

taking care

Summer Smarts

Tips for battling ticks and avoiding sunburn

THE VALUE OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Important considerations for you and your family

Life After Knee Surgery

Moving on, moving ahead



< **Our Greatest Asset:**
Employee and volunteers of the year
(page 4)



< **A Welcome Sign:**
The first-ever AVH sign
(page 5)



< **Your Doctor:**
Dr. Harry Stearns returns to AVH
(page 7)

FROM THE C.E.O.



AVH Takes Pride in Our People

Providing top-notch health care is a priority at Androscoggin Valley Hospital. That means we invest a great deal in our facilities and always try to have the best technology available. We also depend on some very special people: our employees and volunteers.

Being a community hospital creates a special closeness between the people who work here and the patients. This bond is a welcomed by-product of caring for our friends, neighbors, and acquaintances.

On more than one occasion, I have said that this hospital is the greatest asset the community has. Behind its greatness are the people who take pride in the work they do here. For this second issue of *Taking Care*, I am proud to introduce you to two of our outstanding volunteers and one of our finest employees. You will also read how volunteer efforts are enabling us to purchase and display our first sign and to enhance our facility and services.

To all our employees and volunteers, I salute and thank you. I hope you understand the vital role you play at AVH.

Sincerely,

Russell G. Keene,
Chief Executive Officer

COMMUNITY

About NorthCare

NorthCare is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to delivering quality care to the residents of northern New Hampshire. Governed by a volunteer community Board of Directors, NorthCare coordinates the care and services provided by Androscoggin Valley Hospital and Androscoggin Valley Hospital Foundation. This ensures that our community receives the most technologically current care, delivered by caring, dedicated professionals.

NorthCare considers the immediate and future needs of the community through strategic planning, fund-raising, and care management. In addition, NorthCare financially supports other not-for-profit corporations and is the parent company of:

Androscoggin Valley Hospital
59 Page Hill Road
Berlin, NH 03570
(603) 752-2200

Androscoggin Valley Hospital Foundation
59 Page Hill Road
Berlin, NH 03570
(603) 752-2200

www.avnh.com

GETTING

What's Happening at www.avnh.com?

Got a friend or loved one in the hospital? Go to www.avnh.com, and send them an electronic get-well wish by clicking on "Send a patient an e-mail today!" You can also find information on our Web site about staff and services, as well as a schedule of our community classes and links to other regional health Web sites.



Wish your loved one well
with an e-mail through
www.avnh.com.



Published by Redesign® Communications, Inc. © 2003. All rights reserved. No material may be reproduced in whole or in part from this publication without the express written permission of the publisher. The information in this publication is intended to complement—not take the place of—the recommendations of your health care provider. Consult your physician before making major changes in your lifestyle or health care regimen. Redesign Communications makes no endorsement or warranties regarding any of the products and services included in this publication or its articles.

SUNSCREEN

The ABCs of SPFs

Make sure you're using sunscreen safely this summer.

Think you know everything about sunscreen? According to the American Academy of Dermatology, most Americans don't. Here are important things to keep in mind when using sunscreen this summer:



- Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen, which protects against both UVA and UVB rays.
- Use a product with a sun protection factor of at least 15. An SPF of 15 means it would take 15 times longer for you to burn than it does when you don't use sunscreen.
- The average person needs enough sunscreen to fill a shot glass to cover exposed areas.
- Always apply sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors, so it has time to absorb.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours or after swimming.
- Wear sunscreen even on cloudy days since 80 percent of the sun's rays can penetrate clouds.
- Use sunscreen any time you plan to be outside for more than 20 minutes.

LYME DISEASE

Tick Patrol

One of the pleasures of summer is spending more time outdoors. But summer is also prime time for Lyme disease, a bacterial infection spread by immature deer ticks, tiny insects no larger than a poppy seed.



The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to avoid wooded areas, shady grasslands, and anywhere deer tend to gather. If you do go out, follow these tips:

- Dress in long-sleeve shirts and long pants that fit snugly at the wrists and ankles. Wear a hat, and tuck pant legs into socks. Avoid shoes that expose any part of your feet.
- Walk in the center of trails to avoid brushing up against grass and brush.
- To make ticks easier to spot, wear light-colored clothing.
- Tie back long hair.
- Do not sit on the ground.
- Spray clothing or skin with repellents that contain 10 percent to 30 percent DEET. Make sure kids

get below 10 percent DEET.

