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Daily Eastern News: April 15, 2014

Eastern Illinois University

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HOUSE HUNTERS

Students share their experiences with trying to find off-campus living arrangements.

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TRYING TO STEP UP A NOTCH

Coming off of a series loss, the Eastern baseball team prepares to go head-to-head against Indiana State.

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THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Tuesday, April 15, 2014

“TELL THE TRUTH AND DON’T BE AFRAID”

VOL. 98 | NO. 137

Students let colors fly with paint dodgeball



PHOTOS BY JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS
Holland Hempen (left), a freshman English with teacher certification major, participates in paint dodgeball on Monday on the South Squad.
Sarah Gibbens (top), a freshman communication disorders and sciences major, gets ready to throw a ball during paint dodgeball on Monday on the South Squad.
Meanwhile, Gage Munsterman (right), a freshman undecided major, throws a ball leaving paint trailing behind during paint dodgeball. Even with the drizzle, participants were enthusiastic and played multiple rounds, each with foam balls dipped in different color paint.

Hearing set for murder suspect

By Katie Smith
Photo Editor | @DEN_News

A status hearing was set Monday during a Charleston man’s first court appearance to address charges of first-degree murder in connection with the death of Gina Giberson.
Larry Steeples was arrested and charged April 7, with two counts of first-degree murder with intent to kill or injure and one count of first-degree murder with strong probability to kill or injure.
Steeple’s requested, and was granted, a one-week continuance on Monday. His status hearing is set to take place at 9 a.m. April 21 in courtroom No. 1.
Steeple’s faces accusations of causing Giberson’s death, which Chief Deputy Coroner Mike Bennett said was brought about by multiple gunshot wounds.
Steeple’s, a Charleston resident, who was last known to reside at 216 W. Vine Ave., is still in police custody and his bond is set at \$5 million.
Steeple’s has a history of reports filed against him by Giberson, including an order of protection of which he was supposed to attend court for one day after Giberson’s death.

Katie Smith can be reached at 581-2812 or kesmith2@eiu.edu.

Alert system in place for Eastern safety

By Bob Galuski
Managing Editor | @BobGaluski

When emergencies happen on campus, students who are signed up, receive text alerts informing them of what is happening and whether or not they should take action.
Alert EIU uses text messages, but other forms of informing the campus include sirens and campus-wide emails.
According to the Eastern website, Alert EIU is a “text-messaging system that alerts subscribers, via their cell phones, to emergency situations and (if needed) advises them to take action. The messages are short -- no longer than 160 characters. Messages will focus on possible threats on EIU’s main campus.”
When possible gunshots were reported from Klehm Hall on April 7, police responded to the building.
The gunshots turned out to be the noise from a shotgun used during Greek Week’s Tugs competition at Campus Pond.
Dan Nadler, the vice president for student affairs, said the reason the campus – and students signed up for Alert EIU – did not receive a notification was because of the police presence.

ALERTS, page 5

Congressman to visit Energy Center

By Bob Galuski
Managing Editor | @BobGaluski

Congressman John Shimkus (R-15th Congressional District) will be visiting the Renewable Energy Center and the Center for Clean Energy Research and Education Tuesday.
Shimkus will be with President Bill Perry, along with other faculty and staff members during the tour.
Patrick Early, the assistant vice president for communications, said in a press release that Shimkus will meet with the faculty and staff from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m., and then tour the Renewable Energy Center. The tour of the Renewable Energy Center will be from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m.
After that, he will get a “sneak preview” of the soon-to-be-opened Center for Clean Energy Research and Education from 3 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.
The grand opening of the Center for Clean Energy Research and Education will

What: John Shimkus to tour Renewable Energy Center, Center for Clean Energy Research and Education
When: 1 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. Tuesday

Congressman John Shimkus, accompanied by President Bill Perry, will be given a tour of the Renewable Energy Center and Center for Clean Energy Research and Education. The Center for Clean Energy will have its grand opening April 25.

be at 11:30 a.m. April 25.
Along with visiting the two centers, Shimkus, Perry and the other faculty and staff members will visit nearby lands where a variety of crops are raised specifically for energy production.
The Renewable Energy Center replaced the university’s old steam plant, which burned coal. The last time the plant burned coal was Dec. 1, 2010.
Within the Renewable Energy Center are four boilers. Two boilers burn biomass, which is biological material, including woodchips and switch grass. The other two

burn natural gas with a fuel oil backup.
The Center for Clean Energy Research and Education, a 5,000-square-foot center north of the Renewable Energy Center near the intersection of Illinois Route 130 and Edgar Drive, cost approximately \$1 million to complete. Groundbreaking began in 2013.
Bob Galuski can be reached at 581-2812 or dennewsdesk@gmail.com.

