Robert and Pauline Young knew they wanted to make a significant gift to Munson Medical Center because it is a “vital and necessary community resource.” The right opportunity came along as Munson developed plans for a new cancer center.

A $1 million donation from the Youngs is one of the lead gifts that will support construction of the $45 million Cowell Family Cancer Center just north of the hospital.

Bob and Pauline’s generous gift honors her late brother, Malcolm A. Bagshaw, MD, who helped pioneer radiation therapy, first as a resident at the University of Michigan, then during a brilliant career at Stanford University in California. (see page 3).

When the new cancer center opens in 2016, patients will receive the most technologically-advanced cancer treatment Munson offers in the stereotactic radiosurgery suite, which will be dedicated to the Young’s generosity.

Interestingly, Dr. Bagshaw delivered opening remarks for the dedication of the Biederman Cancer Treatment Center in July 1987. He was invited to attend by Traverse City Urologist Tim Hall, MD, who was excited about the prostate cancer research Dr. Bagshaw was doing in California.

“We were raised in very humble beginnings,” Pauline said. “Mal’s achievements were all on his own – it was pretty amazing.” Pauline and her brothers, Mal and Dickie, grew up in Tecumseh. Her father, a self-educated man, was a city engineer and business owner. Dickie had developmental disabilities and could not read or write. “I think that was part of the reason Mal decided to go into medicine,” Pauline said.

Pauline studied social sciences at Michigan State University, where she met Bob, who was a mechanical engineering student. Bob completed a two-year stint with the U.S. Air Force and they married in 1955 – three days after Pauline graduated from college. They moved to Ann Arbor, where Bob partnered with a meteorology professor at the University of Michigan to launch R.M. Young Company, which manufactures and markets precision meteorological instruments.

As they raised their family, the Youngs and their sons, Tom, Mike, and Pete, began spending increasing amounts of recreational time in Traverse City. In 1971, they took the plunge and moved their business and family north. The sons and the company flourished. As their company expanded to worldwide markets, Pauline worked part-time as an engineer in meteorological instruments.

“Over the years we have supported a number of things around town – those things we feel are important to us and to the community,” Pauline said. “Munson was always up there on the list. We’ve respected the way it has operated and grown.” “It’s such a great hospital,” Bob added.

“We have no personal experience with cancer,” Pauline said. “However, thinking about my brother’s contributions inspired us to make a significant commitment to Munson.

Living Center, now known as Brickways, in honor of Pauline’s brother.

“My real interest was cancer and I rationalized that it didn’t matter how I treated the cancer, whether I did it with surgery or with radiation. Then I ran into a most extraordinary man who was head of the radiation therapy division in Ann Arbor – Isadore Lampe. We were the first department in the United States to get an Atomic Energy Commission of Canada cobalt unit. I had quite an opportunity because when we first got the cobalt unit, all of the construction of depth dose curves had to be done. They didn’t come with the machine. We had a good physicist and good physics department, so Dr. Lampe assigned me to the physicist who assigned me to taking all the data and drawing all of the depth dose curves. I sat at a large drawing table and constructed the whole set of depth dose curves for the cobalt machines.”

After his residency, Dr. Bagshaw joined Stanford University School of Medicine.

“...We had the only linear accelerator in the United States at that time. It was handmade in our physics department...we were one of the first places to really develop super voltage radiation at those energies.”

From Dr. Bagshaw’s 2011 obituary: “He helped pioneer the medical use of high-energy radiation as produced by a medical linear accelerator in the treatment of various cancers. Fifty years and 40 million patients later, medical linear accelerators became the backbone of radiation therapy for cancer worldwide. Roughly half of all cancer patients receive radiation therapy, primarily from radiation beams generated by a linear accelerator.”

Radiotherapy techniques for localized prostate cancer devised by Dr. Bagshaw have become a standard of care. His innovation and creativity was legendary outside of the research laboratory, as well. He built his own photography darkroom, guitar, and constructed a glider airplane in his living room. A big fan of Stanford football, he was thrilled to have the opportunity to lead the Stanford marching band – a gift won for him at an auction by his residents. He rigged a baton with a screw so that it twirled constantly, despite his lack of baton-twirling skills.

After retirement, Dr. Bagshaw took up painting with fervor. His sister, Pauline Young of Traverse City, hopes to procure at least one of his paintings to hang in the new stereotactic radiosurgery suite in the Cowell Family Cancer Center.

Malcolm A. Bagshaw, MD: ‘A Visionary in the Field of Radiation Therapy’

Malcolm A. Bagshaw, MD, made overwhelming contributions to the advancement of cancer treatment during his career. He was one of the world’s foremost experts in radiation therapy and led the radiology department at Stanford University School of Medicine for two decades.

Dr. Bagshaw described in an interview when he retired how he hand computed the very first doses of radiation for cobalt units while in residency at the University of Michigan.

“...I sat at a large drawing table and constructed the whole set of depth dose curves for the cobalt machines.”

Malcolm A. Bagshaw, MD, made overwhelming contributions to the advancement of cancer treatment during his career. He was one of the world’s foremost experts in radiation therapy and led the radiology department at Stanford University School of Medicine for two decades.