



## Bringing Cancer Care Closer to Home: A Local Mission to Save Lives and Support Our Community, by Barney Ellis-Perry, CEO

This month we have a mission to Bring Cancer Care closer to home. This resonates with me, as not much hits closer to home than cancer. Like you, I have lost many loved ones to cancer from my stepfather to two very close friends who, heartbreakingly, left young children behind. One of our friend's kids is now in medical school and her application essay was a letter to cancer saying "Cancer, I am coming after you!". Cancer hits close to home for all of us which is why we need to ensure we have the best possible care close to home.

Our local regional doctors have seen 14% more chemo and oncology patients over the past two years. In fact, last year, 3,630 people in North and Central Vancouver Island were diagnosed with cancer. And despite there being more cancer diagnoses in North and Central Island, the vast majority of resources are located in the South Island. In fact, there are 40 oncologists in the South Island, compared with zero (yes, zero) here at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH).

You may have received a mailing from us, if you didn't here is the [website link](#). In that letter we are sharing the story of Cole, a patient who was diagnosed at NRGH and then experienced first-hand the challenge and burden of travelling out of our region to receive cancer care. I'm happy to report that Cole is now cancer free and back cheering on his favourite hockey team. You will also hear from some of our medical team who will benefit directly when we are able to fund the critical equipment arming them to help detect cancer early and treat it closer to home.

Your gift will directly help save lives. I thank you for your donations online and in that return envelope likely sitting in your mailbox, or on your kitchen counter right now.

Warmly,  
Barney Ellis-Perry

### Breaking News - April 16, 2024

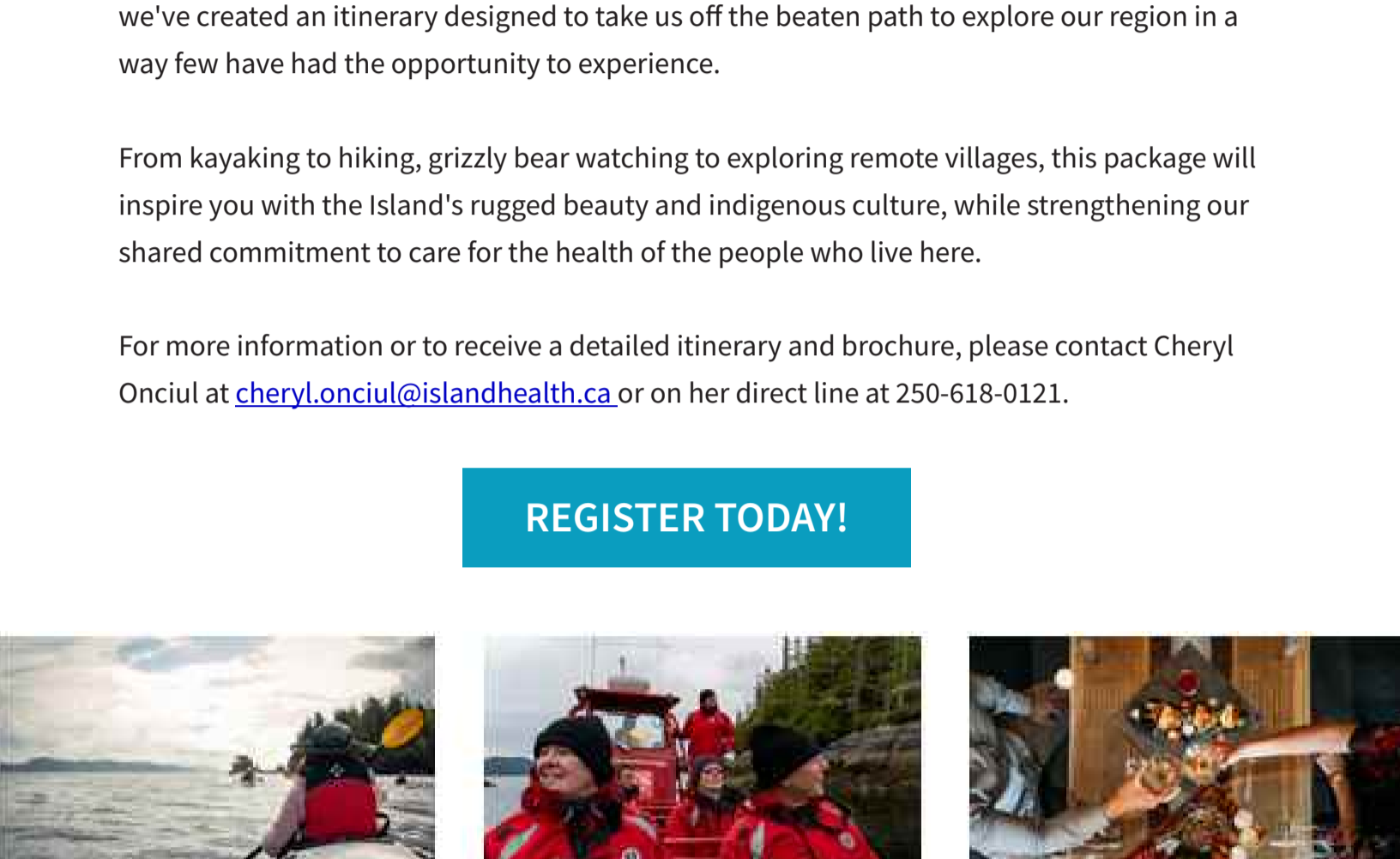
Government announces the details of the greatly anticipated new Cancer Centre for Central Island. Learn more [here](#).



