

Beating ALS

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She knew a doctor who fit his bill perfectly and introduced him the next morning to Hu Yin Fen, or Dr. Hu, as Kai calls her. "She agreed to take me on as a student," said Kai. He shared a close relationship with Dr. Hu and her family for many months, visiting her daily and observing her diagnosis and treatment of patients. "She considers me her apprentice," he said.

Although he has picked up enough of the Chinese language for basic conversations, sharing medical terminology with the non-English-speaking Dr. Hu is difficult. So, Kai had a friend write out his brother's illness and symptoms in Chinese and showed it to her.

"There aren't any coincidences," said Todd. "Everything happens for a reason."

Todd Van Bodegon-Smith

"She said, with her typical cocky attitude," Kai relates with a smile. "Oh yes, I can help him. No problem. No problem." Dr. Hu's self-confidence is well earned. She is famous in her country and although the doctor is semi-retired, her services are highly sought after, so she continues to take terminally ill patients and those who have exhausted all other types of treatment methods. And those who, like Todd, have been given no treatment options by Western-style medicine.

Kai said Dr. Hu has trained under several masters and her skills are diverse. She is a master of herbal remedies. "She is gifted sensitively," said Kai. "She will tell you if this plant is yin or yang, hot or cold, good for the liver or the spleen by feeling the energy of it as she holds her hand over it.

"Chinese medicine is based on energy," he continued. "All the organs are tied into the emotions and psychological functions. It is all interwoven.

"She told me the bulk of what she knows is in the secret formulas (of the herbals). She said, 'When you can read and write Chinese, I will pass them on to you.'" Kai said of his mentor, "She is an amazing woman."

Kai and Todd will leave their parents' home in Harveys Lake in early September and travel to China. The two will first visit Dr. Hu for a month, then move on to some of the other alterna-



Todd Van Bodegon-Smith, left, and his brother Kai flank their parents, Eleanor and Neil at their Harveys Lake home.



Kai Van Bodegon-Smith shared a meal with Dr. Hu Yin Fen, who practices traditional Chinese medicine. Van Bodegon-Smith teaches English in China.

POST PHOTO/ELIZABETH ANDERSON

tive practitioners and healers Kai has met in his travels. They will stay in China three and a half months.

Todd realizes he cannot depend on just one person or one thing to heal him.

"Ultimately, if I'm going to beat this," Todd said. "I have to beat it.

"It is not going to be any one thing but it's going to be a combination of many different things that are going to get me better.

"I have been called to the front of the line to take care of some spiritual work for myself," said an optimistic and determined Todd. "The old Todd would look at my life and say, 'You're really screwed up.' I am completely transformed.

"These seemingly tragic things led to something great. One path (in my life) became completely roadblocked and now I have a whole new path to do whatever I want. That is a very liberating and freeing feeling."

L-L High School

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The first home game with Nanticoke is August 31 and the football field will be ready, according to the contractor, Southwestern. Roberts complimented the foreman of the crew saying they had "been working from dawn till dusk and last night had some cars pulled around the track with their lights on to get some work done." The scoreboard and bleachers will be in place this week. Trumbower said the press box would be completed some time in September and lighting would be operational in mid-October.

The track around the field is scheduled to be paved August 27. It must be allowed to cure for 21 days, said Trumbower. The actual artificial surface on the track will be laid the end of September and then a chain link fence will be installed.

In other business, School Board President Charles Boytin said the board provided the teachers' negotiating team and representative a contract two weeks ago and is waiting to hear back from them.

"With any kind of luck, we hope in the next couple of weeks to be announcing we have a contract that is completed," said Boytin. "Then we can get this behind us and get to what we do best — the education of our kids."

Rumors of a teachers' strike has caused much concern among the high school population — especially the seniors.

"There will be minor inconveniences as you might expect. But we will be ready to go."

Robert O. Roberts
Superintendent of Schools

Many students spoke out at board meetings over the summer urging the board to settle with the teachers' union.

"We are hoping they'll get back to us real soon," added Boytin. "Now everything is in their court and not ours."

The bid for the high school athletic field lighting was awarded to Apollo Group, Inc. of Wilkes-Barre, at a cost of \$145,000. The cost includes lighting, wiring and a sound system for the press box.

Lake-Noxen Elementary School Principal Dave McLaughlin-Smith has been appointed the K-12 Curriculum Director and the Federal programs and Grants Coordinator retroactive to July 1, 2002 at a salary of \$75,000.

The next work session will be Tuesday, September 3 at 7 p.m., with the next meeting for general purposes to be held on Tuesday, September 10 at 7 p.m. Both meetings will be held in the music room of the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School.

Karen Urzen earns nursing degree

Karen Sitar Urzen of Shavertown, recently received her baccalaureate degree in nursing from the RN-BSN Expressway Program through College Misericordia. Karen, wife of Albert Urzen and daughter of Cecelia Sitar of Ashley, is presently a staff nurse in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre. She has had a long and distinguished nursing career at the VA, starting as a licensed practical nurse and graduating with her Associates Degree in registered nursing in 1998.

The Urzens are parents of four children; son Ryan and daughters, Holly, Allyson and Beverly.

Old Time revival services August 25-28

Old Time Revival services will be held at the Emmanuel Assembly of God Church, Church Road, Harveys Lake August 25-28. Guest speaker will be Evangelist G. Carver. Morning service will start at 10:45 a.m. Sunday. Evening services will be at 6:30 p.m. Sunday to Wednesday.

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