EIGHT INSPIRING STORIES OF THE POWER OF TOGETHER
Milestones Built on Partnership

Every day at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, we build on our mission to take exceptional care of people.

In partnership with the Washington University School of Medicine, our team works to advance health care for our patients and our community. Our history is filled with milestones, as we learn from past achievements and pursue tomorrow’s innovations.

Earlier this year, a journey that started in 1963 achieved a significant milestone, as the Washington University and Barnes-Jewish Transplant Center’s surgical and medical teams performed their 10,000th adult organ transplant.

Imagine being in the operating room just over 55 years ago, as the first kidney was successfully transplanted. It would have been inconceivable to fully grasp how your efforts would be the start of a legacy that has helped our Transplant Center grow to be among the premier programs in the nation, with a reputation for excellent patient outcomes.

We also recently experienced a first, with the formation of the Division of Palliative Medicine, a collaboration between the Department of Medicine at Washington University, BJC HealthCare, Barnes-Jewish Hospital and The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

The new division will integrate supportive care, palliative medicine, and hospice services in order to relieve pain and suffering, and ultimately enhance the quality of life for patients and their families. For years to come, this team is creating a new legacy for patients and families, who will receive better end-of-life care because of this effort.

These are just two of the important milestones that set Barnes-Jewish apart, many that would not be possible without generous support from donors.

As this issue of Giving Magazine captures, you’re helping to ensure the best care possible in so many areas, from cancer to transplant to neurology and beyond.

Thank you for your partnership. Your support of The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital helps provide exceptional care, enrich well-being, save lives and transform patient care.

Together, with each milestone, we are fulfilling our mission.

Thank you,

Robert Cannon
President, Barnes-Jewish Hospital
Group President, BJC HealthCare

The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital helps donors enrich lives, save lives, and transform patient care through charitable gifts. Please give at www.FoundationBarnesJewish.org.

Your gift is very much appreciated and fully deductible as a charitable contribution. A copy of our latest financial report may be obtained by writing to The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital, 1001 Highlands Plaza Drive West, Suite 140, St. Louis, Missouri 63110, 314-286-0600. The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital was formed in Missouri.
BY GAIL APPLESON

Ira J. Kodner, MD, and James T. Kirk, the famous captain of Star Trek’s Starship Enterprise, share a common calling to explore uncharted territory. But while Capt. Kirk is pure fiction, Dr. Kodner is the real thing. He is a major figure in the development of the specialty of colon and rectal surgery and in ethics education—both nationally and within Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

When asked where he gets his courage and drive, the intrepid Dr. Kodner replies: “I suppose my courage comes from my father who, at 19, got his parents and brothers out of Russia, while my values come from my mother.”

Indeed, he credits the hours he spent at his mother’s side, learning to embroider and garden, and watching her extraordinary kindness to others, that instilled in him the importance of compassion and caring for those in need.

The result is a long career of first-time positions that include being the founder and first chief of the Section of Colon and Rectal Surgery at Washington University. He also held the Solon and Bettie Gershman Endowed Chair in Colon and Rectal Surgery from The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital from 1985 until his retirement in 2013. Funding from the chair allowed Dr. Kodner to launch and carry out a number of innovative programs.
Among them was the creation of a unique curriculum in surgical ethics education at Washington University School of Medicine—a program that positioned the school as a national leader in the field. Another direct outcome of the ethics program was the creation, in 2005, of the palliative care service at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. In recent years, Dr. Kodner has been a champion for the efforts to build Evelyn’s House, the BJC Hospice facility that opened on the grounds of Barnes-Jewish West County Hospital in 2017.

“All of these extra things—thinking about ethics issues, teaching students more intently—became possible because of the endowed chair,” Dr. Kodner says. “It supported me during a busy surgical career and allowed me to do these other things that I thought were special and very needed.”

Giving back is also very important to Dr. Kodner and he continues to be involved in numerous national and local organizations that seek to improve people’s lives. The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital is one of those organizations. Dr. Kodner joined the board of directors in 2016 and serves on the Philanthropy Committee.

“The work of the Foundation allows people to be innovative, to deviate from the old standard. It’s not just the financial support, it’s the feeling of empowerment to know the community is behind you,” Dr. Kodner says.

