

Golf tournament held in youth's memory



BY HEATHER KENDALL
Staff Reporter

The balls were soaring at Barry's Bay Golf Club Saturday, as 60 golfers played their way through the nine-hole course in memory of Thomas Peter Jasinski.

Thomas was just 17 when he was killed in a vehicle collision in Mississauga on March 31 of this year. On the night of the accident, he left his house shortly after 9 p.m. to help a friend in need of consolation. He was returning home about 1 a.m. and was just one highway exit away from his residence when the Jeep Wrangler he was driving entered a ditch, became airborne and crashed into an overpass. It is suspected he fell asleep at the wheel. That he had been aiding a friend was no surprise to his father Tony.

"He was focused on helping his friends deal with difficulties in life and school," he says.

Thomas attended St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic High School in Mississauga for Grade 9 and 10 and Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School in Oakville for Grade 11 and 12. He was a musician, dancer, tech wizard, entrepreneur and honour student. He had his own multimedia company, Jastech, which offers services like web design, photo editing and effects, VHS to DVD conversion and greeting card/invitations design. The company also did all of the web site and multi-media services for the Run The Dream organization - Thomas and his cousin Tomas Urlich volunteered their services as their contribution to create greater awareness of autism.

In the fall of 2008, Thomas participated in DECA, an organization that gives hands-

on experience to high school and university students in field of business, marketing and entrepreneurship. He also took part in "Dragons' Den," a CBC television program where aspiring entrepreneurs pitch business concepts or products to a panel of Canadian business moguls. Thomas had the opportunity to pitch an idea and received invaluable feedback on how to take his venture to the next level.

After his death, the Thomas P. Jasinski Scholarship Fund was created. It is a non-profit organization set up to provide scholarships to deserving high school students wishing to pursue post-secondary education and a career in the business world, with a view to setting up their own business. The fund's mission statement explains the fund was established to "commemorate Thomas Jasinski's love of learning and his passion for business and technology as well to perpetuate the memory of a son who wanted, above all, to help others." In June, three students each received \$2,000 from the fund. At his high school's graduation at the end of the school year, Thomas was posthumously awarded his diploma and his name was on the honour roll.

Tony Jasinski has been coming up to this area since he was 13 years old. The family has had a cottage in the Barry's Bay area for 21 years, so his son Thomas enjoyed the cottage experience his whole life.

"Thomas loved the slower pace," says his father. "He loved stargazing with his telescope, fishing, swimming, boating, ATV riding, and skiing and building snow forts in winter. In the city, we moved four times, so Barry's Bay was the one home he knew from birth."

Thomas had been accepted at seven uni-

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Heather Kendall photos

Above, **Tony Jasinski** takes a mighty swing at the golf ball.

Above right, Chris Wolnik prepares to hit his ball onto the green.

Left, Thomas Jasinski's father Tony and stepmother Wanda were overwhelmed with the great turnout for the charity golf tournament.

versities and had narrowed his choices to the University of Toronto and Peterborough's Trent University (where he would be closer to the cottage).

Thomas also loved to play golf at the Barry's Bay Golf Club on Old Barry's Bay Road. That is why the charity golf tournament was organized at the club. Sixty people registered for last Saturday's tournament, with all proceeds going to the Thomas P. Jasinski Scholarship Fund. On Saturday morning, Tony Jasinski called the support "fantastic."

"My emotions are racing," he said. "This is

phenomenal."

The tournament began at 9 a.m. on the nine-hole course and ran in the best ball format. Tony said 100 per cent of the proceeds go to the fund.

"No administrative costs come out of the fund - I pay for those myself," he said.

Since the fund was started, \$14,000 has been raised. The fund is waiting to be issued a charitable tax number and Tony said everyone who donates will get a tax receipt by the end of the year. For more information on the fund, visit online at www.thomasjasinski.com.