



AUCTION BEGINS, A8-9



TIME TO CORONATE DAVID BETRAS?

BERTRAM DE SOUZA, A18

Austintown Fitch	##
Marysville	##
Liberty	##
Crestview	##
Western Reserve	##
Trinity	##



Ursuline ##  
Akron Manchester ##  
SPORTS, B1

Southington	##
Norwalk St. Paul	##
Lowellville	##
Darville	##
Wellsville	##
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SPORTS, B1



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# The Vindicator

SUNDAY  
NOVEMBER 10, 2013  
\$1.50



MADELYN P. HASTINGS | THE VINDICATOR  
Vincent Campbell of Farrell, Pa., installs a decorated cross at the site of a two-vehicle crash along the Shenango Valley Freeway near U.S. Route 62 in Sharon, which killed three and injured four others.

## Sharon athletes and father mourned

Two football players, Brookfield dad killed in head-on collision

By KEVIN CONNELLY  
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and PETER H. MILLIKEN  
milliken@vindy.com

SHARON, PA. The Sharon and Brookfield communities are mourning after losing three residents — two Sharon High School football players and a Brookfield father, in a head-on collision that also injured four others late Friday night.

The deadly head-on crash between the Mazda SUV carrying four Sharon players and a Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck carrying the father and two young boys occurred on a slight bend in the Shenango Valley Freeway, just west of the Oakland Avenue Viaduct at 10:05 p.m. Friday.

Cory Swartz, 18, who was driving the SUV, and Evan Gill, 17, both of Sharon and both high school seniors, were pronounced dead at the scene by Mercer County Coroner Brad McGonigle. The driver of the pickup, John Zdelar Jr., 50, of Brookfield, was pronounced dead at 10:52 p.m. at Sharon Regional Health System.

Injured in the crash were Cory's passengers, twin brothers Craig and Gregg Osmon, also senior players, who were transported to Sharon Regional and then to St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown, where they under-

See MOURN, A6

## OUT HERE IN THE FIELDS

BAND HELPS BOARDMAN GIRL PLAY ON AS CLOCK TICKS ON RARE DISEASE



WILLIAM D. LEWIS | THE VINDICATOR  
Rachel Ruggieri, daughter of Boardman High School Marching Band Director Thomas Ruggieri, wheels Kaitlin Windt across the field during her participation in the band's routine. At top right, Kaitlin plays her flute.

“ I NEVER DISCOURAGE HER TO NOT DO A THING. SHE'S HAD A BOYFRIEND. SHE WENT TO HOMECOMING. SHE'S IN BAND. AS WE'VE GONE ON, I'VE COME TO REALIZE IT'S ALL THAT WE MAKE OF IT.”



♦ Talk about this story more on The Vindicator Facebook page.

♦ Editor Todd Franko will join the conversation this morning.

CHRISSE LONGLEY, mother of Kaitlin Windt

## Mayor-elect McNally lost majority of wards

Election results break down largely along racial lines, analysis shows

By DAVID SKOLNICK  
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YOUNGSTOWN Though Democrat John McNally IV won the Youngstown mayoral race by 11.5 percentage points, he won only three of the city's seven wards.

McNally also had a one-precinct victory over DeMaine Kitchen, an independent candidate. McNally won 39 precincts to 38 for Kitchen.

Based on raw numbers of voters in the city's 77 precincts provided by the Mahoning County Board of Elections, an analysis by *The Vin-*

### INSIDE

♦ Youngstown Mayor-elect John McNally IV must address crime and housing demolition early in his term. Vindicator editorial, A18

dicator shows that for the most part that the longstanding pattern in Youngstown of white voters largely voting for white candidates and black voters largely voting for black candidates occurred again in this mayoral election.

“It's the way things have unfortu-



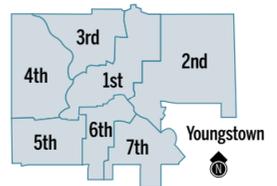
McNally

7,227 in the South Side's 6th Ward to 12,130 in the West Side's 4th Ward, using 2010 U.S. Census numbers.

