

# Employees Night

AT THE BALL GAME • JULY 27, 2023 • HUNNICUTT STADIUM • PRINCETON, WV



**Nutrition Services' Frances Weise threw out the ceremonial first pitch.**



WhistlePigs Catcher Tucker Moore with Frances Weise.

July 27, 2023: Over 450 PCH employees and family members gathered on a sweltering 88-degree evening for the annual *Employee Night at the Ball Game*, a midsummer event that celebrates the hard work and dedication of care team members at PCH, PCH Bluefield, The Behavioral Health Pavilion, and all MMG clinics.

President and CEO Karen Bowling welcomed employees and guests to the Princeton WhistlePigs vs. Johnson City Doughboys game.

The delicious evening meal was catered by *A Piece of Cake*, with drinks and desserts provided by Nutrition Services/*Mountain Thyme Cafe*.



Following the pitch, Frances was presented a bouquet of pink flowers, a symbol of cancer awareness, by President and CEO Karen Bowling.

(continued)



# First Pitch Honors go to Cancer Survivor Frances Weise

Frances Weise had a lot to celebrate during Employee Night at the Princeton WhistlePigs baseball game. Along with having the honor of throwing out the ceremonial first pitch, Frances also successfully completed treatment for cancer recently at PCH.

An employee in Nutrition Services, Frances has worked at PCH since 1998. She has become a friendly fixture in the cafeteria where she kindly greets patients, their families and visitors, and her co-workers as they pay for their meals at the cash register.

After being diagnosed with cancer last year, Frances started chemotherapy in October. She had all her treatment at PCH and completed it on April 18, 2023. She said that being able to take chemotherapy at PCH surrounded by her friends and co-workers was “awesome.”

“The nurses up in Oncology are the best...they’re still looking out for me,” she explained.

“Everybody was praying for me,” she continued, thanking them for their prayers. “All my friends, family, and co-workers were praying for me and they’re still praying. It means a lot.”

Frances is from Hiawatha and continues to live in the Mercer County community. She says her parents, Glenna and James Weise, have been a constant source of support and companionship during the ordeal of her cancer diagnosis and treatment.

The crowd at the WhistlePigs game was definitely on her side, too. With the sure and steady arm of a former high school softball player, Frances hurled out the pitch that started the contest between Princeton and the Johnson City Doughboys. Surrounded by cheering fans, Frances then accepted a bouquet of pink flowers from PCH President and CEO Karen Bowling. Her bright smile remained as she made her way off the field.



*Frances with her mother Glenna Weise.*





*President Bowling welcomed employees and thanked them for their service.*



*Cody Bragg delivered a powerful rendition of the national anthem.*







Musical Chairs, and the winner was James Boggs, director of Radiology.



## Prize Winners

- Rachel Butler: \$50 Grants Card
- Linda Steele: WVU Zero Gravity Chair
- Melissa Bowling: \$25 Outback Card
- Kristy Hamilton: Backpack Cooler
- Megan Mendoza: WVU Stadium Chair
- Becky Kanode: WVU Zero Gravity Chair
- Crystal Belcher: WVU Porch Sign
- Julie Blevins: \$50 Amazon Card
- James Boggs: \$25 Amazon Card
- Ashton Cox: \$25 Grants Card
- Samatha Choate: \$50 Grants Card
- Debra Halsey: \$25 Belk Card
- Barbara Fogus: \$50 Lowe's Card
- James Pendleton: \$100 Grants Card





# Tina Hearld, RN, BSN, Retires After 46 Years of Dedicated Service

Tina Hearld retired on July 15, 2023, after devoting 46 years of her professional career to Princeton Community Hospital.

She sat for an interview and a studio portrait a few weeks prior to her retirement.

## *Where are you from originally?*

**TH:** I am from Michigan, but I moved here at age 12. My mother was from Spanishburg, and she and my dad bought and renovated an old farmhouse adjoining my grandparents' farm. My parents were hard working and were delighted to be back in West Virginia. It was quite an adjustment, living in the country or "the holler," as we called it. It was difficult for a while without running water, indoor plumbing, or electricity. We walked about two miles to school and were paid 25 cents per day to do so, as there were no buses that traveled up our old country road.

Looking back, this was the greatest adventure of my life. It taught me to be innovative and to quickly problem solve and really value the things in life that matter most. It was a challenge to hike up the road from the school, carrying books and overseeing my younger siblings who were in grade school. My parents also owned and operated a business, a fabric shop, that was opened shortly after our move to West Virginia. I worked there for a few years in the evenings and on Saturdays. This was a wonderful and eye-opening experience. I loved the people here. West Virginians are the salt of the earth, so caring and helpful.

They are the greatest resource that we have! I never took anything for granted and developed a very strong work ethic and never again wanted to leave. This was my forever home. I had found my place.