- Always check for ticks after being outside. Be sure to check the scalp and behind the ears, where ticks can hide.
- Check pets for ticks before letting them back indoors.

HEALTH RESOURCES

Visit Our Library for Free Health Information

DID YOU KNOW that Androscoggin Valley Hospital has a library of health resources available to you? The AVH Auxiliary/Eli Isaacson Memorial Family Health Library lends health-related books, videos, and audiotapes and also offers Internet access for health-related searches. And the best part? Access to the library is free to visitors and patients of AVH.

The library is located on the first floor (to the left of the Information Desk) and is open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call Edwina Keene, AVH Volunteer Coordinator, at (603) 326-5676.

Our Winning Volunteers

With almost 100 volunteers to choose from, it wasn't easy to pick just one for the Volunteer of the Year Award. So we chose two.



Edna Plante and Marcel Danais, this year's Androscoggin Valley Hospital Volunteers of the Year, have enjoyed working with people and consider AVH their second home.

► Marcel Danais

When Marcel Danais was a funeral director, he worked 70 hours a week. But after a sudden stroke forced him into retirement, Marcel found himself with a lot of free time. "When you're used to working all your life, and you suddenly stop, it's pretty hard," says Marcel, age 61.

His wife suggested Marcel volunteer at the hospital. He liked the idea and began volunteering here in 2001, delivering mail. After a while, he started transporting patients too. These days, he works five days a week,

five to six hours a day, doing both patient transport and mail delivery. "I like working with people," Marcel says. "I'm a real people person."

► Edna Plante

For more than 20 years, Edna Plante has done filing and made copies in the AVH Business Office. "I love everything about it," says Edna, age 61. "Everyone in the hospital is really nice. It's like my second home."

Volunteering is a passion for Edna, who won the Governor's Volunteer Award in 1994. In addition to AVH, she has volunteered with the American Red Cross, taken calls on the Sexual and Domestic Violence Help Line, served on the board of the state housing authority, and worked with other organizations, including the United Way and Northern White Mountain Chamber of Commerce.

Last April, she had knee replacement surgery, followed by two hip replacements in July. Three months later, Edna was back at AVH. She now works two days a week, for three hours at a time. "I told them, 'You can give me all that therapy for my body, but what about my mind?'" she says.

Answering the Call

Good phone manners, a friendly smile, and a willingness to help those in need make Rita Laroche AVH's Employee of the Year.

Rita, a Berlin native, has manned the phones at AVH for 28 years and served as the Switchboard Supervisor



"I like talking to people," says Rita Laroche, Switchboard Supervisor and AVH's Employee of the Year.

since 1998. She oversees a staff of five Switchboard Operators, who collectively take as many as 700 calls a day.

Receiving the award, she says, is a complete shock. "One of the doctors said I looked like I was going to pass out," she says. "I totally didn't expect it."

Rita genuinely loves her job and her colleagues, who have become like family to her. She also enjoys the responsibility and seriousness that come with working in a hospital that caters to many needs. "I look forward to coming to work," she says. "I really like what I do."

In high school, Rita considered becoming a nurse. But she knew she'd have a hard time distancing herself emotionally from the patients she tended. Instead she worked as a telephone operator for a while and then stayed home to raise her three children.

She came to the hospital when her youngest child turned 5.

Manning the hospital Switchboard turned out to be a perfect fit for Rita. "I like talking to people, and I'm a little bit on the shy side," she says. "So this has been good for me."

Want to Help?

AVH always needs volunteers and currently is looking for someone to chair the 2006 Flower Festival, as well as people to transport patients around the hospital. There are also opportunities in Hospice and the Auxiliary, which does fund-raising. Other tasks include manning the Sunny Corner Gift Shop, doing office work, and helping at health fairs. High school students may volunteer during the summer, too. For information, contact Edwina Keene, AVH Volunteer Coordinator, at (603) 326-5676.

