



Wednesday Herald-Press


October 20, 1999

HUNTINGTON, INDIANA • 2 SECTIONS • 16 PAGES
Newsstand: 50¢ / Home Delivery: City 25¢ County 28¢

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TOMORROW



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Death threats alleged by Kyle

By TOM HERNES
Associate Editor

Mayor Robert Kyle says his wife Sarah has received a pair of death threats this year during his campaign for re-election, but he has not filed a report with police on either of the incidents.

Kyle did not know the exact dates when the anonymous threats were made by telephone, but said one of them was before the primary election last May, and the second was about a month ago.

"I can tell you, to the best of my knowledge, it was words to this effect — 'that if your husband doesn't stop talking about Terry Abbott's bankruptcy, we'll either rub you out or snuff you out.' I don't know which word was. I pounded my wife to no end on that. She got so upset with me because I wanted it verbatim."

Abbott, the Republican mayoral nominee, filed for bankruptcy 15 years ago after a failed attempt at running a pair of Burger Dairy convenience stores.

Kyle said he never said anything about Abbott's bankruptcy. "I have never said one thing about Terry Abbott," Kyle said.

Abbott denies any involvement in the calls, believing Kyle did not even receive them. He hopes it will not make a difference in the outcome of the Nov. 2 general election.

"It's a little bit shocking," Abbott said of the allegations, "but what can I do about it? People will want to believe what they want to believe."

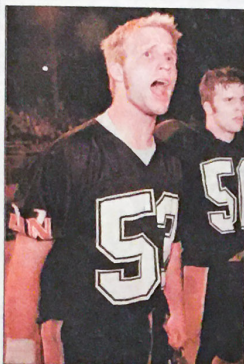
Kyle said he didn't blame Abbott for the phone calls.

"I never blamed Terry Abbott for this," Kyle declared. "And I'm still not blaming him. He has a wife and family too."

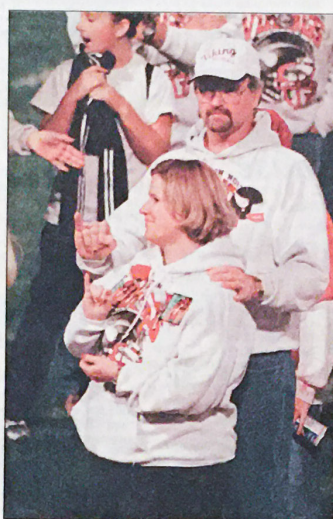
Kyle said he left the decision about going to the police up to his

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Beyond words



Above, Hunckler twins Jason (left) and Samson (right) cheer on their Huntington North teammates Friday at Kriegbaum Field. Right, parents Frank and Missy Hunckler use sign language to cheer prior to the game.



Family bond based on communication

By PAUL SIEGFRIED
Sports Editor

It might be a telling glance or just the way they walk in the house, but Missy Hunckler knows when there's something wrong with her boys.

Most of it's probably motherly instinct. Moms always seem to know, and for Missy, the message comes through loud and clear.

"Mom's smart, she knows everything," she says. "I can tell when they are upset. I know when something's wrong. They might not feel like talking, but I know how to find the key and get them to open up. We just have to communicate and be supportive and help them out with their problems. The main focus is communication. I want them to be part of our life, and for us to be part of their lives."

Communication might have been a very difficult

proposition in the Hunckler home, because Missy is deaf and her husband, Frank, has limited hearing even with the use of a hearing aid. What might have been an obstacle for some families has turned into the defining quality of this one.

Their eldest child, Samson, is a junior at St. Mary's College in South Bend. Twin sons Jason and Samson are seniors and football players at Huntington North, and while their personalities may be at opposite ends of the spectrum, they share the bond of family.

"They have different interests, but when they're home, they talk all the time," says Frank. "They keep us up to date with what's happening at school or wherever. Communication is the number one thing around here."

The boys share one more trait: they are leaders, on the football field, in the classroom, and beyond.

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Roanoke says, again, finances are in order

By JERRY HERTENSTEIN
Staff Writer

ROANOKE — "The town of Roanoke is not broke, nor is it near financial collapse."

That statement concluded a four-point message concerning the town's finances contained in a letter addressed "to all residents and taxpayers of the town of Roanoke" and distributed Tuesday by Councilwoman Jean Ann Tribolet to 22 people attending a meeting of Town Council. The letter is signed by all five members of Town Council.

