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## ROUND TWO

Area high school teams play second-round playoff games today



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## Tazewell garbage

Recycling, expansion target landfill space

Former Gov. George Ryan will serve sentence at Oxford, Wis., prison, B1



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## Building integrity

Pekin custom car shop will give opportunity to at-risk kids

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# Ameren files rate hike request

Increase would be near \$3 a month for typical AmerenCILCO customer

BY ANITA SZOKE  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — The timing may be awful for those already struggling with utility bills, but Ameren Illinois officials say they need another increase in residential delivery service rates for

ongoing system improvements and to increase reliability.

The request, which was filed with the Illinois Commerce Commission on Friday by AmerenCILCO, AmerenCIPS and AmerenIP, would provide \$247 million annually in additional revenue, or about \$180 million for electricity and \$67 million for gas. The increases, which must be approved by the ICC during an 11-month process, are not expected to take effect before October 2008.

AmerenIP customers would be hit the hardest for both the delivery of gas and electricity, followed by AmerenCIPS.

AmerenCILCO customers can expect a more modest increase for the delivery of electricity and potentially a decrease for gas.

Company officials agree the timing isn't ideal but say the rate increase is necessary for the Ameren Illinois utilities to maintain and improve its electric and natural gas infrastruc-

ture. Current rates aren't enough to recover costs and earn a reasonable return on investments, the utility said.

"This additional revenue is essential for the Ameren Illinois utilities to ... fulfill our commitment to deliver energy in a safe, reliable and cost-efficient manner to our customers," said Scott A. Cisel, president and CEO of Ameren Illinois utilities.

The utility said it plans to

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## School stands by hair color decision

There's a reason Shawnterya Carter can't wear maroon highlights in her hair at Pleasant Valley Middle School.

It's the rule. "I'm an educator," says Superintendent Allen Johnson. "... Some colors of hair don't fit."

That's the flat, simple explanation offered by Johnson, who finally called me Friday — three days after my first calls to him and two days after a column that has sparked more reader response than anything to run in this newspaper in a while.

He admits, "I probably should've called a few days ago."

Still, he stands by the original decision to prohibit the 12-year-old from coming to school with maroon in her hair.

The thing is, some people don't find the rule as clear as Johnson. Moreover, it seems to be a rule for the sake of being a rule.

For 11 years, Johnson has been superintendent at Pleasant Valley Middle School, which is just west of Peoria. Shawnterya is in the seventh grade there.

Last weekend, she got a new hair style: microbraids, which involve tight



PHIL LUCIANO

Please see **LUCIANO**, Page A9

# A prayer against crime



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ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

Peoria Mayor Jim Ardis bows his head in a moment of prayer as local pastors and religious leaders meet at Riverside Community Church on Friday afternoon. Ardis called on the religious community to organize a 40-day prayer effort against crime.



ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

Local religious leaders congregate after Friday's meeting with Mayor Jim Ardis at Riverside Community Church.

## Peoria mayor, religious leaders to organize 40 days of prayer to address crime

BY MICHAEL MILLER  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — More than 50 ministers and other Christian leaders answered Mayor Jim Ardis' call to prayer Friday.

The men and women gathered at Riverside Community Church at Ardis' request to discuss organization of a "Ready Set Pray" 40-day period of prayer for lowering the city's crime rate.

Ardis adopted the idea from a program going on in Orlando, Fla.

"I'm ecstatic," the mayor said Friday about the turnout and discussion as he left near the end of the 45-minute meeting. "I cannot be more proud to live in

this city with people who want to make this city better."

A steering committee of about a dozen people was organized after several ideas were voiced on how to go about the effort. The Rev. William Preston of City on a Hill Church, who took an informal leadership role in the meeting, said he was encouraged by the mix of white and black ministers from a variety of traditions.

"No one but the Lord could have achieved this today," Preston said.

The committee will meet and send out information about future gatherings to everyone who signed up to take part.

Please see **PRAYER**, Page A10

## At last, it's time to set clocks back

Energy Policy Act pushed time change into November

BY MICHELLE ANSTETT  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — If you have noticed your morning routine plagued by darkness longer than usual this year, you're right.

Instead of winding back the clocks on Oct. 28, the last Sunday in October, the time change will now be the first Sunday in November, which is Nov. 4.

As part of the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, dates for time changes in the United States shifted about a total of one month in 2007. The start of daylight-saving time was pushed up a full three weeks, from the first Sunday in April to the second Sunday in March.

With many schoolchildren on early pick-up bus routes in local school

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