McNally, who is white, lost a majority of the wards, but he was a big

See MAYOR, A5

### MAYORAL RESULTS BY WARD



1st ward	2nd ward	KEY
B: 12 M: 232 C: 6 W: 6 K: 613	B: 8 M: 300 C: 6 W: 2 K: 1,048	B: Frankie Bellamy C: John Crea K: DeMaine Kitchen
3rd ward	4th ward	
B: 17 M: 592 C: 14 W: 16 K: 869	B: 31 M: 1,647 C: 25 W: 11 K: 311	M: John McNally W: Write in
5th ward	6th ward	7th ward
B: 19 M: 1,579 C: 17 W: 12 K: 848	B: 12 M: 316 C: 7 W: 5 K: 523	B: 22 M: 1,137 C: 10 W: 7 K: 370

Source: Mahoning County Board of Elections THE VINDICATOR

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# KAITLIN

Continued from A1

When she reached high school and Ruggieri this year, they committed to Friedrich's not keeping her from the band, either.

With the rapid and intricate movements of a high school marching band — from twisting tubas to dipping drums to majorettes — it's no place for a wheelchair to be rolling around.

You would think...

### MEANT TO BE

For Ruggieri, Kaitlin's spot in the band started long before he ever met her.

Several years ago, he watched a news program about a college marching band. In it was a wheelchair-bound student whose dad learned the march routine so he could push his son on the field.

"I choked up when I saw it," said Ruggieri. "I put myself in that position and wondered 'How would I do it?' I thought — I would like to make that happen some day."

That "some day" came last spring.

Kaitlin has been in school band since fifth grade. She had dreams of being in the Boardman High band.

Walking has always been a challenge with her disease. Halfway through eighth grade last year, the curvature in her spine had progressed that she needed rods inserted in her spine to straighten her. It made her walking even more unstable, and a wheelchair safer.

"Mr. Ruggieri already knew of Kaitlin and her interest in band," said dad, Howard. "He got a surprise with the wheelchair, though."



H. Windt

Kaitlin's mom, Chrissy Longley, did not want Kaitlin's feelings hurt.



Longley

"She really wanted to be part of band, but I didn't want to get her hopes up," Chrissy said. "The last thing I wanted to do was have her sign up and learn that she had to sit on sidelines."



Blake

Ruggieri didn't want that either.

"We have the same expectations for all our kids," Ruggieri said. "Never are all kids at the same level of music or marching. We work with all of them."

For Kaitlin to play her flute in the Boardman band, an adult would need to learn all the drills and push Kaitlin around the field at every event. Howard's and Chrissy's work schedules would not permit them.

Ruggieri needed someone to volunteer.

### HE GOT TWO

"It brought back memories of my band life at Springfield," said Beth Bean, band booster club president and mom to band members Jeff, a senior, and Kristine, a freshman. This summer, she added the role of Kaitlin's away game partner.

Kaitlin's home games were handled by Ruggieri's daughter, Rachel, who came home from Kent State to help out.

It was an easy fit for Beth and Rachel as they were set to be at the critical band camp anyway to assist Ruggieri. The three of them got started together at August camp in Erie, Pa., and Mother Nature tested them from the start.

Rain-soaked fields, mud, slogging — it was a tough introduction to their new partnership.

"We started with the worst conditions, so it could only get better," Rachel said.

Kaitlin laughs at those first days. "I almost fell out of my chair twice," said the 14-year-old who, with her brother Blake, 12, splits living time between her parents' Boardman homes.

Beth recalls one tipping moment. "I turned too fast and was

not used to the chair yet, and I hear 'Mrs. Bean — I'm tipping,'" laughed Beth.

Both Beth and Rachel said if you think their job was tough, try being Kaitlin and playing the flute while all this was going on.

"She did the best to play flute while we bumped around," said Rachel. "It was just nice to see her happy and enjoying the band."

Already solved for the Boardman band next year is who will handle Kaitlin.

Beth and Rachel are already set to go. And Kaitlin no doubt expects to be there.

Their challenge:

What will Friedrich's allow?

### FRIEDREICH'S & FAULT

Don't read the Internet.

That's the first thing Howard and Chrissy were told when came Kaitlin's diagnosis of Friedrich's Ataxia.

It came the summer before fifth grade. At summer camp, a curvature in Kaitlin's spine became more noticeable. They always knew something wasn't right about Kaitlin's motor skills. They're delicate when they describe it, yet perfectly blunt:

"When she walked, she had this stagger like she was drunk," said Howard.

Still, she had a normal kid life — ballet, baseball, etc. They saw small things, but they were dismissible. Friedrich's itself is often not diagnosed until teen years or later, said Chrissy. That all changed that summer as the disease took control.

"It affects everyone differently," said Howard.

The impact of the diagnosis came to the family in stages.

"First they told us the ataxia part — a tightening of the muscles, and I thought, 'oh well, no biggiee — therapy and stretching,'" said Chrissy.

"Friedreich's is a whole different ball game."

