

# PROMISE

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IVY FOUNDATION

Catherine and Ben Ivy, who established the Ivy Foundation before Ben's death in 2005. **p. 7**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Comments? Suggestions?  
We welcome your perspective.  
**Email us your thoughts: [Promise@mdanderson.org](mailto:Promise@mdanderson.org)**

### OCTOBER

**28-29: Houston**  
MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors Annual Meeting

### NOVEMBER

**4: Houston**  
A Conversation With a Living Legend® honoring Bob McNair

### DECEMBER

**1: Dallas**  
A Conversation With a Living Legend® honoring Condoleezza Rice

**9: Beaumont**  
Santa's Elves Party

**10: Houston**  
Santa's Elves Party

### JANUARY

**27: Palm Beach**  
Making Cancer History® Dinner

## ACCESS ANSWERS

To become a patient: Call 877-632-6789 or fill out the self-referral form at [www.mdanderson.org](http://www.mdanderson.org).

For more information, please visit [www.mdanderson.org/gifts](http://www.mdanderson.org/gifts) or call 800-525-5841.

Download Promise at [www.mdanderson.org/Promise](http://www.mdanderson.org/Promise).

If you do not want to receive certain fundraising communications from MD Anderson, please visit our website at [www.mdanderson.org/FundraisingOptOut](http://www.mdanderson.org/FundraisingOptOut) or contact us at 855-344-5272.

## 4 NEWS MAKERS

- Allison wins Lasker Award
- Colorectal cancer research breakthrough
- DePinho among top 100 influencers in health care
- Study shows, in the case of breast cancer radiation, less may be more
- CheckMate-025 study: hope for advanced kidney cancer patients
- Sun-savvy cancer fighters send prevention message to preschoolers

Breast cancer survivor Rosemary Herron raises awareness about MD Anderson as she travels the globe. **p. 7**



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSEMARY HERRON

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**Back Cover:** iPromise



### ON THE COVER:

Rosemary Herron and her husband, Don, recently visited MD Anderson to present \$25,000 to Elizabeth Mittendorf, M.D., associate professor, Breast Surgical Oncology, in support of her breast cancer vaccine program, Injecting Hope.

PHOTO BY ADOLFO CHAVEZ III

# PROMISE

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## BIOMARKER TIED TO POOR SURVIVAL FOR COLORECTAL CANCER PATIENTS

Study focuses on role of a key protein



**THE PROTEIN CSN6** has been correlated with poor survival among

patients with colorectal cancer, according to an MD Anderson study published in the medical journal *Cancer Cell*.

Researchers found CSN6, a subunit of a protein complex known as COP9 signalosome, is overexpressed in colorectal cancer tissue samples. The finding could be significant in the search for improved and alternative treatment strategies for colorectal cancer.

“CSN6 is a biomarker that’s elevated in colon cancer and leads to worse recurrence-free survival.”

— Mong-Hong Lee, Ph.D.

The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, the Program of Introducing Talents of Discipline to Universities and the International S&T Cooperation Program of China.

RON GILMORE



## SUPERPOWERS AGAINST SUNBURN

Preschool program debuts through CATCH, MD Anderson research

**FIVE GLOBETROTTING**, sun-blocking superheroes use their superpowers — shade, clothing, sunscreen, hats and sunglasses — to teach preschoolers about lifelong sun safety. Based on years of MD Anderson research, the Ray and the Sunbeatables™ sun safety curriculum debuted in a pilot rollout this summer. While the sun-savvy five help teachers deliver sun protection messages through songs, games and lessons for the under-5 set, the program also connects with parents to reinforce sun safety at home.

“Research shows that excessive sun exposure during childhood increases the risk of developing melanoma and other skin cancers later in life, so it’s important to develop sun

protection habits at a young age,” says Mary Tripp, Ph.D., instructor of Behavioral Science and one of the program’s developers.

Sunbeatables™ reaches more than 2,600 preschoolers across six states through a partnership of MD Anderson and the CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health) Global Foundation.

It’s a project of the Melanoma Moon Shot, which focuses on prevention and developing better treatments. The team is working on a similar program for elementary school children and studying approaches for middle school and high school students.

SCOTT MERVILLE

Ray and the Sunbeatables™ use their superpowers of sun protection as they travel the world on their ship, the Eclipse, showing children how to be sun safe every day and everywhere. Above, from left: Chloe (protective clothing), Serena (sunscreen), Ray (shade), Stefan (sunglasses) and Hannah (hats).

## RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGH

Immunotherapy for advanced kidney cancer

**FOR THE FIRST TIME**, an immune checkpoint inhibitor has been proven to increase survival among patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma (RCC), for whom treatment options are limited. MD Anderson researchers demonstrated a median overall survival benefit of 25 months with nivolumab, a Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved immunotherapy agent, compared with 19.6 months for everolimus, a standard treatment for metastatic kidney cancer.

The CheckMate-025 study findings, published by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, provide definitive evidence that an immune checkpoint inhibitor is a valid treatment strategy for patients with advanced RCC.

Nivolumab, marketed as Opdivo, is used to treat metastatic melanoma and advanced non-small cell lung cancer. CheckMate-025 is an example of how investigators are examining approved immunotherapy drugs to determine potential impact on other tumor types.

“Immunotherapy has long been believed to

have the potential to make an impact in kidney cancer, but until now we hadn’t been able to demonstrate such a significant survival benefit. We have a real opportunity to change clinical practice for patients when other therapies have failed,” says principal investigator Padmanee Sharma, M.D., Ph.D., professor, Genitourinary Medical Oncology and Immunology.

Sharma is scientific director of MD Anderson’s immunotherapy platform, part of MD Anderson’s Moon Shots Program (see page 6). Platform researchers seek to evaluate effective drug combinations, identify new molecules that block or stimulate immune response and understand which patients will benefit from immunotherapy.

“We’re learning to target the patients’ immune systems to fight cancer rather than targeting the tumor itself,” says Sharma. “This is a new way forward.”



PHOTO BY F. CARTER SMITH

Padmanee Sharma, M.D., Ph.D.

CLAYTON BOLDT

## MD Anderson president among top 100 influencers in health care



**RONALD DEPINHO, M.D.**, president of MD Anderson, has been named to Modern Healthcare's 2015

list of Top 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare. The annual awards and recognition program honors people whom their peers and the publication's senior editors deem to be the most influential in the industry in terms of leadership and impact. Also among the distinguished honorees is Peter Fine, president and CEO of Banner Health in Arizona, a member of the MD Anderson Cancer Network.

SEE THE FULL LIST AT:

[www.modernhealthcare.com/  
community/100-most-influential/2015/](http://www.modernhealthcare.com/community/100-most-influential/2015/)

## WELCOME, JOXEL GARCIA, M.D.

Four-star admiral, former U.S. assistant secretary for health to lead cancer prevention and control platform

AS INAUGURAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the Moon Shots Program's cancer prevention and control platform, Joxel Garcia, M.D., leads efforts to reduce the cancer burden, especially in the underserved population.

Ernest Hawk, M.D., vice president and division head, Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences, and co-leader of the platform, says Garcia's knowledge and leadership at the local, state, national and international levels will boost MD Anderson's commitment to advancing cancer prevention and control "in transformative ways."

