



# COMMUNITY FOCUS

NEWSLETTER OF VISITING NURSE SERVICE & HOSPICE OF SUFFOLK, INC.



VISITING NURSE SERVICE &  
HOSPICE OF SUFFOLK, INC.



## LIVING IS GIVING



Sheila Pariser

In the words of Sheila Pariser, “to live is to give.” One of her favorite quotes from George Bernard Shaw captures the essence of this motto, and Sheila works to live it every day. Sheila has been a volunteer at VNSHS for over 8 years, and that is simply the icing on the cake for this very accomplished woman.

Sheila initially wanted to be a pediatric nurse, but fate had other plans for her.

Encouraged by her family, she went to the Stenotype Institute in Manhattan and fared so well that she ultimately received a scholarship from there to Hunter College to continue her court reporting studies. She then taught Stenotype and business classes at the Institute. After three years of teaching, she started her own business, Modern Shorthand Reporting Agency, a freelance court reporting agency, which she began with a partner and continued as a sole proprietor for over 51 years. She’s had contracts with the Town of Huntington, the Villages of Northport, Huntington Bay, Lloyd Harbor, the County of Suffolk, the State of New York, to name a few, for all of that time.

Volunteering came naturally to Sheila. As a young entrepreneur, she managed to find the time to volunteer at Huntington Hospital, which appealed to her love of nursing. No matter the job, from her court reporting business or moonlighting at the candy stand at the Huntington Theater (now the Paramount), and the Century Bowling Alley (now Stop and Shop), also in Huntington, she gave 100% and loved what she did.

Career and volunteering have gone hand-in-hand for Sheila for all of her adult life. Sheila remembers her mother volunteering as an Air Raid Warden during World War II when she was just a little girl and attributes all of her endeavors to her mother’s example of giving back.

In addition to volunteering at Huntington Hospital in her free time, she became a member of the Board of Directors of the Huntington Freedom Center, which is now Head Start, as well as the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition. Serving as president, vice president and director, Sheila has been an active member and life member of Soroptimist International of Suffolk County since 1980.

As a resident of the Greens in Melville, she has been a member of the HOA and Condo Board, and was appointed government liaison for its Government Affairs and Public Relations Committee.

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## 14th Annual Golf Classic

by Barbara Colatosti

Record temperatures did not deter loyal and new friends from coming out to honor Michael L. McCarthy, support VNSHS and make the 14th Annual Golf Classic a wonderful success. More than \$55,000 was raised for Hospice House!

The day kicked off with breakfast followed by a shotgun start at noon and then 18 holes at the beautiful Indian Hills Country Club. The day concluded with a dinner reception, raffle and awards ceremony. The VNSHS Board of Trustees were proud to present the 2018 Outstanding Community Service Award to Michael L. McCarthy, Esq. for his loyal support of VNSHS, outstanding leadership and commitment to the community. An accomplished attorney with more than 25 years of expertise in the areas of municipal law, land use and development, real estate, environmental law and related litigation, Mr. McCarthy is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, the 2010 graduating class of the Molloy College Emergeia Partnership, the Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce and is active in his parish.

VNSHS would like to thank the staff of Indian Hills, especially Joe Luarentino, Head Golf Professional, and Scott Lafreniere, Clubhouse Manager, for providing us with an exceptional course and another memorable classic.

The classic could not take place without the generous support of our event sponsors and the golfers who come out to support VNSHS in rain or shine.



Pictured L to R: Linda Taylor, VNSHS CEO, Golf Classic Honoree Michael McCarthy, Kim McCarthy and Robert Cogliati, VNSHS Board President

## Please save Monday, August 5, 2019 for the VNSHS 15th Annual Golf Classic!



## HEART to HEART

From our hearts to yours,  
Linda Taylor, MA, BSN, RN  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friend,

