



This is first in a series of articles that will profile individuals or groups who, having struggled with illness or loss, are inspired by those experiences to give back to the community.

clubs for cancer

When members of the planning committee for the first annual Clubs for Cancer woke up the morning of the golf tournament their moods quickly changed from excitement to trepidation.

From the moment the idea for this charity tournament was hatched they had worked tirelessly. They had chosen the Southlake Regional Cancer Centre as the beneficiary for monies raised. They had secured Vanbots Construction Corporation and Geo. A. Kelson Company Ltd. as platinum sponsors. They had amassed fabulous silent auction items – including rounds of golf with both Wendel Clark and Lance Brown, a helicopter ride in the York Regional Police chopper and a boat trip on one of the force’s marine units. They had loaded up goodie bags for each of the 95 golfers, who had paid \$250 to play a round at the renowned Angus Glen Golf Club. The people at Angus Glen had helped plan a wonderful banquet, and celebrated singer/impressionist Brian Roman had volunteered to headline the entertainment. Everything was planned right down to the last detail. Everything, that is, except the

weather. And, on this Sept. 30 morning, it was absolutely teeming rain.

Each committee member had a very personal reason behind his or her commitment to the event. Joel Parke, vice-president of client services at Vanbots Construction, lost his wife Judy to cancer. Rodney Sine, a retired staff sergeant from YRP, lost his sister Judi Grimes to cancer. Kevin Thistle, president of the Angus Glen, lost his executive assistant, Michelle Hobor to cancer. Chief Armand La Barge and the York Regional Police family have lost countless people to cancer, among them Staff Sgt. Doug Hall, Det. Const. Doug Nuttall and Deb Young.

As friends, Mr. Parke, Mr. Sine and Chief LaBarge had supported one another through the loss of someone they loved to cancer, and decided they needed to take action, to do something more in the fight against this disease.

Together with Mr. Thistle, Judy Moore, Joanne Bertrand, Mark Holland, Terry Hunt and Anne Crisp they formed the planning committee for what would become the Clubs for Cancer golf tournament.

“We wanted to honour the memory of

fundraising
in memory of
loved ones

by Judy Murdoch

the people we loved," says Mr. Parke, "by helping to fight this terrible disease, for the betterment of others."

So, when they awoke to such awful weather that day they felt somehow that they had been let down. No matter how important the cause, golfing in pouring rain is just not fun. As the tee-off time of 1 p.m. drew nearer, their anxiety increased.

"Then, just about 12:30 p.m. the most amazing thing happened," says Mr. Parke. "The sky cleared and the sun began to shine. And it stayed that way for the rest of the day."

Thanks to the design of the Angus Glen course, the water drained away from the fairways.

"Right on time, we were miraculously ready to play," says Terry Hunt.

To the organizers, it seemed that an act of divine intervention had taken place, that Judy Parke, Judi Grimes, Michelle Hobor, Staff Sgt. Doug Hall, Det. Const. Doug Nuttall and Deb Young were not simply the honourees, but were very much a part of the tournament's success.

In the end, the first Clubs for Cancer tournament raised \$35,000 for the Regional Cancer Program at Southlake. The monies will go towards the purchase of 10 reclining chairs for use during chemotherapy treatment and cancer equipment as required. In recognition of the gift and commitment to raise funds through the tournament again in 2009, a plaque to honour the memory of the people they loved will be placed in one of the elevators in the cancer centre.

Rodney Sine knew the group had met its goal when a friend emailed him the next day to compliment him on what a wonderful thing he had done for his sister.

"It meant everything to me that we were able to raise enough money to ease the strain just a bit for those battling this disease that took my sister," he says.

The second annual Clubs for Cancer golf tournament will take place at Angus Glen Golf Club on Sept. 29, 2009. To sign up to play, or to make a contribution, contact Terry Hunt at 866-876-5423, ext. 7699 or 5553@yrc.ca.