Garcia was the nation's 13th assistant secretary for health during President George W. Bush's administration. At the same time, he was named a U.S. Public Health Service four-star Admiral and U.S. Representative to the World Health Organization. Later Garcia served as president and dean of medicine for Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences in his native Puerto Rico. In 2012, he became director and chief medical officer for the Washington, D.C. Department of Health. He also served as a founding partner with Aegis Health Security, a global health care advisory firm.



Joxel Garcia, M.D.

CLAYTON BOLDT

## LESS MAY BE MORE

Study shows benefits of shorter radiation therapy for early stage breast cancer patients

PATIENTS who receive a shorter course of whole breast radiation therapy for early-stage disease experience less toxicity and improved quality of life compared with those who undergo longer treatment, MD Anderson researchers report in JAMA Oncology.

"Randomized studies in the United Kingdom and Canada have shown equal rates of recurrence in both groups, as well as equal survival," says Simona Shaitelman, M.D., assistant professor, Radiation Oncology, and the study's first author.



Simona Shaitelman, M.D.

"With modern technology, and knowing that the survival and recurrence outcomes are equal, can we offer patients a better option?"

— Simona Shaitelman, M.D.

For the study, patients were enrolled at MD Anderson, the institution's Houston-area locations, Orlando Health (formerly MD Anderson Orlando) in Orlando, Fla., and Banner MD Anderson in Gilbert, Ariz.

The study was funded by the Conquer Cancer Foundation of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, MD Anderson's Center for Radiation Oncology Research, a philanthropic gift from Ann and Clarence Cazalot and the National Cancer Institute.

LANY KIMMONS

Podcast: <http://bit.ly/1KaKgi4>

## JIM ALLISON WINS LASKER AWARD

Prestigious honor recognizes pioneering immunotherapy research

**JIM ALLISON, PH.D.**, chair of Immunology at MD Anderson, has received the nation's highest honor for clinical medical research, the Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medical Research Award.

Through research into the biology of T cells, white blood cells that serve as guided weapons for the immune system, Allison developed an antibody that unleashes an immune response against cancer. Drugs using this immune checkpoint blockade approach are approved for treating late-stage melanoma and lung cancer (see promising kidney cancer study, page 4). Long-term studies show 20% of late-stage melanoma patients treated with ipilimumab survive for at least 10 years.

"The Lasker award highlights Jim's genius, creativity and passion," says MD Anderson President Ronald DePinho, M.D. "Countless cancer patients have experienced renewed promise and health thanks to this groundbreaking advance."

Allison is MD Anderson's second faculty member to win a Lasker award. Emil J Freireich, M.D., was honored in 1972 for outstanding achievements in chemotherapy combination treatment and supportive care for leukemia patients.

"As a basic scientist, I was pleasantly surprised, really kind of stunned, to receive this award," Allison says. "It's important recognition



PHOTO BY F. CARTER SMITH

### WORKING TOGETHER TO END CANCER

The Center for Cancer Immunology Research at the Red and Charline McCombs Institute for the Early Detection and Treatment of Cancer brings together investigators from several MD Anderson departments, including Immunology, Lymphoma and Myeloma, Melanoma Medical Oncology, and Stem Cell Transplantation and Cellular Therapy. The center's collaborative strategy is key to quickly applying new discoveries and concepts in immunology for the benefit of patients.

of cancer immunotherapy's early success and its great potential to extend cancer survival for decades, and ultimately to cure some types of cancer."

SCOTT MERVILLE

## MOON SHOTS PROGRAM EXPANDS REACH

BY SCOTT MERVILLE

Six targets added to aggressive assault on cancer

After a rigorous scientific review, MD Anderson's Moon Shots Program is zeroing in on six additional areas of focus: **b-cell lymphomas, colorectal cancer, glioblastoma, high-risk multiple myeloma, human papillomavirus-related cancers and pancreatic cancer.**

They join the original moon shots, established in 2013 against breast/ovarian cancer, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, lung cancer, melanoma, myelodysplastic syndromes/acute myeloid leukemia and prostate cancer.

"Our new moon shots extend our efforts to more rapidly reduce deaths from cancer through prevention, early detection and curative treatments,"

### PILOTS TAKE FLIGHT

The new moon shots began life as pilots, chosen last summer from 14 proposals. Teams received initial funding to plan their proposals a year ago. The program's external Scientific Advisory Board reviewed pilots and inaugural moon shots this summer. Scores focused on such criteria as potential to measurably reduce cancer deaths, breadth and depth of multidisciplinary teams and quality of scientific plans. The board's feedback helped mold priorities and funding for Fiscal Year 2016.

says Giulio Draetta, M.D., Ph.D., co-leader of the Moon Shots Program. "Drawing on the expertise and technology of specialized platforms, all 12 moon shots are poised to make a significant difference for our patients."

### GOAL-ORIENTED, PATIENT-DRIVEN

Accelerated effort will ultimately apply to all cancers

MD Anderson's Moon Shots Program is an unprecedented, comprehensive assault to significantly reduce cancer deaths and transform cancer care. Moon shot teams pursue innovative projects prioritized for greatest patient impact, including groundbreaking clinical trials of new cancer immunotherapies, targeted therapies and combinations. Longer-term collaboration to heighten molecular understanding of cancers and therapies aims to further improve translational research and move scientific findings into the clinic. Many moon shots also include prevention and early detection projects. Specialized platforms provide infrastructure, systems and strategy.

The ultimate goal is to apply knowledge gained from this process to all cancers. Moon shot efforts will help support all other cancer research at MD Anderson, particularly with improved resources and infrastructure. Funding is from private philanthropy, institutional earnings, competitive research grants and commercialization of new discoveries.

**As of Sept. 30, private philanthropic commitments to the program total more than \$290 million.**



### MY MOON SHOT

*In 2001, Marnie Rose, M.D., a first-year pediatric resident at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital, was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer. Despite a courageous fight throughout treatment at MD Anderson, she died the following year. Since 2003, the Dr. Marnie Rose Foundation and its annual Run for the Rose 5K have honored Marnie's memory, raising \$4.75 million for brain cancer research and drug development at MD Anderson as well as pediatric health initiatives at Children's Memorial Hermann.*

*Following her own recent diagnosis of breast cancer, Lanie Rose, Marnie's mother, reflects on MD Anderson, the Glioblastoma Moon Shot and her daughter's legacy.*

When I learned that the Moon Shots Program had added glioblastoma research, it was like a dream come true. Brain cancer patients do not have the luxury of time. Now the most promising research will reach patients much more quickly. The cure seems so close.

For me personally, it means a little relief from the heightened urgency that never has subsided since Marnie's diagnosis. All the loved ones of brain tumor patients experience this feeling. It's encouraging to know that MD Anderson is accelerating efforts to expedite treatments, increase survival times and save lives.

MD Anderson offers so much to brain cancer patients: focused radiation to spare healthy brain tissue, the Brain Suite where an MRI scans the patient's brain during surgery, a depository for brain tumor samples, a team approach to patient care, innovative research and clinical trials that bring hope. We were the first to fund development of the Delta-24-RGD oncolytic virus at MD Anderson after it was turned down for funding by the National Institutes of Health. It was our very first project, and we've also funded immunotherapy for years. We continue to fund the Delta-24-RGD research as it's combined with immunotherapy drugs to

enhance its efficacy.

