

## Cancer Survivor Making a Difference by Giving Back

/ BY ALEX MARCOUX

**Sometimes when you give, you receive in areas you would never expect.**

Susan M. Bender is the President and CEO of Linc Energy Systems, a manufacturers' agent, distributor and contractor for the energy industry. She started her business in 1990, when she relocated to Colorado. Not wanting to name the business after herself, she chose Linc, after her dog "Abraham Lincoln." Abraham was Susan's trusted travel companion and that first year they clocked nearly 100,000 miles on her SUV while visiting customers. She didn't have a choice as she was the only salesperson in her business and knew what she needed to do to cover the Rocky Mountain states and be successful.

Fast-forward 21 years and you'll still find Susan selling in the industry, but without her trusted canine. While the dynamics of her business have changed as it's grown over the years, one thing has remained constant, her attitude toward giving back.

Over the years, Susan has actively supported numerous organizations by giving her time, talents and money. She's held board and officer positions in homeowners associations, a business condo complex and church groups. She regularly donates to her church, Planned Parenthood and ILIFF School of Theology to name a few.

As an avid bicyclist, Susan has participated in organized events like Ride the Rockies, the Elephant Rock, RAGBRAI and Tour of Colorado. Combined with her desire to give back, it shouldn't be a surprise that she's also ridden in the Courage Classic to raise funds for Children's Hospital.

Many organizations she's supported over the years relate to cancer research and treatment. While this may have been initially inspired when she lost her mother to cancer, Susan herself has had a brush with Hodgkin's lymphoma. As a cancer survivor, Susan has a unique perspective for life and the gift of time. This is why she volunteers as a "first responder" for Hodgkin's disease and the Sonaviv Alternative Healing Center. Those recently diagnosed with lymphoma are given names of survivors, including Susan's, to call and speak with about the challenges they're facing.

When I asked Susan why she is so generous, her response was simple: "It makes me feel good! Whenever you have a glimpse of your mortality and are given a second chance, how can you not give back?" Susan feels if she can demonstrate to just one individual that there's hope, and they don't give up, she'll make a difference.


"Isn't that what we all want, to make a difference in this world? How



Susan M. Bender

fortunate I am to have a fresh start." Susan believes that the more she gives unconditionally, she receives back by knowing she's helped others. "I remember how grateful I was to have someone to talk to when I was sick."

Perhaps Susan's experience demonstrates that the more you give the more you get back, not necessarily in the same way though. While Susan may feel "good" about what she's doing, it is fascinating that in these interesting economic times, her company is expanding and she's venturing into new markets. The one-person and dog team is now recognized as a leading supplier and utility contractor in the Rocky Mountain States and is venturing outward.

"You don't have to be a survivor to give back," Susan Bender says. "It feels good knowing I've helped those in need and trust it'll come back to me one way or another. It always has." Those interested in connecting with Susan can find her on [www.lincenergysystems.com](http://www.lincenergysystems.com). 

*Alex Marcoux is a former employee of Linc Energy Systems and Vice President of M Squared Public Relations and Marketing.*