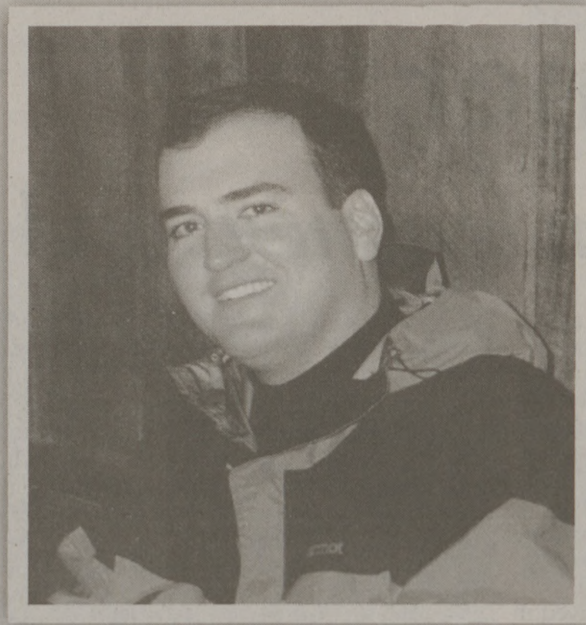


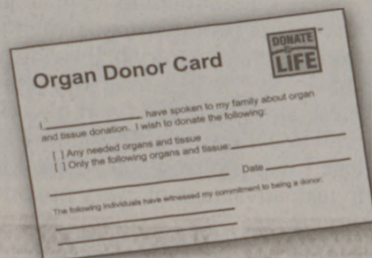
"Hundreds of people are walking around with a better quality of life because of his generosity..."



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CAMDEN Living Excellence

A child's wish

9-year-old cancer victim leaves legacy for classmates on his old playground

By Jim Suhr
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. LOUIS — Battling an incurable brain tumor that robbed him of his sight, 9-year-old Mak Shulist made a dying wish that had nothing to do with meeting with a celebrity, shaking a president's hand or going to Walt Disney World.

Before his death Friday, Mak got the Make-A-Wish Foundation to do something for his friends — build a rock-climbing wall on the playground of Ellisville Elementary School.

"It says a lot about the family and the type of person he was — selfless, thoughtful and caring," said Dave Knes, principal at the 600-student school in suburban Ellisville. "We learned a lesson from a 9-year-old — that even when we're going through tough times we should be thinking of other people and not ourselves."

Mak's illness was diagnosed about a year ago, Knes said, when physical education teachers noticed him losing his balance and falling while he ran around the track.

Despite chemotherapy and radiation treatments, the tumor came back last fall about the time Mak started third grade.

Knes said. Mak last attended school in October or November.

"I thought he was going to wish that there was a medicine or something, and he just wished for that," schoolmate Will Randall told KSDK-TV. "Whoa, he's nice."

The family remained private, but a basket appeared outside their home and became a drop-off spot for well-wishers. "People would put a gift in there every day," Knes said.

As Mak's health declined, the Make-A-Wish Foundation hustled to build the 7-foot-high climbing wall.

"We learned a lesson from a 9-year-old — that even when we're going through tough times we should be thinking of other people and not ourselves."

— Dave Knes
Principal, Ellisville Elementary School

"From the time the wish was granted to the time they were playing on it was less than two weeks," Knes said. He estimated it cost the foundation \$10,000 to \$15,000. Volunteers put it together.

On Thursday, Knes videotaped students scaling the wall and describing it in detail for Mak's benefit, and he rushed the tape to Mak's parents.

"We tried to hit the audio really big for him," the principal said. "His mom said he did hear it."

Mak died the next day, surrounded by family.

"Every time I'm going to go on this wall I think about him and what he did for us," said

NEWS IN BRIEF

Document talks of al-Qaida determination to launch U.S. attacks

CRAWFORD, Texas (AP) — A document sent to President Bush before the Sept. 11 attacks cited recent intelligence of a possible al-Qaida plot to strike inside the United States.

The White House released the document Saturday.

"Clandestine, foreign government, and media reports indicate Bin Laden since 1997 has wanted to conduct terrorist attacks in the US," the memo to Bush stated. Bin Laden implied in U.S. television interviews in 1997 and 1998 that his followers would follow the example of World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef and "bring the fighting to America."

The document, declassified Saturday, said that after President Clinton launched missile strikes on his base in Afghanistan in 1998, "bin Laden told followers he wanted to retaliate in Washington." The memo cited intelligence from another country, but the White House blacked out the name of the country.

Efforts to launch an attack from Canada around the time of "Y2K" "may have been part of bin Laden's first serious attempt to implement a terrorist strike in the U.S.," the document states.

Victoria's Secret drops fashion show

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Victoria's Secret is dropping its nationally televised fashion show this year, at least partly because of criticism following Janet Jackson's breast-baring faux pas at the Super Bowl.

Ed Razek, chief creative officer

for the Columbus-based lingerie chain, said Saturday the main reason for the decision was so the company can look at new ways to promote the brand.

Still, he said, "We had to make the decision probably six to eight weeks ago when the heat was on the television networks."

The announcement came less than three months after the Jackson uproar and a week after federal regulators proposed \$495,000 in fines against Clear Channel Communications for sexual material on the Howard Stern show.

The televised fashion show has generated criticism in the past from groups complaining about supermodels strutting down the runway in skimpy underwear.

Pope presides over Easter vigil service in St. Peter's Basilica

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Looking weak and speaking with great effort, Pope John Paul II blessed the flame of a tall candle at the start of a long Easter vigil service Saturday night in a packed St. Peter's Basilica. The pontiff baptized people from Europe, Africa and Asia in a solemn, chant-filled ceremony.

The pope's right hand trembled as he poured water from a gold-colored, shell-shaped scooper over the heads of a young man from Italy, a toddler from Togo, two Japanese women in kimonos and three others during baptism.

Earlier, John Paul slowly leaned forward in his chair to insert five grains of incense into the cream-colored candle's wax.

John Paul gripped the candle as he was wheeled in his chair up the center aisle of a darkened basilica.

Thousands of faithful held small candles whose flames

sparked in the darkness. After a deacon's sung phrase, "Lumen Christi" (Light of Christ, in Latin), rang out through the cavernous basilica for a third time, the lights went on in the basilica to the vigil service, which lasted about three hours.

Parents of 'Weird Al' found dead in home

FALLBROOK, Calif. (AP) — Elderly parents of Grammy-winning recording artist "Weird Al" Yankovic were found dead in their home, apparently victims of carbon monoxide poisoning, officials said.

Nick and Mary Yankovic were found dead Friday in their suburban San Diego home by relatives who were worried because they had not seen the couple in a while.

Paramedics found Mary Yankovic, 86, in a chair in the front living room. His 81-year-old wife was on the bathroom floor.

A wood fire had been set recently in the fireplace, Grayson said.

"The house was full of smoke when they opened the door," Grayson said, adding that the family members found the fire closed.

"Weird Al" Yankovic, 44, has no comment during a performance in Mankato, Minn., Saturday night.

Before the show, a graphic projected on the screens at the back of the stage dedicated the event to his parents, KTOE-AM reported.

Yankovic also canceled a meet-and-greet with selected fans.

A neighbor described Yankovic's parents as nice people who were proud of their son.

"Everybody who came to the neighborhood knew Nick," said John Buehman, who lives across the street. "They're going to be missed, big time."



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