What matters most to you? That is the question our nurses and therapists and all who interact with our patients are asking as we are welcomed into their homes to assist with their care. Our health care delivery system demonstrates a longstanding history of directive behavior that reflects an attitude of “doctor knows best” – or nurse or whatever health care practitioner - but we have learned from experience that when treatment goals don’t always align with patient goals there is a disconnect that yields compromised successes. No one would disagree that we share global mutual goals to improve overall health and well-being and quality of life by our interventions. What we must agree on is how to get there. The health care team may bring expertise that provides for educated understanding, but that can only influence behavior that will also work to meet the patient’s goals. At VNSHS we want to make goals of care together that consider what matters most to the patient in the context of their physical condition. We want to personalize a shared care plan to maximize successes for all. We may recognize the benefit of implementing an exercise program for maximal healing and function after a knee replacement for example, but knowing that what matters most to the patient is to be able to navigate stairs safely to get to their own bedroom, or to drive again, or to get out to a family wedding, helps to implement a meaningful care plan that will provide for maximal improvement and patient satisfaction as well. Having implemented this approach with our patients, we quickly realized this concept has broader applications for our staff as well. For example, by asking staff what matters most to them, we recognized better employer coverage of health insurance premiums mattered enough to precipitate job changes. VNSHS management subsequently modified the employee benefits package with the mutual goal of recruiting and retaining competent staff in a very competitive job market. Job changes by staff have ramifications to patient care goals as well, where consistency of practitioners visiting leads to satisfaction by patients and staff alike.

What matters most to you? ❤️

If you are considering making a donation in support of VNSHS services, a Qualified Charitable Donation from an IRA via direct rollover of funds provides an excellent option. This is especially attractive to individuals who, once over the age 70 1/2, are required to take minimum distributions from their IRA toward which such a donation would count and subsequently not be taxed to the donor. An IRA rollover is potentially even more appealing this year with consideration of changes to the tax laws that impact all deductible amounts permitted on federal income tax filed.

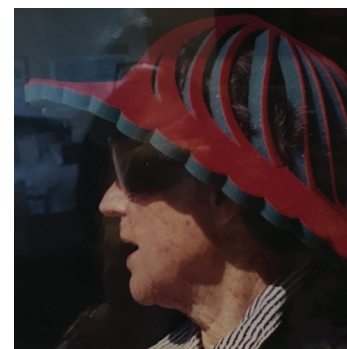


# FULL CIRCLE

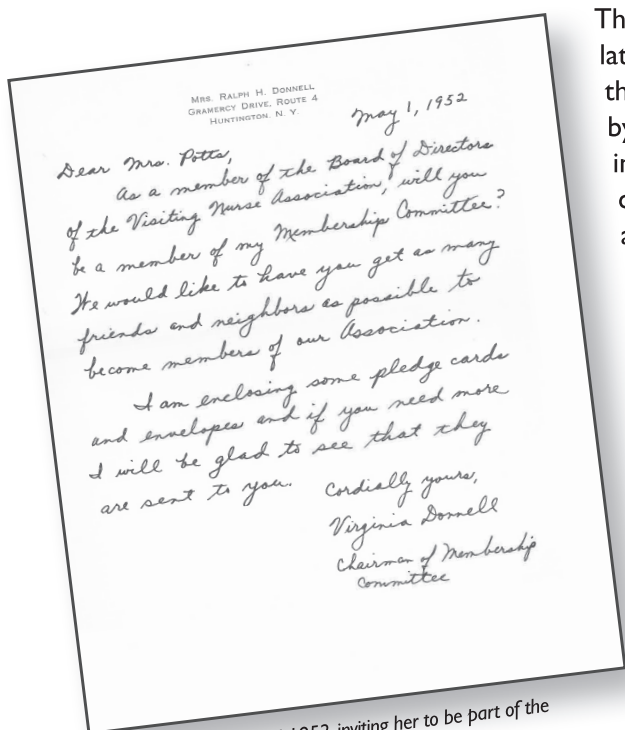
When Mrs. Natalie Roe Potts passed away in the loving hands of her son William “Rocky” Potts, along with the dedicated care of VNSHS’ Hospice, it was a peaceful moment for him and a true culmination of giving back. While cleaning out his mother’s belongings, Rocky had found letters in his mom’s correspondence from when she was a Board Member for The Visiting Nurse Association of Huntington Township, Inc. in the 1950’s. Rocky was so comforted by the care our hospice team provided, he decided to share her nostalgic letters with VNSHS, as well as her story.

