



# SUGAR HIGH

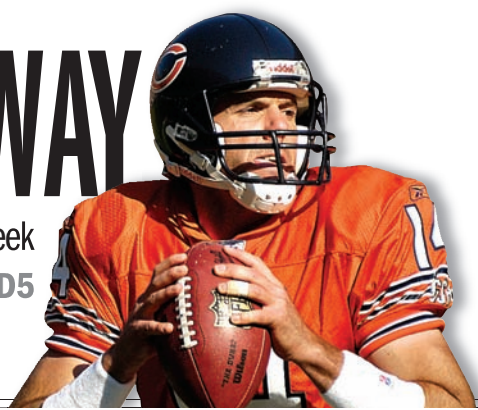
Rising corn prices have pushed up the bill for your Halloween sweets and treats this year

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# SLIPPING AWAY

Chicago Bears limps into their bye week with injuries and doubts. **SPORTS, D5**

**GREEN BAY TOPPLES DENVER, D1**



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# Girardi snags job offer

East Peoria native poised to become new manager of the Yankees

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► A look at Girardi's background. **Page A6**  
► Former coaches, teammates say EP native right for Yankees manager post. **Page D1**

BY RONALD BLUM  
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**NEW YORK** — The New York Yankees picked experience over popularity, offering the highly coveted manager's job to Joe Girardi.

Girardi, an East Peoria native who played for the Peoria Chiefs, was the 2006 National League Manager of the Year with Florida, plus he has a pin-striped pedigree. The hard-nosed catcher played on three Yankees teams that won the World Series, served as their bench coach and was a TV announcer this year.

"Joe Girardi is a good man," Joe Torre, who recently ended his 12-year stint with New York, said Monday on "Late Show with David Letterman." "He's got a feel for this organization."

Radio station 1050 ESPN New York first reported the development and said Girardi is expected to take the job.

A baseball official confirmed the Yankees are negotiating with Girardi's agent, Steve Mandell.

"The Yankees contacted us," Mandell said. "They have an interest in Joe becoming their manager. We've had some discus-

sions. It's a process and we'll go through the process."

He declined to say when there might be an announcement.

Girardi beat out two other baseball mainstays for the job — Don Mattingly and Tony Pena.

Beloved as team captain, Mattingly was the early favorite to replace Torre. After finding out Monday he didn't get it, Mattingly told the Yankees he had no interest in returning next year as bench coach or in any other coaching position.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Joe Girardi smiles on TV before the World Series on Saturday in Denver.

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# School dropout numbers dismal

More than 1 in 10 American high schools are classified as 'dropout factories'

BY NANCY ZUCKERBROD  
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — It's a nickname no principal could be proud of: "Drop-out Factory," a high school where no more than 60 percent of the students who start as freshmen make it to their senior year. That dubious distinction applies to more than one in 10 high schools across America.

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► Tri-County Area schools avoided making the list. **Page A7**

"If you're born in a neighborhood or town where the only high school is one where graduation is not the norm, how is this living in the land of equal opportunity?" asks Bob Balfanz, the researcher at Johns Hopkins University who defines such a school as a "dropout factory."

There are about 1,700 regular or vocational high schools nationwide that fit that description, according to an analysis of Education Department data conducted by Johns Hopkins for The Associated Press. That's 12 percent of all such schools, no more than a decade ago but no less, either.

While some of the missing students transferred, most dropped out, Balfanz says. The data tracked senior classes for three years in a row — 2004, 2005 and 2006 — to make sure local events like plant closures weren't to blame for the low retention rates.

The highest concentration of dropout factories is in large cities or high-poverty rural areas in the South and Southwest. Most have high

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# NOTRE DAME PLAYERS, FANS CRUSHED AFTER TEAM FALLS SHORT OF STATE



ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

Notre Dame High School junior Brogan O'Brien, right, shows his disappointment along with teammates Michael Schrader, top, and Ben Ralph, bottom, after suffering a 2-1 sudden death overtime loss to Champaign Centennial during the Class AA boys soccer supersectional in Peoria on Monday night. ■ RELATED STORY, PAGE D1

# Banner mine project gains state permit

Environmentalists have fought against plan for 643-acre site

BY BRENDA ROTHERT  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

**BANNER** — A permit to mine coal in a 643-acre site outside Banner is an important step in "the rebirth of an industry deeply rooted in the heritage of Fulton County," the Canton engineer who handled the permit paperwork said Monday.

Capital Resources Development Co. of Chicago first applied for a state permit to mine a 643-acre site just outside Banner six years ago. Company officials got word Friday that they'll get one.

"As long as they pay their fees and produce their bond, we will issue them the permit," said Illinois Department of Natural Resources spokesman Chris McCloud.

"We're actively working to get that

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# Illinois River islands may soon become reality

Legislation would finally provide funds for project to help control sediment

BY MICHAEL SMOTHERS  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

**EAST PEORIA** — A major federal bill U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood called "veto-proof" clears the way for construction of three large islands

in Lower Peoria Lake along East Peoria's shoreline.

In the short term, they'll fight sediment choking the Illinois River by speeding its current through the lower lake and by dredging 1½ million cubic yards of mud to build the islands and create deep-water basins around them.

In the long run, the islands — first conceived 20 years ago — "will be the keystone of a series

of projects to build a diversionary channel" along the river's east banks from the McClugage Bridge to Farm Creek, state-based scientist Bill White said Friday.

"The stars have all kind of lined up" in favor of a series of long-range plans for the channel, which also would speed sediment downriver while enhancing ecology and river recreation, said White, manager of the Illinois State Wa-

ter Survey's Peoria office.

Much more of the river will benefit from the latest Water Resources Development Act, a multi-billion dollar improvements package typically updated every two years but which has laid dormant since 2000.

The act's 2007 version was delivered to President Bush for his



RAY LAHOOD

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