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Daily Eastern News: August 25, 2005

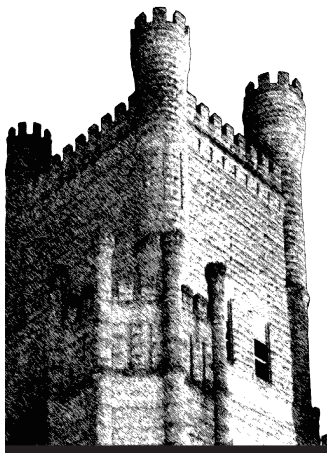
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"Tell the truth and don't be afraid."

SPORTS ♦ Panther kicker pulls hammy: page 12

THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

VOLUME 90, ISSUE 05

thedailyeasternnews.com

90th Anniversary

Eastern Illinois University, Charleston

THURSDAY
AUGUST
25
2005

\$3.00! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

Gas prices still climbing

City and students deal with spending more at the pump

By ERIN MILLER
CITY EDITOR

The city of Charleston is spending more money on rising gas prices to keep vehicles running for community residents.

The Charleston Police and Public Works departments use the most gas in the city because their vehicles run all day long, said City Manager Scott Smith.

"Americans complain too much; it's a discount for me."

CAROLINE POWELL,
BIOLOGY GRADUATE
STUDENT

Not only are motorists making changes in their budget due to gas prices, but local gas stations are also experiencing problems.

The Citgo on Route 16 outside Mattoon has had more drive-offs than in the past, said Carry Dunkley, assistant manager.

To prevent drive-offs, Citgo has enhanced its camera system and one person stays behind the register at all times, Dunkley said.

Of course, students have limited money and filling their car becomes a challenge.

Nora-Lisa Malloy, a senior English major, jokes about selling her car because gas prices are so high.

It takes Caroline Powell, a biology graduate student, approximately \$30 to fill her car's gas tank, but the

"Right now we are doing alright as far as the budget goes," said Deputy Chief Dave Chambers. "It hasn't hit us too bad just yet."

Typically the Charleston Police Department has anywhere from three to seven patrol cars out on the streets in a day, Chambers said.

Smith could not be reached for exact numbers on how much gas prices are affecting the city's budget.



DANIEL WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Pierre Walters, sophomore sociology major, fills his gas tank at Lambo's Amoco along Lincoln Avenue Tuesday. Walters said he's trying to drive his car as little as possible because of the price in gas.

England native usually pays \$75 for gas in Europe.

"Americans complain too much," Powell said. "It's a discount for me."

The police department plans to manage things as they have done in the past and take things day by day, Chambers said.

Executive board controlled by one party

Student Interaction Party dominates Student Senate, others looking to work together

By SARAH WHITNEY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT EDITOR

Jeff Collier takes his seat on Student Senate this fall, knowing he sits in the minority.

Collier is one of several senate members who are not affiliated with the Student Interaction Party, which swept the positions of Student Government's executive board last spring.

Collier ran for student body president last year for the United Campus Reform Party. His platform included issues such as meal-plan reform and forming a community service committee.

Despite his defeat, he feels confident he will be able to accomplish his campaign goals.

"Every campaign promise that I made running as student body president, I don't need to be president to get accomplished."

JEFF COLLIER, STUDENT SENATE MEMBER



"Every campaign promise that I made running as student body president, I don't need to be president to get that accomplished," he said. "I do feel confident that Mr. Berger will assist me in doing so, especially since the students do want a kind of meal-plan reform."

Senate member Mark Bates didn't run for office last spring and has no past affiliation with any of the campus parties.

"Their platform wasn't anything earth

shattering either way," he said about Student Interaction Party.

As long as the executive board members are qualified and representing the students, Bates said, he doesn't think the entire board being from the same party matters.

"I feel that it's not necessarily the best thing all the time," said Andrew Gahan, who ran for student body president last spring under the United Campus Party. Gahan also said it benefits Student Government since the executive board members all have the same goals and priorities.

Gahan chose not to be involved in the senate this semester so he could focus on his

\$3 million spent on renovations

Three residence halls receive improvements over summer break

By Ashley Rueff
Staff Reporter

Fresh paint, new carpeting and dining center upgrades are a few changes residence halls underwent during the summer.

Housing and Dining Services spent approximately \$3 million on improvements to Carman, Taylor, Thomas, Pemberton and Weller halls and to Greek Court, said Mark Hudson, director of housing and dining.

"It's all about student satisfaction," Hudson said. "We want to make sure students are getting what they desire in their living environment."

For the last three years, approximately 3 percent of students' room and board fees have been put toward campus renovations.

"We hope to have the same plan for the next three years so we can keep the dollars up to do all the changes we need to do," Hudson said.

After the improvements are complete, room and board rates will only have to be adjusted to meet inflation, which should be a nice change for students, he said.

Changes made each year on campus are greatly influenced by the resident satisfaction surveys, Hudson said.

The surveys have also reflected student satisfaction after past improvements have been completed.

Ben Hart, a senior English major and a resident assistant in Thomas Hall for three years, is pleased with the changes made to the Thomas Dining Center.

Improvements made during the summer included a new dish machine and the expansion of the serving area.

"It has more of a restaurant feel and is more comfortable," Hart said. "The physical changes do set Thomas apart."

Vincent Shamhart, a sophomore secondary education mathematics major, was happy to see the renovations on five floors of Taylor Hall's north wing when he arrived at school.

"I thought it looked pretty bad last year," Shamhart said. "I think changes do need to be made so everyone has a nice living environment."

In Taylor Hall, furniture was replaced with new stackable furniture, carpet was laid, walls were painted, lights were moved and doors were replaced.

Shamhart preferred the old furniture because he could change his bed into a couch and it didn't take up as much room. However, he does think the new furniture looks a lot better.

"It is cool if you want to have the stackable stuff," he said.

"With a campus this large there is a constant need for

Summer residence hall improvements

- ♦ **Cost:** \$3 million
- ♦ **Thomas Hall:** improved dining center, new dish machine
- ♦ **Taylor Hall:** renovations on five floors, including new stackable furniture
- ♦ **Carman Hall North:** new sprinkler system

FIVE-DAY OUTLOOK

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Sunny

The Daily EASTERN NEWS

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FIND A MISTAKE?

Let us know if you find a factual error in The DEN so we can provide the correct information to other readers. Contact the editor at 581-2812 or DENEic@gmail.com.

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CAMPUS BRIEFS



DANIEL WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Graduate assistant English majors Lisa Walker, left, and Lisa Chamberlin are two Writing Center workers. The Writing Center is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday.

Writing Center opens to offer students assistance

The Writing Center opened for the fall semester Wednesday.

The center is staffed by trained graduate assistants who help students with writing-related problems.

Now that it is open for the semester, the center will have regular hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fridays.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT
LOOKING FOR MENTORS

The Office of Faculty Development is seeking associate and full professors to be

mentors for junior faculty.

Assistant professors can also be mentors for faculty members who are working on their doctoral or terminal degrees.

A mentoring seminar will be held Friday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Arcola-Tuscola Room in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union.

WORKSHOP TO HELP
STUDENTS BUILD RESUMES

Students who want to improve their career chances have the opportunity to work on their resume.

Students of all majors can attend a "Rev Up Your Resume" session from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. today.

Resumes can be built from scratch or revised at the event.

CONVOCATION CEREMONY
SIGN-UP DEADLINE TODAY

Faculty who wish to participate in the processional at the annual Convocation Ceremony must register by today.

The Web site to register is www.eiu.edu/~orient/convocation/application1.php.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY NEWS

MOST WASHINGTON STATE U.
RISKS ALCOHOL-RELATED

BY ALY VAN DEUSEN
DAILY EVERGREEN (WASHINGTON STATE U.)

