



CLIP AND SAVE WITH COUPONS IN TODAY'S J&C



GET IN FREE

Don't miss your chance for free admission to the Indiana State Fair with a coupon inside Monday's Journal & Courier

TRITON WATER SOLUTIONS
We provide water solutions for residential and commercial customers in and around Greater Lafayette ensuring clean soft water for your home or business.

FREE 2 YR SERVICE PACKAGE WITH PURCHASE OF NEW WATER SOFTENER A

\$150 VALUE
Hellenbrand Water Softener

833 TWYCKENHAM BLVD LAFAYETTE, IN 47909
PHONE: (765) 637-0984

JOURNAL & COURIER

SUNDAY 08.13.17 || LAFAYETTE, IN

JOURNALANDCOURIER.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



RISING STAR

PHOTOS BY JOHN TERHUNE/JOURNAL & COURIER

West Lafayette defensive end George Karlaftis enters his junior year with offers from numerous blue chip college programs.

West Side's Karlaftis, still learning football, is among nation's top recruits

SAM KING
JOURNAL & COURIER

George Karlaftis had barely played a down of football when he said he would play in the NFL.

His friends laughed. "You suck at football," they said.

Karlaftis didn't so much "suck" as much as he didn't understand the game.

The first down of football Karlaftis ever played was in eighth grade. He jumped off-sides. On another play, he blew past the center and stopped dead in his tracks because he didn't know what to do next.

In a lot of ways, the West Lafayette High School junior defensive end, who arrived in his mother's hometown three years ago from halfway across the globe, still doesn't fully comprehend football.

Though he's been in West Lafayette's football program for three seasons, last year was truly the first time he got on the field to play

See STAR, Page 2A



A three-sport star, Karlaftis led West Lafayette's basketball team to a sectional title and won a state shot put title as a sophomore.



JOHN TERHUNE/JOURNAL & COURIER

Liberty German and Abigail Williams were killed 6 months ago today.

6 months later, case remains unsolved

Suspect in Delphi murders still unknown, at large

RON WILKINS
JOURNAL & COURIER

DELPHI - Teenagers Libby German and Abby Williams walked the historic trails here on a mild winter day six months ago today. They never returned, and half a year later, their killer remains unknown and on the loose.

Last month, police released a sketch of the man suspected of killing the teens. Since then, more than 6,000 tips landed, and investigators are working through those, Indiana State Police Sgt. Kim Riley said Thursday.

Overall, investigators have received 24,000 tips, which were phoned or emailed to police, and each has been — or is being — pursued by investigators, Riley said.

"There is new information, which is encouraging to us," Carroll County Sheriff Tobe Leazenby said Thursday. "We're hopeful."

The killer is described as a white man who weighs between 180 and 200 pounds. He stands between 5-feet, 6-inches tall and 5-feet, 8-inches tall, police said.

Anyone with information about the killings or the person in the sketch should call the Delphi homicide tip line at 844-459-5786. Tips also may be emailed to abbyandlibbytip@ca

See DELPHI, Page 5A

INDEX Classified 1E | Life 1D | Opinions 8A | Obituaries 2D | Sports 1C | Weather 8D

JOURNALANDCOURIER.COM

@JCONLINE

FACEBOOK.COM/JOURNALANDCOURIER

\$2.00 RETAIL

A Gannett Newspaper, Copyright © 2017
Volume 99, Number 225



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

LUCAS OIL STADIUM // 7:30 PM

PURDUE

LOUISVILLE



TICKETS AVAILABLE AT PURDUESPORTS.COM

Star

Continued from Page 1A

consistently.

The blossoming star still asks basic questions that everyone else understands.

"I can't explain how unbelievable it is how little he knows about the game of football," West Lafayette Coach Shane Fry said. "If you came from the outside and listened to questions he asks at football practice, you would think he is joking."

It hasn't kept college programs from reaching out to the unpolished product, whose NFL aspirations suddenly don't seem so far-fetched.

On the desk of his downstairs bedroom is a mountain of mail from some of the most prestigious college football programs in the country. In that same room, where his mother allows him to express his creativity, are inspirational quotes and Bible verses scribbled on the wall.

