

LAWN & GARDEN, D1

HOSTA HAVEN

Annual walk showcases the leafy, shade-loving garden plants across the area.



LOCAL & STATE, B1

Lacking heart?

Heart of Peoria Commission faces dissolution vote from City Council.

MVC tournament play ends for Bradley baseball after loss to Creighton. SPORTS, C1



SPORTS, C1

THIRD-TIME CHARM

Men's Senior City golf title goes to Dan Moran for third year running.

SATURDAY
MAY 26, 2007

\$1.00

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State gambling bill advances

Senate president also pushing more business taxes; Madigan, Blagojevich send positive signals

working families," Jones said. Coupled with the gambling plan — which would add four new casinos and allow existing casinos to expand — Jones' proposals could generate nearly \$5 billion for the state each year. Jones outlined the plan during a closed-door meeting Friday with Gov. Rod Blagojevich and House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago.

What's on the table?

- The Democrats' gambling plan includes:
- ▶ Add casinos in Chicago, Waukegan, the south Chicago suburbs and near O'Hare airport.
 - ▶ Allow existing casinos to add up to 800 new gaming positions each.
 - ▶ Allow a form of electronic poker at riverboats, horse racing tracks and off-track betting parlors.
 - ▶ No slot machines at horse racing tracks, but more financial aid to tracks from casino revenues.

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Senate President Emil Jones, D-Chicago, outlined a series of proposals, including a corporate minimum tax, closing tax loopholes, and imposing corporate taxes on companies that are set up to pay personal income taxes instead. "I'm not interested in taxing young

BY DOUG FINKE
OF GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE
SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Senate Democrats moved a massive gambling bill out of committee Friday and proposed new business taxes that could raise billions more dollars for expanded state programs.

Fatal standoff mystifies neighbors

Official investigation into shooting gears up, with few answers so far

BY LESLIE FARK
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

CREVE COEUR — Shock and disbelief settled over the neighborhood Friday where police shot and fatally wounded a Creve Coeur man after a five-hour standoff Thursday night at his house.

Brian M. Pitzer, 32, of 309 Ehertt St. died shortly after midnight during surgery at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria.

He was shot twice in the back, Peoria County Coroner Johnna Ingersoll said Friday.

"We've never had any trouble like this on our street," said Dorothy Farar, who also lives on Ehertt Street, a usually quiet street dotted with quaint bungalows.

"I never thought anything like that would happen," added a neighbor, who asked to remain anonymous. "He was a nice guy."

Pitzer, a tugboat captain and father of two, called police and a local television station telling them he was distraught over ongoing marital problems with his wife.

Pitzer also was armed with a shotgun and threatened to kill himself, and any police officer who attempted to take him into custody, authorities said. Creve Coeur police responded about 4:30 p.m. and tried unsuccessfully to get Pitzer to surrender. Officers reportedly allowed Pitzer to speak to family members in an attempt to defuse the situation.

Members of the Central Illinois Emergency Response Team (CIERT) negotiated with Pitzer for nearly five hours while he was holed up in his house.

During the standoff, Pitzer left his house four times to speak with police. On each occasion he was armed with

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SUMMER CAMP BEGINS AT THREE SISTERS PARK



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ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

ABOVE: Eric, who declined to give his last name but refers to himself as "The King of Candyland," jams during a set by Keller Williams on Friday evening at Summer Camp in Three Sisters Park near Chillicothe. The Cary, Ill., resident has attended the festival the past three years, saying that he was excited for the live set by Umphrey's McGee. The three days of music comes to a close Sunday. BELOW: Two young women twirl to the side of the main stage Friday evening at the Summer Camp music festival in Three Sisters Park.

Setting up camp

'Relaxed,' happy atmosphere pervades Summer Camp as festivities kick off

BY CLARE JELICK
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

CHILICOTHE — Lindsay Krippelz and Hazel Suarez were on a mission Friday that grew more desperate with every passing second. They had arrived at Chillicothe at

Summer Camp 2007 several hours earlier needing to use the bathroom and couldn't find a portable toilet that wasn't filled.

Finally, they hit the jackpot. They spotted workers hosing out a row of toilets near the entrance of the music festival.

"I was so excited" Krippelz, 22, said, retelling the success story.

"Luck, my friend, luck," countered Suarez, 23, with a roll of toilet paper in hand.

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FRED ZWICKY/JOURNAL STAR

General manager Pat Lewis waters flowers at the entrance of Springdale Cemetery as workers and volunteers prepare for the Memorial Day weekend.

Paying tribute to the fallen

Cemeteries across the area prepare for Memorial Day visitors

BY CATHY BAYER
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Pat Lewis looks forward to the smiles of people leaving Springdale Cemetery each Memorial Day weekend.

He likes observing the change from the solemn, stern faces that people often wear walking into the cemetery.

People simply don't expect the positive experience they can get from visiting the cemetery, said Lewis, the general manager at Springdale Cemetery and Mausoleum.

"Our job is to help families heal.

That process doesn't ever end for some people," he said. "When the cemetery looks good, it helps the positive memories come back."

Planning events at the cemetery and making the land look beautiful helps people focus on positive memories, Lewis said.

On a weekend like this, having the facility looking good is important, as thousands are expected to visit.

Springdale is hosting a special Memorial Day flag-passing ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Sunday. The flag will begin in the hands of one who knows it well, a World War II Marine captain.

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INSIDE

▶ Chart shows closings planned around the area for Memorial Day. Page B7

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NEWS DIGEST

NOTEWORTHY COMPETITION

Musicians square off at the keys during 33rd Annual Old-Time Piano Playing Contest. LOCAL, PAGE B1



COSTLY TRIAL

Taxpayers on the hook for more than \$1 million in costs associated with new trial of killer Daniel Ramsey. LOCAL, PAGE B1

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