

Scottie Bailey's death leaves family with void

By C.J. RUSH
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It was not an easy Thanksgiving for the James Frank Middleton family.

Christmas does not look more promising.

Frank and Mary Middleton of Franklin, ages 63 and 65, lost a grandson on Nov. 20, just two days after the boy's 23rd birthday.

SCOTTIE BAILEY, who worked for Cassano's Pizza around the corner from where he lived with his grandparents at 220 Bridge St., was killed by a blow to the head with a blunt object after delivering a pizza to 10900 Cincinnati-Dayton Pk. in Miami Township. An undisclosed amount of money was stolen, along with the delivery vehicle.

The two suspects, charged with aggravated murder, aggravated assault and grand theft auto, are expected to be tried in Montgomery County Common Pleas Court in coming weeks. Robbery is the believed motive, according to police.

Family members expect to attend all the trials and hearings.

People who knew Scottie are stunned by the killing. He was not the



SCOTTIE BAILEY

'He was the most wonderful guy you ever met in your life...'

sort of boy who had been in trouble, according to family members.

"HE WAS perfect, I thought," says his aunt Eileen Abrams of

Middletown. "Of course, he was curs, so naturally we thought he was perfect."

Bailey spent much of his life living with his grandparents and attending schools near where they lived including Franklin grade schools, Middletown's Verity Middle School and Giddings County Indiana high schools.

He dropped out of Lemon Monroe High School in the 11th grade to work at jobs such as his cooking positions at Louise's Restaurant and at the Union 76 truck stop.

He'd begun his Cassano's delivery job this past June, the same month he bought himself his first non-used car, a 1988 Ford escort, which he washed inside (the motor) and out daily, according to first cousin Butch Barger.

"HE WAS the most wonderful guy you ever met in your life," says his grandfather, whose own car benefited from his grandson's hankering for automotive maintenance. Scottie had also recently purchased a living room suit for his grandparents' apartment.

Scottie's pastimes included automobile, vacuum and television

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repair, cooking and baking, and teasing his family.

"He could do anything," Abrams says of her nephew's television repair skills. "— put in a new picture tube — he was just gifted like that. He'd sit down and tear it apart and put it together again.

"He wasn't much for sports because he was heavy," she said.

IN SCHOOL, he liked woodshop and took vocational courses, but after his school years were behind him, he passed his time, when not working, creating dishes as Hungarian goulash or cake baking and decorating.

Unlike some male cooks, he cleaned up the kitchen after himself.

Obituaries

James Scott Bailey

James Scott Bailey, 23, of 220 Bridge St. Apt. C, Franklin died Sunday, Nov. 29 in Miami Township.

He was a native of Dayton and a deliveryman for Cassano's Pizza King in Franklin.

Survivors include his grandparents, James and Mary Middleton of Franklin; his parents, Harold and Carolyn Bailey of Liberty, In.; two brothers, Joey and Shane, both of Liberty; and one sister, Carrie, of Liberty.

Services were held Saturday, Nov. 26 at the Woods Road Pentecostal Church with Rev. Lonnie Mitchell officiating. Burial was at Woodhill Cemetery.

"Oh yes, he vacuumed the house — he was good in the house," Middleton says of his grandson. "He cleaned house as good as a woman."

Thanksgiving would have been a special time for Bailey.

THERE WERE two things he looked forward to: Thanksgiving dinner, which would bring his parents and brothers and sisters from Indiana together with aunts and uncles who lived in Ohio and elsewhere, and the January birth of his brother's first child. He looked forward to becoming an uncle.

Following Scottie's death, the family didn't cook a Thanksgiving meal. Friday night was when visitation was held at the Woods Road

Pentecostal Church

Saturday, the day of Scottie's funeral, brought approximately 1,000 nearby friends and relatives from four states to the little church in the country, Abrams said.

Other recent tragedies have been heaped on the family.

Mary Middleton's mother passed away five months ago. A great grandchild is in the hospital this week having liver surgery.

MEANWHILE, the family mourns the loss of Scottie.

When he wasn't buying something for somebody, he was renting video tapes and watching them with some of his girl cousins who were co-workers at Cassano's, going shopping with his cousin Beverly Watts' 2-year-old daughter, Stephanie, or making family members laugh.

"If somebody was asleep, he liked to dress them up like a girl," says Butch, "— but he'd hate it when someone else got him."

All the grandchildren call Mary Middleton "Mammaw" except for Scottie, who sometimes teased and called her "Marilou."

"HE COULD get away with anything with any of us, that's just the kind of person he was, you couldn't get mad at him," Abrams

says of her nephew. "He wouldn't let you get mad at him. He'd scare you. You'd be washing dishes and he'd come up behind you and scare you and just die laughing."

During conversations slipped in between orders for quarter pounders and french fries at Star Pizza where Scottie was a customer, manager Shirley Hyde remembers, "At different times he'd say things, like, he'd bought his grandparents a new couch or he'd gone to get them their medicine — different things like that.

"I was there (at the restaurant) when they told the grandmother that he was dead," she continued. "You can't even describe how sad they all were. Every one of them.

"When you work together as a team, and when one person is taken out of that team — you can't describe the emotion that's there. It wasn't necessary. Cassano's would have wanted him to give them the car — all of it. He would not have had to die. It's just such a shame. I just can't imagine leaving a little boy like that."

SCOTTIE'S aunt recalled a Cassano's delivery customer who recently said to her, "I just told my husband the other day that I just wish that little guy would deliver our pizzas every time."

Except for a change of hairstyle and the recent addition of a budding mustache, his appearance had changed little from the likeness offered in the school photograph taken when he was 14.

"He always smiled like that," Abrams said. "Everytime you saw him, he always had a smile, always, no matter how mad he got. He was always the same old Scottie."

If Scottie is watching what's going on right now, "he'd sure be surprised that so many people cared, and happy," says Abrams. "We can't express what he's really like. What we told you is true. Everybody just loved him."