Included among them is Karlaftis' favorite phrase: "Prove them wrong." He continues to do just that to those who initially doubted him.

He's been offered scholarships from the likes of Notre Dame and Alabama.

Prior to his junior year, he's already limited his list of suitors to three: Michigan, Miami (Florida) and Purdue.

Karlaftis has a long way to go, but he's come a long way - nearly 5,500 miles to be exact - from his athletic beginnings and blossomed into the biggest football prospect the area has produced in 15 years.

Growing up Greek

Most see Greece from afar, through beautiful photographs of ancient buildings.

George Karlaftis lived in Athens for the first 13 years of his life and sees things through a different scope.

"Kids were raised tougher and forced to mature more rapidly than kids" in the United States, he recalled. "You have more of a rough childhood than anything. Here, life is way simpler and almost stress free compared to what it is in Athens."

The typical Greek kid essentially learns to live without his parents, who work 12-hour shifts, by age 6.

The Karlaftis family was better off than most, but it didn't mean it was easy living all the time.

The dangers of a large city in a country struggling through a financial crisis was a far cry from the simple Indiana life George's mother was accustomed to.

"I would never let them ride their bikes outside," she said.

Amy Weida was a three-sport standout at West Lafayette High

School, graduating as the leading scorer in Red Devils' girls basketball history.

She attended Purdue University and frequented the co-rec to play volleyball.

Matthew Karlaftis was a track-and-field standout at the University of Miami (Florida), still owning one of the longest javelin throws in the school's history, and later played football for the Hurricanes, growing to be 6-foot-4 and 280 pounds. He also was a regular visitor in Purdue's co-rec while attaining a Ph.D. in civil engineering.

The two met in 1994.

They fell in love.

In 1998, they moved to Matt's homeland of Greece and were married in 2000. George, their first of four children, was born in 2001 and would inherit the athletic traits of his parents.

Things seemed to come naturally. By 10 months old, he was walking and he rapidly developed phenomenal strength that far exceeded children his age.

He developed into a star water polo goalie, which helped him develop massive legs akin to his father. Like his dad, Karlaftis also found a calling in track and field.

He carried his father's frame with big broad shoulders and seemingly nonstop growth and developed a knack for throwing shot put. At age 13, he was competing for Greece's 16-and-under national water polo team that placed third at the 2014 world championships.

Tragedy strikes

The pool is where George was when he found out the worst news imaginable.

He was training for water polo in the home pool when his mom began banging on the door. She was with George's aunt and his father's best friend.

He sensed something wasn't right about the situation.

"Inside of me, I said I hope it is not my dad," George recalled.

Matthew Karlaftis died on June 4, 2014, of a massive heart attack at the age of 44.

"It was pretty painful," George said.

As much as it hurt, it was also a realization that, at 13 years old, George had to be the man of a house that included his mother, and younger siblings Yanni, Annie and Niko, who ranged from 6 to 11 years old at the time.

"George was a little kid," Amy said. "I saw within the next day that he wasn't a little kid anymore. He tried to become the man of the house. And by Greek law, he is."

With Greece in shambles and her West Lafayette home providing the most comforting surroundings following the devastation of losing her husband, the family pre-



COURTESY OF AMY KARLAFTIS

From left, Yanni, Amy, George, Niko and Annie Karlaftis after George won the IHSAA state shot put championship at Indiana University in June.

pared to move to the United States.

"Within 10 days, I knew I was leaving," Amy said from the dinner table of her West Lafayette home. "I had lived there for 16 years at that point, and I knew I had a good family base and good friends, but my family was here.

"It was going to be a family decision. I didn't want one of them to say they didn't want to go. They all agreed. Just now when we were back in Greece, they said, 'Why did we ever live here?' Now they've been here and they really like it here."

While the rest of the family packed for Indiana, George stayed behind to complete the water polo team's European tour and arrived.

School had started by the time George reunited with his family.

Adapting to America

Yanni Karlaftis was a world judo champion in Greece but upon arriving in Indiana had already made a decision it was another sport he wanted to excel in.

Football in Greece is soccer and that was nothing more than a leisurely activity. But football in America looked much more appealing.

