



## Nominee Information:

# 1066

Nominee's Name: Ms. Pearl Broswick

Nominee's Title: Xray Technician

Nominee's Organization: Dr. Helmcken Memorial Hospital

Nominee's Project / Group  
Name (If Applicable):

Nominee's Address: c/o DHH 640 Park Drive, Clearwater, British Columbia, VOE1N1

Nominee's Email: pearl.broswick@interiorhealth.ca

Nominee's Phone: 250.674.2244

## Nominator Information:

Nominator's Name: Mrs. Janice Wyatt

Nominator's Title: Registered Nurse

Nominator's Organization: Dr. Helmcken Memorial Hospital

Nominator's Address: c/o DHH 640 Park Drive, Clearwater, British Columbia, VOE1N1

Nominator's Email: janice.wyatt@interiorhealth.ca

Nominator's Phone: 250.674.2244

## Health Care Hero Awards:

### 1) Provide a brief biography and/or background for this individual.

I am submitting a nomination for a woman who has lived in Clearwater all of her adult life. As a single parent, she raised her children here. As a community fixture, she has volunteered and worked for decades in this almost idyllic setting. Having a population of about 2,500 locally and another 2,500 in the surrounding area, Clearwater has a few local amenities including a newer 6- bed hospital, hardware store, grocery store, dollar store, and community recreation facilities including curling, hockey, and tennis. For those outdoor enthusiasts, the breathtaking Wells Gray area sits beside Clearwater. A thriving outdoor recreation area and neighbors who care about each other is what makes Clearwater a great place to raise a family. Fortunately, day care for working parents is a newer addition to the town. And Kamloops is only about 1.5 hours away for all those urban services that city folk enjoy: Costco, Starbucks, Walmart, Hairdressers, Clothing stores, Home Depot, or variety in restaurants. Which is just fine for those who desire a rural lifestyle with a quick hop to the city, but the simplicity in Clearwater can make it difficult for local employers to recruit talent. The woman I write about in this nomination has worked full-time at the old, and new, Clearwater hospitals (now known as Dr. Helmcken Memorial), for a very long time. I will describe further why her contributions to the hospital, her colleagues, and the local community are heroic and outstanding.

### 2) Describe why this individual should receive a Health Care Hero Award. What has the nominee done that is heroic? Relate either a specific incident or a pattern of contributions.

In both her professional and personal life, this woman has committed endless time and energy to enhancing community services for rural patrons. She takes care of people and does it in that quiet, "don't notice me way."

Today, most people change job descriptions every few years. But this woman exemplifies heroic commitment to her profession and her employer. Not only has she worked for decades in her current position, but she has taken additional training in order to provide the same health care opportunities for rural patients, that those in the city can expect. She applies holter monitors and downloads the data. She educates the patient for the need to monitor oxygen saturations overnight, and then documents the success of that intervention. She provides spirometry testing, downloads pacemaker data, and organizes specialty clinics so that Clearwater residents do not



have to travel 3 hours roundtrip to Kamloops to see the Orthopedic Surgeon. She takes to heart the phrase on her job description that says "any other duties as assigned," except that she does not wait for them to be assigned. During lulls in her workload, where the rest of us would enjoy the break, she seeks out ways to contribute to all colleagues on the team. When the old 12 bed hospital was manned by only one RN, she would complete the paper admission forms after her tasks were complete. As the general hospital workflow changed over time, she would perform safety audits and report back to the OH&S committee (decades later she is still doing this). As nursing staff became busier with direct care, she would take charge of supply ordering, not just for the hospital, but for the home care nurses and residential care too. She did this with an attention to cost efficiency and became so versed with order codes, that she created master minimum and maximum order sheets for all departments to use. The amount of time saved to staff has been immeasurable. When the new hospital was built in 2003 she became so fluent in understanding how key panels worked, boiler panels mal-functioned, telephone systems failed, snow plowing the parking lot, how generators kicked in, in which cubby hole lesser used equipment was stored, how to reboot the ECG machine, why the tap water was brown, how to use the dishwasher in the kitchen, how many face masks to order in the event of an outbreak, why the morgue did not get cold, and when was the best time to have a staff party based on multiple competing schedules, that virtually every staff member ( 100+ employees now) still go to her first for help with virtually any problem that needs to be solved.