## Nanaimo Hospital Auxiliary Delivers Record Donation

Nanaimo Hospital Auxiliary proved to be a particularly generous tipper at its AGM luncheon in March when it presented a cheque for \$800,000 to Nanaimo Regional General Hospital.

The record \$800,000 donation is the largest annual donation made by the Auxiliary and a significant portion of it, \$315,000, will be used to purchase an operating room microscope for performing ophthalmology procedures. The microscope will allow ophthalmologists to more accurately position replacement lenses while performing cataract surgeries. More than 2,000 cataract surgeries are performed in Nanaimo each year. Read the full story covering the news by the Nanaimo Bulletin [here](#).



## North Island Explorer A Wildlife & Cultural Journey to North Vancouver Island September 12-17, 2024

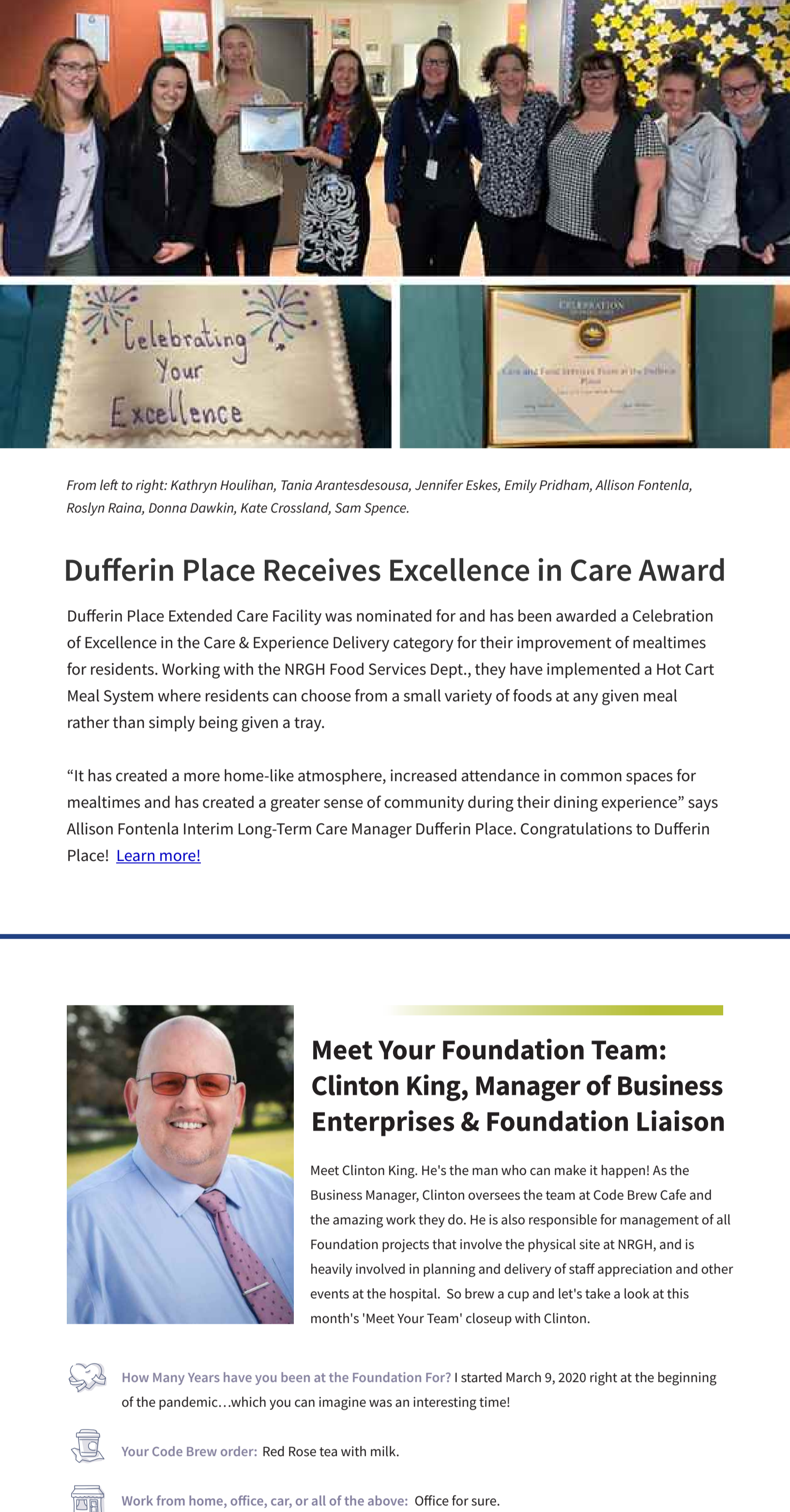
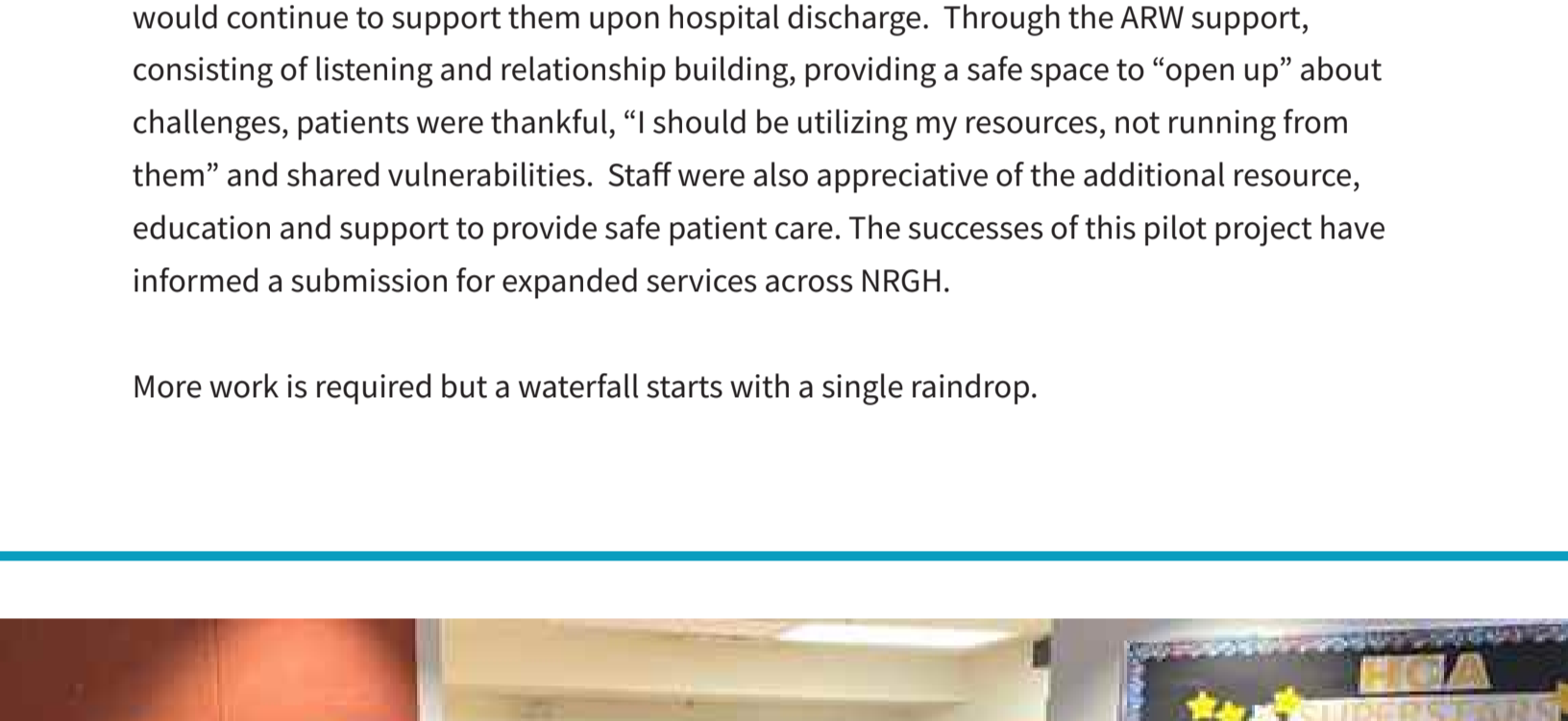
### Explore Northern Vancouver Island with CEO Barney Ellis-Perry