FARA stands for Friedrich's Ataxia Research Alliance, and it's one place on the Internet that Chrissy finds solace. FARA describes the disease as a degenerative neuro-muscular disorder that affects about 1 in 50,000 people in the U.S. The effects include:

- ◆ loss of coordination in the arms and legs.
- ◆ fatigue, energy deprivation and muscle loss.
- ◆ vision impairment, hearing loss, and slurred speech.
- ◆ aggressive scoliosis.
- ◆ diabetes.
- ◆ erious heart conditions.

Of all those harsh realities of Friedrich's, one reality strikes just a bit harder: It is genetic.

Brother Blake has it as well.

### YOU CRY

"I was in Columbus for work," said Chrissy when she got the news. She and Howard ended their marriage long before Friedrich's entered their lives. "I was away from the kids, so they could not see me break down. It was so hard to grasp. I did not function for days."

Remember the doctors' advice to not read the Internet?

"I read it all .....", said Howard.

"I was in tears for months."

Chrissy struggled with guilt.

"It's a horrible feeling knowing it's a genetic disease. As a parent — I know that it came from me," she said.

Although it affects 1 in 50,000 Americans, how it happens seems almost a tragic fluke.

The gene can exist and be defective in any one person, and there are no problems. That's Howard and Chrissy.

When those two people who have that defective gene have children, there's a 25 percent chance their offspring will have the disease. That's Kaitlin and Blake.

The disease is a slow progression of the body.

"They say 'today is the best day you will have' because you don't know what tomorrow brings," said Chrissy.

With two children affected, Howard and Chrissy have been able to watch what the doctors advised: It affects everyone differently.

Kaitlin's handled it well overall.

"Once in awhile," said Chrissy, "she'll break down



Boardman Marching Band Director Tom Ruggieri talks with band member Kaitlin Windt at Boardman High School. Kaitlin is in a wheelchair but still performs with the Boardman High School Marching band. Two women volunteer to steer Kaitlin through the band's marching routines.



Above left, Kaitlin and fellow band member Helen Nguyen take a break during a half-time performance. Above right, Kaitlin rehearses with the marching band at the high school. Among Kaitlin's group of supportive friends, at left from left, are Courtney Segool, Emily Mook, Kait and Shannon McMaster.



with a 'why me.' Then she just kind of rocks on and figures it out."

Blake's determined that he won't be in a wheelchair, said Howard. And they notice that physical effects on him are less than Kaitlin's. But Blake required glasses at an earlier age — the disease affected his eye muscles.

### FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

As imaginable, how to function and finance such a family challenge is a daily puzzle.

Both parents work, and Howard's insurance covers the medical needs fine. But the life things are tough.

Howard's Cornersburg home — the "first house in Boardman" he laughs because he sits right next to a Youngstown home — needed a new bathroom and a wheelchair ramp.

Kaitlin's special wheelchair cost \$10,000 and was covered by insurance, but took nine months of agency approval. And when the wheels snapped during a park outing, that \$1,400 repair was not covered by warranty or insurance.

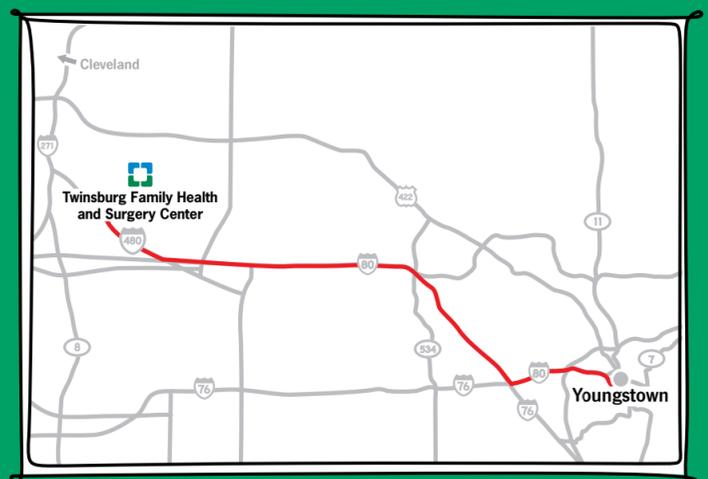
Chrissy credits Howard with spending two years of searching agencies and the internet to help meet their needs.

"It's just crazy," said Chrissy. "The stuff you have to sign up for, just so you can be denied, just so that you can qualify for other things ... You have to go through so many motions to get some help."

And as workplace health insurance policies churn, Howard pauses. He pays \$260 per month for expenses, and he monitors the calendar for his own medical care to ensure the \$4,000 deductible is met. And he's aware of his company reports.