Marnie was appalled and frightened as she looked around and saw no awareness of brain cancer, no funding for brain cancer, no interest in brain cancer except among her MD Anderson doctors and their colleagues. She wanted the world to know that brain cancer is no longer a disease of older men — it's destroying young, promising lives. She would be thrilled at the promising work of the Glioblastoma Moon Shot team.

I'm seeing the cancer world from the perspective of a new patient, so I'm attuned to the remarkable care MD Anderson gives its patients. Appointments are made for you. You're guided through every step in the process. Information is at your fingertips. MD Anderson truly is a place of hope.



Lanie Rose

PHOTO BY SHAWN GREEN

### WHAT'S YOUR MOON SHOT?

Contact us at [promise@mdanderson.org](mailto:promise@mdanderson.org) and tell us why MD Anderson's Moon Shots Program is important to you.

# Seeking a cure

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

Ivy Foundation advances glioblastoma research with \$2 million gift

Catherine and Ben Ivy were married only five years before cancer uprooted their entire world.

“He was diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2005,” says Catherine, founder and board president of the Ivy Foundation. “We quickly learned what a devastating diagnosis it is as far as survivorship.”

Ben’s diagnosis ignited a fire within the couple. Their passion for finding a cure and better quality of life for glioblastoma patients quickly developed into a mission for the Ivy Foundation, the nonprofit they had created when they got married.

“Our immediate goal is to double the life expectancy of glioblastoma patients in the next seven years,” says Catherine. “If we can get people living longer, we can study the disease more, which will hopefully open the door to finding a cure.”

Ben died four months after his diagnosis.

Catherine continues his fight through the Ivy Foundation, investing more than \$60 million in brain cancer research across the country over the past 10 years. The foundation’s latest gift provided \$2 million for research led by Amy Heimberger, M.D., associate professor, Neurosurgery (see sidebar).

“Dr. Heimberger is so innovative and efficient, and it’s all about the patient for her,” says Catherine. “I’m grateful for the entire staff at MD Anderson. Our projects don’t always fit the mold but we like to think creatively and see if we can make more progress.”

Catherine is confident in the work that’s being done and hopes that one day the foundation’s vision will become a reality.

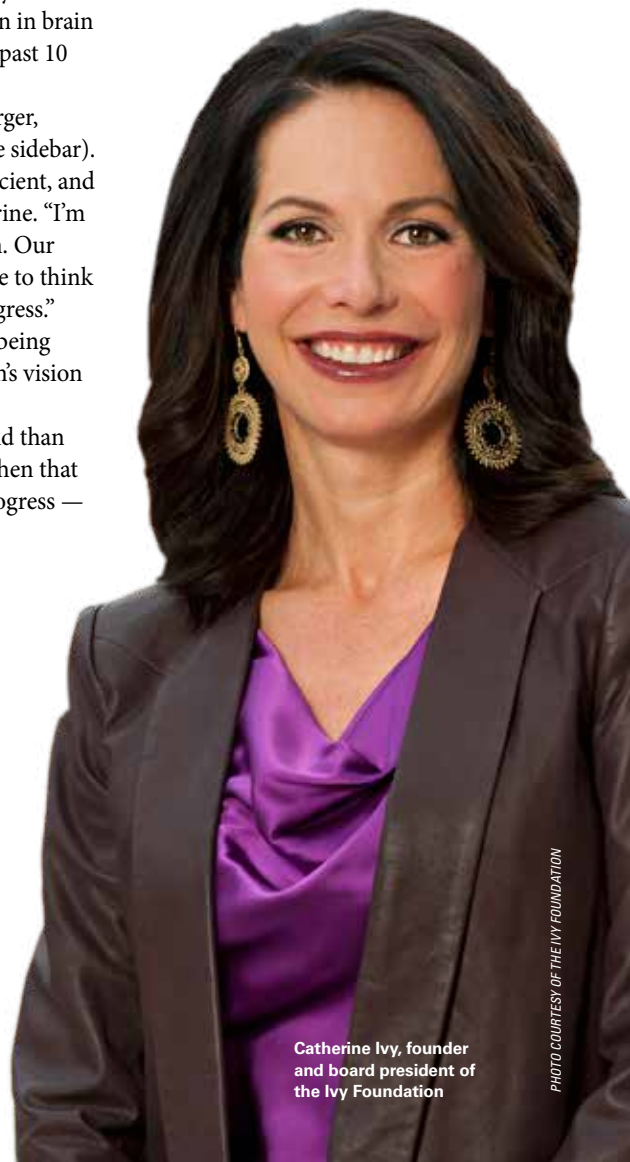
“There’s nothing I want more in this world than a cure,” says Catherine. “You never know when that day is going to come — that big jump in progress — but it’s going to come.”

## STOP BRAIN CANCER STAT | Foundation fills urgent need

The protein transcription factor STAT3 (signal transducer and activator of transcription 3) has a key role in high-grade malignant gliomas, the most common and aggressive brain tumors, says Amy Heimberger, M.D., professor, Neurosurgery. STAT3 is essential for maintaining cancer stem cells, and it protects tumors by suppressing the body’s immune system responses.

Propelled by support from the Ben and Catherine Ivy Foundation, Heimberger’s team has developed two ways to shut down STAT3: a small molecule inhibitor to halt STAT3’s cancer-driving function, and a nanoparticle that transports a blocking agent to disable the STAT3 signaling pathway in the immune system, unleashing it to destroy the tumor.

“We’re grateful to the Ben and Catherine Ivy Foundation for partnering with us to enable preclinical research so we can develop novel therapeutic strategies and the forthcoming launch of clinical trials that will bring them to patients,” says Heimberger. “We believe this work has the potential to change the course of treatment for patients with glioblastoma multiforme and other deadly gliomas by improving survival rates and minimizing toxicity.”



Catherine Ivy, founder and board president of the Ivy Foundation

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IVY FOUNDATION

## SURVIVORS SAY



Rosemary Herron represents MD Anderson in front of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSEMARY HERRON

**ROSEMARY HERRON** is a 14-year breast cancer survivor and longtime Pink Ribbon Volunteer at MD Anderson’s Nellie B. Connally Breast Center. She also volunteers at MD Anderson in Sugar Land. In 2012, she received the Painter Award for outstanding contributions to the Anderson Network support group, now known as myCancerConnection. Though her breast cancer returned two months later, she continued volunteering throughout treatment. Rosemary and her husband, Don, recently contributed \$25,000 to support a HER2 vaccine research program, Injecting Hope. The program is led by Elizabeth Mittendorf, M.D., associate professor, Breast Surgical Oncology.

One of my MD Anderson physicians, Dr. Jean-Bernard Durand, suggested that I share my around-the-world travel photos to inspire other patients to live life while living with cancer. I’m now on maintenance therapy, receiving Herceptin and Perjeta every three weeks. We schedule my treatments around my life, not my life around my treatments. I consider myself an unofficial MD Anderson ambassador and frequently wear my

MD Anderson T-shirts when traveling. I’m almost always approached with questions about my experiences, which I’m happy to share. I’ve had the most outstanding health care team there and feel blessed to be under their care. I want people to know that MD Anderson is not only a world-renowned cancer center, but also a place of hope and genuine kindness and compassion.

Promise invites cancer survivors to share their reflections. Email [promise@mdanderson.org](mailto:promise@mdanderson.org).

