing a favorite memory or explaining what Art meant to them.

“We plan to present this to the family, and we may be able to order a book for you as well if you are interested,” said Elnora Cameron, president of NorthBay Healthcare Advantage and vice president of Strategic Development. “When we know what the price will be, we will let you know so you can place an order with us,” she said.

Send your photos and stories for the memory book to RememberingArt@NorthBay.org or upload onto ShareSpace.

Art joined NorthBay Healthcare as its Chief Financial Officer in 2001.

During his 30-plus-year career in healthcare financial management, he has worked as a CFO, a consultant, a lecturer and an auditor. He has worked at both private and public hospitals, in urban and rural markets.

He held senior financial management positions at VHA Consulting Services and with a "Big 8" public accounting firm.

He graduated with honors from Occidental College in Los Angeles in 1968, and received his master’s degree in business administration from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1971. He is a Fellow of the Healthcare Financial Management Association and a member of the American Institute of CPAs.

Art was a visiting lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Public Health, and on the faculty of the Extended Education division of the Graduate Program in Health Services Administration at St. Mary’s College in Moraga.

He is survived by his wife, Madeline, son J.R.; daughter-in-law Jamie; and two grandchildren, A.J. and Addison.

Art had been instrumental in strategic planning at NorthBay, helping to secure funds for numerous building projects, including the current three-story wing and the Emergency Department expansion, the surgery center and much more.
Dear Editor:
As I depart from the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, I would like to express my appreciation to a solid team of nursing professionals collectively, and individually.
Collectively, they are a team that the word awesome just doesn’t express amply their level of operational skill levels, and hands-on assistance to those patients they assist.
This is a team of knowledgeable nurses. They not only monitor the cardiac health care needs of the patients, they also manage the emotional and mental health care of those needing such care well.
Each individual within this team contributes extensively to the overall success of the NorthBay Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services.
The overall success of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program foundation is due to the following care professionals, and they should be recognized for their performance and contribution to the success of all patients assigned to their care. I would like to personally thank each of them for assisting me individually, then as a successful team:
They are: Lailanie Revelo, R.N.; Victoria Erickson, R.N.; Lisa Ensley, R.N.; Jenny Moraida, R.N.; Kathleen Galante, R.N.; and Sonya Grant, office associate.
Lastly, because of them, I am of the opinion that this program should be expanded to all patients needing the rehabilitation skills that these professionals contribute toward the health care of those assigned to them.
A Cardiac Patient

Your Patient’s Donation Saved Several Lives
I wanted to reach out and thank the staff of NorthBay Medical Center for your collaboration on our recent organ donor case. We appreciate your partnership in these life-saving efforts. I wanted to share the outcomes of the donation with you and your staff who were involved.
The 51-year-old patient was able to give life to four individuals:
* His heart was transplanted to a man in San Diego who was in desperate need of this life-saving gift.
* A man in San Francisco received his liver.
* One of his kidneys was transplanted to a man in Southern California and the other was flown to New York and saved the life of a man there.
Again, your collaboration with Donor Network West make these gifts of life possible.
If you have questions, contact me at JGabbard@dnwest.org. Happy New Year to you and your staff.
— Julie Gabbard
Donation Program Consultant
Donor Network West

Patient Review Excerpts
“This was a seamless visit. Considering this was my first visit to this clinic, I am very pleased. Dr. Amster and his staff were helpful, efficient and informative. I am hopeful he can help me with my chronic pain.”
— Pain Management
Patient Review

* * *
“Dr. (Andrew) Brooks was exceptional. I trust his judgment and he gave me clear and concise information that was easily understood. I would recommend him in the future.”
— Orthopedic Patient Review
NorthBay Delivers First Baby of the Bay!

Keani Diane Quitugua weighed just 8 pounds, 5 ounces when she was born Tuesday, Jan. 1, at NorthBay Medical Center — but she made big news across the Bay Area as the first baby born of 2019.

She made headlines in The Reporter in Vacaville, the Daily Republic in Fairfield, and was featured on NBCBayarea.com, KTVU, ABC7news.com and onenewspage.com, just to name a few.

She joins a large, loving Fairfield family including mom, Elesha Matte, dad, Kamehameha Quitugua, and 9 (yes, 9) siblings.

