



Division II Sportswriter of the Year
Charles Grafe – Hallettsville Tribune-Herald

Age: 72. Born July 24, 1947 1.8 miles NW of Hallettsville in a farm house in which I now live. My two sisters were also born there. (There was “Home Delivery” back then.)

Education: Sacred Heart Catholic High School, Victoria JC, Southwest Texas State, and the “real” education came from two years in the U.S. Army.

Had an interest in sports ever since my mother bought me a football magazine when I was 8. I was a four-sport athlete in high school - three-time all-district in basketball. Was a hurdler (also known as “Timber Topper” because the hurdles were made out of wood), shortstop and end (not tight end back then) in football. Also had the lead role in the senior play.

My journalism career actually began in high school when I wrote sports for the school newspaper. I started writing sports back in 1974 for the Hallettsville Tribune-Herald as a part-time hobby. The reason I did it was because there was no sports in the paper after football season (unless a coach turned it in) and I wanted the kids to have recognition. The way I got started was contacting coaches and they would leave basketball or baseball scorebooks in their office and gave me a key to the gym.

I began full time in 1987, so I have 46 plus years total. At a small newspaper I do a lot of things and also cover city council and school board meetings.

I cover two schools: Hallettsville High School and Sacred Heart Catholic High School and do my own photography. Digital cameras are great, but I love black and white pictures from back in the day.

Have three children, one of whom is deceased. Zachary Grafe, Sr. was a graduate of the University of Texas and the head girls basketball coach at Fort Bend

Clements High School until his death in 2007 after battling leukemia for seven years. He was 32 and left behind three kids. Riley graduated from Richmond George Ranch High School this year and was all-district four-years in soccer. Her team was ready to begin the playoffs until COVID-19 interfered. Reagan will be a junior and is a soccer player and Zachary Jr., who likes anything with ball involved, will be entering the seventh grade.

My daughter, Candace Grafe-Gallihugh, is 48 and retired from the U.S. Navy. She holds a master's from San Diego State in criminal justice and lives in El Cajon, California, where she works for a government contractor.

My son Nathan, 42, is a golf pro at Ridglea Country Club, one of the four oldest courses in Fort Worth, and lives in Dallas. He got his education at San Diego Golf Academy.

I taught all my kids to play golf and all of them have a hole-in-one except for me. Hallettsville has a nine-hole course and it is dirt cheap to be a member.

The thing I like most about my job is getting to know the kids. Just like coaches, I'm in it for them and there are some great ones out there.

Sports was great until parents started interfering. No parent that I know of had a conference with a coach while I was in high school.

Firm believer that things you learn in sports cannot be learned in a classroom. Anything else? Thanks - I am humbled by this honor.

Geography lesson: Hallettsville is 100 miles from everywhere - Austin, Houston and San Antonio.

Member of the VFW, American Legion and Vietnam Veterans of America.

Was commander of the VFW for two years, post adjutant 24 years.

Served on the Hallettsville Golf Association Board of Directors.