ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
JULY 1, 2009 - JUNE 30, 2010
Dear Friends:

The New Milford Visiting Nurse Association once again has had a busy, fulfilling and productive year pursuing our mission of providing the very best in home health services, Hospice and community wellness programs. For the fourth year in a row we have been named to HomeCare Elite, ranking us in the top 25th percent of all home care agencies in the United States. We also underwent an excellent survey by CHAP (Community Health Accreditation Program), the leading accreditor of visiting nurse associations. We are understandably proud of these accomplishments, but as a hometown agency we are even more pleased by the personal responses we receive from our patients and their families. Here are just a few of the comments we have received this year through patient satisfaction surveys and letters:

“I first thought I wasn’t going to take Visiting Nurse services, but I am so glad I did! My Visiting Nurse was very helpful in getting me better. Thank you.”
“Great care. They always went the extra mile to help and solve any problems.”
“I can’t suggest any improvement. I was completely satisfied – great service.”
“My physical therapist was terrific – caring, competent, got me back up to speed!”
“Very professional and knowledgeable. Very helpful coordinating pharmacy needs for patient.”

These responses, which reflect the expertise and dedication of our staff, are very gratifying indeed. Our clinical staff, nurses, therapists, home health aides and homemakers, together with our efficient office staff, our knowledgeable Board of Directors, and our loyal volunteers continue to provide excellence in care for the people of western Connecticut. We look forward to serving you for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Andrea Wilson, Executive Director

New Milford VNA Top Performer Four Years In A Row

New Milford VNA was once again named to the HomeCare Elite™, a compilation of the top-performing home health agencies in the United States. This annual review identifies the top 25 percent of agencies and further highlights the top 100 and top 500 agencies overall. Winners are ranked by an analysis of performance measures in quality outcomes, quality improvement, and financial performance. “The 2009 HomeCare Elite winners demonstrate a commitment to providing their patients with the best possible care while performing at the highest level,” said Nancy Buller, senior director of marketing communications at OCS HomeCare. “We congratulate the New Milford Visiting Nurse Association on being one of the top home care agencies in the country.” “DecisionHealth would like to congratulate the top HomeCare Elite agencies that achieved excellent clinical and financial outcomes by providing quality care to their patients,” adds Marci Heydt, executive editor of DecisionHealth’s Home Health Line.
Post-Op Physical Therapy—Why Not In Your Own Home?

More and more adults and senior citizens are having hip and knee replacements. The technology involved in these procedures has improved dramatically in recent years, and people no longer have to “slow down” in their fifties, sixties and beyond. After a short stay at a rehab facility, many patients go on to outpatient therapy for further strengthening and maintenance. If you need post-operative therapy, you may be able to do this right in your own home. New Milford VNA physical therapists provide expertise in rehabilitative care which can usually be covered by private insurance or Medicare. With a doctor’s order, the therapist will evaluate your status, and then visit two or three times a week to educate and support you in your strengthening regimen. And when your home therapy is complete, you can maintain your strength and progress by joining one of NMVNA’s “Flex Appeal” exercise programs for seniors at no charge at your local senior center!

Skilled Nursing Meets 21st Century Needs

Skilled visiting nurse services have certainly come a long way from the founding of New Milford VNA in 1918! The demand for high tech services for homebound patients, which were once available only in a hospital setting, continues to surge.

New Milford VNA offers the finest in high-tech home care to hundreds of patients in our seven town service area.

WoundVac- This greatly reduces the amount of time it takes post-operative wounds or decubitus ulcers to heal at home. Seven of our nurses are certified in this technique.

Well at Home- Designed to prevent re-hospitalizations, this computer monitored technique reports a patient’s vital signs to the NMVNA through the home phone. Changes in weight, temperature and blood pressure can then be addressed by a home visit, often avoiding a hospital stay.

Diabetes Education- With the dramatic increase in numbers of Americans developing diabetes, the need for education has never been greater. Our Certified Diabetes Educator can provide this in the patient’s home or at our agency.

