

# CENTRAL ILLINOIS

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Herald & Review

Wednesday, November 24, 1999

Decatur, Illinois

## BRIEFS

H&R staff reports

### Dalton City lifts bond order

DALTON CITY — A bail order for the southeast portion of Dalton City has been lifted, the village announced Tuesday.

### Man sentenced for Bethany bank robbery

URBANA — A 38-year-old Indiana man will spend the next 18 months in prison as a result of the early April robbery of Scott State Bank in Bethany.

During a hearing Monday in U.S. District Court in Urbana, Judge Michael P. McCuskey sentenced Donald L. Schoolcraft of Noblesville, Ind., to 15 years and six months in prison.

In early August, Schoolcraft admitted he was the man who entered Bethany's only bank on April 7, announced he had a gun and demanded money from a teller before fleeing on foot. Schoolcraft was identified from photos taken by a surveillance camera.

McCuskey also sentenced Schoolcraft to three years of supervised release and ordered him to pay restitution of \$3,556 to the bank.

### Blood collection date scheduled for Friday

DECATUR — Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the American Red Cross Heart of America Blood Region has scheduled only one blood collection this week in Macon County.

The collection will be 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, Nov. 26, at the new American Red Cross Blood Center, 2887 N. Monroe St., in Decatur. To donate, a person must be at least 17 years old, weigh between 110 and 150 pounds, be in good health and eat well before donating.

To make an appointment, call 1-800-728-3343.

### Adult fitness event slated for Dec. 3

CHARLESTON — Area residents are invited to the 18th annual Adult Fitness/METS Winter Dinner Party at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 3, in the Grand Ball Room at the Student Union Building on the Eastern Illinois University campus.

The event will include a video presentation by Eastern professor and adult fitness swimmer Marilyn Liskowski, who spent several weeks on the Amazon River last summer. The dinner party also features a "heart healthy" buffet meal and a slide presentation by Dr. Margot Forsyth, a Charleston dentist and adult fitness swimmer who joined nine other women on a recent trip along the Appalachian Trail.

Tickets must be purchased before Wednesday, Dec. 1. The cost is \$10 per person. For information on how to purchase tickets, call 941-3310.

### Workshop offers help in returning to school

DECATUR — Adults considering a return to college are invited to attend a back-to-school workshop from 10 a.m. to noon or 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 1.

The workshop will be at the Shilling Education Center, Room 500, at Richland Community College.

Topics such as juggling multiple responsibilities, financial aid, support services and career choosing will be covered.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 875-7211, Ext. 372.

### Don't break the eggs and win a scholarship

DECATUR — Richland Community College will hold its fourth annual Egg Drop Contest from 8:30 a.m. to noon Friday, Dec. 3, in the Shilling Auditorium.

The goal of the contest is to design a container that will house three eggs — and after being dropped from 25 feet — will keep the eggs intact and unbroken.

All high school juniors and seniors are invited to participate.

The winning student will receive a tuition scholarship of 30 credit hours at Richland.

Second prize is 15 hours, and third prize is eight hours.

For more information, call 875-7211, Ext. 213.

## Lan makers want hearings on tainted soil

**Macon County Landfill manager defends planned disposal of material from U.S. Air Force base.**

By TOM COLLINS

H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — The U.S. Air Force is being challenged to hold public hearings in Macon County, giving residents a chance to learn more about contaminated soil it may dispose of here.

The Air Force plans to remove 60,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil from Chamite Air Force Base in Rantoul. The soil contains six chemical contaminants — two of which are known to cause cancer — and is slated for disposal in one of three landfills, including Macon County's.

These plans surprised state Sen. N. Duane Noland, R-Blue Mound, and state Rep. Bill Mitchell, R-Forsyth, who said Tuesday they were alerted by a colleague in the Illinois General Assembly.

Noland and Mitchell want the Air Force to make the issue public before any soil crosses the county line. They filed a house resolution, Mitchell said, that calls on

the Air Force to conduct public hearings in the community they choose.

"And I think the public has a right to know exactly what is in there," Mitchell said.

The Air Force also is considering sites in Will and Vermilion counties.

Noland and Mitchell said they simply want the Air Force to discuss any Macon County plans publicly.

Chemical officials were not available late Tuesday for comment.

"We're not trying to use scare tactics and cry wolf," Noland said. "At the same time, we are not chemical engineers."

"When you look at the resolution that's been filed, it lists all the different compounds and we'd like to know exactly if there's a threat," he said.