Dr. Kodner’s trailblazing accomplishments and community service have been recognized with many prestigious honors including the Foundation’s 2018 President’s Achievement Award.

“Recipients of the President’s Achievement Award are among the finest, most accomplished physicians in the world.

They advance medical knowledge and continuously improve our practices, while delivering care in a compassionate, respectful, and responsive way,” says Bob Cannon, president of Barnes-Jewish Hospital and group president of BJC HealthCare. “Dr. Ira J. Kodner epitomizes all of this award’s criteria, and then some.”

Dr. Kodner’s acclaimed medical career started in the 1960s, when he was a student at Washington University School of Medicine. As the Vietnam War escalated,
he joined the U.S. Army in 1967 as part of a program that paid for his final year of education and, in return, required him to serve for three years. He became a battalion surgeon in Germany for two years, ended up on the Surgical Service of the U.S. Army Hospital Berlin, and rose to the rank of Major.

After completing his Army service and finishing his general surgery residency at The Jewish Hospital of St. Louis, he received fellowship training under a highly-regarded colon and rectal surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic. When Dr. Kodner and his wife, Barbara, returned to St. Louis with their three children, he joined a private surgical practice, under the mentorship of Stanley London, MD, and became one of the first board-certified colon and rectal surgeons in St. Louis.

“A good part of my career was helping people no one else cared to help,” he says. “We started something no one else wanted to do.”

In fact, his interest in colon and rectal surgery developed in response to the need to help patients with colostomies, ileostomies, or urinary conduits who were not being well served by the medical community.

He was later recruited to a full-time academic practice at Washington University to start and head the colon and rectal surgery service. Colon and rectal cancer was one of the first malignancies that could be predicted by genetic mutation.

This led Dr. Kodner to take on the challenge of ethically managing genetic predisposition to the disease.

Even when he was in his 60s, Dr. Kodner continued to blaze new trails. He completed a one-year fellowship in clinical medical ethics at the University of Chicago and went on to found and direct the Center for the Study of Ethics and Human Values at Washington University from 2002 to 2010.

To ensure the continuation of the study of ethics in medicine and surgery, and to honor Dr. Kodner’s lifelong commitment to others, the Foundation recently created The Barbara and Ira J. Kodner MD Endowed Fund for Surgical Ethics. The fund also recognizes Barbara’s critical support of Ira and her nurturing of hundreds of students, residents, and surgical fellows. Gifts from the Eric P. and Evelyn E. Newman Foundation (Peggy and Andy Newman), Yvette and John Dubinsky, and Carol and Mark Vittert, initiated the fund. Others have also given, and the Foundation is committed to engaging even more philanthropy to advance education, research and advocacy in the field of surgical ethics.

“I’ve been the luckiest person in the world to get support for my ideas over the years. It allowed me to do innovative things and it totally changed my career track. I’m forever thankful for it.”

Live long and prosper, Dr. Kodner!

For more information on how to make a gift to support The Barbara and Ira J. Kodner MD Endowed Fund for Surgical Ethics, please call Mary Hendricks, director of philanthropy, at 314-362-3499 or Mary.Hendricks@bjc.org.
There’s often a special bond between a family and the caretakers—the team of nurses, physicians, volunteers and therapists—who help a loved one through the precious final days of life in hospice care.

“The personal attention provided by everyone we met in hospice was so important,” says Otto Reiter, whose wife, Konnie, passed away at Evelyn’s House in 2018 after a year of palliative home care with BJC Hospice. “You really get close to the people. I’ll never forget the enduring care they gave us.”

BJC Hospice provides a full spectrum of supportive care in a variety of venues, including Evelyn’s House, private homes, long-term nursing facilities and all BJC HealthCare hospitals.

One BJC Hospice nurse, Alice Macdonald, RN, spent about a year and a half with the Reiter family and now has a special place among them.

“One unique facet to hospice, according to Alice, is that a patient’s family and friends are an essential part of care. “This is important, because often a patient’s biggest worry is leaving their loved ones,” she says.

This was certainly true in the case of Otto and his family as Konnie neared the end of her life. Konnie suffered from Alzheimer’s disease and was referred to hospice by her physician at the optimal time. During her time in hospice, Alice and her team worked together to provide comprehensive care for Konnie that included the entire Reiter family. They helped educate Otto and provided emotional support and music therapy.

