

LOCAL REPORT

Miss Illinois and Washington native joins charity walk

EUREKA — Miss Illinois will walk two miles Saturday to raise awareness and money for Heart House, a Eureka shelter for the homeless and domestic violence victims, and the Heartline human services agency.

Ashley Murray, a 2008 Washington Community High School graduate, will participate in Heart House and Heartline's annual Race With Your Heart fundraiser at Lake Eureka Park.

Entry fee for the 2-mile walk and 4-mile run is \$20. Registration will begin at 8 a.m. in the pavilion and the walk and run will start at 9:30 a.m.

Each runner will receive a T-shirt, and 3D medallions will be awarded to the top finishers in the run. Participants, friends and family members are invited to a post-race party.

Registration form is available at www.lakerunclub.org under "Area Races." For information, call 467-6101.

Bradley softball clinic will raise money for disabled fan

PEORIA — The Bradley University softball team will host a clinic at Laura Bradley Park following its noon home game Sunday to raise money for one of the team's fans who has cerebral palsy.

Children in eighth grade and younger can attend the \$15, 75-minute clinic. All proceeds will go toward purchasing a new wheelchair for Julie Prill, a Braves fan who was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at age 2.

To register for the clinic, contact assistant coach Jennie Shollenberger at jshollenberger@bradley.edu or

Help wanted to clean up area neighborhoods

PEORIA — Neighborhood associations across the city will participate in the Great American Cleanup on Saturday.

Peoria Disposal Co. will have trash collection trucks circulating through registered neighborhoods to collect garbage and yard waste. The refuse should be collected at a central site in the neighborhood.

Biaggi's Italian restaurant to add a Peoria location

PEORIA — Biaggi's Ristorante Italiano's 22nd location will open at the Westlake Shopping Center.

Les Cohen, president of Cohen Development Company, which manages Westlake, said Biaggi's will open Aug. 8. He said it will take the spot currently housed by Chevys Fresh Mex, which is slated to close in May.

Westlake Shopping Center is at the intersection of Sterling Avenue and Interstate 74 and has enjoyed growth lately with the addition of retailers including the Fresh Market and Five Guys Burgers and Fries.

Biaggi's offers Italian fare such as pasta, seafood, steak, pizza and desserts, as well as an extensive wine list. Biaggi's is based in Bloomington and operates 21 restaurants in Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Utah and Wisconsin.

For more information, to apply for a job or to view a menu, visit www.biaggis.com.

New state senator holds office hours on April 28

TOULON — State Sen. Darin LaHood, R-Peoria, will hold office hours from 10 to 11 a.m. April 28 at Connie's Country Kitchen, 115 W. Main St.

LaHood, who recently was appointed to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of state Sen. Dale Risinger, said the event will give constituents an opportunity to meet with him, ask questions and share their views on important issues.

No appointment is necessary.

Cat joins state in assisting relief effort in Japan

PEORIA — Caterpillar Inc. has volunteered to transport the radiation detection devices the state of Illinois is providing as part of a relief effort announced Friday to assist disaster victims in Japan.

"We are pleased to lend a hand and donate the transportation costs for this important humanitarian effort," Steve Larson, a Caterpillar vice president, said in a news release.

Larson is president of Cat Logistics, which will handle the delivery of 2,000 personal radiation detectors similar to devices used in Illinois by law enforcement agencies and fire departments.

Gov. Pat Quinn said the Illinois agricultural community also will provide products to Japan, which imports about 60 percent of its food supply.

"The people of Japan are our good friends," Quinn said. "The state of Illinois, our business community and our farmers are all working together to help them get back on their feet."

CORRECTION

Wrong address: Jeff Butler, the owner of Butler's Chicken & Stuff, 3311 N. Sterling Ave., said his restaurant would adjust to a new law on banning trans fats if it's approved in the General Assembly. The restaurant's location was incorrectly listed in both the story and the photo caption that appeared in Friday's edition.