PULLMAN, Wash. – Basic safety at Washington State University includes always being aware of surroundings, never leaving possessions unattended and walking home in groups at night.

Safety risks and sexual assaults at WSU increase during the months of September and October, Women's Transit Coordinator Kim Barrett said.

"This is when people are just coming back to school, partying a lot and meeting a lot of new people," Barrett said.

The first months of school are referred to as 'the red weeks' because of the flux in unsafe behavior, she said.

There are more incidents of date rape at WSU than rape by someone unknown to the victim, Barrett said. Women assume it is safe to walk by

themselves at night, or have an acquaintance walk them home from parties, she said.

Alcohol can also impair the judgment of students who would otherwise make safe decisions, Barrett said.

Many WSU crimes are alcohol related, WSU Police Chief Steve Hansen said. More than a thousand students received referrals for alcohol in 2004, according to the WSU police Web site.

"Alcohol is a factor in almost everything we deal with," West said.

GAS PRICES FRUSTRATE
U. MISSISSIPPI RESIDENTS

BY ELISE DOSTER
DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN (U. MISSISSIPPI)

OXFORD, Miss. – As the price for a gallon of gas continues to rise, local residents and gas station owners alike are feeling substantial pains at the pump.

With gas prices peaking at \$2.79 a gal-

lon in some areas of Oxford, many residents are changing their lifestyles to protect their finances.

Some area gas stations are losing much of their profit that would normally come from gas sales as a result.

"Everyone is complaining about the price of gas. People are buying much less. Instead of spending the usual \$30 to \$40, I see more people putting \$15 in their tanks, a little here, a little there," said Charles Mullin, manager of the Double Quick station located on Jackson Avenue.

Using less money to fill up their tank is one way that many in town are trying to solve their fueling issues. Others, like Sally Swearngen of Carthage, are trying a more analytical approach, comparing the prices at numerous stations in Oxford in an attempt to get the best deal.

"I don't just drive anywhere and everywhere now. I think it through before I just take off," she said.

ONLINE POLL

This week we ask our readers what is the worst part about the first week of school.

- A) The moving in process
B) Stepping foot in the classroom again
C) Dealing with all the drunk people
D) Nothing, the first week of school is the easiest

VOTE @
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EASTERNNEWS.COM



EARLY
HEADLINES

Listen to "Wake Up Live" with Rob and Jenn Monday through Friday for morning headlines on 88.9 or at weihitmix.net

POLICE
BLOTTER

On Aug. 21, Rashida Gordon, 21, Olympia Fields, was arrested for driving under the influence at 12:37 a.m. at the corner of Monroe Avenue and Third Street.

WTF?

Woman offended by doc's obesity advice

ROCHESTER, N.H. (AP) – As doctors warn more patients they should lose weight, the advice has backfired on one doctor with a woman filing a complaint with the state saying he was hurtful, not helpful.

Dr. Terry Bennett says he tells obese patients their weight is bad for their health and their love lives, but the lecture drove one patient to complain to the state.

"I told a fat woman she was obese," Bennett says. "I tried to get her attention."

E.L. Krackers, Stu's to open under new management

By ERIN MILLER
CITY EDITOR

Renovations to make E.L. Krackers and Stu's Surf Side have begun and the new owners hope everything will be open by late fall.

They plan to completely remodel Stu's to make it a more appropriate atmosphere for Charleston residents in addition to students, said new owner Michael Corray.

"We just saw this as a great opportunity for us and the community," Corray said.

Stu's does not have a new name yet, but it will still have a separate name and entrance from the restaurant section.

The restaurant will open Oct. 1 and the owners hope the bar will be open before students leave for winter break.

Corray, who owns Petropics, teamed up with the owner of Boxa, Michael Boksa to revamp the building at 1405 Fourth St.

"The building was such a key cornerstone to the local and Eastern atmosphere," Corray said. "We both saw a chance to jump in with our business knowledge and turn it around."

Corray and Boksa plan to move the bar to the center and have seating around the edge.

"We are moving away from the college bar with a huge dance floor," Corray said. "We are trying to give the

students a place to hang out in a much different atmosphere than Charleston offers."

They also plan to put pool tables and couches in the banquet room on the second floor, which will overlook the bar.

Students are not really worried about the changes about to take place.

"A college bar is a college bar," said Nick Gaona, a senior career and technical education major.

Clayton Heitz, a junior special education major said he will consider going if the new Stu's is a "chill bar."

"I don't want it to be a typical club bar," Heitz said.

The restaurant formerly known as E.L. Krackers will be renamed Michael Domani's.

Some of the changes to the restaurant will be cosmetic and next week the blue exterior of the building

will be painted to an earth tone color.

Operational and layout changes will also be made to the restaurant.



DANNY WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Renovations have begun for the new restaurant Michael Domani's, formerly known as E.L. Krackers. Some of the changes include painting the outside of the building an earth tone color, changing the layout of the building and offering more of a variety of food for their menu.

"We are trying to liven up the restaurant and make it faster-paced," Corray said.

The menu will also be changed to offer a variety of food that focuses on pasta and steak.

Although the food might be more high-end dining, the prices will still appeal to students.

Two Eastern university police promoted to lieutenant

By DAVID THILL
SENIOR REPORTER

Eastern's University Police Department has recently filled two administrative positions that had been vacant since spring of 2002 and late fall of 2004, respectively.

Officers Harold Harris and Phil Lang have been promoted to shift lieutenants with Harris covering third shift and Lang covering second shift.

The positions had been open due to retirement and the department felt it was time to fill the top positions, Chief of Police Adam Due said.

The positions as shift lieutenants include the tasks of issuing parking citations, opening and closing buildings, backing up Charleston officers, training officers, scheduling and "making sure things are getting done right," Harris said.

Harris graduated from Eastern in 1989 with a degree in sociology and went straight to work for the department. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in science.

"I came in straight out of high school," Harris said. "It's a great institution, and I decided to stick around (after graduation)."

"I'm looking forward to the challenge and serving the campus community. I'm thrilled about the decision."

The promotions were based on several different categories. Test scores, willingness to do the job and amount of effort were all taken into account, Due said.

"Both (Lang and Harris) are very friendly," Due said. "They have good character and high standards. They know their jobs, they know the campus. Both work well with the staff. We just felt they were the best candidates for the job," he said.

Harris cites his frequent interaction with students as beneficial to his work with the department.

"I think my educational background and my willingness helped me," Harris said. "I work a lot with students, and being a student myself, I think I am in tune with the students' needs."

Harris said, without looking at the data, he thinks crime on campus is going down.

"Kids are pretty busy with school these days," he said. "I think it's the maturity level. It seems like they don't party as much."

Lang also began with the department in 1989 and had been working as a night shift sergeant.

Both officers had previously been assigned to the East Central Illinois Task Force and department investigations. Both are currently involved with the Combined Agency Response Team.

Lieutenant Lang is on vacation until next week and could not be reached for comment.

Marketing committee looks to help direct new students

By CRYSTAL REED
STAFF REPORTER

The University Marketing Committee is taking a step to make it easier for visitors and new students to find their way around campus.

The signs are being placed because of concerns the University Marketing Committee has about the lack of signs on campus to direct visitors and new students to buildings, Jill Nilsen, vice president of external relations, said.

"It's been something talked about in the university master plan," she said. "It needs resources to come to action, but we're taking one step forward now in the process."

The plan for new signs was approved by the President's Council and will continue to develop as resources become available, Nilsen said.

Signs will be placed in front of buildings and near sidewalks and roads.

