

SPORTS, D1

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Illini fall to Tennessee State in men's hoops/D1



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'THE FINAL COUNTDOWN'

Bhutto's husband, son to lead her party

19-year-old chosen as symbolic leader; husband takes effective control

BY ZARAR KHAN
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NAUDERO, PAKISTAN — Benazir Bhutto's 19-year-old son — a student with no political experience — was named symbolic leader of her party Sunday, while her husband took effective control, extending Pakistan's most enduring political dynasty.

The major parties appeared to agree that the elections should take place as scheduled on Jan. 8 despite street violence and political turmoil triggered by the assassination of Bhutto. The Election Commission is to discuss the timing of the polls today.

A successful vote would bolster U.S.-backed plans to restore democracy to the nuclear-armed country as it battles rising Islamic extremism.

Rioting subsided Sunday after destruction that left at least 44 dead and caused tens of millions of dollars in damage, but bitterness remained over the government's response to the gun and suicide attack that killed Bhutto.

The appointment of Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, was not without its own complications. A former Cabinet minister who spent eight years in prison on corruption accusations, he is known as "Mr. 10 Percent" for allegedly taking kickbacks and is viewed with suspicion by many Pakistanis.

At a news conference on Sunday, Zardari said the opposition party — Pakistan's largest — had no confidence in the government's ability to bring the killers to justice and urged the United Nations to establish a committee like the one investigating the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The decisions on the future Please see **PAKISTAN**, Page A7



BILAWAL ZARDARI



ASIF ALI ZARDARI



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ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

ABOVE: Paul Taylor of Metamora lights up a cigar while smoking with his friend Bill Liberman of Springfield at Hoops Pub and Pizza on Sunday evening. An event there sponsored by the Gentlemen's Cigar Society attracted more than a dozen smokers looking to get in one last puff before the statewide smoking ban takes effect Tuesday. "This is one of the last times we'll get together legally," Liberman said of the group. "I think you'll see a lot of garage and basement get-togethers in the future," Taylor added. **BELOW:** Cigar smokers socialize Sunday during the Gentlemen's Cigar Society get-together.

Cigar smokers gather at Peoria bar for final time before smoking ban

BY ERIN WOOD
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Cigar smoke could be smelled a block away from Hoops Pub and Pizza on Sunday evening.

A group of about a dozen smokers — puffing cigars and sipping scotch — gathered on the smoke-filled second floor of the bar for the last time before the statewide smoking ban goes into effect at midnight tonight.

"This is the final countdown," Lucas Woith of Peoria said while the tip of his cigar glowed in his right hand. "In

two days, we won't be able to do this anymore."

Woith is a member of the Peoria-based Gentlemen's Cigar Society, consisting of about 20 local men who get together once a month at area bars for a smoke and a drink. The group rented the second floor of Hoops and hosted a four-hour open house for cigar smokers on Sunday evening.

"It's one last hurrah," Woith said.

Like many smokers, he said he doesn't support the Smoke Free Illinois Act.

Please see **CIGARS**, Page A6



Countdown to the State Smoking Ban 1 DAY TO GO

INSIDE STORIES

► Ian "Don Bubba" Farquharson opens a legal cigar lounge next to the cigar store he opened in Peoria in September. **Page B6**

► Roundup of new state laws that take effect at midnight. **Page B3**

Where can one still light up?

Some tobacco stores qualify for exemption from smoking ban

BY CLARE JELLIK
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — While many business owners that cater to smokers are fired up about the impending smoking ban, the owner of the Tinderbox cigar store at The Shoppes at Grand Prairie feels quite differently.

Amy Blair is optimistic about the new law and thinks she may see more business as a result. That's because her store, which sells cigars, pipes and smoking accessories, is one of a few places where smokers will

Please see **SMOKING**, Page A6

Christmas Fund just passes goal for 2007

BY CLARE JELLIK
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — It was a close one, but Journal Star readers rallied and helped the Christmas Fund meet and surpass its goal this year.

Donations had been lagging behind for much of the campaign, but the final total surpassed the fund-

raising goal of \$182,000 by \$982.

"It was definitely close. Our readers always come through, and we appreciate that," said Kelli Rude, senior project manager at the Journal Star.

While the fund met its goal this year, the total amount raised is down over last year, as is the num-

ber of donors. About \$189,266 was raised at this time last year, about 3 percent more than this year's total.

Rude said Friday she believes the economic issues felt nationwide have affected giving. "The whole season, spending has been down. The retailers have been feeling it, and I was certain that would affect

us, too. ... People are just more cautious now."

She said the need was greater than ever this year, based on letters and phone calls from those asking for help and her interactions with people at donation events.

Please see **FUND**, Page A7



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