Visit the Journal Star on the Internet at www.pjstar.com for news and special features.

District 150 exec seeks injunction

Associate superintendent says she was reassigned without cause; district points to signed contract

BY ANDY KRAVETZ
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — A Peoria County judge likely will decide next week whether to throw out a request by Associate Superintendent Michelle Ungurait that seeks to block the District 150 School Board's decision to terminate her contract.

Chief Circuit Judge Michael Brandt heard arguments Thursday regarding whether Ungurait's lawsuit, filed March

30, passed legal muster. She wants Brandt to issue an injunction that would put on hold any move to reassign her or to terminate her contract.

Last month, Superintendent Grenita Lathan suspended Ungurait. No reason has been publicly given, and the School Board then voted to terminate her contract "without cause" and reassign her to a teaching position beginning May 1, "for which a lower salary is paid."

Ungurait says that's not right, because she had a contract to work for three years. The issue seems to be a clause in the contract that allows both sides to back out of the deal. Ungurait says she didn't get to see that contract

until after she moved her family here and had been on the job for nearly a week.

Attorneys hired by the district contend the lawsuit should be dismissed because no legal action can resolve it, given the contract. They also say Ungurait was able to view the contract before she signed it, and that once she did, she lost her ability to challenge it.

Ungurait's attorney disagrees and says his client had already moved here, quit her job in North Carolina and was working before the district showed her the contract.

Andy Kravetz can be reached at 686-3283 or akravetz@pjstar.com.

POLICE, FIRE AND COURTS

Three Chicagoland cops arrested at Big Al's

PEORIA — Three suburban Chicago police officers were arrested outside a Downtown establishment after an altercation last week, Peoria police say.

The three officers — two from west suburban Bolingbrook and one from far southwest suburban Channahon, both in Will County — were in Peoria for a law enforcement conference.

The group went to the strip club Big Al's, 519 Main St., about 11:30 p.m. April 5, where two members of the group presented identification and were allowed entry to the club, but the third had no ID and was not allowed inside, Peoria police officials said.

The two who were in the club were bothering the security staff to the point they were asked to leave, Peoria police spokesman Doug Burgess said. One of the two would not leave, which eventually escalated into a physical confrontation that started in the bar but moved to the street in front of the club.

All three were arrested. Two were booked on battery charges and the third was booked on a charge of battery and criminal trespass.

Peoria police would not release their names because all three work in undercover operations.

No one hurt in afternoon Peoria apartment fire

PEORIA — An apartment fire in Northwest Peoria on Friday afternoon caused about \$20,000 in damages to the Timberlane Apartments.

Firefighters responded about 3:20 p.m. to 5933 N. Cypress Drive, where two apartments sustained damage, mostly from smoke, firefighters said.

The blaze was quickly extinguished in about 10 minutes, firefighters said.

The apartments were both unoccupied at the time of the fire, and no one was injured.

The cause is under investigation.

Cat found shot by arrow in southern Illinois

WEST FRANKFORT (AP) — Authorities are trying to pinpoint who shot a cat with an arrow in southern

Former Peoria officer gets probation for burglarizing estranged wife's friend

PEORIA — A former Peoria police officer was sentenced to 30 months' probation Friday for entering a car at his estranged wife's house and taking a laptop computer from a man who was there.

Clayton Glasper, 46, address unknown, was found guilty of burglary at a bench trial last month. But Peoria County Circuit Judge Glenn Collier didn't find him guilty of criminal trespass to residence and domestic battery. He had faced up to seven years in prison, but with no record a prison term was unlikely.

Prosecutors claimed that on Oct. 31, 2009, Glasper was arrested when he tried to enter his wife's bedroom. He fled but later returned to the house, where he was arrested. Police, in checking the house, found the other man's car had been burglarized. Missing was a laptop computer, which was found in Glasper's car.

He said he wasn't going to keep the computer but took a picture of it as proof his wife was with the man.