Lives lived to the fullest, Rocky has shared both mother and son’s intriguing life stories in which a good many years were, and still are, spent on Fort Hill Drive in Lloyd Harbor. This is where Rocky grew up, and how he and his family came to live there is fortuitous at best. At the time, Natalie Potts and her husband William lived in New York City. Natalie befriended Anna Matheson Wood, known as Nan, the daughter of William John Matheson, an extraordinary chemist and businessman. The Senior Matheson purchased the land in the year 1900. The Fort Hill House sat on 300 plus untouched acres with gardens and verdant fields of green and more than 1,000 feet of its own beachfront.

This grand property is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in the Town of Huntington, New York and warrants mentioning. Predating Matheson’s ownership by more than a century, the property originally was purchased in a trade from the Matinecock Native Americans in 1654 for tools and clothing. In 1670, the area became the property of James Lloyd of Boston. The Lloyds forfeited the land around the fort to England’s military and it was established as a British Fortification in 1778. Initially named for Benjamin Franklin’s Loyalist son William. Fort Franklin was later purchased by Anne Coleman Alden, whose family came over on the Mayflower.



Mrs. Natalie Roe Potts



Letter to Mrs. Potts, dated 1952, inviting her to be part of the VNA of Huntington Township Membership Committee

The history of the glorious property still denotes its presence all these years later, although barely perceptible. One would have to know it to appreciate the remnants of its rich past. Visitors to the now Campbell home are greeted by three imposing cannons on the great lawn. There is a brick alcove that incorporates excavated cannons built into the brick, a trough where horses came to drink, and a fountain that spills into a brick well, the headstone of a fallen British Army Lieutenant, which Rocky graciously showed us as we toured the property on a bright sunny summer day in July. Listening to Rocky’s and his mom’s life stories was a pleasure as we strolled through the three acres of impeccably maintained English formal gardens, which take one back in time, complete with whimsical statues of children playing, brick pathways, and trellises under which one can sit in the shade.

Matheson presented the estate to his daughter, Nan and husband, Willis Wood as a wedding gift, and around the year 1940 was when Natalie Potts became friends with Nan Wood.

When Natalie Roe Potts moved into the Fort Hill house back in 1942, it was an offer that was made out of friendship. To ease William Potts’ commute to work, Nan offered to rent what had been the visiting chauffeur’s quarters to Natalie, one of the 32 plus other small stand-alone structures built on the property. Bill Potts was serving as an instructor at the Merchant Marine Academy and not having to commute from New York City was a relief.



