

ISSUE XIX | SPRING 2024

OCEANFRONT NAVIGATOR

Our seasonal lifestyle newsletter focuses on finding fulfilment in our daily lives and optimizing our **Return On Life™**.

JANET WOOD

An inspirational tech leader...

**JANET'S ADVICE
FOR ANYONE
PURSUING A
CAREER IN TECH**

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Check out
all of Janet's
travel photos
inside this
issue!

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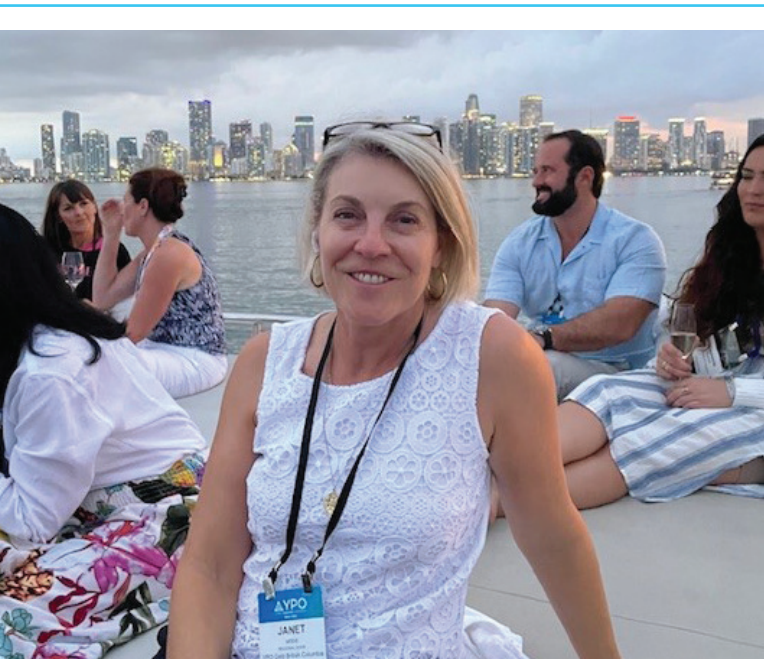
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WEALTH INC.

**"YOU'RE ONLY
HERE FOR A
SHORT VISIT.
DON'T HURRY.
DON'T WORRY.
AND BE SURE
TO SMELL
THE FLOWERS
ALONG THE
WAY."**

-WALTER HAGEN

In this **Spring 2024** edition of OceanFront Navigator, we are proud to feature our client **JANET WOOD** and share her unique and successful life journey to becoming a female trailblazer in the tech industry and achieving a financially secure and personally fulfilling transition into the next phase of life.



Janet at a Conference in Miami

"Humble beginnings forced Janet to learn the importance of being smart with money early on in her life."

Janet deeply values her **freedom and independence**, and her success is a testament to her ability to remain true to those values over time. These values have guided her across the years, helping her to make informed decisions that positively shaped her career and personal life. She continues to embrace these core values as she embarks on her post-work life journey.

Janet's values were ingrained in her early years. Her parents immigrated to Canada by ship from Ireland, and she recalls her father saying that sometimes the only money they had was the change in their pockets - literally. They had very little, and these humble beginnings forced Janet to learn the importance of being smart with money early on in her life. She knew that living within her means would allow her to be independent and live life in a way that would allow her more freedom in the long run.

Earning a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Alberta, Janet began her career at IBM in Edmonton in 1984 and was transferred to Vancouver in 1989.

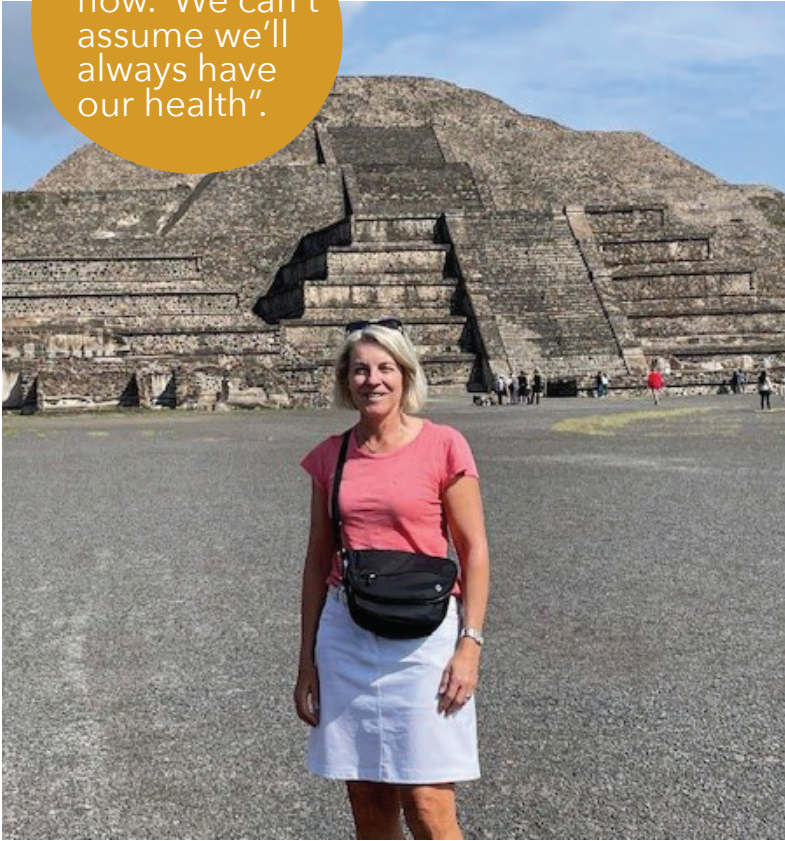
The IBM of the 80s was the Google or Apple of today and was a mecca for programmers and coders.