Although Tribolet said the letter attempts to clear up questions about the town's finances as presented by Town Manager Dick Smart at Town Council meetings Sept. 7, Sept. 21 and Oct. 5, the Town Council, Smart was apparently not satisfied.

"Is this council supporting me in this position?" Smart asked Council.

Smart's concerns had centered on income and expenses, notably in the water and sewer accounts.

Clerk-Treasurer JoAnne Kirchner and council members attempted to answer questions on the town's finances during Town Council meetings Sept. 21 and Oct. 5, but Smart said Tuesday the issue was "handled very poorly by this council and people in the community."

"I have documented facts to back up my concerns and I think my character has been destroyed," Smart said. "I have been left with egg on my face apparently forever."

"I have been putting information

Books show balances in accounts

Roanoke Clerk-Treasurer JoAnne Kirchner said Wednesday that, through September, the town's water account shows a balance of \$115,202.05 and the sewer account \$114,619.04.

Those figures are actual balances, Kirchner said. She explained that budget estimates are not made on water and sewer accounts because they are not tax based.

Town Manager Dick Smart has questioned town incomes and expenses, specifically in water and sewer accounts.

Smart said his research showed that from Jan. 1, 1996, through April 1999, water account expenses totaled

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together all these weeks and have offered and offered to answer anyone's questions," Kirchner said. "Smart said his questioning finances 'was never meant as a personal attack. I just want answers to my questions. Is the council supporting me in this position? Not one council member has called me and said let's figure this out.'"

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Smart: Higher salary will show he's the boss

By JERRY HERTENSTEIN
Staff Writer

ROANOKE — Town Manager Dick Smart on Tuesday presented the Town Council a list of salary comparisons between the annual wages of town managers and superintendents in communities in northeast Indiana.

"It's my hope you might reconsider your thought process of your last salary evaluation," Smart said. His comment was in reference to a special Sept. 30 Town Council meeting held for evaluating town employees and setting salaries for the year 2000.

Although the council has yet to pass a salary ordinance for 2000, the council agreed at its Sept. 30 meeting to grant Smart a 5.25 percent wage increase elevating his yearly salary from \$29,120 to \$30,648. The council also granted a 5.25 percent increase for Town Superintendent Paul Swain, raising his salary to \$16,788 an hour from \$16,133.

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Northern Indiana may outgrow its 219 code

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — Indiana regulators are weighing a proposal from the telecommunications industry to create a second area code to overlay the 219 area in northern Indiana.

If the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission adopts the plan, new phone numbers throughout the region eventually would have a different area code.

State regulators are investigating that idea and other proposals that would split northern Indiana into two or three geographic regions. One region would keep 219, customers in the rest of the area would get a new code.

Part of the reason is the proliferation of cell phones, fax machines, pagers and computers. But Federal Communications Commission Chairman William Kennard cites an even bigger

reason: Every time a local telephone company needs new numbers, the FCC gives it a block of 10,000, even if far fewer are needed. Also, each new company providing local, wireless or Internet service gets blocks of 10,000 numbers, even if it needs only need a few hundred.

As a result, thousands of phone numbers go unused.

Huntington House to get a new look, thanks to grant

By JUDY FITZMAURICE
Staff Writer

Huntington House, the temporary shelter at 576 William St., will be closed for the next several weeks while renovations are made to the inside of the facility.

Funds from the \$25,000 rehabilitation grant, applied for in the fall of 1997, were released early this year, explained Jeff Valends, director of specialized services with Community and Family Services.

Renovations to the facility will include expanding the upstairs bathroom and renovating the downstairs bathroom, Valends said. "The bathrooms are inadequate for the number of people going through there."

"Shelving and storage will be added throughout the house, the electrical and plumbing systems will be upgraded, ceilings throughout most of the house will be lowered as an energy saving measure, the living room/reception area will get new carpet and all of the inside will be painted."

Mary Hamilton, residential director of Huntington House, lives on the first floor of the facility with her

two children.

"We're going to try to stay here as much as possible," Hamilton said, "but we'll probably have to stay somewhere for a few nights when they shut the water off to work on the plumbing. Comfort Inn has told us they will let us stay there for half price," she said. "We really appreciate that."