IV Therapy- Antibiotic medications may be administered intravenously at home with appropriate patient and family education.
**LIFELINE- A VITAL LINK TO SAFETY**

New Milford VNA’s **Lifeline Coordinator Claudette Sesera** knows that more than half of all falls that result in injury happen at home. **Lifeline** provides quick access to help 24 hours a day. It can give greater peace of mind not only to seniors, but to their family members and neighbors. In an emergency, delayed medical care can jeopardize recovery. Having access to help at the push of a button can reduce these risks. **Lifeline can give your loved one greater peace of mind and a sense of confidence to help maintain independent living.** There is no equipment to buy and no long-term contract to sign. **The cost is literally less than that of a cup of coffee a day.** In the event of a fall or emergency, help is available at the push of a button. The Lifeline Personal Help Button connects to a trained Personal Response Associate who can send help quickly, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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**NURTURING FAMILIES PROGRAMS (FOR MOMS AND DADS!)**

*Nurturing Families Network* (NFN), administered in western Connecticut by New Milford VNA, provides information, guidance and support to new parents. NFN works in partnership with first-time parents facing the challenges of parenthood.

We offer **Home Visitation** to first-time parents. Weekly home visits with the family provide timely and appropriate parenting education. Parents are also linked to a host of community services. **Phone Support** creates connections between the family and their community. Trained staff and volunteers make weekly to monthly calls to new families. **Parenting Groups** are also available for parents to share their experiences and expand their own social contacts. Parenting Groups include: **Parenting Basics**, **Instructions That Didn’t Come with Your Child**; **Mom2Mom**, For New Moms and Their Babies; **Fathers’ Support Group**; and **The ABC’s of Parenting**.
Our Medicare Certified New Milford VNA Hospice Program completed its twenty-seventh year of service to the people of the greater New Milford area this year, serving well over one hundred terminally ill patients and their families. We have also increased the number of patients on our HOPE program, a palliative care program for people experiencing life-threatening, life-limiting or advanced illness. A six month or less prognosis is not necessary for HOPE patients. Palliative care addresses the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of the patient and family. HOPE is an excellent way for the New Milford VNA staff to get to know and support patients in their individual choices and for them to learn about our many services.

The mission of Hospice is to improve the quality of life by easing pain and providing comfort and dignity to people at a very special time of life. A team approach is used to provide the patient’s primary caregiver and family members with well trained support. The Hospice Team works with patients and families to develop individualized plans of care. Our team provides services anywhere the patient lives. At present we provide home care for patients who wish and are able to remain in their own homes. We have contracts with three skilled nursing facilities, Candlewood Valley Health and Rehabilitation, Village Crest, and The Kent. Hospice services are also provided by New Milford VNA at New Milford Hospital and Danbury Hospital. The Hospice nurse is the main contact with the family, overseeing the provision of medical equipment, supplies and medications necessary for symptom control and pain relief. She provides education and training to caregivers. Other members of the team include the Hospice physician, certified nursing assistants, speech, physical and occupational therapists, the medical social worker, dietitian, chaplain, and massage therapist. Trained volunteers round out the team, providing a myriad of services including companionship and running errands for the family. Hospice services do not end with the death of the patient. We provide bereavement services and resources, and provide expert ongoing support for at least thirteen months following the patient’s death. We are pleased to provide such an important and essential service for our patients and families.
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS CAMP JONATHAN

SUNSET SOCIAL – A WONDERFUL EVENING

On a beautiful evening in June, over one hundred supporters of the New Milford VNA Hospice Program enjoyed a “Sunset Social” hosted by Ronald Pizzarelli and Georgia Hynes to raise funds for Camp Jonathan, NMVNA's day camp for bereaved children. Guests were treated to beverages, delicious hors d’oeuvres and delectable desserts. A lovely event in the beautiful country setting of Mr. Pizzarelli’s Roxbury home, the evening offered guests the opportunity to come together in support of a good cause and to learn more about Camp Jonathan and the Hospice Program. Mary Lee Carroll, LCSW, founder and director of the camp since its inception in 1994, spoke about the origins of the camp, its purpose, and some of the therapeutic techniques used in working with grieving children. In the early 1990’s Ms. Carroll was a Hospice volunteer for a young boy with terminal cancer whose name was Jonathan. She wanted to do something to keep his memory alive, and Camp Jonathan became that testimony to Jonathan’s spirit. The camp provides a safe and loving environment for bereaved children to come together with others who have suffered losses to learn how to express their grief using creative therapies. Camp is free due to the generous support of many individuals in the community like Mr. Pizzarelli, and of many groups and businesses who donate necessary goods and services. Over three hundred children have been served by Camp Jonathan in New Milford since its beginnings.

