

# A RISING STAR

Former Bradley standout Anthony Parker is back in the NBA and excelling with the Toronto Raptors.



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# Consumers feel the pinch

# Governor touts bus program

Blagojevich says new law offering free rides to seniors was 'the right thing to do'

BY ERIN WOOD  
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — The governor made a stop in Peoria on Monday to urge senior citizens to take advantage of free bus rides starting March 17.

A mass transit funding bill passed in Springfield last week provides for a sales tax increase for the Chicago area served by mass transit systems but also carries a last-minute provision giving free public transportation to seniors.

"I just thought it was the right thing to do ... to give all our seniors a chance to be able to ride public transportation for free," Gov. Rod Blagojevich said Monday at the Heartland Apartments, a housing complex primarily for the elderly and disabled near Downtown Peoria.

However, CityLink Interim General Manager Tom Lucek said after the news conference that the Greater Peoria Mass Transit Board, scheduled to meet twice before the law goes into effect, will decide whether to allow free rides to senior citizens all day or during specific hours. Because buses may be more crowded when seniors can ride for free, Lucek said the board may decide to allow free rides only during certain hours.

"I personally am in favor," Lucek said of the law. "I really think it's a

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# Typical food poisoning has lasting effects

Bouts can trigger serious health problems years later

BY LAURAN NEERGAARD  
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — It's a dirty little secret of food poisoning: E. coli and certain other foodborne illnesses can sometimes trigger serious health problems months or years after patients survived that initial bout.

Scientists now are unraveling a legacy that has largely gone unnoticed.

What they've spotted so far is troubling. In interviews with The Associated Press, they described high blood pressure, kidney damage, even full kidney failure striking 10 to 20 years later in people who survived severe E. coli infection as children, arthritis after a bout of salmonella or

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## NEWSMAKER

► Outgoing Peoria City Manager **Randy Oliver** is named a finalist for an administrator job in Florida. **PAGE B1**



## ECONOMY WOES

► Is a recession here? Depends on your point of view, but businesses and consumers are suffering. **PAGE C1**

► Tips on how to tighten your financial belt. **PAGE C3**



are trying to be more prudent with their money. They're monitoring spending more closely and continuing to whittle down their credit card balances and her dental school debt, she said.

"We know how to put the brakes on if we have to," said Freemont, 35.

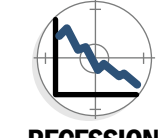
Across America, there are growing signs that consumers are worried about the weakening economy, which could slip into recession. While some say Americans are not famed for their belt-tightening tactics, there are signs people

are trying to improve their personal balance sheets so they're ready for tougher times.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com, said the economic signals "are flashing yellow," suggesting that consumers need to take care.

Jobs are getting harder to find, while the crisis in the mortgage industry has made it more difficult for homeowners to borrow against their houses, closing down what has been a major source of extra cash in recent years. Consumers' budgets have been squeezed by rising food and fuel prices.

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RECESSION WATCH

BY EILEEN ALT POWELL  
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Joi Freemont, a dentist in suburban Atlanta, doesn't have to look further than her appointment book to tell that people are worried about money.

Patients who used to get their teeth whitened all the time "now want to think about it a bit," she said. Braces? "People were getting them for the kids, for themselves, but now they're waiting," she added. When people get cavities, they have their fillings done one a month, not five or six at a time, she said.

As a result, Freemont and her husband are worried their income could drop and

# DREAM WILL LIVE ON

Martin Luther King III, the eldest son of the late civil rights icon, addresses the 1,500 people who attended the 16th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Luncheon at the Peoria Civic Center on Monday. King's birthday is Jan. 15, but the federal holiday bearing his name is observed on the third Monday in January. It has been a national holiday since 1986.



## Martin Luther King Jr.'s son urges audience to focus on forgiveness, honor father's legacy

Story by **MIKE MACIAG**  
Photograph by **ADAM GERIK**  
of the Journal Star

Martin Luther King III challenged 1,500 people at the Peoria Civic Center to empower their communities on the holiday commemorating his father's life.

King, the eldest son of the late civil rights icon, spoke Monday at the 16th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Luncheon sponsored by the Public Employees for Community Concern.

King discussed how his mother and father set examples for him growing up. "They chose service to try to make a difference in the lives of the American people and the world," he said.

Following in their footsteps, King emphasized the importance of service throughout his speech. He currently serves as CEO of Realizing the Dream, a not-for-profit humanitarian organization.

After the assassination of his father, King said it would have been easy for him to embrace hate. He encouraged those in attendance to focus on forgiveness.

"We don't understand how to embrace love and nonviolence yet," he said.

He applauded recent political strides that have been made. Though he hasn't endorsed a candidate

for president, he cited the candidacies of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama as progress for women and minorities.

King also touched on several problems facing the country. He emphasized combating the three evils his father spoke of: poverty, racism and war.

"We can't celebrate yet," he said.

In calling for an end to the war in Iraq, he said more resources need to be devoted to domestic issues. In addition, he said the high number of housing foreclosures will continue to contribute to poverty.

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► MLK Day marchers spread vision by including their kids. **Page B1**

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