

## 2009 Women of the Year Nominee Summary Speech

The display boards, articles in the local newspaper, and the programs barely dent the surface of the many accomplishments of each of these individuals. These women are wonderfully dynamic and they are inspirational in the way they live their lives, their philosophies and the contributions they have made to our communities.

So, who are these incredible woman that others saw as a worthy woman of the year nominee, we decided to delve a little more into just who are they: each nominee was asked a list of questions and it is our pleasure to unveil some more truths about each of these women: these questions and answers in no way influenced the outcome of the judges decision as the questions were put forward to the nominees over the long weekend.  
The recipients were announced at the end.

This Leo inspired to become the type of person that she remembers her own Mom to be, the kind of mom who loves to play with her children and so when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up it was only natural that the answer was A MOM.

And not only was her mom's love for her children an inspiration when asked who she respects the most, of course her mom and yes even her mother-in-law were her choices. She describes them as being two strong women for different reasons.

Keeping with the mom and family theme, it was not a surprise that her favourite activities include spontaneous family activities that involve projects and people, and having her friends and their families over to her house for dinner.

This finalist believes her greatest strength is patience and perseverance and her ultimate goal is to make her family stronger, the community tighter and herself grounded.

When asked about the most important events in her life, she quite confidently states in chronological order; being accepted to the U Vic MEd program, running my first half marathon, getting married and having children.

Things that make her laugh: that she's actually made it to the end of the day AND Bill Cosby and the five things she can't live without

a sense of belonging, friendship, loving another, inner peace, and a great consignment shop!  
This dynamic finalist that doesn't like going to sleep in a bed with the bed sheets tucked tightly in is **Cynthia Higgins**.

This nominee can't live without Pets, books, friends, family, and gummy bears which explains why her favourite activities include trail walking with her dog, hanging with her friends and as she says reading, reading, and more reading... probably chomping on a stash full of gummy bears as she flips through the pages of her latest book.

Divorced with no children, this Libra's earliest memory is walking up what seemed like an endless staircase to meet her headmistress – she was four at the time. Having wanting to be a psychologist when she grew up she recognizes that her biggest quirk is when people are late.

When asked her greatest strength, she not only said self-sufficiency but ENORMOUS self-sufficiency followed by "I also think this is my greatest weakness!"

While she is still waiting for the most important event in her life to occur her ultimate goal is to live a well lived life surrounding herself with people who are loyal and make her laugh with their own dry wit.

This gummy bear loving self-sufficient nominee is **Maggie Calloway**.

At the age of nine, this nominee proudly announced to her horrified Mother that she wanted to be a tomboy when she grew up. Roller skating and romping around outdoors was too much fun at the time to consider doing anything else. Later, she admitted she wanted to care for children and did that for six years... but when she finally grew up she recognized her true passion and followed that.

Her earliest memory was having her picture taken with her sister on the lawn outside their heritage home, while dressed in their fancy Easter outfits. She now admits that that's what triggered her love of fashion!

This nominee enjoys horseback riding, reading, sewing and throwing dinner parties and of course shopping and so it makes sense when asked what five things that she could not live without, a shopping mall was right up there on her list.

Other goodies she can't live without: Family, good books, chocolate, and earplugs (apparently her husband snores).

She respects her family members the most with her greatest strength being her work ethic. And her ultimate goal is to be respected and appreciated for the work that she does. Being a Gemini, the sign of the Twins, explains why this dual-natured, elusive, complex and contradictory personality of this nominee totally confounds her where she can be very social at one point and a complete loner/hermit the next and yet the oddities of human behaviour makes her laugh.

Oh, and her true passion: she always had a concern for the natural environment and wanted to do something that involved caring for it, which led her to get involved in the environmental

movement, then politics, which also involves her balancing her concern for economic and social issues as well.

Most important event in my life: Aside from the obvious answers like birth of her daughter and her marriage, the fight to defeat SE2 was the most important event in her life as it really forced her to step up and be her best self.

If you haven't figured it out, this finalist is **Patricia Ross**.

When asked what this nominee wanted to be when she grew up, she told a little white lie only because she wanted people to stop asking her what she wanted to be. So instead of saying "I don't know" she said a nurse. Apparently it worked, because soon they stopped asking.

This Aries with Leo rising admits that she can't drink more than two cups of coffee per day because it makes her jumpy, laughs loudly at the movies and screams at the scary ones. She reads two newspapers per day and wears clip on earrings even though she's had her ears pieced three times.

Her earliest memory is looking up at her mother and grandmother from her crib, we take it you were a baby at the time... and speaking of babies the birth of both her sons was the most important event in this special ladies life.

And who does she respect the most, those two ladies that she looked up to from her crib, her mother and grandmother. These individuals endured hardship and sacrifice, they were strong, indomitable women, who she admires tremendously.

This nominee loves family meals and occasions, sharing a good meal and good conversations with friends; walking her dogs, reading a good book and walking on any beach but especially Tofino.

She says she laughs easily. . at situational humour, funny movies, Russell Peters, Rowan Atkinson, and my kids. Friends, children, family members all make her laugh when they are all together.