Local weather

TODAY

WEDNESDAY



Sunny
High: 45°
Low: 28°

Partly Cloudy
High: 56°
Low: 39°

For more weather visit castle.eiu.edu/weather.

THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

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

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Students share apartment, house-hunting experiences

By Alex Seidler
Staff Reporter | @DEN_News

The process of selecting an apartment can be overwhelming to some and completely worth it to others. Even though every student has different reasons for choosing to get an apartment they all have different experiences with the process that follows.

Mallorie Mosely, a sophomore psychology major, said some of her reasons for selecting an apartment over the residence halls are for sanitation and cost.

"(I was) living with a bunch of girls, (and) it was dirty," she said. "They only clean showers twice a week and there's like 50 girls on the floor. The apartment is also cheaper."

Julie Roberts, the property manager of Unique Properties, said she has many students each year getting apartments from there. Most of Unique Properties is online and they are one of many places students can go to find an apartment that is closer to the school.

"We show them different apartments based on what they're looking for like different sizes, number of roommates and cost," she said. "Then they have to fill out an application. We give them a handbook to look through and they sign their lease agreement. We make it easy for them."

In Mosely's case she went about finding an apartment the old fashioned way.

"We just got a newspaper and started from there," she said. "We wrote down every place we were interested in and called to find out more. At the beginning we had about seven places to choose from, but after figuring our budget and a distance from campus we ended up with three we were looking into."

Amy Whitcomb, a graduate psychology major, tried a different route at finding her apartment.

"I did a lot of searching on different websites to check out prices and listing apartments side by side to compare," she said. "I Google searched a lot of apartments to find the information I needed."

Both these students have said this process for them was long and stressful.

"It's a bit overwhelming," Mosely said. "Especially when you don't know where to go to first. It took us a month or so, but it took a lot in that month and we were some of the lucky ones. They even lowered their price knowing we were moving in mid-school year."



KATIE SMITH | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Whether students find their apartments through newspaper classifieds or by word of mouth from friends, their house-hunting experiences are as unique as their living situations.

When students choose to get an apartment with another person, they also have to consult with them as well before making final decisions.

"Among all three of us, when we were searching for an apartment, some of the biggest things we had to agree on when deciding what apartment to take were safety, location and of course, a price that is budget-friendly for everybody," Whitcomb said.

Whitcomb also said that finding the best pricing as the hardest step in the process.

"Each of us had a slightly different idea of what's considered a good price," she said. "It took me from October until December to decide."

Mosely said the most stressful part for her was agreeing with her roommate. "We couldn't decide whether price or comfort was more important," she said.

When going apartment shopping, constant communication between potential roommates is vital and can change the course of plans, as was the case with Tony Alozie, a junior biology major.

Alozie decided to get an apartment with a friend from a different campus but after signing the lease the friend backed out.

"At first, I couldn't find anyone at all," he said. "They said by the time

move in date comes, I would either have had to have found a roommate or they would give me a random one. After a month or two I found a friend willing to move in."

Alozie said his reasons for getting an apartment was to get freedom and save money. But through his experience he has some advice to share with others.

"I would suggest wait till your friend is there to sign the lease with you," he said.

Alozie said while he managed to save cost without room and board he still had to find a way to pay for his living expenses.

"I had to get a job to pay for food and electric bill," he said. "I paid my rent with my refund check. The rent was \$515 a month, but it all worked out for the best."

While an apartment is more affordable and favorable to underclassmen some upper level students have found a different option. Kara Baker, senior science with teacher certification under earth science major, decided to live in a house with her two other friends two years ago and said she prefers it as an alternative option.

"I think that a house is better because you get to know your neighbor better and it's cheaper," she said. "It also feels more like home and you have a yard. Also you have better parking in

a house."