FACILITY ENHANCEMENT

Sign of the Times

A donation from the hospital Auxiliary puts a name to the AVH face.

In the century since it was founded, AVH has quietly existed in the woods of the Androscoggin Valley in an unnamed building. This year, the hospital will get its first sign, thanks to a generous donation from the hospital Auxiliary.

"Using \$24,000 in proceeds from the Gift Shop, the hospital will purchase and post a sign for the first time since the concrete structure was built in the late 1970s," says Linda Morris, President of the Auxiliary.

The money comes from the sale of Gift Shop merchandise, which includes candles, teddy bears, and gift cards. Angel figurines and baby clothes are the top-selling items, and most of the customers are AVH employees who are often too busy to shop elsewhere. Linda Morris and Mary LaPierre, who both serve as buyers for the store, co-manage the shop.

"The money we raise from Auxiliary projects goes to patient care," Linda says. "The money we raise from the Gift Shop goes to facility enhancement."

Last year, Gift Shop proceeds were used to upgrade patient rooms. "Fresh coats of paint, decorative borders, and new curtains and bedspreads give the rooms a homier feel," Linda says.

The Gift Shop, which is manned by a dozen volunteers, is only

one Auxiliary project that helps raise money for the hospital. The volunteer organization also runs several annual events including a Flower Festival, a Christmas Fair, and a Community Ball. The Auxiliary's biggest fund-raiser, however, is the annual Golf Tournament, which grossed \$53,000 last year. The money was used to help purchase a hematology analyzer that aids in making diagnoses. This year, Morris and LaPierre hope the Golf Tournament will allow for the purchase of five new extended-stay stretchers.

In addition, the Auxiliary is hoping to use money from its other events to enhance the landscaping on the circle outside the hospital and to add park benches there. And they are always looking for volunteers to pitch in on projects. For more information, call Linda Morris at (603) 326-5678.



ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Make Your Wishes Known

As Terri Schiavo's family battled over her care last winter, Americans learned a valuable lesson: It's important to make your health care wishes known before you get too sick. That's where advance directives come in. These legal documents tell doctors the care you would like if you become unable to make medical decisions.

• A **durable power of attorney for health care, or a health care proxy**, is someone who acts on your behalf if you become incompetent and unable to make healthcare decisions.

• A **living will** outlines your wishes with respect to extraordinary measures and allows you to limit or forgo life-sustaining procedures you don't want. Be sure to discuss your wishes with the person(s) who will be your proxy, as they must be willing to honor your wishes.

• A **do-not-resuscitate order** directs that cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) not be performed in the event you stop breathing or your heart stops.

Writing an advance directive can be done on a form from your doctor, your state health agency, a lawyer, or a computer software package. Forms are available at the Berlin Health Department and North Country Cares, both on Main Street in Berlin. Make sure forms are signed in the presence of a Notary Public or a lawyer, otherwise they will not be legal. Be sure to provide copies of your forms to your proxy, your doctor's office, and the admission desk at your hospital.



Moving for Better Health

The AVH Surgical Associates Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Clinic takes steps to get you back in motion.

For years, Charles Dodge suffered from osteoarthritis in his right knee. As time passed, the pain got worse. Not even pain medication or cortisone shots could relieve the pain. Routine activities like walking became increasingly difficult. "I had to take two hands to lift my right leg out of the truck," says the 66-year-old retired police officer.

Eventually, Dodge realized that surgery was his only option. On Feb. 10, 2005, he underwent knee replacement surgery. "And I've been doing activities since a month after that," he says proudly.

Healthy Healing

Restoring a patient's ability to walk again is just one of the many responsibilities of the AVH Surgical Associates Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Clinic (SAO and SMC). The specialty practice is headed up by Delphine Glorieux-Sullivan, M.D., FRCS(C), with Richard J. Lorenz, PA-C, serving as the physician's

assistant. On July 1, 2005, they were joined by Harry C. Stearns, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon.

Orthopaedics, a word with Greek roots, literally means "straight (ortho)

"There isn't always one answer for every disease or injury. That's where we, the doctors, come in. We have to determine the best treatment plan that will enable our patients to resume an active life."