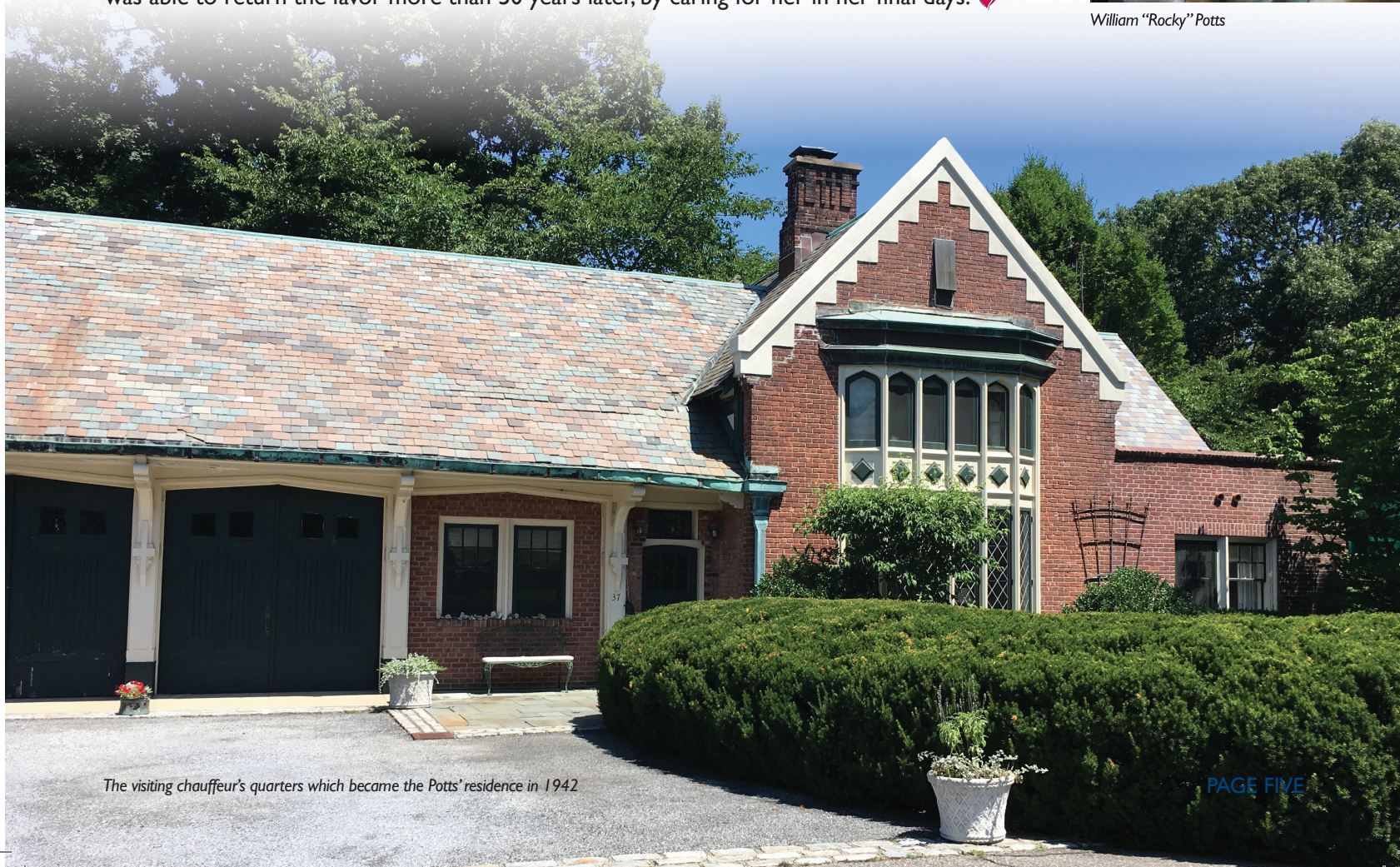
At the time, Rocky Potts was a mere 7 years old. He and his sister were enrolled in the Lloyd Harbor School which housed 64 children ranging in age from kindergarten to eighth grade. He was fortunate enough to experience the privilege of growing up on the grounds of Fort Hill, meandering through the fields, enjoying the beach and sea, as well as being surrounded by the estate's exceptional beauty. At age 15, Rocky first began sailing boats professionally, then went on to college, followed by a stint in the military, and ultimately went to work for NBC. By then the family had purchased their half of the building. Bill Potts passed away at the young age of 54. Socializing with the diverse families of Huntington, Cold Spring and Lloyd Harbor, Natalie Potts was a perfect candidate to join the board of The Visiting Nurse Service Association of Huntington Township, Inc., as it was called at the time. With her contacts, she acted as fundraiser and helped bring in much support for the association from many influential and generous benefactors. She lived out her many years at Fort Hill and ultimately sold the property. Rocky was fortunate enough to return to the house at Fort Hill and to this day lives on the premises. The mansion with its rich history boasts more than 30 rooms on 10 glorious acres and awaits its next privileged owner as the property is currently up for sale.

George and son Greg Campbell ultimately acquired the property in 1992 and have lovingly restored the mansion and grounds over the past 26 years. The Campbells added a 5,000 square foot detached 14 car garage displaying their family crest in artisan created stained glass, and on the second floor is where Rocky resides today.

Rocky gave us the pleasure of an interview on the property and shared many stories of his youth at Fort Hill, as well as the remarkable life story of his mother and all she did for the association. As Natalie Roe Potts was there for The VNA of Huntington Township in the 1950's, so VNSHS was able to return the favor more than 50 years later, by caring for her in her final days. ❤️



William "Rocky" Potts



The visiting chauffeur's quarters which became the Potts' residence in 1942



## SCOTT WILLIAMS, OUR NEW CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Scott Williams joins the staff at Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk with impressive credentials, as well as the desire to be part of a team that is passionate about what they do every day!

