



Louise Jones, interim President and CEO of Eastern Health.

Supper Time with Louise Jones

The Telegram, February 17th, 2009

Louise Jones is one strong woman. The eldest of eight children born in St. John's, Louise has risen to many challenges in life. Louise recalls an active and engaged childhood and teen years where community service and involvement was encouraged by her parents. She was a Girl Guide and Ranger and developed a love of music and singing.

When getting ready to leave high school, at the tender age of sixteen, Louise thought she would become a secretary. She laughs her vibrant laugh when she tells me "my father told me to make another choice". She made a good one and chose nursing. After a couple of years as a volunteer at the former Grace General Hospital, and lots of exposure to a hospital environment, Louise entered Memorial University to study nursing. There she completed a Bachelor's of Nursing degree, and later in life received an MBA, again from Memorial, but she still strongly identifies as a nurse.

After some years of front-line nursing, Louise took on roles of increasing and significant responsibility. In her early thirties she became Director of Nursing at the Grace where her team where nurses senior to her in experience and age. There with her team she promoted the growth and empowerment of her sister nurses. A few years later, and just a few months after

the birth of daughter Alana, she returned to work and became the acting administrator of the Grace Hospital.

From there Louise was chosen by Sister Elizabeth Davis to be part of the senior management team for the then-newly amalgamated Health Care Corporation of St. John's. There she was mentored and encouraged by Sister Elizabeth to trust her knowledge and instincts and not be afraid to make and learn from mistakes.

When I asked Louise what it is in her work that sustains her, she acknowledges the competence and dedication of people within Eastern Health like Colleen Simms, regional director of mental health and addictions, and her senior executive team. She has also valued opportunities to mentor and assist staff achieve their maximum potential.

When asked what sustains her in her personal life, Louise acknowledges a loving and supportive husband and family, a number of close personal friends who she can count on for support whenever needed, the family dog who is her walking companion every morning to help keep her stress level under control, and again with that vibrant laugh she says, "my mother's cherry cake". Louise also mentioned regular Friday night visits that she and husband, David, make to her parents home, where I suspect she begins the weekend re-charging of her batteries.

We are all always stronger when the people close to us support and love us unconditionally.

Geoff Chaulk
St. John's