Meet **Dave** Ranney from Lawrence  
**KABC At Large Member and board member since 2016**

“I’m 73 years old, which means my high school and college years coincided with the Civil Rights Movement, the war in Vietnam, and the so-called cultural revolution. My big ‘take away’ was that we all have an obligation to make the world a better, more livable place.

Though we may not like to admit it, most of us grow up to be like our parents. My mother’s father was a surgeon. He would take her and her brother with him on his nightly hospital rounds. On their way home, they would stop for ice cream. I’m convinced that my mother, at a very early age, realized that many of her father’s patients were suffering. She saw it first-hand, and for the rest of her life, she spoke out against it. I can remember her opining that God didn’t put us here to suffer. I share that belief. My mother lived to 95 years old. She spent her final 18 months at Brandon Woods in Lawrence. The care, at best, was adequate…albeit barely. She welcomed death and, frankly, I did too.

I’ve long struggled to understand, **why do we do this to our elders?**

I spent most of my career in Kansas journalism, covering social services and state government. I wrote many, many – TOO MANY! – stories about nursing home conditions and the Legislature’s halfhearted efforts to promote non-institutional care.

I had enormous respect Kansas Advocates for Better Care and its then-executive director, Mitzi McFatrich…and, of course, Lenette Hamm. They truly fought the fight, always.

Fifty-plus years ago, I was a charter employee at Cottonwood, Inc. I think I was 19, maybe 20, a senior at KU. Three of Cottonwood’s founders -- Petey Cerf, Bryona Wiley, and Jessie Branson – were also instrumental in starting KABC’s predecessor, Kansans for Improvement of Nursing Homes (KINH).

I knew and admired Bryona and Jessie, certainly. They were warriors. But for me, Petey was a mentor. She was a do-er, she made things happen. I can remember thinking, ‘Man, when I grow up, I want to be like her!’

I’ll leave you with this: I saw a T-shirt the other day, it read, *Nothing changes when nothing changes.*"