For Otto, it was a critical source of support during the most challenging time.

“One big worry for Otto was that he wouldn’t be able to care for Konnie at home,” says Alice. “It was so important for him to be present and engaged in her care.”

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“One big worry for Otto was that he wouldn’t be able to care for Konnie at home,” says Alice. “It was so important for him to be present and engaged in her care.”

When the music therapist visited the family’s house, the entire family joined in to create lasting memories.
“The therapist played guitar. We all enjoyed it, especially our two grandchildren, Annie and Sam, who called my wife ‘Nonny.’ One time we all sang ‘Take Me Out to the Ballgame’ and Konnie didn’t miss a word. She loved baseball as much as we all do. Annie and Sam often read, sang and played music for Konnie. They always told her how much they loved her and I know she could feel that,” Otto says.

As a gift for Konnie to give to her loved ones, volunteers made teddy bears and pillows out of some of her sweaters. “These amazing gifts will be cherished and are just another example of the incredible thoughtfulness put into the support provided by hospice,” Otto says.

Volunteers also provided much-needed support if someone couldn’t be at home with Konnie. “All of the volunteers were amazing,” says Otto. Tom McLaughlin was the volunteer who stayed with Konnie the most. “He really took the time to get to know Konnie and the family. When he discovered how important Konnie’s pets were to her, he even included our dog Lucy when he sat with her and prayed for her. We cannot thank him enough for all of his caring and support. His prayers, concern for the whole family, and words of wisdom were so comforting. He has become part of the family.”

Shortly before she passed away in July 2018, Konnie transitioned to Evelyn’s House for symptom management.

“After visiting Evelyn’s House, we knew it was the right place for Konnie when the time came,” Otto says. “The 24-hour care was important to us. As it turned out, Konnie only spent about a day there before she passed, but it made it peaceful for us.” Otto says Patrick White MD, chief medical officer for BJC Hospice, and the staff provide a warm and caring environment that is filled with love.

Though Konnie passed away, her generous spirit lives on; she donated her brain to advance research into Alzheimer’s disease to benefit future patients.

Tom performed the memorial for Konnie after she passed away and it was attended by the rest of the hospice team. “It meant the world to us that the people who helped Konnie so much were able to attend,” Otto says.

Today, Otto is moved by the generous community members who give back to BJC Hospice and Evelyn’s House through The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital to memorialize their loved ones—and help improve care for everyone.
Shahrdad Khodamoradi, MD, an anesthesiologist at Barnes-Jewish West County Hospital, has an unusual favorite snack: matzo and peanut butter. But not just any matzo, it has to be salted. Leave it to Sharon Baker, the hospital’s late medical staff office manager, to know that little tidbit about Dr. Khodamoradi. In fact, she kept a box of salted matzo hidden away in the doctor’s lounge just for him.

That’s just one tiny example of why the hospital doctors and staff adored Sharon. Her legendary warmth, compassion and tireless graciousness made her a pillar of Barnes-Jewish West County and her colleagues were heartbroken when she passed away on May 26, 2017. She had devoted 27 years to the hospital she loved so much.

“She made every single one of us feel like we were her favorite person. Sharon was like a Jewish mother who doted on everyone,” Dr. Khodamoradi says. “Every time I go into the lounge, I still look for her.”

He’s far from alone. In fact, members of the Barnes-Jewish West County medical staff association so wanted to honor her legacy that they created a patient care fund in her name at The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital. This endowed fund, established with a $50,000 gift, will help provide a financial lifeline for years to come to patients who are unable to pay for critical medical treatments and other daily necessities including food, rent and utilities.

Physicians and other individuals within the hospital and local community are also joining in the effort to remember Sharon. If another $25,000 can be raised from individual donations, the medical staff association has agreed to match up to that amount, bringing the total funds raised in her memory to $100,000. In addition, at this level of philanthropy, the replacement hospital’s medical staff lounge will be named in Sharon’s honor.
Thank you to the Medical Staff Association for establishing the Sharon Baker Endowed Patient Care Fund and gift challenge. The Barnes-Jewish West County Hospital community and The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital are grateful.

