

SPORTS

Saturday, December 25, 2010

Brother's helper

Dan Hurley and his brother Bobby, a former Duke star, try to build a men's basketball program at Wagner, a far cry from the programs they're accustomed to. **Story, B4**



MORE INSIDE

- COLLEGE FOOTBALL: Grades and new 'show jackets' on sideline. **B3**
- PRO BASKETBALL: Lakers and Heat will finally meet on the court. **B4**
- OLYMPICS: Former WNBA and UKConn star Diana Taurasi could face a ban. **B5**

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High Point Christian's Bethany Gesell (center)

all-area volleyball 2010 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

▲ Bethany Gesell

OUTSIDE HITTER, HIGH POINT CHRISTIAN, SENIOR

- 580 kills, 105 aces, 64 blocks, 265 digs
- Piedmont Athletic Conference of Independent Schools player of the year (four-time conference player of the year)
- N.C. Independent Schools Athletic Association Class 3-A All-State team (four-time all-state selection)
- American Volleyball Coaches Association
- Preseason All-America watch list
- Super Six tournament MVP
- 2009 News & Record All-Area Player of the Year
- Helped lead Cougars to 29-8 record, PKCIS title (3-0) and state quarterfinal this season
- Signed letter of intent to play at East Tennessee State

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COACH OF THE YEAR

Marty Woods — McMICHAEL

- Mid-State 3-A Conference coach of the year
- 29-6 overall record
- Reached third round of state playoffs
- Won 500th career match
- Won 10th regular-season conference championship
- Has coached at McMichael and its predecessor, Madison-Majors, for more than 30 years



FRIDAY: BOYS SOCCER
TODAY: VOLLEYBALL
SUNDAY: FOOTBALL
MONDAY: GIRLS TENNIS, GIRLS GOLF AND BOYS & GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY



ED HARDIN

Christmas is a time for giving real gifts

Do you remember your best Christmas present ever? Through all the years, can there even be such a thing?

I remember mine. It was a Green Bay Packers jersey. I think it was 1967. I asked for Bart Starr and got Max McGee. Oh well. I was the only kid in Charlotte who had one, and when jerseys were handed out for my junior high football team the next year, I was the only one who asked for No. 85. "You're not an end," Coach Crackback said. "You're a flanker. Here, take this one."

It was No. 15. In a day and age when we're bombarded with advertising and commercials trying to convince us we can afford to give our wife a diamond or a Lexus for Christmas, we sometimes forget that what she really wants is a Bart Starr jersey. OK, I'm divorced, so maybe I'm not the one to be giving out advice on things like that. Everything I gave my wife ended up in a yard sale that summer anyway.

But I digress. Here's what I really wanted to tell you this morning. My grandson is here, all the way from Greater Chattanooga. He's expecting a Mickey Mouse something or other. He's seven.

I bought him a gun. I'm pretty sure he's going to remember it.

Now before you go calling the number at the bottom of the column (or the number for Social Services) let me explain. This isn't just any gun. I bought him the Red Ryder 650-shot, lever-action carbine with the branded wood stock. It's the BB gun in the movie "Christmas Story."

Sort of. The kid in the movie asked for an "official Red Ryder carbine-action, 200-shot range-model air rifle with a compass in the stock," which didn't actually exist. I looked it up.

I looked up some other stuff, too, facts about injuries from BB guns and anti-violence groups protesting the sale of the gun first manufactured in 1938 and even the law behind purchasing such a thing in this day and age. I saw it in a hardware store locked inside a glass display case in the long rectangular box with Red Ryder himself on it, and I bought it for myself in case his parents said "no." I figured I could always keep it in the box for next Christmas. Or the next.

I talked to his mom and promised her it would never leave my house unless I was with him. The gun stays here when he goes back home, and it will stay hidden until it's time to go outside and target shoot.

No birds. No squirrels. No critters of any kind. It's not 1938 anymore. And the movie that popularized the iconic BB gun is pure fiction. I promised my daughters I would never have a gun in the house when they were growing up knowing full well they'd one day give me grandsons and this day would come.

I even asked the clerk at the hardware store if it was still legal to just buy a BB gun and walk out with it.

"Yes," she said, after checking with a manager.

A man standing in line to buy a snow shovel watched the entire purchase then asked if he could get one, too.

"No," she said. "That's the only one we have. It's been in here all year. It's been here as long as I've worked here."

That's the beauty of the Red Ryder 650-shot, lever-action carbine with the branded wood

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