

# Giving keeps us connected

Annette Bloch (left) greets Dr. Karen Kelly, deputy director of the KU Cancer Center.



We often hear that we're all connected. One action by one person can trigger another one, and this can cause a ripple effect felt by thousands of people.

The act of one donor caused me to reflect on this phenomenon.

You may have heard of Annette Bloch's extraordinary \$20 million gift to benefit The University of Kansas Hospital's cancer program. What motivates someone like her to give? What I hear time and again from donors is that they had an intense personal experience that changed their lives, and they want to express gratitude. They also hope their act of generosity inspires others.

For Annette Bloch, it was the experience of being diagnosed with breast cancer and receiving compassionate, competent care at KU Hospital. What she has done as a grateful patient will be felt by people all over our region for many years.

The suffering caused by cancer in Kansas and western Missouri in 2008 alone is staggering: 25,000 people will be diagnosed with cancer and 11,000 will die. And, most alarming: The cancer mortality

rate in our region is decreasing at only half the rate of the national average.

What would you do if one of your loved ones were diagnosed with a rare and often fatal form of cancer? Would you be able to pick up and move near a place like the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston to have the best chance of survival? For most people in our region, the answer is no.

This is what inspired recent donors like Annette Bloch, Floriene and George Lieberman, and Frank and Beverly Gaines to make leadership gifts for cancer treatment and research. Cancer has touched them all. And thanks to their gifts, more people in our region will be able to stay home and have the best chance of success in beating this disease. Their gifts may prove instrumental in helping KU achieve designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute — the gold standard in the field.

I know most of us might never be able to make a million-dollar gift. But regardless of the amount, giving to a cause like cancer enables us to treat total strangers with kindness, expecting nothing in return.

Giving provides us a sense of peace and well-being. What better way to feel connected with other human beings?



Dale Seufferling, President