# 25 years OF CHEER

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

Holiday Giving Program celebrates silver anniversary

Since 1990, MD Anderson’s Holiday Giving Program has brought smiles to countless families through seasonal cards that have generated more than \$5.78 million. The annual program has provided funding for more than 200 patient assistance, community outreach, education and prevention programs that are truly Making Cancer History®.

## HOW IT WORKS

For a single donation, MD Anderson’s Development Office personalizes and mails holiday cards to donors’ friends, family and business associates. Holiday Giving Program supporters have the option to provide MD Anderson with a mailing list of the people they’d like to honor, and a card is sent to each honoree by MD Anderson. Or, MD Anderson will send the cards directly to the donor so that he or she may mail the cards with a personal greeting. Two new card designs are available for the 2015 holiday season. Each card was designed for the program by a patient at MD Anderson Children’s Cancer Hospital.

## MEANINGFUL MEMORIES

Nancy Glanville Jewell, of Houston, has supported the Holiday Giving Program for the past 24 years, practically since the program first started. She says the cards have become an integral part of her family’s traditions.

“As a young family, we always shared traditional, tangible Christmas gifts with our friends,” says Jewell. “As we grew older, we realized that what was most

important to us was to share something that would benefit not just our friends, but their families as well. Supporting the Holiday Giving Program allows us to honor our friends with a donation to an incredible institution while sharing a bigger message and raising awareness of the work being done to stop this disease.”

## TIME-TESTED TRADITION

Since 1991, Gayla and George Chapman, of Dallas, have used the Holiday Giving Program during the Christmas season to honor family and friends, and to support MD Anderson. “What I’ve always appreciated about MD Anderson is the love, the caring and the comfort that everyone has exhibited to me and others during my time there in addition to the extremely high level of medical competency,” says Gayla. “There are many charities that have similar kinds of holiday card programs, but none has the reputation of MD Anderson,” says George. “When we send the cards, people know we have the utmost confidence in the top cancer center in the world. No one asks why we chose MD Anderson.”

**200+** PROGRAMS

supporting patient assistance, cancer prevention and community outreach

**130,000**

GIVING CARDS  
SENT IN THE PAST DECADE

**\$5,781,105**

TOTAL RAISED



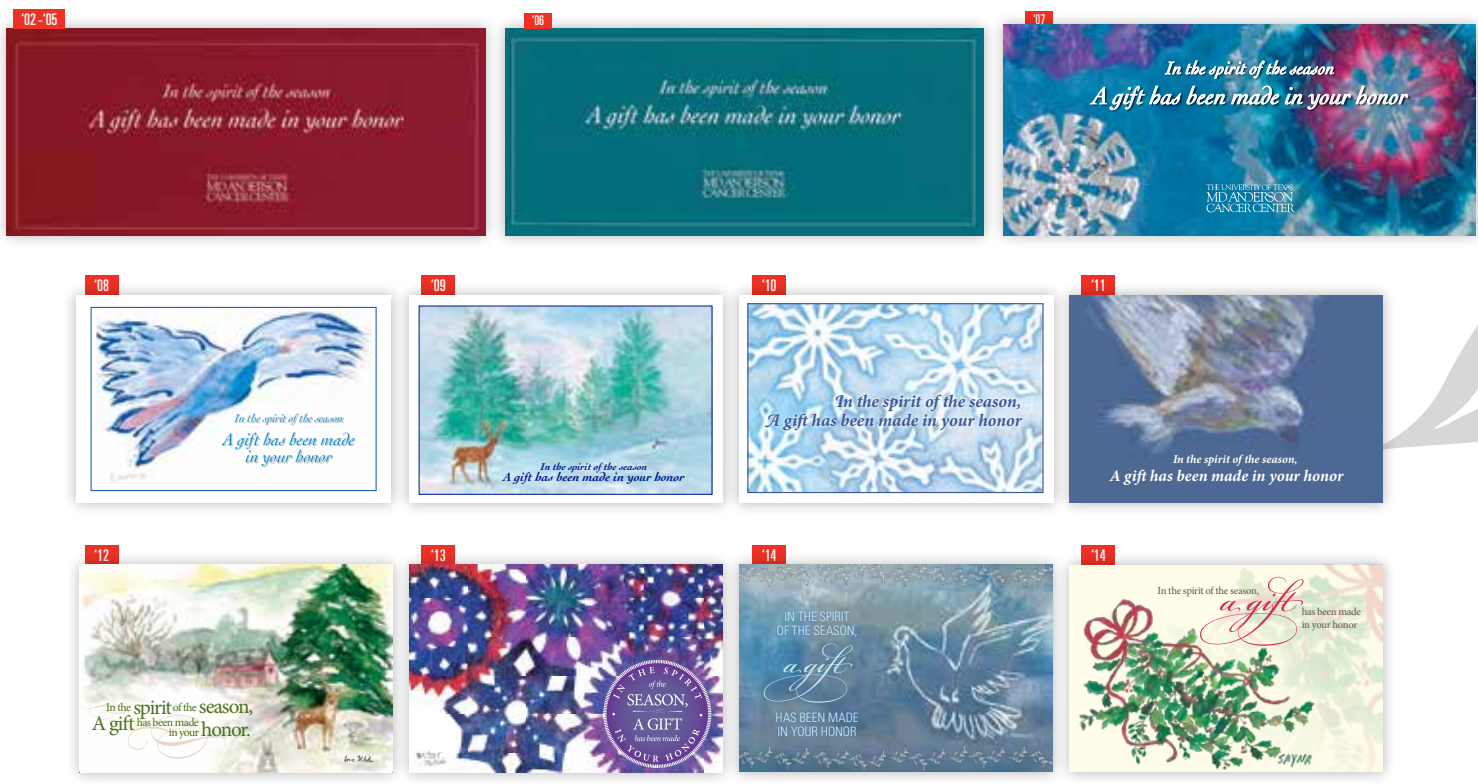


Cards are designed by patients at MD Anderson's Children's Cancer Hospital.

PHOTO BY ADOLFO GHAÑEZ III



“There are many charities that have similar kinds of holiday card programs, but none has the reputation of MD Anderson.” — GEORGE CHAPMAN



**CHANGING LIVES**

Through funding provided by the Holiday Giving Program in 2014, MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital was able to purchase two VGo robots, which patients have nicknamed Taylor and Travis. Patients in isolation or those too sick to venture out of their rooms control the robots to represent themselves at events, off-campus trips and their schools back home. A camera attached to the robot allows the children to video-conference in to the desired activity.

“Donors who support the Holiday Giving Program are really changing lives,” says Wykesha Hayes, pediatric school coordinator at the Children's Cancer Hospital. “They're giving us an opportunity to keep our patients feeling connected and normal. Education is such an integral part of life, and these technologies are helping us maintain that normality. We're forever grateful.”

**GIVE. GREET. REPEAT.**

The Holiday Giving Program continues to grow. Starting in fall 2015, wish happy birthday, celebrate a wedding or anniversary or tell someone you care with a special card that makes a world of difference for patients with cancer.

For more information and to support the Holiday Giving Program, visit [www.mdanderson.org/tributes](http://www.mdanderson.org/tributes).