"Facilities Planning and


Management has identified appropriate locations for signs and devised designs that are clear, durable and able to be produced on campus," Nilsen said.

The cost of the signs will vary depending on the design and size chosen for the particular location, she said.

"New signage could be included with the costs of major building projects, such as Fine Arts and Blair Hall," said Gary Reed, director of facilities planning and management. "Upgrades to other signs on campus will take place when opportunities arise and funds become available."

"The signs are a campus-standard design, which was recently approved by the administration," he said. "This signage standard meets the intent of the campus' master plan for finding and building identification."

"I think the signage on campus is old and inconsistent," Nilsen said. "Having signs all over campus will contribute to making it a more friendly campus."



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Tough Crowd w/ Colin Quinn
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SHOWTIMES FOR AUG 22-25
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY (PG) DAILY 6:45
SKY HIGH (R) DAILY 7:00

SHOWPLACE 10
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NOW WITH STADIUM SEATING
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RED EYE (PG13) 5:00 7:45 9:50
VALIANT (G) 3:40 6:15 8:30
40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN (R) 3:50 7:20 10:00
SUPERCROSS (PG13) 4:40 6:50 9:00
DUECE BIGALOW 2 (R) 5:45 8:00 10:15
FOUR BROTHERS (R) 4:30 7:10 9:40
SKELETON KEY (PG13) 4:10 6:40 9:15
DUKES OF HAZZARD (PG13) 4:20 7:00 9:30
MARCH OF THE PENGUINS (G) 4:00 6:30 8:45
WEDDING CRASHERS (R) 4:50 7:30 10:10

“Tell the truth and don’t be afraid.”

OPINION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2005

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COMMENTARY



NICOLE MILSTEAD
ACTIVITIES EDITOR

UB’S ‘BRAND NEW BAG’ DOESN’T HOLD A GEM

After the entire Ciara disaster last year, I had my fingers crossed that the University Board would be able to dribble the ball a few times and rebound, but it turns out the ball is flat.

I was thinking that it’d be nice to bring in a little comedy or a music genre that we, as students, haven’t been able to watch yet, such as Emo. However, UB was not on that page or in the same library for that matter.

But no, their brilliant idea was, ‘hey, James Brown!’ I mean, come on, James Brown! My parents don’t even want to see this guy. And from word on campus, very few parents do.

How can he possibly appeal to our generation? Really, how many die hard James Brown fans are there on campus? Do students really rush up to Champaign every time the guy has a concert?

I personally thought Jackie Chan killed him off. I only know of one of his songs and up until this week, I thought it was the “grandfather” of soul, not “godfather.” Is this guy a one hit wonder or does he have lots of songs that they play at the Panther Paw every Friday?

But, more importantly, will he have the stamina at such an old age to perform a whole concert, or will he be 1, 2 steppin’ it out of here after three or four songs again?

“Of all the things UB could have booked, whose head did James Brown pop into? Students fill out a survey ranking our top 10 choices, and James Brown was not even an option on that list.”

Of all the things UB could have booked, whose head did James Brown pop into? Students fill out a survey ranking our top 10 choices, and James Brown was not even an option on that list.

If I were to pick an act for parent’s weekend it would not be a 72-year-old man in a purple leisure suit.

I would choose, perhaps, something like Alkaline Trio, Death Cab or maybe any artist who is not old enough to collect social security. One more request would be that the group not be a part of the country genre.

Also, comedy would be a nice change we haven’t had in a couple of years. Maybe, for a comedic performance, Dane Cook would be a good choice; at least the guy is animated and full of life and not medicated to stay alive.

Milstead, a sophomore journalism major, can be reached at DENactivities@gmail.com.

EDITORIAL

HERE FOR NOW



TIM NOWAK
WOMEN’S SOCCER COACH
STARTING FIRST SEMESTER



LORI BENNETT
VOLLEYBALL COACH
STARTING FIRST SEMESTER



JOHN BLACKBURN
TENNIS COACH
STARTING FIRST SEMESTER



MIKE MILLER
MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH
STARTING FIRST SEMESTER



GEOFF MASANET
CROSS COUNTRY COACH
STARTING THIRD SEMESTER



KIM SCHUETTE
SOFTBALL COACH
STARTING FIRST SEMESTER



BRADY SALLEE
WOMEN’S BASKETBALL COACH
STARTING THIRD SEMESTER

Connecting Eastern’s coaching changes

In the last two years, seven coaching changes occurred in Eastern’s athletic department. Five of those changes have come since the end of winter sports in March.

Of the 16 head coaching positions at the Eastern, only eight of them have coached the Panthers for more than one season — and this shouldn’t come as a surprise.

Because of the size of Eastern and the conference they are a part of, the Ohio Valley Conference, our school should be considered a low-major Division I school where the turnover rate will be high.

While some of the changes have been due to the decisions of Director of Athletics Richard McDuffie, other coaching changes are just bound to happen anyway.

At a low-major school, most of the coaches are looking to move up in the college and possibly pro ranks. Coaches like Brenda Winkeler, who led Eastern volleyball for five years, left the program after accepting a job offer from Southern Illinois-Carbondale, where she will coach in the more competitive Missouri Valley Conference.

At Eastern, football in particular is a stepping stone for coaches to move onto bigger, better paying jobs. Offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Jon Carr left Eastern to coach receivers at Toledo, who won the Mid-American Conference last season, and defensive line coach Derrick Jackson left in the offseason to coach the same position at Northern Illinois.

Brian Holzgrafe resigned from tennis at the end of last season because the athletic department couldn’t provide him with recruiting tools like they do for other sports.

These smaller sports like tennis, swimming and wrestling don’t get the attention that other sports do, thus making it harder to recruit.

On the other hand, there were coaches like Rick Samuels (Men’s Basketball) whose contract was not renewed or Lloydene Searle’s (Softball), who resigned after she was given what she called, “ultimatums.”

Samuels was at Eastern 25 years and had a .500 record in his tenure. Searle spent eight seasons in Charleston with a losing record.

Low-major schools shouldn’t typically have coaches with long tenures because if a coach is successful enough, the coach is bound to get better offers, such as Winkeler did.

But just because a coach has a long tenure doesn’t mean he’s not successful. Eastern head football coach Bob Spoo, for example, has had conference and national coach-of-the year recognition.

No matter what the case, high turnover rates in coaching are not only healthy, but expected at a school like Eastern.

ANSWERS:

Who replaced who: Tim Nowak and Steve Ballard (women’s soccer), Lori Bennett and Brenda Winkeler (volleyball), John Blackburn and Brian Holzgrafe (tennis), Mike Miller and Rick Samuels (men’s basketball), Geoff Masanet and John McInerney (cross country), Kim Schuette and Lloydene Searle (softball), Brady Sallee and Linda Wunder (women’s basketball).