QUILT RAFFLE— A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Angela Haglund (right) cheerfully sold raffle tickets during the New Milford Village Fair Days for the beautiful quilt made by a group of local quilters. The raffle was a fund raiser for Camp Jonathan. The exceptionally beautiful quilt was sewn by members of the Mountain Laurel Quilters, New Milford Senior Center Quilters and NMVNA volunteers under the guidance of master quilter Veralynn Davee. The drawing was held on Saturday, July 31 at New Milford Village Fair Days. Tickets were sold by NMVNA employees and Board members, Erin Maguire’s Natural Food Market on Bank Street and at Stop n’ Shop in New Milford. Union Savings Bank lent their support by selling tickets at their booth at Village Fair Days. Nancy Hutson of New Milford, a quilter and supporter of Camp Jonathan, was the happy winner of the quilt.

Many thanks to Mayor Pat Murphy, Irene Norkowski, Debbie Wilcox, Fran Dempewol, Catherine Killoran, Veralynn Davee, Kathy Buccellato, Lee Conn, Sandy Keane, Doris Palmer, Anne Luongo, Joanna Lukianoff, Donna Ramsey and Ann Marie Chauvin who took part in the quilt project.
**Hospice Remembrance Service Joins with Tree of Life**

Over one hundred people attended the Hospice Program’s 28th Interfaith Remembrance Service on Sunday, November 28th at the First Congregational Church. For the first time, the Remembrance Service, which honors our Hospice patients and all the members of our community who have died in the past year, was joined with the annual Tree of Life ceremony. The crowd was welcomed by Richard Kosier, president of the NMVNA Board of Directors, and music was provided by organist Tom Holcombe and soloist Rebecca Nesmith. One particularly poignant moment occurred when four year old Sarah Wolfenden, granddaughter of Hospice Director Linda Lewis, lit a candle in memory of her father, thirty-eight year old Kenneth Wolfenden, who had died of cancer in June. The homily was given by our new Hospice Chaplain, Rev. Chris Sakis. After the service, participants crossed the lawn to the Richmond Center for the lighting of the fifteenth Tree of Life.

**New Milford VNA Administers Dramatic Increase in Number of Flu Clinics**

“I had a little bird; its name was Enza. I opened the window, and in-flu-enza.”

*Children’s Nursery Rhyme circa 1918*

Just when Community Health Nurse Geri Rodda R.N. thought flu season couldn’t possibly get any busier, in flew H1N1! In order to protect our population from this new strand of influenza and to comply with federal and state mandates, Geri and her staff, in cooperation with the Directors of Health of New Milford and other area towns, had to intensify their efforts to prepare for the 2009-2010 season. Staff education, ordering sufficient vaccine, writing and implementing new policies and procedures, recruiting volunteers and informing the public were just a few of the many tasks that needed to be completed before the season began. For the first time New Milford VNA organized pediatric flu clinics, immunizing the birth to 12 year population. Clinics were also organized for pregnant women, a particularly vulnerable population. Compared to the previous year when 1,820 doses of influenza vaccine were administered, this past year saw 7,072 doses distributed by NMVNA, almost a four-fold increase!

