



Sports
Daily News all-area boys hoops team revealed. ▶ B1

Tomorrow
The great B-17: A World War II memory.



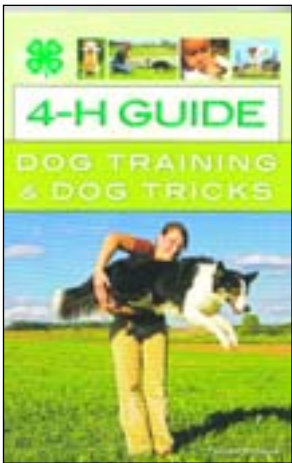
Inside



Step back in time

Exhibit in Chicago features 42,000-year-old baby mammoth.

▶ C1



New tricks

Brownstown woman pens dog training manual.

▶ D1

Saturday



Healthy Easter

Serve healthy dishes the whole family can enjoy on Easter.

Weather



Mostly sunny today. 51/32

▶ A7

In Memory

Word has been received of the following deaths:
Robert Green
Howard Shadwell
Lucille Krohn
Billy Speagle

▶ A5

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Quinn: Pension cuts 'political earthquake'

SPRINGFIELD (AP) — Legislation to trim Illinois pension costs amounts to a "political earthquake" that proves state government is willing to tighten its belt as it asks more of taxpayers, Gov. Pat Quinn said Thursday.

The pension overhaul, approved by lawmakers on Wednesday, won't have a major effect on the state's current budget crisis but it will reduce retirement costs by roughly \$100 billion in the coming decades.

"It's been talked about by many governors before me. Yesterday was a day

of action," said Quinn, a Chicago Democrat. "That was an earthquake ... a political earthquake."

Illinois faces a record-high budget deficit of roughly \$13 billion in the upcoming fiscal year. Officials could reduce that deficit by allocating some of the long-term

pension savings to the next budget.

Saying government should be conservative about that financial maneuver, Quinn advocated using just \$300 million of the pension savings in the next budget.

The pension legislation also could help Quinn

politically.

His Republican opponent, Sen. Bill Brady of Bloomington, opposes a tax increase and argues that the keys to balancing the budget are cutting Medicaid and overhauling government pensions.

— PENSION to A3 —

High-tech checkup



Dan Flach of Montrose gets his body mass index and and body fat percentages read by a handheld electronic device that sends a current through water in the body, while Effingham County Health Department Medical Case Manager Shannon Goering helps him read his results at the health department's Men's Wellness Day on Thursday. By around noon, the health department had about 50 men participate, and were hoping for the same amount of men as last year, which was almost 100. Samantha Newburn photo

Costs for veterans may rise

Quinn's proposal could lead to 45 percent hike in nursing home costs

SPRINGFIELD (AP) — Gov. Pat Quinn is proposing a plan that would increase the cost of staying in Illinois' four nursing homes for veterans by as much as 45 percent.

Quinn has asked lawmakers to approve a \$400 per month increase in the maintenance fee for veterans' home residents. The plan is designed to bring in about \$3.5 million to help operate the state nursing homes in Anna, LaSalle, Manteno and Quincy.

A spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs says the current \$929 per resident monthly maintenance fee hasn't been increased since 1979. Spokeswoman Sabrina Miller says, if approved by lawmakers, the increase would go into effect July 1.

Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Dan Grant says the proposed \$1,329 rate will cover less than 17 percent of the actual cost of caring for the estimated 1,000 veterans who live at the four homes.

Unemployment rate increases to 11.4 percent in Illinois

CHICAGO (AP) — Unemployment in Illinois rose slightly from January to February.

The seasonally adjusted jobless rate for February was 11.4 percent. That compares to 11.3 percent in January. There were 900 fewer jobs in Illinois in February.

Illinois Department of Employment Security Director Maureen O'Donnell says she's encouraged that the job loss pace is slowing in the state. She says a few more months of data are needed before it's possible to assess the path of recovery.

Illinois' jobless rate is at its highest level since July 1983. Since the recession began in December 2007, the nation has lost 8.4 million jobs and Illinois has lost 403,600 jobs.

The national unemployment rate in February was 9.7 percent.

Health Care Overhaul

Dems decry opposition's threats

WASHINGTON (AP) — A fax bearing the image of a noose. Profane voice mails. Bricks thrown, a gas line cut.

Democrats and a few Republicans revealed new details of threats against them Thursday in the aftermath of the passage of the health care overhaul. They uniformly condemned the harassment, but that's where the agreement ended. Democrats said Republicans were slow to condemn the vigilantism, while Republicans said Democrats inspired retaliation.

■ **Look for related story on A2**

"By ratcheting up the rhetoric, some will only inflame these situations to dangerous levels," said House Republican Whip Eric Cantor of Virginia. "Enough is enough. It has to stop."

Reports by at least 10 Democrats of harassment this week have been followed by Democratic complaints that GOP leaders were slow to condemn the incidents.

At least four Democratic offices in New York, Arizona and Kansas were struck, and at least 10 members of Congress have reported threats, including obscenity-laced phone messages and a fax bearing the image of a noose, congressional leaders



The Monroe County Democratic Committee office in Rochester, N.Y., is shown Wednesday after a glass door was struck with a brick with a note reading "Exremism in Defense of Liberty Is no Vice" sometime from late Saturday or Sunday. Bricks have been hurled through Democrats' windows, a propane line was cut at the home of a congressman's brother and lawmakers who voted for a federal health care bill have received phone threats in the days before and after passage of the sweeping legislation. AP photo

have said.

On Thursday, two Republicans said they, too, had been menaced.

No arrests have been reported. A threat to assault a member of Congress in retaliation for the performance of official duties is punishable by up to a year in prison.

House historian Fred Beuttler said there have been few acts of violence against lawmakers over legislation. The worst occurred in 1954 when four Puerto Rican nationalists shot up the House chamber, wounding five members. A cross was burned on

— BACKLASH to A2 —

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