



VITALsigns

March 2017



**NATHAN
LITTAUER**

Hospital & Nursing Home

Baby boxes help babies and new parents sleep easier

Newborn babies spend most of their time asleep, so a safe, warm and comfortable place in which to rest is one of the most valuable things a parent can give their new baby. But not everyone can afford luxury cribs and bassinets, and even something as simple as sleeping conditions can contribute to infant mortality rates in devastating ways. Finland began to remedy this societal shortcoming more than 75 years ago by gifting every new

mother a simple yet durable box for her baby to sleep in. This tradition has helped Finland achieve one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world, and now it has finally come to New York State.

As of February 2017, Nathan Littauer Hospital is giving out free Baby Boxes to every

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Matt Romell announced as Goodwill Employee of the Year



Matthew Romell has been named Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home's 2016 Goodwill Employee of the Year! Littauer President and CEO Laurence E. Kelly presented this award to him before a gathering of his friends, family, Littauer staff and administrators.

"Matt is a professional team player who treats everyone with courtesy and respect along with a smile and great sense of humor. He always finds the solution," said Kelly.

Romell, a four-year employee of the hospital, is a MIS System Administrator on the main hospital campus. He was nominated for this top honor by his peers. His coworkers noted that he stood out not just for the quality of his work, but also his upbeat personality.

"Matt meets everyday challenges with a positive attitude," said Goodwill Committee Chairperson Brenda Hammons. "In the time he has been here, he has made a notable difference with so many technical issues."

To choose each year's Goodwill Employee of the Year, the Goodwill Committee receives nominations in a blind format and narrows them to three top finalists. This year's first runner-up was Nora Albertin, Human Resource Generalist in the Human Resources Department. The second runner-up was Tammy Gerdes, Littauer's Senior Mammography Technologist. Both received a check and a gift certificate to the hospital's gift shop.

As for Romell, along with the honor, he received flowers, cake, a gift certificate, a check, the coveted year-long prime parking spot and a plaque on Littauer's Wall of Fame. But despite all the acclaim, he accepted the award and perks with a humble spirit.

"I appreciate this," he said, "but it's very easy for me because I work with such a great team."



WELCOME MAGGIE ROWLEY

Nathan Littauer Hospital welcomes Margaret (Maggie) Rowley, LMSW, to the team as the new Manager of Care Coordination. Maggie has held management and leadership positions at Liberty ARC, the Lexington Center and Value Options. She has experience in case management, grant writing, developing and implementing community programs, policy and procedures, program budgets and organizational strategic plans. A Gloversville resident, Maggie holds a B.A. from the State University of New York at Cortland and received her master's degree in Social Work from the University of Hawaii. She is fluent in Mandarin Chinese and is a competitive long distance swimmer. You may reach Maggie at 773-5517.

Salon Strong event recognizes hair stylists' role in caring for cancer patients



In the series of challenges that one faces on their cancer journey, losing hair can be a uniquely painful blow. Women especially depend on their hair to feel their best, and also depend on hairstylists to preserve their sense of beauty. That relationship takes on a greater significance when a woman is diagnosed with cancer.

Hairstylists have questions about their critical yet under-acknowledged role in caring for cancer patients, as do the patients. To address these questions, Nathan Littauer Hospital teamed up with New York Oncology Hematology to hold the Salon Strong event in January for hairstylists interested in supporting women on their cancer journey.

The "Salon Strong" decal that each stylist was given to put on his or her salon mirror as a valuable physical takeaway from the event. "We want this beautiful 'Salon Strong' logo to spark a conversation," Cheryl McGrattan, Vice President of Marketing, Public Relations and Community Relations at Nathan Littauer Hospital, said. "Whether it is for themselves, a friend or family member, we hope it will create a network women can turn to. At Nathan Littauer, we are deeply committed to community education. We work closely with New York Oncology Hematology and are pleased to be partnering on this new initiative to help patients during cancer treatment."

Speakers at the event included Arsyl De Jesus, M.D., a radiation oncologist at New York Oncology Hematology's Amsterdam office; Tammy Merendo, RN, Director of Healthlink Community Education at Nathan Littauer Hospital; Jessica Bump, a hairstylist at CW Hair Salon in Johnstown; and Amy Karas, co-owner of Ruby & Quiri Carpet One Floor & Home. Karas is a breast cancer survivor who wore wigs during her treatment.

"This was an opportunity to thank our local hairstylists and recognize them as critical partners in caring for our cancer patients," De Jesus said. For more information, call Cheryl McGrattan at 773-5212.



family who comes through our Birthing Center as part of our Universal Safe Sleep program. We are the first hospital in the state to offer such a program. The program will last one year.

In 2016, 312 babies were born at Nathan Littauer's Birthing Center. The Baby Boxes, available through partnership with The Baby Box Co., are offered to all new parents regardless of socioeconomic status upon discharge from The Birthing Center. The program combines the new Baby Box University curriculum for new parents with the proven safety of the Baby Box itself to empower parents and families with the knowledge they need to properly care for newborns.

"What makes this program so unique is the focus on education," said Maureen Mosher, RN, NLH Manager of Maternal Child Health. "Every mother must watch a video syllabus in the prenatal stage to secure the box." Peter Dowling, MD, has been a champion of the program. He presented the idea to Nathan Littauer last year.