To ensure clinical competency, Geri Rodda developed a pediatric influenza vaccination program educating hundreds of clinicians using a PowerPoint presentation at the State of Connecticut Annual Influenza Conference. The State then distributed this program to health departments statewide.
Staff

Executive Director
Andrea S. Wilson

Supervisors
Linda Lewis
Linda McDonald
Sue McElroy
Cecile Rooney
Geri Rodda

Nurses
Linda Anderson
Sherron Anderson
Bonnie Birmingham
Nancy Buck
Colleen Chamberlin
Sherry Corridan
Karen Dewey
Joanne Dorn
P.J. Farquharson
Mary Sue Gerson
Kathy Hoblitzell
Lisa Holland
Karen Hunter
Roseanne Jones
Kathy Leier
Sue Miranda
Amanda Nevin
Amy Tagg
Joanne Tiebout-Douglas
Patricia Tosches
Ann Varughese

Home Health Aides
Courtney Engle
Kathleen Fajardo
Jean Hanlon
Joanne Howard
Robynne Johnson
Susanne Johnson
Sibylle McGarry
Ester Mark-Gbeh
Samantha Ristau
Samantha Scalzo
Donna Spongberg

Therapists
Mary Erhardt
Rita Fitch
Stacey Gaudenzi
Darlene Glover
Dawn MacNutt
Heather Malsin
Terry McCarthy
Debra Neeb
Robert O'Keefe
Genevieve Pelliciari
Stacie Perachi
Mikelanne Phaneuf
Rev. Christopher Sakis
Patricia Squires
Jennifer Tuz
Marie Swanson
Alison Waldmann
Kathleen Walsh
Alexandra Winkelstern

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Mikelanne Phaneuf
Rev. Christopher Sakis
Patricia Squires
Jennifer Tuz
Marie Swanson
Alison Waldmann
Kathleen Walsh
Alexandra Winkelstern

Homemakers
Patricia Failla
Sandy Maroney
Kathryn Nolting
Nancy Obregon
Patty Parente
Mary Jane Sartwell

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Kathryn Nolting
Nancy Obregon
Patty Parente
Mary Jane Sartwell

Nurturing Families Network
Gabriela Mendoza
Megan Moore
Amy Spallino
Allison Zaccagnini

Office Staff
Shirley Fabische
Regina Fay
Marion Frankel
Darlene Glover
Sarah Hauser
Kathy Johnson
Deborah Luongo
Mary Peitler
Teri Peterson
Ann Marie Raymond
Claudette Sesera

Board
Richard Kosier, President
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Suzanne Gallup
Peter Hurlbut
Barbara Johnson
William McGoldrick
Lyndall Miller
Barbara Mullen
Doris Palmer
John Powers
Eleanor Rittman
Mary H. Roberts
Cindy Tyler
James Williams, Jr.

Cover photo: Karen Dewey R.N. ready to start her day seeing home care patients.
NMVNA Annual Report was written by Mary Peitler and designed by Sarah Hauser.
IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE

Hospice Volunteer Joanna Vaillant Settle (1933—2010) People, children, dogs. Joanna loved them all, and we at Hospice were fortunate to be the recipient of her love as well. A Washington resident, Joanna began her journey as a Hospice volunteer in 1993 after the death of her beloved husband Ellis. She was a patient and family support volunteer, a visitor at area skilled nursing facilities, worked in the office, and gave many years to Camp Jonathan. Never one to call attention to herself, she was very humble about the many gifts she gave to others in sharing of her time, talents, finances and resources. Besides her work for the Hospice Program, Joanna was a volunteer “room aunt” at local schools, tutoring children in math and reading. Her fluency in Spanish was well utilized everywhere she volunteered. In Joanna’s own words in a note to the Hospice Director she wrote, “Volunteering is selfish! As I look back on my experience with Hospice I have always received so much more than I ever gave.” We received so much from Joanna, and all of us at NMVNA Hospice greatly miss her kind presence.

Friend of New Milford VNA Jim Palmer (1933-2010) The old saying “If you want something done ask a busy person” certainly applied to Kent resident Jim Palmer. After his retirement, Jim was always on the go as a devoted husband, father, grandfather and community member. He was always eager to assist his wife Doris, past president of the Board of Directors of NMVNA, whether it was moving furniture, taking pictures at a program, using his computer skills, or helping host a social event. Jim served on the board of directors of the Kent Community Fund, taught computer skills at the New Milford Senior Center, and drove for FISH. He was active in Kent politics, serving many years on the Boards of Finance, Planning and Zoning. Despite all these activities, family came first, getting together often with his sons Jim Jr. and Scott and daughter Kathy and their children. Jim’s easy-going manner, his dry sense of humor, and ability to turn almost any ordinary event into a memorable and enjoyable one, are missed by all who knew him. New Milford VNA certainly appreciates everything Jim Palmer did for us and for our patients.

