



Blood Bank of Alaska
Helping Alaska patients in need



Find Your Reason to Donate Today **Recipient Stories: Bill McAllister**

Bill McAllister, a long time journalist in Anchorage, is usually the one reporting stories of emergency and need. He never imagined the tides would turn and he would be in need of an immediate blood transfusion.

It happened in the summer of 2008 when Bill began feeling out of breath after his regular tennis workout. An avid tennis player this was unusual for him, after some hesitation Bill decided to go to the doctor to get a check-up. At the time Bill was working as the Communications Director for then Governor Sarah Palin. Due to his busy schedule the last thing he had time for was a health screening. Through his family's encouragement he met with the doctor and he ordered a series of test.

Later that evening he was at home watching the Palin-Biden debate when he his phone rang. Bill recalls, "Then the home phone rang, and my then wife answered said it was my doctor. They had gotten the results of the test, said I had to go to the ER immediately." Still focused on the work, Bill waited for the debate to end before he headed to the emergency room for the requested procedure. When Bill finally arrived at the hospital he was told that his blood had lost half of its' oxygen carrying capacity and he would need a blood transfusion immediately. He was at risk for a heart attack. Bill remembers, "It was mid evening when I got the call, it was just before midnight when I started getting the transfusion which lasted all night."

That blood transfusion was just the beginning of Bill's journey as it would turn out that he had Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and the transfusion was the first step to his recovery. However, without the

generous donations of strangers Bill would never have gotten the chance to battle his disease. Blood donors changed his life and gave him a second chance.

Bill is a strong advocate for blood donation and tries to spread the word when he can about the wonderful gift that blood donors share every day. "Donating blood is a simple straight forward process that doesn't take much time, and yet can save someone's life. It is really a gift to the whole world," remarks Bill. If there was a way to speak to those donors who made it possible for him to be here today he would like to thank them. Bill, "I would say to the person who donated the blood that I received in the transfusion, that in all likelihood you saved my life and I really appreciate that you took the time to do it."

Blood donation is a simple process, but it can make all the difference is someone's time of need. The generosity of blood donors is sometimes overlooked, but critical for the medical treatment of many conditions. For Bill it was a life-saving gift that he could not live without. Blood donors change lives every day, they certainly changed Bill's.

Call 222-5630 to schedule your appointment today.