Troy Goodrich, general manager of the Macon County Landfill, said there is no cause for concern.

"We are allowed by permit, issued by Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, to accept petroleum-contaminated soils," Goodrich said, "and this material meets special waste as defined by the EPA."

Goodrich said the landfill has previously accepted petroleum-contaminated soils.

"These chemicals are well below the permissible exposure limits established by Occupational Safety and Health Administration," he said.

The chemicals in question are mostly fuel residues. According to Scorecard Environmental Defense Fund, two of the contaminants, benzopyrene and methylene chloride, are known carcinogens. Scorecard said two of the contaminants — acetone and naphthalene — pose "suspected health risks."

Information on two others — anthracene and trichloro benzene — was not available.

Noland said the Air Force plans to spend \$4 million to truck the tainted soil — which he said would cover 50 football fields with a foot of soil — across Illinois.

The Air Force solicited bids from interested disposal sites. The Macon County Landfill submitted a bid to accept 60,000 cubic yards.

Mitchell and Noland said they're concerned that toxic chemicals could be leached from the soil and taint the water supply, though Goodrich said that will not happen.

"There is absolutely no risk of this material leaching into the groundwater," Goodrich said. "This is because of the liner system in the landfill and the leachate collection system."

Kelly Neal, director of the Macon County Solid Waste Management Department, confirmed the proposed soil shipment is within EPA guidelines. Neal said she would object if the soil shipment posed any risk.

"We just want the opportunity to have some hearings to hold the Air Force accountable, so that the citizens of our district understand what's happening," Noland said.

Noland and Mitchell said they contacted the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and learned the Air Force has other options.

The Air Force can treat the soil on-site in Rantoul, they said, or apply it to existing soil to reduce chemical concentration and nullify any health risks.

Noland and Mitchell have since turned to Capitol Hill, enlisting the support of U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and U.S. Rep. David Phelps, D-Ill., to put pressure on the Air Force to hold the hearings.

## TAKING THE OATH

## Gaining citizenship where Lincoln once stood

By NANCY CHESLEY

H&R Springfield Bureau Writer

SPRINGFIELD — Susan Min Lee thought she would mark this milestone alone. Her husband, Gary, had already become a U.S. citizen. He had to run the Decatur business they own, the Aloha restaurant.

Lee had a fun club, however. Three couples, all regulars at the restaurant, came to Springfield to see her take the oath of citizenship Tuesday.

"We're just here for support," said Joyce Olson. "She's such a good person. They both are. We wouldn't miss it for anything."

With Olson was her husband, Bud; Shirley and Carl Catron; and Kathy and John Shroyer.

Lee, 49, said she and her husband came to Decatur nearly 15 years ago to work in a friend's restaurant, the Aloha. The Lees bought the restaurant six years ago.

Susan Lee said the couple's sons, ages 23, 21 and 19, urged her to become naturalized. She pursued citizenship, she said, "because I live here, my kids are all here and I love here."

Lee and 68 other participants carefully repeated the oath together in the bunting-draped Hall of Representatives in the Old State Capitol. Then they were called one at a time to receive certificates.

Senior U.S. District Judge Richard Mills presided over the ceremony and told them about becoming part of the United States in the same room where Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous House Divided speech so long ago.

They were welcomed by other public officials. U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Iowa, said his grandfather "came with the idea if you work hard you can succeed in America."

And Springfield Mayor Karen Haas said Americans benefit from an infusion of diverse cultures. "We can thank you for wanting to come here and add so much to our culture."

The patriotic ceremony stirred the emotions of another new citizen, Dr. Benjamin Esparaz. He has practiced medicine with Cancer Care Specialists of Central Illinois for the past 10 years. He and his

### Area residents who took the oath

H&R Springfield Bureau

SPRINGFIELD — Central Illinois residents who took the oath of U.S. citizenship Tuesday and their countries of origin include:

- Umberto Bertoldo of Decatur, Italy
- Susan Min Lee of Decatur, Taiwan
- Prima Lagague Boas of Hillsboro, the Philippines
- Rubinos Yap Tosey of Clinton, the Philippines
- My Haah Thi Nguyen of Lincoln, Vietnam
- Shaktini Dillip Khatri of Lincoln, India
- Kumad Harish Bhakta of Decatur, Trinidad and Tobago
- Norma Margaret Harrold of Clinton, Canada
- Nerissa Simondo Sample of Decatur, the Philippines
- Paul Won Park of Decatur, Korea
- Benjamin Tia Esparaz of Decatur, the Philippines
- Cesar Augusto Barillas de Leon of Clinton, El Salvador
- Francisco Kalala of Decatur, Mexico
- Pety Justina Calvert of Taylorville, Indonesia
- Tereza de Jesus Herber of Decatur, Mexico
- Mirza Masood Baig of Decatur, India
- Yi Jun Wu Karpen of Effingham, China



