

With encouragement from friends

Former Valley Citian opens business

Friends and neighbors got together last fall to help Tim Bevins of Minnetonka, Minn., formerly of Valley City, open his new business on Tim Bevins Day.

Bevins, 23, is a quadriplegic, he suffered a broken neck in an auto accident Sept. 8, 1974. Now, though he can't use his legs or arms, he can get around in an electric wheelchair. And he wants to make a life for himself and a living.

Bevins is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Bevins, originally from Valley City. The Bevins left Valley City when Tim was about 10 years old but his grandmother, Mrs. Carl Straus and an uncle, Ralph Bevins, still live here.

Bevins opened a liquor store in Minnetonka, a Minneapolis suburb, and everyone turned out, including Mrs. Straus, John Berg of Wayzata Bank and Trust, and Dave Harnish, vice-president of Northwestern National Bank in Hopkins, both of whom were involved in getting Bevins started in his new business.

"I was kind of gun-shy about going out into the world again," Bevins said in an interview in the Minneapolis Tribune. "The main thing that turned it around for me was my friends. They wouldn't feel sorry for me, so I couldn't feel sorry for myself."

Bevins was a good high school athlete, captain of the wrestling and football teams at Hopkins Eisenhower. After graduation he went to work for the Northwestern National Bank in Hopkins, played amateur football and softball and helped coach the wrestling team at Harley Grade school. Then the accident occurred.

Bevins spent about five months in a hospital then began rehabilitation therapy at University of Minnesota Hospitals. Karl Kassulke, the former Vikings football player whose career was ended by a motorcycle accident, helped lift Bevins' spirits as they worked out together. "And my friends wouldn't let me sit home," he said. "They'd come and get me and make me go out."

enjoy myself. I could make plans and get back into the world or I could sit around depressed until I died. It was up to me."



Tim Bevins

Bevins took over the liquor store where he does the buying, advises customers, makes the decisions. And he discovered, he said, that a lot of people want to help a man help himself.

John Berg has "done an unbelievable amount of work arranging financing and getting papers in order for a small business loan." Dave Harnish, from the bank where Bevins worked, "is helpful every time I have a question on business management, taxes or whatever problem comes up."

Business people around the corner "got acquainted with Tim," said Ty Abel, who has run a service station there since 1940, the first business on the corner. "We want to see him make it."

Arnie Palmer used to own the liquor store. He sold it several years ago to a man who didn't do well. When Bevins took over, Palmer watched his progress. Out of all this neighborly interest plans for an opening celebration "sort of grew" Abel said.

So last fall there was a grand opening. All the merchants around the corner reminded their customers that Tim Bevins was in business. Shriners were cavorting. Boxer Scott LeDoux was there and the day was a success.