



# VHA Voice

ISSUE 5 ■ WINTER ■ 2016

## Avoiding Slips and Falls in Winter Weather

- Regularly remove snow from the driveway and walkways and de-ice with salt, kitty litter or other de-icer.
- Make sure the sidewalk, driveway and steps are all well lit.
- Install support railings that lead to the front door. If railings are already there, make sure they're sturdy and secure.
- Ensure that you own a good pair of boots with thick, non-slip rubber soles and that you have warm winter clothing. Being cold can make you hurry or tense up which can cause you to lose your balance.
- Use a walking aid such as a cane or walker if needed.
- Place a winter mat at the front door so wet boots can be taken off right away. This will prevent puddles that can cause indoor slips.
- Carry safety items including a cell phone, whistle and personal identification if going for a walk.



## Nominate a VHA Worker for a Client Choice Award!

VHA is committed to bringing the voices, feedback and ideas of clients and their families into all that we do. So what better way to do this than by asking YOU for your input about who should win VHA's 2016 Barbara Blackstock-Cody Client Choice Awards?

While we hope that every worker provides spectacular client care, we know there are "standouts." People who go above and beyond to support you or your loved one. They're kind, dedicated and passionate, putting the needs of their clients and families first.



A few of our winners from last year's appreciation event.

For a second year, we're asking clients and family members to share your stories of spectacular VHA care by **nominating your nurse, personal support worker (PSW), rehab service provider or client service co-ordinator for VHA's Barbara Blackstock-Cody Client Choice Award.**

## How can I nominate my VHA worker?

Tell us about how your VHA worker has truly made a difference in your life.  
Submit your nomination by **February 19, 2016:**

- Online at [www.vha.ca/clientchoice](http://www.vha.ca/clientchoice)
- By calling 416-489-2500 ext. 7007 or toll free at 1-888-314-6622 ext. 7007
- By writing us a letter and addressing it to:  
VHA Home HealthCare, Client Choice Award  
30 Soudan Ave., Suite 600, Toronto, ON M4S 1V6

Don't forget to give us the name of the VHA worker you are nominating, tell us why they should receive the award and give examples of why you feel the worker is so spectacular! We look forward to hearing from you!

Loved our newsletter?

Thought we missed something?

Want to be profiled or contribute?

We're interested in hearing your ideas, stories and suggestions!

Email [communications@vha.ca](mailto:communications@vha.ca) or call

**416-489-2500 ext. 4344 toll free: 1-888-314-6622 ext. 4344.**

**We're All Ears!!**



# VHA's Spectacular Spirit Surprise Contest Winners!

VHA ended its 90<sup>th</sup> year with a splash by spreading some holiday spirit to our clients and workers by surprising a total of 17 people with special gifts during the holiday season. We felt a little bad “tricking” the winners (most thought they were being interviewed about their service), but the faces of delight were worth it (and we seemed to be forgiven).

Although it was a tough decision, we hope you'll agree that our winners are deserving. Watch our “ambush videos” surprising some of the winners by going to: <http://bit.ly/vhaspectacular>. Below are some of our winners' stories.

**Ann** is a very dedicated mother who would do anything to care for her daughters, even while dealing with her own health challenges. We surprised Ann with a Christmas dinner for her and her extended family. She was overjoyed! We also gave her a nice robe and cozy pair of slippers and she enjoyed a well-deserved “PJ day.”



**Reshat** worked as a bushman in Northern Ontario but suffered a painful back injury after a tree fell on him. Despite health challenges, Reshat remains positive and grateful—not only to VHA and his PSW, but also to the Canadian government and health care system whose support allows him to remain living independently at

home. We surprised Reshat with a new, larger-screened TV so he could see shows more clearly. Reshat's reaction was priceless and his tears made us cry!

**Karen** was living in a motel waiting for housing. Despite several personal losses, Karen remains positive and hopeful. And things are looking up: aside from winning a spa day from VHA, she finally secured permanent housing just before Christmas. Since good luck comes in threes, we suggested it might be a good time to buy a lottery ticket!



**Paulette** lives on her own and is visually impaired. Her worker suggested a comfortable chair for Paulette because, having little furniture, she was forced to spend much of her day in bed. Paulette was overwhelmed when we surprised her with her new recliner, and her smile lit up the room. She was also so grateful to her worker, who she noted “is the best.”



**Husna and Jibril:** This lovely couple have four young boys, one of whom has severe Autism. Because of their son's high care needs, neither can work full-time and, therefore, have limited financial resources. We surprised them with tickets to the Ripley's Aquarium and a Canadian Tire gift card for them to use on things they need for their home. They were overjoyed and are looking forward to sharing some fun quality time together as a family.

**Christine and Tyrese:** As a hardworking mom of a child with a disability, going the extra mile is par for the course for Christine. Juggling motherhood is made even more challenging with the addition of full-time studies;;Christine is currently on her way to becoming a nurse. What better way to reward her efforts than by showing up with a gift certificate for the spa of her choice and a talking Elmo doll—Tyrese's favourite character—for her son?!



**Georgia and Richard:** Since Georgia became ill, Richard has remained by her side. Their kindness and devotion to one another was the driving force behind their nomination. Richard often talks about going to their favourite restaurant. While we couldn't grant that wish, we arranged delivery of a lovely holiday dinner from a renowned Toronto caterer.



**Suzy:** Raising four kids is challenging task on its own. So when Suzy stepped in (and moved in) to care for her uncle after his daughter died suddenly, we were amazed. We “amicably ambushed” Suzy with tickets for Ripley's Aquarium for some family fun and a spa certificate for some “me time.”



**Share your voice!** VHA is always looking to improve. Join the conversation as a Client and Family Partner and **share your ideas to make our services spectacular!**

Visit [www.vha.ca](http://www.vha.ca) or call Roseanna Wirt at 416-489-2500 ext. 4327, toll free at 1-888-314-6622 ext. 4327 for more information.