

## Thoughts on International Women's Day by Barney Ellis-Perry, CEO

It is International Women's Day this month, but in my head, it's pretty much international women's day every day of the year. Can you tell I was raised by a strong, widowed mother? In 1966 my father choked to death, and I was raised by a single mom. I saw firsthand in the 1960's how male dominated the world was but I never understood it because my mother was super smart and immensely powerful.



The theme for this year's #InternationalWomensDay is #InspireInclusion. When I think of this theme, what comes to mind are the amazing women

who power up our Foundation. We are immensely lucky to have some phenomenal women in leadership positions with our staff team and our Board. Two examples are Anu Mayer and Donna Hais who are both NDHF Board members, businesswomen and community leaders.

As the co-founder of the annual Nanaimo International Women's Day event, Anu gathers and inspires hundreds of women each year. And the Foundation is one of the lucky recipient charities of their largess. I have been the only man in that room and all I can say is the energy is phenomenal.

Soon you will be hearing more about a community-wide push to advocate for better healthcare. Leading the charge and inspiring all of the participants from the Mayor to the head of the Regional Hospital Board and everyone in between is Donna. To say she is an inspiring leader would be the world's greatest understatement!

The other aspect that really strikes me is that many of our major donors are women, and many like my mom are widows. I am fascinated by the stories that they share with me and their genuine desire for change in our community. There is a strong sense of agency that I get from these wonderful women who are using their resources to amplify their desire to make the world a better place by improving healthcare on Vancouver Island. It is truly an honor to spend time with them and to be able to help facilitate their desire for change.

On this occasion we also want to again recognize some of the incredible donors and female led organizations that continue to drive change for healthcare in our region, and I am so incredibly proud to call them our partners and friends. This includes but is not limited our amazing individual donors and wide variety of organizations such as the Ladies of Cottonwood Golf Club, 100 Women Who Care, Legion Ladies Auxiliary, Women in Construction, Abreast of Life C.V.I. Dragon Boat Team, and many more.

On behalf of the Foundation Board and staff team thank you to all the amazing women making our community a better place to live, work and play!

Warmly,  
Barney Ellis-Perry

Image: Barney and his Mom in a 1968 Junior League photo shoot.

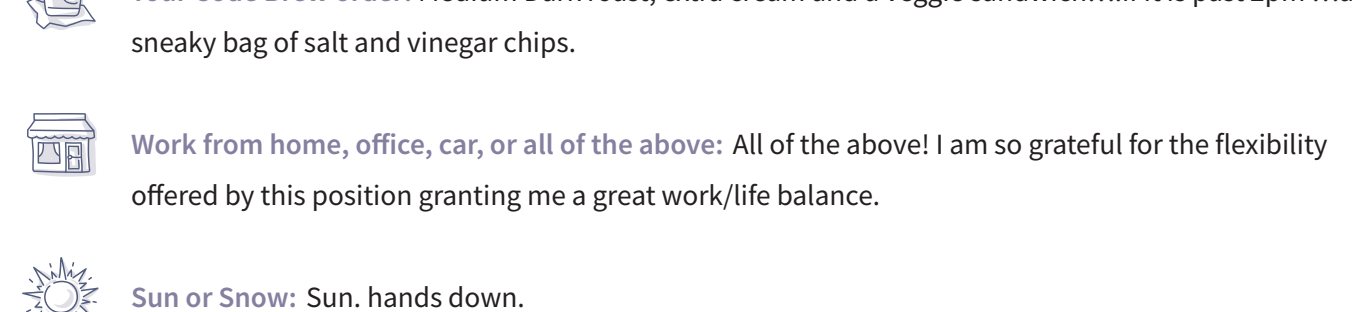


## Social Worker Week: One Profession, Many Roles

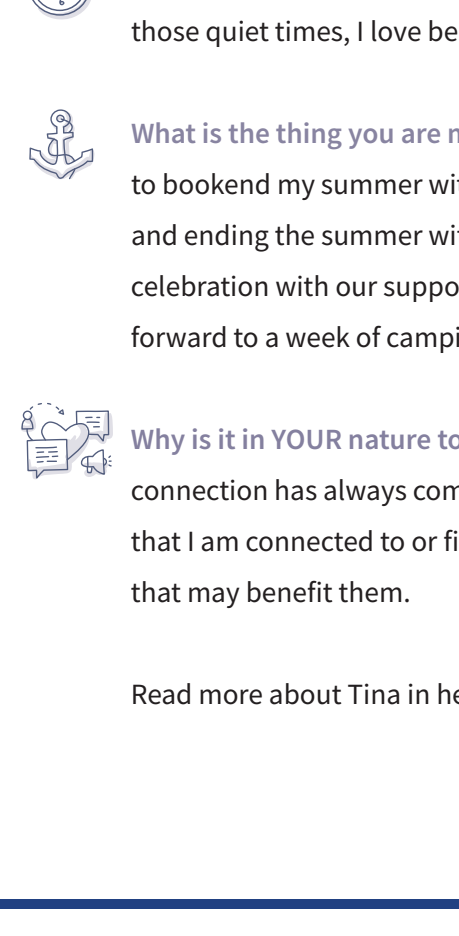
March is also a month we turned our attention to the amazing social workers serving families and patients in our region. Every day our social workers work in a number of different roles, depending on the needs of the patient, their families and their situation.

