

From Patient to Advocate: My St. Mary's Story

By Molly Thompson, Unit Secretary

I didn't always imagine returning to a psychiatric unit as a professional. For much of my life, these spaces were where I went to survive. Mental health has always been part of my story, shaping how I see the world and how I understand myself.

After years of work that left me feeling disconnected, I knew I needed something different — something rooted in meaning. That search took me to Maui, Hawaii, where I worked as a funeral arranger. Supporting families through profound loss clarified what mattered most to me: that if I was going to work, it had to be in a way that served others.

"I know firsthand how meaningful, compassionate, well-resourced care can be."

When I returned to Maine after 10 years away, I joined St. Mary's as a peer support specialist through Sweetser. For the first time, I walked into a psychiatric unit without being a patient. Standing on the other side of care shifted my perspective and allowed me to imagine a future I hadn't believed was possible.

Stepping into the role of unit secretary felt like a continuation of that growth. I was hesitant, but knowing I could continue facilitating music and art groups helped me say yes. Those moments of shared creativity often open doors to connection that words alone cannot.

Having been hospitalized for mental health reasons 18 separate times, I carry a deep awareness of what it means to be a patient. I try to move through my work with that understanding — offering presence, patience, and small reminders of dignity. Often, it is the quiet gestures that matter most.



One idea guides me more than any other: "The unspoken rule of life is to become the person your younger self would have felt safe with."

That belief continues to shape how I show up, both for others and for myself. As I look ahead, I hope to keep growing alongside St. Mary's and contributing to a culture of care that is thoughtful, compassionate, and human.

And when doubt creeps in, I remind myself — and others — to take off the imposter hat, you are more capable than you know.

I know firsthand how meaningful, compassionate, well-resourced care can be. Now, as a unit secretary, I get to advocate for patients even more and contribute my unique perspective to St. Mary's ongoing growth. With your generosity, St. Mary's continues to strengthen the services that have helped change lives like mine.



Scan the QR code to learn more about the mental health services changing lives at St. Mary's.



MONTHLY



A Lifetime of Giving Back: Joe's Inspiration for Monthly Giving

When Joe Longtin first joined St. Mary's Health System as a clinical chemist in 1969, he had no idea how deeply the organization would shape his life and career.

After being deployed during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Joe returned to St. Mary's, where leadership recognized his skills and asked him to help establish the hospital's very first computer network. That request launched him into a new chapter as St. Mary's first senior network engineer.

"St. Mary's gave me a lot during my 39-year career there, and I want to give back," Joe said. "I decided to set up my gift as an automatic monthly donation so I don't have to remember if I've given for the current year or not. It's very convenient, and I never have to worry about following through on my intentions to support St. Mary's."

Joe's story shows how meaningful and easy giving can be with a monthly recurring gift. You can increase your impact and provide steady support to the programs you care about most with a monthly gift.



If you'd like to explore this option, scan the QR code and select recurring donation in the Gift Amount section. Contact Deb Anthoine at danthoine@stmarysmaine.com or 207.777.8828 for assistance.

Shared Values Inspire Collective Giving

If you've chosen a career in healthcare, it's likely because you believe you can make a measurable difference in peoples' lives. Together, members of St. Mary's medical staff have stepped up to make that difference a reality by launching the Medical Staff Giving Circle. It's a collective initiative, led by medical staff, to identify and fund patient care and programs with the philanthropic gifts of its members.

Members of the medical staff who contribute to the fund will review funding proposals submitted by members of the Giving Circle. They will then cast votes for their preferred initiatives at the start of each year. As direct caregivers, they will be in a strong position to make these decisions.

"It's rewarding to be part of a team that not only provides excellent care but also looks for new ways to support our patients and community," shares Triste Coulombe, MD, St. Mary's Surgical Associates. "The Giving Circle brings us together to fund meaningful programs and care initiatives that help people when they need it most."

"It's rewarding to be part of a team that not only provides excellent care but also looks for new ways to support our patients and community."



Empowering Recovery: Outpatient Mental Health Innovation



In June of 2025, St. Mary's Health System proudly launched its Day Hospital Program, offering intensive, short-term mental health care for adults who need more support than traditional outpatient therapy.

Also called a partial hospitalization program (PHP), the Day Hospital Program helps patients manage symptoms, build coping skills and return to daily life with greater confidence and stability.

The Day Hospital meets the growing mental health needs of our community while reducing strain on emergency and inpatient services. Patients can attend Monday through Friday for five hours each day, typically for two weeks.

Services include group therapy focused on emotional regulation and problem-solving, individual clinical support, medication management and discharge planning to ensure a smooth transition to ongoing treatment in the community.

A compassionate team of psychiatrists, nurses and licensed clinical social workers guides each patient through treatment in a supportive, welcoming environment.