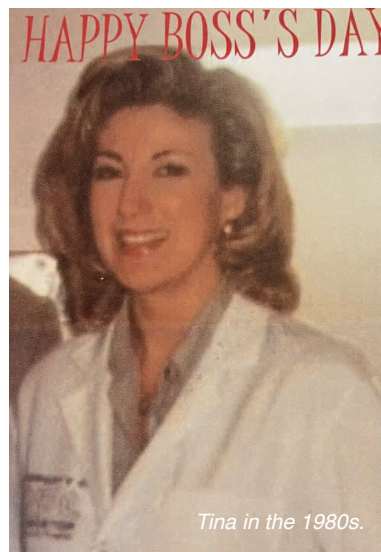
Within two years of living here, my grandfather became very sick. He was a retired coal miner and years of underground mining had ravaged his health. He was hospitalized at Princeton Community Hospital. I was involved in his care, along with other family members. I knew at that time that caretaking was in my future, and I pursued a career in nursing.

## *Where did you study nursing?*

**TH:** Bluefield State College



**Tina Hearld, RN, BSN**



*Tina in the 1980s.*



*From left, Kendra Boggess, president, Concord University; Michael Gibson, attorney; and Tina Hearld in the 1990s at a fund raiser for the Princeton Health and Fitness Center.*

*(continued)*





*From left, Christine Miller-Shrewsbury and Tina Hearld at the Princeton Health and Fitness Center after its opening in 1997. Tina chaired the Program Development Committee for the planning and construction of the center.*

Nursery and OB, then ICU/CCU, 2-West, 3-South, 3-West, and 4-East. When you graduated from nursing school, you were expected to work frequently as a charge nurse. I was young and inexperienced. I thank God for the LPNs I worked with, Grace Webb, Willie Stevenson, Janice Cecil, Shirley O'Quinn, Betty Thomason, and many others. In the nursery, we had two great LPNs, Aggie, and Ann Faulkner, who mentored us. Several nursing assistants came from the old hospital and were an important part of our team, and we all worked closely together to take care of the patients. This was a much simpler time in health care, which fostered very close working relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

From 1983 to 2008, I was the nurse manager of the Behavioral Medicine Center. The hospital recruited several psychiatrists, including Drs. Sprague, Dar, Robertson, and many others to provide behavioral health care. The program began using an interdisciplinary approach which was very team oriented and collaborative. The services grew from a 12-bed unit on 4-East, then expanded to 4-West and 2-East until moving to the The Behavioral Health Pavilion in 2010. There were many excellent physicians, licensed counselors, social workers, and nurses who laid the groundwork for future services at The Pavilion. I feel there is a need to recognize many who developed these services including Dolly Maddy, Lynda Spangler, and William Armstrong. Twyla Hersman was a wonderful role model and mentor. By working in a behavioral health field, you quickly recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships among work groups as well as families. It instills a sense of awareness and insight, sort of like enlightenment. Part of self-awareness and helping others is taking off your blinders and accepting our differences. Diversity is wonderful, and everyone has unique strengths and potential. We thrive as a team when we focus on each other's strengths and minimize or overcome weaknesses. Everyone employed at our hospital is valued and plays an important role.

I worked as a nursing supervisor on the evening and night shifts from 2008 to 2011, and then in Case Management as bed assignment coordinator. I enjoyed working with Lynn Thompson, Brenda Gross, and the CM group.

#### ***What memorable events/changes have you witnessed during your tenure?***

**TH:** Many changes and accomplishments over the years. I wish I had a camera in fast motion, especially under WVU Medicine and Karen Bowling. We are bursting at the seams and have literally outgrown the internal structure. We are reaching into different communities. I can't wait to see what has been accomplished in the next five years. Innovation and rapid changes in technology require constant staff support and reallocation of resources to stay abreast of ongoing developments. Physicians play a vital role and cooperation is essential. There is still a little unrest among those who have many years of experience in health care, as change is painful

#### ***When did you join PCH?***

**TH:** On June 5, 1976, as a summer employee. I returned in 1977 and graduated from Bluefield State as an RN in May of 1978, and earned a BSN in 1999. I have been at PCH for 46 continuous years. Ten of those years were working for Springhaven, a mental health management company.

#### ***What departments have you worked in over the years?***

**TH:** I started in the





*Behavioral Medicine Center employees surprised Tina on her birthday in the 1990s with a friendly gorilla delivering flowers.*

*From left, Gwynn Ramey-Ricks (she currently owns and operates Sister's Coffee House), Tina Hearld, Diane Miller, Denise Woolridge, Lynda Spangler, and Gregory Howard.*

but necessary. Part of this is due to COVID-19. Everyone, especially the front-line staff, all departments in hospitals and physicians took a beating. They were overwhelmed but strong, and they demonstrated incredible endurance during the pandemic. Health care may be hurting, but this is a time of healing and nurturance with thanks and recognition. It is a time of pulling in new players who have much to give as we go forward.