A Social Worker is a connector, linking patients to needed community resources and support services. A negotiator, networking with community partners to address patient needs and ways to meet these needs. A mediator, assisting with dispute resolution. A counsellor, engaging in problem solving with patients, addressing coping strategies in partnership with patients and providing crisis intervention. An educator, providing information and making recommendations to assist with problem situations. A facilitator, assisting with communication between the medical team, the patient, and their family. An advocate, for required services and funding support, an ally being a voice for equal treatment, and a protector for the most vulnerable, providing a lifeline in difficult situations.

Last week our Nanaimo Lifeline staff held a fun event to show NRGH Social Workers our appreciation. Please join us in thanking and celebrating all the hardworking Social Workers in our region this month.



## Meet Your Foundation Team: Tina Lutz, Manager of Corporate & Community Engagement



Meet Tina Lutz, the connector! Of course many of you already know Tina, whether it is grabbing a cookie during Smile Cookie week, or fueling up for good at the annual Fuel Good Days, Tina is a resourceful relationship builder connecting our amazing community to help drive positive change in healthcare. We're stepping away from the desk to learn a bit more about Tina in this month's 'Meet Your Team' closeup!

- How Many Years have you been at the Foundation For? I just celebrated my 1 year anniversary!
- Your Code Brew order: Medium Dark roast, extra cream and a veggie sandwich...if it is past 2pm ...a sneaky bag of salt and vinegar chips.
- Work from home, office, car, or all of the above: All of the above! I am so grateful for the flexibility offered by this position granting me a great work/life balance.
- Sun or Snow: Sun. hands down.
- Best part of your job: The people I work with everyday. From my team to our partners/donors and the healthcare workers that I get to observe the work they do in admiration. The people I work with and beside simply make this job so much more than a job.
- Place you spend your time most (outside of the office): With my kids, on a field or in my car. But in those quiet times, I love being in the gym, near the water or on a patio with my friends.
- What is the thing you are most excited for this summer and why is it Soiree by the Sea?: I am excited to bookend my summer with two NDHF events! Starting off with the inaugural Soiree by the Sea event, and ending the summer with our signature event, the 31st Annual Golf For Life! Coming together in celebration with our supporters is what makes me most happy. And on a personal note, I am looking forward to a week of camping with my family and friends in my hometown of Spences Bridge!
- Why is it in YOUR nature to give: Growing up in a very small town creating community and connection has always come naturally to me. Often this looks like volunteering with organizations that I am connected to or finding a way to connect people close to my heart with opportunities that may benefit them.

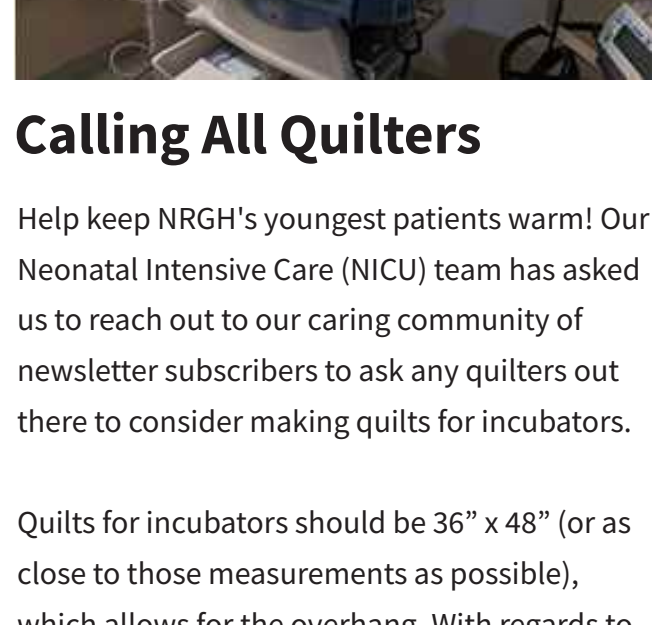
Read more about Tina in her bio on our staff page [here](#)

## Live Independently with Lifeline

As Canada's most trusted medical alert system, [Nanaimo Lifeline](#) has been empowering seniors and their families to live, travel, and explore independently since 1987. Book a call with Chelsea and the local team at Lifeline Nanaimo today by emailing [Chelsea.Carne@islandhealth.ca](mailto:Chelsea.Carne@islandhealth.ca) or calling the team direct at 250-739-5770.