Media outlets across Solano County and the San Francisco Bay Area picked up the story and came to photograph and video record the tiny celebrity.

Elesha explained to reporters that she came in Monday, Dec. 26, for a checkup and her doctors determined that the baby had shifted into a head-down position and the decision was made to induce labor. Elesha was induced in the morning on Dec. 31 and Keani arrived 13 hours later at 12:25 a.m. on New Year’s Day.

Elesha said her daughter’s name is Hawaiian, in keeping with her dad’s heritage and that her name is defined as “breeze that carries the waves.”

NorthBay Healthcare Academy Seeks Speakers

NorthBay Trauma is seeking speakers for the NorthBay Healthcare Academy in 2019. The academy, held at the Fairfield Police Activities League (PAL) Center, is focused on all aspects of health care and encouraging the next generation to consider careers in the field. Organizers are currently developing a calendar of speakers for 2019.

“It’s an amazing opportunity to meet some really great youth and give back to the community,” said Brenna Benjamin, NorthBay Trauma injury prevention and outreach technician.

PAL is an after-school program designed to offer youth a safe environment where they can learn, grow and build life skills. The Academy is an effort that reaches this unique group of youth that may not be part of the current NorthBay Nurse Academy or may not have considered a career in medicine and health care.

The academy begins in February with workshops integrated into the PAL Center’s Career Café on the fourth Monday of each month from 5 to 6 p.m. at the Sullivan Interagency Youth Service Building, 2195 Union Ave., in Fairfield.

A trauma team representative will be present at every workshop. They will provide presentation equipment that you need, and will arrive early to set up. If you are in need of any sort of presentation equipment, or any handouts, goodies, swag, etc., you can let them know one month in advance so they can reserve the needed equipment.

At the start of each workshop a trauma team representative will lead a short icebreaker activity and do a brief speaker introduction. Speakers may share information on their profession and present some hands-on activity for the youth. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, contact Brenna Benjamin at (707) 646-4448 or email her at bbenjamin@northbay.org.
Connecting with Patients Is Priority

It looks like 2019 will be the year of patient connection for NorthBay Healthcare.

That’s because NorthBay started using an outreach program Jan. 1 called “Connect,” by National Research Corp.

It’s part of a campaign to make sure discharged patients are contacted within 24 to 72 hours after leaving the hospital, especially those who are at high risk due to clinical- or service-related concerns, according to Jennifer Shoemaker, Patient Experience program manager.

The first call is made to patients the day after discharge. If the patient is not reached, two subsequent attempts will be made — one call per day, for up to three days total, Jennifer explained.

“This is an evidence-based best practice,” said Jennifer. “We know from studies that failing to make a connection can result in major dissatisfaction on the part of the patient.”

The automated call addresses questions regarding medication and follow-up care and answers are recorded and eventually will become part of the patient’s health record.

“And finally, it’s the last chance to correct any customer service issues the patient may have experienced,” said Jennifer.

If a call meets criteria for follow up, a quality review nurse will receive an alert from the system and will respond as quickly as possible. Research indicates that rapid resolution of customer service inquiries and clinical follow up reduces unnecessary readmissions and improves patient satisfaction.

“We want to encourage our nurses to let their patients know the survey call is coming,” said Jennifer. “If it’s not a surprise, it may make the patient more willing to take a couple of minutes to answer the questions.”

The Emergency Room is the first to go live and the inpatient units will follow by mid-February or early March if all goes well. Jennifer or her director, Heather Resseger, are available to answer any specific questions, and will also attend unit huddles.

PolicyStat Link Ready to Assist with Searches

Links to PolicyStat, NorthBay Healthcare’s new resource for policies, can now be found on computer desktops, under Quick Links in ShareSpace and in the Policies and Procedure area in ShareSpace.

“We are in the process of educating policy owners and policy approvers, but the system is already available for staff to view,” said Heather Resseger, director of Quality and Patient Safety. “We are expecting to start the full editing/approving process by the end of February.”

Policy owners and approvers can search “PolicyStat” in Cornerstone for the training schedule. For all other staff who are using PolicyStat to look up policies, here’s a link featuring a three-minute education module: http://learn.policystat.com/searching/.

Questions? Call Heather at Ext. 5759, Dean Pawley at Ext. 3210 or Emily Brown at Ext. 5783.

