

Herald & Review

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Decatur, Illinois

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Quick Take



Meridian gains finals

The Hawks have a date for a Class 2A title game in Champaign, after a convincing victory on Saturday.

Sports / C1

Bowl waiting

A 29-7 win over Northwestern before a surprisingly large crowd gives the Fighting Illini a shot at a better bowl game.

Sports / C1.3



Home remedies

The flu season will drive some to look up those cure-alls their grandparents used.

Lifestyle / G1

Married and mobile

Some companies are working harder to help find jobs for spouses of employees here.

Business / D1

Lottery

Here are the winning numbers selected Saturday in the Illinois State Lottery.

- Pick Three-Midday: 7-5-4
- Pick Three-Evening: 8-8-8
- Pick Four-Midday: 0-9-4-9
- Pick Four-Evening: 3-7-3-3
- Lotto: 14-34-38-49-50-52
- Lotto jackpot: \$2.5 million
- Big Game jackpot: \$13 million

Weather

■ Today: Partly cloudy. High 63.
■ Tonight: Partly cloudy. Low 43.

Details / B6

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Our 12th year
Issue 325 • Seven sections



Book tells how to help grieving process when a friend's child dies

Mount Zion man draws from a deep emotional well to write work that's aided many.

By THERESA CHURCHILL
H&R Education/Family Editor

MOUNT ZION — Many times when Kim Crump and Lisa Tucker looked at each other during the first days and weeks of devastation, both women burst into tears.

At least Crump found some comfort in knowing that sharing her own sorrow over the death of Tucker's husband and son made her friend feel a little less alone. Bart Tucker, 38, and Evan Tucker, 16, died April 15, 1998, after a train struck their pickup near Illinois 48 and Macon County Highway 30, southwest of Decatur.

And later, when the pain grew less intense, Crump knew to remember Tucker on Bart's and Evan's

birthdays but to wait for her to talk about her grief if she wanted to. "One thing that really sticks in my mind is not to always ask her how she's doing," said Crump, 41. "She's OK now, but at the time, she was not fine."

Crump's ability to be there for Tucker didn't come solely from knowing her since they took turns carpooling their oldest children, now teen-agers, to preschool from their homes in rural Boody. Nor did it come from baby-sitting Tucker's two sons and the best friendship that blossomed between Evan and Crump's son, Matthew, 11.

Her insight came from a book — "When Someone You Know Loses A Child" by Wally Sparks of Mount Zion — another friend gave to her around the time of the accident.

Unknown to Tucker, the book bolstered Crump and other members of their women's group at Zion Chapel United Methodist Church in their

efforts to support her. As Sparks suggests, members of the group shared the task of sending cards, telephoning and making sure Tucker knew they were thinking of her.

"I now understand that my mere presence, maybe with a smile or a hug, fills space with a bereaved someone much better than empty, well-intended words," wrote Sally Brown, 58, of rural Blue Mound in a letter of thanks to Sparks.

"My friends just took over for me, keeping track of who brought what to the house, getting thank-you notes out and just listening," Tucker said. "I still get greeting cards from them. That lets me know they care."

"When Someone You Know Loses A Child," the book making such a difference to bereaved parents and

GRIEVING

Continued on A4

STANDING UP FOR CONVICTIONS

Marches spread messages

Participants cite the benefit of a public, dramatic show of beliefs.

By VALERIE WELLS
H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — The Rev. Robert Wiedrich remembers marching in the 1960s, when the Peoria school board wanted to send elementary school children home for lunch rather than providing lunch at school.

The problem, Wiedrich said, was that in the inner city, many children had nowhere to go at lunch time. He and his group filed for permission to march and did not receive it, but marched anyway. They were arrested.

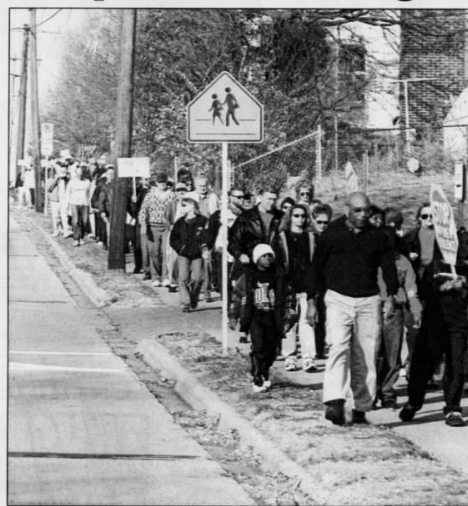
Until their march, Wiedrich said, that board had held meetings in a small room, so small that no more than a handful of the community could attend. After the march, they held their next meeting in a high school auditorium — and they voted to provide lunches at school.

