



Teton Valley Hospital Nurse Recognized by Idaho March of Dimes

The Idaho Chapter of the March of Dimes has named Bonnie J. Burlage, RN, as Idaho Nurse of the Year for Rural Medical Facilities. The annual awards ceremony was held November 12th in Boise where four nurses were selected from facility categories according to size: Rural (less than 50 employees not including nursing staff), Small (50 – 199), Medium (200-999), and Large (1000+).

Award honorees must show outstanding performance in four key areas: inspiring others by actions, spirit or service in the workplace; examples of leadership contributions to the nursing profession; significant career accomplishments; and significant contributions to the community.

Bonnie has served as a Registered Nurse for thirty-four years. She has worked at Teton Valley Hospital since 1987 where her titles included Clinical Educator, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Infection Control & Employee Health Coordinator, and Wound Care Team Coordinator. Her resumé is replete with achievements and certifications related to health care education, training and patient care.

In addition to her part time duties at Teton Valley Hospital, Bonnie was elected County Coroner for Fremont County, serves as a Planning and Zoning Commissioner for the City of Ashton, works on multiple Emergency Planning committees for schools and counties, and volunteers as an Advanced EMT for Fremont County Ambulance Service. She's an instructor for the State of Idaho Emergency Medical Services, and the owner/operator of BDM Medical, Inc., a medical supply company. Bonnie is also an active member of the Eastern Idaho Public Health District HRSA/ASPR Regional Committee. Somehow, she also found the time to invent a safety device for ambulance backboards called a "Spider Strap" for which she holds the US Patent. Coincidentally, a March of Dimes scholarship made it possible for Bonnie to attend nursing school.

In the application nominating Bonnie for Nurse of the Year, Angela Booker, Director of Nursing Services at Teton Valley Health Care, wrote "Her contributions to patient care and the practice of nursing began when she decided to attend nursing school and continue to this day."

"Bonnie is an amazing person and an invaluable asset to her community," says Booker, noting that the March of Dimes application was kept secret from Bonnie until the invitation to the awards ceremony arrived. Bonnie attended the event with her husband and children but didn't know that she had won until the announcement from the podium.

“I heard the March of Dimes representative talking about the achievements of the Rural Medical Nurse of the Year and it suddenly dawned on me that she was talking about me!” said Bonnie. “I broke down in tears. It was a wonderful moment.”

TVHC CEO Virgil Boss noted that “we’re fortunate to have such highly skilled employees that have chosen to work with our organization, and Bonnie’s achievements are particularly remarkable.”