Baker said that people who don't like roommates should not get a house because they will be intimately involved in their lives. She said she was already best friends with her roommates before living with them in a house.

"Make sure your roommates are your friends first. I was lucky because my roommates were my best friends first," she said. "Look at a lot of places. Also, if you plan on having a cat or dog make sure they are pet friendly. Don't wait until the last minute because the good places will be gone by then."

She also had some advice for people who might be thinking about choosing that option in the future.

"I would say find a good landlord and see who rents from a good landlord," she said. "I highly advise paying your rent in full for the whole year that way if you run out of money you at least have a place to live. Ask how much utilities cost. See if they allow gardening. Ask if they will allow you to put nails on the wall. Lastly, don't let the person pressure you to sign for the house until you absolutely want to."

Alex Seidler can be reached at 581-2812 or ajseidler@eiu.edu.

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Reading food



KATIE SMITH | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Kristyn Grice, a senior elementary education major, and Shanel McDonald, a senior family and consumer sciences major, look at the Edible Book exhibit Monday at Booth Library. The women's favorites included the Forest Gump display and the Best in Show winner, "Reading is Sweet as Peach," James in the Giant Peach, which was constructed by Michelle Cheval and Justin Decker. Grice and McDonald said they originally went to the library to study for their final weeks of classes, but were distracted by the edible story scenes.

City Council to approve contract for 12th St. project

By **Jarad Jarmon**
Associate News Editor | @JJarmonReporter

The Charleston City Council will be voting to authorize the engineering agreement with Consolidated Services, Inc. for the 12th St. project at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the City Hall council chambers.

This agreement will allow for Consolidated Services to start designing the storm sewers to be made on the 12th St. road. This is a part of an on-going project to enhance the 12th St. road close to Greek Court. Mayor Larry Rennels said this project is expected to be worked on for years.

As part of the project, the city also plans on widening the street as well as refining the street as a whole. Rennels said this project would alleviate the traffic going to 9th St. He said this will hopefully encourage people to use 12th St. more.

They will also be voting to use \$150,000 from the motor fuel tax funds for the 12th St. project. This money will not be used all at once but will be set aside for the project over the coming years.

\$25,000 will be contracted to Consolidated Services for the designs.

Rennels said this does not mean they will necessarily pay the full \$25,000. He added it is just the maximum amount the city is paying.

They will also be filing an ordinance for public inspection that would restrict parking on McLeod Ave. Residents have made a petition for no parking on the street because the street is not wide enough to handle parking on both sides. Rennels said many of the employees from Monicals' Pizza and Charleston Family Dental have been parking on the road filling up much of the road.

They will also be looking at amending the 3 percent increase to the Sewer and Water rates.

They will also be amending city budget for the fiscal year from 2013 to 2014. The will also be approving the city budget beginning May 1, 2014 and ending April 30, 2015.

Jarad Jarmon can be reached at 581-2812 or jsjarmon@eiu.edu

Speaker to explore mentality of Cubs fans

By **Kaylie Homann**
Staff Reporter | @kayliehomann

Commonalities, good or bad, bring people together to form a community. This is exactly what Holly Swyers studies and researches. Swyers, the associate professor of anthropology at Lake Forest College, focuses her studies on how Americans form communities.

Swyers will be talking to students at Eastern about bleacher regular Chicago Cubs fans and how they have created a long-standing community with the only commonality being that they love Cubs baseball. The talk is based on the book "Wrigley Regulars: Finding

Community in the Bleachers" that Swyers wrote in 2010.

The lecture will be at 11 a.m. April 18 at Buzzard Hall room 1501.

The Cubs fans that compose this bleacher family met in the bleachers at different times and have created a family through their experiences together.

"Being a member of the bleacher family means attending weddings and funerals, taking vacations together and watching each other's kids," Swyers said. "I will be talking about what the group does to create these strong ties between people who seem to have nothing in common but a love for Cubs baseball."

When Swyers decided she wanted to research how Americans form communities, she thought the bleacher regulars were an epitome of what she wanted to study.

The process of building and maintaining a community is relative to any type of group, Swyers said.

"I've had people tell me that their book group or their dog park group ... do a lot of the things that the regulars do to create a sense of belonging," said Swyers.

Swyers is one of many speakers who have been picked to come speak by Donald Holly, Jr., Professor of Anthropology at Eastern.