This September, 10 supporters will have the chance to join Foundation CEO Barney Ellis-Perry for a custom tour of Northern Vancouver Island! Working with BC-based Mosaic Earth tours, we've created an itinerary designed to take us off the beaten path to explore our region in a way few have had the opportunity to experience.

From kayaking to hiking, grizzly bear watching to exploring remote villages, this package will inspire you with the Island's rugged beauty and indigenous culture, while strengthening our shared commitment to care for the health of the people who live here.

For more information or to receive a detailed itinerary and brochure, please contact Cheryl Onciu at [cheryl.onciu@islandhealth.ca](mailto:cheryl.onciu@islandhealth.ca) or on her direct line at 250-618-0121.

**REGISTER TODAY!**



From Left to Right: Lainey Richards RN, Cathy Woods HCA, Dana Becker ARW, Lina Dinh LPN and Ann Ababoo NUA.

## A Waterfall Starts with a Single Raindrop Message from Hospital Leadership

Recent media attention has brought to light the profound and devastating impact substance use in healthcare settings has on both patients and healthcare providers. The chaos and despair that often accompany substance use cannot be overstated.

Under the leadership of Karyn Perry, Manager Floor 1 and Carrie Boland, Manager Inpatient Psychiatry Services, NRGH piloted a project to protect both patients and staff. Starting with fostering a culture of empathy, understanding, and support, leadership was determined to provide a safe and non-judgmental environment for those experiencing addiction. Through education, advocacy, and access to resources, they empowered their team to deliver compassionate care and help individuals on their journey towards recovery.

With the vision of different and better, the leaders from Floor 1 and Addiction Medicine Consulting Service collaborated on a novel strategy to implement an Addiction Recovery Worker (ARW) role which is a Healthcare Worker with additional education in Addictions and Mental Health.

