



NURSING WEEK

NIGHTINGALE AWARD RECIPIENT JANE MACIVER



Nurse practitioner Jane Maciver, centre, is the 2009 recipient of the Nightingale Award for her remarkable care of patient Michael Martin. She is flanked by surgeon Vivek Rao and Martin's sister, Jennifer Martin-Kepes.

TGH's queen of hearts

COURAGE from U1

Nurse practitioner Jane Maciver — this year's Nightingale Award recipient — tended to Martin while he was treated at Toronto General Hospital. It was Jennifer Martin-Kepes, Martin's younger sister, who nominated Maciver. "She's an incredibly caring person — it emanates from her in waves. There's a twinkle in her eye. Although she's non-nonsense, she has a wonderfully irreverent sense of humour," says Martin-Kepes.

Maciver calls Michael Martin "the real hero of this story." As a nurse practitioner for heart failure and heart transplant in TGH's cardiac care unit, she learned how to fine-tune Martin's left ventricular assist device (LVAD). The battery-driven machine was surgically implanted into his heart in May 2005 to help it pump, as a stop-gap measure while he waited for a heart transplant.

When it became evident a transplant wasn't possible and the device could no longer effectively do its job, Maciver and Martin's family comforted him while he turned off his machine. He died in March at age 54, after surviving as Canada's longest-living LVAD patient. "When I found out that I had been honoured with the Nightingale Award, it was bittersweet — I started to cry," says Maciver, a mother of three who lives with her family in the Beach. "I'm honoured to be nominated, humbled to be selected. It's Mike's story — the story needs to be heard."

Martin's story is interwoven with Maciver's, since she cared for him for seven of the 11 years he suffered from cardiomyopathy — a disease that causes the heart muscle to deteriorate, reducing its ability to pump blood to the rest of the body. Martin had the type known as dilated cardiomyopathy, resulting in an oversized heart. One theory was that he contracted the disease in his teens from a virus.

There were other health problems. Martin was diabetic prior to receiving his pump and, over the last six years, he developed neuropathy from

the diabetes. Neuropathy causes nerve and blood vessel changes, which resulted in pain in his legs. It was relieved with medication, says Maciver.

"It was Jane who was phoned in the middle of the night when there was an emergency. Jane who learned how to fine-tune the computer adjustments that kept Michael's heart pumping and Jane who had the thankless task of changing infected bandages and inserting ports and IVs and conveying grim news," Martin-Kepes wrote in her Nightingale nomination.

Maciver has practised nursing for 20 years and has worked at TGH since 1994, first as a clinical nurse specialist in cardiology and then as a nurse practitioner in cardiovascular surgery in '97. She helped develop the ventricular assist device (VAD)

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program in 2001. Her main duties involve the outpatient care of VAD patients, as well as prepping recipients for pre-op and then overseeing them in the ICU. The team sees 12 to 15 VAD patients a year. Originally inserted as "a bridge to transplant", VADs are also in use as long-term therapy for patients who do not qualify for transplant.

Maciver says working with VADs is still an evolving field, with staff learning as they go.

"It changes not only how patients live but also how they die. These patients typically have an incredible will to live and, for many, it's the last chance at life.

"With VADs, both the team and the patient/family need to commit to the relationship that is hopefully a long one. Some go into heart transplant; others, like Mike, remain on support until they die; some die after a short duration of support," says Maciver, who works days but is committed to be on call 24/7.

Because Martin lived such a long time with his ticking LVAD, Martin-Kepes says the family had years to develop a relationship with Maciver. "It was almost like having your own

personal nurse on call."

Maciver is quick to give credit to the rest of the team involved with Martin's care. "The nurses on the ward were awesome — it took courage to enter that room knowing that every time that LVAD alarmed, it might be the end."

She also lauds the work of the program directors: Dr. Heather Ross, a cardiologist, and Dr. Vivek Rao, Martin's cardiac surgeon.

Martin-Kepes says her brother — who lived with his parents and younger brother Andrew in Richmond Hill and taught computer graphics at George Brown College — was "never a great candidate for a transplant" and was terrified of the procedure.

He was overweight and would continually come within 10 pounds of the weight needed to qualify. But if you met him, she adds, you would

never have known he was sick. "It was a huge shock to me when I came to the realization that I would go in (to the hospital) one day and that the machine was going to have to be turned off."

In January, Martin and his family were told the LVAD was failing. Maciver says Martin made the decision — because of health issues and his fear of surgery — not to have another device implanted. That left him with roughly three months to live.