While Janet was passionate about tech, she wasn't interested in the typical tech roles like coding and development and instead was drawn to various sales and management positions.

JANET'S PERSPECTIVE

*A passion for taking on challenges
and making a difference*

"Let's start travelling now. We can't assume we'll always have our health".



Janet in Mexico City



Janet in Berlin

She wanted to take on challenges that would make a difference. Her talents and interest in the tech business allowed her to secure various management positions over 16 years at the company. **After IBM, she held senior positions at several tech firms, including SAP**, which is the world's leading enterprise resource planning software vendor. Janet's roles at these firms included sales, talent/leadership development and strategic partnerships.

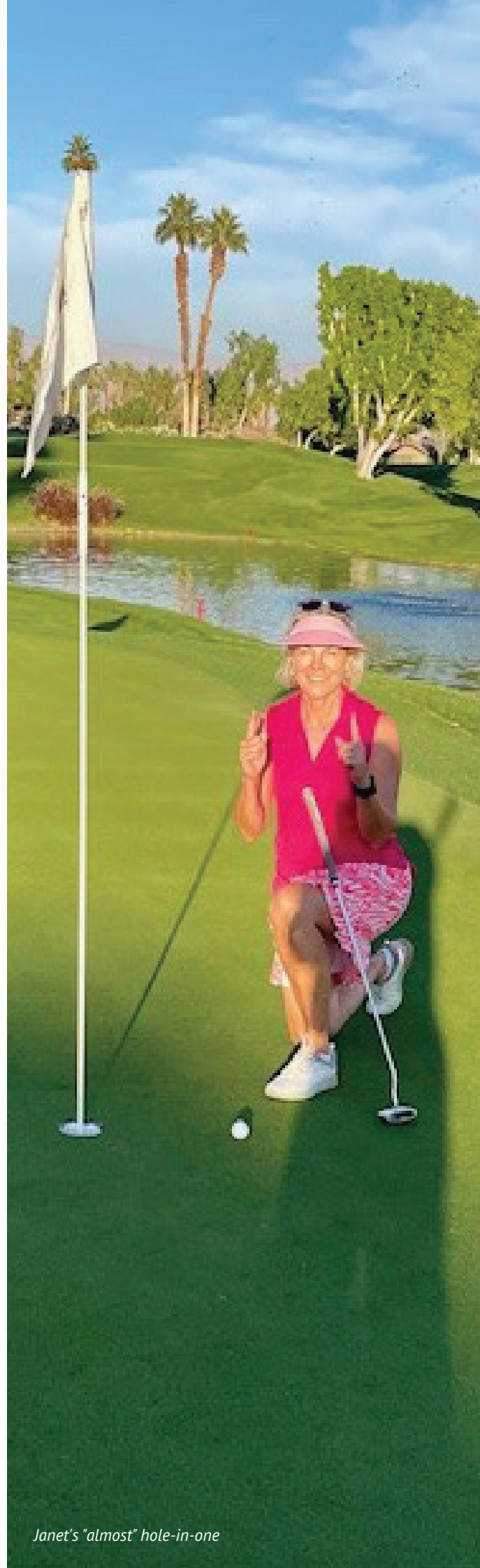
Throughout her career, **Janet preferred to take on challenges that others wouldn't touch.** She wanted to make a difference, and gravitated towards problem areas to help turn them around. She says, "I wanted to take on things that were not working well and make them better, rather than going into something that was working perfectly and getting told not to mess it up." She notes that, especially in the beginning, **the tech industry was largely male-centered** and many times she would find herself to be the only woman in business meetings. It wasn't ever something she noticed though, and she didn't feel that it impacted her in a negative way.

She recalls a conversation with a colleague after a call once who commented that she had been very quiet - she was always more of a listener in these meetings, noting actions to follow up on after the call, than a vocal contributor. However, after she received that feedback, she made sure to never leave her colleagues wondering why she was in a meeting and to make her contributions known. **It was important input in developing her unique and supportive leadership style.**

"Never leave a meeting and have people wonder why you were there".

