

Sometimes we don't get to know why

Tommy and I have been friends almost as long as I can remember.

We met on the first day of middle school way back in the early 1970s and hit it off immediately.

I always joked that I had to be his friend because I was the second-worst trombone player in the history of the world. But luckily I was better than Tommy. He kept me from the shame of being last chair when my parents came to the concerts.



Niles Kruger
Monroe News sports editor

We were inseparable during our high school and college years.

As the years rolled by and family, jobs and life got in the way, we drifted apart. But Tommy has always been one of those friends I can talk to after months of not communicating and nothing has changed.

I spoke with him again Friday, but it was not a happy occasion.

His niece was killed in an automobile accident a few days earlier. Too often in recent years it seems that death has brought us back together — funerals for both of his parents and his wife and for my father and brother.

I asked him how his sister was dealing with the tragic loss of a teenage daughter.

“She’s not going to have a good day for a long time,” he said.

It’s the same way for the friends and family of Bedford football player Colton Durbin, who died Thursday from injuries suffered in an automobile accident the day before.

The grief felt by the Bedford community washed over all of the Monroe County Region and beyond.

Monroe and Bedford are bitter rivals. They compete fiercely in every sport. The players often do not like each other.

But when something like this happens, all of that is set aside.

I spoke with Monroe assistant football coach Nick Notario before Friday night’s game against Dearborn Fordson.

His team was getting ready for a big game that would determine whether or not the Trojans would make the playoffs, but the Bedford players and coaches were on his mind.

He talked about how tough it must be on all of them.

“High school kids don’t know how to deal with that,” I said.

“None of us do,” he responded.

Amen, Nick. You are right.

Many times in life we struggle for answers to the simple question of “Why?” But too often we never get the answer. It is beyond human understanding.

The best we can do is stand together, offering emotional support and prayer.

That’s why the outpouring of love displayed at football fields across Southeastern Michigan and Northern Ohio Friday night was so important. Everywhere people were wearing Bedford Red or had CD3 for Durbin’s initials and number written somewhere on them.

Much of it was initiated by the students themselves.

Whiteford coach Jason Mensing said it best: “When something terrible like this happens, it’s all about being there for each other.”

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