On Feb. 25, the machine's alarms went off and Martin was admitted to TGH for what would be his last time. A last supper was thrown for him, attended by Maciver, Rao, and his brother and sister.

"He didn't want this to be a sad event. He wanted to be surrounded by people who loved him. We laughed and told jokes," recalls Maciver.

One week later, they were there when Martin pulled the plug on his life — dying when he chose to, rather than "alone at 4 a.m.," says Maciver, her voice breaking.

"He didn't want to die at home and he didn't want it to hurt," she says. "We accomplished both."

HONOURABLE NOMINEE KATRINA KACZALA

WestBury residents 'blessed with an angel'

JANICE BRADBEER TORONTO STAR

Antonina Stepovy has experienced great joy in the life she shared with her husband Jack and their daughter Sophia. And she has endured great sorrow, including the extermination of her Ukrainian parents during the Russian Revolution, the deaths of Jack and her first husband, as well as the loss of a 2-year-old son to pneumonia. But the handsome, dignified woman is fighting her fiercest adversary to date: Alzheimer's disease.

Antonina, 93, who has also battled melanoma and two heart attacks, was stricken with Alzheimer's about eight years ago and has spent the past four years at The WestBury long-term-care residence in Etobicoke.

Her escalating mood swings, coupled with almost non-existent reasoning skills, resulted in Antonina being relocated in late 2006 from the WestBury's seventh floor to the third, or "behavioural floor," where

residents wrestle with various forms of dementia, says Sophia Stepovy, 59, who works evenings as a proofreader for a Toronto law firm. Antonina was notably unhappy there. She never smiled and had no appetite. Then, fresh hope appeared in the form of third-floor nurse, Katarzyna (Katrina) Kaczala, whom Sophia calls "a whirlwind of efficiency."

Katrina made sure that my mother's body and soul were well looked after, and they thrived.

Under Kaczala's care, Antonina blossomed. The woman who had lost the zest and kindness that once governed her life began to smile and enjoy her food again. If she refused to co-operate for blood work or tests, Kaczala insisted the technicians return when she was more relaxed. "Katrina made sure that my mother's body and soul were well looked after, and they thrived," wrote Sophia when nominating Kaczala for the Star's Nightingale Award.

Kaczala says she was surprised to be chosen as an Honourable Nominee. "I don't feel that I am special. I'm just doing my job. I treat everyone the way I would like to be treated."

The 44-year-old nurse trained in Poland before immigrating to Canada 18 years ago. She worked in two homes for the aged here as a health-care aide before going back to school to upgrade her RN designation to Canadian standards. She has been at The WestBury for five years. She works days as the charge nurse, attending to 22 patients and also oversees three personal support workers.

"One of the common things families mentioned is that Katrina is a caring and passionate person," says Nina Kandik, the WestBury's family and community co-ordinator. "She always puts her residents' best interest at heart first. One of the family members — Shane Gordon — has said, 'We are blessed with an angel.'"



Sophia Stepovy, right, says Katrina Kaczala has a gift for nursing Alzheimer's patients such as her mother, Antonina.

Sophia says Kaczala has a gift for nursing her patients, many of whom now possess the mental capacity of a 1- to 5-year-old child. Her own mother can no longer attend to her own hygiene, has difficulty walking (she uses a wheelchair) and when she

does speak, her sentences consist of a few words. And Sophia adds her voice to others who say that Kaczala treats all her patients with respect. "I always try to talk to them the way that you would talk to a healthy person," Kaczala says. "I always smile

when I talk to them, so that they can see that I'm not angry with them." Although Antonina does speak English, Kaczala will often speak to her in Ukrainian and give her hugs and kisses. Patients' families also receive nur-

turing from Kaczala, says Sophia, who visits her mom twice a week. "She not only takes care of my mom, I feel that my emotions are taken care of as well. I feel like I'm okay. I know that she's in safe hands."

But she worried about her mother when Kaczala was struck by her own tragedy last May. Wiping away tears, Kaczala explains that her husband Peter died suddenly from an aneurysm on his 45th birthday, leaving her with two teenage boys.

She took a three-month leave. Sophia says that, during that time, the sparkle in her mother's eyes and her smile faded. Antonina lost weight, wouldn't eat and what little she did consume, caused her to choke. A therapist checked her over, but couldn't find anything physically wrong. Despite the attentions of other staff, Antonina continued her downward slide.

Then, after three months — like the arrival of spring after a harsh winter — Antonina sprang back and blossomed into life. Was it a miracle?

No. Katrina Kaczala had returned to work.