"When we got here, Yanni was in sixth grade and his first year (of football), they would practice Little Gridiron and he would sit outside my parents' house with his football gear on waiting to go across the street," Amy said.

George, however, wasn't sure about the game.

Matt Karlaftis was a track-and-field star at Miami when the football coach convinced him to join as a walk-on. With his Greek background, he knew very little about the game and was learning it firsthand with one of the top football teams in the

"School was really hard. There was a language barrier and sometimes there still is."

GEORGE KARLAFTIS
ON LEARNING IN THE U.S.

ing his skull fracture reconnected with screws. The surgery left a permanent scar from one ear over the top of his head to the other ear.

Because of the injury, Matt told his sons they would not play American football. Matt's father, George Sr., echoed that sentiment.

"He didn't want to play football," said West Lafayette receiver and cousin R.J. Erb. "You had to convince him to do it."

Football was a foreign concept when George decided to give it a try, but that wasn't even the most difficult adaptation.

Math terminologies were different. Notes were written on the classroom boards in cursive, which had not been learned in Greece. George would carry conversations with his mother in English, but by no

means was he a native English-speaker.

"School was really hard," George said. "There was a language barrier and sometimes there still is."

Adapting to sports, given his genetics, was the easy part.

Sports of sorts

While in Greece, the family would visit West Lafayette once or twice a year.

Jerry Weida, Amy's father, had a basketball court at his house. George had little concept of basketball but carried a big body. He couldn't shoot, but he could rebound.

When the move to America happened, Weida, a basketball junkie, saw to it that George worked on the game.

"When George came over here after his father died, he was pretty interested in basketball," Weida said. "He would spend hours in my back yard shooting baskets and improved his shooting tremendously and improved his footwork. He just got a whole lot better."

George had a good eighth grade season and joined an AAU team. He

Continued on Next Page

KOHLER® Walk-In Bath

A bath you'll love for the home you love.



Kohler Belay™ Walk-In Bath

Backed by over 140 years of KOHLER® engineering expertise.

- An easier and safer way to bathe
- A soothing and relaxing private spa experience
- The freedom and independence to stay in your own home

Bask™ heated back, neck and shoulder surfaces

Hydrotherapy BubbleMassage™ and whirlpool jets

Extra wide door, 3" step-in height

Multi-function hand shower

Fast Fill and Drain technology

Free \$50 Gift Card
WITH IN-HOME CONSULTATION.

(765) 637-7237
Call now for your FREE quote!



*Limited time offer. Valid until September 17, 2017, at participating dealers only. Not available in AK; HI; Nassau County, NY; Suffolk County, NY; Westchester County, NY; and Buffalo County, NY. Also may not be available in other areas. Dealer will provide customer with certificate for free gift card upon completion of in-home consultation. No certificate will be provided for in-home consultations that are scheduled but not completed. Certificates to be redeemed directly from dealer. Cannot be combined with any other advertised offer.

Journal & Courier

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Published daily and Sunday by Journal & Courier Media Group, 823 Park East Blvd., Suite C, Lafayette, IN 47905

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

GEORGE SPOHR 765-420-5242, gspohr@gannett.com

NEWS EDITOR

CAROL BANGERT 765-420-5226, cbangert@gannett.com

SPORTS EDITOR

KEN THOMPSON 765-420-5236, kthompson@gannett.com

PRESIDENT, GANNETT INDIANA

PATRICIA FRANKS MILLER
765-420-5314, pfmiller@gannett.com

LOBBY HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday

HOURS M-F: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.

HOURS SUNDAY: 7 a.m.-10 a.m.

ONLINE SERVICE: journalandcourier.com and click on "Manage your subscription."

BACK ISSUES: 866-521-5511

Subscribers, to view important information related to your subscription, please visit <http://aboutyoursubscription.jconline.com>.

TO ADVERTISE

RETAIL ADVERTISING
765-420-5251, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Friday

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
765-423-5512, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Friday

ON THE WEB

journalandcourier.com

[@jconline](https://twitter.com/jconline)

facebook.com/journalandcourier

CONTACTS

NEWS 765-420-5259

SPORTS 765-420-5234

TOLL FREE: 800-407-5813

FAX: 765-420-5246

SUBSCRIPTION, BILLING OR DELIVERY ISSUES? CALL 800-456-3223

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Chuck Miller,
765-420-5297, chmiller@gannett.com
or call 765-420-5329 or 765-420-5344

Continued from Page 2A

wound up starting as a high school freshman for the varsity team and starring for the Red Devils on the hardwood just like his uncles, aunt and mother had. As a sophomore he was the center for a sectional championship team, averaging 9.3 points and 7.1 rebounds per game.

