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United Way of York County honors Bonnie Ferrence through Essence of Humanity Award Program

York, Pa. (September, 2008) – The United Way of York County has honored Bonnie Ferrence, a Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Hospice nurse who resides in Spring Grove, Pa., with the Essence of Humanity Award. She was nominated for the award by the VNA of Hanover and Spring Grove because of her many commitments to her community.

The Essence of Humanity Award is intended to recognize individuals who, beyond the requirements of their work, demonstrate remarkable human qualities including courage, love, strength, determination, and persistence when dealing with adversity. The award also honors those who demonstrate a spirit of caring and provide inspiration to such individuals on a daily basis.

Bonnie has worked as a registered nurse for more than thirty years. She also has provided significant support to a mentally handicapped man whose family could no longer provide care for him. For more than 30 years, Bonnie has helped him with finances, housing, and employment.

Bonnie also has volunteered for 25 years at the Pleasant Hill Christian School. Kenneth Nell, principal of Pleasant Hill, explained, “She comes faithfully and administers health screenings for all the children in the school each and every year.”

Bonnie’s mission of caring also extends to those suffering with cancer or ill health. A friend noted, “Even though she works every day as a VNA Hospice Nurse, Bonnie never seems to suffer the burnout so common in helping professions. A lot of people leave their jobs at the end of the day and say, ‘I’m done,’ but Bonnie keeps on giving. Every single day she provides goodness.”

Bonnie also prepares meals for the Rescue Mission in York several times a year. She recently became a board member of Cross Keys Village, the Brethren Home Community. “She is a natural born caregiver and knows the need to focus on the individual,” said Vernon King, director at Cross Keys Village. “She helps to remind the board and staff of that. Her deep understanding of health care, quality of life issues, and the importance of community is invaluable.”

About Essence of Humanity

There seems to be consensus that as a culture, we often can’t identify enough role models. The intent of the Essence of Humanity Award is to elevate the stories of the inspirational role models that indeed do exist in our communities. The program began in 2001 when business and community leaders in South-Central Pennsylvania established the Essence of Humanity Award. The award is presented by participating organizations in collaboration with the Essence of Humanity program’s steering committee, which evaluates the nominations. For more information, contact Robin Stauffer, Executive Director, at 717-293-4498, or visit the website at www.essenceofhumanity.org.

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