HONOURABLE NOMINEE KAREN MULLER

Caring voice helped soothe tragic loss

VALERIE HAUCH TORONTO STAR

In her darkest hour, and having suffered the greatest loss of her young life, it was the voice of a nurse that brought Apryle Bayley some measure of peace.

Karen Muller was talking to Bayley's stillborn baby, as she washed and dressed him, telling him how beautiful he was and how he had his father's chin, the look of his mom around the eyes.

Her soothing voice reached out to Bayley, still shaken and recovering from her labour at Mount Sinai hospital with her husband, Dustin, and sister Jennifer Burch.

"I was afraid to see him," says Bayley, 32, in a phone interview from Timmins. "But I could hear her talking to him and I was listening. At first I said no, but Karen encouraged me — she seemed to know I needed time . . . and then I wasn't afraid. I wanted to hold him and we held him and rocked him. It didn't really hit me, what had happened, until I held him. All our hopes and dreams for this baby — they weren't going to be possible."

"You have to know your limits, you have to be supportive. You do all you can but you're not going to be able to make the bad go away. You do all you can . . . but there's nothing wrong with crying with a patient. When I read (Bayley's nomination) letter, the tears started to run down my face . . . some of them stick with you. They stay here," she says, pointing to her heart.

"I feel good about what I do. I really have to thank my parents — they taught me to be kind," says Muller, a mother of two: Christopher, 19 and Matthew, 18.

She already knows she will see Bayley again. The Timmins woman is pregnant and will be coming to Mount Sinai to deliver in August. Bayley says she wouldn't have gotten pregnant again so soon if Muller hadn't helped.

And Jackson also plays a role in this pregnancy. Because of him, Bayley was found to have Neonatal Alloimmune Thrombocytopenia, a platelet disorder that caused his death. Bayley now gets blood transfusions twice a week at her local hospital.

When she delivers, she'll see a familiar face. "I've already told her," says Muller, "just call me and I'll be there."



Mount Sinai registered nurse Karen Muller.

That baby's life was precious — we need to celebrate his 8½ months. His birthday will always be his birthday.

HONOURABLE NOMINEE PETER CARNIE



Nursing student Sarah Dulmage, registered nurse Peter Carnie and former students Mark Kantor and Victoria Govan.

Humour and compassion shine through

VALERIE HAUCH TORONTO STAR

The neat-as-a-pin apartment, on a quiet street fringed by a cemetery, where Peter Carnie lives seems a serene oasis.

Just the sort of place that a nurse working 12-hour shifts in one of the city's busiest hospitals might retreat to on his days off. There are giant, wall-mounted photos of a forest that seem to tumble viewers deep inside a leafy retreat, like Alice falling into a wooded wonderland.

And then there's Frankenstein on a chair. The homely stuffed doll draws a laugh and smile from Carnie, 46, the father of three boys, 8, 10 and 13. He says it appealed to him when he saw it in a store, so home it came.

Humour and being able to see the light side of life, even when you're in an environment that can be grim, is important to Carnie, a Nightingale Award honourable nominee.

"Humour is a good way to communicate with people — it's good to make people laugh," says Carnie, an RN who obtained his diploma from George Brown College when he was 24 and later earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing long-distance from a university in Australia. It took him three years of part-time studies but the upgrading is a "good thing" for the profession, he says.

In addition to his nursing shifts at St. Michael's, Carnie also works at the hospital as a clinical instructor, teaching University of Toronto nursing students on the general medicine floor. Two of his recent students, Vic-

toria Govan and Mark Kantor, were so impressed that they nominated him for the Nightingale.

Carnie's holistic view of nursing — "You're treating the whole person, not just the condition" — was inspirational, says Govan, who will be licensed as an RN next October.

In her nomination letter, she wrote that not only did she and her fellow students learn to "critically apply clinical knowledge and judgment," they also were expected to assess the "physical, emotional and social aspects of those in our care . . . each student left this clinical rotation empowered and inspired to be the best nurses that we could possibly be."

She adds she will never forget the way Carnie "held the hands of homeless and destitute patients, how he brought smiles to the faces of people who had lost hope."

As a male nursing student, Kantor says he found Carnie a powerful role model and one who could inspire more males to enter the nursing profession.

Not only did he find Carnie "a supportive teacher, a genuinely caring person, a compassionate nurse, and a well-informed educator, he was also a role model."

"I remember watching him in action and thinking that Peter really gets it when it comes to caring for people, and that inspired me to put the extra effort in," says Kantor, who writes his final RN exam in October.

