

CE 012

SECTION H
SATURDAY
APRIL 30, 2011
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»TORONTO STAR«

New in Homes & Condos

DR. WHO ON THE TOWN

Colin and Justin went to New York
and bumped into Matt Smith.
Let the meetings wait! **H2**



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CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

DEALING A WINNING HAND

TRACY HANES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

When 300 members from the real estate and development community got together for a high stakes poker tournament on Thursday at the Four Seasons Hotel, they dealt Princess Margaret and Mount Sinai hospitals winning hands.

Since its inception four years ago, the Canadian Real Estate Industry Hold'em for Life Charity Challenge has raised in excess of \$3.5 million for cancer research and equipment and has become a high-profile event for senior executives from major real estate companies.

The event is the brainchild of Centre Court Developments founder Andrew Hoffman, who prior to launching his own company in 2010, was chief operating officer at Menkes Developments for more than 20 years. Centre Court's first project is Peter Street Condos at Adelaide and Peter Sts.

He co-founded Hold'em for Life with Tony Realle, a director at BMO Capital Markets.

"Hold'em for Life is something I'm very proud of," says Hoffman. "Five years ago, I was with some friends and colleagues from the real estate sector and we were remarking how the industry got together for various education forums and annual awards, but we never got together as an industry

Hold'em for Life Charity Challenge raises money
for Princess Margaret and Mount Sinai hospitals

to give back to charity."

Soon afterwards, Hoffman's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. He had previously been involved with charitable causes, sitting on the boards of the Multiple Sclerosis

Society of Toronto and Ronald McDonald House, but wanted to take on a proactive fundraising role. "A lot of us are impacted by breast cancer. Cancer hits when we least expect it and I knew my sister was

going down a tough road," he says. "I wanted to show my love and support for her. It was a call to action."

Hoffman knew that the real estate community would have the financial means and the willingness to support a good cause. So, he and Realle started planning the first Hold'em For Life.

"Poker was well underway to being almost a sport and we created a classy black tie evening with a cocktail reception, poker tournament and high-end fashion show with the objective of not only having a good time, but to raise funds for cancer research," says Hoffman.

The response was tremendous and the first Hold'em for Life raised just under \$1 million. Every subsequent event has been a sell-out and raised similar amounts. Attendees don't have to have previous poker experience, says Hoffman; last year's winner only learned to play the week before.

"It's become the go-to industry event," says Hoffman.

At Mount Sinai Hospital, Hold'em for Life proceeds were used to purchase equipment that dramatically accelerated genetic testing on tumour samples, a digital mammography unit, and a luminometer to help world-renowned researcher Dr. Jeffrey Wrana screen drug molecules to determine their effectiveness in treating leukemia.



CHARITY continued on H4

CORNELL

Revisiting the new urbanism

In 1998, residents moved into a Markham lifestyle experiment

ELVIRA CORDILEONE
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The way Cornell residents tell it, giving neighbours tea and sympathy is a way of life in this Markham new urbanist community.

Homeowners wanting a serious dose of such palliatives, however, can head to Bur Oak Ave., where Jayme Collier Moniz has made a career out of dispensing such things.

Moniz and her husband, Mo, run a storefront called Integral Temple. She's an herbal practitioner and blends teas for what ails your body, and provides lifestyle counselling and meditation coaching to ease your heart and mind.

Mo Moniz is a tattoo artist with a large and loyal following across the GTA, including his wife, who displays large swaths of delicate, intricate designs on her back, legs and arms with pride.

The crisp sunshine pours through the store's picture window across a dark gleaming floor.

Delicate exotic fragrances waft through the air.

Bur Oak has zoning for mixed use, which allows residents to run a business at street level and live upstairs.

The Moniz family occupies a spacious two-storey, three-bedroom apartment. They relocated from Toronto's Willowdale area two years ago.

Moniz says she'd never heard the term "new urbanism" before they came to Cornell.

CORNELL continued on H12

CE 012

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NEW IN HOMES

A royal flush for hospital, cancer charities

CHARITY from H1

Last year, the charity made a 10-year commitment to the hospital by establishing the Hold'em for Life chair in prostate cancer research.

"The real estate sector has been incredibly generous and stepped up to the challenge and we are very proud we could fully fund a 10-year chair," says Hoffman, who is now on the board of the Mount Sinai Foundation.

Princess Margaret Hospital has received funding for its genitourinary cancer division, which seeks to be a world leader in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the most common cancers in men including prostate, kidney, bladder and testicular cancer.

A small portion of Hold'em for Life funds have gone to Camp Oochigeas, an oasis for 4- to 19-year-olds affected by cancer, and to purchase a carbon fibre racing wheelchair for elite Paralympic athlete Michelle Stilwell, who won two gold medals at the Beijing Paralympics.

Two years ago, Hoffman realized that the Hold'em for Life concept could be replicated in another sector and approached a friend who heads up one of the world's largest gold companies.

In 2010, a similar event was



Co-founders of the Hold'Em for Life Charity Challenge, Andrew Hoffman, left, president of CentreCourt Developments, and Tony Reale, director, BMO Capital Markets, during 2010's fundraiser.

launched in the mining sector and has raised \$5 million for the Hospital for Sick Children and Healthy Kids International.

Hoffman is hoping that other sectors will also embrace the Hold'em

for Life idea to raise money for other worthy charities. He has renewed energy, particularly for the cancer cause, because his sister's cancer has reoccurred and he understands the need for ongoing

funding for research and treatment.

After the last poker hand was played at Thursday's fundraiser, Hoffman turned his attention to his next big event: the launch of the

Peter Street Condos.

As head of his own company, he's looking forward "to having the opportunity to roll up my sleeves and to be involved from the smallest detail to the largest strategic detail. It's exciting."

His two decades at Menkes provided him with the chance to work with "an incredible lineage of great consultants," and he's been able to handpick a team of top talent, including architect Peter Clewes and interior designer Elaine Cecconi.

"The key for me was bringing a development forward that had density and that was designed to a standard one would be proud of," says Hoffman. "I couldn't be prouder."

"Peter Clewes had sensitivity to the nature of the area and its brick and beam buildings and came up with a design for the podium that is consistent with the surrounding area, with a modern tower on top. And we brought Peter and Elaine together, and the design of the interior and exterior were done simultaneously to be consistent with each other."

Three storeys of office and retail space will occupy the podium, with the 40-storey tower rising above. Hoffman plans to launch the project in June.

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