Eileen Anderson Katherine and Robert Olson Katharine and Robert Olson
Tibor Boles Joyce Sciepura
Frank Brenzovich Martha Brenzovich
Lawrence Buoy Cindy and David Arnemann
Loretta and Albert Bayers
Suzanne and Robert DeBoy
Judy and Charles Horgen
Carol and David Jalbert
George Murray
Terri and Dan Nash
Mary Lou Scattino

Gerald Cowan Rebecca G. Adams
Catherine Brandorff
Candlewood Tool and Machine Shop
Joan and George Christophersen
Anna and Francis Cornelis
Danbury Hospital Speech Pathology Dept.
Danbury Hospital Physical Medicine Staff
Anita and Stephen Desovich

Judith and Laurence Friedman
Doris Geiger
Tony Guzzi
Terry and Fred Hale
Susan and Terry Hampton
James Harding
Betty Lou Haxo
Christine Hipp
Steven W. Iliff
Hadley Adams Iliff
The Knowles Family
The Lake House Partnership
Jane and Ed Landry
Mille Loeb and Steven Roffwarg
Jane and Joseph Manley
Pat and Bob Mosher
Northville School Staff
Heather Penny
The Seidler Family
Sunset Social host Ron Pizzarelli and Camp Jonathan Director Mary Lee Carroll.

Gerald Cowan  Janet and John Smith
Janet and John Smith
Marlana and Steve Sprindis
Warren Public Library Board of Directors
Grafton Dickson  Doris and Gordon Gulbrandsen
Doris and Gordon Gulbrandsen
Emma Hansen
Lakewood Piners Toastmasters
Patrick E. Bowe School
Lynn and Seymour Levin
Mary Dudley  Cheryl and Jim Williams
Rudi Eisenberg  Waltrud Eisenberg
Andrew Garten  Laura and Bruce Taylor
Elfriede Harris  Rita H. Brengel
Rita H. Brengel
Robert H. Harris
Ruth and Jack Occhiogrosso
Florence Yudt
Howard Hopkins  Jean Kavanek
Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club
Thomas Jejer  Len Jejer
David Klemm  Klemm Real Estate Staff
Mary Knipple  William Knipple
E. Theodore Koerner  Robert McDermott
Jean Kullgren  David Kullgren
Joan Landi  Diana and Joe Maimone
Ruth Lennon  Rosemarie Burkhardt
Jo Ellen Cimmino
Susan Grissell and Dick Stalter
Sandra Kudler
Ruth Lennon  Ellen Montgomery
Richard Stalter
Rosemarie Lombardi  Kate and Al Allured
Penny and Bill Bardel
Eugene Baslow
Charles Best
Katie Bisbee and Michael Szarowicz
Kay and Don Brigham
Betty Daniels
Paul Douglas
Linda Erlinger
Linda and Paul Frank
Emily FitzHugh
Valerie Friedman
Sidney Reid Funston
Judy Jackson
Boris Kerzner
Susann Kelly Kurz
Julie Lacouture
Mary Ann and Stanley Mailman
Betsy and Ecton Manning
Susan and Philip Markert

Carl Musial, Kelly Mohan, Wendy Kosier and Patty Dyer at Camp Jonathan Sunset Social.

Patricia and Edwin Matthews
Elsie and Bill McTiernan
Georgianna Middlebrook
Edwina and John Millington
Sarah and Phillips Payson
Hugh Rawson
Jane and Emery Roth II
Michele Sherburne
Charles Treadway

Martin Mangione  The Mangione Family
Susan Martinez  Nancy and William Schiel
Marissa Mattrisciano  Len Jejer
Tom McAllister  Covenant Security Services
Ward McBreairty  Maria Bogos
Helen, Bonnie and Dale McBreairty
John McCarroll  Phyllis Onorato
Rev. David McGuire  Arrow Elevator, Inc.
Carol and Larry Bigman
Samuel Combs
The Haglund Family
Martha and Al Paul

Linda Lewis and Sarah Woffenden light candles at the Hospice Remembrance Service.
Rev. David McGuire
Patricia Prokop
Margaret and Russell Quinn
Myra Shaw
Sullivan Farm Association, Inc.

