

CHESTERTON/VALPARAISO

# Post-Tribune

NORTHWEST INDIANA'S LEADING NEWSPAPER | [www.post-trib.com](http://www.post-trib.com)

© 2007 Volume 97, Issue 122

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Wednesday, January 31, 2007



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## Highland business survey concludes we're Bears country

BY DANIELLE BRAFF

Post-Tribune staff writer

As if you had to ask, Northwest Indiana residents are officially Bears fans, according to a survey posted on a local business' Web site.

Blaine's Business Services, Inc. is a Highland Internet company, and its employees love football. But before taking a stance on the Super Bowl, possibly offending its customers, they decided to create a Web site, called <http://whodowesupport.com>, to make sure they're supporting the right team.

"We are probably the only people in the country that must deal with this," said company's owner Blaine Hilton. "For some

like me, it can be problematic, especially when dealing with clients. Football is deadly serious, and when we have clients on one side of the ball, one wrong word might send our clientele into a rage."

As of Tuesday, about 50 people had voted for their favorite team, and 63 percent of the Northwest Indiana voters said they loved the Bears.

"Bears vs. a horse?" wrote one person who responded to the survey. "I'd take a bear in that matchup any day. Especially a big, scary bear from Chicago, Ill. I've seen horses in Southern Indiana. Not too intimidating, eh?"

Other Bears supporters said that while they live in Indiana,

they are rooting for the Chicago team because of the region's proximity to the Windy City.

"We don't have Indy accents, we have Chicago accents," one responder wrote.

"We get Chicago radio, news. We are a lot closer to Chicago than we are to Indy. We have awesome Chicago eateries and stores."

And so it was decided. Northwest Indiana is unofficially a branch of Illinois.

But there still were some Colts fans out there.

Few wrote comments on the Web site about their support for the minority, other than some short posts saying how much they love Peyton Manning, the Colt's quarterback who is so

popular he has his own Web site, <http://peytonmanning.com/>.

If the voting trend continues by the end of the week, Blaine's Business Services will declare themselves a Bears company, said Joseph Duron, sales director.

Before launching the Web site, Duron said he thought most people would vote for Indiana because that's where voters live.

While he was surprised at the

outcome, he was pleased.

Duron was born in Florida, but he was raised in Indiana and he lives in Valparaiso.

"The Bears are my favorite team because they're in Chicago," he said. "I've been supporting them during the bad and the good, so I've been waiting for this."

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