

## ANNE RAPP - 2002 HONORARY SURVIVOR CHAIR

Some she helped to heal. Others she provided a comforting touch, conversation, and an understanding of the trials ahead.

As a woman's health nurse practitioner in the OB/GYN department at the University of Iowa Hospitals, Anne Rapp saw firsthand the devastating effects of undetected late-stage breast cancer. She recalls an experience with a 24-year-old student from the University of Iowa. "She found a lump that morning and wanted someone to check her," said Rapp. "I examined her and found two firm lumps. She was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer and subsequently died."

That experience indelibly marked Rapp. She has since dedicated her career and personal life to educating women on the importance of early detection through monthly breast self-exams and annual mammograms.

The enormity of her message hit home once again when, in 1998, a screening mammogram detected a lump in her breast. "The lump was so small that it could not be palpated," said Rapp. "I immediately knew the lump was cancerous. But, having seen others battle breast cancer and win, I took what was about to come in stride."

During the ensuing three months, Rapp underwent lumpectomy surgery and 38 courses of radiation therapy. She was the third woman to participate in the Sentinel Lymph Node Mapping study through the Genesis Center for Breast Health. During this procedure a few key nodes are removed to determine if cancer has spread beyond the breast. Rapp recalled, "The sentinel node was negative for cancer, however, the protocol for the study indicated that additional axillary nodes were to be dissected." Six weeks after surgery, during radiation treatment, Rapp developed lymphedema, a painful swelling caused by fluid build-up.

Throughout Rapp was determined to remain upbeat. "My father developed cancer of the kidney and passed away after fighting colon cancer." "I drew my strength by remembering his unfaltering positive outlook on life."

She now plans to provide that strength to others. Rapp related, "I have a particular interest in taking the message of early detection to the African-American and minority community." Statistics indicate that the death rate due to breast cancer is higher in African-American and Hispanic women due to late detection. Rapp believes that every woman should be aware of how critical it is to continue monthly breast self-exams, annual clinical exams and screening mammograms. Because of her career and personal dedication to breast cancer awareness, Rapp has been selected as the Honorary Survivor Chair for the 13th Annual Komen Quad Cities Race for the Cure®, to be held Saturday, June 9, in the John Deere Commons area of downtown Moline. Sponsored locally by Genesis Medical Center and KWQC-TV-6, the race is one of more than 100 across the country. In 12 years, the local event has raised more than \$1.5 million and provided over 2,500 mammogram vouchers to needy Quad City-area women.