—Delphine Glorieux-Sullivan, M.D., FRCS(C)

child (pais)." The term reflects the origins of this medical specialty, which focused on treating children with spine or limb deformities. Today, orthopaedics is devoted to the treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of injuries and diseases that

occur in the musculoskeletal system, which includes bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles, and nerves. Patients turn up at the AVH SAO and SMC with conditions including arthritis, bursitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, hip fractures, sports injuries, and foot problems.

"We have patients of all ages, who come to us for all kinds of care," says Dr. Glorieux-Sullivan. "These days, with an aging population, a lot of our work is helping older patients cope with arthritis, which often means total joint replacement."

Treatment Solutions

Dr. Glorieux-Sullivan says a big part of her job is staying on top of the latest developments in her field and making sure AVH has the most up-to-date equipment and diagnostic tools. But the heart of her work is knowing how to pinpoint the best strategy for helping a patient reclaim function of an injured bone, joint, muscle, or nerve. "There isn't always one answer for every disease or injury," she says. "That's where we, the doctors, come in. We have to determine the best treatment plan that will enable our patients to resume an active life."

Charles Dodge, for one, is delighted with the knee surgery that has eliminated his arthritis pain. "I'm very active again," he says. "I mow the lawn, I golf, I bowl. And I'm the secretary of the Lion's Club."

The entire experience, he says, was made easy by Dr. Glorieux-Sullivan, whom he describes as a "great lady." "I never once felt uncomfortable in that



From left to right: Barbara Dumont; Jeanette Murray; Delphine Glorieux-Sullivan, M.D., FRCS(C); Kelly Braden; Joan Jepson; Richard J. Lorenz, PA-C.



Charles Dodge, an avid golfer, is delighted that knee surgery has eliminated his arthritis pain and let him resume an active lifestyle.

office," he says. "She talks to you like a person, not another dollar sign."

He also credits the physical therapists for his recovery, which took about four weeks (see sidebar). "They were very friendly, very helpful, and they let me go at my own pace," Dodge says. "By the end of three to four weeks, I was back to my bowling league." For more information about AVH SAO and SMC, call (603) 752-2300.



Introducing Harry C. Stearns, III, M.D.

AVH is delighted to announce the return of Dr. Harry C. Stearns, III, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon who previously

practiced in the Androscoggin Valley community from 1983 to 1999. Dr. Stearns has a medical degree from the Abraham Lincoln School of Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago. He is board-certified in orthopaedic surgery and is a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Before returning to AVH, he worked in Spearfish, S.D.

REHABILITATION

Getting Physical

You've had surgery, now comes physical therapy. AVH is here to help you make the move.

"No orthopaedic surgery would be complete—or successful—without the help of the physical therapy team at AVH," says Steven Schofield, Director of Rehabilitation Services at AVH.

Working with a physical therapist may begin prior to the decision to do joint replacement. The patient may decide to attempt prolonging the life of the joint with strengthening and flexibility exercises. If and when the patient does have surgery, the therapists will initiate an exercise plan immediately. Patients will often question the therapists about the need to get out of bed so soon, but

experience has shown that this early mobilization will shorten the recovery time. The benefits of getting up and moving far outweigh any benefits gained from lying in bed.

A patient's willingness to engage in exercise shortly after major surgery is slowly changing, though, as the benefits of exercise become increasingly apparent and the public becomes better educated about the importance of movement.

Although the Rehab Department also tends to patients with other diseases or impairments, most patients come from orthopaedics. The Rehab Staff consists of eight therapists and assistants, many of whom have certification or training in subspecialties such as back care, soft tissue management, and aquatic therapy.

Regardless of the problem, the goal of all physical therapy is simple: to restore the patient to his prior level of function. "We're not trying to get people to do something they weren't doing before," Schofield says. "The nuts and bolts of our business is to restore people to their previous lifestyles." For more information about the AVH Rehabilitation Department, call (603) 326-5738.



Steven Schofield, Director of Rehabilitation Services at Androscoggin Valley Hospital, helps Priscilla Berthiaume recover from total knee replacement on both knees. The surgeries were performed by Delphine Glorieux-Sullivan, M.D., FRCS(C).