***Are there certain individuals that had a positive or significant impact during your career?***

**TH:** Sue Frankenfield, evening shift supervisor, always kept me grounded, especially in my early years of nursing when I had three little boys and a full-time job. Also, my friends, Marlene Martin, Sandy Counts, and Janet Shrewsbury; we still vacation together. Dinah Magyar was a great friend and nurse. I'll never forget her. Norma Luciano and Margie Belcher had a significant impact as the director and assistant director of Nursing.

***What was your favorite role at PCH?***

**TH:** Managing the psych unit for so many years.

***When will you retire?***

**TH:** July 15, 2023

***What are your interests/hobbies outside of work?***

**TH:** My grandchildren on the Hearld and Huffman side of the family can't wait for me to retire. I am their "Gigi" which, along with being a wife and mother, is one of my most valued roles. You don't know true love until you become a grandparent.

I am looking forward to family time under new management. I'm checking with the grandkids for details. I hope to return to the "holler" and spend some time on the family farm. I am rejuvenated by the outdoors and love to garden. I haven't had much time for myself. I hope that I have many adventures that await me! West Virginia has lots of playgrounds, parks and trails that are calling my name.

***Thank you, Tina, for 46 years of dedicated service to this organization! You devoted your entire professional career to Princeton Community Hospital.***

***Your knowledge and experience cannot easily be replaced.***

***You will be missed! – Thank you!***



# Former PCH Employee Will Thompson Remembered with Memorial Bridge

The life, legacy, and military service of a hometown hero have been honored in a special way in Princeton. U.S. Army SSG William Joseph “Will” Thompson, a tireless patriot, dedicated medical professional, and devoted family man, is being remembered with “an enduring memorial” by having a bridge named in his memory.

The structure, known locally as I-77 NB & SB, carrying 1-77 over County Route 20 in Mercer County, has officially been named the U.S. Army SSG William Joseph “Will” Thompson Memorial Bridge. The two section span crosses Route 20 at the highway’s intersection with Eads Mill Road.

A ceremony to dedicate the bridge was held the evening of July 19 in the Parkview Center Atrium at WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital. Members of Will’s family – including his wife, Suzanne Six-Thompson, son, Ethan Thompson, and daughter, Ava Thompson – were joined at the gathering by friends and PCH employees, among them former co-workers of the Thompsons. Both Will and Suzanne had worked at the hospital as part of the nursing staff. He was an LPN on 3-South and she worked as an RN in case management.



*U.S. Army SSG William Joseph Thompson.*

“This is where we met,” Suzanne said. “We have a lot of memories here.”

Will was born in Baltimore in 1971, but grew up in Princeton, moving here when he was two years old. He played football and ran track for the Princeton Senior High School Tigers and graduated in 1989.



*The Thompson family in 2012.*

He began his decorated military career when he enlisted in the West Virginia Army National Guard, then joined the U.S. Army in 1989 as an active duty soldier where he went on to become a combat medic. His deployments in Iraq included serving during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and at Camp Stryker near the Baghdad airport. Between deployments, SSG Thompson continued his medical service and training by working at PCH and pursuing an RN degree at Bluefield State University.

When he returned home to Princeton from his second deployment in Iraq in 2010, he was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis brought on by inhaling toxins from the burn pits and toxic dust in Iraq. Battling these respiratory problems, he was medically retired from the military in October 2012 with 23 years of service.

With this terminal diagnosis, he underwent a double lung transplant. A second double lung transplant was necessary when his body rejected the first donor lungs. Because he was taking anti-rejection medications to help keep his lungs healthy, he was more susceptible to skin cancer. Although he had multiple surgeries and treatments for cancer, he passed away from the disease in December 2021.





*From left, Dr. Joe Ellington, Suzanne Six-Thompson, Ethan Thompson, and Ava Thompson.*

“Before Will passed away, I made a promise to him that he would never be forgotten and that I would do my best to keep his name and memory alive,” Suzanne said.

Will’s primary care physician and friend, Dr. Marshall Long, proposed the idea of a memorial bridge to Suzanne Thompson as a tangible way to remember her husband. He enlisted the help of Delegate Joe Ellington, who, with the support of fellow West Virginia delegates Marty Gearheart, William Ridenour, and Doug



Smith, saw House Concurrent Resolution 42 adopted by the legislature on March 11 of this year. The resolution called for the West Virginia Division of Highways to name the bridge in memory of SSG Thompson.

Ellington read the resolution during the bridge dedication ceremony. One portion describes Will Thompson’s personality and celebrates his character.