The lone sport that carried over from Greece was track and field.

As a freshman, George qualified for the state finals in shot put and also ran with the state-qualifying 400 relay team as an alternate after teammate Christian Burns was involved in a fatal car accident less than a week before the state meet.

As the No. 22 seed, George finished sixth in the shot put. In June, he made history, becoming the first sophomore to win the boys state shot put title in 71 years.

But football is where he found his calling.

To say Fry was licking his chops when a 6-foot-5 eighth grader moved to town would be a stretch.

"I met him his first day of school in 2014," Fry said. "One of the first classes he had was my P.E. class and we were playing Wiffle Ball.

Fry saw a massive kid who seemed somewhat unsure of himself. When George's turn to bat came, he saw why.

"He holds the bat with one hand," Fry said. "I am pitching and slow tossing, and he looks like a cave man with a club."

First impressions go a long way. Until the class moved on to basketball.



ERIC SCHLENE/FOR THE JOURNAL & COURIER

West Lafayette sophomore George Karlaftis puts pressure on Twin Lakes quarterback Owen Crowel.

That's when Fry saw how quick and athletic George was, especially for his size.

He can stand under a 10-foot rim, jump up and dunk a basketball. He can outrace many half his size. He won the state championship in shot put without the typical spin that the elite shot putters use. Instead, Karlaftis simply twists his torso and lets the shot fly behind his natural strength.

"His natural size, strength and athleticism is off the charts," Fry said.

Jon Speaker, a childhood friend of Amy and a member of the Red Devils' football staff, inquired about the notion of George trying football.

Eventually, he wound up playing the sport his father vowed he never would.

Football star

Because George arrived at school late while competing for Greece's national water polo team, his introduction to football started late in the

eighth-grade season. He was not allowed to get on the field until the conference championship game because he did not have enough practices to play.

"He didn't come here wanting to play football," Yanni, now a freshman linebacker, said of his older brother. "My uncles kind of talked him into it. They played football for West Side growing up. Toward the end of the season, he got to play in two games, then played his ninth grade year and after not even playing a whole varsity game, he got an IU offer, so that was pretty cool."

Fry put a size 15 kicking boot on the 14-year-old freshman prior to the 2015 season and made him the kicker for the kickoff team simply as a means to get the raw, yet promising, player on the field for a team that advanced to the Class 3A state championship game.

George's kickoffs didn't sail deep, but he did have one noticeable trait that stuck out on film.

"It wasn't real impres-



SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

West Lafayette's George Karlaftis kicks off at the Class 3A semistate his freshman season. Karlaftis played special teams as a freshman in his first full season of football.

sive watching him kick, but every time he kicked, he was the first one down the field," Fry said. "He was running to where he kicked it as fast as he can like a wild man through people. That was really all he could do. He was not ready to play."

Which made it even more surprising when former Indiana University head coach Kevin Wilson offered Karlaftis a scholarship during his freshman year of high school, without so much as play-

ing a down of defense.

"Schools aren't going to recruit you without film. I didn't really have any film," George said. "I did because I went to their camp and I won their 40-yard dash as a defensive lineman. They were like, 'Whoa.'"

Less than a year later, George Karlaftis' name would be on the radar of seemingly every college football coach in the country.

He started at defensive end as a sophomore and

had two sacks in a season-opening win against Tri-West. He accumulated 11 sacks in the first seven games before teams simply tried to avoid him. Even then, he disrupted plays by chasing quarterbacks from behind.

But in many ways, he was still adapting and in an overtime loss to McCutcheon the week after that Tri-West contest, the Mavericks took advantage of his lack of football knowledge with their strong running game.

"Last year was a process," Fry said. "There were times he looked like a world beater and there were times he was trying to learn and didn't do too well. He is wet behind the ears and hadn't had the reps everyone else had."