Holly has had many speakers who have a variety of topics in-

"Cubs fans have a strong identity linking them together through misery and there's a lot of Cubs fans around here."

-Holly Swyers, associate professor of anthropology at Lake Forest College

cluding Navajo raps, witchcraft and voodoo.

He chose Swyers to come speak at Eastern because of the identity and community she discusses about Cubs fans and the relativity it would be to the audience.

Holly also said that Cubs fans are not only bonded together because they like the Cubs, but because they experience the Cubs losing a lot of games.

"Cubs fans have a strong identity linking them together through misery," Swyers said. "And there's a lot of Cubs fans around here."

The lecture on Friday is open to the public, and Swyers will also speak in Holly's anthropology classes.

Kaylie Homann can be reached at 581-2812 or dennewsdesk@gmail.com.



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Letter to the Editor

What a pleasant surprise when I opened to page four of the DEN today and read “No bunny loves you more than God” by Brian Weaver.

Thank you Brian for sharing the true meaning of Easter. In a time of when the world is a mess at time. It’s great to look beyond ourselves and know that there is a God that meets us where we are. Most of us are broken and unaware that there is someone who loves us unconditionally. Thank you for reminding me of this today

Jana Johnson-WEIU Membership Manager

“LET’S GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT”

“Have you heard the term “Chiraq” around campus?

Get social

The Daily Eastern News



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To submit your opinion on today’s topic, bring it in with identification to The DEN at 1811 Buzzard Hall or submit it electronically from the author’s EIU email address to DENopinions@gmail.com by 4 p.m. today or reply to us on social media.

Quote of the Day

“All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them.”
- Galileo Galilei

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DRAWN FROM THE EASEL



SABRINA ANN DUNCAN | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

STAFF EDITORIAL

All emergencies need notification

When possible gunshots were reported from Klehm Hall on April 7, the Eastern community did not receive a notification through the EIU Alert System.

Despite having the university’s police department respond to Klehm Hall, Eastern students, faculty and staff should have been notified by the university of what was happening.

The incident was first reported at around 4 p.m. on April 7, a time when students and professors are either leaving classes or going to them. The fact that the police were there is not enough of a deterrent, but instead it may have caused more people to show up to see what was happening.

As a student, when signing up for the alert system, we are told that in cases of emergencies, there will be notification to let students know what is going on and what they should do.

On April 7, there was no such notification.

tion.

Even though the “possible gunshots inside Klehm Hall” turned out to be the sound of a shotgun over at Greek Week’s Tugs competition, at the time, clearly whoever reported the gunshots did not know this.

There is no reason not to send out an alert. If alerts are sent about things like break-ins near campus, then gunshots reported on campus should be first on the list.

If the alert system is not sent out, then the entire support system breaks down and students are left nearly unaware.

Although The Daily Eastern News reported on the incident, it is still up to the university to make sure the students are properly alerted to what is happening on campus.

That was the agreement when signing up. That was the deal.

Now, when something serious could have occurred, instead of a text being sent out to tell students that maybe they should steer clear of Klehm Hall until the situation was figured out, they were left unaware.

If there had been real gunshots inside, students out on the campus, either going to or from class could have been put in danger. This is not acceptable by any means.

Although the police were in the area and they responded swiftly, that does not negate the fact that students still have a right to know what exactly is happening on their campus.

Without the system for students to rely on, the entire structure can be torn down. It is not the right system if it does not work when there is a real emergency.

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

Embracing ‘Chiraq’ shouldn’t be encouraged

A few weeks back, rapper Nicki Minaj dropped a track titled “Chiraq” featuring Chicago rapper Lil Herb. The song has an undeniably catchy feel to it, channelling the same vibe that the likes of Chief Keef and King Louie rose to fame with, but there’s something about it that I can’t help but feel unsettled about.

The term “Chiraq,” a combination of Chicago and Iraq, comes from the unfortunately violent incidents that tend to occur in both places. The term started to come to more prominence after Kanye West stated in his song “Murder For Excellence” that more people were murdered in Chicago than American soldiers in Iraq in 2008. Since then, publications like Vice have done documentary pieces on Chicago’s most violent neighborhoods, shining a light into some of the city’s darker streets.