“U.S. Army SSG William Joseph “Will” Thompson was a bright light in this world. He was a man of God and praised Him through the good times and the bad. His continued faith was an inspiration to many; he loved to make people laugh, he loved to dance, sing and have fun; he was selfless, always thinking of those in need; he was a patriot and loved serving his country and loved the American flag, saluting the one in his yard every day; he was grateful for each





*From left, Dr. Marshall Long, Dr. Joe Ellington, Suzanne Six-Thompson, Ava Thompson, and Ethan Thompson.*

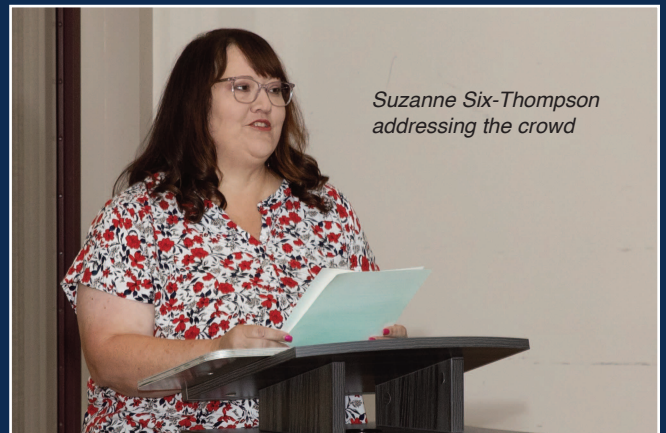
that gave him the gift of life; he was a wonderful husband, father, brother, son, combat medic, nurse and a true hero,” Ellington said.

Another entry details how SSG Thompson advocated for fellow soldiers who had been exposed to burn pits while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. He testified before the United States Congress and United States Committee on Veterans Affairs and shared his story with major news networks. Quoting from the resolution, Ellington said, “He played a pivotal role in fighting for federal legislation in what is now called the PACT Act that was passed August 10, 2022.”

Ellington presented copies of the resolution to Thompson’s family along with a sign similar to those posted along the highway near the lanes of the memorial bridge.

In her remarks, Suzanne thanked Long, Ellington, and his colleagues in the state legislature for their efforts in bringing the dream of the memorial bridge to reality.

“Dr. Ellington knew Will personally and delivered both of our babies,” she said. “This is something we will never forget.” Along with serving in the legislature, Ellington is also a practicing physician, specializing in obstetrics and gynecology. Suzanne said that naming this particular bridge in her husband’s memory is especially significant because it is “on a road we travel frequently” and will be meaningful for generations to come. With the signs now in place, Suzanne says she has already driven past to see them. “It puts a smile on my face...this way he will never be forgotten.”







*These Six and Thompson family members attended the bridge dedication ceremony.*

## Amanda Shrader Good Catch Recipient



**Congratulations to Amanda Shrader, Telemetry, the recipient of our June 2023 Good Catch Award. The Good Catch Award recognizes employees that correct a misstep or identify a better way of performing a task in the workplace. Thank you, Amanda, for your outstanding work!**

*The award was presented July 20. From left, Tim Anderson, CNO; Amanda Shrader; Karen Bowling, president and CEO; and Helena Griffith, RN, BSN, ONC, nurse director of 3-South and Central Telemetry.*



# Anita Bowling, RN, BSN, Retires After Nearly 46 Years of Outstanding Service

Anita Bowling, RN, BSN, retired on June 30, 2023, after devoting 45 years and nine months to providing the best possible care to the patients at Princeton Community Hospital. Anita was the last nurse at PCH who continued to wear the traditional white uniform and nurse's hat.

Anita began her nursing career on September 11, 1977, on the 3-West 36-bed orthopedic unit. She spent 33 years and three months on that unit before moving to 2-West med-surg in January 2011. She worked 2-West until her retirement.

Anita said, "I have been married to my high school sweetheart Gene Bowling for 49 years. Our only son Greg is 42 years old. Both Gene and Greg have been very supportive of me during my career. PCH has been my home and family away from home and family. I do appreciate and will truly miss each one of the many people I have worked with for so many years.

"I enjoyed my nursing career very much, working closely with patients and the many intelligent and caring doctors. I also valued the teamwork with coworkers, the nurse managers over the years, and the supervisors.

"Now, my retirement plan is to enjoy each day God gives me to the fullest."



**Anita Bowling, RN, BSN**



*Anita receiving her 45-year service award certificate last year from President Bowling.*

***Thank you, Anita, for nearly 46 years of outstanding dedication to your patients and to this organization!  
You devoted your entire professional career to PCH and it is appreciated beyond measure.  
Your knowledge and experience cannot easily be replaced.***

***You will be missed! – Thank you!***