NO LONGER HERE



JOHN MCINERNEY
LEFT CROSS COUNTRY FOR PERSONAL REASONS



RICK SAMUELS
MEN’S BASKETBALL
CONTRACT NOT RENEWED



STEVE BALLARD
LEFT WOMEN’S SOCCER FOR A DIFFERENT SCHOOL



LLOYDENE SEARLE
RESIGNED FROM SOFTBALL AFTER LAST SEASON



LINDA WUNDER
WOMEN’S SOCCER
CONTRACT NOT RENEWED



BRENDA WINKELER
LEFT FOR VOLLEYBALL AT A DIFFERENT SCHOOL



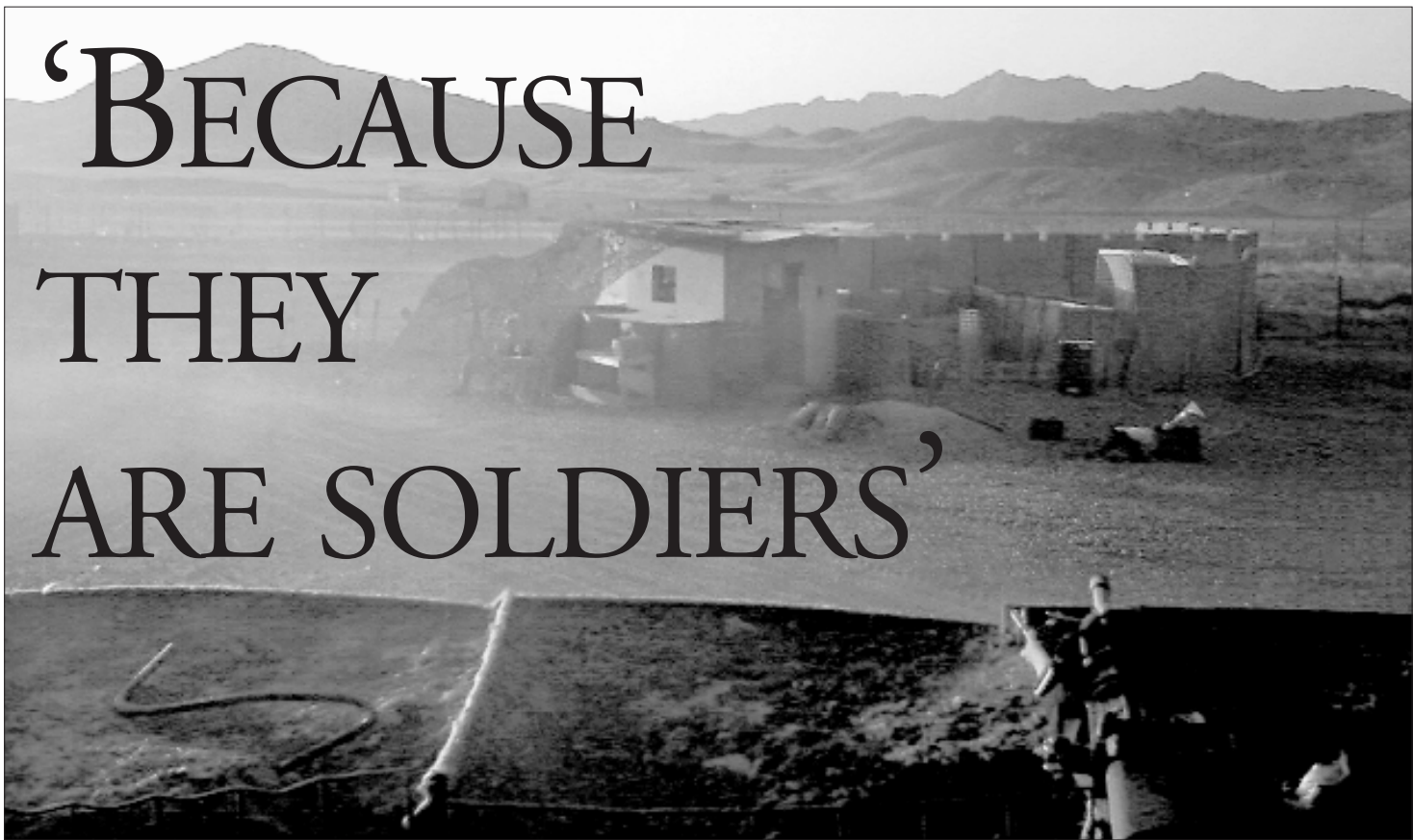
BRIAN HOLZGRAFE
DECIDED NOT TO COME BACK TO COACH TENNIS

The editorial is the majority opinion of The Daily Eastern News editorial board.



LETTER FROM IRAQ

Editors note: This letter was submitted with photographs to *The Daily Eastern News* from Spc. David Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald is a 2003 Eastern graduate with a degree in industrial technology.



Dear EIU students,

As an alumnus of Eastern and a former member of the broadcasting team, I feel somewhat obligated to provide information to the university that could have some bearing on the student body's opinion on global issues. My name is Spc. David Fitzgerald of the 864th Engineering Battalion, C Company based out of Ft. Richardson, Alaska. I am currently deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. I am one of many soldiers of the U.S. Army on deployment who endure hardships every day to provide some kind of relief to innocent and helpless people. I can tell you that this is a truly difficult and high stress occupation. My purpose in writing to the students at EIU is to provide an understanding of what the army is here for and why we as soldiers are here. Secondly, this is a plea for support.

C co 864th is a heavy combat support unit. This means that we go to dangerous areas in the world, and provide support for our combat soldiers and the local region's people through building and development. My unit's mission in Afghanistan is to build a road about 80 miles long between the cities of Kandahar and Tarin Kaot. This will improve transportation through this region significantly. The existing

road before construction was nothing more than tire tracks over a goat trail where trucks would occasionally attempt to navigate almost impossible terrain to ship supplies. Now that the mission is almost complete, the trip between these two cities has reduced from a 12-hour trip only manageable by humvee to a three-hour trip easily commutable by bus to big rig. Sometimes the troops feel like this is a great accomplishment, especially because we are working in a region with a high Taliban threat. Despite enemy contact causing wounded engineers and dead soldiers, we continue to perform our tasks efficiently so we can achieve our goal to finish construction on time. The Taliban have not lightened their attack even though this road benefits the country on a whole and even in some way benefits the Taliban themselves.

Soldiers carry on and endure because they are soldiers. They are soldiers of the greatest nation on Earth. They made a choice to enlist for their own reasons; whether it was for financial or educational reasons, to establish security and safety for their families, or simply out of a strong sense of patriotism. Ultimately, every soldier is a soldier because they recognize the

freedoms they have, and feel obligated to in some way return the favor. The biggest hardship that deployed soldiers endure is knowing that the country that they work and fight to defend, doesn't support them.

The troops out here do their jobs without question or hesitation, yet the low morale weakens them. Most soldiers occasionally hear reassuring words in letters or phone calls from their families at home. What is increasingly disheartening is that the general consensus of Americans in the states is less than supportive. Word of the media reporting the negative responses to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq has reached our ears. When soldiers hear Americans bad-mouthing our cause and purpose for occupying this area, it makes them feel as if the soldiers we have lost have died in vain, and that all of the work they are doing out here is for nothing. Our only reconciliation comes from our own hearts and minds.

Right now, my wife is just about ready to have my second child. I will miss that birth. My daughter is only two and a half years old. I have missed more than half of her life. I have missed almost half of my marriage. If my sacrifices are in vain, then what kind of father or

husband does that make me? I am not alone out here. Many of my fellow soldiers go through the same thing. Nevertheless, we strive to make our families and our country proud of us, and to give them a reason to be proud to be an American.

I hope that by informing the students that soldiers at war are not necessarily ironclad in their morale, that this could make some kind of difference, however small. There are a lot of soldiers without support from their families at home. They receive no mail while others open packages from wives and husbands like it is Christmas. I hope that they can also get some kind of gratification for their sacrifices. The Americans back home are as much in this as we are, because it is through their support that we maintain resilience. There is an excellent organization called Any Soldier that can be found at anysoldier.com. This organization reaches out to the public to offer soldiers in need of a helping hand. My unit's address is listed below, and can be used to provide specific support to them. This letter is a plea for support, and as an alumnus of EIU, I know the warmth and compassion that the student body is capable of having. Thank you for your support.