"We're mindful of the fact that the more support services we offer, the healthier our community will be," says Greg Bowers, vice president of behavioral health. "We are immensely grateful to Senator Peggy Rotundo and other sponsors of the legislation that provided funding to launch this critical service."



You can learn more about how The Day Hospital is supporting the mental health needs of our community by scanning the QR code.



Recognizing Excellence Across St. Mary's

Recognition comes in many forms, but each reflects a shared truth: exceptional care happens when dedicated team members work together toward a common mission. These achievements celebrate the commitment of St. Mary's Health System staff and leadership in delivering safer, more compassionate and more responsive patient care.

St. Mary's was named to the inaugural 2026 Forbes Top Hospitals list, earning a 4-star rating after a national review of more than 5,400 hospitals. This recognition places St. Mary's among only four hospitals in Maine to achieve this distinction.

St. Mary's earned Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation from the American College of Emergency Physicians, a national recognition for providing high-quality, age-sensitive care. The Gary and Mary West Health Institute and The John A. Hartford Foundation support the accreditation, which is earned based on strong safety practices, staff training and screening for conditions such as dementia, delirium and fall risk.

St. Mary's Pediatrics achieved Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), joining the rest of

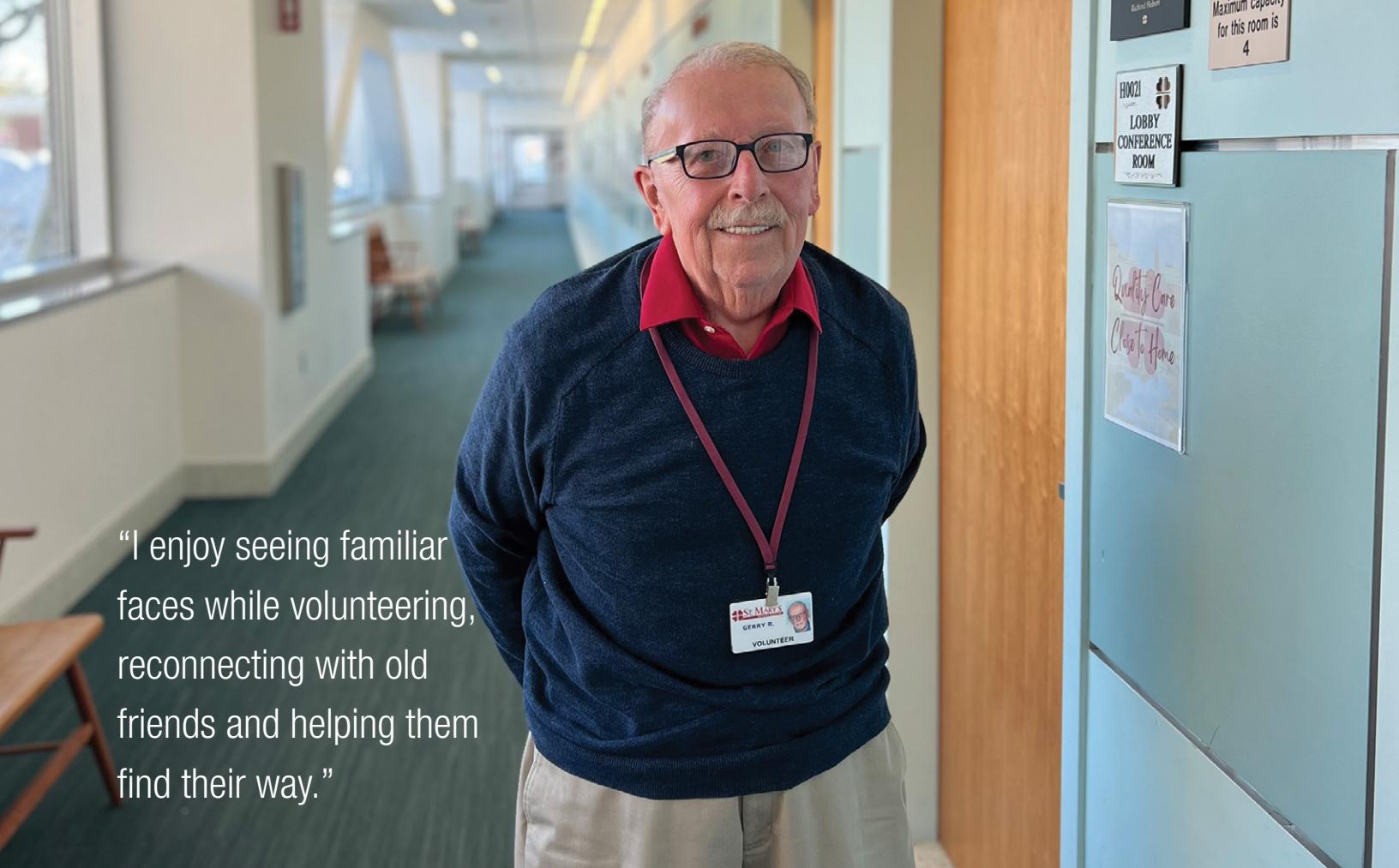
St. Mary's primary care practices in meeting rigorous national standards for coordinated, patient-centered care.