"It's tough to know that 7 percent of a workforce causes 75 percent of a company's health care expense. You get uneasy when you know your impact," he said.

They've applied to the



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SPECIAL TO THE VINDICATOR

Kaitlin Windt, center in wheelchair; Rachel Ruggieri, directly behind Kaitlin; and Beth Bean, Boardman High School marching band director, assist Kaitlin during halftime performances by pushing her wheelchair during marching routines.

## KAITLIN

Continued from A4

Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities, but the kids' conditions aren't covered. He earns too much for Social Security assistance.

But they find options. Through Kaitlin's physical therapist Cathy O'Shaughnessy, Howard connected with the Difference Makers charitable group, and a new wheelchair ramp was conducted onto his front porch. He's currently in the process of making his bathrooms wheelchair accessible at a price of \$10,000.

### LESSONS IN LIFE

Amid all of this, they push on with as normal a life as Friedreich's allows.

Blake and Kaitlin are A and B students. Kaitlin finds a special place with helping Boardman's special-education students. She'd like to be a nurse when she's older.

Being in a wheelchair has actually eased things for her, Chrissy said.

"With the chair, people now know there's something not right. Where as before, people thought she was drunk or something."

It's not about wondering what might have been, but simply dealing with what is.

"This is the hand you're dealt," Howard said. "You simply have to step up and make things happen for them. I try not to dwell on something I can't control."

Chrissy admits to having had doom-and-gloom issues. She said her boyfriend is more of a one-day-at-a-time type, and she's learned such.

"I never discourage her to not do a thing. She's had a boyfriend. She went to homecoming. She's in band. As we've gone on, I've come to realize it's all that we make of it. And we'll just deal as things progress."

Through others and the FARA website, they learn and hope. Scientists are working on a cure.

"My hope is they find something before the kids get too far along," said Chrissy.

Howard keeps in contact with a Friedreich's lady who, at 32, just had her first child.

They learn, and they live, and they're blessed when people care.

### FRIENDS OLD & NEW

It's odd when not getting a call is good.

"Not getting a call during band camp was a great feeling — a sigh of relief. It had worked and it was going well," Howard said.

Around Kaitlin is a core of kids who've been friends since kindergarten: Courtney Segool, Shannon McMaster and Emily Mook.

They form a tight ring around Kaitlin — aiding with all her needs as needed at the dorm, on the bus and more.

"Her friends are so welcoming to her. They're the most loving people," Rachel said.

And occasionally in life, you bump into new folks like Ruggieri, Rachel and Beth willing to figure out new things.

"I was floored at how much they've invested in her," said Chrissy, who was watching video posts throughout the week of band camp. "This was a huge deal for Kaitlin."

Rachel was nervous, she admits. She asked her dad what if this doesn't work.

"He said 'We're just going to make it work,'" she said.

"I love that he's not afraid to

## MAYOR

Continued from A1

winner in the three most populated: the 4th on the West Side; the 5th Ward on the southwest side, including Cornersburg; and the 7th in the eastern portion of the South Side.

The 4th and 7th are predominately populated by white people while the 5th has a white majority.

"I wanted to improve in the 4th, 5th and 7th to get more people to vote from my base," McNally said. "The goal was to focus on places we did well in the primary and those were the predominately white wards. It's a realistic political approach to not ignore [the predominately black wards], but we were not going to spend as much time [campaigning] in the wards where we wouldn't do well."

The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th Wards are predominately populated by black people with Kitchen, who is black, easily winning in those wards. Kitchen won in 31 of the 37 precincts in those wards.

McNally lost all 10 precincts in the 3rd Ward during his Democratic primary victory — in which he beat city Council President Jamael Tito Brown, who is black and lives in the 3rd Ward, by only 142 votes. In last week's general he won two precincts in the 3rd.

McNally said he was disappointed with how he performed in the primary in the 3rd Ward, which as recent as the 2005 election was a mixed ward that leaned black, in the primary.

In May, Brown received 68.9 percent of the vote in the 3rd compared with 29.9 percent for McNally.

In the general election, McNally increased his support in the 3rd to 39.3 percent.

"I thought [the 3rd Ward] was where we didn't do as well in the primary and could have done better," he said. "I thought



VINDICATOR FILE PHOTO, OCTOBER 2013

Youngstown Mayoral candidates DeMaine Kitchen, left, and John McNally prepare for a candidates' debate last month at New Bethel Baptist Church. McNally won the race in Tuesday's election.

we could do better there, and we did."