Still, while learning on the fly, Karlaftis led the sectional champion Red Devils with 113 tackles.

An interesting dynamic came when George's family moved to West Lafayette. Chike Okefor moved back to his hometown. Okefor was a star for the Red Devils in the early 1990s and went on to play 10 years as a defensive end in the National Football League.

Okefor was essentially giving Karlaftis pro-

Continued on Next Page

All the Extras
SALE HURRY SALE ENDS SOON
 Get All the Extras For **FREE**

- Free room measure & estimate
- Free carpet delivery
- Free carpet & pad removal
- Free furniture moving**
- Free appliance moving

Special
12 Month FREE Financing

Save on:
 Carpet - Hardwood
 Ceramic Tile - Laminate
 Waterproof Flooring

Miller's FlooringAmerica

2228 Sagamore Pkwy. South, where friends send friends
 Lafayette, IN 47905
 765-429-8899 • 800-244-4155

Mon-Wed: 9 am to 6 pm
 Thurs-Fri: 9 am to 7 pm
 Saturday: 9 am to 5 pm

Huge Savings On In stock Flooring

Great CD Rates & Great Bank: 1st Source!

Get a sizzling-hot rate on a 1st Source Certificate of Deposit.

1.60% APY

19-Month Certificate of Deposit (CD)
 \$500 Minimum Opening Balance

It's easy to open. Plus, you'll experience helpful service that's been rated "Best in the Midwest" two years in a row.

1st Source: A Helpful, Easier & Better Bank!

1st Source Bank

Lafayette Downtown Lafayette Cascada
 133 North 4th Street 3944 McCarty Lane
 765-807-7928 765-588-1083

1stsource.com/locations

Annual Percentage Yield (APY) effective 8/2/2017. Yield assumes interest is compounded annually or on its maturity date. Substantial penalty for early withdrawal from a Certificate of Deposit. No additional bonus rates or coupons may be combined with this offer. Limited-time offer.

Member **FDIC**

Continued from Page 3A

style workouts that bulked up his skinny frame.

The two set goal weights once George, all of 210 pounds, embraced the weight room. He weighed 240 pounds as a sophomore and is between 255 and 260 pounds going into his junior season, standing 6-5. He put on 50 pounds without losing the speed and athleticism.

College coaches were salivating. So were teammates. "His ceiling is limitless," said Matt Marley, a captain on last year's team. "Everything he has gotten so far, he has put in the work to earn it. He is going to continue to improve from a football standpoint, but as an athlete, he is even more impressive. It's going to be fun to watch the next couple of years."

Yanni had no setbacks in revealing his new passion to his paternal grandfather in Greece. George was more hesitant.

Amy was cautionary, telling George Sr. that his grandson was the kicker, which was true. Once it became obvious that he'd be playing the sport beyond high school, there was no more hiding it.

"He doesn't agree with it, but he supports it," Amy said.

Chasing a dream

George Karlaftis still has not watched an NFL game. The three college games he's seen were because he was on campuses for unofficial visits.

He instead relies on YouTube for football viewing.

He'll watch highlights of Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt. Moreso, he studies Watt, mimicking his maneuvers and applying them to the football field.

In a lot of ways, Karlaftis is a high school version of Watt with his size and speed.

Others can draw comparisons. Ohio State is recruiting Karlaftis as a tight end, a position Watt began his college football career playing for the Wisconsin Badgers. Most though see him as a defensive end, including Fry, who put him at the position a year ago and, without a whole lot of guidance, let him be an athlete more than a football player.

"We feel like he's got an advantage over any offensive tackle," Fry said.



Matt Karlaftis at the beach with his three oldest children.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMY KARLAFTIS

"He is going to continue to improve from a football standpoint, but as an athlete, he is even more impressive. It's going to be fun to watch the next couple of years."

MATT MARLEY
FORMER TEAM CAPTAIN

"Teams planning on running some zone and doing some drop back passing, we feel like we can just let him go. We don't want to pack his head full of rules. We just want him to be an athlete and play fast, and he's been good when he's done that."

George, though, still was unsure how good he was.

He was invited to January's U.S. Army All-American combine.