The term is in no sense a positive, and we shouldn’t look at it in any other way. Chicago has some problems. Everybody knows that. What I would hope is that everyone also knows, even though they probably do not, is that romanticizing a place for



Dominic Renzetti

its murder rate and comparison to an actual war-zone, and then using it as promotional material for your product, is in fact, pretty messed up.

There are a lot of people who died because of what “Chiraq” means, some of them were probably fans of Nicki Minaj. Now, the deaths of those same people and the culture they were entrapped in, are being used to put money right back in the pockets of record companies and other big wigs who are never going to set foot in Englewood or Roseland.

Whether you’re from Chicago, near it, or not even close to it, you shouldn’t be proud that people call it “Chiraq.” You should

be insulted, really. You should take offense that its embracing the violence that goes on there. You should take offense that there actually are people really living in real war zones across the world and that people think these two things are even comparable.

This isn’t a piece about how to solve all of Chicago’s problems, because frankly, I don’t know. What I do know is that I don’t want this song’s title to turn “Chiraq” into a trendy saying (more so than it already is) or further trivialize the issues of violence among young people in the inner city. There’s a lot of great, positive things that happen every day in Chicago.

That’s not to say that we should simply ignore the bad, but we shouldn’t embrace it, and we certainly shouldn’t be letting somebody else profit off of it.

Dominic Renzetti is a family and consumer science major. He can be reached at 581-2812 or DENopinions@gmail.com.

Biological sciences professor receives faculty award

By **Jarad Jarmon**
Associate News Editor |@JJarmonReporter

Mushrooms used primarily in cooking have been focus of study for one biological sciences professor.

Collecting mushrooms as well as other fungi and molds, Andrew Methven, who is retiring at the end of this semester, has now collected something entirely different.

At a faculty senate meeting, Methven was awarded this year's Distinguished Faculty Award.

Economic professor Mingh Dao, who was on the awards committee deciding who would win the award, said the award is one of the highest accolades faculty can receive. Despite having six nominations for the award, Dao said it was an almost unanimous decision fairly early on in the discussion of who deserved the award.

Methven said he was pleasantly surprised when he found out he won.

"From working on committee on campus I know we have a lot of excellent committees on campus," Methven said. "The other five people could have easily gotten the award as I did."

Dao said he was easy choice for multiple reasons. The committee looked at three criteria for the award including what they have done in teaching, in research and in service the community. He added Methven had exceeded each of these criteria "going above and beyond the call of duty."

Methven has worked on various projects revolving around mushrooms. Over the years, he has collected and studied legion of fungi samples. With the help of graduate and undergraduate students, he has also studied the various and frequent molds that have grown throughout the bi-

ological sciences building and Blair Hall. He still keeps many of these in buckets filled to the brim with molds.

Methven said he has always been fascinated with fungi and molds, which is why he chose the study mycology.

His interest in the field has also given him a scientific funny bone, which has seeped into his teaching.

"I have all the standard mushroom jokes like 'I must be a mushroom because they keep me in the dark,'" Methven said.

Dao said Methven had been changing his teaching methods consistently throughout his career, starting in 1987. He added Methven's student evaluations also showed how positively responsive his previous students have been.

Despite originally planning to move on to something better, Methven, in his first years as an Eastern professor, was unsure on whether he would stay at the university, thinking there was something better on. He said he quickly realized this university would be his home where he would come to join several Eastern councils and committees to improve the campus.

Retiring in May, Methven will move on to be an adjunct professor at Eastern and then move to Savannah Georgia to be with his wife.

Methven said he is extremely excited for the future, as it has been a while since he was unsure of what he would be doing, since he has taught much of his life.

Methven added it has been a tremendous honor receiving the award and it is a good send off to have.

Jarad Jarmon can be reached at 581-2812 or jsjarmon@eiu.edu



KATIE SMITH | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

An armed Charleston police officer patrols the perimeters of Klehm Hall after a false call reporting shots fired at Klehm April 7. Despite the reports, the building's doors were open, and professors inside did not receive any notification of the potential emergency.

» ALERTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"We had University Police Officers in the immediate vicinity and they were able to investigate and confirm that there wasn't any imminent threat to the EIU community," he said. "As a result, we did not send out an alert."

Eastern also incorporates other methods of informing the campus as to emergencies on campus.

