



BELLEVILLE NEWS-DEMOCRAT

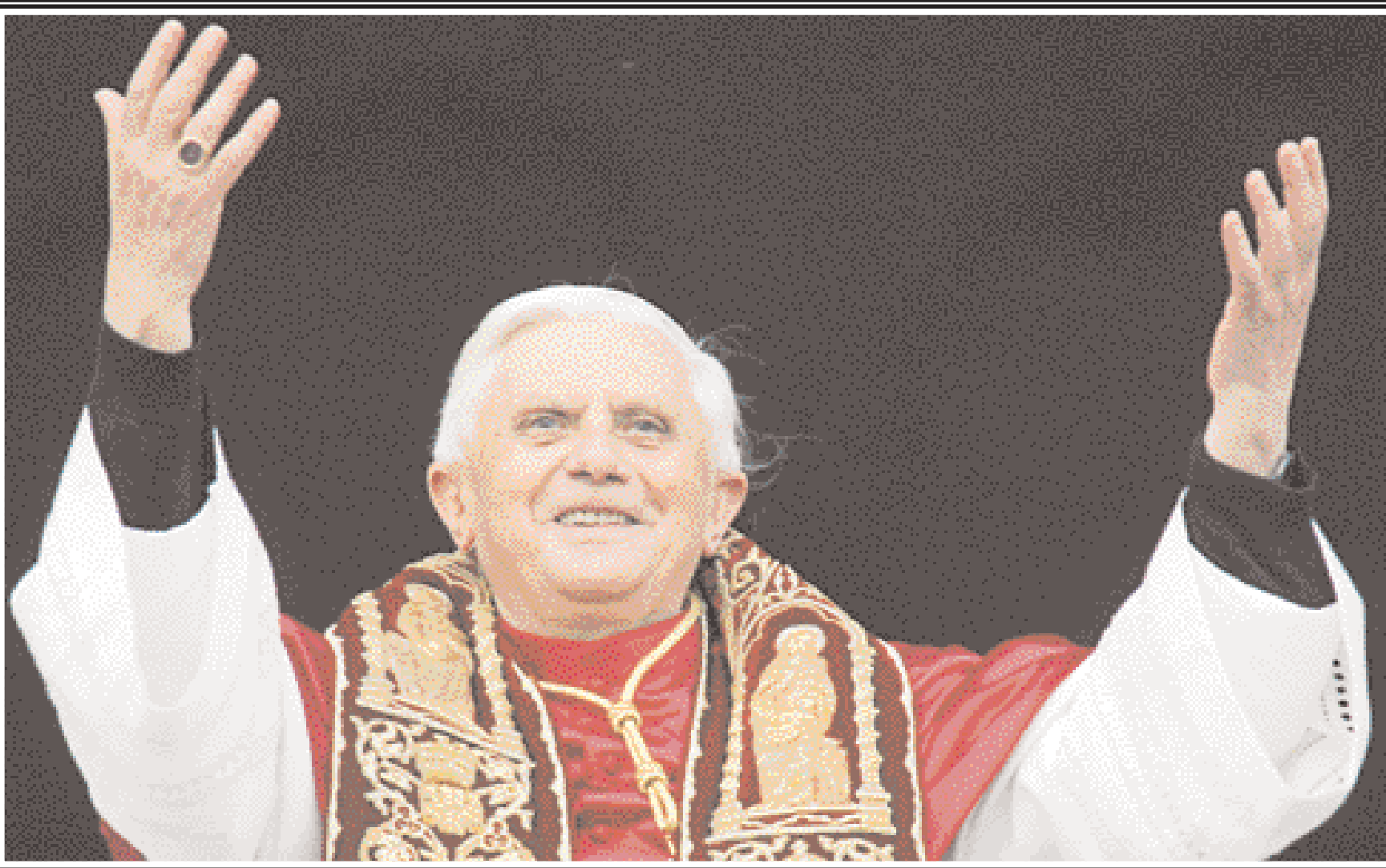
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POPE BENEDICT XVI

'WE HAVE A POPE'



AP

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany, a leading conservative of the Roman Catholic Church, was elected pope Tuesday in the first conclave of the new millennium. He chose the name Benedict XVI.

Ratzinger, the first German pope in centuries, waved to a cheering crowd outside St. Peter's Basilica. In addition to our local coverage below, you can learn more about the new pope and his thoughts on Page A5.

Bishops: Pontiff is engaging, warm

BY PATRICK J. POWERS
News-Democrat

It was more than 22 years ago at the Pontifical North American College in Rome when Belleville Bishop-designate Edward K. Braxton first met Pope Benedict XVI. On Tuesday, Braxton fondly remembered the occasion.