Doris Melosh
Crissi Castellano
Carolyn Critelli
Addie and Lee Feist
Ruth Gottlieb
Susan Michaud
Nancy Miller
Linda O’Loskey
Janet Smith

Margaret Molina
Carol Bald
Elizabeth Benson
Lisa and Joe Carena
Carlson's Ridge Homeowner's Assoc.
Carl Dill
Carol DiVico
Pat and Larry Greenspan
Dawn Hammacott
Joanne Harrison
Virginia Kalat

Lorraine Kelley
Judith Koch and Barbara Eler
Linn Larson and Kari Telleen
Nancy Lindoerfer
Jan and Chuck Lister
Judith Moore
Judi Morse
Andrea Olivera
Pet Relief Staff
Anne Potter
Geri Rodda
Maureen Salerno
Carol Veley
Suzanne Von Holt

Marianne R. Murray
Lucinda Mann Coveney
William Ottoshavett
R. Chris Robinson
Patricia Cronin Percy
Lucinda Mann Coveney
Margery Perlo
Susan Magee
James Pitcher
Doris and Edward Bohan
Gavin Donnelly
Melissa and John Donnelly
Mary and Mark Furber

James Pitcher
Diane Minck
Nancy and Fred Montanari
Joellen and Robert Murphy
Glenys and Robin Stack

Ann Pratt
Jane and Joseph Manley
Tosha Lynn Purvis
Lucinda Mann Coveney
Erin Reynolds
Jeanne and Leo Hulton and Family
Stephan Michael
Phyl and Roddy Denne
Romanoff

Ann Rothwell
Dorothea Arnold
Priscilla Martin
M.J.P. Associates, Inc.

Shirley Sawyer
Jeri-Ann Frankel
Sharon Salvador
Jane Tacca
Irvin Schreider
Anthony Carrato
J. Paul Sinnott
Beth Giebel
Charles Smalley
Genevieve Smalley
Frances Vincent
Avery Family
Brenda Humiston
Sega Ready Mix
Sandra Smith
Hazel and James Thompson

Joey Wohlschlaeger
Janice Wohlschlaeger

Our sincerest apologies to any of our valued contributors whose names may have been inadvertently omitted from this list.

Board President Richard Kosier welcomes participants at the Hospice Remembrance Service.
Our longest serving active volunteer, Arja Anneli Heimonen, has been volunteering for the New Milford VNA Hospice Program since 1988. A native of Finland, she emigrated in 1971 and worked as a nanny before marrying and raising her family. Arja began her academic career at Western CT State University, earning a B.A. in Social Sciences and a Master’s in Community Counseling. Her Master’s Practicum entailed working 100 hours with our Hospice Program. She has been a family support volunteer, worked in the office, and assists at Hospice events. Her kind and quiet personality goes a long way to making everyone around her feel comfortable and cared for. Now semi-retired, she is traveling a bit and visiting her children in New York City and San Francisco and family in Finland. We are delighted to have Arja with us for the past 22 years!

Cynthia Merritt is fairly new to Hospice volunteering, having graduated from our training class in May 2009. Since then she has been busy as a family support volunteer and as a visitor at area nursing homes. A New Milford native, she has worked many years in local medical practices as an office administrator. Currently she works in the Dean’s office at Kent School. The mother of three grown children, she is a very active member of Gaylordsville United Methodist Church. Cindy’s commitment to Hospice stems from her experience with her dad Ed Allen who was an NMVNA Hospice patient. She says, “My Dad showed us how to live and how to die and Hospice enabled all of us to be part of the process.” We are so pleased to have Cindy join our program and share her many talents with us!