Along with the sirens, emails and text messages, Eastern also

uses a "phone tree" method, where it "will help notify key individuals in departments/programs on campus; they, in turn, will post this emergency information in accessible locations for general public awareness," according to the website.

The emergency siren is also tested every month – the first Tuesday of each month. The siren sounds, followed by a gener-

al test message. According to the website, its "pulse tone is distinct from the normal continuous tone used by Coles County Emergency Services as a severe weather alert."

That siren is tested at 10 a.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

Bob Galuski can be reached at 581-2812 or dennewsdesk@gmail.com.

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Maday misses out on Pitcher of the Week

Panthers keep Skyhawks scoreless in weekend series

By **Anthony Catezone**
Sports Editor | @AnthonyCatz

Stephanie Maday has not surrendered a run in four starts at home this season. She has provided the Eastern softball team with four wins in those starts, where she has allotted 26 innings pitched (including a five-inning no-hitter on April 6) while lowering her ERA to 2.13 in the process.

“Just playing at home is more relaxing,” Maday said. “We have great fans that cheer for us at home and on the road the fans are cheering against you. It doesn’t have a huge impact, but it is always better to play at home.”

Most recently, Maday pitched back-to-back games against Tennessee-Martin on Saturday and Sunday, leading the Panthers to 1-0 and 4-0 victories, respectively.

Maday gave up one hit to the Skyhawks in each game while walking none. Opponents have just four hits against her in her four starts at Williams Field.

With the help of fellow pitcher Hanna Mennenga, the Panthers were able to keep the Skyhawks scoreless in all three games during the weekend.

“When I go out there, I just realize I have nothing to lose, so I need to give it everything I have,” Maday said. “This is my last chance — my senior season.”

But Maday’s recent success still was not enough to earn her a second consecutive Ohio Valley Conference Pitcher of the Week, one week removed from her second career no-hitter.

Instead, the nod went to Southern Illinois-Edwardsville’s Haley Chambers, who, as a sophomore, tossed her third career no-hitter against Southeast Missouri on Saturday in a five-inning 10-0 win.

She also recorded two complete game shutouts against Bradley on Thursday and against Southeast Missouri again on Sunday.

Over 19 scoreless innings last week, Chambers gave up just six hits and four walks while striking out 29 batters. She currently leads the OVC in innings pitched with 151.2 and is second in strikeouts with 152 this season.

Edwardsville is the only team ahead of Eastern in the west division of the OVC.

Maday dominates Williams Field	
GAMES STARTED	4
INNINGS PITCHED	26
ERA	0.00
STRIKEOUTS	32
HITS	4
WALKS	0
NO-HITTERS	1

The Panthers have the edge in overall record at 30-11 while Edwardsville is 20-18, however, in conference play, the Cougars are 12-3 and the Panthers are 10-4.

Offensively, Tennessee Tech’s Kendall Hooper won Player of the Week.

A native of Hermitage, Tenn., Hooper hit a pair of home runs off a 2-for-3 performance against No. 4 ranked Tennessee to begin the week, as she recorded four of the teams’ five runs in the Golden Eagles’ 13-5 loss.

The senior first baseman then went 5-for-12 with six RBIs in the three-game sweep of OVC foe Tennessee State.

For the week, she hit .467 with 10 RBI, scoring six runs, also recording three doubles and two home runs.

Hooper also extended her OVC-leading RBI streak to seven straight games.

Anthony Catezone can be reached at 581-2812 or ajcatezone@eiu.edu.



JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS
Senior pitcher Stephanie Maday throws the ball to first against Tennessee-Martin Saturday at Williams Field. The right-handed pitcher threw seven innings and allowed one run and threw 10 strikeouts. The Panthers won the weekend series against the Skyhawks. The Panthers are 30-11 overall and 10-4 in the Ohio Valley Conference.

OVC represented among national leaders

By **Aldo Soto**
Assistant Sports Editor | @AldoSoto21

The Eastern baseball team is in 10th place in the Ohio Valley Conference, but sit two games behind Morehead State and Eastern Kentucky for sixth place, which would put the Panthers into the postseason tournament.

Following a series loss at home against Tennessee Tech, Eastern fell to 5-10 in the OVC, while the Golden Eagles remained in third place with an 11-7 conference record.

