

# Herald & Review

Friday

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Decatur, Illinois

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**Quick Take**  
**Argenta-Oreana, Meridian show spirit**  
In a way, it is a little bit funny what has happened to Meridian and Argenta-Oreana high schools this fall. They'll play a football game on Saturday — a state Class 2A quarterfinal. But to people who live there, what will happen Saturday will be only partly about football.

Sports / B1

**Chick flicks**



Female-themed movies are everywhere, with more on the way.

Lifestyle / D1

**1999 UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN**

Goal . . . \$2.5 million  
Raised . . . \$2,125,497.97  
Needed . . . \$374,502.03  
Days left . . . 7

**Lottery**

Here are the winning numbers selected Thursday:  
■ Pick Three-Midday: 8-8-8  
■ Pick Three-Evening: 4-9-1  
■ Pick Four-Midday: 0-7-6-2  
■ Pick Four-Evening: 5-5-2-8  
■ Little Lotto: 06-10-21-22-24  
■ Lotto "jackpot": \$6 million  
■ Big Game jackpot: \$5 million

**Weather**

■ Today: Warmer, High 66.  
■ Tonight: Clearing late. Low 46.

Details / B8

**Inside**

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countdown:



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Our 120th year  
Issue 316 • Four sections



**TAPS:** Bob Debrun, a member of VFW Post 6577, Assumption, salutes a flag flying at half-staff on Thursday at Central A&M Middle School.

Decatur marks Veterans Day / A3

## Instead of taking a holiday, pupils honor veterans

Central A&M youths say thanks with musical performances, poetry and essay readings.

By AMY BURCH  
Staff Writer

**ASSUMPTION** — While most Central Illinois students enjoyed a holiday from school on Thursday, the Central A&M Middle School hand played patriotic tunes, the chorus sang several numbers and students read poems and essays dedicated to veterans.

It was a switch from the school's prior celebrations of Veterans Day. For the past three years, veterans from Assumption and Moweaqua have hosted ceremonies at the school and answered questions about war posed by curious pupils.

But this year, the school prepared a musical ceremony and celebration in the veterans' honor.

Under gray skies at Arlington National Cemetery, President Clinton paid tribute Thursday to the nation's war dead.

**Nation / A2**  
This is going to make it a good year because the school is going to entertain

us," said Bob Debrun, a member of the Assumption VFW who served as a sergeant in the Korean War.

"We learn a lot more this way, and we have a chance to invite the community into our school," Principal Marsha Parr said. "The kids get a chance to learn about the people who came before them, which beats a day of sitting at home watching TV and playing Nintendo."

This year, the school was able to use a grant from the Decatur Area Arts Council to bring in several musicians from Normal, Champaign and Carlinville who played old-time music from five wars.

**VETS**  
Continued on A3

## Stalemate stands



**DEPARTURE:** The Rev. Jesse Jackson prepares to hug a supporter just before leaving Decatur Airport on a flight to Washington, D.C.

### McGee hopes to craft settlement when school board meets next week

By ARVIN DONLEY  
Staff Writer

**DECATUR** — Decatur school officials and the Rev. Jesse Jackson went to neutral corners Thursday as a state education official hoped to broker a deal between the two parties over the expulsion of seven high school students.

As Jackson jetted off to Washington, D.C., and school officials hunkered down for a respite from the national spotlight, state school Superintendent Glenn V. McGee told the Herald & Review he is looking forward to sitting down with the Decatur school board to present a list of proposals for breaking the stalemate.

"They have my cell phone number and my home phone number," McGee said in a phone interview on Thursday.

McGee discussed the proposals with

Jackson and said he had hoped to meet with the school board on Wednesday.

He said he discussed that possibility with Decatur school Superintendent Kenneth Arnold and school board President Jackie Goetter but was told the board was too tired to meet. "They have been under a lot of pressure, and I respect that," he said.

Goetter said the plans to schedule such a meeting for next week.

The expulsions stemmed from a Sept. 17 fight in the bleachers at an Eisenhower High School football game. A private videotape of the altercation was used by prosecutors in determining to charge four adults and five juveniles with felony mob action. The charges were filed Tuesday in Macon County Circuit Court.

The tape was released by unspecified persons this week and has been widely shown on network television news programs. Jackson alleges the school board leaked the tape to help justify its decisions.

During a Thursday morning news conference, Jackson also accused school officials

of leaking the tape to the media. Jackson said he had been told the school board was "covering up" the incident.

Some of Jackson's critics say he's diminishing the incident to promote his own agenda. Others contend the school board made too much of the incident and meted out unfair punishment.

But even those who aren't major players in this controversy have widely varying opinions about the fight, which was captured on videotape and shown on national television this week.