Immediate positive impacts were actualized. Patients had direct access to this added resource which in turn helped to build trust in our healthcare system and connections to resources that would continue to support them upon hospital discharge. Through the ARW support, consisting of listening and relationship building, providing a safe space to "open up" about challenges, patients were thankful, "I should be utilizing my resources, not running from them" and shared vulnerabilities. Staff were also appreciative of the additional resource, education and support to provide safe patient care. The successes of this pilot project have informed a submission for expanded services across NRGH.

More work is required but a waterfall starts with a single raindrop.

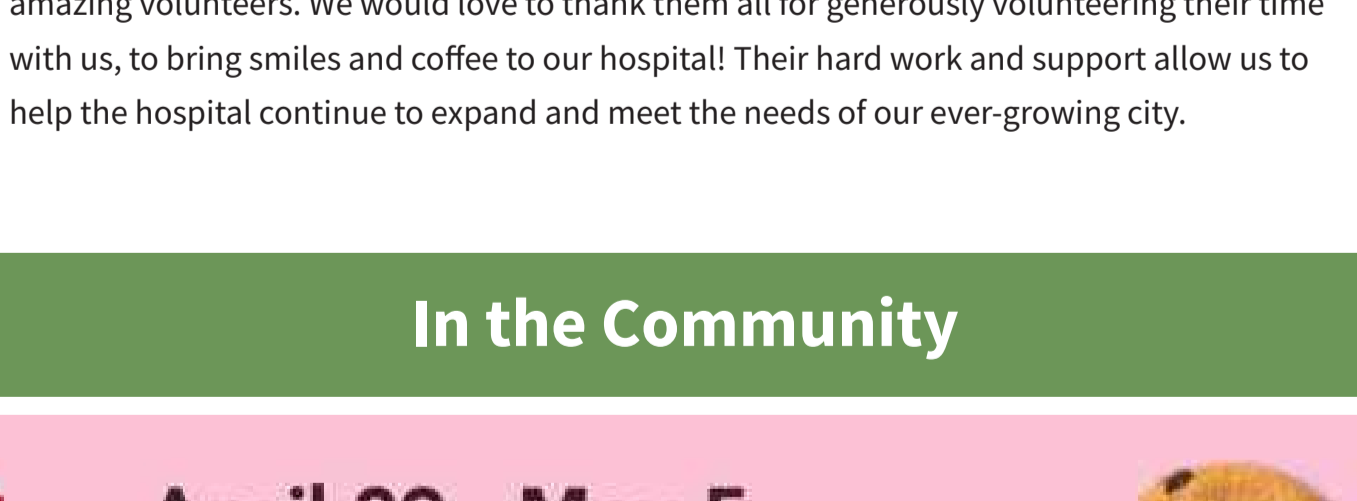


From left to right: Kathryn Houlihan, Tania Arantesdesousa, Jennifer Eskes, Emily Pridham, Allison Fontenla, Roslyn Raina, Donna Dawkin, Kate Crossland, Sam Spence.

## Dufferin Place Receives Excellence in Care Award

Dufferin Place Extended Care Facility was nominated for and has been awarded a Celebration of Excellence in the Care & Experience Delivery category for their improvement of mealtimes for residents. Working with the NRGH Food Services Dept., they have implemented a Hot Cart Meal System where residents can choose from a small variety of foods at any given meal rather than simply being given a tray.

"It has created a more home-like atmosphere, increased attendance in common spaces for mealtimes and has created a greater sense of community during their dining experience" says Allison Fontenla Interim Long-Term Care Manager Dufferin Place. Congratulations to Dufferin Place! [Learn more!](#)