# A journey down the right path

Bladder cancer survivor thriving, thanks to family support and MD Anderson 'geniuses'

BY MIRIAM SPRADLING

Last May, Jerry Vilmont's Iowa City, Iowa doctors diagnosed him with stage IV bladder cancer and gave him less than six months to live. Jerry and his wife, Cheryl, live in nearby Clinton, where they lead a close-knit family with four children and four grandchildren living within five minutes of their home. They were devastated.

Jerry's son-in-law did some quick research and found MD Anderson has made impressive strides in treating bladder cancer. Before long, Jerry was headed to Houston for his best chance at survival, confined to a wheelchair and growing ever weaker. That day, at the end of his cul-de-sac, a special surprise awaited him: all of their friends, children and grandchildren holding a banner the grandchildren had made that read "Our papa will beat cancer."

"It brought tears to my eyes," Jerry recalls. "I thought, 'How are they going to cope if I don't beat this?' Maybe that helped me too."

After a series of tests at MD Anderson, Jerry met his oncologist, Jennifer Wang,

**"I was given a miracle. Dr. Shah is the best thing that ever happened to us."**

— JERRY VILMONT

M.D., and his surgeon, Jay Bakul Shah, M.D. They started with chemotherapy, which shrank the tumor to half its size. After a quick jaunt home for his daughter's wedding, it was time for surgery.

## OPTIMAL OUTCOMES

Bladder surgery patients typically have a 10- to 14-day hospital stay followed by months of recovery at home. Thanks to the Optimized Surgical Journey for bladder cancer patients, a new approach by Shah that tweaks the standard of care before, during and after surgery, Jerry was discharged three days after the operation.

"Jerry wouldn't be alive today if we hadn't

gone to MD Anderson," Cheryl says.

He's regained nearly all of the weight he lost during treatment and is back to his favorite activity: 18 holes of golf, five days a week.

"I was given a miracle," Jerry says. "Dr. Shah is the best thing that ever happened to us."

To show their gratitude, Cheryl and Jerry contributed \$125,000 to support the doctor's Optimized Surgical Journey initiative.

"This is a good cause for a good team of people moving in the right direction," Jerry says. "I look at them as geniuses with common sense and compassion."

## ROGERS AWARD HONORS ESTEEMED EDUCATOR

Professor, dean strives to 'put students first'

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER



Michelle Barton, Ph.D.

**Michelle Barton, Ph.D.**, professor, Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis, is the 2015 recipient of the Julie and Ben Rogers Award for Excellence in Education. The \$15,000 prize recognizes excellence and dedication among MD Anderson employees.

Regina Rogers, a senior member of the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors, established the award almost 30 years ago in honor of her parents, the late Julie and Ben Rogers of Beaumont, Texas. Rogers' mother and brother, Arvey Rogers, M.D., were treated at MD Anderson.

"Education is a crucial component of MD Anderson's mission," says Rogers. "It's an honor and a privilege to recognize the amazing educators who contribute so much to this wonderful institution and who provide a foundation of knowledge for the next generation of clinicians and researchers."

Barton has worked at MD Anderson since 2000, first as an associate professor, then as a professor in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. She also is co-director of the Center for Stem Cell and Developmental Biology and dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences along with Michael Blackburn, Ph.D., of UTHealth.

"The simple focus I try to maintain in all aspects of education is to put the students first," says Barton. "I consider myself to be extremely lucky to have numerous opportunities to contribute to education, to work with an amazing team, great students and inspired colleagues, and to have leaders who believe in MD Anderson's mission of education."

### THE JULIE & BEN ROGERS

Award for

## EXCELLENCE



The Rogers Award was created in honor of Julie and Ben Rogers.

### 2015 FINALISTS

- **Kathleen Denton, Ph.D.**, associate director, Nursing Programs
- **Kelly Brassil, Ph.D.**, director, Nursing Programs
- **Mahsa Dehghanpour, Ed.D.**, program director, School of Health Professions
- **Crystal Franzese**, program coordinator, Hematology

ESTABLISHED

1978

Rotating focus areas

5 PATIENT CARE  
RESEARCH  
EDUCATION  
PREVENTION  
ADMINISTRATION

WINNER'S PRIZE

\$15,000

FINALISTS' PRIZES

\$1,500

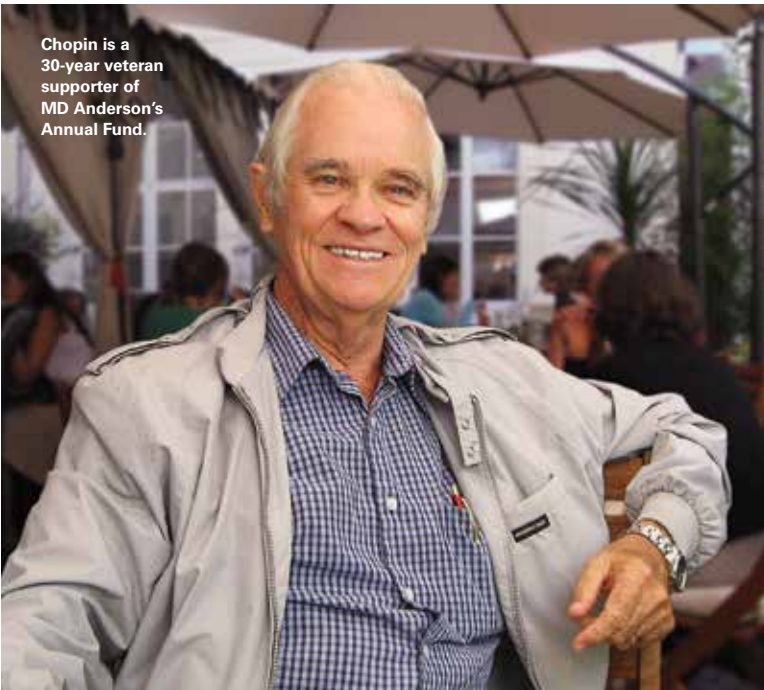
# Long-term BY DAWN DORSEY LOYALTY

Annual Fund donor: 30 years and counting



## YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

Donors to MD Anderson's Annual Fund take pride in knowing their contributions support innovative cancer research and a number of vital patient care and education initiatives. Each year the MD Anderson Cancer Foundation Administrative Board channels internal applications for Annual Fund assistance. Members of the board strive to find the perfect place for these unrestricted gifts, balancing the institution's mission areas of patient care, research, prevention and education. In this way the Annual Fund provides money where it's needed most, for initiatives that might otherwise go unfunded.



Chopin is a 30-year veteran supporter of MD Anderson's Annual Fund.

PHOTO COURTESY OF COLIN CHOPIN

“MD Anderson is truly a worthy cause. Cancer is a scourge to so many, and if I can do something to help I will.”

— COLIN CHOPIN

**T**houghtful investigation and steady perseverance are the approaches MD Anderson's specialists use to unlock answers to cancer's mysteries. They're also the tactics behind Colin Chopin's history as a 30-year Annual Fund supporter.

Although Chopin has never been a patient at MD Anderson, he studies the institution closely, keeping up with the latest developments.

“MD Anderson is truly a worthy cause,” he says. “Cancer is a scourge to so many, and if I can do something to help I will.”

### METHOD MEASURES QUALITY

Chopin, a native Australian who moved to Plano, Texas, near Dallas, 40 years ago, practiced law for many years. One of his clients was an insurance company, and as a defendant in personal injury cases he learned to measure physicians' skill and integrity. This led him to develop a personal logarithm to evaluate health care providers.

