



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers celebrated at NHH event

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Thursday, April 19, 2012 – Close to 100 volunteers filled the Education Centre at Northumberland Hills Hospital this morning at the annual National Volunteer Week event celebration.

Serving as master of ceremony for the mid-morning tea, NHH Board Chair John Hudson spoke to the variety and dedication of the many individuals who choose to lend their support to NHH.

“Some have been doing so for years,” he noted, looking to this year’s special guest, retired volunteer Marg Gear, “and some lend a hand for a particular event.”

Thanking the volunteers from the NHH Auxiliary, the NHH Foundation, the Board of Directors and the broad range of other community-based organizations who support the hospital every day, Mr. Hudson recognized equally “the small acts of kindness” and the very significant financial support.

“As a direct result of the NHH Foundation’s volunteer efforts, as well as the fundraising services of the NHH Auxiliary, close to \$2 million in community donations have been directed to NHH for capital equipment purchases in the past year alone,” he noted. “For a community our size, this is nothing short of remarkable.”

New volunteer activities were also praised, namely a visiting program to support the new Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP), which is minimizing the functional decline often associated with seniors during hospital stays, and the addition of specific support for the hospital’s Intensive Care Unit, where volunteers now assist with visitor coordination. At the NHH Board table, Mr. Hudson recognized the considerable hours contributed by community volunteers in the areas of both quality oversight and financial stewardship.

With messages from grateful staff members projected on screens in the room together with photos of volunteers going about their daily acts of kindness, Mr. Hudson welcomed to the microphone Past President of the NHH Auxiliary, Patricia Fenner. Together with another Past President of the same organization, Yvonne Green, the women delivered a tribute to special guest Marg Gear, the longest-serving volunteer in the Auxiliary’s history.

Wife of the late Dr. Doug Gear, a general physician and anesthetist, Mrs. Gear was a nurse by profession who took up the cause of the hospital auxiliary shortly after moving

to Cobourg from Toronto in the late 1940s. A volunteer since 1949, Mrs. Gear recently retired after 63 years of dedicated service.

Referring to the distinctive burgundy vests worn by the Auxiliary volunteers, Mrs. Fenner noted: "If this were a hockey team, we'd be retiring her tabard!"

Instead, Mrs. Gear, accompanied by all five of her children, was treated to a moving rendition of "*A You're Adorable*", made famous by Perry Como in the same year she took up hospital volunteering. Sung beautifully by James W. Gordon--owner of the local insurance company by the same name who, clearly, missed his calling--Mr. Gordon also led the crowd in a fitting farewell song that inspired a standing ovation from everyone in the room: *Auld Lang Syne*.

For more information contact Jennifer Gillard at 905-377-7757 or jgillard@nhh.ca.

About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, and obstetrical care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care, rehabilitation and palliative care. Mental health care, chemotherapy, dialysis and 16 other ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. NHH offers a full range of diagnostic services, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) and mammography. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs approximately 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca.