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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019

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#TogetherDecatur

UNDERWOOD VISITS DECATUR



ABOVE: MacArthur High School head basketball coach Ron Ingram, left, talks with Illinois basketball coach Brad Underwood Thursday at the Decatur Conference Center and Hotel during a special edition of "SportTalk" on WSOY, hosted by the Herald & Review's Tim Cain and retired Executive Sports Editor Mark Tupper. For all the Herald & Review's coverage of Illinois sports, go to herald-review.com/illini.

RIGHT: Illinois basketball head coach Brad Underwood speaks with Mark Tupper on Thursday. **CLAY JACKSON PHOTOS, HERALD & REVIEW**



U.S. hails Turkish cease-fire in Syria

ROBERT BURNS AND ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — The U.S. and Turkey agreed Thursday to a cease-fire in the Turks' deadly attacks on Kurdish fighters in northern Syria, requiring the Kurds to vacate the area in an arrangement that largely solidifies Turkey's position and aims in the weeklong conflict. The deal includes a conditional halt to American economic sanctions. **Pence**



After negotiations with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence hailed the five-day cease-fire as the way to end the bloodshed caused by Turkey's invasion. He remained silent on whether it amounted to a second abandonment of America's former Kurdish allies in the fight against the Islamic State group.

Turkish troops and Turkish-backed Syrian fighters launched their offensive against

Please see **SYRIA**, Page A2

Trump resort picked to host next G-7

KEVIN FREKING AND BERNARD CONDON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's suggestion that his Miami golf resort host next year's Group of Seven summit became a reality Thursday, sparking an outcry from critics who called it the most blatant example yet of him using the power of his office to boost his business empire. **Mulvaney**



"There are folks who will never get over the fact that it's a Trump property, but we're still going to go there," acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney said in announcing Trump National Doral as host. "It's not the only place. It's the best place."

Mulvaney said the Doral was picked for its location and amenities, and the president will not profit because the resort will be booked "at cost." But the

Please see **SUMMIT**, Page A2

DECATUR SCHOOLS

Teaching assistants' union eyes strike

Plan set for Oct. 29 if deal not reached

KENNEDY NOLEN
kennedy.nolen@lee.net

DECATUR — The union that represents Decatur teaching assistants plans to strike later this month if it can't come to a tentative agreement with school district administration in negotiations that are set to continue next week, officials said.

The Decatur Federation of Teaching Assistants said Thursday that it would strike Oct. 29 if the sides can't reach a deal. The union represents about 275

employees who include hearing interpreters, licensed practical nurses, hearing-vision technician, teaching assistants and employees working with students in the Macon-Piatt Special Education District.



Busboom

The two sides have been in talks since April, and the union has been working under a contract extension since August. They have met three times with a federal mediator, most recently on Tuesday evening, and are scheduled for another

mediation session Oct. 23. "It is with heavy heart that we do this," union president Paula Busboom said in a statement released Thursday morning. "Never in my many years as president of this union did I think we would be setting a strike date. But we cannot allow health care to be priced out of the reach of our members. The Board of Education needs to rethink their proposals."

In a statement released Thursday afternoon, district spokeswoman Maria Robertson said the school board values all staff members.

"We strive to provide a com-

petitive salary and benefits package for our employees while being fiscally responsible and accountable to the Decatur community that we serve," she said.

"Within the last two years we have successfully negotiated union contracts with the Decatur Education Association (teachers), two SEIU-B (maintenance staff) contracts, SEIU-C (security staff), and DESPA

Please see **STRIKE**, Page A2

■ **MORE ONLINE:** Read both sides' proposals for yourself with this story at herald-review.com



■ **Movies in a Minute:** 'Maleficent: Mistress of Evil' & 'Zombieland: Double Tap'
■ **Inside Pitch:** The biggest questions that await the Cardinals this offseason

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