



Blood Bank of Alaska
Helping Alaska patients in need



Find Your Reason to Donate Today **Recipient Stories: Bunny Beeman**

When Bunny Beeman first began working at Blood Bank of Alaska in 1999, she knew that blood donation was a great mission to support. She first became a blood donor in 1976, at the age of forty and always encouraged others to give it a try. Bunny was an integral part of Blood Bank of Alaska, where she organized the Annual Donor Picnic and other donor luncheons. She oversaw the Gal-loneer program, handling the updating of the certificates and persuading local businesses to provide in-kind donations for our loyal blood donors. When she left Blood Bank of Alaska in 2009 she was greatly missed.

She left to enjoy retirement with her husband. A short time later she received some surprising news during a routine colonoscopy exam. While discussing the results of her test with her doctor she realized she had additional symptoms. Bunny, "I told my doctor that I had a tightness near my rib cage and he immediately recommended I see Dr. Hope for further examination." It was during this additional exam that she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

Ovarian cancer does not always have obvious symptoms before being diagnosed. Bunny recalls, "Well I knew that I was experiencing GERD and that I could feel an expansion in my rib cage – sort of a bloating and discomfort. I really didn't have many noticeable symptoms." Bunny would begin her treatment in the summer of 2011, going through six rounds of chemotherapy and surgery to treat the ovarian cancer.

Many cancer patients that undergo chemotherapy find that they need blood transfusions because the treatments deplete their platelet counts. In

many cases this causes anemia. Bunny, "After the chemo treatments I was short of breath. I mean I would stand at the kitchen counter holding on gasping for breath. " The doctors recommended that she receive two blood transfusions in order to regain the oxygen supply to her blood. "Immediately after I had the blood transfusions I noticed a difference – cancer took my breath away, but the blood transfusions gave it back," remarks Bunny.

The connection between blood donation and cancer treatment is sometimes overlooked. Her personal experience of receiving blood to treat the side effects of her cancer was magnified by her years of service with Blood Bank of Alaska. Bunny is extremely grateful for the generosity of others. Every blood donor makes a difference in the lives of others by ensuring that the supply is available when others need their help.

Call 222-5630 to schedule your appointment today.