- ### Why Choose Nanaimo Lifeline
- Empowering Seniors:** Stay active and independent, with a safety net that's always there.
  - Local Support:** The Lifeline Response Centre is located right here in Nanaimo, offering quick, local support right when you need it.
  - Community First:** 100% Operated by the Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation—using our service directly supports local healthcare.
  - Worry-Free Living:** With Personal Help Buttons that work up to 350 feet radius and in the shower/bath, help is always within reach.
  - No Hidden Fees, No Long-Term Contracts:** Just simple, straightforward safety, designed for seniors, supported by your local Nanaimo Lifeline team.

## In the Community

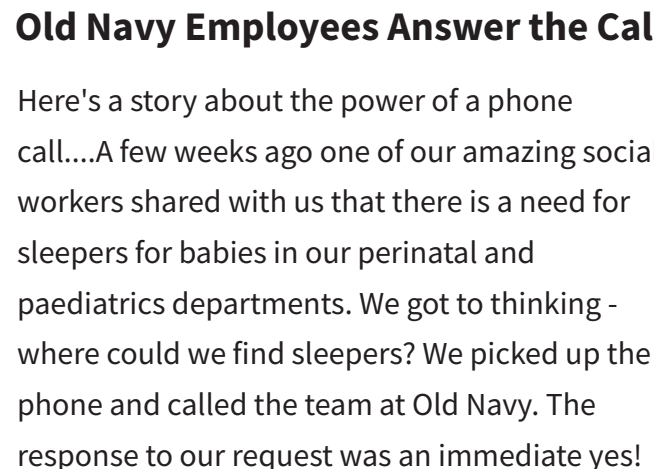


### Calling All Quilters

Help keep NRGH's youngest patients warm! Our Neonatal Intensive Care (NICU) team has asked us to reach out to our caring community of newsletter subscribers to ask any quilters out there to consider making quilts for incubators.

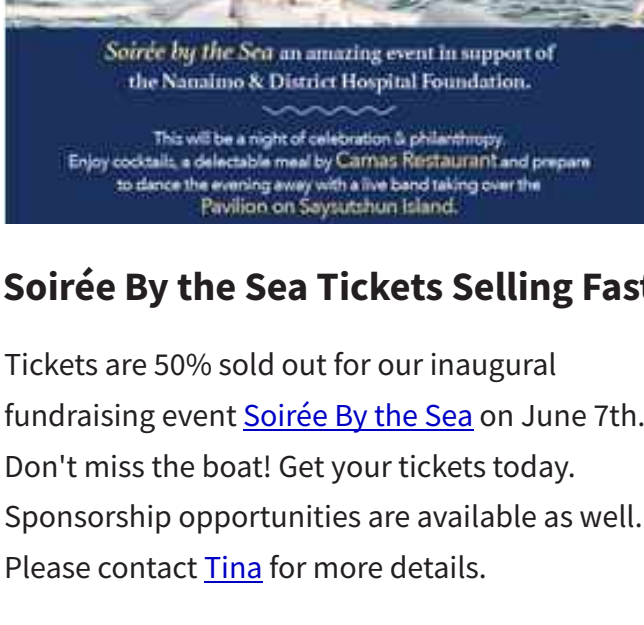
Quilts for incubators should be 36" x 48" (or as close to those measurements as possible), which allows for the overhang. With regards to the materials, it is best to have dark flannel on the underside, to keep the incubators dark and warm, and because it is soft. Batting is not needed for these quilts, nor is intricate stitching.

Patients leaving the NICU take the quilts home with them - they are such a special keepsake!