Greatest strength:

Intentionality. she envisions what she wants to accomplish and then sets about making that intention real. And her ultimate goal: to be a happy grandmother...

With the five things she can't live without:

Computer, Dishwasher, Washing machine, Car and books

This remarkable finalist is: **Madeleine Hardin**

Joanne: Her friend Irene is the person she respects the most and the important event in her life is climbing mountains with her husband.

When she wanted to grow up, she too wanted to be a nurse but this Cancer had other things happen that took into the field that involves one of her favourite pastimes – books!

Her other favourite activities include walking and swimming and the thing that makes her laugh most is a good evening with friends.

Take this nominee back to her earliest memory: she fondly remembers sitting in the back garden of the Vancouver house where she grew up, eating raspberries.

Her greatest strength is perseverance and survival is her ultimate goal, so far she's done a pretty good job at it!

She admits that she remembers people's phone numbers using the Dewey Decimal System, now is that a quirk or a very talented lady!

And the other four items that she can't live without besides books is immersion in water, music, laughter and her community.

This amazing nominee is: **Elspeth Bowers.**

We imagine that it's a good thing that this nominee likes to hike and run because her other favourite activities include cooking and drinking wine, entertaining, reading, traveling and gardening.

Even though she didn't become the doctor that she said she wanted to be when she grew up, having and caring for four daughters is just as hectic, stressful and rewarding as being an MD.

As a Capricorn, known for their honesty in their criticism of self and putting their families and/or their work before their own needs, this nominee respects people who have made a difference and make their lives count as well as lives a life of integrity that inspires others to believe in themselves.

Her earliest memory is of learning to tie her shoes which may have taught her to laugh at an early age because when asked what makes her laugh, the response was a lot of things including hanging out with people who have wit and a sense of humour.

While her quirk is that she enjoys cleaning and organizing, (if she would like to stay behind

and help us clean up at the end of the evening that would certainly be appreciated!) she also believes her greatest strength is her ability to see the positive in every situation.

And finally the five things that she can't live without: travel, love, learning, fun, being active and the outdoors

This positively honest nominee is: **Donna Bernard.**

It was one early Christmas morning and as this nominee peered around the Christmas tree she could see a little doll. With anticipation she assumed that it was her's, her very first doll. But her grandfather said it wasn't so, that that dolly was for him not her. That of course was not true as her grandmother scolded her grandfather for teasing her as she handed her the doll.

Following in the footsteps of her father she at first wanted to be a commercial artist but as she reached her teens, those dreams left and she switched.

Meeting her husband and having her children ranked high on her most important events in her life and now it's her grandchildren that inspire and make her laugh the most. Her ultimate goal is to live long enough to see her grandchildren currently ages three to 11 become adults.

Her five things she can't live without certainly relate to her favourite activities, books and reading, family, friends and travel, live theatre, especially musicals and laughter.

This nominators more often than not described her as non-judgemental and she herself believes that it is her greatest strength and when asked who she respect the most, it's the founder of the Go Go's Stephan Lewis.

So what is this Gemini's quirk that she could tell us: she collects teddy bears, too many to keep track. She adds, of course the winter bears are put away for the summer season.

This remarkable nominee is: **Arlene Kropp.**

So imagine watching your older brother in red shorts getting chased and pecked by the family rooster, this nominee didn't have to imagine it, it was her older brother and not only was it her earliest memory she apparently found it quite funny!

Aquarians, known as the Water Carriers, for being friendly and humanitarians, honest and loyal, original and inventive as well as independent and intellectual, similar words to what was described by her nominators.

However, like everything, there is the other side of the coin and this finalist also describes herself as a neat freak, have to be on time come hell or high water, follow me or eat my dust, dress with clothes/ accessories matching, little patience with process, and the need to know 'why are we doing this again?'

Even though she wanted to be a teacher when she grew up, (we suspect it would have been a history teacher) since some of her favourite activities include exploring historic areas, seaside towns/village, museums, agri tourism and wineries with her hubby and hunting for antiques and art.

Maybe it's doing what she's currently doing for a living because also included in her favourite activities was leisure afternoon high tea listening to classic or soft music, going to live theatre, opera, shopping; (big sigh) Good coffee over stimulating conversation and lots of laughs with friends or family; Enjoying a day at community fairs, parks, outdoor activities or theatre with the grandkids, then taking them to Birchwood Dairy for ice cream.

And finally, volunteering at only FUN events with only FUN individuals!!

This nominee's most important event in her life involved immigrating as a large family from a third world country to Canada, the land of milk and honey, at least that's what we thought; and at 21, experiencing one of the many wars between Israel and Lebanon in Beirut.

Who do you respect the most: My late father, my hubby who humours me and Lee Laccoca.

What makes you laugh: Politicians, family pranks, great sitcoms and the grand kids.

Greatest strength: A sucker for being organized, always completing what I start to the best of my ability, and laughing at myself.

Ultimate goal: To always have fun, be excited about what I'm doing...and live life without too many regrets, ha, ha!

Five things you can't live without:

Decadent desserts, crazy family and friends, jogging, work, fashionable clothes - lots of them!

This crazily busy nominee who has so many favourite activities is: **Ingrid Epp.**