More than three decades ago, Chopin read about MD Anderson's progress toward cancer treatment and prevention.

“I support only institutions I believe are honest and good,” he says. “MD Anderson sounded like an institution exerting tremendous effort, with all the right people involved. That's proved to be the case.”

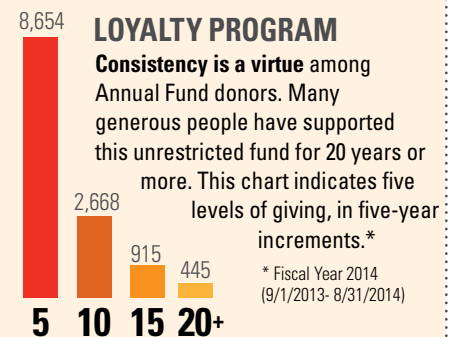


Frederick Lang Jr., M.D.

Several years ago, a friend in Australia called with the bad news that she had a brain tumor. Armed with a recommendation from his son's fellow college professor, Chopin that day contacted Frederick Lang Jr., M.D., professor and director of clinical research in Neurosurgery at MD Anderson. Lang responded promptly with the name of a stellar physician in Australia, cementing Chopin's good impression.

### GIFTS MADE WITH CARE AND GRATITUDE

At 79, Chopin still works in real estate



management. He and his wife have three children, seven grandchildren and a new great-granddaughter. He travels often, including annual visits to France for a family reunion that's been going on for 166 years.

At the end of each year, the Chopins decide who's worthy of a check. And for 30 years, MD Anderson's made the cut.

“Cancer is a major challenge,” he says. “But I believe progress is being made, and MD Anderson is positioned to make real strides.”

To contribute to the Annual Fund, visit [www.mdanderson.org/gifts](http://www.mdanderson.org/gifts). Thank you for making a difference in the lives of cancer patients everywhere.

## FISHING FOR ANSWERS

Foundation reels in support for appendiceal cancer

BY WENDY MOHON

When Jeff Reid found out his brother, Matt, had been diagnosed with appendiceal cancer, his initial thought was, “Why not just remove the appendix?” He learned it’s not that simple.

Appendiceal cancer is relatively rare, affecting approximately 1,500 people in the U.S. each year. Most don’t exhibit symptoms until the disease is advanced. Matt’s cancer had advanced to stage IV by the time he arrived at MD Anderson.

Jeff credits MD Anderson with extending Matt’s life four additional years following the diagnosis, time the brothers spent healing the kind of a rift strong-willed siblings often endure. By the time Matt passed away in 2013, they had rebuilt their brotherly bond.

Jeff, along with Steve Ingle and Elizabeth Craft, who grew up together in Alvin, Texas, created The Matthew Scot Reel Deel Foundation Inc. The organization uses hunting, fishing and live music events to raise funding for appendiceal cancer research and spread awareness of the disease. Last year the nonprofit donated \$30,000 for MD Anderson research. Jeff expects to match that figure by the end of 2015.

“We’re doing it for the doctors, for the people who are in the fight,” Jeff says. “I want to help the ones who are researching appendiceal cancer to eradicate this disease.”

### Philanthropy plays crucial role

Rare cancers present a funding and research challenge, says Michael Overman, M.D., associate professor, Gastrointestinal Medical Oncology, and a member of Matt Reid’s treatment team. The cancer’s rarity means clinicians have less experience with the disease, researchers have less data, and grants and traditional funding for additional studies are more difficult to secure. Overman says that’s why private gifts like those from The Reel Deel Foundation are even more significant.

Funds from The Reel Deel Foundation will support a study of appendiceal cancer molecular samples in the hope of developing a better way to detect the cancer at its earlier stages.

## LUNCHEON MAKES A LASTING IMPACT

Inaugural event raises \$231,100 for radiation oncology research

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

**MD** Anderson Cancer Center Advance Team member Jenee Bobbora, along with co-chair Judy Jackson and honorary chair and Advance Team member Dorothy Paterson, raised more than \$231,100 at the inaugural Impact Award Luncheon, hosted by the Inflammatory Breast Cancer (IBC) Foundation and presenting sponsors Clarence P. Cazalot, MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors senior member, and his wife, Ann.

Tom Buchholz, M.D., executive vice president and physician-in-chief at MD Anderson, received the inaugural Impact Award. More than 330 attendees came to honor Buchholz and support the newly established Center for Radiation Oncology Research, one of eight components of the Red and Charline McCombs Institute for the Early Detection and Treatment of Cancer.

“I feel privileged to have a career devoted to caring for cancer patients and working in an institution focused on providing the best treatment outcomes,” says Buchholz, who became Bobbora’s radiation oncologist when she was diagnosed with IBC in 2003. “These funds will support our goal of making radiation safer and more effective.”

“I consider myself MD Anderson’s No. 1 fan.”

— JENEЕ BOBBORA



From left: Clarence P. Cazalot, MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors senior member, and wife Ann; Tom Buchholz, M.D.

### IBC SURVIVOR: ON A MISSION

Since her inflammatory breast cancer (IBC) diagnosis 12 years ago, Jenee Bobbora has been on a mission to give back, both to MD Anderson and other survivors.

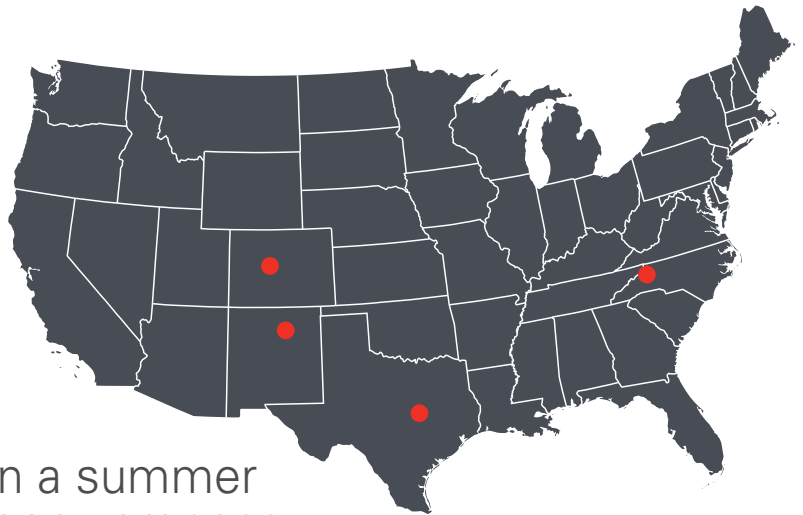
“I consider myself MD Anderson’s No. 1 fan,” says Bobbora, president and co-founder of the IBC Foundation. “It’s such a pleasure to raise money for the institution because you know it’s going to be used by the best and brightest to help end cancer. Dr. Buchholz is passionate about research and has a gift for explaining the complexities of that research in a way people can understand. He worked hard to help establish MD Anderson’s IBC Clinic and on top of that, he’s a wonderful person.”