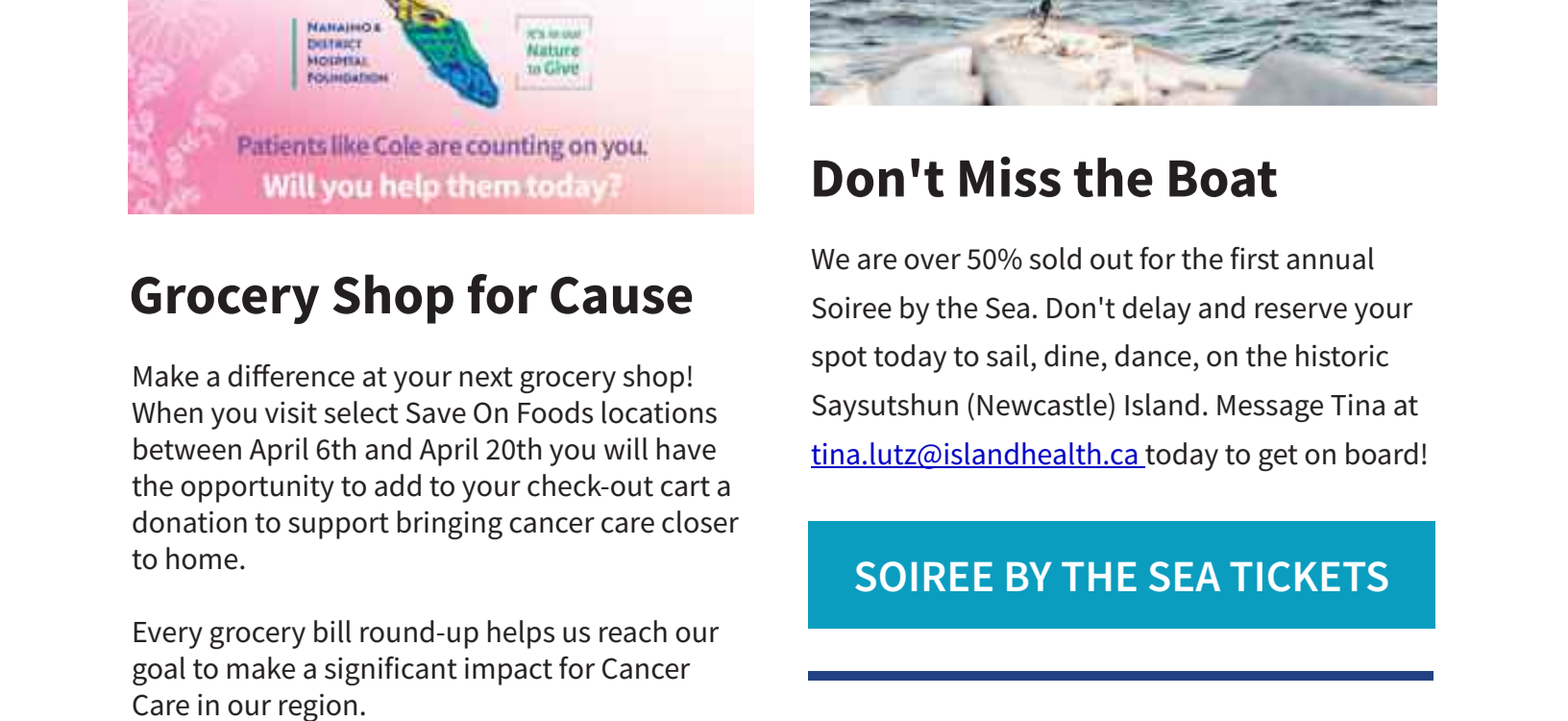


## Meet Your Foundation Team: Clinton King, Manager of Business Enterprises & Foundation Liaison

Meet Clinton King. He's the man who can make it happen! As the Business Manager, Clinton oversees the team at Code Brew Cafe and the amazing work they do. He is also responsible for management of all Foundation projects that involve the physical site at NRGH, and is heavily involved in planning and delivery of staff appreciation and other events at the hospital. So brew a cup and let's take a look at this month's 'Meet Your Team' closeup with Clinton.