In his nomination letter, Kantor recalls a specific incident with one pa-

tient who had difficulty communicating because of stroke damage. He says Carnie "placed himself close to the patient, as if he was an old friend, and treated him with compassion and understanding, which clearly had a calming effect. I will never forget this day because I was emotionally moved and this touching experience left me wanting to increase my own compassion for others."

Carnie says the general medicine

He brought smiles to the faces of people who had lost hope.

floor is a good place for students to learn because they get a wide variety of hands-on experience — from treating minor infections to grave, even palliative care. He has been teaching groups of eight students at a time over three-month periods for five years.

"St. Mike's is a wonderful hospital, which has always taken care of the poor, the disenfranchised, the homeless, people with addiction problems . . . people with diseases in end stages. It's a very special place. We treat people with an openness and understanding — we aren't there to judge. You can't change the trajectory of someone's life."

Some might think palliative care would be a depressing or dispiriting experience. But Carnie finds it just the opposite. He says he finds it humbling and a privilege to "help that person go through that final stage in their life . . . I view it as an honour."

THE NIGHTINGALE HONOUR ROLL, FROM A TO W

The Toronto Star Nightingale Award is presented each year to an Ontario nurse nominated for recognition by their patients or peers. The recipient and honourable mentions are selected by a panel of representatives from the Star and Ontario's nursing associations.

- Frances Abela-Dimech, RN, CAMH
- Stephanie Aldom, RN University Hosp., London
- Janice Allen, NP Southlake, Newmarket
- Pamela Andersen, RN VON, North Bay
- Charles Anyinam, RN York University
- Margaret Bachle, RN Credit Valley, Mississauga
- Adolfo Baliton, RN Providence Healthcare
- Marilyn Barrington, RN Uxbridge
- Grace Belliveau, RPN Brant Centre, Burlington
- Catherine Bennett, NP Sp. Care Bradford/Valley
- Anne Berentschot, RPN Lakeridge, Oshawa
- Lorraine Betts, RN George Brown College
- Charles Anyinam, RN York University
- Margaret Bachle, RN Credit Valley, Mississauga
- Adolfo Baliton, RN Providence Healthcare
- Marilyn Barrington, RN Uxbridge

- Rosemary Cameirao, RN Markham Stouffville
- Peter Carnie, RN St. Michael's
- Alice Chan, Para Med Scarborough
- Scarbring Chow, RN Yee Hong, Mississauga
- Mary Chu, RN Sunnybrook
- Shirley Church, RPN Shepherd Village
- Beth Clarkson, RN Markham Stouffville
- Michelle Clifford-Middel, RN, homecare
- Claire Clovis, RN Perram House
- Bonnie Cole, RN St. Elizabeth
- Bobbi Anne Colyer, RPN homecare
- Cathy Cooper, RN, Trillium
- Mary Coulter, RN University Hosp., London
- Marilyn Coulthrust, RPN Etobicoke
- Linda Crawford, The Medical Centre
- Judy Dean, RN Welland Hospital
- Tenzin Dicky, RN, Mount Sinai
- Jean Dobson, RN University Hosp., London
- Patricia Dookie, RN Markham Stouffville
- Vicky Dumitrache, RN Toronto Western
- Krystyna Eder, RN Mount Sinai
- Michael Edgeworth, RPN Toronto East

- Helen Elliot, RN Elliot Lake
- Lorna Eyles, McCall Centre
- Alan Ferguson, RPN Etobicoke
- Judith Ferguson, RN York Central
- Caroline Fillon, RPN Card. Ambrozic Houses
- Dawn Fletcher, RN York Cen., Richmond Hill
- Jan Flynn, RN Holland Centre
- Cathy Forster, RN Rouge Valley
- Jennie Franck, RN Toronto General
- Monica Freeca, RN Mount Sinai
- Vivian Gatchalian, RN Leisureworld Ellesmere
- Janet Giannini, RN Southlake, Newmarket
- Jane Giroux, RN Kingston General
- Loretta Gonsalves, RN Etobicoke Healthcare
- Chito Gonzaga, RN Sunnybrook
- Beth Goudie, RN Sunnybrook
- Stephanie Grayson, RPN Saint Elizabeth, Markham
- Terry Hamilton, RN Trillium Health Centre
- Susan Jenkins, RN Toronto General
- Elisabeth Jensen, RN, RNAO
- Katrina Kaczala, RN WestBury LTC, Etobicoke
- Mina Kashani, RN St. Michael's