Over the Rainbow...

A gorgeous rainbow over NorthBay Medical Center was photographed by Dominic Uchikura from Biotronik, a vendor that works with cath lab staff. Thanks to Clinical Coordinator Terri Bartoli, R.N., for sharing it.

HealthSpring Has Fitness Offer for Employees

HealthSpring is offering new members $100 to use as they choose — toward initial cost of membership, Pilates, massage or any other HealthSpring service if you join in January. As always, there is a special rate for NorthBay Healthcare employees.

Call (707) 624-8090 or visit HealthSpringFitness.org/fit19 for more information.
Security ...

(From Page 1)

Patient Access ambassadors, along with volunteers, signing in visitors at the Welcome Pavilion. Last week, a metal security desk was positioned in the hallway between the Welcome Pavilion and the Emergency Department, and will be staffed with a uniformed security officer 24/7/365, according to Tyler Jobson, Security manager.

“We’ll use the security podium to check in anyone coming from the Emergency Department into the hospital, and to check on visitors who have already picked up their badge in the Welcome Pavilion,” said Tyler. “If the line in the pavilion is backing up, we can also process them at the security checkpoint.”

The system is similar to a vendor badging system that NorthBay Healthcare has used since 2011, which requires vendors to sign in and indicate a destination. The Envoy visitor badges are good for 24 hours.

“The whole goal is to be able to identify all visitors in our hospital,” explained Tyler. “The system will even allow us to create a black list, in case we have visitors who have been a problem in the past,” he said.

The other hope is that visitors who are wanted by law enforcement, or who pose a potential for violence won’t be inclined to visit, if a badge with their name and photo is required.

“We work very closely with local law enforcement,” said Tyler. “If a potential visitor has a warrant out for their arrest, we can quickly communicate and nip any potential problems in the bud.”

The system is fairly simple, said Tyler. It uses an iPad and a printer. The guest answers questions and uses the iPad to take their photo. They have to state their destination and the room number they plan to visit.

“This is where we really need the help of all of our employees,” said Tyler. “If you see someone without a badge, stop them and ask them to check in with security. Everyone should have a badge — either an employee badge, a vendor badge or a visitor badge. That covers all our bases.”

It is a culture change, Jon admits. “We must empower our employees to be part of the safety campaign,” he noted.

Security has been working on bringing the badging system to NorthBay for more than a year.

“First we had to secure all doors on campus at NorthBay Medical Center,” said Tyler. “That was a challenge. But now there are only two entrances for visitors — in the Welcome Pavilion and through the Emergency Department. All other doors require an employee badge.”

Parking was also altered to accommodate the changes.

“We must ensure visitors have parking near the Welcome Pavilion and Emergency Department, so we made the front lot a patient-only lot, and changed the southeast lot into an employee-only lot. We’ve had to install signage, and we’re still using security officers to direct traffic to ensure employees aren’t parking in patient areas, and vice versa. And it’s working,” said Tyler.

Plans call for implementing the system at Vacaville in 2020, once all exterior doors, except the main entrances have been secured, allowing only one entry point for visitors.
Top Prizes Honor Special Legacies

Raffle Winners Can Claim Dream Vacation, Pixar Tour

What’s your dream vacation? Going on an ocean cruise, to a sunny beach resort or a skiing adventure? Would you take the whole family or go on a honeymoon? How about if it was all paid for? That could be a reality for the grand prize winner in this year’s Solano Wine & Food Jubilee raffle.

The top prize is a $15,000 Dream Vacation, courtesy of Wasserman Travel. The prize has been donated by Jim Kellogg, in memory of his wife, Wendy Wasserman-Kellogg, Foundation board member who lost her battle with cancer last September.

Don’t want to take time off? Then take $15,000 in cash, the other option offered to the Grand Prize winner.

In addition, there is a Tribute Prize this year: a private tour of Pixar Animation Studios, valued at $5,000, in honor of Adam Burke, Foundation board member, who also passed in 2018.

The Jubilee raffle offers cash prizes totaling $10,000, with 12 winners of $125, 10 winners of $500, one winner of $1,000 and one $2,500 winner.

And, since only 2,500 tickets will be sold, the odds of winning something are about one in 100, according to Jim Kellogg, Raffle chair.

