

Just another day on the job

Emergency personnel still on duty despite Super Bowl

By CANDACE BEATY
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The streets should be nearly empty after kickoff Sunday. While most of central Indiana huddles around television screens in homes and bars for the big game, some public servants will be on the clock. Police officers will patrol deserted streets, and firefighters can only hope they don't get called out.

Police and firefighters working Sunday night plan on taping the game and view their Super Bowl shifts as another sacrifice to duty.

The Franklin Police Department ranks public safety as its priority no matter the occasion, Chief John Borges said.

"It's part of what we do, and a ball game is no less severe than missing Christmas," he said.

Firefighters can watch the game at their stations until the alarm sounds. Then the TiVo gets switched on as they jump into action.

Greenwood firefighters plan to have a cookout with hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad and snacks. Colts banners hang throughout the main station, and a Colts flag rustles in the wind on the flag pole.

The station's main ladder truck also carries a Colts flag on calls.



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John Borges
Chief of the Franklin Police Department on Sunday's Super Bowl game

Capt. Chris Harrell, who shrugs off Super Bowl duty after 18 years of service, hopes the decorations can stay up at least a week after a Colts title.

"The Super Bowl was ... against the Patriots," said Harrell, who was grateful to catch the AFC Championship Game on television at home. "This is just a formality."

The Franklin Fire Department pooled money and ordered blue T-shirts with the fire department patch and the inscription "Go Colts!" A pot of chili may be in order on game day, Capt. Richard Lashbrook said.

Lashbrook has attended 47 consecutive Indianapolis 500s, taking time off when necessary. He's content to risk watching the Super Bowl on the big screen at the station house, hoping for a quiet day.

"We'd prefer we never had to go out on any runs," he said.

"Every time we turn a wheel, somebody somewhere's hurt."

Fearing a busy night, Lashbrook urges residents to drink responsibly during and after the game. Some fans put others at risk on the road when they celebrate with too much alcohol, he said.

Lashbrook sympathizes with the impulse to celebrate. He describes himself as an excitable fan who will even throw things around the house after a bad call. He'll have to rein it in at the fire station.

"I like to raise hell, screaming and hollering," he said. "I've been asked why I care so much when I have no money riding on the game."

White River Township Fire Department Lt. Joe Green, who works Sunday, considers himself a dedicated fan, having stuck with the Colts through years of

early playoffs exits and the nagging of naysayers.

As a teenager, he greeted the Colts at the airport after every away game during their 3-13 season 1997.

"I've missed many Super Bowls before, but none that mattered to me," he said.

Green strongly considered taking time off to guarantee he could watch the game the entire way through, but he's saving his vacation time because his wife is expecting a child.

The White River Township fire station has a digital video recorder. If the men go out on a run, they'll pick up the game where they left off.

Text messages or phone calls may clue the firefighters into the game's outcome, if they're out responding to an emergency. But Green hopes they won't talk. He wants the men to experience history unfold together, even if it's from a recording.

Police and firefighters agree that duty comes first, no matter how big the game.

"I treat this one the same as any other," said Sgt. Eric Cox, who commands the evening shift at the Johnson County Sheriff's Office on Sunday. "It's no different than any other day."

To pray or not to pray for Colts

Religious leaders weigh in on what's appropriate to ask for in game

By CANDACE BEATY
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Praying for the Colts (or the Bears) is not out of bounds, local religious leaders said.

"We pray for everybody," said the Rev. Mark Svarczkopf, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Catholic Church.

As a church, Our Lady did not pray for the Colts; they have Bears fans, too, he said.

After all, if the Colts weren't in the Super Bowl, most of Indianapolis would probably be praying for the Bears over the Patriots, he said.

Svarczkopf said it's not wrong to pray for your team to win. People are praying for both teams to win, and that's all right.

"God hears all prayers," he said.

Even at Friday Mass, Svarczkopf prayed for the big game.

CHEER IN CHURCH

Here's a look at Super Bowl events at area churches:

Fair Haven Christian Church, 1476 W. County Road 300S, Franklin

A junior high and high school student party at the church near Trafalgar will show the game in the sanctuary on one screen, following NFL rules for public viewing events. Pizza and other snacks will be provided. The event starts at 6 p.m.

Friendship Baptist Church, 1600 Westview Drive, Franklin

Pre-game service starts at 5:30 p.m. The game party starts at 6:15 p.m. with the Super Bowl being shown on a large screen. During halftime, a video message from Tony Dungy will be shown. Food, snacks, drinks and desserts will be served.

He prayed that it would be a nice game and that everyone watching it would be entertained in a good wholesome way, he said. He also asked God that every-

one would come away being proud of their teams, he said.

Franklin College professor of philosophy and religion David Carlson is not as open to praying for a win.

"Our prayer life often reflects the values of our culture, not the values of our God," he said.

American society values competition, Carlson said.

"It's appropriate to pray to do the best at the gifts we've been given," he said.

Each team needs the other team to do really well so they can play their best game, Carlson said.

Praying for the Colts or the Bears to win would not be appropriate.

"God's not a fairy godmother," he said. He is not going to weigh the number of prayers for a Colts win versus the number of prayers for Bears win to decide the outcome, he said.

Southsiders deck halls with Colts blue, white

By ANNIE GOELLER
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Tim and Beth Clark's house in Franklin has been the place for Super Bowl parties for nearly 20 years.

Every year, they invite 20 to 25 friends over, set up at least three or four televisions and make a meal for their friends.

They have a 52-inch television in the living room, two 20-inch sets in the office and loft, a 22-inch TV in the Colts room and a 13-inch set in the garage for the smokers.

Usually, people will talk and mingle, going from room to room, but Tim Clark thinks this year will be different.

"Since it's the Colts, I bet everyone is going to be vying for a spot in front of the big-screen TV," he said.

The Clarks usually do their best to get the mingling out of the way, inviting friends over early and organizing some kind of activity. This year's activity is Texas hold 'em poker.

"When the (football) game starts, everybody's got their plate of food and they're sitting

in front of the TV," he said. No more talking.

The other difference will be the decorations. Clark plans to wind blue and white streamers around the banister. And the upstairs room decked out in Colts pictures, blankets and other items may be more popular than ever, he said.

One other difference: The Colts will be on every TV. Tim Clark said. In the past, the Clarks have set up video games for the children at the party, since they often get bored watching the whole game.

Not this year. "I've outlawed video games

this year. All TVs have to be on the Colts," he said.

He just hopes the children will want to watch the game.

If not, there will be plenty of food to snack on.

They'll be dining on chili, which Beth Clark is making Saturday, and food friends bring. He doesn't expect any Bears fans to show up, but he's ready to tolerate the yearly tradition.

Someone always goes against the team everyone else wants to win. "At anything like that, you'll always get some to go against them," he said.

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