To support the challenge, please use the enclosed envelope, call 314-286-0600 or make your gift online at www.FoundationBarnesJewish.org/Sharon and reference the Sharon Baker Challenge.

“Sharon’s knowledge of the workings and history of the hospital was essential in guiding our leadership over the years,” says J. Chris Eagon, MD, chief of staff. “And in the early days, she was truly a one-person sales force for our hospital, traveling to area physician offices encouraging them to send patients to the hospital.

“After Sharon’s passing, many of us on the medical staff wanted to appropriately commemorate all that Sharon gave to this hospital,” he says. “With the construction of the new hospital, it seemed appropriate to create a philanthropic gift to memorialize her devotion to the medical staff.”

Sharon’s husband, Barry, knows how much the fund’s creation would have meant to his wife.

“The hospital was a big part of Sharon’s life,” Barry says. “The doctors and staff were like family to her, and most of her friends worked for the hospital. Her main focus was helping doctors and patients. She wanted to make sure everyone got the right care.”

“Everyone” is the operative word in that last sentence, as Sharon was concerned about each person she met, regardless of who they were or their role at the hospital, says Roxane Harbaugh, who now manages the medical staff office.

In a personal experience, she recalls Sharon’s efforts to help when Roxane’s husband was deployed to Afghanistan in 2013. Sharon checked in with her every day to see if she or her family needed anything.

“She wanted to make sure I was okay, that my husband was safe, that we were all safe,” Roxane says. “That’s the type of person she was. She was a friend to all of us and the mother of Barnes-Jewish West County.”

As medical staff office manger, Sharon Baker (center) created a tight-knit family atmosphere. Pictured here with Barnes-Jewish West County employees (from left) Renee Brown and Joan Lux.
Ken Steinback has only a hazy memory of his first meeting with Nancy Bartlett, MD, a prominent Washington University School of Medicine oncologist at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. After all, their first face-to-face encounter was under horrible circumstances. Just 11 months after believing he was in remission from lymphoma, Ken learned the disease had returned.

“I was so nervous and depressed when I met Dr. Bartlett. I was convinced that I was going to die,” Ken says. “I always tell people with cancer to take someone with you to your appointments because you won’t process anything the doctor says.”

While he might not remember much about Dr. Bartlett from that initial appointment 18 years ago, Ken’s current vision of her is crystal clear. Thanks to Dr. Bartlett and her team at The Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center, Ken is now in remission after three bouts of an aggressive form of non-Hodgkin lymphoma that started with his first diagnosis in 2000.

“Nancy started out as my physician and has now become my friend. I’m here because of her,” Ken says. “She could ask me to jump off the Empire State Building and I probably would consider it!”

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is a cancer that starts in white blood cells called lymphocytes, which are part of the body’s immune system. These cancerous cells can travel and form tumors in many areas of the body, including the lymph nodes, spleen, bone marrow, blood, or other organs.

Ken’s personal experience led him and his wife, Marilyn, to establish The Kenneth B. Steinback Cancer Research Fund, which was formally launched at The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital in 2008. The purpose of the fund is to provide the financial resources needed for Dr. Bartlett and her team to lead innovative lymphoma research.

“I’m a business guy who looks for a return on my investment,” Ken says. “Hopefully, the investment from the Steinback Fund will foster significant research leading to either new cures or innovations for non-Hodgkin lymphoma.”

Since the inception of the Steinback fund, 313 donors have given and/or pledged a total of more than $1,439,000 through 733 individual gifts. The total includes
gifts from Ken, who has also donated his time to help elevate medical research and patient care by serving on the board of trustees of the Foundation, which he chaired from 2008 to 2012. He continues his involvement as an emeritus member.

“It gives me great pleasure to give to an important cause,” Ken says. “It’s especially true in my case. Dr. Bartlett gave me 18 years of my life and counting.”

Ken is the founder and former chairman of St. Louis-based CSI Leasing, Inc., one of the world’s largest independent equipment leasing companies. He was 57 and the head of the company when his battle against cancer began. The lymphoma’s aggressiveness made the journey an arduous one, marked by challenging chemotherapy treatments and a difficult stem cell transplant. But today, Ken’s follow-up appointments are relatively easy and short. At most, he might wait 35 to 45 minutes for Dr. Bartlett to walk into the examination room but he doesn’t mind.

