

Barbara Rogers

Patient Advocate

2/1/1947 – 12/7/2013



Barbara Rogers was an indefatigable patient advocate. Born in 1947 with scoliosis and a club foot, until age 6, she was never without a cast or brace. At 13, the bone used for her spinal fusion proved infected, and Rogers spent six months in a hospital isolation room. After marriage, she delivered a healthy 7 pound baby boy — although she'd been told she could not survive a pregnancy.

During the next 20 years, Rogers was a wife, mother and business-woman with a grueling schedule. Eventually, she ended up hospitalized in respiratory failure. Dr. Norma Braun became Rogers' pulmonologist and started her on home noninvasive ventilation. For the remainder of her life, Rogers credited Dr. Braun with "keeping her going."

Rogers believed in patient education, and in the mid 1990s, she started "Breethezy", an organization devoted to helping home respiratory patients. In 2000, she started NECA (National Emphysema and COPD Association), recognizing there was a great need for patient advocacy. Rogers lectured on the patient's perspective all over the world and was well-published.

In 2003, Rogers was the recipient of the Dr. Charles H. Hudson Award for Cardiopulmonary Health. The annual award recognizes efforts to positively influence the public's awareness of cardiopulmonary health.

In 2010, Rogers was the first patient to be honored by CHEST with the Margaret Pfrommer Memorial Lecture in Long-Term Mechanical Ventilation. Established in 1999 by Dr. Eveline Faure and Dr. Allen Goldberg, the award honors an individual who has advanced mechanical ventilation and fostered partnerships between physicians and patients.