Tickets are $35 each or three for $100 and 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; at Jackson Medical Supply, 506 Main Street in Vacaville; or at Wasserman Travel, 366 Merchant St. in Vacaville.

The winning tickets will be drawn at the Jubilee, May 18, 2018, at Harbison Event Center at the Nut Tree in Vacaville. Ticketholders need not be present to win, but those who do attend will experience Solano County’s finest opportunity to mingle and socialize while enjoying an evening of wine, brews, food and great music, all while benefitting a great cause — the programs of NorthBay Hospice & Bereavement.

Presenting Sponsors are Al and Patt Shaw, Lee and Valerie Freeman, Heidi Y. Campini, Dennis and Alex Landis, Before The Movie, Western Health Advantage, DPR Construction and Paradise Valley Estates.

The 32nd Jubilee gets underway at 6:30 p.m. Tickets, for those ages 21 and up, are $75 each (plus a small service charge) through Feb. 23, and must be purchased in advance by going to www.NorthBayC2C.org. Tickets will be $100 after Feb. 23 and $125 on the day of the event, if still available. For more information, call (707) 646-3133.

Dr. Brooks Lectures on Knees, Hips Jan. 23

Andrew Brooks, M.D., will speak about hip and knee replacement surgery, as well as partial knee replacement through the NorthBay Joint Replacement Program in Vacaville on Jan. 23.

The event begins with registration at 5:30 p.m., followed by a lecture from 6 to 7 p.m., at VacaValley Wellness Center, 1020 Nut Tree Road, in Vacaville. The event is free, but reservations are requested. Email Events@NorthBay.org, or call (707) 646-3280.

The memory of Wendy Wasserman (left) with husband, Jim, and Adam Burke (above) with wife, Kim, will be honored in a big way in this year’s Jubilee raffle.
Open Staff ...
(From Page 1)

Center’s new North Wing and how after months of bustle and hustle the Emergency Department is getting close to normal again.

OpEx progress, as well as the latest financial performance, are on the agenda, as is how NorthBay will fill the chief financial officer position vacated by the unexpected passing of Art DeNio in December.

Konard wants to ensure employees have the opportunity to ask questions, either at the meetings or in advance, and encourages employees to either come to Open Staff with questions in mind, or to send them, anonymously or not, through interoffice mail or by email to Diane Barney in Public Relations, at dbarney@northbay.org.

“Or, you can always stop me in the hall,” he said.

Konard promises to either answer questions on the spot during Open Staff, or to follow up on them afterward.

As always, a video synopsis of the open staff discussion will be available on the employee portal, posted several days after the last session, for those who were not able to attend.

Open Staff ...
(From Page 1)

Always a Meeting Near You

Mark your calendars with these Open Staff dates and times:

**Monday**, Jan. 28: Green Valley Administration Center, Conference Room 154 at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

**Tuesday**, Jan. 29: NorthBay Medical Center, Annex Conference Rooms 1-2, at 7:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

**Wednesday**, Jan. 30: Hilborn Administration Building, Conference Room 229AB, at 10 a.m.

**Friday**, Feb. 1, VacaValley Hospital Cafe Conference Room, at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Big Year ...
(From Page 1)

sylvenia Avenue in Fairfield. It became NorthBay Medical Center in 1986, and today has 132 hospital beds, another 29 Emergency Department beds, and soon will have an extra 22 high-tech patient beds when its North Wing project opens this summer.

But first comes expansion of NorthBay Medical Center’s Emergency Department.

It is in its fourth and final phase of construction now, having opened an additional 10 beds in December, bringing the number to 29. The project added two new trauma bays, one for cardiac resuscitation, and three high-acuity beds with patient lifts.

The final phase — to be completed in April — will bring a new CT scanner into the department.

At the same time, work on the three-story North Wing continues at a frenzied pace.

The $183 million, 77,000-square-foot addition will host a new café, 22 high-tech patient rooms, eight new surgical suites and a post-anesthesia care unit. It will also be home to diagnostic imaging and central sterile supply departments.

“The new wing and all its state-of-the art equipment and design is testament to NorthBay’s dedication to serving its community,” said Konard Jones, CEO and president. “We are committed to delivering advanced medicine close to home for our patients. And we can’t wait to show off all the new features that will make our hospital a showcase.”