**MEMORABLE MOMENT** Clutching her naturalization papers and some roses, Susan Min Lee, right, of Decatur hugs her friend Joyce Olson following a naturalization ceremony on Tuesday at the Old State Capitol in Springfield. Lee, 49, and her husband Gary came to Decatur 15 years ago to work in a friend's restaurant, the Aloha. The Lees bought the restaurant six years ago.

## Expulsion issue waits in court

By TOM COLLINS

H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — A legal effort to keep the Rev. Jesse Jackson and others off Decatur School District property is on hold in Macon County Circuit Court.

Circuit Judge Jerry L. Patton said Tuesday that the school board's request for a temporary restraining order can wait until a federal judge in Urbana decides whether the issue belongs there or in Decatur.

The Decatur school board asked the circuit court on Nov. 17 to prohibit Jackson, the students expelled for a Sept. 17 fight and several affiliates of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition from coming within 50 feet of school property.

The matter was to have been heard Tuesday by Patton. But Rainbow/PUSH lawyers filed a motion Monday in Urbana to get the matter heard in U.S. District Court instead.

Chicago attorney Lewis Myers Jr. argued that the First Amendment rights of the defendants would be violated if the school board got its restraining order, making this a federal, not state, issue.

No hearing date is set for Federal Judge Michael P. McCuskey to consider the motion.

If approved, the federal court would hold another hearing to decide whether Jack-

son can cross school property. If denied, the matter goes back to circuit court in Decatur.

Everett Nicholas, the lawyer who represented the school board Tuesday, said the school board will ask McCuskey to keep the case in Decatur.

Myers and Jackson were not present at the Tuesday hearing.

This is the second court battle being waged between the expelled students and their supporters and the school board.

On Nov. 19, several of the students petitioned the U.S. District Court for a temporary restraining order.

The students want the federal court to overturn the district's so-called "zero-tolerance policy" on violence and reinstate them in regular school at once.

McCuskey will preside over that hearing, which was continued Monday until Dec. 27 at Myers' request.

Myers told McCuskey that he needed to tighten up the law against the complaint filed by six students.

## Authorities ready for holiday traffic

**State, area police to put out extra patrols to handle busy roadways.**

By BRAD MUDD

H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — Law enforcement agencies are hoping drivers slow down and wear their seat belts over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

Officers with the Illinois State Police will be out in force looking for aggressive and reckless drivers.

"It is estimated that 33 million people will be traveling over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend," said Sam W. Nolen, director of the Illinois State Police. "With the increased traffic, it is crucial that motorists obey the speed limits and other traffic laws."

Our increased presence on the highways will serve as a constant reminder."

Mark McDonald, spokesman for the Illinois State Police, said the

increase in officers will be similar to other holiday weekends.

"The real difference is the length of the period, usually Wednesday through Sunday. We simply have a longer travel period," McDonald said.

"We pick and choose the heavier travel times Wednesday and Sunday are very heavy travel days while Thursday is a very light travel day. People usually don't go as far or stay home on Thanksgiving."

The Macon County Sheriff's Office will be working with State Police and the Decatur Police Department over the weekend.

Capt. Jerry Dawson said officers will be concentrated on patrol around Hickory Point Mall in Forsyth. Parking lots fill quickly causing traffic problems and congestion in and around the mall complex, Dawson said.

"The day after Thanksgiving is notoriously the worst day of the year at the mall," Dawson said. "It's even worse than the day after Christmas usually."

On the highways, State Police will also be looking for drivers not wearing seat belts and children not in safety seats, McDonald said.

"People should know the Illinois State Police has a zero-tolerance policy on seat belt use and child restraints," McDonald said.

If drivers are not wearing seat belts and children are not strapped in, he will write tickets and warnings."

On Illinois roads last Thanksgiving, 23 people were killed in auto accidents with half of the crashes involving alcohol, according to State Police records.

"Seat belts remain your best defense in a crash," Nolen said in a written release. "We believe increasing your belt compliance will result in a decrease of highway fatalities, and that we can be something we could all be thankful for."