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Fort Wayne, Indiana

Family gives Embassy supporter a send-off at theater

Sumpters worked with volunteers who helped save it from demolition.

By **KEVIN KILBANE**
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His family didn't know it until shortly before he died, but Joseph Sumpter left detailed instructions about how he wanted things done

after he was gone. Just like old times, it includes a party at the Embassy Theatre.

Family and friends plan to gather in the grand old theater Sunday afternoon to enjoy music played on the Grande Page Organ, reminiscing, and hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

Sumpter died at age 76 on June 25 in Panama City, Fla., where he and his wife, Becky, spent winters

for the past 18 years and where they now live full time. His death wasn't expected, but he hadn't felt well for the past year because of health problems such as diabetes and heart trouble, said his daughter, Cindy Kiel of Mount Prospect, Ill.

She and her family had been there a week before he died, delivering some furniture and items from the Sumpters' previous home



Sumpter

They already knew he wanted to be cremated.

"He already had bought his

urn," Becky said. "He said, 'Look, it's Purdue colors.'"

"We are a Purdue (University) family," she explained.

In the letter to his family on his computer, Sumpter said that, since he was saving them money because he didn't want a funeral and wouldn't need a casket, he wanted a big party thrown at the Embassy

See **EMBASSY**, Page 9A

RIDE THROUGH THE PAST AND FUTURE



A blue heron stands on the St. Marys River's bank as the canal boat Sweet Breeze floats by it.

Photos by Lisa M. Esquivel Long of The News-Sentinel

Canal boat offers up-close view of pre-developed riverfront

By **LISA M. ESQUIVEL LONG**
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Some residents see the brown water, scraggly trees along the riverbank and the occasional plastic bottle that floats by. For others, Fort Wayne's rivers are alive with wildlife, recreational opportunities and potential.

Last month city officials broke ground on the riverfront Promenade Park, the first phase of the planned riverfront development. The park, along the St. Marys River between the Historic Wells Street Bridge and Harrison

A sweet ride

Sweet Breeze is available for public and private events.

Educational cruises can be booked through Fort Wayne Outfitters and Bike Depot at fwoutfitters.com or by calling 420-3962. Most cruises take 90 minutes. Cost for public tours: adults, \$30; ages 6-12, \$10; and newborns to age 5, \$5.

Street, will include a pavilion, plaza, children's play area, tree canopy trail, bandshell and docks.

As Fort Wayne moves forward

See **CANAL BOAT**, Page 3A



Dan Wire, standing rear, July 15 leads a Sweet Breeze canal boat tour focusing on riverfront development and history.

Homicide victim's family extends mercy to brothers

Each will serve 15 years in prison followed by three years on probation.

By **KEVIN KILBANE**
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As brothers Kamari and Shakidi Underwood were being led from the courtroom Friday morning, Allen County Deputy Prosecutor Adam Mildred expressed the hopes of many who attended their sentencing hearing for voluntary manslaughter.

"Take full advantage of the opportunity," Mildred urged the brothers. "Don't



K. Underwood



S. Underwood

prove me wrong." The widow of Melvin Palmer, the man they were accused of shooting, wanted Kamari, 18, and Shakidi, 19, to serve some time in prison, but she also wanted them to have a chance to reform and rebuild their lives, Mildred said.

"These (plea agreement) terms would not have been tendered if they did not have the full support of Mrs. Palmer," he said after the court hearing.

Allen Superior Judge Fran Gull accepted the terms of a plea agreement and sentenced each teen to a total of 25 years in prison, but with 10 years suspended, so they will serve 15 years before release. After release from prison, Gull sentenced them to spend three years on probation, with the first year on home detention.

Additionally, Gull ordered them to have no further contact with Palmer's family, no further illegal activity and to make restitution of \$3,694 to

See **BROTHERS**, Page 3A

Fort Wayne man's sentencing ends in brief chaos

He was ordered to serve 80 years for rape and burglary.

By **KEVIN KILBANE**
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Allen County Superior Court bailiffs scrambled to control brief chaos Friday morning after a sentencing hearing left the defendant wailing,



Drake

after Judge Fran Gull sentenced Frank D. Drake, 26, to 40 years each

"Eighty years, 80 years!" the victim yelling at him and the defendant's mother being led away in handcuffs.

The scene, which lasted only a minute or two, took place immediately

on charges of two counts of rape and one count of burglary, with the rape charges served concurrently for a total of 80 years in prison.

Drake, who had just spent several minutes asking for leniency and apologizing for actions he said he doesn't remember, broke down in the jury box where he and other defendants were sitting. He began crying and shouting, "Eighty years, 80 years!"

The victim, who was sitting with her parents in the audience, started yelling, "You almost killed me!" as court staff tried quickly to escort her out of the courtroom.

Drake's mother, who earlier in the hearing also pleaded for leniency for her son, also became upset. As her son was being led out of the courtroom, she ignored a bailiff's

See **CHAOS**, Page 3A

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More contacts, Page 2A.

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Business **1B** Features **6A**
Classifieds **6S** Lotteries **2A**
Comics **4-5A** Obituaries **2B**
Editorials **8A** Television **7A**



Lights & Sirens
Why were the police in your neighborhood? Find out with our Lights & Sirens database in the Local section.

7-DAY FORECAST, 9A
TONIGHT: Mostly cloudy skies with a low of 71.
Sunset at 9:06 p.m.
SUN: Partly sunny
HIGH 87 || LOW 66
MON: Mostly sunny
HIGH 79 || LOW 60