

NH Veterans Home's John Ciriello Receives "Above and Beyond" Award.

TILTON, NH – John Ciriello, Building and Grounds Utility Person at the NH Veterans Home (NHVH) in Tilton, has received the Home's "Above and Beyond" Award for May, 2009. The NHVH Above & Beyond Award was created to recognize employees who are committed to excellence and superior performance.

According to Melissa Milione, NHVH Human Resources Administrator, Ciriello has worked at the New Hampshire Veterans Home since December 2007. He was nominated by co-workers, who said: "John has spent his own time and money to make the exterior of the Veterans Home look more 'homey' for residents and staff. He also worked on a grant proposal and spent many hours putting together the NHVH history project. John is the ultimate team player. You'll never hear him say: 'Not in my job description.' He does whatever it takes to make residents and staff feel at home."

As a Building and Grounds Utility Person, John works primarily in the Grounds Department but also works with building maintenance-related tasks. His daily routine involves all of the basic chores familiar to any landscaper, as well as the freedom to design, install and maintain new beds in the courtyards and outer perimeter of the facility. Pruning, propagating, and reorganizing existing plant materials, plus attention to overall plant health (monitoring insect, disease, exposure problems), keep him busy throughout the growing season, until the first snowfall. In the winter months, he attends to indoor building maintenance issues, as well as any required painting, snow removal, and tasks involved with the operational functions of the facility.

Of his work at NHVH he says, "I'm proud to be part of the NHVH's extended family. It's rewarding to know that my contribution at work helps improve the quality of life of our resident veterans. Each resident has served our country in order to assure us the preservation of the rights and freedoms that we all enjoy and cherish today. I consider every one of the residents a hero, and to me, they represent the highest degree of patriotism, loyalty, and bravery. Their lives are

interwoven with our country's incredibly rich history and each one has their own unique story to tell. My job at the Veterans' Home allows daily interaction with both residents and staff. The staff's commitment to the health and well being of each resident is admirable and the cooperation and efficiency of their work ethics is unmatched. I'm glad to do my part to help make the facility such a great place to live and work."

Ciriello lives in Tilton with his spouse, Tracey (Harwood) Ciriello and new baby girl, Isabella ("Bella") Argentina Ciriello. When he's not working, he enjoys "puttering around" on projects involving the restoration of his old farmhouse and making landscape additions and improvements around the yard. John previously owned and operated a landscape design business in the Boston area for 18 years before moving to Tilton in the fall of 2007. His other hobbies include an active



John Ciriello with his daughter, Isabella ("Bella") Argentina Ciriello.



Nick Mangini photo

John Ciriello (left) working in some of the Veterans Home gardens and (below) the early spring results of John's work.



Nick Mangini photo

involvement in local government. In 2003, after serving two years as the Chairman for the Woburn Historical Commission in Massachusetts, he decided to run for a seat on the City Council. He won the election, and went on to represent over 5,000 constituents in his ward for the next four years. Other hobbies include painting with acrylics, researching history, and keeping fit through walking and weight training. Since the arrival of his new baby girl just last year, he has been devoting most of his time to being a "dad" first, with hobbies coming second.

Ciriello is one of nearly 400 staff members at the New Hampshire Veterans Home, established in Tilton in 1890 as the Soldier's Home for Civil War Veterans. One of just four New Hampshire nursing homes to win the 2007 Quality of Life Award from the NH Department of Health & Human Services, the NHVH campus is home to 200 men and women who have served their country and fellow New Hampshire citizens. The mission of NHVH is to provide high quality, professional long-term care services to the Granite State's elderly and disabled veterans. NHVH is the only long-term care facility in the Granite State that is dedicated exclusively to veterans.

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Jackie Bonaride photo

NHVH Commandant Barry Conway with John & Bella Ciriello and Jon Bossey, Facilities Plant Manager

Special thanks to NHVH Resident **Nick Mangini** for his photographs for this article.