With education and degrees in Accounting, Economics and Finance, as well as certification in Real Estate Management and FSO and COMSEC certification from the U.S. Department of Defense and National Security Agency, Scott is well qualified for the job of Chief Financial Officer. With over 25 years of diversified financial experience, his career began in cash management for a major Manhattan real estate group. From there he moved up to Senior Financial Analyst for numerous entities before joining a defense company. In his 20-year tenure in Defense he has acquired experience in all aspects of the business world. As Chief Financial Officer, Scott helped turn a small 20-person negative equity operation with annual sales of \$2 million, into a premier, debt-free corporation with more than 200 employees in 13 locations nationwide, an annual revenue in excess of \$75 million and record profits. Most recently, Scott specialized in Venture Capital activities for technology companies and consulting for defense contractors.

Scott is happily married with 3 boys, one 18, in his freshman year of college, one 16, in high school, and his 12 year old. He enjoys boating, playing hockey and other sports with his family.

Wanting to continue doing what he does best, Scott looked for new work in the financial field but wanted to embark on a different field that would be more fulfilling, which ultimately led him to interviewing with VNSHS. After meeting with Linda Taylor, CEO, and the staff, he said, "It was obvious that there was something quite special here," and the thought of being a part of the incredible work they do at VNSHS was very appealing to him. "This job opportunity immediately felt like a natural fit" Scott exclaimed.

As Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk's new Chief Financial Officer, Scott expressed that although he is not hands on with the patients, he feels great about being a part of this organization that positively impacts families every day. He believes that contributing to the financial growth of VNSHS will be his way of helping other people, "and that prospect," Scott says, "is very satisfying to me." ❤️

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## EVENT PLANNING AT ITS BEST ~ SUSAN BRUDER



Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, Inc., would like to welcome Susan Bruder to the staff. Susan is our new Event Planner and comes to VNSHS with a wealth of experience in event fundraising for charitable organizations.

From 1991 to 2001, Susan worked in corporate marketing in the fashion industry and concluded her work as Director of Marketing for a well-known international firm. During that time, Susan also volunteered to fulfill her desire to give back and help others. As her involvement in volunteer work grew, a position became available at The Children's Aid Society, and having ultimately fallen in love with their mission, Susan was driven to utilize her career skills in a field where her passions lie. She served as Children's Aid Special Events Director from 2001 until 2007 when she then established her own fundraising event company working with youth development and health organizations including Children's Aid, Helen Keller International and Futures and Options. In the span of two plus decades, Susan's dedicated career has earned her a multi-faceted resume that includes extensive fundraising, special event, marketing and strategic planning skills as well as expertise in corporate development and donor cultivation.

Susan and her husband Peter live in Smithtown with their two children: Peter, who is in middle school, and their daughter Grace, currently in elementary school. In her leisure time, Susan enjoys running, volunteering with the PTA and Scouts and watching her children's swim meets. Her belief in charitable work continues to be a fulfilling aspect of her life in her career at VNSHS, as giving back is a cornerstone of her beliefs and value system. In 2014, while in the care of hospice in Upstate New York, Susan's mom sadly passed away, yet words cannot describe the amazing, supportive experience she and her family had with hospice. To be working with hospice now brings her full circle. She is very enthusiastic to be a part of the VNSHS team and continue its longstanding tradition of providing signature events for the community to enjoy.

With a focus on both fundraising and awareness building, Susan hopes to expand individual support and corporate partnerships through special events. With her broad experience with nonprofits and for-profits, VNSHS looks forward to Susan's fresh ideas and future events to continue the terrific work they do in bringing the community together and beyond for the benefit of everyone involved. ❤️

## Coco, Everyone's Best Friend!

Melissa and Jim Kimberling have a standing appointment every Wednesday evening at the Hospice House in East Northport with their adorable pooch, Coco. Coco is a mixed breed, consisting of Shih Tzu and Lhasa Apso, weighing all of eight pounds, full grown at six years old, and precious to boot.

In order to understand how Melissa and Jim came to have a therapy dog for work and for volunteer practices, we must go back to where it all began. Melissa, originally from West Virginia, had been living in New York for over thirty years. Her career as a social worker led her to her present position working in a school with special needs children, as well as private practice. As her parents aged they both fell ill, and she began to spend more time in West Virginia taking care of them. Around the same time, she reconnected with Jim, her high school prom date who still lived in town. As it turned out, Jim moved into the house next door to her parents' home which needed renovation. While renovating the house he also became the overseer of her parents' care, helping with groceries, bills, medication, doctors' visits, etc. She was now fortunate that her parents had a very caring individual living next door as they became homebound with illness.