SPC. DAVID FITZGERALD,
2003 EASTERN GRADUATE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *The Daily Eastern News* accepts letters to the editor addressing local, state, national and international issues. They should be **less than 250 words** and include the authors' name, telephone number and address. Students should indicate their year in school and major. Faculty, administration and staff should indicate their position and department. Letters whose authors cannot be verified will not be printed. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. Letters can be sent to *The Daily Eastern News* at **1811 Buzzard Hall**, Charleston IL 61920; faxed to 217-581-2923; or e-mailed to **DENeic@gmail.com**.



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Student Government parties fade after election

By SARAH WHITNEY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT EDITOR

Students who didn't really understand the differences between the parties in last year's Student Government elections shouldn't be concerned because parties don't exist after the election.

Student Government organizes into parties for elections to group students under a main theme and to share votes, said Student Body President Ryan Berger.

"I would say that they play no role (after the election)," he said. "Just because somebody ran with me doesn't mean that they're going to agree with me and pass what I want."

If the parties did play a major role the rest of the year, they would just cause conflict, he said.

Senate member Jeff Collier, who ran for student body president under the Campus Reform Party, said he doesn't really know what the differences were between the parties.

Student Government Parties In Spring Elections:

- ◆ Student Interaction Party: dominated elections, winning executive board seats
- ◆ Campus Orientation Party: Ran on platform of helping students understand government
- ◆ Campus Reform Party: Ran on platform of meal-plan reform, community service
- ◆ United Campus Party: Ran on platform of improving communications between government and students, restructuring Student Government

"I think that the party differences are who you think you can work with the best if elect-

ed, not an ideological thing," he said. "That was the purpose of the parties."

"I think after elections the parties kind of dissolve, and it becomes one working group," said Andrew Gahan, who ran for student body president on the United Campus Party ballot.

In fact, student government members don't have to organize into a party to run for office if they don't want to, but Berger said it helps to win votes.

"I may personally be able to get 200 people to vote for me, but I will not win an election by getting that many people to vote," Berger said.

By running under a party name, candidates combine votes. So those 200 people Berger used in his example will probably vote for his executive vice president candidate and vice versa, he said.

"It's become one of those things, that if you don't do it this way, you're not as likely to win," Berger said.

"I think after elections the parties kind of dissolve, and it becomes one working group."

ANDREW GAHAN, UNITED CAMPUS PARTY CANDIDATE

Senate member Mark Bates said parties may play a part throughout the year, but he hasn't seen it.

"Could it come down to appointments?" he asked. "Is Adam (Howell, speaker of Student Senate) only going to appoint people he likes for positions? Yeah it could. But will it? No."

"The only purpose of these political parties was the election," Bates said. "When it comes to Student Government, no more parties exist in my book."

Geography professor plants more than 7,000 trees to improve water supply

By CINDY TANNEY
ADMINISTRATION EDITOR

Vince Gutowski values soil and water.

The Eastern professor of geography planted more than 7,000 trees in his 16-acre backyard to reduce soil erosion. He has also spent almost 10 years working with the Embarras River Management Association to protect the supply and quality of Embarras River water.

"What affects the soil affects the water," he said.

Gutowski has acted as a liaison for Eastern and the association for several years, said John Stimac, geology and geography chair.

Students have conducted research on the Embarras River and have participated in hands-on conservation work, better known as Clean-up Day,

"What affects the soil affects the water."

VINCE GUTOWSKI, GEOGRAPHY PROFESSOR

Gutowski said.

"The beautiful thing about it is that he does involve students at all levels," Stimac said.

One major concern in his work with the association is the impact of fertilizer and other chemicals used on farmland which drain into creeks and tributaries of the Embarras River.

Gutowski and ERMA members encourage landowners to join the conservation effort.

"Farmers are pretty good conservationists," he said. "I give farmers a lot of credit since their livelihood is dependent upon the land."

Gutowski added, farmers can terrace the land to slow down the water

runoff.

He estimated 75 percent of Illinois land was used for farming.

About one half of the Embarras River leads into Lake Charleston, which supplies the city's water, he said.

The Embarras River stretches from the University of Illinois for more than 190 miles into the Wabash River in Lawrence County.

Several Eastern students involved with ERMA have advanced in the field of biology and conservation, Gutowski said.

Dan Osterman, who earned a master's degree in environmental biology, was eventually hired as a full-time coordinator for ERMA, he said.

Amtrak hits new record

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Each of the four state-funded Amtrak routes to and from Chicago served a record number of riders during Illinois' most recent fiscal year, transportation officials announced Wednesday.

Amtrak's Chicago-St. Louis, Chicago-Carbondale, Chicago-Quincy and Chicago-Milwaukee routes each posted sharp ridership growth for fiscal year 2005.

Amtrak and Illinois Department of Transportation officials credited the record numbers to stronger marketing, improved service and higher gas prices, which likely prompted many would-be drivers to take the train.

MITSUBISHI MOTORS REVISES CONTRACTS

NORMAL — Mitsubishi

STATE BRIEFS



Motors and union leaders at its only U.S. plant have agreed to a tentative contract extension that will aid the troubled automaker's efforts to rebound from a global sales skid fueled by scandals and recalls, company officials said Wednesday.

Terms of the 31-month deal between Mitsubishi Motors North America and the United Auto Workers were not disclosed.

The current four-year contract expires at midnight Thursday, but work will continue at the Normal plant pending a Sunday vote by about 2,800 UAW members, the company said.

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Career Services . www.jobsrv.elu.edu

Government seeks to recover costs of suit against tobacco

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department said Wednesday that tobacco companies should pay more than \$140 million to cover the government’s cost of bringing a racketeering lawsuit alleging the industry misled the public about the dangers of smoking.

The amount is on top of the \$10 billion the government is asking a federal judge to order the cigarette companies to pay for a five-year nationwide stop-smoking program.

The companies have employed “questionable and vexatious” tactics through the case and an award of costs is appropriate, the government said in a filing in federal court.

No figure was given in the court papers, but the lawsuit has cost the Justice Department over \$140 million since it was brought in 1999.

The government told U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler that the companies should be held liable for conspiring to violate the racketeering law.

MUSLIM LEADER CALLS ON BUSH

PLAINFIELD — A leading U.S. Muslim group called on President Bush Wednesday to



show his support for mainstream Islam in this country and worldwide by meeting with the group next week in Chicago.

Bush could make a powerful statement to the world’s 1.2 billion Muslims by appearing at the annual meeting of the Islamic Society of North America, just as he showed his support for adherents of the religion when he visited a Washington mosque a few days after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, said Sayyid Syeed, the group’s secretary general.

ISNA, an umbrella organization of largely immigrant Muslim organizations and mosques in the United States and Canada, will attract tens of thousands of Muslims to Chicago for its annual meeting over Labor Day weekend.

CONDE NAST TO ENTER THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE WORLD

NEW YORK — Conde Nast Publications Inc., the publisher of Vanity Fair and Vogue, said Wednesday it will start up a monthly busi-

ness magazine, the company’s first foray into the business magazine world.

The still-unnamed magazine has no launch date, but Conde Nast said it hired Joanne Lipman, a deputy managing editor of The Wall Street Journal, as its editor-in-chief.

Conde Nast, owned by privately-held communications company Advance Publications Inc., also named David Carey, vice president and publisher of The New Yorker, president of the new business magazine group.

STOCKS SINK AS OIL REACHES NEW RECORD

NEW YORK — Stocks sank amid increasing pessimism on Wall Street Wednesday, shedding early gains after oil prices reached another record high and a mix of data provided conflicting views on the economy.

