

**MYÉLOME
CANADA**



**MYELOMA
CANADA**

Uniquely devoted to the Canadian myeloma community

A new cause when an affliction hits home

From The Globe and Mail Saturday, Jan. 09, 2010

The donors: David and Molly Bloom

The Gift: Raising \$4.1-million

The Cause: Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital

The Reason: To finance a chair in multiple myeloma research. For years, David Bloom and his wife Molly raised money for various health causes even though the diseases didn't affect their family directly.

"I was always raising money for someone else's cause," Mr. Bloom recalled.

"I didn't have that particular health challenge nor did members of my family."

One day in May 2006, about five years after he retired as chief executive of Shoppers Drug Mart, Mr. Bloom felt pain in his chest. He thought he had hurt a rib by playing too much tennis and went to see a doctor. It turned out to be much more serious. Doctors told Mr. Bloom he had multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer.

He began rigorous treatment at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto which included two stem-cell transplants.

"As a result of that, I've achieved at least a partial remission," he said.

Mr. Bloom was eventually put in touch with Paul Alofs, head of the hospital's foundation, who asked if he could help advance public understanding of the disease. The two knew each other well from their business days (Mr. Alofs is former head of HMV Canada) and Mr. Bloom agreed to take on the effort.

"One of the challenges I had was, I didn't want to be a victim of this disease," Mr. Bloom said. "I wanted to contribute to obtaining knowledge about the disease and to find drugs that could stabilize multiple myeloma patients until the cure is found."

The Blooms spearheaded a fundraising campaign for a chair in multiple myeloma at the hospital. Despite the recession, they raised \$4.1-million and made their own substantial donation.

The chair was formally announced during a ceremony last fall and Mr. Bloom, 66, hopes to keep raising more money. "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass," he said. "It's about learning to dance in the rain."