



South Point mayor dies

Bob Armstrong was longtime compositor at Independent

Mike James

The Independent

SOUTH POINT — The mood was somber Tuesday at the South Point municipal building, where workers were still absorbing the news that Mayor Bob Armstrong had died the day before.

“Yesterday afternoon he was sitting here and he seemed fine. It must have hit all at once,” said village fiscal officer Scott Thomas.

Armstrong, 73, died at his home Monday. He had been sealing his driveway when he suffered a heart attack. He had a history of heart problems.

He was a 34-year employee of The Independent, working in the composing department from 1964 to 1998. “He was probably one of the hardest-working people I ever saw in the composing room,” said Independent editor Mike Reliford. “He would do the work of two or three men sometimes. He would do whatever he could to make this newspaper look good.”

Armstrong had been appointed to the South Point city council in 1967 and had served continuously since. He took over as acting mayor on the death of Bill Gaskin in February and was to have served out the term, which ends Dec. 31, 2011. He typically led the ticket in his council races, Thomas said.

“As far as I know, he was planning on running (for mayor),” he said.

“He was a gentle giant. He did a good job and I never saw him upset,” said village administrator Pat Leighty, who had known Armstrong 40 years. “He always did everything for the village. I never saw him do anything that was for himself.”

Tuesday afternoon, Leighty and other South Point officials were at The Point, an industrial park on the outskirts of the village, where Armstrong had been scheduled to speak at the groundbreaking of a rail facility.

“The shovel on the end, that would have been Bob Armstrong’s shovel,” said Bill Dingus, director of the Lawrence Economic Development Corp. “The others are for breaking ground, and he would have wanted it that way.”

Armstrong is survived by his wife Patricia and three children, Robert B. Armstrong, Lee A. Chapman and Rodney C. Armstrong.

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