Eighteen students from Huntington College working through the Joe Mertz Center for Volunteer Service helped move most of the furnishings out of Huntington House Saturday morning.

"All the furniture upstairs and most of the furniture downstairs has been taken out. All that's left is one chair, the TV and the computer in the living room and my bed," said Hamilton. "The volunteers from the college did a great job — they got it all done."

Hamilton says the rehabilitation grant will alleviate a lot of future problems. "This grant gives us the peace of mind of knowing that pretty much everything is fixed that needs fixing. All the major things are done and we won't need to worry about any big

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Huntington College freshmen Sharon Rich, left, from South Bend, and Rebecca Schmit from Uniondale, both from the Joe Mertz Center for Volunteer Service, help remove furniture from Huntington House Saturday so the facility can be renovated.

Villanueva earns Merit recognition

By SANDRA WILEY
Staff Writer

Huntington North High School senior Andrew Villanueva has been named a Commended Student in the 2000 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Principal Van Bailey will present a letter of commendation from the school and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program.

Villanueva is the son of Ray and Linda Villanueva, 846 North St.

Some 34,000 commended students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the competition for Merit Scholarship awards to be offered next spring, commended students placed among the top 5 percent of more than 1 million students who entered the 2000 Merit program by taking the 1998 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

The young men and women named commended students have demonstrated outstanding academic potential by their high performance in the extremely

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MORE ABOUT

Huncklers

(Continued from Page 1A)

OPPOSITE PERSONALITIES

The differences between the twins started literally at birth. Frank and Missy didn't know they were having twins.

"We just thought it was one big baby," says Missy. Jason was the first born, and was undersize at four pounds. Samson was born at a robust six pounds.

The name Jason had already been picked out, but when there were two babies, Frank and Missy needed another name. They wanted to keep the "son" suffix, so after two days, the larger baby was given the name Samson.

Frank says they figured Samson would always be the bigger of the boys. Like just about everything else, things turned out opposite of expectations. Samson is brown-eyed and brown-haired, standing about 5-11 and 167 pounds. Jason has blonde hair and blue eyes, and is 6-2 and 207 pounds. Suffice it to say, they aren't identical twins.

"When we were little, about the only thing that was the same were our clothes. They dressed us up in the same things," says Samson. "Since we were little, we've always picked up on different things. We did a lot of things together, but some things he was better at, and some things I was better at."

Since they were babies, they've each liked different foods and even eaten in different ways. For instance, Samson likes to dunk his Oreos cookies in milk, while Jason puts all the cookies in a glass, pours milk over them and eats them with a spoon.

"Disgusting," says the dunker. But each respects the other, with communication the key to mutual understanding.

"He's very diverse," says Jason of Samson. "For five minutes, he could be raging on you, then the next minute he can turn around and be laughing with you. Most days he's my best friend, although there are some days I just want to be away from him. He's a great guy. He's somebody you can look up to and talk to."

Jason spends his winter as like the Vike, the Huntington North mascot for basketball games. Samson says the role is a perfect reflection of his brother.

"Everybody who knows him thinks of him as a charming, big, huggable guy," he says. "If you think of a picture of like the Vike, that's Jason."

Both play football, where Jason is a lineman and Samson is a linebacker who has led Huntington North in tackles the past two seasons. When not on the field, Jason stands calmly on the sidelines, while a nervous Samson paces back and forth.

"When there's no pressure, Jason just cannot sit still. I can sit there and not move," says Samson. "But when there's pressure like in a game situation, Jason can sit calmly through it all but I've got to keep moving or I'll go insane with my own thoughts."

The situation is reversed in the classroom, where Jason's the one that can't be calmed once the school bell rings.

"In a class situation, I always try to be involved," says Jason. "I can't just sit there for 90 minutes and twiddle my thumbs. In my U.S. history class, every question that was asked, I had my hand up. I always thought I knew the right answer. People wonder what I'm going to say next. When we have class discussions, I'm always the predominant speaker, because I want to get my two cents in."

Like all brothers, there's a level of competitiveness and often scuffles between the two.

"When I was little, I used to punch Jason and he'd cry and go to mom," says Samson. "I used to take off and hide under my bed and not make a sound, because I knew she couldn't find me if I didn't make a sound. I'd come down in about half an hour and hope everything had blown over."