- How Many Years have you been at the Foundation For? I started March 9, 2020 right at the beginning of the pandemic... which you can imagine was an interesting time!
- Your Code Brew order: Red Rose tea with milk.
- Work from home, office, car, or all of the above: Office for sure.
- Sun or Snow: I love winter, but spring and fall are my favorite, mainly because I don't love the heat!
- Best part of your job: Being part of an organization that has such a huge impact on the community I live in. Also being able to support the amazing people that work for Island Health.
- Place you spend your time most (outside of the office): Most of the year that would be working in my garden and playing with my dogs.
- What is your favourite thing about your amazing Code Brew team?: The Code Brew team is able to be a point of calm and rest for the staff and patients at NRGH in what can be an overwhelming environment. In our small way the team makes NRGH a happier place.
- Why is it in YOUR nature to give: Over the years I have been a patient at NRGH more than a few times. I have always received outstanding care and support from so many staff members it seems only natural and right to give back.

Read more about Clinton in his bio on our staff page [here](#).



## Donations Help Improve Patient Care and Comfort

Your kindness can truly make a difference in the lives of those in need. This month, the generous contributions of donors like you brought comfort and hope to breast cancer patients through a beautiful mural in the Mammography Suite at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital. Art has been proven to ease stress and boost mental health, providing a much-needed escape during difficult times. Donations also allowed our medical teams to receive training in Neurodevelopment Treatment, enhancing their skills and expertise.

We believe in your power to choose which area of care or department your donations support. [Visit our donate page](#) and select your preferred option from the drop-down menu, or simply choose "other" and let us know your priorities. Together, we can truly make a meaningful impact.



## April 14-20 INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

### Celebrating Our Volunteers: National Volunteer Week, April 14th-20th

As we celebrate National Volunteer Week, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of our volunteers. From our dedicated board members to our enthusiastic Code Brew and Lifeline volunteers, from the patients and donors who so generously inspire us with their personal stories to our fantastic event helpers—your time, skills, and commitment are what make our community stronger. Every moment of your effort contributes to our collective impact. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey.



## Cheers to Our Volunteers: Celebrating Over \$1 Million in Sales and Continued Support for Nanaimo Hospital

Code Brew had over one million dollars in sales last year with proceeds going to the Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation, and we couldn't have achieved that without the help of our amazing volunteers. We would love to thank them all for generously volunteering their time with us, to bring smiles and coffee to our hospital! Their hard work and support allow us to help the hospital continue to expand and meet the needs of our ever-growing city.

## In the Community



### Brightening Futures: Support the Smile Cookie Campaign for NRGH

This year's Smile Cookie campaign, from April 29th to May 5th, 2024, focuses on a noble goal—raising \$50,000 to enhance the Perinatal Operating Room at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH). Since its inception in 2010, the campaign has raised over \$283,000, significantly improving healthcare facilities on Central Vancouver Island, including creating the Staff Breakroom in the new Critical Care wing. By purchasing a Smile Cookie during this campaign, you contribute directly to equipping the Perinatal Operating Room with essential Operating Room Lights, facilitating better healthcare delivery and saving more lives. Join us in this meaningful initiative—every cookie counts towards a brighter future for our community.

Get your bulk order in now for your office, kids' sports team, and school. Message Tina at [tina.lutz@islandhealth.ca](mailto:tina.lutz@islandhealth.ca) if you have a big order to make, or find the bulk order form [here](#).

### Grocery Shop for Cause

Make a difference at your next grocery shop! When you visit select Save On Foods locations between April 6th and April 20th you will have the opportunity to add to your check-out cart a donation to support bringing cancer care closer to home.

Every grocery bill round-up helps us reach our goal to make a significant impact for Cancer Care in our region.

Participating Locations: Brooks Landing, Country Club, Woodgrove, Parksville.

We are over 50% sold out for the first annual Soiree by the Sea. Don't delay and reserve your spot today to sail, dine, dance, on the historic Saisutshun (Newcastle) Island. Message Tina at [tina.lutz@islandhealth.ca](mailto:tina.lutz@islandhealth.ca) today to get on board!

**SOIREE BY THE SEA TICKETS**

Every day, the unwavering support of individuals like you is significantly impacting outcomes in Central and North Vancouver Island. Your contribution has been instrumental in bringing healthcare closer to home. Thank you for being an inspiration to us all!

Thanks for reading our newsletter!

**DONATE TODAY**

