



BELLEVILLE NEWS-DEMOCRAT

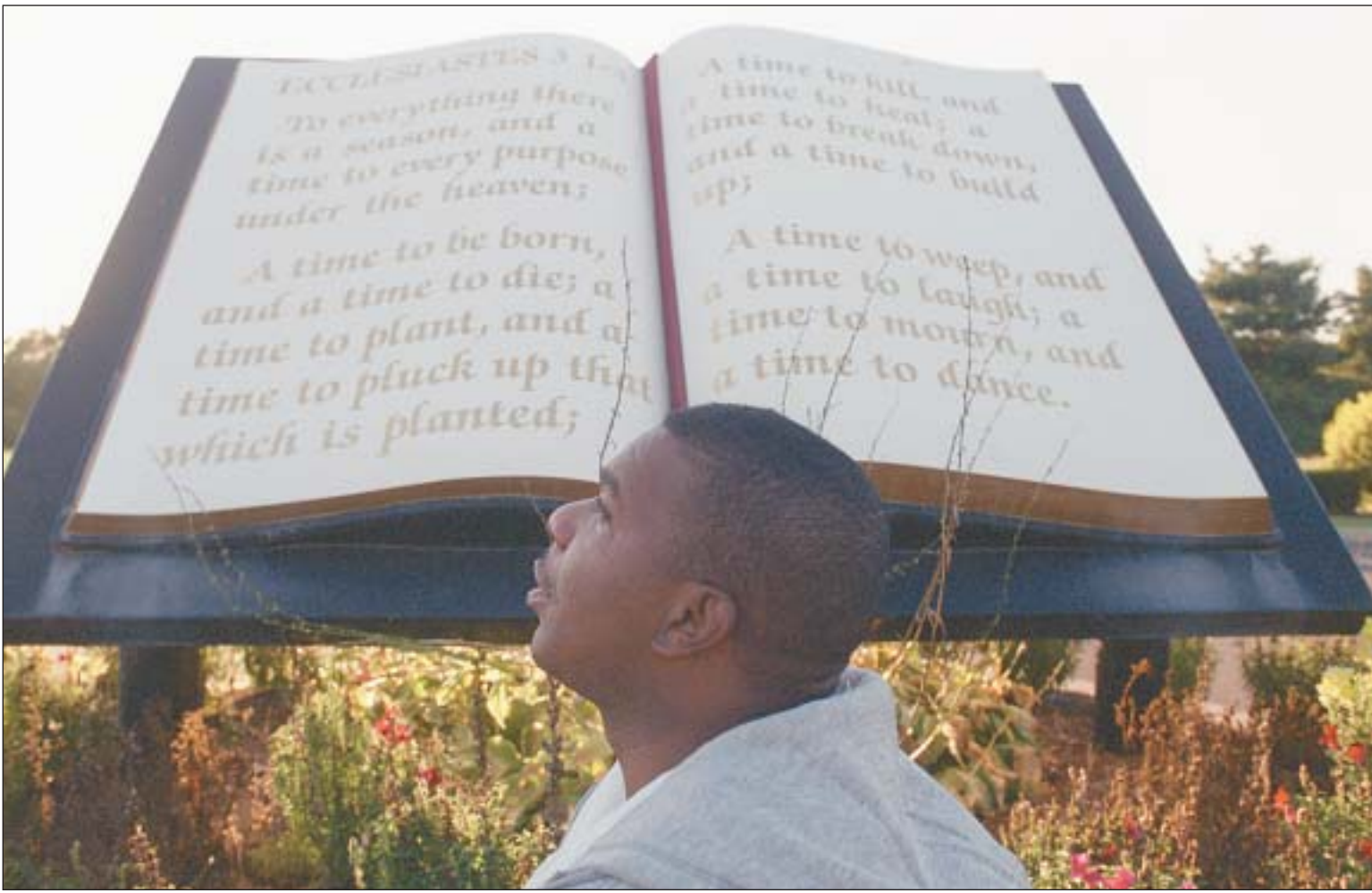
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SURVIVING AIDS IN THE METRO-EAST

LIVING ON A PRAYER



ZIA NIZAMI/News-Democrat

The Rev. Harold Lawary reflects on a Bible passage during a visit to his mother's grave at a Millstadt cemetery.

AIDS.
The word alone was a synonym for hopelessness and an early grave. But not any more. New classes of anti-AIDS drugs have added years to patients' lives and sharply cut the death rate. But the drugs also take a harsh toll, both physical and emotional, on the people whose survival depends on them. So some have just quit taking them. Harold Lawary and Bill Michaelree, two metro-east men with AIDS, embody this dilemma. Beginning today, the News-Democrat presents portraits of both men and their responses to the disease that haunts them.

FIRST OF TWO PARTS

TODAY

DRUG HOLIDAYS: More AIDS patients are taking extended breaks from the drug cocktails that wear down their bodies. **PAGE A10**

AIDS IN THE METRO-EAST: Complacency, carelessness lead to more AIDS cases in the region. **PAGE A12**

COMING MONDAY



STRUGGLING: Bill Michaelree takes his drug cocktail every day and attends Mass regularly, but AIDS is taking a toll on his body.

