

# Hospital Readout

by Steven Kelley, CHE  
President and CEO, Ellenville Regional Hospital

Isolated in a valley with limited transportation access and easily destroyed communication links leaves the Ellenville area vulnerable to emergencies. We need to be self-reliant to address a crisis when it happens.

The recent flooding disaster, when the main routes into and out of Ellenville were destroyed or blocked, highlighted the need to maintain the local emergency and health organizations. **Ellenville Regional Hospital** responded quickly and worked cooperatively with the EMS, police, and fire departments to respond to this disaster. Our community may be proud of the immediate reaction of the members of the community that worked together during this crisis.

While the flood was the worst in 50 years, other types of events, including snowstorms, major electrical failure, mass casualty due to biological, radiological, or chemical terrorism, accidents, fires, pandemic flu or infectious disease, or other type of disasters could happen at any time.

**Ellenville Regional Hospital** is doing much better and is finalizing plans for a new emergency department to better respond to crises of all flavors. We are very grateful for the community support over the last year, and we will be there for each of you should you or your family have an emergency.

**Ellenville Regional Hospital** and CSEA recently announced that Assemblyman Kevin A. Cahill had secured a \$300,000 grant for the hospital.

The Board of Directors, management, and staff of **Ellenville Regional Hospital** extend their thanks to Assemblyman Cahill for his efforts in acquiring this grant for our local hospital.

This infusion of capital will be used to fund a pension plan that will make ERH more competitive in attracting and retaining quality employees in multiple disciplines, such as nursing, radiology, laboratory, and other professions.

We are truly grateful to Assemblyman Cahill for his efforts in assisting **Ellenville Regional Hospital** and its employees. As we emerge from bankruptcy, this money will help us to move forward and to provide additional healthcare services to our community members.

**Ellenville Regional Hospital** attained a critical access hospital designation in July 2004, with assistance from Assemblyman Cahill, and is currently preparing a Swing Bed Unit that will offer transitional care to recovering patients who require skilled nursing care after an acute admission.

The ability to recruit and retain qualified health care personnel can only enhance **ERH's** commitment to quality healthcare services.

The next major step in **Ellenville Regional Hospital's** renaissance will be the *Emergency Department* project. We are committed to breaking ground in 2005, moving the *Emergency Department* back to the general area where it was originally located.

This construction project will be the first major change to the structure of the hospital since it was erected forty years ago. It is part of a thoughtfully planned review of the flow of patient services for maximum efficiency and patient comfort. The *Emergency Department* will be next to laboratory and radiology services.

Funding for the construction project is falling into place. A Health and Human Services Grant procured by

Congressman Maurice Hinchey will be supplemented by commitments from the Gillette, McDonald, and Resnick families. Additional funding is needed and welcomed.

Future plans include continuation of the review and implementation of an internal process for better patient flow throughout the hospital. Goals include the reduction of waiting time in the *Emergency Department* and a better use of wireless technology by implementing bedside registration.

The hospital's reorganization and recovery plans were approved by the US Bankruptcy Court, Northern District of New York, in early March of this year. Thanks to community support, the *Kingston Regional Healthcare System*, Ulster County, the Town of Wawarsing and the Village of Ellenville, hospital staff, volunteers, donors and board members, **Ellenville Regional Hospital** has made an almost miraculous return to its role as a major quality healthcare provider in this area.

For more about **Ellenville Regional Hospital** services, or volunteer possibilities, call 647-6400 ext. 286. 



The Ellenville Lionesses make a donation to the Ellenville Regional Hospital Swing Bed unit. The donation will be used to purchase a stereo and TV for swing bed patients.  
Left to right: Donna Reynaud, R.N., Kathy Quinn, Patient Care Services Coordinator, Barbara Baker, Activities Professional, Lioness Audrey Garcia, and Lioness Ruth Troin.

## Transitional Care Now at ERH

In these days of limitations on hospital stays, **Ellenville Regional Hospital** is especially proud to announce a new service that will make it possible for Ellenville area patients to recover closer to their homes.

A transitional care unit called "the *Swing Bed Program*" is available to patients who have been hospitalized for three days or more as an acute admission, require services on a daily basis, as well as the supervision of professional or technical personnel. The program has 10 beds available and was scheduled to open May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Consider the Ellenville, Cragmoor, or Kerhonkson resident who has had major surgery at a larger hospital many miles from home. After three or more days of hospital recovery, the patient is discharged. Now what?

Perhaps there is no one at home to help this person, or the person needs professional care, or requires daily wound care, or has serious concerns about the level of skilled nursing care that will be available. One of the options might be a nursing home, even more miles from home. A much better alternative may be a transfer to **Ellenville Regional Hospital's Swing Bed Unit**. 