

OPINION

How to be a hero

The other night I was sitting in the recliner when my sons — ages 5 and 2 — came up and wanted me to put on their capes.

I asked them what they were up to, and I was told they were getting ready to be heroes. I thought this a worthwhile adventure, so I helped put the Superman cape on the little Velcro strips for John then the Batman cape for Owen.

Pretty soon they were bouncing around the house fighting mythical bad guys. They were both wearing some Amish hats I bought them as “hero head shields,” and their “vehicle” was a stuffed Herbie from the Luv Bug movies. Their weapons were Herbie’s bumper and a big stuffed snake that was supposed to be some mythical snake net when thrown around you.

Basically, they were like all of us that have idolized someone who was a hero (at least to us) and pretended to be them.

I watched the superhero antics for a little while, then I thought to myself that it hadn’t been that long since I’d called someone a hero in my newspaper.

It took a couple of minutes, then I realized it was two little boys whom I called heroes on the front page of



RYAN
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—
Home Cookin’

the Standard last week. It was a headline written in haste, but I might have never been more spot on.

The boys are like any of us, except that they can’t walk very well (or at all) and did something any hero does: sees a wrong and goes about fixing it.

And because they are young, there weren’t any preconceived notions that they could fail. Because each time they try to move they know they might fall, a simple task like getting a governing public body to spend \$35,000 to do something that had never been done before in Todd County was a forgone conclusion; it’s just that no one knew that yet.

What happened over the summer here in Todd County is a lesson for all of us.

Two boys, Kody and Nolan, along with their teacher and principal, made a video on the new Mac soft-

ware and asked the board to make the playground at North Todd Elementary handicap-accessible.

Kody, 7, had complained one day that there was nothing for him to do on the playground. And if you look at some of the pictures the Standard took for our story in the back-to-school issue last week, you can see just how hard it was for the boys to get on the playground, much less actually play on the equipment.

So Kody, who at his age is so persuasive that he should consider running for President in 28 years if there is still such a job, started getting the ball rolling, and he and Nolan were able to make the film and be more in their short lives than many of us are in our whole lives.

When was the last time that you saw something (in your older age) that wasn’t right and did something about it?

When was the last time you stopped and thought about how you could make your home, your community, your county, your state or your country a better place?

Kody saw what was wrong and for all the things he was without in this world, he was without fear as he took the challenge head-on and made those around him believe in

his cause.

That is a hero.

For Kody and Nolan should have been afraid to do what they did, but because they believed what they were doing was on the side of the angels, it didn’t matter.

That is also a hero that is brave.

When the time is right and I think my sons can fully understand, then I will pull out the story of Kody and Nolan and tell my sons about heroes that are evermore as brave as Superman and Batman, though Kody and Nolan didn’t have super-strength or a cool utility belt.

Heroes, it seems, come in all sizes and shapes.

One thing I’ve noticed about the heroes I’ve come across since I got into the journalism biz is that the true heroes needed nothing to be a hero — they already had everything they ever needed before fate called upon them.

They have the largest of hearts.

Their use of their legs is not important when determination, compassion and concern for what is right surpasses what we would call a handicap.

Kody and Nolan, the new Dynamic Duo, I can’t wait to see what you do next.