The surge in crude prices wiped out the advance that followed the Energy Department’s latest inventory report, which showed a strong buildup of heating oil and distillate stocks. Concerns about a drawdown in crude oil and a tropical storm threatening oil facilities pushed crude futures to a new record. A barrel of light crude surged \$1.61 to settle at \$67.32 on the

New York Mercantile Exchange, surpassing the previous record settlement of \$66.86 per barrel on Aug. 12.

NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR WEAPON TALKS COULD START SEPT. 2

TOKYO — China is considering restarting six-party talks on North Korea’s nuclear weapons programs on Sept. 2, Kyodo News agency quoted Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei as saying Thursday.

Wu, China’s top negotiator for the Beijing talks, made the comment in talks in Tokyo with Japan’s Social Democratic Party, Kyodo said.

The report did not say whether Wu confirmed the comments to reporters, or whether SDP officials briefed reporters on the content of the meeting. An official at SDP headquarters contacted by The Associated Press said the report could not be immediately confirmed.

The nuclear talks, conducted by the two Koreas, China, Japan, the United States and Russia, have been in recess for several weeks and were expected to resume next week, but no date had yet been specified.

RENOVATIONS:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

repairs or upgrades to all of our buildings,” said Stephen Shrake, manager of design and construction.

Housing and Dining Services has a five year plan for renovations around campus that is updated annually, he said.

This year’s improvements were very similar to past years, Shrake said.

The same type of projects, renovations and installation of sprinkler systems were completed as in previous years.

This summer, a sprinkler system was installed in Carman Hall North to meet the Dormitory Sprinkler Act passed by the Illinois General Assembly in August 2004.

Plans are to install a sprinkler system in Carman’s south tower next summer.

“It’s all about student satisfaction; we want to make sure students are getting what they desire in their living environment.”

MARK HUDSON, DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND DINING

SENATE:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

duties as president of Lambda Chi Alpha International Fraternity, but he plans to apply for senator position next semester.

One issue Gahan felt strongly about last year was the creation of a freshman leadership council to get freshman more involved in campus organizations.

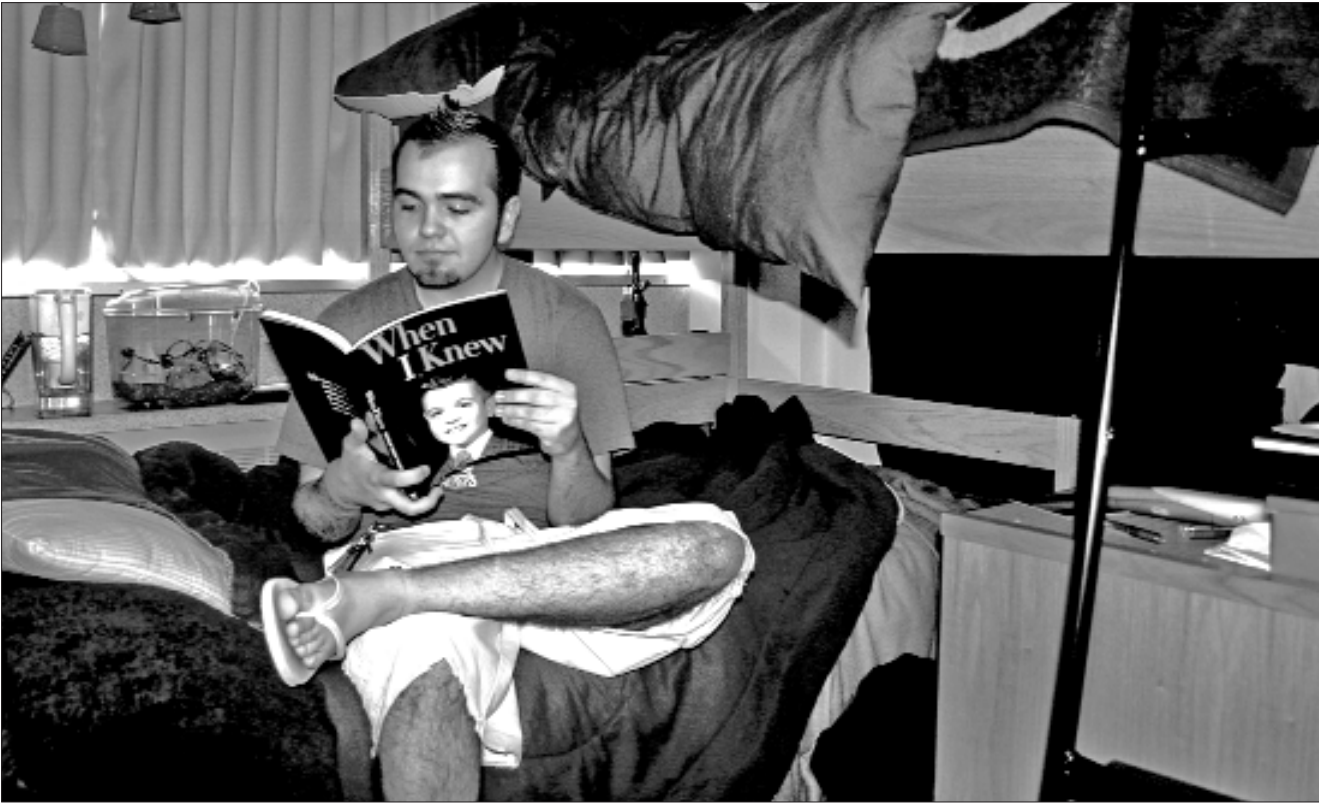
Student Body President Ryan Berger hasn’t created a freshman council, but through First Night, Berger effectively accomplished getting the freshman motivated about becoming involved in student life, Gahan said.

Collier wants the executive board to not forget about the point of view of those who are not involved in campus organizations.

Just because you’re not involved does not mean that you’re not a student with concerns, Collier said.

Looking back, Collier said that he feels good about the election result because Student Interaction worked hard for their win.

“It wasn’t easy for them,” he said. “And that’s where I get my confidence from— knowing that we gave them a run with three people.”



Kris Wilhelmsen, sophomore marketing major, studies at 3:30 p.m. in his newly refurnished fifth-floor dorm room in Taylor Hall. “Compared to last year, it’s (new furniture) amazing,” Wilhelmsen said.

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY MILLER



BOONDOCKS BY AARON MCGRUDER



Huggins, nearly a year after DUI arrest, takes \$3 million buyout

CINCINNATI — Bob Huggins agreed Wednesday to step down as Cincinnati’s basketball coach, ousted by a school president determined to change the program’s image.

One day after Huggins was given a choice of resigning or being fired, he agreed to take a \$3 million buyout of his contract. The school’s offer includes a chance to stay for three more months, giving advice on basketball recruits and related matters.

“We are working on the details of the agreement, which may or may not be finalized in the next 24 hours,” said Richard Katz, the coach’s attorney.

Huggins left Katz’s office without comment, dressed in his black Cincinnati jacket, when no final deal was reached on Wednesday.

The university sent Katz a letter earlier in the day outlining the \$3 million buyout. The letter, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, offered Huggins \$110,000 per month for the next three months to stay on and ease the coaching transition.

“His duties will include providing information about the current team, identifying and commenting upon potential recruits, and documenting his institutional memory of the basketball program during his 16-year coaching tenure,” the letter said.

An interim coach has not been chosen. The school doesn’t anticipate hiring a permanent replacement until after the 2005-06 season, its first in the Big East. The school will have a difficult time attracting recruits in the meantime.

The volcanic coach who won more games than anyone else in Cincinnati history was forced out by an academically minded school president who doesn’t like Huggins’ history or philosophy.

President Nancy Zimpher sent Huggins an ultimatum

on Tuesday, giving him 24 hours to either take the buyout, stay in a capacity other than basketball coach or get fired from the job.

