

# ELECTION '06: A RETURN TO POLITICS

ARLENE SHOEMAKER TO RUN FOR KANE COUNTY BOARD, **OUR TOWNS A3**

# The Beacon News



HIGH 35

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## Budget vote fills house; wins OK

By Allecia Vermillion  
STAFF WRITER

AURORA—Aldermen approved the 2006 budget Tuesday night, stamping a new mayor's efforts to make intrinsic changes in both the city and its finances.

A 9-1 vote made official a \$389 million plan for next year that includes some large-scale city projects and the first property tax increase in more than a decade.

Weisner said the tax hike was a response to previous budgets, which he described as holding taxes steady at the expense of the capital improvement fund, which guides large-scale city projects.

"We will continue to reverse that trend," he said.

Most of the discussion leading up to the budget vote centered around Mayor Tom Weisner's three centerpiece initiatives: a new central police station; overhauling the downtown sewer system; and a city-wide network of fiber-optic cables and wireless Internet, or WiFi.

In Tuesday night's lengthy public hearing, more than 15 people took the podium to voice support, disapproval or simple questions about Weisner's inaugural budget. Last year, nobody

❖ Turn to **BUDGET, A2**

## East Side Wal-Mart approved

By Allecia Vermillion  
STAFF WRITER

AURORA—Wal-Mart got a unanimous invitation to build a store on aurora's East Side Tuesday night, despite surrounding residents' tepid feelings about their new neighbor.

The entire City Council approved an annexation and plan for a 54-acre Super Wal-Mart at the northwest corner of Kirk and Butterfield roads. The project also will include a housing development, Walgreens drug store, Starbucks coffee shop and several additional shops and restaurants.

"This is really what was envisioned for this property," First Ward Alderman Abby Schuler said. However, the city has attached "an

❖ Turn to **WAL-MART, A2**

## Production problems cause late delivery

If your Beacon News arrived late during the past few days, please don't blame your carrier.

The late deliveries to some of our customers were due to press and production problems. The people who deliver the paper have worked doubly hard to make up for late truck arrivals at our distribution centers.

We apologize to our customers for the inconvenience and promise to redouble our efforts to get the newspapers to you on time.

Rick Nagel  
Managing editor

"If you don't know your way around here, just forget it."

Ed Kurz, driver of the Kendall County veterans van

## BATTLE OF THE VAN



PHOTOS BY DONNELL COLLINS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Lloyd Hamblin, of Yorkville, and two other veterans meet driver Ed Kurz at the Kendall County Health Department Tuesday morning for a ride in the county's Veterans Assistance Commission van to Hines Veterans Hospital in Maywood.

### KENDALL VETERANS VALUE THE VEHICLE THAT TRANSPORTS THEM TO DOCTORS

By Matthew DeFour  
STAFF WRITER

YORKVILLE — There's a hallway at Hines Veterans Hospital in Maywood known as "the longest mile."

The corridor doesn't measure a full mile, but to wheel a patient from surgery on one end to the extended care unit on the other, it takes two nurse attendants who switch at the halfway point — at least according to Ed Kurz.

"If you don't know your way around here, just forget it," Kurz says. "There's a lot of guys who come here and have to fend for themselves — and I'm just talking about the parking part."

Kurz, 61, of Yorkville, has walked the hallway many times, often assisting Kendall County veterans in wheelchairs. After two years as the van driver of the county's Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) transit service, he readily can navigate the warren



❖ Turn to **VAN, A6**

Ed Kurz, driver of the Kendall County Veterans Administration Commission van, helps Bob Bodine into the vehicle following medical appointments Tuesday at Hines VA Hospital.

## Illinois third in nation for unhealthy air

By David Pace and Ryan Keith  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Kevin Brown's most feared opponent on the sandlot or basketball court while he was growing up wasn't another kid. It was the polluted air he breathed.

"I would look outside, and I would see him just leaning on a tree or leaning over a pole, gasping, gasping, trying to get some breath so he could go back to playing," recalls his mother, Lana Brown.

Kevin suffered from asthma. His mother is convinced the factory air that covered their neighborhood triggered her son's attacks that sent them rushing to the emergency room week after week, his panic filling the car.

"I can't breathe! I have no air, I'm going to

### How dirty is your air?

Go to [www.suburbanchicagonews/beaconnews](http://www.suburbanchicagonews/beaconnews) to learn about air pollution in your neighborhood.

die!"

The air in the neighborhood where Kevin played is among the least healthy in the country, according to a little-known government research project that assigns risk scores for industrial air pollution in every square kilometer of the United States.

More than 280 Illinois neighborhoods are among those nationwide where the air is the most unhealthy because of industrial air pollution, the study found. That ranks Illinois

❖ Turn to **AIR, A2**

### Neighborhoods hit by industrial air pollution

Illinois has more than 280 neighborhoods considered at-risk for health problems from industrial air pollution. Neighborhoods with the top 20 worst rankings in Illinois are in:

- Granite City (four neighborhoods), Madison County
- Decatur (three neighborhoods), Macon County
- Cicero (two neighborhoods), Cook County
- Melrose Park (two neighborhoods), Cook County
- Chicago (two neighborhoods), Cook County
- Peoria (two neighborhoods), Peoria County
- Rockford (two neighborhoods), Winnebago County
- Sterling (two neighborhoods), Whiteside County
- Rock Falls, Whiteside County



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