"Though I was well aware of his keen intellect, my first impression was of his warmth, his gentle humility, and his ability to pay close attention to the person who was speaking to him," Braxton said in a statement. "He is, as he said, 'a simple, humble

Please see **BISHOPS, A2**

The Rev. John Myler holds a picture of himself with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, taken 10 years before his election as pope.

Web extra

Read Belleville Bishop-designate Edward K. Braxton's statement and more coverage of the new pope at bellevillenewsdemocrat.com.



ZIA NIZAMI/News-Democrat

Priest had chance to meet new pope

BY JENNIFER A. BOWEN
News-Democrat

Imagine strolling in a garden in Rome, talking to and praying with the man who someday would become pope.

The Rev. John Myler of St. Mary Church in Belleville did those things. Myler met Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany on several occasions while at the Vatican recently, he said.

"He is a gentle, little, white-haired, brilliant scholar and pastor," Myler said. "He's been both a scholar and a pastor, and I think that's important."

Please see **PRIEST, A2**

Parents question school calendar

Districts examine balanced schedule

BY RAMONA CURTIS
News-Democrat

FREEBURG — More than 200 parents and community members filled the Freeburg High School cafeteria Tuesday night to learn about a proposal for an expanded school calendar for schools in Freeburg, Smithton and St. Libory.

Both private and public schools in the three towns have been looking into a balanced calendar, which would call for the school year to begin Aug. 1 and end June 1, with three separate two-week breaks scheduled throughout the year.

The districts are considering the plan to improve academic performance by offering instruction during the two-week breaks to students who have fallen behind.

Smithton Superintendent Ed Settles said the districts have used traditional methods of remediation such as after-school tutoring and summer school. But he calls the mandates of the federal No Child Left Behind Act "a strong concern."

"We can look at other alternatives, but we need to embrace NCLB and how we're being held accountable," he said.

Participants had an array of other concerns, including working families who will need to provide day care during the two-week breaks, the additional costs of the proposal in terms of teacher pay, utilities and materials, the interference of summer jobs for high school students and professional development for teachers, and how traditional family vacations will be affected.

Vanessa Whitfield said that she has a daughter with special needs who attends a Belleville District 118 school. She is concerned that her daughter will be on a different schedule from her other children.

"She won't have anyone to socialize with while the other kids are in school during the summer."

Jeff Chenowith, a day-care provider, said the proposal should require careful consideration.

"You're talking about uprooting whole communities,

Please see **CALENDAR, A2**

Coming Thursday

Former members of the Byrds and Mama's Pride will perform acoustic music this weekend at Paesano's at the Barn in Shiloh. Read about this and other metro-east and St. Louis Best Bets this weekend in our Lifestyle section.

Jury awards \$43.7 million to crash victim's family in Ford suit

Man in fiery wreck in Madison County

BY BRIAN BRUEGGEMANN
News-Democrat

EDWARDSVILLE — A Madison County jury awarded \$43.7 million on Tuesday night to the family of a man who died

in a fiery car wreck and his disfigured widow.

The family of John and Dora Jablonski of Florissant, Mo., had asked for a multimillion judgment against Ford Motor Co., manufacturer of the couple's

1993 Lincoln Town Car, which caught fire when it was hit from behind by a vehicle going about 65 mph in July 2003 on Interstate 270 near Granite City.

The family's attorney, Brad Lakin, told jurors during his closing argument that the design of the car, with its fuel tank

behind the rear axle, caused the fire.

The jury awarded the family \$15 million in punitive damages, \$23.1 million for Dora Jablonski's claim and \$5.67 million for John Jablonski's estate.

Lakin had asked the jury to award Dora Jablonski \$32.8 mil-

lion in compensatory damages and pain and suffering, and \$7.6 million to the Jablonski family for John Jablonski's death.

He also had asked the jury to award punitive damages but did

Please see **FORD, A2**

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LOTTERY FOR ILLINOIS

Pick 3-Midday: **4-1-5** Pick 4-Evening: **5-1-9-7**
Pick 3-Evening: **0-2-6** Little Lotto: **02-15-21-32-36**
Pick 4-Midday: **3-3-3-5** Jackpot: **\$36 million**

MEGA MILLIONS Game: **5-6-14-42-47**

Mega Ball: **3**

Jackpot: **\$168 million**

FOR MISSOURI

Pick 3-Midday: **4-2-2**; Evening: **3-8-9**
Pick 4-Midday: **6-4-9-3**; Evening: **2-0-6-0**
Show Me 5-Midday: **23-24-26-34-42**
Show Me 5-Evening: **11-12-30-35-39**



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