“If she keeps me waiting, I know that she has another patient who needs her attention more than I do at the moment. She is so special and attentive to the needs of each patient.”

Dr. Bartlett is indeed special. In addition to the compassionate and knowledgeable care she provides her patients, Dr. Bartlett, the Koman Chair of Medical Oncology, has directed the lymphoma research and treatment program at Siteman and Barnes-Jewish Hospital for more than 20 years. The program is considered a national leader in clinical trials aimed at evaluating new approaches in lymphoma treatment.

Support from the Steinback Fund is playing a significant role in the ability of Dr. Bartlett and her team to conduct leading-edge studies that will provide a much deeper understanding of the causes of lymphoma; a basis for placing patients in clinical studies based on their mutation profiles; and new targets for drug development.

In 2018, Ken, along with Bob Virgil and Bill Koman, who are also patients of Dr. Bartlett, launched a fundraising initiative to support early stage research being led by Dr. Bartlett and her team. This research will be instrumental in advancing understanding of the progression and treatment of lymphoma. The important resources raised will also help attract additional scientists who can accelerate and expand the promising projects underway.

Studies that will take knowledge and treatment to the next level include those that are aimed at developing new strategies to augment immune responses to lymphoma; identifying recurrent mutations that predict response to chemotherapy-free approaches; and identifying potential targets for tumor specific vaccines.

“I believe with adequate support, our team is poised to make very important contributions toward these lofty goals,” Dr. Bartlett says.

In addition to helping further this research, Ken says gifts to the Fund support a cause that’s very important to Dr. Bartlett and he thinks there is no better way to show appreciation for her work.

“We need to support medical research or the quality of medicine will diminish. Not only will the quality go down, but we won’t have the growth, new enhancements, or advanced therapies and surgeries.” Adding another important point, he says, “If we don’t support clinicians and researchers, we won’t keep the best physicians, and we want the best.”

For more information on how to support lymphoma research or the Steinback Fund, please contact Corey Pashea, manager of philanthropy programs, at corey.pashea@bjc.org or (314) 286-0604.
There’s a special kind of friendship that withstands the test of time. No matter how many years pass, where you’ve gone or what you’ve done, you can pick up the conversation with your pal exactly where you left off. That’s how it is with Steve Hurster, Mark Kodner, Jeff Fox, David Fitter and Stan Hoffman (pictured above, from left).

These five men met each other at different times while growing up in St. Louis—some as far back as grade school. Even as kids they began to develop an unbreakable bond that has united them through adulthood. They stood up at each other’s weddings, their wives and children are friends, and they continue to stay in touch on a daily basis.

As time goes by, some acquaintances question whether the five really talk that frequently, David says.

“We do,” he confirms. “Most people don’t have what we have. Our relationship is very special.”

“We are all so intertwined,” adds Steve. “We value and cherish it.”

Because of the unique chemistry that links the five men together, they were stunned when Mark, who was then a successful lawyer at Kodner Watkins, confided that he had been living with Parkinson’s disease. Mark was only 40 when he was diagnosed with the progressive neurological disorder in 2000.
When Mark stopped practicing law because of the disease, his friends were there for him and they continue to be his support system. This includes the 11 surgeries Mark has undergone since his diagnosis and an unknown future.

“These guys have been with me from the get-go. We’ve remained the best of friends through thick and thin,” he says.

For Mark and other Parkinson’s patients, the challenges include both physical and cognitive symptoms that develop slowly over time. These symptoms can include fatigue, muscle tremors, trouble walking, standing and concentrating, confusion, and speech changes.

While there are some therapies available to Parkinson’s patients, they are most effective in treating movement-related symptoms. No treatments have been developed yet to slow or halt the inevitable progression of the disease.

However one of Mark’s doctors, Joel Perlmutter, MD, the Elliot H. Stein Family Endowed Chair in Neurology, is researching a promising drug that appears to have the potential to slow or even reverse some of the damage in the brain caused by the disease.

His team is poised to begin studies of the drug in humans, but must be able to measure the effect of the drug in the brain. In order to do so, the researchers need funding to complete preliminary studies that will help leverage the necessary federal funding to ultimately make the drug available for treatment.