St. Mary's also earned an A Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, one of only six hospitals in Maine to do so, highlighting our strong performance in preventing errors, injuries and infections.

Mariah Rinck, CPXP, patient experience manager at St. Mary's earned her Certified Patient Experience Professional (CPXP) credential for her leadership and proven knowledge in shaping positive care experiences.

Thank you for the role you play in every one of these accomplishments, strengthening exceptional nationally recognized care for every patient, every day.





“I enjoy seeing familiar faces while volunteering, reconnecting with old friends and helping them find their way.”

Gerry Raymond – He Makes a Positive Impression on Everyone He Meets

In 2023, lifelong Lewiston resident, Gerry Raymond, was looking for a way to give back to his community. He saw a call for volunteers in the local newspaper and felt an immediate connection to the opportunity. Gerry's ties to St. Mary Health System run deep. He was born at the hospital, as were many of his relatives from past generations. His sister also graduated from St. Mary's Nursing School and went on to work as a nurse at the hospital. For Gerry, volunteering at St. Mary's seemed like a perfect fit.

Gerry joined the team as a greeter and has served over 300 hours to date. Every Friday morning, he welcomes patients and visitors with a warm smile and makes their visit to the hospital a little more pleasant.

“I worked at Lewiston's City Hall for 18 years and was a director at St. Peter's Cemetery for 25 years,” shares Gerry. “I enjoy seeing familiar faces while

volunteering, reconnecting with old friends and helping them find their way.”

What started with a simple newspaper listing has led to Gerry becoming a well-known volunteer at St. Mary's. Mariah Rinck, patient experience manager, adds, “Gerry is kind and committed. He makes a positive impression on everyone he meets.”

Volunteers play a vital role in creating a welcoming and supportive environment at our hospitals, post-acute care facilities and community events. If you know anyone interested in volunteering, please encourage them to reach out directly to any of our care communities.



Scan the QR code and contact us to start your volunteer journey today.

EyeClick Brings Joy and Connection to d'Youville Pavilion

At St. Mary's Health System's d'Youville Pavilion, every day is shaped by the vision to conquer the three plagues: loneliness, boredom and helplessness — especially when it comes to enriching the lives of Memory Care Unit residents. Guided by that mission, Nurse Manager Jessica Dussault, RN, and Director of Therapeutic Recreation Programs Shelly Katula-Blais combined efforts to bring a powerful new tool to our community.

With donor gifts to d'Youville Pavilion, we were able to purchase the EyeClick interactive, motion-activated projection system for Memory Care Unit residents.

The EyeClick stimulates cognition through socially engaging games and activities that promote cognitive and motor function, problem-solving and recall. This technology also helps residents improve mobility and physical activity.

"We are especially thankful for this EyeClick program because it keeps our residents' fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination skills sharp," said Katula-Blais.

EyeClick creates more moments for residents to experience fun, accomplishment and fulfillment — supporting their emotional well-being and preserving their sense of dignity. For example, residents can swipe at floating images to make them burst or bloom, encouraging meaningful connections among residents, staff and family members while reducing agitation and anxiety through immediate positive feedback and calming engagement.

"We have a lot of smiles playing with it. We are very grateful for the opportunity to have this enrichment activity for them," Katula-Blais said.



Support innovative technology that brings St. Mary's patients comfort and connection. Scan the QR code to give.





ST. MARY'S
HEALTH SYSTEM

A Member of Covenant Health

Address Service Requested

PO Box 7291
Lewiston, ME 04243

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Snowman Group

CORNERSTONE

– St. Mary's Foundation Newsletter –



ST. MARY'S
HEALTH SYSTEM

A Member of Covenant Health

Lace Up Your Sneakers!

The 1st ANNUAL St. Mary's
Steps for Hope 5K is Coming in 2026
Date & Location TBA

Race proceeds will benefit St. Mary's
Behavioral Health services. *Let's make strides
to keep our community healthy!*



Stay tuned at
[stmarysmaine.com/news!](http://stmarysmaine.com/news)



Contact Us

foundation@stmarysmaine.com
207.777.8863

By Mail

PO Box 7291
Lewiston, ME 04243

In Person

Foundation Office
272 Sabattus St.
Lewiston, ME 04243