



IHSA CLASS A SOFTBALL

HOME RUNS

► Coaches help lift Beecher team to finals, C1
► EP school's efforts will net \$6,000, B1



SECTION D

FIELD OF DREAMS

It's history in the making as park district recruits for 1800s-rules baseball team

SATURDAY
JUNE 2, 2007

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A GATEHOUSE NEWSPAPER Journal Star

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Complete forecast Page B8

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LaHood ponders BU post



RAY LAHOOD

Peoria Republican one of many who has been suggested for school's presidency

BY MOLLY PARKER
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — With six congressional terms under his belt and his party dumped from power on Capitol Hill, Republican U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood has his eyes on Bradley University.

LaHood, 61, said Friday he's seriously considering applying for the position retiring President David Broski

officially vacates at the end of June.

"If you look at the job description, it's not a traditional one," LaHood said. "It becomes very clear they're not looking for a traditional academic. I think that's why people have come to me and asked me to apply."

If selected, LaHood would be the first Bradley president without a doctoral degree since the university

was founded in 1897. Though he's been nominated, LaHood said he plans to decide in the next few weeks whether to officially apply, as the university is looking to hire a new president by the start of the school year.

LaHood graduated from Bradley in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science degree in education and sociology, also earning a teaching certificate.

The ad posted on the university's Web site calls for an individual with "impeccable integrity, strategic

Please see LAHOOD, Page A9

Slithery, slimy, scary but mostly harmless

Recent area sightings of snakes shouldn't raise any alarm bells

BY JOHN SHARP
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

GERMANTOWN HILLS — A brightly colored red and brown snake that rattles its tail aggressively when encountered and gives off the appearance it's willing to strike at any moment

INSIDE

► Graphic shows difference between dangerous, harmless snakes. Page A8

has startled Woodford County residents in recent weeks.

Frightened, the people who encountered this snake — one in Germantown Hills and the other in Secor — called Animal Control. It's a rattlesnake, they claim.

Please see SNAKES, Page A8

HONOR and SORROW



ABOVE: A former Marine, who wished only to be identified as "an American," salutes the passing funeral motorcade of Cpl. Benjamin Desilets as it makes its way to Fondulac Township Cemetery on Friday afternoon. Desilets was laid to rest after being killed in action May 22 in Iraq. The man holds aloft an eagle feather in his right hand, an important symbol in Native American spirituality. "It's the highest honor I could give him," he said. BELOW: Family and friends crowd around the casket of Desilets on Friday afternoon at Fondulac Township Cemetery.

Joy, mischief and support recalled as Ben Desilets is laid to rest

ELMWOOD — Last year, Ben Desilets and his Marine buddy, the one they called Joey Dubbs, leaned on each other when their friend Kyle Price was killed by small arms fire while on combat operations in Ramadi, Iraq.

On Friday, although he had the support of his large extended Marine family, Joey Dubbs in some ways mourned alone. He said Desilets saved his life.

"I feared no evil when I had you by my side," the Marine said during

funeral services for Desilets, 21, the 2004 Elmwood High School graduate who was killed May 22 in Iraq's Anbar province. "We went through hell and back, but Myrtle Beach and Disney World, too. We were together on the day that Kyle died."

Finally on Friday, the use of the word "ornery" to describe Desilets — as many family members and friends have used since his death — began to make more sense. The picture of public record of Desilets

Please see MARINE, Page A11



Story by SCOTT HILYARD ♦ Photographs by ADAM GERIK ♦ of the Journal Star

Budget, rate freeze remain in limbo

Legislators go home with no deal; downstate Democrats still demanding electric action

BY ADRIANA COLINDRES
OF GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

SPRINGFIELD — Already past a May 31 adjournment deadline for the spring legislative session, state lawmakers headed home for the weekend Friday without resolving two of the biggest issues: a new budget and electric-rate relief.

Those matters became intertwined this week. Democrats provided enough votes for the House to approve a scaled-down budget plan on Wednesday, but Rep. Thomas Holbrook, D-Belleville, later used a parliamentary maneuver to prevent the legislation from advancing to the Senate.

Other downstate House Democrats are siding with Holbrook, who has said he won't back down "until there's rate relief of some sort."

The cost of electricity soared this year for customers of Commonwealth Edison and the Ameren Illinois utility companies because a long-standing rate freeze expired. The freeze had been part of the state's 1997 deregulation law.

Holbrook said Friday that negotiations aimed at settling the electricity issue "are moving ahead, and the budget stays in the House."

Please see BUDGET, Page A11

INSIDE STORIES

► Governor, Moline Democrat in tiff over health care plan. Page A11

► Questions and answers about the budget gridlock. Page A11

Cherry pioneer returning home

He's made sweet brisket tacos a signature at Cherry Festival, now he hands over the reins

BY STEVE STEIN
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

WASHINGTON — Frank Rodriguez, the man who brought cherry brisket tacos to the Washington Cherry Festival, is leaving town and headed back to his native Texas.

But don't fret, taco fans. Robert Musselman is taking Rodriguez's place. He'll inherit the Rube Goldberg-esque contraption Rodriguez built from five 55-gallon drums on a trailer that is used to cook the meat, and the daunting job of running the taco stand.

The official changing of the taco guard will take place at noon today when the Texas state flag that flies on the brisket grill is removed and replaced

Please see CHERRIES, Page A8

STEPPING DOWN

Longtime Peoria Christian basketball coach steps down, but he'll keep his hand in the game as an assistant. PAGE C1



GALESBURG: State's Attorney John Pempeyer seeks clarification on court's order about investigation. PAGE B5

BATH: State grant of \$175,000 will help town build community center. PAGE B7

LONG LEGACY

Metro Centre founder, father of notable Peoria women dies at age 90. PAGE B1



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DOWN ON THE FARM

Metro Centre's farmers market opens for the summer. PAGE B1