While down there one visit, she and Jim saw this cute white pup for sale at a flea market. Jim had the idea that this dog would be a great companion for Melissa's parents, and so they adopted Coco. For 1½ years, Coco became her parents' therapy dog, and they were ecstatic.

Sadly, Melissa's dad passed away, at home with the aid of in-home hospice, and her mom passed away 3 months later in a hospice house. These experiences were Melissa and Jim's first with hospice and she reiterated that the care they received was outstanding.

Prior to Melissa's dad passing, Jim moved to New York and eventually the two were married. The three of them were enjoying their new life together. Melissa suggested to Jim that they give back and because Coco brought so much joy to Melissa's parents, they both felt that he would be the perfect candidate to provide that same joy to others. Melissa researched how to get Coco certified as an official therapy dog and soon was on the path to doing just that. It took some time, as a lot was entailed. First, Coco had to be observed by a member of the Alliance of Therapy Dogs in a public setting with people and other animals to see how he interacted. Then Coco was required to be observed in an adult day care setting a couple of times as well. And finally, Coco was tested to ensure that he could listen, take commands, and obey direction.

When the process was complete, Coco became certified as a therapy dog for volunteer settings. Melissa and Jim's first stop was to become Hospice volunteers and complete the orientation process. After more time and paperwork, Coco is now certified to go to work with Melissa in her school with kids in their Special Education program. So, between the kids at school and the patients at Hospice, Melissa, Jim and Coco have a fulfilling career and a purpose, one that can officially be termed a "family affair". It is also a purpose that brings tremendous happiness to a great number of people, and immeasurable joy to Melissa and Jim. ❤️



## LIVING IS GIVING *Continued from page 1*

After a friend passed at VNSHS' Hospice, Sheila was so impressed with the level of care at hospice she elected to volunteer at the Hospice House. She has been there almost every week since 2010, wearing a lovely smile and the desire to pitch in wherever she is needed, whether it is preparing breakfast for a patient, sitting and chatting with family members or keeping a patient company in their room until family arrives.

She was recently written up in the Long Islander and was the recipient of the Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce's John Klaber Memorial Award, an award that symbolizes devotion to the community. It is given to a citizen, at least 60 years of age, who has a record of exceptional voluntary service to the community for 15 years or more and has held key leadership positions with diversified townwide organizations. Sheila exemplifies the meaning of the Klaber Award, and at a special Chamber event this past August, she humbly accepted this distinguished accolade at a celebration at the Courtyard at Fox Hollow Inn specifically in her honor.

Throughout all of the commitments during her life, Sheila Pariser, is an unwavering humanitarian who perseveres today and repeatedly fulfills many aspirations in both her professional career and her numerous volunteer positions. A remarkable part of the VNSHS volunteer family, she is always giving 100% and looking to improve and enhance the many organizations she works with. Sheila continues to grace the rooms at the Hospice House each week, as well as the lives of all she touches. ❤️



**Visiting Nurse Service &  
Hospice of Suffolk, Inc.**

Linda Taylor, MA, BSN, RN  
Chief Executive Officer

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Holiday Fashion Show

Tuesday, December 4, 2018 - Nocello's Restaurant, 843 Fort Salonga Road,  
Northport - noon to 2:30 p.m.

## ELF Benefit Performance

Wednesday, December 12, 2018 - John W. Engeman Theater  
250 Main Street, Northport - 6 p.m. VIP Reception, 8 p.m. ELF

## Hospice House 15th Anniversary Benefit featuring Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks

Sunday, March 24, 2019 - The Founder's Room, Huntington - 1 to 4 p.m.

## 16th Annual Taste of Long Island

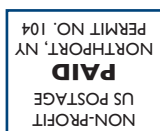
Thursday, April 18, 2019 - Larkfield Manor, East Northport - 6:30 to 10 p.m.

For more information please call 631.261.7200  
Visit us online at [visitingnurseservice.org](http://visitingnurseservice.org)



MAKING A DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk is a participating agency of  
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