You could be the casual Front Office Clerk and need to know the best way to ship a parcel to Blue River, and she will know. You could be the night nurse and not know how to shut off the accidental fire alarm started by the demented resident, and she will know. You could be the maintenance guy who needs to shut off the main water valve, and she will know. . You could be an HEU member who does not know the rules and she was your union representative carefully explaining the process. You could be the new locum physician and not know how to access the online xray viewer, and she will walk you through it. You could be the 3 residential care staff who are working today and want the 1.5 hours off the floor to attend a team meeting, and she will cover the floor. You could be the housekeeper who is having trouble loading the floor buffer, and she will take time out of her lunch break to help problem solve. You could be the 6th ER patient today who can't warm up enough, and she will bring you a blanket from the warmer that she ordered and likely fund raised for. You could be the 7th ER stretcher that needs to be cleaned in the last 3 hours, and she will strip it, wipe it down, and drag the laundry bag to the hamper down the hall, because she is a team player and it needs to be done. None of these extra activities are performed until her own job responsibilities are complete. This same heroic commitment is evidenced in her personal life. She persevered through single parenthood, as many of us do, but also took the time to volunteer in 4H, cooking and baking for years to support that organization and Ducks Unlimited. Her lemon poppy seed chiffon cake is famous! And she also shares the same baking at the hospital for staff. For years she would bring in baking twice a week for everyone to enjoy. The current favourite is gluten free brownies! She would then go on to use her talents as a Board Member on two substantial community services organizations: Yellowhead Community Services and Evergreen Acres, an independent seniors living facility (two longstanding social service organizations that have benefitted from her initiative and leadership to this day). These are all compelling reasons why she should receive the Gold Apple Award, but there is more.

**3) Describe how this person goes "above and beyond" the scope of their job. What sets them apart from other dedicated health care workers?**

Clearwater is a small community with a small hospital. The nature of the equally small departments within the hospital means that staffing needs do not support much work for casual staff. As everyone in health care knows, one needs a large employee base to keep casuals happy. And if your department has only one staff member, and if your hospital is considered remote by any standards in 1978, it is unlikely that you will have any back up. The unfortunate part is that, over the years, conditions have not really changed. In fact, the need for Xray Technicians is likely to outrace the need for nurses in the next decade. So as the only Xray Technician at the Clearwater hospital, for nearly 38 years, you step up to the plate and accept the responsibility. You perform Xrays with care and compassion that respects the dignity, and pain, that needs protecting. Your patients know you on a first name basis and more likely confide personal problems with you, than the physician! And when there are lulls in the Xray work, you seek out other activities that can keep you busy and help out your colleagues. We all know long term employees who fit this description! They are so kind and caring in their approach that you want to be in their company. They seem to multi-task more projects than you can imagine. And they always have a smile for you and a cup of tea, or home made baked goods brought in fresh for staff that day. The truly heroic, outstanding, dedicated part is this: do patients or emergency procedures wait for Monday to Friday office hours?

No. So who is on call, returning to the hospital at a moments notice, to perform all those Xrays over the past 38+ years? For anyone who has ever worked on call, you can only imagine what that means. For approximately 13,870 days in a row, with maybe 2 – 4 weeks of vacation a year (380 – 760 days in total over 38 years), this



woman has worked on call. Every hour after her shift ends, till the start of her next shift, she carried a pager or was tied to the telephone, and then carried a cell phone. A life-long tether that meant she must return to the hospital, at any hour, on any day, or stat holiday, within 15 minutes. Can you even imagine how this would alter your life? Could you find daycare at 0217 am? Or 0455 am? Or 0630am? Could you be expected to attend your children's curricular activities on time, for the duration, or even get there? What about the in town soccer games or the away hockey games? Could you later guarantee that you could attend their graduations? Or Weddings? Could you even commit the time to baby sit your grandchildren? Could you look them in the eyes and promise that dinner tonight would not be interrupted like it had been for the last 16 evenings? And what of your own personal and social life? Could you make plans for dinner out with friends? Could you participate in down-hill skiing, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, or even curling? Could you play team sports of any kind, for decades? Could you hop into Kamloops for a quick shopping trip, dinner, or a movie? Could you date? No! You, or I, probably could not. Given the breadth and depth of this job requirement, would you even consider being the Xray Technician in Clearwater for all those 13,870 days? Well this extraordinary woman did! We are so thankful that she accepted and continues to do so! We are so thankful for her knowledge, her expertise, her genuine caring for everyone she works with, and for willing to be there at a drop of the hat, for decades!

We believe that she exemplifies the Gold Apple Award criteria for heroic!