“It could happen to anyone when you get hired by a different president,” Louisville coach Rick Pitino said Wednesday. “There’s a difference in philosophies. It happens. It’s a change in CEOs. They have their own people, their own philosophies, and it’s different than what Bob stands for.”

Zimpher, hired in 2003, wants the program to recruit players with better grades and an aversion to trouble. She also wants her coaches to be better role models.

Huggins’ arrest and conviction for drunken driving last year dismayed Zimpher, a strong-willed administrator who wound up in a power struggle with the strong-willed coach. She refused to extend his contract last May, setting the stage for his exit.

He may have been king of the hilltop campus, but it was Zimpher’s hill. During a news conference on Tuesday evening, Zimpher insisted that the basketball program had to live up to her standards.

“We expect to recruit very strong students, both on the court and in the classroom,” Zimpher said. “We expect our coaches to be role models, and we expect our students to be role models. I will not apologize for setting high standards.”

During Huggins’ 16-year stay at Cincinnati, the Bearcats made the Final Four and were ranked No. 1 nationally for the first time in 34 years. They also developed a history of player arrests and violations that resulted in an NCAA probation in 1998 and a hoodlum image nationally. In the 1990s, the Bearcats had one of the lowest graduation rates in the nation.

After last season ended, a player was kicked off the team for having a gun on campus.

KICKER:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

-line for the first game of the season.

Huggins’ contract was cut down from seven years to three. It became obvious that the new university president, who is clearly uncomfortable with having a name on campus bigger than hers, wanted Huggins out. But she still announced in May that Huggins would be allowed to finish out the remainder of his contract.

That quickly changed and after a summer of being a lame duck, Huggins was given an ultimatum: either resign or get fired. This was done through a cowardly fax to his lawyer while Huggins was working at a camp in Las Vegas.

Whether Huggins deserved to be fired or not (he didn’t), the way in which Cincinnati handled this made them look classless and it clearly sacrificed the future of the program. The players and students feel betrayed and are outraged. Recruit after recruit crosses Cincinnati off

of their list and donors and alumni are retracting their financial contributions.

The University of Cincinnati had a right to fire Huggins after the DUI arrest, but they didn’t. They did give him and the fans their word and then reneged on it twice within 15 months.

As controversial as the end of the Samuels’ tenure was last year, in comparison to this and even to the Notre Dame situation in December, Eastern handled Samuels’ firing with much more class.

They didn’t beat around the bush and break their word. We are lucky that they presented their reasons for not renewing Samuels’ contract, made the decision, and moved on.

The world of collegiate sports is cutthroat. But even the most difficult decision can be made with more class than Cincinnati used.

Mike Schroeder is a senior history major. If you think he should get some class and fire himself you can do so at cumjs1@eiu.edu.

DEFENSE:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

The pair will be tested even more this season, though, as Eastern lost defensive tackle Marcus Loric, a 2004 second team All-America selection by Sports Network.

“Do we have somebody who can replace him, or are the four or five guys who are going to rotate in there replace him collectively?” Bellantoni said. “That’s the biggest question to me.”

But Lothe said the return of senior defensive tackle Will Bihun from an injury that kept him out of action all of the 2004 season and spring workouts should help. Bihun started 11 games for the Panthers in 2003.

“It’s the first time in two years me, Travis and Will are playing together,” Lothe said. “If we can get four-man pressure, then our line backers and (defensive backs) can do what they do best — cover receivers and tight ends.”

The secondary is one group Bellantoni expects to have a major impact.

“They’re not just guys covering guys out there — they’re difference makers,” Bellantoni said.

Brown had five interceptions in 2004 and led the OVC by breaking up 21 passes. Despite his accomplishments, Bellantoni said Brown continues to make strides towards becoming a special player.

“(Brown) practices harder now, focuses on getting better every day,” Belantoni said. “He’s always getting better at something, and we can see his progress. Everything is improved.”

And junior strong safety Tristan Burge, coming off a 91 tackle, two interception season, is on the verge of giving opposing offensive players lots of aches and pains.

“This conference, I don’t think they’re ready for him,” Bellantoni said. “He’s fast. He’s got good instincts. He’s big. He likes to hit, and he’s mean. He’s got all the tools.”

“He’s one of the keys to the defense, and he’s been under the radar. I think this will be a coming out year.”

In between the defensive line and

“We want to stress the quarterback as much as we can, and in turn, our guys can make plays.”

KORY LOTHE, DEFENSIVE END

the secondary will be a linebacking corps with two newcomers, junior strong-side linebacker Clint Sellers and sophomore middle linebacker Donald Thomas.

Sellers is a transfer from North Iowa Area Community College, and Bellantoni said Panther fans will quickly recognize his versatility against the pass and the run.

Thomas, who appeared in 10 games in 2004 and recorded 21 tackles, said his main goal in the preseason has been to become more assertive as a vocal leader.

“I feel very confident about being the play caller on defense,” Thomas said. “It feels good to hear my coaches telling me I’m the number one guy at the position.”

“I feel like I can get the job done, and the rest of the defense feels like I can get the job done.”

With all the pieces in place, the Panther defense seems primed to make opposing offenses uncomfortable en route to making an OVC title run.


Lothe said a strong pass rush will be the basis for the defense’s successes.

“We want to stress the quarterback as much as we can, and in turn, our guys can make plays,” he said. “The more stressed we can make him, the more interceptions he’ll throw and make bad decisions. And, we’ll take our sacks too, where we can get them.”

“I think we understand what we have to do and we’re set to do it.”

2004 Panther Defense

- ◆ Points Allowed: 29.4
- ◆ Touchdowns (pass): 15
- ◆ Touchdowns (rush): 21
- ◆ Interceptions: 13
- ◆ Forced Fumbles: 16
- ◆ Fumbles Recovered: 6
- ◆ Passing Yds/Game: 220.3
- ◆ Rushing Yds/Game: 114.3



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WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Masanet: 'We'll be surprisingly good'

Blend of youth, experience improve chances of conference title

By DERRICK JOHNSON II
STAFF WRITER

This year Eastern's chances for an Ohio Valley Conference championship are looking much brighter, thanks to young talent coupled with veteran leadership.

One of the reasons that the Panthers' chances have improved is because of the amount of progress made in the offseason, head coach Geoff Masanet said.

"We actually have a pretty good team," Masanet said. "We are vastly improved from last year."

Because of the developments made by the women, the prediction of winning the conference has become more probable than ever, Masanet said.

"This year we can set more realistic goals for conference," Masanet said. "I think we'll be surprisingly good."

Adding to the skill level of the ladies is the recruitment of new freshmen. Two of these freshmen, Jessica Blondell and Vanessa Andrews, are expected to make an impact on the team, Masanet said.

"I think our young kids are going to be one of the reasons we're so improved," Masanet said.

Even though the ladies have picked up their game since last year, the health of the Panthers is a point of concern.

Sophomore Kirsten Bosnak says that her injuries have improved over the course of the past year.

"I'm good," Bosnak said. "I had a lot of problems with my shin. I'm a lot better than last year."

Junior Katie Dzielski is not as fortunate as Bosnak. Slowed by a stress fracture, Dzielski will have to support her team from the sidelines.

"I don't think I'll be ready for this cross country season, but I definitely hope to be back for early track season," Dzielski said. "My goal is to be able to support my teammates and be there for them."

Although she will see much of the season from the sidelines because of



DANIEL WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

The women's cross country squad begins the season on Sept. 2 at the Iowa Invitational in Iowa City.

the injury, Dzielski will try to be a leader off the course.

"I think we've gotten better as a team," Dzielski said. "I think that

we've just got a lot of good leadership as a whole."

