



South Okanagan
Similkameen
Medical Foundation

December 12, 2018

PRH nurse remembered by her Summerland family

Raksha Rikhi's nursing career at Penticton Regional Hospital lasted more than 30 years.

Now her husband, Ramesh Rikhi and family have donated \$60,000 in her memory to PRH.

Raksha and Ramesh were both born in India and moved together to England in 1971, before immigrating to Canada and the South Okanagan two years later. Raksha worked for 33 years as a registered nurse in the medical and surgical departments at PRH.

She was one of the first women of Indian descent to work in the hospital. Besides her regular duties, she often assisted recent immigrants with translation and helped them understand and navigate the medical system. Through her work, she developed many close relationships and friendships in the community.

Raksha was diagnosed with cancer in 2007 – just one year after retiring from PRH. Although doctors had initially only given her a few months to live, she survived another five years before passing away in August 2012.

Now Ramesh, and their children Jyoti, Neil and Nisha who all grew up in Summerland, are honouring Raksha with their donation to the South Okanagan Similkameen Medical Foundation to help provide medical equipment for the PRH expansion.

Jyoti described her mother as generous, kind, and supportive.

"Her work and our family were both important to her. She preferred to work the night shift at the hospital so she could be home for us when we got back from school," Jyoti said.

Ramesh noted PRH is so meaningful to everyone in the family because it's where Raksha worked.

"It is also such an important resource for the entire community especially during critical times such as during illness or injury, and from birth to the end of life," he said. "I know Raksha would have been thrilled that we were able to make a contribution towards the hospital's expansion."

Ramesh obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in political science and economics and then a Master's Degree in political science in India, before moving to the UK. He built and sold his first house in 1976 and today owns a well established real estate development firm. He served for 17 years as a public appointee to the Real Estate Council of BC and sat as director on the board of Valley First and later First West Credit Union.

Ramesh was elected in 1996 to a term on Summerland municipal council. He is also a farmer and owns orchards in Summerland and businesses in the food and beverage sector.

The new tower at PRH will open for patients on April 29, 2019.

Photo cutline: Well-known Summerland resident Ramesh Rikhi (holding his granddaughter Zara Raksha Gill) is remembering his wife Raksha with a \$60,000 donation to Penticton Regional Hospital. Joining him

are daughters Nisha Rikhi-Gill (left), Jyoti, and son Neil. Raksha Rikhi, who worked as a registered nurse at PRH for 33 years, passed away in 2012.