The Panthers’ next conference opponent, in Southeast Missouri, won two of its three games road games at Austin Peay to improve to an OVC best 15-3. The RedHawks have only lost one of their six series in the OVC conference, which came against Morehead State at home in late March.

Southeast Missouri started its conference schedule, sweeping four of its first five series wins. The RedHawks comfortably sit in first place in the OVC, with four more wins than

Jacksonville State, while playing three more games in the conference.

National leaders

Eastern junior Caleb Howell hit .333 (4-for-12) against Tennessee Tech, which dropped his season batting average from .431 to .422.

He entered the weekend series ranked No. 3 in Division I baseball with his .431 average and now ranks No. 7.

Howell’s 57 hits this season also rank him 14th in the nation and No. 3 in the Ohio Valley Conference behind Morehead State’s Brandon Rawe and Tennessee Tech’s Daniel Miles.

Rawe is tied for the second most hits in the country at 62 along with Kennesaw State’s Max Pentecost. Miles is tied for eighth in the nation with 61 hits. The national leader has 63 hits, in North Florida’s Drew Weeks.

In total, the OVC has five players ranked in the top-50 in the country in hits so far this season.

Eastern pitchers faced two of the best home-

run hitters in the nation during the week, as Brandon Thomasson and Zach Stephens both showed off their power Friday, hitting their 11th and 10th home runs of the season, respectively.

Thomasson’s 11 home runs has the senior ranked No. 4 in the country in home runs, while his teammate is tied for fifth overall with three other players. Thomasson is also 10th in the country with a .677 slugging percentage. Kentucky’s A.J. Reed is the leader with a .786 slugging percentage.

Reed is also tied with William and Mary’s Michael Katz for most home runs with 14.

OVC weekly awards

Eastern Kentucky’s Bryan Soloman hit three home runs and drove in 11 runs in five games last week, which earned him Ohio Valley Conference Player of the Week.

The designated hitter went 7-for-20, (.350) slugging .850, while scoring six runs and having an on-base percentage of .409 for the Col-

onels, who went 3-2 during the five game stretch.

On Saturday, against Tennessee-Martin, Soloman hit two home runs and had five RBIs and added a double as he led Eastern Kentucky to an 18-13 win.

Senior Taylor Shields won Ohio Valley Pitcher of the Week, following his one-hit, eight-inning outing Sunday against Murray State, leading Jacksonville State to a 5-1 win.

Shields allowed a double to the second batter he faced in the second inning and surrender two walks all afternoon to the Thoroughbreds. The senior finished with six strikeouts and was charged a run after the only batter he faced in the ninth inning reached on an error and later scored for Murray State’s lone run.

The senior improved to 4-3 this season.

Aldo Soto can be reached at 581-2812 or asoto2@eiu.edu.

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Eastern trying to 'turn the corner' against Sycamores

Panthers end home stand, host Indiana State

By Aldo Soto
Assistant Sports Editor | @AldoSoto21

Following a series loss to Tennessee Tech, the Eastern baseball team ends its five-game home stand with Tuesday matchup against Indiana State.

The Panthers enter the midweek game with an 11-24 overall record after losing two of the three games to Ohio Valley Conference foe Tennessee Tech that dropped Eastern to 5-10 in league action.

Eastern was supposed to play against Indiana State on March 4, in Terre Haute, Ind., but cold temperatures and snow on the ground forced the game to be canceled.