#### **4) How has this person inspired or effected change in others?**

Because she knows the challenges of working solo in a small department in a rural hospital, this woman is very protective and watchful of new employees. Over the years she has mothered many Lab Technicians, among others. The Lab Technicians work much like the Xray Technician except that in Clearwater there are two part-time positions with overlapping days. As in the Xray department, the Lab Technicians work without a manager on site. We currently have two new graduates, of which the oldest (at 21 years of age) is the lead Lab Technician. Barely six months out of school, she has been on call for weeks at a time and has not faltered in assuming duties one would expect of a seasoned veteran. Of the nominee, Brooke the lead Lab Technician says: "The nominee has been a part of the hospital community, here in Clearwater, for numerous years. I have not lived, nor known her for tens of years like other staff at Dr. Helmcken Memorial Hospital have, but in the last year of getting to know her, I strongly believe she is an essential staff member of the hospital as well as the community. As I talk to her, and as she recounts the many memories she has of her past and her present, it is extremely clear that she loves this hospital and would do anything for anyone in need, whether it be a sympathizing shoulder to cry on or a strong mentor support system, she is always there. I believe that she is an exceptional candidate for the Health Care Hero Award because she continues to go above and beyond everyday she is working. She has taken on extra tasks to ease other staff's workload, such as ordering ALL the supplies for the hospital. She will help in the ER doing anything that needs to be done including helping ventilate patients. Another extraordinary accomplishment she can strap under her belt is helping with the design and layout of the new hospital that was built in 2003. Having a staff member that truly cares about the ergonomics, accessibility and comfort of staff and patients is so important to the hospital environment. She embodies teamwork like I have never seen before! She is willing to work with or around other staff to get her job done, and is able to adapt if nursing, laboratory, kitchen or housekeeping needs help. Being new to the team and having to work so many hours on call, it has been great for me to be able to talk to her about the stress, and know that what I was feeling was normal. And not just for me, I know she is available in a confidential way, for any staff member who needs a role model or support. Thank you!"

#### **5) How has this person's efforts had a positive impact on their patients, coworkers, employer and/or community?**

Now that her retirement is a distinct possibility, we are actually panicking! If a nurse cannot find the coudee catheter, they call her for the location in stores. If the Care Aids all need to attend a team meeting, they call her to cover the floor so everyone can be present. If the Home Care nurses run low on a specialty dressing, they call her for a rush order. If the fire alarm has been activated and the nurse cannot turn it off, they call her for the location of the key. If a bed alarm cannot be found to keep a patient safe, they call her for tips and tricks. If the ECG machine is full of data, they call her for help to override. If the site specific contingency policy is missing from the binder, they call her. If the off-site pharmacy cannot get us the medication in time, she will drive to the Pharmasave in town and pick up critical drugs. If there is not enough control solution for the Urinalysis machine, she knows how to source it. If there is a code blue in our ER, she records events. If an ER patient needs a warm blanket, she fetches one. If they need food, she will even drive to the A&W after the kitchen has closed. If the stretcher they vacated needs to be cleaned, she does it. And if employee morale is lagging, she brings us cake!



It is 2014 and we are about to lose our hospitals most valuable asset when she retires! She has inspired us all to wonder what we will do without her! Trish RN says that "She probably has the building schematics in memory! That's how much she knows this building!" Tom CA says "We are going to need her to write it all down so that we have a resource to turn to when she is gone! It will take two manuals to cover it all!" Berni Administrator says "Her value is priceless, I cannot imagine doing it without her!" Sonya RN Resident Care Coordinator says "She is known at Dr. Helmcken Memorial to "have the answer!" Not only does she contribute to OH&S in finding hazards, but she becomes an active part of the solution." Judy the Cook says "She is the person you go to whenever you need things or want to know how to get things. She knows the system inside and out and you can always rely on her for help. After working with her for 36 years, I certainly respect her continued support and knowledge." Laura CA says "Lord knows it takes a very special person to do what she has done all these years! She will even sweep the hallways or wash the dishes. There is simply no replacing her. We are especially lucky to have her!" Rebecca Xray Technician says "She champions the notion of collaborative practice in healthcare. She views the hospital as one unit working together to achieve the same goal. The phrase "that's not my job" is not in her vocabulary. Her dedication is absolutely invaluable and a true testament to her strong character and depth of commitment. Thank you!" Kymberly CA gets all misty when she thinks about this woman retiring. Susan RN says "Being a part-time nurse for all of my career in Clearwater, I often deal with incomplete histories due to any number of reasons. The nominee has always been willing to discreetly "fill in the gaps" with whatever knowledge she has about the patient. This has proved invaluable over the years. Her willingness and patience to aid and teach me about bone fracture assessments has enabled me to provide improved care to patients, especially in the ER. Lastly but not least, in times of crisis, she will contribute and do whatever it takes to help her patients and co-workers. It is for these things and much more that I am deeply appreciative of and feel fortunate to be able to work with her. And I have worked with her for 25 years and whole-heartedly support her nomination. It is deeply deserved!" Kim Radiology Practice Leader says "It has always been a relief knowing that she was working out there. I did not have to worry about sick calls that I could not fill and I could always count on her to be an exemplary professional! She has provided service 24/7 for decades and has truly given her life to ensure that Clearwater patients receive the care they need. In reflecting upon my whole career, I cannot think of a more deserving nominee for this distinguished award! Thank you!" And thank you to all the staff that came forward to support this nomination, many showed support with a thumbs up or a passing "thank you for doing that!" I am writing for all of us here at Dr. Helmcken Memorial Hospital when I say that I am honored to nominate Pearl Broswick, Xray Technician Extraordinaire, for the Health Care Hero Award 2014! Janice Wyatt RN

**6) OPTIONAL - Additional brief testimonials or endorsements from others.**