"In those days, it seemed things were more 'right' and 'wrong,'" Wiedrich said. "I don't think they're that clean cut today. I wish they were."

In the past two weeks, Decatur has experienced firsthand the reality of an issue with no absolute "right" and "wrong."

On one hand, the school board disciplined seven high school students for a fight by expelling them for up to two years. Some citizens agreed with them; some did not. Some of those who didn't appealed to the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition for help.

The issue has polarized the city. And in the midst of it all, with Jackson supporters demonstrating in one part of town and Ku Klux Klan members in another, Betsy Stockard held a "Stop the Violence" march with one aim



SIDEWALKING: About 200 people joined Betsy Stockard in her march against violence on Saturday. Stockard has been using marches to promote this cause for years.

in mind — peace, in the schools, in the streets and in homes. Wiedrich said that even though he would normally support Stockard's marches, he marched with the Rev. Jesse Jackson's group last week. He doesn't entirely agree with

either side, though he does feel the school board's original decision to expel the students for two years was too harsh.

"I don't know what marching

has accomplished their goals and whether more could have been accomplished privately rather than through the public path that Jackson has pursued.

However, he said, "The struggle is not over and some of the outcomes of it have created new levels of discussion."

Bristling at adjectives like "thugs," which have been used by some to describe the expelled students, Jackson alluded to his own upbringing as an adopted child. He said he was termed a "bastard" at birth.

"These terms are ways of writing you out of the human race. We must write off none of them," he said.

At one point, gesturing to the expelled youths seated in the front row, he drew parallels between his role in their lives with that of Jesus Christ when he encountered the prostitute. Her life was spared when Jesus asked anyone who was willing to cast the first stone.

"He said to her, as I said to these boys, 'Sin no more.'"

At least 100 people in attendance traveled from Decatur, including a busload of nearly 50. Those who made the trip included several ministers, whom Jackson

JACKSON
Continued on A5

Decatur hospitals set for what comes their way New Year's Day

Area facilities also have systems and supplies ready for possible problems.

By ARVIN DOWLEY
H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — Imagine our worst Y2K fears coming true at the stroke of midnight, Jan. 1. As people are singing "Auld Lang Syne" to usher in the year 2000, a sudden darkness engulfs Decatur.

Two buildings that should continue to shine brightly, should such a catastrophic scenario unfold, are St. Mary's Hospital and Decatur Memorial Hospital. Both have generators that are programmed to switch on automatically when there's a power failure.

"It's almost totally unnoticeable when we switch over to generator power," said Tony Custin, Y2K project manager at Decatur Memorial Hospital. "The people inside the hospital won't even know we've switched over to generator power, except those who work in



■ Are you ready?

No major disruptions of life are expected with the new year, but we have some tips on what to have on hand in case of minor problems.

Graphic / A3

the engineering department."

Having worked on the Y2K matter for many months, officials at both hospitals are confident they'll be able to provide efficient care, regardless what circumstances may arise.

Custin said Decatur Memorial has written 300 contingency plans to cover every conceivable event.

In some cases, hospital officials have contingency plans for contingency plans. For instance, Custin said if the 20,000-gallon diesel tanks that power the generator run low, there's a plan in place to get more fuel. The

generator can run at 80 percent capacity for 72 hours, Custin said.

Critical patient equipment such as respirators and defibrillators has been upgraded at both hospitals. But should there be a problem, alternative treatment methods, such as portable oxygen, can be used.

If AT&T and Ameritech have problems, radio phones will be used so that employees can communicate within the hospitals. Runners will also be available to relay messages from department to department.

Even if the Y2K computer glitch doesn't rear its ugly head, emergency rooms will have extra staff on hand because it will be a Friday night, New Year's Eve and the end of the year 1999, a combination that could lead to more alcohol-related accidents than on a typical

Y2K
Continued on A4