

BANNERLINE

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RE: Crime Stoppers International "Civilian of the Year Award"

Nomination of Shirley Stocker

I understand that Shirley Stocker is being proposed as a candidate for the Crime Stoppers International "Civilian of the Year Award". It is a privilege for me to endorse this nomination.

As a witness to the founding of Crimestoppers in British Columbia, I was honoured to be asked to make this contribution. No one was more instrumental in the evolution of Crimestoppers International in this province. When Crimestoppers was in its infancy worldwide, she played the lead role in introducing Greg MacAleese, the Canadian-born Albuquerque, N.M., police officer who founded the international movement, to B.C. audiences and justice leaders.

Her enthusiasm from the outset came at a price: many of us involved in the justice system through long careers, including senior police officers, penologists, lawyers and judges, characterized the fledgling organization as "the fink line," sarcastically predicting it would result only in a circus of valuable police officers being consumed by chasing their own tails.

Ms. Stocker and the earliest of directors were undeterred and they went on to assist in achieving what can only be described as a triumph.

Crimestoppers has been but one of her professional pursuits within the Justice system. She has produced live broadcasts from penal institutions, countless numbers of justice and police initiatives and related activities. She was a key planner and communicator for the Pacific Rim Money Laundering Conference in Vancouver during the year 2000., which attracted forensic accounting and criminal fraud experts from around the world.

I have known and worked with Ms. Stocker since 1974, when she left CBC to work with my team on CKNW's open line program. Few people have had such a profound impact on the broadcast industry in this province, and even fewer have so effectively used whatever influence media prominence accords, for the greater good of those within society who can least help themselves.

Her work for Crimestoppers must be viewed within the context of a distinguished career. For example:

- The prominence of women in broadcasting today is in stark contrast to what existed when my career began in the mid-1960s. There were very few women in media and those who succeeded were usually confined to the so-called "women's pages" focused on fashion, cooking or the arts. It has been a highlight of my own career to have known and worked with some of the pioneers whose success enabled a generation of women to thrive in mainstream public affairs. Among these were Shirley Stocker of CKNW and Betty Kennedy of CFRB in Toronto. There were several others of distinction, including the current Governor General of Canada and Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. The road they travelled in the early days was usually rather rocky.
- As a broadcaster, Shirley Stocker's leadership has been extraordinary. She pioneered radio consumer affairs reporting on both CBC and CKNW, frequently confronted by advertisers and broadcast managers who were unaccustomed to having commercial enterprises criticized on air. She never wavered when she felt the facts supported her arguments. Her work frequently put an end to fraudulent practices in the marketplace. As her role evolved from a pure on-air reporter to a producer, she ultimately became responsible for all of CKNW's talk radio programs and remote broadcasts such as leadership conventions. In this capacity, as well as an advisory role with BCIT's broadcasting and journalism programs, she trained hundreds of young people for media work, many of whom are now considered to be "stars."
- Her charity work is legendary: the organizer of the CKNW Orphans Fund "Pledge Day", an annual radio-a-thon, for more than 25 years, she has been instrumental in raising millions for needy children. She has been the administrator of this fund since 1998. Ms. Stocker has been an active director and behind-the-scenes worker with Variety Club, including production responsibilities with the annual telethon.

I trust the emphasis of this letter on lifetime achievement does not distract from the consideration of Shirley Stocker's work for Crimestoppers within a narrower slice of history.

In my view, any year would do.

Sincerely,

Gary Bannerman
President