"They put me with the first group, which was the better group, and guys were 6-5, 250 pounds and I had a little bit of pee running down my leg," Karlaftis said. "I went against them and just ran by them without them touching me. I heard a lot of people saying, 'Whoa.'"

"I thought that maybe I am pretty good. My confidence went up and there were lots of reporters there, so that helped my exposure, too."

When Indiana offered a scholarship, it gained some traction through social media.

When Purdue followed, there was a little more. A third in-state school opened George's eyes to the recruiting game when it offered a scholarship in April.

Notre Dame has an unequaled national following.

Because of that, there's a lot of media covering the Fighting Irish.

The Notre Dame offer came with lots of phone calls. The attention was nice and welcomed by the 16-year-old Karlaftis. When offers came from Alabama and Miami, though, it became somewhat overwhelming.

Even though college coaches can't initiate contact with Karlaftis per NCAA rules because he has not completed his junior year, media requests are more persistent as recruiting interest continues to reach new heights.

"I wish there was a recipe I could give him to handle everything that is going on," Amy said. "If it was just one report-

er per school, then it wouldn't be an issue. But when people are messaging you all the time and you feel obligated to respond ..."

Last week, he trimmed his list to three schools, hoping it would cut back on the media requests and social media notifications.

"The attention is nice, but I am trying to be a kid, too," he said.

It's a far cry from lining up at nose tackle on his first down and jumping off-sides.

"If I start something, I want to be the best at it. When I started, I didn't know I was going to be this heavily recruited," Karlaftis said. "I was thinking I would have to grind and hopefully get an offer my senior year."

Instead, he said he will likely be committed to a college before his senior year. Along the way, he's been up front with schools. If he has little or no interest, he will politely tell the coach it's probably not worth investing their time in him. Maybe that's held back more potential scholarship offers.

He gets that from his mother, who will rein him in at the slightest hint of cockiness.

"She'll tell me to step it down, hot shot," George said, smirking.

He still wants to play in the NFL someday. He said perhaps the first NFL game he watches will be one he is playing in.

There's a long way to go if that ever happens.

Karlaftis realizes he's come a long way in a short time, but also that there's plenty more left to learn.

"I am probably the recruit who has played the least, maybe in the country," he said. "I'd definitely be up there."

No one questions his football abilities anymore.

So there's really only one question left to ask.

What would your father think about all of this?

"I think if he knew I had the chance to get a full-ride scholarship, he would be OK with it," George said. "If he was here right now, and he knew how advanced the game is with all the equipment, he wouldn't have a doubt that we should play."

Contact high school sports reporter Sam King at sking@journalandcourier.com. Follow him on Twitter @samueltking.

Renewal by Andersen
WINDOW REPLACEMENT
an Andersen Company

THE FULL SERVICE REPLACEMENT WINDOW DIVISION OF

Andersen CORPORATION

THE MOST TRUSTED FAMILY OF WINDOW AND DOOR BRANDS IN AMERICA¹

With our exclusive composite window material, you'll have absolute peace-of-mind!

- ✓ 200% STRONGER THAN VINYL
- ✓ RESISTS ROTTING, CRACKING, & PEELING
- ✓ 9 BEAUTIFUL COLORS AVAILABLE

SAVE 20%
on Fibrex Windows & Patio Doors
PLUS Free Upgrade to SmartSun® Glass

Riley Children's Foundation

Renewal by Andersen of Indiana is Giving Back!
We are making a donation to Riley Hospital for Children for every window sold this month.

A minimum donation of
\$5,000
for the month!

Call Now for a Free In-Home Consultation

(765) 588-5627

GetRenewalWindows.com

Renewal by Andersen Midwest is independently owned and operated. *Offer expires 8/31/2017. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Get 20% off your entire project and 12 months no payments, no interest when you purchase four (4) or more windows or patio doors between 8/1/2017 & 8/31/2017 with approved credit. ~APR of 16.68% as of 6/1/2015, subject to change. Interest accrues from date of purchase but waived if paid in full within 12 months. Savings comparison is based on the purchase of a single unit at regular list price. See your local Renewal by Andersen location for details. All license numbers available upon request. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of Andersen Corporation. © 2017 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved.