

# Herald & Review

Sunday  
November 7, 1999  
Decatur, Illinois

Serving Central Illinois Since 1873

**State champion**  
Shelbyville freshman Sarah Selby conquers all comers in Class A cross-country championship.  
**Sports / C1**



**Volleyball**  
Casey defeats Shelbyville, gets state tournament berth  
**Preps / C10**

## SPORTS SPECTACULAR

**High school second-round action**  
Argenta-Oreana 50, Salt Fork 20  
Milledgeville 50, Cerro Gordo 23  
Freeport 38, Arcola 6  
Tuscola 35, Sesser 28  
**Preps / C10**



Illini prove road ready, pasting Iowa 40-24  
**Sports / C1**



Volleyball team gains national tourney bid  
**Sports / C7**

## Quick Take

**Bement board sued**  
A Bement police officer accuses the village board of conducting illegal closed meetings with the aim of firing him.

Central Illinois / B1

## Loving the library

Whether it's the bright, airy space or the ample, nearby parking, the new Decatur Public Library is the darling of the reading public.

Lifestyle / G1

## Strikers' benefits

Bridgestone's Finestone workers are allowed to keep the unemployment compensation they received during a 1994-95 labor dispute.

Business / D1

## 1999 UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

Goal	\$2.5 million
Raised	\$2,012,656.97
Needed	\$487,343.03
Days left	11

## Lottery

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

- Pick Three-Midday: 3-0-0
- Pick Three-Evening: 5-1-3
- Pick Four-Midday: 2-0-0-8
- Pick Four-Evening: 1-3-3-0
- Lotto: 29-36-39-47-48-51
- Mega jackpot: \$4 million
- Big Game jackpot: \$62 million

## Weather

■ Today: Sunny, mild. High 65.  
■ Tonight: Clear. Low 46.

Details / B6

## Inside

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**\$1.75**  
Our 120th year  
Issue 311 • Seven sections



# The Edison effect

Backers tout academic gains, foes worry about finances



**GETTING THE BEAT:** Teacher Alison Routt makes music with two of her pupils at Williams-Edison School in Flint, Mich. Music, art and Spanish classes are integral components at Edison Project schools.

By KEN DICKSON  
Herald Staff Writer

The effects on students, schools and teachers are major concerns by many in the Decatur School District if two schools are turned over to the Edison Project.

Edison says it will improve student achievement and decrease problems with attendance and mobility at the two schools. Superintendent Kenneth Arndt also hopes the introduction of Edison would increase and stabilize enrollment throughout the school district.

However, Decatur educators fear Edison would detract from other schools in town, especially financially. Specifically, they worry a grade school might need to be closed and teaching jobs eliminated.

Edison, a privately owned corporation based in New York City, runs 79 schools in 16 states, including that town opened this year in Peoria. Edison is courting the Decatur school board for a chance to operate Washington and South Shores schools in partnership with the district.

Arndt and some members of the school board have promised that the district will not pay more than its annual operating expense per pupil to bring in the Edison

program. The average operating expense per year is \$5,883, but educators say that it costs more to educate a high school student than a first-grader — classes are generally smaller in high school, and there are many more costly extracurricular activities, like band and football.

So, if Decatur pays the average, is that not a disproportionate amount?

"The Edison premise is to fund education at an earlier age," Arndt said. "It has been proven to have a greater impact on student achievement. Traditionally, it's just the opposite and much more money is spent in the higher grades. It's generally that way in Decatur. High school students have many more electives and special programs, like sports and labs."

Arndt backs the Edison Project for Decatur because of its promise of increasing enrollment and student achievement at the two schools. "It will be very difficult

EDISON

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## Preparing for the worst, hoping for the best

Plan for Y2K as you would for a winter storm, officials suggest

By TOM COLLINS  
Herald Staff Writer

DECATUR — A year ago, Marsha Sykes of rural Decatur became interested in the so-called "Year 2000 Problem" and decided to read up on what might happen when the ball drops on New Year's Eve.

Sykes found a lot of Y2K predictions on the Internet — many of them "terribly negative" — and decided she was better safe than sorry.

Since then, Sykes has stocked up her home with canned goods, bottled water, candy for her children, and games to keep the family entertained if the lights go out.

"I look for the worst to happen and I hope for the best," Sykes said. "But I

don't want to be waiting until the end of the year and wait until the last minute to stock up. I think it's going to be chaos at that time of the year, anyway."

"The bottom line is that nobody really knows what's going to happen," Sykes said. "And there's times when I think, 'Oh, is it really going to be that bad?' But I'm about as ready as I could be."

The Y2K Problem is the anticipated failure of computers stemming from a programming glitch. Many companies track calendar dates using a two-digit year. Come Jan. 1, computer calendars will read "99" and have no way to distinguish the year 1999 from 2000.

Y2K has inspired vast fears, most of which government and industry leaders insist will never come to pass. Nuclear missiles will not launch. Power stations

PLAN

Continued on A5

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A proposal to turn management of two Decatur schools over to the Edison Project was part of a sweeping plan presented to the school board Sept. 14 by Superintendent Kenneth Arndt. The board voted Oct. 28 to close Roosevelt Middle School, convert Stephen Decatur High School to a middle school and put Mound Middle School and Sunnyside Center up for sale. With an alternative proposal by South Shores School to become a choice school without Edison — a proposal to be presented formally at Tuesday's school board meeting, the school district has suspended negotiations with Edison for now but may look again at the privately owned corporation in the future. This special School Restructuring report explores what Edison could mean for Decatur schools. Here's the lineup.

**TODAY:** The changes that come with the Edison Project and their possible impact are examined.

**MONDAY:** Many financial questions about bringing Edison to Decatur have yet to be resolved, but its introduction in the Peoria School District gives some indications.

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Herald & Review/Timothy J. Hoff

**EMERGENCY TOOL:** Macon County Red Cross Director of Emergency Services Dan Groves unpacks the food storage containers in the agency's new emergency response vehicle. The new E.R.V. just arrived Thursday from Tennessee and will be used to distribute aid in the event of a Y2K-related emergency. The American Red Cross however, has been quick to assure people that significant Y2K problems are not expected.

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## Pro-student rally may draw 1,000 plus

An anti-violence march will be held at same hour.

By BRETT WILCOXSON  
Herald Staff Writer

DECATUR — The Rev. Jesse Jackson and more than a thousand supporters are expected to walk the streets of Decatur this afternoon, following a week of controversy that saw the civil rights leader take on the city's school board.

Jackson's demonstration, which comes after failed negotiations, will protest the Decatur Board of Education's refusal to reinstate seven students who were expelled as the result of a brawl Sept. 17 in the bleachers at an Eisenhower High School football game.

But Jackson's march will not be the only one in town. A city leader said she will lead an anti-violence march at the same time the rally is being held.

Decatur City Council member Betty Stockard, who has organized anti-violence marches for years, said members of her Youth Empowerment Agency and any others who would like to participate will gather at Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Eldorado Street just before 3 p.m. After a prayer, they will march east on Decatur Street, stopping around 16th Street.

"It will be no different than what we normally do," Stockard said. "We don't chant things. We say a prayer before and after."

As of Saturday night, Keith Anderson, vice president of Decatur's chapter of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition — the orga-

STUDENT

Continued on A10

## Competitors pose problems for Microsoft

The federal antitrust ruling follows challenges to the software firm's dominance.

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — A judge's ruling that Microsoft Corp. wields monopoly power may be too late to alter the high-tech industry in one key respect. Competition over the way the world accesses the Internet is already moving beyond its Windows-based technology, observers say.

In the two years since the Justice Department brought its antitrust lawsuit, competitors have become emboldened to begin looking for alternatives to the Microsoft operating system that runs on more than 90 percent of the world's personal computers, analyst Bob Enderle of Giga Information Group said.

"Microsoft may well be in a fight for its life anyway," Enderle said Saturday. "A lot of the advantages they had to dictate to their partners and their customers were changed during the course of the trial."

Microsoft has endured much criticism for attempting to force unfavorable contractual terms on computer companies and others that buy Windows, but it may no longer be able to do so.

"It's clear Microsoft was heavily-handed with its vendors, but

MICROSOFT

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