One piece of advice Janet passes on to those individuals who are early in their career is "never leave a meeting and have people wonder why you were there".

Janet's advice to anyone pursuing a career in the tech sector is to realize **there is a real need for people who can understand technology** and apply it in a way that helps customers, and to understand that many different roles exist, from marketing to HR to finance and sales. She says to think more broadly and be open to new challenges and opportunities.



Janet's "almost" hole-in-one

"Janet's found fulfillment and a sense of purpose by doing board and volunteer work."



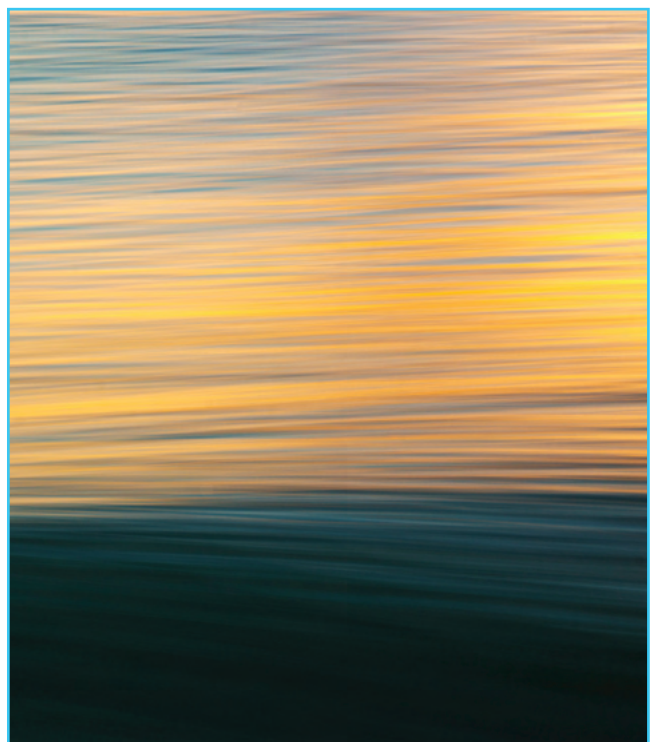
Janet & David in Porto, Portugal

Janet retired from SAP in 2019 after a highly successful career as a tech executive, living in Germany for 2 ½ years and holding several senior global leadership positions. She then had an unexpected opportunity to utilize her considerable business acumen and leadership skills to take on a new challenge. She was offered the position of **Interim President and CEO of Science World** in Vancouver while a global search was conducted for the role. She recalls that her immediate response was,

"I said no at first because I had just retired, and the weather was beautiful!"

But after meeting with Science World staff and understanding the incredible mandate of the organization, she accepted the position. She served for one year and afterward became a supporter and faithful donor to Science World.

Janet then chose to fully transition to the next phase of life. She thought the change would be difficult since she would no longer be part of a team or lead people. However, she found fulfillment and a sense of purpose by doing board and volunteer work. She is also enjoying being active playing pickleball, going to the gym and continuing to work on her golf game



A quote that has always resonated with Janet is from Sheryl Sandberg, former COO of Facebook: **“The most important career decision you will ever make is who you choose as a life partner.** You need to have a supportive partner to help balance work and home life”. Janet has always had that support from her husband, David, who she acknowledges has also been incredibly important in her transition from work-life to post-work life.



Janet & David, cycling trip in the Duoro River Valley, Portugal.



Janet & David's home in Palm Desert

One of their passions is travelling and they want to do it now while they still can. She remembers saying to herself, "Let's start travelling now. We cannot assume that we'll always have our health".

Upcoming adventures include a trip to London and Scotland this year and a cruise/golf trip to the UK next summer. **She wants to take trips and enjoy her financial freedom**, something her parents never did. Janet reflects that her parents were very careful with their money. She says, "Looking back I wish they'd spent more on themselves while they were both healthy."

Janet and David want to use their fruits of their hard work for fun things

- things her parents didn't get to do that she wishes they did and that she hopes her parents would have found joy in.

When they aren't travelling, Janet and David enjoy spending time with family and friends at their lovely home in Palm Desert. It's a place they can relax, stay active and enjoy good food and wine.

They look forward to many more shared experiences there in the future.

Janet's career accomplishments and personal life have exceeded her expectations. **She is proud to have become an inspirational female leader in the tech space** and a model for other women. She is especially grateful for the support received from OceanFront in helping her achieve financial freedom. Maximizing this kind of Return on Life is what the OFW Team strives to help clients achieve.



THANK YOU

We hope you have enjoyed our spring edition of the Navigator featuring **Janet Wood** and her empowering journey into retirement.

We look forward to connecting with you in our next edition of the Navigator.