Plans are in the works for tours and celebrations in the summer, before the new wing opens for business in August. Look for NorthBay to tie in its 60th anniversary to the grand opening celebrations, said Konard.

“This year we’ll be celebrating the amazing growth we’ve experienced, from a team of 45 employees that opened the first hospital in 1959 to the 2,600-plus employees who today represent NorthBay Healthcare,” he said. “What we’ve done in 60 years is impressive, but we’re not finished by any means. Our vision must continue to change with the times, if we are to bring the best possible care to our community. We are still the only locally based, locally managed healthcare organization in Solano County, dedicated to delivering care for all who need it. And we’ve been doing it for 60 years. That’s something to celebrate.”
When it comes to maintaining a healthy gastrointestinal tract, NorthBay Healthcare gastroenterologist Nazia Hasan, M.D., has two pieces of advice: Quit smoking and eat more fiber.

Dr. Hasan shared her tip during the latest #OurDocTalk — a sweeping half-hour chat broadcast via live streaming video Jan. 10 on the NorthBay Facebook page.

“If you are smoking, quit,” she said. “Smoking affects so many health systems from the heart and lungs to the digestive system. “ And fiber is vital for a healthy functioning gastrointestinal system. “The daily requirement is 25 to 35 grams per day and most Americans tend to get about half of that. So consider fiber supplementation.”

Dr. Hasan began her chat by explaining gastroenterology and her subspecialty of interventional endoscopy, detailing how it can be used in the treatment of a wide variety of diseases. She focused on gallstones and reflux disease, common disorders seen by providers in gastroenterology.

Using a printed diagram, she explained what the gallbladder is and its role to store and release bile produced by the liver. The gallbladder is important, she said, but it can be removed as the bile ducts can perform some of the same functions.

Problems can occur when stones are formed in the gallbladder, she said. The stones can cause blockages.

“So the question is what causes the stones to form? A lot of it can be diet-related. So folks who have high concentrations of cholesterol or calcium can be pre-disposed to stone formation,” Dr. Hasan said. Being overweight can be risk factor and women, more than men, suffer from gallstones. Age can also play a role as those over age 40 are more at risk.

Gallstones can have no symptoms but when there are symptoms they commonly include sudden onset of gallbladder pain, particularly after a fatty meal.

Reflux disease was also in focus during the discussion as Dr. Hasan explained that some reflux is normal but that repeated incidences can indicate gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD, a digestive disorder that affects the ring of muscle between the esophagus and stomach.

GERD is diagnosed “when we see inflammation at the bottom of the esophagus,” she explained. Certain foods can increase acid reflux and Dr. Hasan warned against overdoing caffeine, alcohol and tomato-based foods.

Treatment can vary, depending on the severity of the problem and can include over-the-counter medications, prescription medications or surgical procedures.

The full chat can be viewed on the NorthBay Facebook page (Facebook.com/NorthBayHealthcare) and will be posted on the NorthBay YouTube channel soon.
Check Cornerstone for Class Options

Educational opportunities abound at NorthBay Healthcare and with a new year comes new chances to upgrade skills, sharpen old ones or fulfill training that applies to conditions of employment.

Check Cornerstone for information and the latest updates about classes. Class availability is subject to change, and some classes are job/role dependent.

- **TeamSTEPPS** — Jan. 22, 24, 27, 30 and Feb. 1
- **Intro to Evidence-Based Practice** — Jan. 22
- **PolicyStat** — Jan. 23, Feb. 5
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention** — Jan. 24
- **EBP Fellowship** — Jan. 28
- **ACLS** — Jan. 28, 29, 30
- **PALS** — Jan. 29
- **Accurate Evaluations** — Jan. 29
- **Performance Conversation** — Jan. 29
- **Lead and ST Segment** — Jan. 30
- **Peer-to-Peer Feedback** — Jan. 30
- **ICU Skills Day** — Jan. 31, Feb. 1, 5, 6
- **Handling Emotional Stress** — Jan. 31
- **Code Blue** — Feb. 4
- **Cardiac Monitoring Credential** — Feb. 8
- **Orientation Week** — Feb. 4

**NorthBay.org Sporting a ‘Refreshing’ New Look**

You may have noticed a new look for NorthBay Healthcare’s website. A site refresh was recently launched for NorthBay.org after a team effort. It was aimed at updating the site to make it more efficient and more user-friendly, particularly on mobile devices.