"I grew up in Chicago and have seen incidents like this," said Floyd Jenkins, 49, who now lives in Decatur. "No one's safety appeared to be at risk as far as I

### Thursday's events

■ Schools were closed for Veterans Day.  
■ The Rev. Jesse Jackson held a morning news conference calling for investigation into release of student records. He then boarded a plane bound for Washington, D.C.  
■ Decatur school board President Jackie Goetter said no records of individual students were released and that the board hoped to meet next week with Illinois State Board of Education Superintendent Glenn W. McGee. McGee said he has a list of proposals to present to the board aimed at finding a resolution.

### What's next

■ Schools are closed today for a teachers institute day. Schools likely will be open Monday, but students once again will need identification cards to get in. High schools will be open today for students who have lost their school ID to get a new one free of charge.  
■ The Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and state NAACP plan to march in Decatur Sunday afternoon.

## Poll reveals a less angry electorate

Bush is drawing favor in this era of moderate opinion, research shows.

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Americans enter the 2000 election season, a nationwide poll shows they are more moderate than five years ago, less cynical about government and more supportive of Democratic positions on top issues.

Ironically, the politician who is flourishing the most in this climate is a self-described Republican conservative named George W. Bush.

**McCaIn gains ground**  
A New Hampshire poll put Republican presidential contender John McCain in a statistical tie with Gov. George W. Bush.

**Nation / A11**  
ing the most in this climate is a self-described Republican conservative named George W. Bush.

As the GOP presidential front-runner draws support across a broad spectrum of voter groups, a comprehensive political poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press suggested Thursday that the Texas governor's Democratic rivals face early obstacles.

Bill Bradley, a former New Jersey senator, has more work to do introducing himself to the American voters; Vice President Al Gore must reintroduce himself after the trauma of President Clinton's impeachment.

"Gore is really tied to Clinton," said George Appleby, a Des Moines, Iowa, lawyer and a Democrat. "Even the people who have stood by (Clinton) can't wait for this to be over. They don't want to be embarrassed."

And Gore's political problems may not be strictly scandal-related.

"Besides what the candidates tell you, they have to do something for you," said Lacomia, N.H., toy store owner Nancy Thibodeau, a Democrat. "Gore's personality does absolutely nothing for me."

The political landscape in 1999 is dramatically different from five years ago when Pew last looked in great detail at the mood and preferences of voting-age Americans.

"Moderates reign, they reign right, left and center," said Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center. "These are not the angry people we saw five years ago."

Several recent polls have shown American optimism at a high level because of the roaring economy of recent years.

In a series of political values questions, people were asked their feelings about government, the poor, immigrants, and minorities. The "shift" toward this outlook across the board since 1994

**OPINION**  
Continued on A11

## Fistfight or brawl? Videotape viewers' opinions vary

Experts say many factors affect the way people see the incident at Eisenhower.

By ARVIN DONLEY  
Staff Writer

**DECATUR** — It was nothing more than a fistfight, said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the kind that happens in schools all over America.

"No guns, no knives, no blood," are the words Jackson has used repeatedly regarding the Sept. 17 fight at an Eisenhower High School football game that initially led to a controversial two-year expulsion of seven students.

Decatur school board Presi-

dent Jackie Goetter described it as "behavior that endangered the lives of others" and "gang-like, mob-action activity."

Some of Jackson's critics say he's diminishing the incident to promote his own agenda. Others contend the school board made too much of the incident and meted out unfair punishment.

But even those who aren't major players in this controversy have widely varying opinions about the fight, which was captured on videotape and shown on national television this week.

"I grew up in Chicago and have seen incidents like this," said Floyd Jenkins, 49, who now lives in Decatur. "No one's safety appeared to be at risk as far as I

could see on the film. I think it's been blown way out of proportion. There were more people running toward the fight than running away from it, and a lot of them were spectators."

Matt Thompson, a MacArthur High School sophomore who was in the stands when the fight broke out, said the TV footage seemed "just as violent and extreme and out of control" as it did in person.

"I'd describe it as a mob action," he said.

How can two people see the same incident so differently? Michael Vinoux, chairman of social science and human services at Parkland Community College in Champaign, said fac-

tors such as geographic location, income levels and race all play a role in how a person perceives things.

"If you expect the world to be a certain way and the data doesn't fit that, the tendency is to bend the data rather than changing the way you see the world," Vinoux said.

"To further illustrate his point, Vinoux pointed to a classic study in which a group of students who attended Yale University and a group from Harvard University were each shown a videotape of the Harvard-Yale football game.

The Yale people said the ref-

**VIDEO**  
Continued on A4