- Cathy Hoerig, RN Mount Sinai
- Lilly Holmes, RPN Women's College
- Catherine Hooker, RN Rouge Valley
- Kathryn Hope, RN, Hope Consultants
- Penni Huntling, RN Oakville Trafalgar
- Janet Isobel O'Hara, RN, Northern Ontario
- Donna Jaggon, RN North York General
- Susan Jenkins, RN Toronto General
- Elisabeth Jensen, RN, RNAO
- Katrina Kaczala, RN WestBury LTC, Etobicoke
- Mina Kashani, RN St. Michael's
- Greta King, RN Toronto East General
- Holly Kurtz, RPN Chateau Gardens, Elmira
- Wendy LaMontagne, RPN Cobourg Retirement Res.
- Naguleswari Lawrence, RN, Toronto East General
- Jennifer Least, RN SickKids
- Rose Leparulo, RN Toronto General
- Sonda Lockhart, RPN Spectrum homecare
- Melina Loncar, RN Trillium
- Kristina Lyall, RN, SickKids
- Serene Ma, RN Mount Sinai
- Jane Maciver, NP Toronto General

- Leslie McLean, RN St. Joseph's
- Florence Madara-Maku in-home palliative care
- Sue Mainella, NP York Central
- Sacha Marshall, RN Brampton Civic
- Tracy Martin, RN Southlake, Newmarket
- Brenda Martin, RN, 921 Millwood residence
- Randi McDonald, homecare, Richmond Hill
- Marie McDonnell, RN Humber River
- Gloria McLaughlin, RPN Humber River
- Brenda McQuarrie, NP Toronto General
- Jennifer Miles, RN, CCAS
- Karen Muller, RN Mount Sinai
- Paul Myers, RN London Health Sciences
- Norma Nicholson, RN Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Peter Nielsen, RN Toronto General
- Inga Nikkarinen, RN North York General
- Vesna Nikolovska, RN Para Med
- Brenda Norris, RN St. Joseph
- Pat Onion, RN Mount Sinai
- Kim Owens, RN Providence Health Care
- Danny Parmigiano, RN Bridgepoint Health
- Gemma Paul, RPN Humber River

- Sue Peschke, RN Scarborough Centenary
- Shobhana Peters, RN Scarborough General
- Teresa Petrie, RPN Saint Elizabeth
- Sheila Phillips, RN VHA Home HealthCare
- Ann Pottinger, APN CAMH
- Erika Prosser, RN CCAC Mississauga
- Jadwiga Puk, RN homecare
- Dalene Raymundo, RN Sunnybrook
- Amanda Richards, RN Toronto General
- Marjorie Richings, RN, homeless outreach clinic
- Andrea Riekstins, RN Sick Kids
- Mount Sinai
- Scarborough Centenary
- Scarborough General
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Toronto General
- VHA Home HealthCare
- North York General
- CCAC Mississauga
- homecare
- Sunnybrook
- Toronto General
- homeless outreach clinic
- Humber River

- Karen Roberts, RN Mississauga
- Sherri Roberts, RN Rouge Valley, Ajax
- Yvonne Ross, RN Toronto Western
- Saint Elizabeth
- Jacque Rumball, NP Norfolk Family Clinic
- Sabina Sabo, RN homecare
- Doreen Saint, RN North York General
- Ivy Santiago, RN St Michael's
- Angela Sarro, RN Toronto Western
- Pamela Scorsolini Campbell, RN, Mt. Sinai
- Tilda Shalof, RN Toronto General
- Barb Shelley, RN Geriatric MH Program
- Oksana Sklifasovska, RN York Central
- Monica Smith, RN Trillium West
- Ann Marie Stain, RN Sick Kids
- Rachel Tactay, RN Private practice
- Maria Tambong, RN Mount Sinai
- Connie Teewen, RN St. Elizabeth, York Region
- Lorna Thompson, RN Markham Stouffville
- Fiona Thompson-Hutchison, RN, Sunnybrook
- Suzanne Tierney, RN Credit Valley
- Sandra Tedesco, RN VHA Home HealthCare
- Annette Trimmingham, RN, Cummer Lodge
- Dawa Tsomo, RPN, Lakeside
- Lakeside Extendingcare
- Suzette Turner, RN Sunnybrook
- Avril Vasquez, RN Humber River
- Barb Wagg, RN Guelph General
- Jane Walker, RN Niagara Regional
- Maggie Walker, U of T health clinic
- Sanlin Wang, RN Toronto Grace
- Glenda Watson, RPN St. Elizabeth Nurses
- Heather Weir, RN Star Family Health Team
- Jane Wignall, RN, Huntsville Muskoka Dist.
- Debbie Wise, RN Humber River