In addition to a refreshed look on the main landing page, the redesign takes a “mobile first” approach aimed at making it easier to find provider information with a focus on NorthBay’s keynote service lines. Finding specialists is easier, while providing links to providers, videos and resources.

“You can tell when a car was designed and built by looking at it, and it’s no different for websites,” explained Dan Fowler, senior designer in Business Development. “Design trends evolve. Technology advances, and people know when they are dealing with an outdated site with an old design. It affects our credibility.” Visitors who cannot easily navigate a site easily get frustrated and leave, he added.

The refresh is still undergoing fine-tuning and modifications. If you spot an error, e-mail it to Dan at DFowler@NorthBay.org.

**Lung Cancer Screenings are Available All Year Long**

Lung screenings offered by the NorthBay Cancer Center and Solano Diagnostic Imaging were the focus of public outreach in November but, the fact is, they are offered all year long and could save your life or the life of someone you know.

When caught early, survival rates for lung cancer increase dramatically. The screenings are done using a painless, low dose CT scan. They are fast, simple and can detect lung cancer at an early stage when it is more likely to be curable.

Smoking is the No. 1 cause of lung cancer. People between the ages of 55 and 74, who have a history of smoking, and are a current smoker or quit less than 15 years ago, are at higher risk and should consider lung cancer screening.

A new cancer screening page is now live online at NorthBay.org and includes information on the screenings, who should get screened and the costs.

For complete screening criteria or to make an appointment, call (707) 624-8140.
**Did you know?**

**Laboratory Services**

**BEHIND THE TEST TUBES**

**MEET OUR LAB TEAM**
NorthBay Healthcare’s Clinical Laboratory team consists of approximately 100 employees, including 49 clinical laboratory scientists, 46 certified laboratory phlebotomists; a quality, safety and point-of-care coordinator; three supervisors and a director, as well as a unit clerk and two clinical laboratory scientist interns from San Francisco State University.

**WHAT WE DO**
Most frequent tests include chemistry analysis for glucose (sugar) levels, basic metabolic panel (electrolytes, kidney functions), Complete Blood Count (blood count, white count and blood volumes), and urinalysis. These basic test results provide a fast indication of a patients’ overall health and help physicians determine what other testing might need to be done, for cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, anemia, and coronary heart disease, for example.

**WHAT ELSE?**
The lab also conducts blood bank studies, hematology, coagulation studies, microbiology, serology, immunoassays, viral studies, mycology, urinalysis, toxicology, endocrinology, parasitology and immunology testing, as well as DNA testing for Clostridium Difficile Toxin (C. diff.), Neisseria gonorrhea and chlamydia.

**WE’RE ALWAYS ON**
Team members work 24/7/365 at NorthBay Medical Center and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital to provide laboratory services for in- and outpatients, as well as for patients of the Centers for Primary Care.

**WELL-TIMED SERVICE**
Certified laboratory phlebotomists typically perform inpatient blood draws at around 3:30 a.m. so results will be ready for physicians when they begin rounds at around 6 a.m.

**LABS, STAT!**
If a critical or life-threatening result is found in a lab test, staff will confirm the result and then immediately notify the nurse or physician so the patient can receive expedited attention.

**1.4 million**
Laboratory tests performed at NorthBay Medical Center in 2018

**700,000**
Laboratory tests performed at VacaValley Hospital in 2018

**WHAT WE DON’T DO**
TB tests are sent to the California Department of Public Health, and the lab sends HIV screens, as well as non-routine specialized testing (chromosome, virus and special chemistry) to Quest Diagnostics. Pathology samples are sent to Precision Pathology.

**BANKING BLOOD**
Both labs stock dozens of units of all blood types at all times. In 2018, the lab performed more than 4,000 blood transfusions at NorthBay Medical Center to support routine surgeries, the CVOR and the trauma center. At VacaValley Hospital, the lab performed close to 4,000 blood transfusions to support routine surgeries, the emergency room and the Hematology/Oncology program at VacaValley Wellness Center.