After learning about Dr. Perlmutter’s research, Mark decided to explore fundraising vehicles that would provide support directly to Dr. Perlmutter. As a result, he sought a partnership with The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

Since his friends had done so much for him over the years, Mark says he didn’t want to bother them with the fundraising project. But, he found, it was impossible to keep them in the dark.

“When of those guys would’ve found out about what I was doing, but Fox, who has the ‘Batman’ ears, overheard me on a phone conversation and immediately offered to help…which is the norm for this group,” he explains.

Jeff proposed his house as a venue and got involved in the planning.

“I called our buddies and said ‘I’d like to get your help’ and they stepped up,” Jeff says. “It’s about heart. We’d do it for each one of us. That’s our friendship. It’s how we’ve been our whole lives.”

The pals then reached out and personally invited people they thought would be interested in helping Mark and contributing to Parkinson’s research.

“We knew were doing something for a dear friend. But we also knew that if we help Mark we’ll be helping a lot of other people too,” says Stan.

The event was held on Nov. 13, with 78 guests attending. Contributions are still being made with a goal to reach $1 million.

Mark says he was humbled and amazed by the turnout and continuing response.

“Please accept my most profound and sincere thanks for all you have done to support me in my efforts to navigate the waters around this shipwreck they call Parkinson’s disease,” Mark wrote to those who attended the event.

“The impact of research on my life is unreal, because the medicines and the procedures and the possibilities are endless if research can continue to go on.”

While guests were generous with their contributions, the men agree the real highlight of the evening was the moral support the attendees showed by just being there.

“What a great thing, what a tribute, to have a room full of people showing they care,” says Steve. “It’s all about good people trying to do a good thing for a good friend who has been dealt a bad deck of cards.”

“People stepped up because of Mark. He’s a special guy, not just to us buddies, but to everyone who comes across his path,” says David. “He’s a gem of a guy and I’m very lucky to have this gem in my life.”

But Mark says he is the one who is blessed to have such special friends.

“They are a gift to me.”

For more information on how to make a gift to support Parkinson’s disease research, please call Marilyn Shepard, major gift officer, at 314-286-2241 or Marilyn.Shepard@bjc.org.
In April of 2016, Ron and his wife, Deb, were on a trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico, a favorite destination for the travel-loving couple. During the vacation, Ron began to feel ill. “It came out of nowhere,” Deb says. “He was perfectly healthy and then all of a sudden we discovered he had a disease neither of us had ever heard of before.”

It turns out Ron had idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a condition that causes scarring on the lungs for no known reason. His only hope was a double lung transplant—but physicians in Omaha, near his hometown, told him the procedure would be too risky and refused to operate. “They pretty much wrote me off and told me to go home and get my affairs in order,” Ron says. “Of course, we didn’t like the sound of that, so we did some research and went to see physicians in Denver.”

But, the news in Denver was equally disheartening; after some initial testing, the medical team also declined to perform the necessary transplant. “It was like opening a college acceptance letter,” Deb says. “You run to the mailbox and you open the envelope, and they say, ‘We’re sorry, but we’ve turned you down.’ Except that we were talking life and death. It was incredibly difficult.”

By that time, Ron’s condition had deteriorated to the point that he could barely walk one mile per hour on the treadmill. His time was running out.

Finally, a glimmer of hope arrived in the waiting room at the Washington University and Barnes-Jewish Hospital Transplant Center, where he was referred to leading experts.

Ron Cizek, a longtime hot rod enthusiast, got his start in the world of custom cars when his father purchased a 1940 Ford Coupe in 1957 for the pair to work on together when Ron was just 10 years old. Many years later, when Ron entered the hot rod in the 2013 Detroit Autorama—known as the Super Bowl of the hot rod world—he took home the top prize.

Today, after facing a life-threatening disease and a double lung transplant, he’s no longer satisfied to sit on the sidelines. He’s leaving a legacy for future lung transplant patients through his giving to The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital—and following his wildest dreams.
in pulmonology and lung transplantation: Derek Byers, MD, and Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD, the G. Alexander Patterson, MD/Mid-America Transplant Endowed Distinguished Chair in Lung Transplantation.