Glasper, who had served 20 years as a Peoria police officer, lost his job in 2009 after accusations of improperly touching women. In 2006, the city settled a federal lawsuit for \$21,000 in which Glasper also was accused of improperly touching a woman.

Illinois' Franklin County

The Southern Illinoisan of Carbondale reported that a worker at the county's animal hospital in West Frankfort says the arrow found sticking from the black-and-white cat Wednesday broke one of his legs, but the animal named Boxer is recovering.

Officials say the cat had been a stray that had found a home with a rural West Frankfort family.

County animal-control supervisor Jarrett Broy says the arrow did not hit any vital organs, and that the shooting appears deliberate because it's not bow-hunting season.

Teen sentenced to 30 years in torture death

EDWARDSVILLE (AP) — A Madison County judge has sentenced a 19-year-old man to 30 years in prison for the 2008 torture killing of a pregnant, developmentally impaired mother in southwestern Illinois.

Benny Wilson declined to comment during Friday's sentencing hearing.

Prosecutors had sought 45 years in prison for Wilson, while his attorney asked for 20 years.

Wilson pleaded guilty in March of last year to first-degree murder in the death of 29-year-old Dorothy Dixon.

Investigators say Dixon was six months pregnant when she died after weeks

of systematic abuse. Police say she was routinely shot with BBs, doused with scalding liquid, and assaulted with a plunger handle and baseball bat.

Her 1-year-old son weighed 15 pounds when taken into state custody after his mom's death.

Five other defendants also pleaded guilty.

Suburban Chicago priest named in abuse lawsuit

CHICAGO (AP) — A suburban Chicago priest who also serves as an Indy race car chaplain has been accused in a federal lawsuit of child sex abuse.

The alleged victim, who is now in his 40s and living in Maryland, contends the Rev. Philip DeRea of Aurora sexually abused him over eight years while working in Washington, D.C.

Also named in the lawsuit is the Missionaires of the Sacred Heart, USA Province, DeRea's order.

CITY OF PEORIA

Drugs

Barely L. Jones, 30, 1532 W. Tiffany Court, was arrested about 1:05 p.m. Wednesday at West Main and North University streets and booked on a charge of possessing a controlled substance.

Weapons

Dennis W. Alexander, 41, 1306 W. Aiken Ave., was arrested about 10:45 a.m. Friday at his home and booked on charges of unlawful use of weapons and possessing less than 30 grams of marijuana.

Cleary defense appeals verdict

BY SHARON WOODS HARRIS
OF GATEHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

PEKIN — Attorneys for convicted murderer Daniel K. Cleary are asking Tazewell County Circuit Judge Stuart P. Borden to acquit him or give him a new trial.

Defense attorney Kirk Bode made the request based on what the defense claims were errors made by the court during Cleary's trial.

Cleary, 36, was found guilty March 9 of killing

his wife, Melissa Cleary, by a jury less than three hours into deliberations. Melissa was bludgeoned to death in the garage of her Mackinaw home on or about June 6, 2008 — a short time after she told her husband she wanted a divorce.

A pre-sentencing hearing will take place at 9 a.m. May 11 just before Cleary's sentencing. He faces a possible sentence of 20 to 60 years in prison.

Bode's motion argues Cleary was not proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt and was denied due process of law and equal protection under the law.

According to the motion, Borden erred when he allowed testimony about the fact that Cleary fled to Peoria with his children after his wife's body was found.

Bode had filed a motion before the trial to keep the jury from hearing that evidence. Bode said he was not fleeing from police.

A great deal of trial testimony focused on blood evidence gathered from the garage and Melissa Cleary's vehicle. Bode said the court erred by allowing a forensic expert to testify to statements made on the Internet by the makers of Oil-Eater, a product that can remove blood, according to its manufacturers. Bode said the testimony was hearsay.

Bode also maintains the court erred when it limited access to confidential Department of Children and Family Services and Lutheran Social Services juvenile records of Cleary's children.



DANIEL
CLEARY

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