**EVERY HANDPRINT TELLS A STORY:** Patrick Zweidler-McKay, M.D., Ph.D., section chief, Pediatric Leukemia and Lymphoma, received a \$250,000 research grant from Hyundai Hope on Wheels in September. Patients from MD Anderson Children’s Cancer Hospital, MD Anderson President Ronald DePinho and Hyundai representatives participated in a handprint ceremony celebrating Childhood Cancer Awareness month. Hyundai Hope on Wheels, a nonprofit made up of more than 820 Hyundai dealers across the country, raises awareness of childhood cancer and donates funds to support research. Pictured with Zweidler-McKay is Marisa Hornbaker, graduate research assistant, UT Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston, Pediatrics – Research.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SANDRA SOULE

# hot . topics



## Summer seminars spread prevention tips cross-country

MD Anderson leaders set off on a summer road trip of sorts to share cancer awareness and prevention tips across the country. Flip flops and beaches were not on the agenda.

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

MD Anderson held Making Cancer History seminars in four cities, June through August: Austin, Texas; Blowing Rock, N.C.; Aspen, Colo.; and Santa Fe, N.M. The free seminars featured MD Anderson experts such as:

**Ronald DePinho, M.D.**, president

**Lorenzo Cohen, Ph.D.**, professor, Palliative Care and Rehabilitation Medicine, and director, Integrative Medicine Program

**Sam Hanash, M.D., Ph.D.**, director, Red and Charline McCombs Institute for the Early Detection and Treatment of Cancer

**Ernest Hawk, M.D.**, vice president, Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences

**Kelly Hunt, M.D.**, professor, Surgical Oncology

**Gordon Mills, M.D., Ph.D.**, chair, Systems Biology; professor, Medicine and Immunology; co-director, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Institute for Personalized Cancer Therapy; and co-leader, Breast and Ovarian Cancers Moon Shot

**Jim Ray, Ph.D.**, head of research, Neurodegeneration Consortium

Attendees learned about advances in cancer treatment and patient care as well as recent breakthroughs made possible by the Moon Shots Program, MD Anderson's unprecedented effort to rapidly reduce cancer deaths and transform patient care. Guests also received healthy lifestyle tips to reduce cancer risk and participated in question-and-answer sessions with the doctors.

"Our mission is to end cancer in Texas, the nation and the world," says DePinho. "One of our strategies is to educate the public so they can empower themselves with knowledge to attack cancer and to prevent it from happening in the first place. Cancer's greatest vulnerability is knowledge."



PHOTO BY DOUG HOLSTEIN

**Top left:** Seminar attendees eagerly listen to a presentation by Sam Hanash, M.D., Ph.D., in Blowing Rock, N.C.

**Top right:** Jim Ray, Ph.D., Jerry and Frances Freeman, Ronald DePinho, M.D., and Ernest Hawk, M.D., in Santa Fe.

**Right:** Aspen host Barbara Hines greets MD Anderson's Ronald DePinho, M.D., at a reception on the banks of the Roaring Fork River.



PHOTO BY JANE PHILLIPS, JANE PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO BY SHONDIA HOUTZER

# "OUR MISSION IS TO END CANCER IN TEXAS, THE NATION AND THE WORLD."

— RONALD DEPINHO, M.D.

# GETTING TO KNOW Mel Klein

BY SARAH WATSON

Mel Klein has been a member of the MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors for 25 years and is currently serving his second year as chair. An investment banker, entrepreneur, venture capitalist, attorney and philanthropist, he is the founder of Melvyn N. Klein Interests and a respected community leader in Corpus Christi, Texas, with business interests in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and other cities in the U.S. and internationally. From 1980 to 2005, he wrote the guest column “Feedback” for the Corpus Christi Caller-Times, later compiled in the book “Our Time,” proceeds of which benefit MD Anderson. In 1996, he was named to the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans. Klein and his wife, Annette, are members of the Anderson Assembly, an organization honoring donors who’ve made lifetime commitments of \$1 million or more to MD Anderson. They have two daughters, Jacqueline and Jenna.

**What three words would you use to describe yourself?**

I have a lust for life, adventure, travel and learning and am a positive thinker, driven and laser-focused. Three words? Live, love, learn.

**What are the secrets to success?**

Desire, determination, vision and, above all, a positive attitude.

**Who do you count among your mentors?**

C.V. Starr, founder of American International Group, who arranged for me to work in AIG’s general counsel’s office during law school and, after graduation, at high levels in Washington, D.C.; and Dan Lufkin and the late Jay Pritzker, close friends and business partners over decades, extraordinary men who taught me how to be creative and pursue and obtain my goals.

**What is most important in life?**

Loyalty to family, friends and the institutions and causes to which I am committed. My father, who had an irrepressibly positive view of life, taught his children and grandchildren to do the best with our abilities and to take care of each other and those in need. My mother, who will be 97 this November, continues to reinforce those values.

**Describe a particularly life-changing event.**

At age 18, while a freshman in college, I was the only survivor of an alcohol-related car accident. I have not touched hard liquor since, and rarely drink. That tragic experience affected me deeply and

motivated me to make a positive difference with my life.

**Have there been other turning points?**

In 1976, after declining an offer to be the fourth founding partner of KKR, a global investment firm, with Jerome Kohlberg Jr., Henry Kravis and George Roberts, I left New York to marry my fiancée in Corpus Christi and settle in her hometown to be near her family.

**Tell us a little-known fact about Mel Klein.**

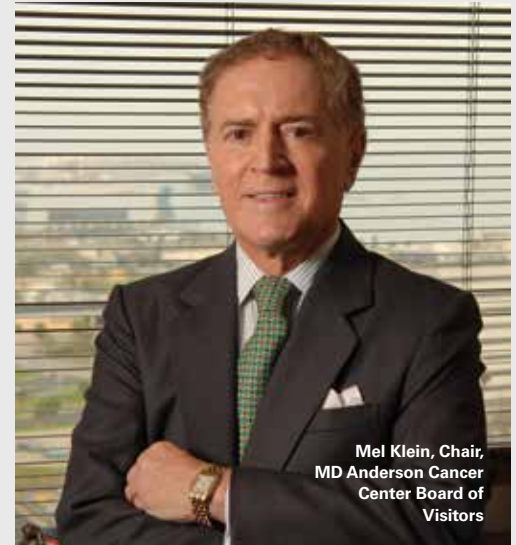
In the 1990s, I co-founded two independent film companies that backed “Sophie’s Choice” and other movies. A favorite project was “Getting Away With Murder,” starring Dan Akroyd, Jack Lemmon, Lily Tomlin and Bonnie Hunt, and produced by Penny Marshall. The director, Harvey Miller, let me be assistant director for several days; my daughter Jacqueline had a speaking part with Akroyd.

**What do you do for fun?**

Play tennis, work out, hike and read, mainly nonfiction.

**What motivated you to be an advocate for MD Anderson?**

My mother-in-law was treated at MD Anderson for lymphoma, and my father was treated for multiple myeloma by a doctor who trained there. After he died, Mickey LeMaistre (Charles LeMaistre, M.D., then MD Anderson president) invited me to join the Board of Visitors. It was an honor, and still is, to be associated with the most outstanding, dedicated and compassionate people in the field.



