

Nightingale Award has history in area

Written by Chris Lee

The Nightingale Award is an honor given to registered nurses throughout the state of Colorado each year.

Gloria Heinitz of Holyoke recently attended the 25th Annual Centennial Nursing and Centennial Region Nightingale Awards dinner as one of 32 regional finalists for the award. Although she won't be one to move onto the state level and have a chance to win the Nightingale Award, she was honored to have been nominated as a regional finalist.

"I was appreciative of what did happen," Heinitz said. "It was really an honor. It is something you really appreciate."

The dinner was held Friday, March 12 in Loveland. Thirty-two registered nurses gathered for the event where six finalists were named to move onto the state selection committee and the chance to win the Nightingale Award.

There are six regions in Colorado. The Centennial Region covers much of Northeast Colorado and the front range. Regional finalists move to the state level and winners will be announced at the May 1 Nightingale Awards Dinner.

After being nominated, Heinitz had to draft an essay and find five people or organizations to write letters of support for her. She had two patients, a physician, human resources and a group of nurses each write a letter for her.

This was the second time Heinitz has been nominated for the award.

She stated in her letter, "The day I started in rural nursing care, I helped with a delivery of a baby, and within the week helped with a cardiac arrest (with me and one other nurse being the only working personnel in the building) and in the same week was told I better clean up the ER after a patient because no one else was going to do that job. That set the tone for the next 40 years. I really don't feel that there is any job that is beneath an RN to do, and I relate well to my team of nurses and nurse assistants, because I like helping them with their jobs."

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She was quick to give praise to MMH Administrator John Ayoub, Director of Nursing Claudia Powell and Pat Notter for their efforts in the process.

“Claudia and Pat gave me a lot of support,” Heinitz said. “They were really helpful.”

Ayoub got the nomination process rolling. “I really appreciate what he did,” Heinitz said. “It was overwhelming when I figured it out.”

“I have been continually and consistently blown away by Gloria’s tireless work, compassion and dedication to her patients and colleagues,” Ayoub said in his letter. “She truly and effectively role models the very best behaviors of a genuine servant leader.”

Heinitz began her career in Holyoke in 1970 as a staff nurse. She has been an administrative nurse off and on for 15 years and has held other nursing positions. She said her career has been somewhat of a hodgepodge of jobs, but staff nursing will always be her favorite.

“I like regular staff nursing, that’s my love and I just as soon stay with that.”

For the past 40 years, Heinitz has seen the field change and evolve. She said it has been fun seeing the changes and growth over her career.

Being involved within different aspects of the community and nursing organizations is something that is looked at during the Nightingale process.

Heinitz has been involved with the triathlon and strongly believes in exercise. She said she probably wouldn’t be where she is today if she hadn’t kept up with running and walking.

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Winona Rouze wins Nightingale in 1987

Winona Rouze was named a finalist in March 1987 and was awarded the Nightingale Award a couple months later in May. She was one of four to receive the award in 1987. Rouze's accomplishment can be remembered by the sculpture displayed at Melissa Memorial Hospital.

As a result of being named one of the four winners of the Nightingale Award, she received a Nightingale sculpture, a letter from former First Lady Betty Ford and a check for \$1,000.

Rouze was known for her caring attitude and instantly gave the money to the Melissa Memorial Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship Fund.

It was reported Rouze's original nomination form was different than the other 184 nominations. Hers was co-signed by 313 Holyoke community members who wanted to show their support for her.

"That's a rare honor to have someone from this area win it," Heinitz said with regard to Rouze winning the award.

In an article in the May 21, 1987 issue of the Enterprise, parts of her nomination letter were printed and said, "Practicing nursing for more than 50 years, Rouze has cared for a remarkable variety of patients, in capacities ranging from private duty to maternity home and hospital care.

"Rouze's tenderness and sensitivity to her community of neighbors and friends in Holyoke extend well beyond retirement. She maintains her nursing license, regularly upgrades her skills and is always on call."

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Regent Park nurse recognized

Another local tie at the dinner comes in the form of Regent Park Charge Nurse Joni Taylor of Julesburg.

“It was a huge honor,” Taylor said.

One of her supporters said, “In all my years in long term care, I have never seen a nurse with so much compassion and love for her residents. They all are literally her family.”

Another said, “When Joni walks into a room, residents truly light up.”

Taylor has been working at Regent Park for five years and loves her job. “It is a huge honor to work here.”

“I love you, yes, I do, I love you.” Those were the words of a friendly elderly man, singing to me as I nervously walked in to apply for my first nursing job,” Taylor said in her essay. “Just out of nursing school, with nothing but fear written all over my face, this elderly man turned my face of fear into a loving smile.”

Faye (Colglazier) Hummel named as a finalist

Faye (Colglazier) Hummel, the daughter of Marjorie Colglazier of Holyoke and the late Dale Colglazier, was named as one of the six finalists for the Nightingale Award at the Centennial

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Region awards dinner.

Hummel lives in Brighton with her husband Bruce and two daughters, April and Autumn. She is an associate professor in the School of Nursing at University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

“I’m very honored to be recognized with 32 other nurses,” Hummel said. “It’s an extraordinary honor.”

The Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Human Caring was founded in 1985 to honor nurses who best exemplify the philosophy and practice of Florence Nightingale, a 19th century nursing pioneer who epitomized the art of helping people toward their optimal health.

Registered nurses throughout the state are nominated in the fall of each year by solicitation from the Colorado Area Health Education Centers System (AHEC) and the Colorado Springs and Western Slope Nightingale Committees.

Fifteen finalists are selected by the regions and forwarded to the State Selection Committee, who determines the recipients.

The Colorado Nurses Foundation (CNF) is the organization planning the statewide event. The Colorado Springs Nightingale and Western Slope Nightingale are part of the CNF statewide planning committee. CNF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, dedicated to improving health care and nursing practice in Colorado. CNF is devoted to creating nursing excellence through the promotion of educational and scientific activities and community-based projects in Colorado.

Since 1999, CNF has awarded 244 scholarships totaling \$313,750.