The syllabus includes multi-media parenting materials and videos featuring local experts. Parents receive a certificate upon completion of the syllabus, which gives them access to the free box.

The goal of the program is to reduce the infant mortality rate in the United States, which was measured around 6.5 percent in 2015. About 3,500 babies die every year in the United States from sleep-related deaths, including sudden unexpected infant death (SUID), ill-defined deaths, and accidental suffocation and strangulation. Today, our infant mortality rate is worse than all EU countries, Japan, South Korea, Australia and Cuba.

But Baby Boxes are proven to help. The Finnish initiative, which gives every expecting woman in the country a Baby Box after she receives prenatal care and parenting information from a healthcare professional, helped decrease Finland's infant mortality rate from 65 deaths per 1,000 children born in 1938 to 2.26 deaths per 1,000 births in 2015.

Our Baby Boxes are made from durable cardboard. The box itself can act as a safe sleeping space for the first eight months of the baby's life if necessary. Participants in the Safe Sleep program will receive a Baby Box that contains the following items:

- Firm mattress
- Waterproof mattress cover
- Fitted cotton sheet
- Safe sleep sack
- Baby wipes
- Diapers
- Onesie

- Board book
- Thermometer

Babies are born into a vast variety of families and socioeconomic conditions, but they all deserve a safe place to sleep. Through the Universal Safe Sleep program, Nathan Littauer Hospital is doing its part to get each baby started in life on equal footing, and to make sure they all grow up healthy and cared for. It all starts with a safe place to sleep.

For more information, call Maureen Mosher at 773-5494.





Gloversville Dialysis Center brings services to the community's doorstep

Dialysis patients in Gloversville have been enjoying the convenience of outpatient services closer to home since the opening of the Gloversville Dialysis Center in January. In the past, patients had to travel into Montgomery County for the closest dialysis center, but this new facility, Fulton County's only one of the kind, represents a new era in this community's patient care.

"Opening this dialysis center is a significant milestone for this community," said Soo Gil Lee, M.D., medical director and co-owner of the Gloversville Dialysis Center. "American Renal Associates has always based its core values upon putting patient care first. The opening of the Gloversville Dialysis Center illustrates that ARA will continue to successfully build upon its physician-driven partnerships to bring quality dialysis care to local

communities like Fulton County. We are proud to serve dialysis patients on Littauer's campus, and we look forward to developing strong ties to this community."

The center is located adjacent to the Nursing Home off Easterly Street. A joint project of Nathan Littauer Hospital and the American Renal Associates, it boasts 12 patient stations and one isolation unit in its 7,000 square foot facility. State-of-the-art technology is combined with permanent exhibits of Adirondack photography provided by local artists to create a comfortable, modern setting for the 60 patients that can be treated there when the center reaches capacity.

"We are fortunate to welcome ARA, a leading dialysis services operator, into our community," said Littauer President and CEO Laurence E. Kelly. "They have an extensive track record of delivering quality care and

operate over 200 dialysis facilities across the U.S. The opening of the Gloversville Dialysis Center gives patients in our community an option for high-quality dialysis care in a modern facility staffed with dedicated caregivers. As I had said when we broke ground, this is the right relationship at the right time."

American Renal Associates is a leading provider of outpatient dialysis services in the United States. It serves over 14,400 patients with end stage renal disease in 25 states and the District of Columbia. ARA operates through a physician partnership model, teaming up with about 370 local nephrologists to operate dialysis clinics. For more information about ARA, visit www.americanrenal.com.

For more information about the Gloversville Dialysis Center, please call (518) 725-9925.



Maggie Luck recognized as one of Adirondack Health Institute's 2016 Rural Champions



The Adirondack Health Institute has named Nathan Littauer team member Maggie Luck the Rural Health Community Wellness Champion of 2016. She was one of only five healthcare professionals from the seven counties the Adirondack Rural Health Network serves to be recognized.

Tammy Merendo, who nominated Luck for this well-deserved honor, said, "The most amazing thing about Maggie is how kind and willing she is to help anyone. She sets an excellent example in her work ethic and loyalty to the community."

The Adirondack Health Institute announces these five Rural Health Champions – in the categories of EMS, public health, wellness, leadership and behavioral health – each year in recognition of National Rural Health

Day, November 17. This day showcases the work being done to address the unique healthcare needs of rural communities. Nominees can be providers or non-providers who deliver or promote outstanding care and make significant personal and professional contributions to their community.

"This region is extremely fortunate to have so many talented individuals dedicated to creating a more efficient and effective rural health care system that is easily accessible, affordable and provides a better overall patient experience," said Margaret Vosburgh, the CEO of Adirondack Health Institute. "Each of our five honorees has had a profoundly positive impact on improving the lives of people in their respective communities and we're so pleased to recognize their contributions."

Congratulations, Maggie!



WELCOME ASHLEY CASE

Ashley Case, Medical Staff Coordinator, joined the Nathan Littauer team in late 2016. She succeeded Lori Kucel, who gave 35 years of service to Nathan Littauer Hospital. Ashley came to us from St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam, where she started working in 2012 as assistant to the CMO and a Credentialing Specialist. She became a Medical Staff Coordinator there in 2014. We are delighted to have such a skilled, courteous, diligent and collaborative professional on our team! You can reach Ashley at 773-5535.