Mel Klein, Chair,  
MD Anderson Cancer  
Center Board of  
Visitors

**Born:** Chicago  
**Raised:** Gary, Ind.  
**Resides:** Corpus Christi  
**Education:** New York (*Colgate University, Columbia University Law School*), London (*London School of Economics and Political Science*), Washington, D.C. (*Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*)  
**Career:** Washington, D.C.; Chicago; New York; Los Angeles; Corpus Christi

**BOARD OF VISITORS (SINCE 1990):**  
**Chair** (September 2014-August 2016)  
**Executive Committee**  
**Strategic Advisory Committee Chair,**  
**Technology Transfer Advisory Group Chair** (10 years)  
**Research Advisory Committee Chair** (10 years)  
**Executive Committee, Making Cancer History®: The Campaign to Transform Cancer Care** (\$1.2 billion)  
**Steering Committee, South Campus Research Initiative** (\$135 million)

**How has your own cancer experience affected your perspective?**

In 2011, after a diagnosis of atypical amelanotic melanoma, I immediately came to MD Anderson. Now I look forward to celebrating my five-year survivorship, in January — especially considering a very recent second occurrence, again successfully treated at MD Anderson. My personal cancer experience, coupled with the losses of my mother-in-law, father and sister, in 2010 to T cell prolymphocytic leukemia, has strengthened my opinion of the universal quality that permeates the institution. It is a beacon of hope, thanks to the most extraordinary people in the world — from the leadership at the top to the professionals on staff to the volunteers — all united in one goal: to end cancer. I am committed to doing my part in advancing their efforts in Making Cancer History®.

# Cancer-free for 50 years

Survivor credits life to MD Anderson

BY ALLISON SCHAFFER

**J**ohn Tucker of Anderson, S. C. was 15 when he first came to MD Anderson in 1965. At that time, the institution had been in operation for 21 years, and teenage John could barely comprehend his diagnosis.

“When you’re young, cancer is cancer,” he says. “You don’t think about what type of cancer it is or what stage it’s in, cancer is cancer. It’s fierce and it’s deadly. And I had cancer.”

The baseball player had been having trouble throwing a ball. After finding a lump underneath his armpit, John’s doctors immediately recommended he go to MD Anderson. John recalls that even 50 years ago, MD Anderson was the premier cancer hospital in the nation.

“It was a rapid chain of events,” he says. “Two weeks after the biopsy came back I had surgery, and two weeks after that I was home.”

## ‘CANCER USED TO BE THE END. IT’S NOT ANYMORE.’

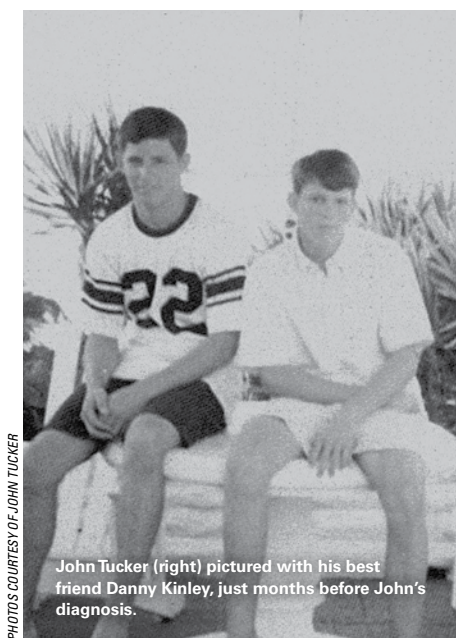
John was diagnosed with desmoid fibromatosis, a rare form of sarcoma that occurs in about two to four people per million per year nationwide. His right arm and shoulder were amputated to prevent the cancer from spreading. Since then, John’s focus has been on what he gained rather than what he lost.

“Life is precious. You can’t dwell on the negative,” he says. “You’ve got to have faith. Every problem is an opportunity to do something positive.”

Today at 65, John is MD Anderson’s fourth longest survivor. He’s lived a full life: raising a happy family; serving his community and state as a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives for six terms; receiving the state’s highest order, the Order of the Palmetto; and counseling fellow cancer survivors and amputees.

John celebrated his 50th year of being cancer-free in September, returning to MD Anderson for the first time in 35 years during the institution’s annual Survivorship Conference.

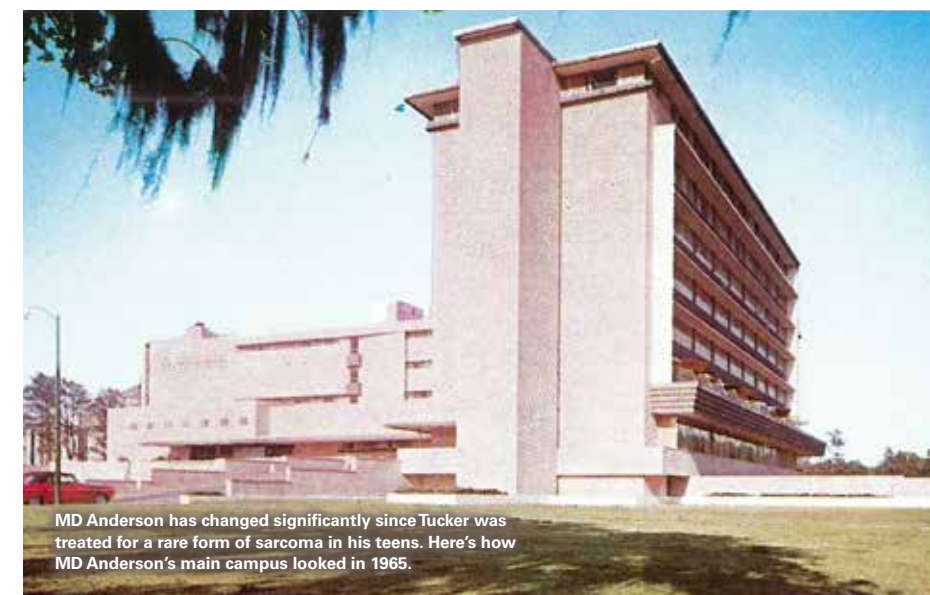
“Simply put, MD Anderson gave me my life,” says John. “I’m living proof of life 50 years after a cancer diagnosis, thanks to MD Anderson. It’s a wonderful place.”



John Tucker (right) pictured with his best friend Danny Kinley, just months before John’s diagnosis.



John Tucker celebrates 50 years of being cancer-free.



MD Anderson has changed significantly since Tucker was treated for a rare form of sarcoma in his teens. Here’s how MD Anderson’s main campus looked in 1965.

**“MD Anderson gave me my life. I’m living proof of life 50 years after a cancer diagnosis, thanks to MD Anderson. It’s a wonderful place.”**

— JOHN TUCKER

[www.youtube.com/user/myGivingToMDAnderson](http://www.youtube.com/user/myGivingToMDAnderson)

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## “Giving is a gift right back.”

*Cancer survivor Estela Avery is a San Antonio native, a former nurse, an avid fundraiser and executive director of the San Antonio River Foundation. She supports MD Anderson's orbital oncology /ophthalmic plastic surgery program in recognition of Bitu Esmaeli, M.D., professor, Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery. Here she reflects on her cancer experience and the importance of giving.*

“ I was struck by the kindness that was all around me at MD Anderson, the compassion and the patience. I thought, they see thousands of people, but when you're sitting in front of them and they're taking their time with you, you are the only patient. Right away I knew this was a great place to be and it was a great place to support.

I think we all take for granted that somebody else is in charge of giving, somebody else is in charge of supporting, somebody else is going to make this happen. That somebody else is you.

A great legacy is to know that you've helped along the way and made a difference in society, your community, maybe that one special person out there. For me, giving is a gift right back.”