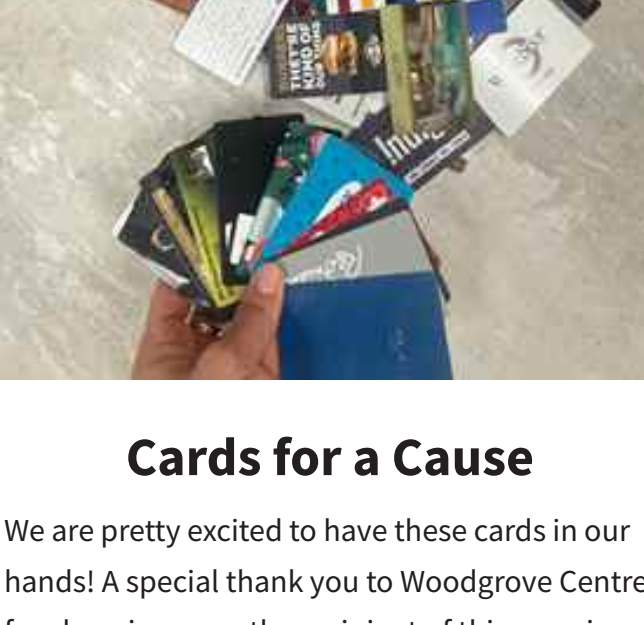
### Old Navy Employees Answer the Call

Here's a story about the power of a phone call...A few weeks ago one of our amazing social workers shared with us that there is a need for sleepers for babies in our perinatal and paediatrics departments. We got to thinking - where could we find sleepers? We picked up the phone and called the team at Old Navy. The response to our request was an immediate yes! The Old Navy Employees led the initiative to donate 36 sleepers which are now being appreciated by our perinatal and paediatrics units. Thanks Old Navy Employees!



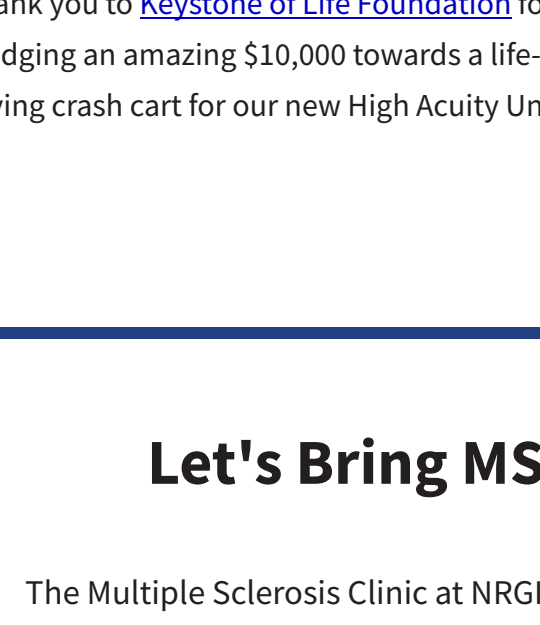
### Soirée By the Sea Tickets Selling Fast

Tickets are 50% sold out for our inaugural fundraising event [Soirée By the Sea](#) on June 7th. Don't miss the boat! Get your tickets today. Sponsorship opportunities are available as well. Please contact [Tina](#) for more details.



### Cards for a Cause

We are pretty excited to have these cards in our hands! A special thank you to Woodgrove Centre for choosing us as the recipient of this amazing promotion where people were encouraged to exchange their unwanted gift cards for a Woodgrove Centre Gift Card. We use these gift cards to show appreciation to our healthcare workers, in silent auctions and to support our donors! In the three years we have been the recipient of this program over \$21,000 in gift cards have been donated!



### Keystone of Life Foundation Gift to HAU

Thank you to [Keystone of Life Foundation](#) for pledging an amazing \$10,000 towards a life-saving crash cart for our new High Acuity Unit!



### Help Fill a Dream

The [Help Fill a Dream Foundation](#) recently partnered with Code Brew Cafe in support of Island families at NRGH whose children are experiencing life-threatening illnesses. Thank you Help Fill A Dream for your \$1000.00 commitment in the coming year to make the lives of families a little bit easier!

## Let's Bring MS Care Closer to Home

The Multiple Sclerosis Clinic at NRGH closed in November 2023, requiring MS patients from Central & North Vancouver Island to travel over the Malahat to get in-person consultations in Victoria.

Dr. Martin SuttonBrown, Neurology Lead at NRGH, has secured another neurologist from Vancouver who is willing to travel to Nanaimo to provide monthly in-person visits at the MS Clinic at NRGH, and follow up with tele-consultation. The Foundation has been asked to cover \$5,000 in out-of-pocket travel expenses for the neurologist for one year. This will mean a shorter drive for patients and allow for continuity of care until another permanent neurologist can be recruited and is in place at NRGH.

Will you help us raise \$5,000 to bring MS Care closer to home? Please donate now and select "Other" as the gift designation and put "NRGH MS Clinic" in the comment section if you would like to support this initiative.

Thank you to each and every one of you for being engaged in improving healthcare on central Vancouver Island. Together, we are making a big difference for all who live here. If you have any comments or questions, or would like to share a story, please [email Cheryl](#).

Thanks for reading our newsletter!

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