

BUNNY'S STORY

Bunny Beeman began working at Blood Bank of Alaska in 1999 because she believed in the mission. She first became a blood donor in 1976, at the age of forty and always encouraged others to give it a try. She managed the Annual Picnic and the galloneer program.



Bunny retired in 2009 from Blood Bank of Alaska to enjoy time with her family. 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. The chemo reduced her platelet count. Bunny recalls, "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," said Bunny.

Many cancer patients rely on blood donations to recover. Blood donors save lives in many ways. Just ask Bunny.