By MIKE FITZGERALD
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Declarations of faith are a basic part of life for the Rev. Harold Lawary. But of all the testimonies that Lawary has ever made, perhaps the boldest is the one whose consequences face him daily.

It is faith in its purest form — living, breathing testimony anchored to the bedrock belief that his trust in God will prevail over his cells.

Harold Lawary has AIDS. A Baptist minister from East St. Louis, Lawary, 43, has lived with HIV, the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, for more than two decades.

And, like a small but growing number of Americans infected with the virus, he is saying no to the very drugs designed to keep him alive.

Lawary stopped taking his medications in November 2001. He said that when he was taking them, he didn't feel very alive.

"For me, the choice — based on everything I knew — was not to take medication," he said. "They impaired my vision,

Please see PRAYER, A10

Detective's credibility questioned

Courts dismiss 3 drug cases despite praise he has earned

By MIKE FITZGERALD
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EAST ST. LOUIS — In America's war on drugs, Detective Jerry Simon stands out as one of its most stalwart foot soldiers.

Simon, 37, has served the last decade as an East St. Louis Police officer. The bulk of his career, however, has been spent on loan to a series of state and federal drug task forces. Current and former supervisors described him as "outstanding," "hard-working" and a "straight arrow."

But two judges' decisions to dismiss three drug cases Simon worked on have led defense attorneys to raise questions about the officer.

On Aug. 11, William Schuwerk, a Randolph County judge hearing a case in St. Clair County Circuit Court, agreed to dismiss an unlawful drug possession case against Charlotte Shannon, 46, a St. Clair County circuit clerk employee.

The case crumbled after Schuwerk tossed out as evidence a small amount of crack cocaine Simon had seized in a search of a car Shannon had been sitting in.

And on Dec. 12, 2000, U.S. District Court

Please see DETECTIVE, A2

Smiling at the courthouse

St. Clair County employees take training course in good service

By NICKLAUS LOVELADY
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BELLEVILLE — If you've been to the St. Clair County courthouse lately and noticed the employees were unusually nice and courteous, pat yourself and your pocketbook on the back for a job well done.

The county paid \$8,140 to send more than 300 employees to a seminar on how to be better employees and have fun while doing so.

"The people I spoke with said they enjoyed the seminar," said Pam Hogan, executive assistant to St. Clair County Board Chairman John Baricevic.

Hogan said that every so often, the county gives its employees extra training to help them improve the quality of service.

"You learn that when somebody calls and they're upset, you know they aren't upset with you," said Theresa Mitchell, a county employee who took the training.

The seminar was presented through the

Please see SMILING, A2

Coming Tuesday



A YEAR TO REMEMBER, A TITLE TO WIN: Recap the St. Louis Cardinals' year as they head into the playoffs with month-by-month glances and a look at how the pieces combined for a winning season.

Team travels by two to save displaced pets

Noah's Wish couple goes to disaster sites

By JAYNE MATTHEWS
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EDWARDSVILLE — No cruises, no European tours and no lazing in the sun for a pair of Madison County animal lovers.

Amy Maher and her husband, Roger Smith, of Prairi-

etown spend some of their time off working to save animals caught in floods, wildfires and other natural disasters.

The couple are members and regional coordinators of Noah's Wish, a 3-year-old organization whose goal is to save animals large and small during disasters, including terrorist attacks.

"That's our idea of a fun vacation," said Maher, 41, an as-

sistant county prosecutor in the state's attorney's office. Smith, 39, is a county coroner's investigator.

Last weekend, the couple made a 1,000-mile round trip to West Virginia, where they took charge of four homeless dogs and a kitten from severe flooding in the Ohio Valley that resulted from Hurricane Ivan.

Maher also went to Florida in August to help find and care

for animals displaced by Hurricane Charley.

And Smith traveled to California in November to help San Bernardino County deal with more than 1,000 pets and farm animals that became separated from their owners during the wildfires.

Smith ended up supervising a barn at the San Bernardino

Please see TEAM, A2



Amy Maher (with Missy) and Roger Smith (with Chip) rescue pets at disaster sites.

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LOTTERY FOR ILLINOIS

Pick 3-Midday: **0-4-2** Little Lotto: **2-12-20-21-31**
Pick 3-Evening: **5-8-1** Lotto: **5-7-36-40-51-52**
Pick 4-Midday: **6-7-4-4** Jackpot: **\$3 million**
Pick 4-Evening: **2-3-5-6**

POWERBALL: 02-13-29-32-35 Powerball: **04**

FOR MISSOURI

Show Me 5-Midday: **4-5-22-32-34**
Pick 3-Midday: **9-8-9** Show Me 5-Evening: **10-12-16-30-38**
Evening: **0-2-5** Lotto: **8-14-17-20-23-34**
Pick 4-Midday: **8-4-8-3**
Evening: **7-6-6-0**

Jackpot: **\$151.7 million** Power Play: **04**

