

I want to tell you about something good which stemmed from a tragic consequence.

Don't know how many of you recall Bill Heindl Jr., a local hockey player who had a cuppa tea in the NHL back in the early 70s, played on Canada's national team, stopped off in the WHA, and then wound down his career in Sweden back when exporting Canadian players outweighed importing foreign players.

The tragic aspect to this story occurred not long after when Bill Heindl Jr. tried to end his life by jumping off the bridge out there on the western outskirts of the city.

He survived the jump but was now paraplegic and would be confined to a wheelchair the rest of his life.

That's when the good started to happen. Heindl rallied, as did a number of his hockey playing friends around him and they came to a charity game, the one game ever played with Bobby Orr and Wayne Gretzky on the same sheet of ice.

A lot of money was raised from that game on Bill Heindl nite and in a payback he approached a couple of locals to express his will to live as a paraplegic and was there a way to spread that will to aid others living in similar circumstances.

That proved to be the seed for the Spinal Cord Research Centre located right here in Winnipeg and now recognized around the world as a leading edge in spinal cord research.

The good really started to roll back in 1983 when a trio of Winnipeggers rolled out The Will To Win, the results of which, 25 years later, are absolutely outstanding.

The Will To Win is a classic golf tournament and not just one of the multitude of run of the mill golf tournaments. Back in 1984 this two-day event presented a \$25,000 cheque for spinal cord research along with a five-year plan of continuing that donation.

That cheque proved to be a drop in the bucket of what was to come. The group of 100 or so, the faces which change a little but not much, turned over a cheque for \$150,000 this week. The grand total from that group is now well over one million dollars.

The organizers are fanatic about anonymity and they will remain so but I can tell you the doctors, the researchers, the scientists, the people who can see the fruits of spinal cord research, extol their virtues on an ongoing basis.

When was the last time you heard of a professorship being named after a golf tournament. This golf tournament has played a leading role in neurosurgical techniques for treatment of spinal cord injury.

Bill Heindl was there to witness the start of the good stemming from his tragic circumstance but in 1992 at age 45 the results of the jump caught with him and he passed away.

It's one of those stories soon forgotten but once a year over a 100 guys get together and retell it by putting another building block into The Spinal Cord Research Centre.

It really is a Good News Story.