Carpenter first to win 18 games

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PITTSBURGH — Chris Carpenter became the major leagues' first 18-game winner and Albert Pujols hit his 34th home run Wednesday night as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 8-3.

Carpenter (18-4) is 10-0 in his last 13 starts, all St. Louis victories. He allowed three runs and four hits in eight innings, improving to 10-0 on the road.

Cardinals manager Tony La Russa tied Sparky Anderson for third place on baseball's managerial wins list with his 2,194th career victory. Only Connie Mack (3,731) and John McGraw (2,763) have won more games.

David Eckstein had three hits and John Rodriguez homered and drove in three runs for St. Louis, which jumped to a 5-0 lead in the first inning. The Cardinals have won 16 of the last 19 meetings against the Pirates.

The teams engaged in a brief shoving match 90 minutes before the game, prompting umpires to ask for a pregame meeting between managers La Russa and Lloyd McClendon. The game was played without incident.

BRAVES 3, CUBS 1

CHICAGO — Two bunts, a bad throw and a tricky hop turned around the Atlanta Braves' day and sent Mark Prior and the Chicago Cubs to another numbing defeat at Wrigley Field.

Shortly after a throwing error by Prior, Rafael Furcal hit a two-out, two-run single in the seventh inning that deflected off sure-handed Chicago first baseman Derrek Lee as the Braves rallied Wednesday for a 3-1 victory.

"The ball ate him up. If anybody can make it in all of baseball, it would be Derrek Lee," Atlanta manager Bobby Cox said.

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SPORTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2005

PANTHER SPORTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY	W SOCCER VS. NORTH TEXAS (St. Paul, Texas)	1:00 p.m.
SATURDAY	Volleyball at Dayton, Bradley (Pepsi Challenge)	All day
SUNDAY	W SOCCER at Texas-St. Paul	1:00 p.m.

Eastern Illinois University, Charleston

FOOTBALL

Injury boots Wilke to 1st string

Redshirt freshman assumes place kicking duties

By MATTHEW STEVENS
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR



DANIEL WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

After the starter hurt himself running, Tyler Wilke, a redshirt freshman, became the Panthers' new kicker. Wilke made the squad last year as a walk-on. He most admires New England Patriots kicker Adam Vinatieri.

Steve Kuehn was planning on his right leg to be a valuable tool for the Panther football team this season. Then, that very leg gave out on him.

The senior kicker that had started in each of his three seasons at Eastern suffered a severe hamstring injury in the final conditioning drill during the summer.

"When it first happened, I thought I'd be out for the year," Kuehn said. "The trainer said I'll be ready to start kicking against BYU (Sept. 10)."

The replacements bring little experience. Redshirt freshman Tyler Wilke won the placekicking job over true freshman Zach Yates for the Sept. 1 season opener at Indiana State.

During a running drill, Kuehn was striding to finish and said he knew exactly what happened immediately.

"I was just running and heard two loud pops," Kuehn said.

Kuehn, who suffered a torn groin muscle twice during his sophomore season, said that this injury was similar.

"When I tore my groin it felt the same thing but that was more of a rip," Kuehn said.

The sudden injury forced an instant competition between two kickers with no college game experience.

"That's the one thing that Steve brought to the table is game experience," Eastern special teams coordinator Jeff Choate said.

The Highland native earned All-Mississippi Valley Conference honors as a senior at Highland High School after he kicked three game-winning field goals that season.

"In high school, I didn't have to

worry about losing my job," Wilke said. "Now if I have a bad day in practice I could be second or third string."

After hearing the news, Wilke wasted no time giving his quarterback confidence in his length.

"I've already told (starting quarterback Mike) Donato that you get the ball inside the 35, and we're good," Wilke said.

Choate has no reservations about attempting a 52-yard field goal with his young kickers.

"Depending upon the conditions

and the situation in the game, I think that's a reasonable expectation," Choate said. "I think these guys would rather go out there than play the field position game with a punt."

With five games last season finishing within a touchdown, Wilke talked about his mindset about possibly being asked to win the contest in his first game in a Panther uniform.

"Nothing is going to be close to (playing) at the D-I level," Wilke said. "It's up to me whether or not I can do the job. We'll find out."

Who is Tyler Wilke?

- ◆ Height: 6-3
- ◆ Weight: 195 pounds
- ◆ High school: Highland HS
- ◆ College experience: None to date
- ◆ Wilke in his own words: "I've already told Donato that you get the ball inside the 35, and we're good."



DANIEL WILLIAMS/THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Robert Brooks, a senior strong safety, leads a defense ranked 7th against the pass last year.

Eight starters return on defense

By DAN WORE
SPORTS EDITOR

There's reason to be excited when opponents of the Eastern football team take the ball.

Eight defensive starters return to the Panther lineup, and two, senior defensive end Kory Lothe and junior cornerback Ben Brown, were preseason all-conference in the Ohio Valley.

Rox Bellantoni has been defensive coordinator since the end of spring practices in 2002, and in that time, he has seen his defenses steadily improving.

"I just want to see us take the next step," Bellantoni said.

The next step involves building on a defense that was the OVC's third best, allowing opponents 4.7 yards a play. Last year's defense was especially tough on the run, allowing 11.4 yards a game, fourth best in the OVC.

Bellantoni said this year's defense will continue to try and neutralize opposing ground attacks.

"We've got to continue to stop the run because it gets offenses into predictable situations," he said.

While teams struggled to run the ball, they did succeed via the pass. Eastern's pass defense ranked seventh in the OVC, allowing opponents 220 yards passing a game.

Bellantoni said the Panthers' defensive line will also put more pressure on opposing quarterbacks.

"(Senior defensive ends) Travis (Wanzeczek) and (Lothe) make my job a lot easier because we don't have to blitz a lot to put pressure on the quarterback," Bellantoni said. "Being fifth-year seniors, they are the leaders of that crew."

"The performance of our defensive line sets the tone for the entire defense."

Lothe's 5.0 sacks tied for the most in the OVC. Wanzeczek started all 11 games last season and recorded 37 tackles and 3.0 sacks.



JUMPIN' HOPE
MICHAEL SCHROEDER
STAFF WRITER

Manners in saying 'You're Fired!'

Today in the business world and the sports world loyalty does not go as far as it used to. Nationally, the employer-employee relationship is being questioned with the University of Cincinnati's recent forced resignation of Bob Huggins. Last March it was questioned here in east-central Illinois with the termination of Rick Samuels' contract at Eastern.

More inside

- ◆ Read more about Huggins' \$3 million buyout

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Huggins had been the coach at Cincinnati for the past 16 years in which he built the program from nothing to a national powerhouse.

His downfall comes from issues involving the off-court behavior of his players and his own drunken driving arrest in June 2004. On the other hand, Samuels' downfall wasn't off-court activities, but his team's on-court performance.

While the men were forced out for the opposite reasons, the cases are very similar. Both were community fixtures, the face of their respective program, and were beloved by fans.

This situation makes cutting ties with the coach, needed or not, all the more difficult. However, one university did it right, the other did it wrong.

After the fourth straight losing year, Eastern declined to renew Samuels' contract and announced it on March 3, just two days after the season ended in the Ohio Valley Conference tournament.

There was no in-between stage; it was quick and done with class. The university moved on without bashing the former coach or the players on his team and searched for a new coach, hiring Mike Miller just a month later.

Just east down I-70, Cincinnati has been beating around the bush since the new university president took office, forfeiting the program's future.

Following Huggins' drunken driving arrest in June of 2004, there were rumors of a termination of his contract. However, after approaching the incident with class, a suspension was handed down, and he was on the side-