There were six mayoral candidates with McNally capturing 54.5 percent of the vote to 43 percent for Kitchen. The four other candidates combined for 2.5 percent of the vote.

In Youngstown, 10,651 of the city's 42,864 registered voters cast ballots in the mayoral election. That's 24.8 percent turnout. The county's voter turnout was 29.3 percent with a ballot largely featuring races for township trustees and seats on school boards.

"I don't know what else to do to get people to vote," McNally said. "We did door-to-door [campaigning], mailers, phone calls and follow-up calls, increased our TV and radio presence."

In the largely black 1st Ward, which includes all of downtown and portions of the East and South Sides, Kitchen received 70.5 percent of the vote compared with 26.7 percent for McNally. McNally also had 26.7 percent of the ward's vote in the primary. As he did in the primary, McNally won one of the ward's seven precincts, 1E.

Of the ward's 4,467 registered voters, only 869 voted, making for a turnout of 19.5 percent.

In the predominately

black 2nd Ward on the East Side, where Kitchen lives and previously served as its councilman, he won all 10 precincts and 76.8 percent of the vote compared with 22 percent for McNally.

Of the 5,839 registered voters in the 2nd, 1,364 voted. Turnout was 23.4 percent there.

In the 3rd Ward on the North Side, Kitchen won eight of its 10 wards and 57.6 percent of the vote. McNally's decision to not give up on the 3rd helped him win the two other precincts — he was swept by Brown in the Democratic primary in the 3rd — and increase his voting percentage from 29.9 percent in the primary to 39.3 percent in the general election.

The ward has 5,821 registered voters with 1,508 casting ballots. Turnout was 25.9 percent.

The 4th has traditionally been the strongest ward for white candidates, and it was again in this election.

McNally received 81.3 percent of the vote in the 4th, the city's most populated ward, winning all 13 precincts. Kitchen received 15.4 percent of the vote.

McNally got 1,647 votes to 311 for Kitchen, a margin of victory of 1,336 votes. McNally won the citywide race by 1,221 votes.

Overall, 2,025 of the ward's 7,677 voters cast ballots in the mayor's race, making turnout 26.4 percent.

The 5th, where McNally resides, has 14 precincts with seven on the West Side and predominately white, and seven on the South Side and predominately black. The ward is divided by Mill Creek MetroParks, and while it has a growing black population, it still has a white majority.

McNally and Kitchen split the 14 precincts along racial lines with the mayor-elect receiving 63.8 percent of the vote, up from 59.9 percent in the primary, and Kitchen getting 34.3 percent.

Of the 7,399 registered voters in the 5th, 2,475 voted. The 33.5 percent turnout in the 5th was the most of any ward in this election.

The 6th Ward on the South Side had the least amount of voters, 863, and the lowest turnout, 18.6 percent, as only 863 of its 4,645 registered voters cast ballots in this race.

As he did in the primary, McNally won three of the 10 precincts in the 6th Ward.

Kitchen received 60.6 percent of the vote compared with 36.6 percent for McNally. But in raw numbers, Kitchen had 523 votes to 316 for McNally in the 6th.

McNally said he wanted to do better in the 7th Ward than he did in the primary. He succeeded, getting 73.5 percent of the vote compared with 23.9 percent for Kitchen. In the primary, McNally received 66.9 percent of the ward's votes.

McNally had 1,137 votes to 370 for Kitchen in the 7th, which, like the 4th Ward, was a big win for the mayor-elect.

There are 7,016 registered voters in the 7th, and 1,546 voted in the mayor's race, resulting in a turnout rate of 22 percent.

**NONE OF US LOOKED AT IT AS 'IT'S A GREAT THING WE'RE DOING.' IT WAS SIMPLY: THIS IS WHAT THE BAND NEEDS; LET'S DO IT."**

**TOM RUGGIERI, Boardman High School marching band director**

take risks that others would push away."

Ruggieri said being in band is about adjustments and acceptance, and this was just the same — even though that TV segment was his only evidence of seeing it work in his 25 years.

"None of us looked at it as 'It's a great thing we're doing.' It was simply: This is what the band needs; let's do it."

It's hard to imagine where Friedreich's Ataxia takes Kaitlin. But you can imagine who'll be around to figure it out.

The "Baba" verse that starts with "Sally take my hand ..." closes fittingly.

"The happy ones are near; let's get together, before we get much older."

Todd Franko is editor of The Vindicator. He likes e-mails about stories and our newspaper. E-mail him at tfranko@vindy.com. He blogs, too, on vindy.com. Tweet him, too, at tfranko.

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