

Learn more about DeVry's Game & Simulation Programming Degree and get **FREE GAME DEMOS**

- [HOME DELIVERY](#)
- [SUBSCRIBER SERVICES](#)
- [CONTACT US](#)
- [ABOUT US](#)
- [SITE MAP](#)
- [Your Ad Your Way](#)



The Daily Item
LIFE DELIVERED DIGITALLY





[Subscribe](#)

[Place a Classified](#) | [Homepage](#) | [News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Forums](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Art & Entertainment](#) | [Milestones](#) | [Danville News](#) | [Lifes Information & Polls](#) |

[News](#) | [Local Video](#) | [Danville News](#) | [2008 Elections](#) | [Pennsylvania news](#) | [Sports](#) | [Editorial](#) | [Letters](#) | [Lifestyles](#) | [Art & Ent](#)

Resources

Published April 30, 2007 12:01 am -

-  [Print this story](#)
-  [E-mail this story](#)
-  [Post to del.icio.us](#)
-  [Discuss this story](#)

Pediatric cancer victim teaches fraternity brothers about life

Pediatric cancer victim teaches fraternity brothers about life

By Asten Smith
The Daily Item

Photos

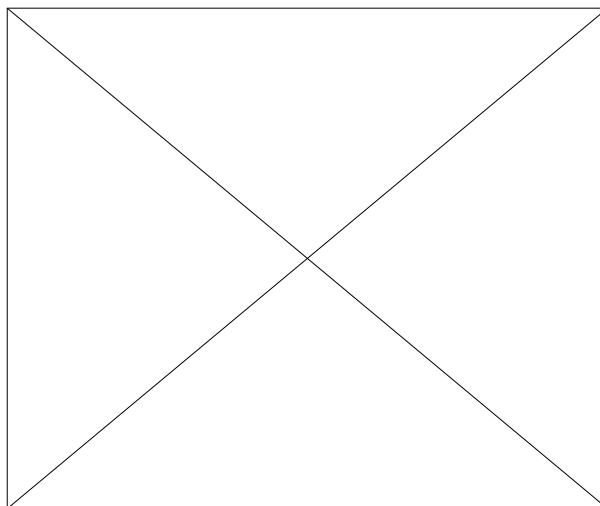


From left: Colby Wesner, Krystian Hammaker and sister Kallan pose for a photo.

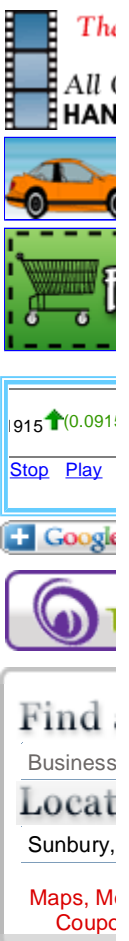


STATE COLLEGE -- For the fraternity brothers of Phi Delta Theta at Penn State University, they said they have learned a lot this year, although they're not referring to lessons found in their textbooks or a professor's lecture. The young men said they learned how to live and how to love through an unlikely teacher.

It was the energetic and enthusiastic spirit of seven-year-old Kallan Hammaker that taught them so many lessons in life they won't soon forget. Sitting around a table at the fraternity house, four of the brothers, Eli Bohemond, Kevin Haslam, Nick Wagner and Colby Wesner, recalled one of their fondest and most recent memory of the little girl and her family this past Christmas.



The grown men spoke with smiles on their faces as they described their involvement in a fantasy "monster and princess" game Kallan created and had them playing for much of the day with her and her little sister, five-year-old Krystian.



[The Daily Item](#)

[All About HAN](#)

[915](#) ↑ (0.091)

[Stop](#) [Play](#)

[+ Google](#)

[Find](#)

[Business](#)

[Locat](#)

[Sunbury,](#)

[Maps, M](#)

[Coupc](#)

Popular

[Search All](#)
[Search](#)
[Monste](#)
[Search](#)

changed their lives. Pictured from left: Krystian Hammaker, Eli Bohemond, Kallan Hammaker, Colby Wesner, Kevin Haslam. Second row: Josh Phillips, Dave Dunn, and Tony Cercone

"We played that game for hours," said Mr. Haslam with a laugh. That day, the brothers ate a holiday meal with the Hammakers and brought gifts for the girls. The girls particularly liked their Penn State t-shirts, teddy bears, and hats.



Seven-year-old Kallan Hammaker inspired the fraternity brothers of Phi Delta Theta through her resilient spirit fighting pediatric cancer. She passed away April 9th

Kallan and her family became very close to the Phi Delta Theta brothers over the years as their adoptive "Thon" family through the Penn State Inter-Fraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, better known as "Thon." The largest student-run philanthropy in the world has raised over \$45 million benefiting the Four Diamonds Fund, an organization that supports children receiving treatment for pediatric cancer at Penn State Children's Hospital in Hershey. "Thon" reached its 35th anniversary this year and raised a record \$5.2 million. The year-long fundraising concludes during "Thon Weekend," a no sitting or sleeping two-day dance marathon.

Mr. Wesner, of Mifflinburg, met Kallan when she was four years old and said that for the Hammakers and so many "Thon" families, Thon weekend was like a holiday on the calendar. The Hammakers were still able to attend this year despite Kallan's health declining.

"She wanted to smile but she was playing a tough card," said Mr. Bohemond. All four brothers danced at this year's "Thon." They still have the Spongebob and Batman necklaces she gave them. Mr. Wagner, also of Mifflinburg, danced for the first time this year and remembered how warm and friendly Kallan was the first time he met her. The timid little girl he met at the beginning of the visit was giving him hugs and kisses goodbye just a few hours later. The goodbye hugs and kisses quickly became her goodbye routine.



