

SECTION G

BUILDING the FUTURE

Our latest Taking Stock section looks at progress in education, medicine, retail and public development in the Tri-County Area.



PREP FOOTBALL SCOREBOARD

► Complete details and stats: **SPORTS D1, D7-8**

IVC	44	Woodruff	33	Richwoods	28
Peoria Central	8	Rock Falls	6	Jerseyville Jersey	6
Metamora	34	Rock Island Alleman	54	Washington	35
Dunlap	6	Notre Dame	0	Canton	6

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 8, 2007

\$1.00

A GATEHOUSE NEWSPAPER
Journal Star

SERVING CENTRAL ILLINOIS SINCE 1855



Complete forecast **Page B8**

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Singing Woods expanding

Land next to nature preserve being purchased by Forest Park Foundation for Peoria Park District

BY TERRY BIBO
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Forest Park Foundation has stepped up to expand Singing Woods Nature Preserve — which contains habitat considered more rare than the rainforest — for the Peoria Park District. “We’re acquiring the land that’s adjacent to Singing Woods, which is land Forest Park Foundation helped the park district acquire 40 years ago,” said foundation attorney Jim Tomlin.

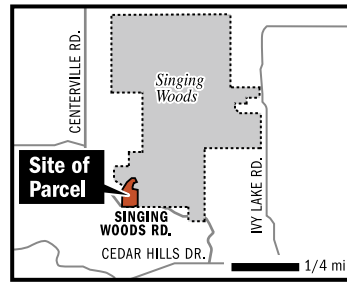
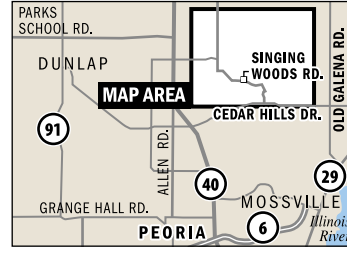
“This is absolutely the best of both worlds, as I look at it,” said Director of Parks and Recreation Bonnie Noble. “We really think it has regional significance.”

At its annual meeting Thursday, the foundation voted to purchase 29 acres of privately owned land next to Singing Woods for \$1.2 million. The parcel is four miles north of Peoria along Cedar Hills Drive. The sellers had a purchase agreement with the national not-for-

profit The Trust for Public Land, which had been holding the property while the park district assembled funding.

“Our mission is to provide open space for the public, both natural areas and open parks,” said the Chicago-based Jeff Greenspan, TPL senior project manager. “We work with local park districts and other agencies to try to do that.”

For example, TPL recently acquired the Neighborhood House Campground for the Chillicothe Park District. Neighborhood House had operated an overnight camp there for 50 years, but



Please see **WOODS**, Page A6

Pastors, police take aim at guns

Firearm buy-back program offers \$100 gift card to get weapons off the street

BY FRANK RADOSEVICH II
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Collaborating with police, civic and religious leaders are organizing a gun buy-back program in the hope of curbing crime and reaching those most at risk.

The group of eight to 15 area pastors said the number of shootings and crimes involving firearms has spurred them to get weapons off the streets. At the same time, organizers want to boost levels of community involvement as well as restore a sense of trust between residents and police.

“What we hope to establish with the gun exchange is not only take weapons off the streets but use this as a vehicle to get into the homes of the community,” said one of the planners, Pastor Odell Dye of Resurrection Power Church of God in Christ.

The buy-back program will offer a non-alcoholic \$100 gift card to people in exchange for a functioning weapon, according to the Rev. Harvey Burnett of New Bethel Church of God in Christ.

“This will also be a ‘no questions asked’ exchange,” he added. “Our only prerequisite is to meet the individuals and pray for them.”

The group, Burnett said, is still hammering out details for the event and seeking more funding from businesses.

Please see **GUNS**, Page A6

ALL-WEATHER FANS



The sun dips low under a bank of storm clouds behind Tremont High School’s new William H. Poorbaugh Field on Friday night as the Turks take on El Paso-Gridley in high school football action. El Paso-Gridley won the game, 21-13.

Photograph by **ADAM GERIK** ♦ of the Journal Star

High school football is more than a contest between two teams — it’s a community event.



This Web log by the Journal Star photo staff aims to capture and share a taste of these weekly parties.

Financial worries persist, but is a recession likely?

Consumer spending patterns beginning to slow, suggesting more bad economic news on the horizon

ANALYSIS

BY ELLEN SIMON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

NEW YORK — American consumers hold the key to whether the unexpected drop in August employment signals either a continuation of a gentle slowdown or a tumble into outright recession for the U.S. economy. The question is whether, after

years of spending, we’re spooked enough now to lock up our credit cards.

A net decline of 4,000 jobs reported by the Labor Department on Friday caps a summer of worrisome economic news — soaring mortgage foreclosures, declining housing prices, credit tightening and wild stock market swings. Throughout it, though, consumer spending has

remained a bright spot.

Now the picture is turning decidedly mixed. While many corporations continue to report strong earnings and predict solid growth for the year, companies from Apple to Office Depot to Harley Davidson have signaled their concerns about consumer spending. Consumers, whose spending accounts for roughly 70 percent of

the economy, have already started pulling back, said Joel L. Naroff, president and chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors. If the pullback accelerates “it almost sets off a domino effect. Businesses, which are increasingly uncertain in their spending decisions, could say, ‘Why spend into a recession?’ Then you’ve created one.”

Please see **ECONOMY**, Page A9

INSIDE

► Chart shows last 13 months of jobless numbers. **Page A9**
► Pressure grows for interest rate cuts. **Page A9**

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GROWING CONTROVERSY

League officials seek answers from Rick Ankiel after revelations he was prescribed human growth hormone in 2004. **PAGE D1**