Nowadays, the two use their command of language to take digs at each other.

"It's never usually anything physical. It's mostly just verbal fighting. We try to destroy each other verbally," says Jason.

Many parents would send two squabbling kids to separate corners and let them calm down. The Huncklers made the boys work things out right away.

"They see each other 24 hours a day. If there's a situation we can't handle, I just say, 'Look, he's your brother, handle it' and that's all I can say. They have to compromise. One goes one way, and one goes the other," says Frank. "I told them their freshman year that in two years they were going to be on their own, but after all those years of habit, they still work



Missy and Frank Hunckler watch from the stands as their sons Jason and Samson play during last Friday's Huntington North football game at Kriegbaum Field.

things out. They're still doing it now."

"I try to get away with playing loud music once in a while, but my mom can feel it," says Jason. "Sometimes when I have an argument with my mom and I don't want to listen to it, I'll just turn my head away, and that's like a big insult. We try to get away with that, but we usually get caught."

"She always knows," adds Samson.

FAMILY MATTERS

Both Frank and Missy come from large families. Frank is from Huntington and has seven sisters and two brothers. Missy has 10 brothers and sisters, seven of whom are deaf.

She works at the post office, while Frank works at ITT in Fort Wayne as a systems tester.



While watching a college football game at the Hunckler home, conversation gets animated for Frank, Missy, Samson and Jason.

They met first at St. Rita's School for the Deaf in Cincinnati. Both went on to Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., a university for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. They were married in 1978.

Two years earlier, Frank bought an old farmhouse in rural Huntington County. He worked to rebuild the house, and even though some of the angles of doorways or trim aren't straight, the uniqueness added a personal touch as Frank and Missy started their family soon after moving in.

"There's something special in this house. There's a spirit around here," says Frank. "It's our house, and that's all that matters."

The house is slow to many family gatherings, and with all the aunts and uncles it can make for a raucous time.

"You get those guys together, it's just joke after joke, talking about trips or movies or whatever," says Jason. "We all sit around the dinner table and they'll express themselves and aren't afraid to make a fool of themselves. We kind of took after them. Being around the family is how we learned to express ourselves."

DEALING WITH DEAFNESS

First with Sunni, and then the boys, teaching reading, writing and speaking went hand-in-hand with learning sign language. While Missy's speech was difficult to understand, Frank was able to read to the children every night.

Once Sunni learned sign language, she was instrumental in translating for the boys and helping them learn sign language as well.

"Samson picked it up very well, but Jason depended on Sunni longer to interpret things," says Missy. "Both of them learned very late because Sunni was the center of the communication."

Instead of preschool, the boys went to a speech therapist. They eventually entered Huntington Catholic for elementary school, and also went to Northwest Elementary before attending Crestview Middle School. "A lot of subjects just came easily to me," says Samson. "I could retain information a lot quicker, just from the fact I had learned sign language and the En-

glish language at the same time. We both excelled at a lot of subjects."

Social education was just as important, says Frank. "We would take them to Fort Wayne with us and they'd meet other deaf parents who had children. We wanted them to see what kind of children they had, and they could learn from each other," he says. "We encouraged them to socialize with people, not just from Huntington. We told them not to be afraid, not to make judgment calls. There's nothing special about it. What's important is communication."

As they learned sign language and spent time with other families with deaf members, the children learned about differences in people, and not just whether they had the ability to hear or not.

"When they go visit Missy's family in Ohio, they sign differently," says Frank. "There's more body language, more expression. When we go to Fort Wayne, it's more of a straight type of signing. Jason and Samson learned different ways

people sign, and it was a very rich experience."

"There was a man who never moved his lips and was straight-faced. It was very challenging for Samson, because he was used to a lot of body language. It was a challenge."

The challenge added to the learning process.

"It's like an accent," says Samson. "You not only have to adjust to their style, but you have to express your style to them. It's kind of neat to watch people at parties with deaf people and see a number of different conversations going on and everybody's different style. You admire that because everybody understands that everyone's dealing with something a little bit different. It makes no difference to them, because they understand completely."

The boys have also developed their own personalities while signing. As usual, they have their differences.

"Jason's more of a finger-speller, and I pause a lot, trying to think of the right word, the right sign," says Samson. "I always put a lot of expression with it, trying to get the emotion across. We definitely have our own styles."