From left: Krystian Hammaker, Nick Wagner, and Kallan Hammaker stickerbook and play together during a visit the fraternity makes to the Hammaker residence

Kallan may not have had any biological big brothers of her own, but instead she inherited a handful of big brothers at Phi Delta Theta. "She considered us all like big brothers and Krystian considered us boyfriends," Mr. Haslam said as the brothers laughed in agreement.

The brothers said their relationship with Kallan taught them how to live. Kallan often asked the question, "What are we going to do tomorrow?" The brothers of Phi Delta Theta said she was always living for the next day.

On April 9, Kallan passed away after battling pediatric cancer. The brothers said they will always carry with them the lessons she taught them.



The fraternity brothers of Phi Delta

Mr. Wesner recalled an e-mail from Kallan's mother, Lora. Mrs. Hammaker talked about Kallan's paralysis that had occurred in her legs shortly before her passing and that even in a wheelchair, Kallan wasn't deterred and continued to attend school. The weekend before her death, Kallan, who was always thinking about tomorrow, asked her father, Scott, to bring her schoolwork home so she wouldn't fall behind. Mr. Bohemond said Kallan's resilient spirit taught him not to complain over minor inconveniences such as a case of the common cold.

Her death made them all realize how much they as a fraternity have been

FEA*
NEW LISTING

Selingsgro Square D
[Read more](#)

Windsor, Prudentia
[Read more](#)

Sunbury, Prudentia
[Read more](#)

Theta always felt welcome at the Hammaker home, their adopted 'Thon' family. The brothers said 7-year-old Kallan Hammaker who passed away April 9th from pediatric cancer, changed their lives. Pictured from left: Krystian Hammaker, Eli Bohemond, Kallan Hammaker, Colby Wesner, Kevin Haslam. Second row: Josh Phillips, Dave Dunn, and Tony Cercone



From left: Colby Wesner, Krystian Hammaker and sister Kallan pose for a photo.



From left: Krystian Hammaker, Nick Wagner, and Kallan Hammaker stickerbook and play together during a visit the fraternity makes to the Hammaker residence

impacted by the Hammakers and how in turn they impacted the lives of Mom, Dad, Kallan, and Krystian. Mr. Wesner said he realized how close the brothers and the Hammaker family had become when the family asked that he and six other brothers serve as pale bearers at Kallan's funeral. Adam Dahr, Phil Donegan, Mr. Haslam, Nate Killough, Mr. Wagner, and Mr. Wesner felt honored to be asked to carry Kallan to her final resting place.

Mr. Wesner, speaking at Kallan's funeral, said her passing on his birthday gives a new meaning now to what the day represents for him.

"It's ironic that Kallan passed away on my birthday. Here, passing away on this date will just give that much more meaning to the celebration of my life. Her courage, strength, and enthusiasm have taught me more about life than her 7-year-old mind could understand," he said during the service. Mr. Wesner went on to say that it was her visit to this year's dance marathon that was all he needed to sustain him for 48 hours. He added, "My relationship with her and the things that she unknowingly taught me, have given me enough motivation and courage to dance my way through the rest of my life, wherever it may take me -- and whatever cards I might be dealt."

The young men are in their last years at Penn State. Some will be graduating in the spring and may not be sure of what they're going to do tomorrow, much like Kallan would often wonder, but they do know the lessons they learned from their young teacher will be the most valuable knowledge they will take from their experiences in college.

[Read more >>](#)



• [Click to discuss this story with other readers on our forums.](#)

More from the Homepage section

[Mid-Daily Items: Pedal Power](#)

['An unforgiving road'](#)

[Couples stick together](#)

[Park about to get wired](#)

[Children's network ready to mark 25 years of miracles](#)



Obituaries

Old Newspaper Obituaries In The World's Largest Newspaper Archive
NewspaperArchive.com/Obituary

Free Genealogy Records

Obtain Free Genealogy, Death & Family Records On Anyone!
DeathRec.com/Genealogy.html

Find a Person in 1 Minute

• Get Current Names, Phone, Address • No Hit - No Fee. Find Anyone Now!
2008.Public-records-now.com

10 Rules Losing Belly Fat

Lose 9 lbs every 11 Days By Following these 10 Idiot Rules.
www.FatLoss4Idiots.com

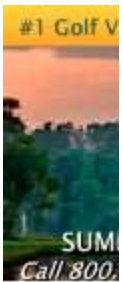
Seven-year-old Kallan Hammaker inspired the fraternity brothers of Phi Delta Theta through her resilient spirit fighting pediatric cancer. She passed away April 9th.

Ads by Google

Ads by Google

- [Sister](#)
- [Brother Lost Story](#)
- [MFC Brother](#)
- [Black Greek Sorority](#)

© 2008, CNHI



Popular Business directory links - Sunbury Apartments | Sunbury Attorneys | Sunbury Auto Dealers | Sunbury Auto Parts | Sunbury Aut Salons | Sunbury Car Rental | Sunbury Dentists | Sunbury Doctors | Sunbury Flowers | Sunbury Hotels | Sunbury Insurance | Sunbury Loans | Movers | Sunbury Pizza | Sunbury Realtors | Sunbury Restaurants | Sunbury Storage | Sunbury Tax Preparation | Sunbury Travel | Sunbury Feat

STOP
Access denied based upon TE Internet policy
"media.adrevolver.com"

The site you requested is blocked under one or more of the following categories:

[Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc.](#) • [CNHI Classified Advertising Network](#) • [CNHI News Service](#)
Associated Press content © 2008. All rights reserved. AP content may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.
Our site is powered by [Zope](#) and our [Internet Yellow Pages](#) site is powered by [PremierGuide](#).
Some parts of our site may require you to [download the Flash Player Plugin](#).
[View our Privacy Policy](#)
[Advertiser index](#)