The transplant team at Barnes-Jewish is a life-saving resource for patients with complex conditions who are turned down as transplant candidates at other institutions. The expertise and experience of the physicians—and the volume of transplants performed—make it one of the highest performing transplant teams in the country.

“When we finally got in touch with Barnes-Jewish, our lives really did turn around,” Deb says. “From the very beginning, they gave us hope that there was a chance. It felt like through the whole thing that they cared about us as human beings.”

Ron was placed on the list to await his double lung transplant. When he found out he had a match, the excitement was palpable. “If I could have jumped up and down, I would have,” he says. “But by that time, I needed a lot of oxygen, so the best I could come up with was a smile. I was elated.”

The wait paid off and the transplant was a success; Ron felt better almost immediately. “I woke up a day or two later and I could breathe,” he says. “I was so grateful to be alive.”

The Cizeks decided to show their gratitude for the transformative double lung transplant by giving back to support research and patient care through The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

Their gift will help Dr. Kreisel and Dr. Byers and their teams accelerate research projects to identify new cellular and molecular pathways that could be targeted to develop new therapies, and train future leaders in lung transplant medicine.

“While we’ve made important advances in surgical techniques and management of transplant patients, we still have a long way to go,” says Dr. Kreisel. “The five-year survival rate after lung transplantation is only 40 to 50 percent. And one reason that the results are not as good as we would like them to be is that we do not fully understand the biology of lung transplantation. Therefore, investment into research is critical to develop new therapies and to improve the lives and survival rates of our patients.”

He adds: “The future of transplantation is very bright. I think we’re going to get to a point where we can personalize transplantation by tailoring and modifying donor organs to fit the biology of the recipient and improve outcomes.”

The couple is grateful for the surgery that saved Ron’s life—and the precious gift of more time.

“It’s changed our life,” Ron says. “I don’t let grass grow anymore. If we want to go somewhere or do something, we do it. Because you just never know how long you’re going to be around.”

In this spirit, he recently celebrated his two-year transplant anniversary and is working to check off items on his “bucket list.” One is to drive his car to a new world record of 300 mph at Bonneville Speedway, a track known as the location of many land speed records.

For Ron, after flirting with death and undergoing major surgery, there is no obstacle too big to overcome.

For more information on how to make a gift to support the lung transplant program at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine, please call Corey Pashea, manager of philanthropy programs, at 314-286-0604 or Corey.Pashea@bjc.org.
John Gerdes met his late wife, Jerrie, at a college mixer in the late 1950s when they were just 18 years old. The jukebox was playing the latest hits, and John was excited to meet new friends—and potential dates—as a college freshman. But when he saw Jerrie, everything changed.

“On some level, I must have known the first time I met her that I was going to marry her,” John says. “She wasn’t like the other girls I met. She wasn’t waiting by the phone. I realized she was just like my two grandmothers—very educated pioneer women, good people who didn’t take any nonsense.”

John and Jerrie built a beautiful life together. After marrying in 1960, they had three children and many grandchildren before Jerrie died in 2004 after a 16-year battle with multiple cancers.

“I remember Jerrie every day and I thank God for every day we had together as husband and wife for 43 years,” John says. “She’s one of God’s greatest blessings.”

John knows the mourning process will never be entirely over, but he is forever grateful for the compassionate world-class care Jerrie received at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Siteman Cancer Center.

“They have good people who do excellent work,” John says. “From top to bottom, I can’t think of a better place to be. I have never found one weak link in the chain, and I’ve spent lots of time there. I’ve never been any place even near this magnitude in my 77 years.”

John decided to show his gratitude by supporting the institution that gave Jerrie precious extra years of life. He included a bequest in his will that will leave his entire estate to Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

“When I die, everything I have will go to Barnes-Jewish,” he says.

“I can’t begin to tell you how much this institution has done for me, my wife and all three of my children. My grandchildren wouldn’t have had a grandmother as long as they did without Barnes-Jewish. I wanted to, in some small way, pay back the many kindnesses my wife and I have been given by the hospital.”
The Benefits of Planned Giving

Planned giving arrangements allow you to make a gift now or after your lifetime while enjoying financial benefits for yourself and your loved ones. Below are answers to a few commonly asked questions.

