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### Tragedy on vacation

By BOB COUPLAND Tribune Chronicle

POSTED: May 1, 2009

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SOUTHINGTON - A township man who died last week while trying to save another man from drowning is being remembered as a "rare person."

Richard P. Yambor Kasunic Sr., 73, died April 23 in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, where he and his wife, Sandi, were vacationing.

Sandi Kasunic they got up early the morning of April 23, and Richard went down to the shore where men were shore fishing in the Sea of Cortez, which flows into the Pacific Ocean.

"He knew one of them," she said.

Sandi said that while her husband was there, one of the fisherman, a 61-year-old retiree from Phoenix, got caught in the water's undertow and was swept from the shore.

"Rich and the other fishermen went to help him. ... The size of the waves that morning were horrific," Sandi said, adding that four more people tried to help as well. The fisherman who fell in the water was pulled onto shore but died on the scene.

She said she become frantic when her husband, who had always been a good swimmer, did not come out of the water. The waves were 10 to 25 feet high and the undertow very strong.

"At one point the water became so treacherous you couldn't go in," she said, adding that boats arrived to help look for Richard.

They soon found him. But he also died at the scene.

"He definitely died without any regard for his own safety when he went into the water. That was the way Rich lived always looking to help others," she said.

The General Motors retiree enjoyed hunting, sailing and being with family. Sandi said her husband had many passions, from fixing the house to spending time with zoning issues.

Trustee Chairman Sam Plott said Kasunic served on the zoning commission for five years, most recently as the chairman, and attended the majority of the trustee meetings informing officials and the public about zoning issues.

"Rich is a rare person who saw the vision of how zoning could help a community keep its own identity and also bring growth," Plott said.

His latest project was meeting with Countryside Program through the Center for Planning Research and Practices at Cleveland State University on a comprehensive plan for growth in rural communities like Southington.



Plott said Kasunic would often travel at his own expense to seminars to get updates on zoning issues.


"He had a rare gift and a rare love for the community," Plott said.

A celebration of Kasunic's life will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday at The Church in Aurora, 146 S. Chillicothe Road, followed by a reception at the Bertram Inn. Contributions in his name can be made to Ducks Unlimited or the American Red Cross.

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| 05-01-09 7:08 AM       | Drone....you are rare, too, & not in a good way. Are you heartless, brainless or both? Truly uneducated!!! I know what WTF means & that shows your character. Get a life & quit posting until you can learn some feelings. This poor man lost his life trying to save another, but you wouldn't understand that compassion. Remember, Karma will get you.<br><a href="#">»Report Abuse</a> |
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