Samson says he was able to gain a better understanding of people by the way they communicate, something most people might take for granted. Like their parents, the boys can read people beyond words.

"With deaf people, it's not just signing, but it's body language," he says. "Jason and I excel at reading body language. Some of our friends hate it, because we always know when something's wrong. But they don't mind it, because we're always there to help. We may not know the reason something's wrong, but we can sense it."

Those perceptions extend to the family as well. Just as mom is able to tell when the boys have a problem, Jason and Samson often sense things with each other. "Sometimes we can just look at each other and know something's up," says Jason.

As each of the children learned more about human diversity and respect for all people, there were often opportunities to educate others.

"If you're in a grocery store, sometimes you'll hear little kids say something about the sound of my mom's voice, they might say she has a weird voice. You kind of ignore that. It's just normal to me. That's the way I grew up," says Samson. "When somebody does have a problem with it, I'm sure to confront them about it and make them realize it's not as big of a deal as they were making it."

"Jason and I get a lot of respect wherever we go, and a lot of people want to learn more about sign language and learn more about our parents. Some of them want to know how to talk to their parents, but there's a barrier between them."



Herald-Press photos by Chris Henderson

A FOOTBALL FAMILY

When Jason and Samson started playing sports in school, especially at Huntington North, Frank and Missy wanted to join the parents' groups who plan events for players like pregame meals and decoration of the stadium.

"The parents are very good with us," says Missy. "The first year we weren't too sure because of the communication barrier. This year there's more recognition and they call us and we have a lot of input. We want to be involved and help out with cheering and food and do what we can."

They cheer along with the rest of the Viking fans, signing each letter as the chant spells out V-I-K-I-N-G-S. Frank helps Missy get on the beat.

The bond between parents and children breaks through even the din of a Friday night football game. "We can talk to them on the field from all the way up in the stands," says Missy. "Parents ask 'How can you talk to your son like that?' I can't even get my son's attention. One mother said she wished she could talk to her son, but it's too loud. But when I yell, Jason can feel it, Samson can feel it."

Like at home, if the boys hear their parents' call, they know it's important.

"I hear a lot of people yelling, but I can always tell when my parents are yelling. It grabs my attention right away," says Samson. "I know they have something to say to me."

THE MAKING OF LEADERS

A willingness to speak their minds helped the boys quickly become leaders in school. They've polished their leadership roles beyond rallying a team on a football field to the point where they can inspire others.

"We have a chapel service before every home game and Brett Hooperingard and I were selected to give the senior talk," says Samson. "In my talk, I told them that to be a leader, you've got to lead yourself first. That's what my dad taught me. Every team we've played for, we've always been leaders by example. Not so much by words or inspiration, but by example. Keep your head up and fight through it."

"I told everyone at the chapel that there's not just four leaders on the team. Everybody's a leader in themselves. You have to lead yourself to be able to lead the team, and everybody's capable of doing that. You've got to step up and accept the fact that you have the ability to do this. Don't sit back and wait for somebody to motivate you. Motivate yourself to motivate others."

Jason and Samson have been involved with the Antioch Youth Retreat Team through SS Peter and Paul Church that meets for six weekends a year. Samson says Jason is a dynamic speaker.

"When Jason speaks, people listen. They know he's either going to say something goofy, or something intelligent. But he's going to bring a smile to their face," he says. "People love to listen to Jason talk. He's the kind of person that when he talks, even though he might not always have the right thing to say, it's always something that will make you listen and maybe motivate you to argue or listen, but at least give some input."

Samson is interested in art, and would like to go to the University of Chicago. Ball State is also an option, and he says he could pursue a career in communication, possibly working with the deaf. Sunni is getting her degree in education at St. Mary's, and may also work with deaf students.

Jason says he may follow a career in law. He originally wanted to be a mechanical engineer, but became involved in Teen Court as a defense attorney. He was able to parlay that experience into an internship with a law firm that will begin at the end of football season, although he's not closing the door yet on engineering.

But he knows whichever road he chooses, his family will be there to help with any struggle along the way.

"They've exposed us to many different experiences in life, and they've always been supportive of us," says Jason. "I think that's what makes our bond so special."

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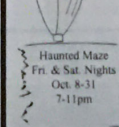
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