What are the advantages to planning a legacy gift?
A legacy gift provides an opportunity to support The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital that is meaningful to you while preserving and enjoying your assets during your lifetime. And, often times, giving in this way allows you to make a greater impact than might be possible currently.

What are some simple ways to make a legacy gift?
You can designate The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital as a beneficiary of your bank account, retirement account or life insurance policy. Or you could include the Foundation as a beneficiary in your will or trust. Your gift might be a set dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, real estate assets, or you can also designate the remainder of your estate after distributions to your other beneficiaries.

Is there a required minimum amount?
There is no minimum amount. Anyone can make a gift—no matter if your estate is worth $100 or $100 million. Any dollar amount, or any assets, are welcome and help us fulfill our mission.

Learn more about legacy giving and beginning the process:
For additional information please visit our website at barnesjewish.planmylegacy.org or contact Joan Cheaney, CFRE, manager of planned giving, at Joan.Cheaney@BJC.org or 314-286-0704.
Board Briefing  BY GAIL APPLESON

The board of directors of The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital comprises individuals who are working to make St. Louis—and the world—a better place. They offer crucial partnership in fulfilling the Foundation’s mission to enrich lives, save lives and transform patient care.

Please join us in welcoming our esteemed new board members!

Pat Burkhart

Pat Burkhart, a St. Louis native, devoted her 34-year career to the financial services industry including serving more than two decades as a senior vice president at Invesco, an investment management company. She also worked for Edward Jones for 13 years.

Active in the community, Pat is a member of the Alexis de Tocqueville Society and William Greenleaf Eliot Society. She has served on committees of the Saint Louis Zoo Zoofari, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis Gala, The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital Illumination Gala and Sing for Siteman (past and present co-chair).

Pat is a breast cancer survivor committed to supporting Siteman Cancer Center from which she received world-class care. Pat established the Pat Burkhart Breast Cancer Fund that supports research and treatment related to breast cancer through The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

Felicia Malter

Felicia Malter is the partner-in-charge of RubinBrown’s Assurance Services Group. In this role, she provides comprehensive audit and business consulting services to clients in the life sciences, technology, professional services and manufacturing and distribution industries.

Felicia also serves as the partner on a large number of employee benefit plans, including defined benefit, defined contribution and health and welfare plans.

A believer in giving back, Felicia chairs the board of directors of the Jewish Community Center and is the past chair of the Ronald McDonald House Charities, St. Louis Chapter, and former treasurer of the St. Louis Forum. She is also a member of a number of professional organizations.

In 2008, she was named to the St. Louis Business Journal’s list of “40 under 40” and the Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants’ “Women to Watch.”

Pam Rubin

Since moving to St. Louis from Mt. Vernon, Illinois, 23 years ago, Pam Rubin has embraced the city by serving on a variety of boards and being particularly active in the Jewish community.

She is currently a member of the board of managers of The Plaza Condos in Clayton and the board of directors of the Women’s Auxiliary Foundation for Jewish Aged, which provides financial support for programs and organizations that ensure the dignity and honor of Jewish elderly in St. Louis.

Previously, Pam served on boards of the following organizations: St. Louis Art Fair; Craft Alliance Center of Art + Design; Jewish Federation of St. Louis; Hillel at Washington University in St. Louis; and the Jewish Fund for Human Needs. The latter awards grants to general community nonprofits that help meet a wide range of critical needs including health care, employment, clothing, education, and housing and emergency shelter.

Advancing Our Mission

We are grateful for the experienced guidance and support of all of our distinguished board members.
SAVE THE DATE

ILLUMINATION

The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital’s
ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA
for the Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center

SATURDAY EVENING
JUNE 1, 2019
The Ritz-Carlton, Saint Louis

Special Guest Host
JEFF GOLDBLUM
& THE MILDRED SNITZER ORCHESTRA

To make your reservation or for more information, contact us at 314.286.0602 or FoundationforBJH@bjc.org

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Visit The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital website today to learn more

www.FoundationBarnesJewish.org

Make a Gift Online

AND...Check out our Facebook page at facebook.com/foundationbarnesjewish

Your generosity strengthens and promotes lifesaving research, essential patient care services, nursing scholarships, community outreach programs and so much more.

Thank you!