

Biography for Janice L. Pearson – February 2014

Born April 28, 1961 and Deceased July 27, 2013

Previous to Rhetech – Janice was born in the Detroit area, graduated from High School from the Livonia school system, achieved an undergraduate degree from Northern Michigan University (English and History – the first in her family) and had many part-time jobs that helped her pay for her college degree. These included long summers in Yosemite National Park doing everything and anything related to the restaurant business.

Rhetech History – hired on September 8, 1986 while still living with her parents on Pontiac Trail in South Lyon. She was working part-time in operations as a Raw Material Inventory Analyst for Jerry Craig. After a 90 day evaluation that was positive (lots of output but too many mistakes), she also started doing production control work with work orders.

She continued working on inventory and costing for Jerry Craig until John Levinson was hired as the CFO in July 1987 after that time, she began to work full-time for accounting – an area that she had no experience or background in. Therefore, the company supported continuing education for her in basic accounting courses and computer courses at Cleary College. She showed competency in both of these areas with “A’s” in all these courses.

Her accomplishments on the job were as impressive as the educational success. She was personally responsible for many personal goals but also played a significant role in other Rhetech team goals. Things like the Sterling Scale Bar Code Inventory system, the in-house Basic Four computer systems and cost accounting for each machine (getting rid of the standard “DIME” per pound cost) were some of the tasks that she contributed to on a very high level of participation. Some of these early accomplishments seem normal or unremarkable to the modern Rhetech employees now but they were state of the art at the time and not just at Rhetech.

In February 1990, Janice was promoted to an exempt salary employee with the title Cost Analyst – no longer was she just someone to fill in numbers and burn up the calculator. She was now moving into a position that required analyzing and doing. Shortly after this promotion – she was reassigned to Inventory Control Analyst in full charge of all of the Sterling Scale systems due to the unexpected resignation of Sperry Hunt. In this too, she flourished as was independently praised for her contributions by then VP of Manufacturing Kojo Afenyi-Annan in several unsolicited notes to her file.

It was during this time that some of her earliest interest in Human Resources was revealed. In 1990-1991, Janice developed a data base maintaining the hourly attendance records while supervising all of the Sterling Scale operations, training the new cost analyst and working many hours in the plant during the Teamster Union strike in 1991. During this time she continued a common practice for Janice – she took several computer information courses/seminars to continue her education and add value to Rhetech.

There are several themes so far that should be really easy to discern – a thirst for education with the intelligence the will to carry it out. Janice was always involved in learning and trying to increase her value to the company. She volunteered for many assignments and gladly accepted others as they were handed to her. She was rewarded for this attitude and effort with a promotion to Supervisor Inventory and Cost Analysis in April of 1994. This for many people would have been the culmination of their career – but not Janice. She continued to move forward with her education on the computer side of her job. The results of her education and skill were evident in the first computerized IMR system that was completed in 1995. In addition, she even became a certified Novell Network Administrator and all this while she furthered her movement into Human Resources by taking over the salary medical benefits administration from the Troy office in 1996.

The following years were quite busy for Rhetech and Janice continued to contribute more than her fair share of the load. She worked on the truck scale project and the introduction of inventory control process at the then NEW PLANT 2 in Fowlerville, she was a team leader on the QS9000 project team, she developed a data base program for salary time sheet history, she designed a new computerized work order system, participated in the Navision project team, implemented a real time Radio Frequency inventory systems and many other notable accomplishments. She continued to enhance her skills with seminars and courses such as Microsoft Access, COBRA seminars for salary benefit administration, HIPPA mandated upgrades on Human Resource documents, Substance Abuse Certification, CPR Training, and many others.

Over the next several years, she took over salary payroll, 401(K) administration and many other Human Resource functions. The assumption of these duties allowed Darrin Wagner to spend much more time on Information Technology items to help the whole Rhetech Team do more with less.

During the significant Ownership and Management changes of 2007, Janice was given additional responsibilities as Director of Human Resources and Inventory & Cost Manager and she took over all of the Union/Management issues including the contracts that were approved in November 2007 and November 2011.

She was a great leader in the do more with less, environment that we faced during the Great Recession of 2008/2009. Janice took a high visibility leadership role and contributed greatly to the SURVIVE AND THRIVE management theme for this severe crisis. This included some very difficult assignments such as termination of some very good long-term Rhetech employees. She was also able to find ways to keep our benefits mostly intact. This caused her to work many additional hours and to help Management find and promote persons that could do the job with fewer resources than previously thought possible. She stayed upbeat professional and generally kept a very positive attitude during these extremely hard times.

All of these things and many more led to her final promotion in April of 2012 – Vice President Human Resources. This was truly a self-made woman that looked for and then took the opportunities offered to her. The most amazing part of this whole story is how she was always learning and educating herself to find more and different opportunities. Therefore, it was a very logical step to attempt to honor her

memory and to pass on her spirit and will for success story. This is why we have established the Janice L. Pearson Scholarship Fund for Rhetechnology employee's children – so that others may gain from her trailblazing in the past.

Thank you for your interest and investment in the future through Janice's memory and example.

John T. Levinson

President and Chief Financial Officer and most of all her Friend and Co-Worker