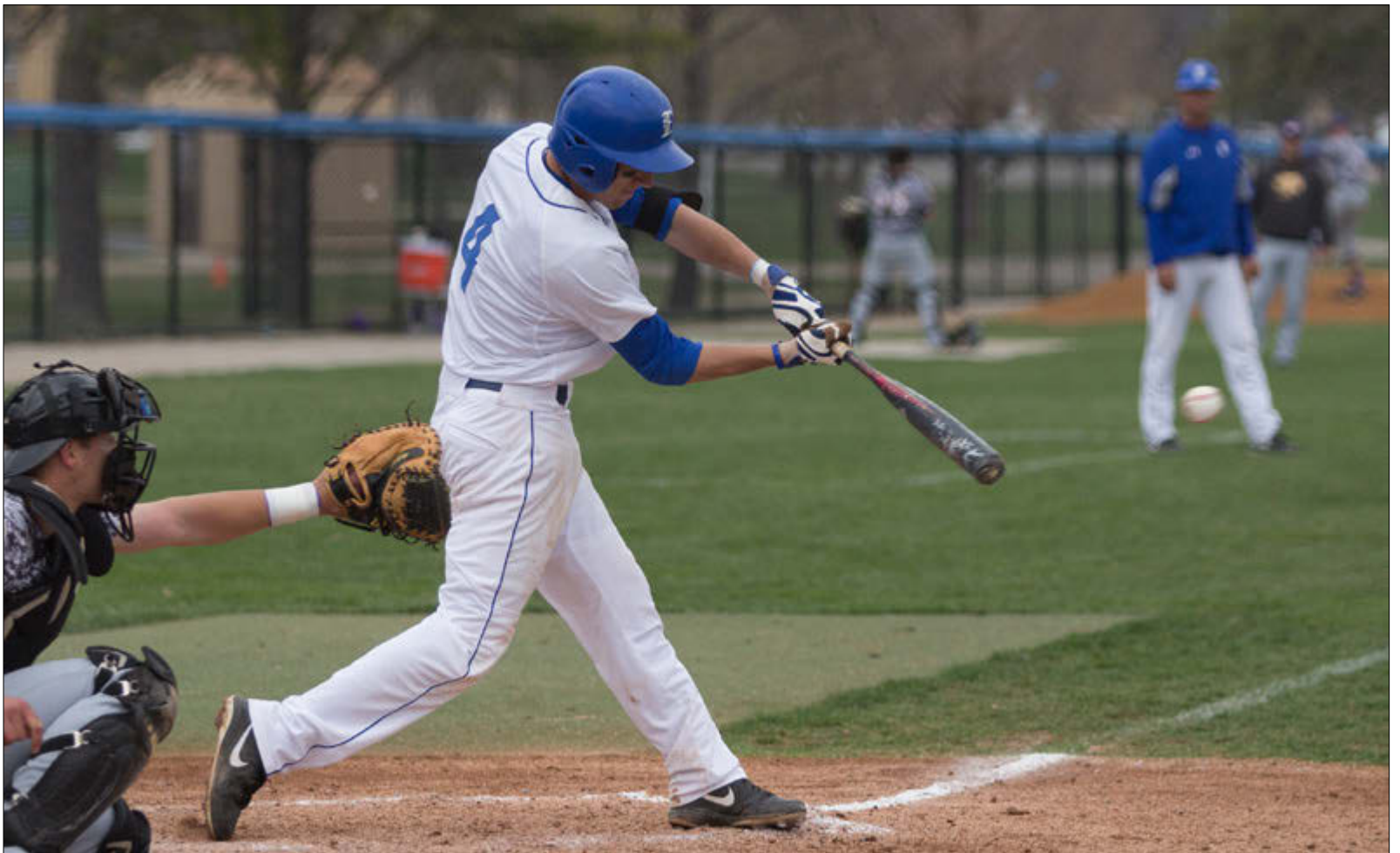
Tuesday's game comes three days before Eastern heads to Southeast Missouri for a three-game series, as the Panthers will play the best team in the OVC.

At 23-10 overall, the Sycamores present a formidable opponent, Eastern coach Jim Schmitz said.

"Indiana State is really good – I mean their ERA is 2.99 – you're playing a real good team and we just have to go what we did Saturday or about two or two and half games during the weekend," Schmitz said.

The Sycamores have three starting pitchers with an ERA that is lower than four. Also, their top two relievers with the most appearances in Nick Kolarik and Keaffaber Ryan have a 2.25 ERA and a 2.73 ERA, respectively.

Kolarik has pitched in 20 innings during his 17 appearances, while Keaffaber has started one game and has come in relief 15 other times throwing



JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Sophomore infielder Mitch Gasbarro swings against Tennessee Tech Sunday at Coaches Stadium. With four at bats, Gasbarro had one hit during the game.

a total of 29.2 innings.

Indiana State's team ERA of 2.99 is No. 1 in the Missouri Valley Conference. The Sycamores are the only team with an ERA less than three in their conference.

Schmitz said the Panthers have not been able to put together a long stretch of playing solid baseball.

"There's kind of an emotional level, where as a team we're just not turning the corner," he said. "That doesn't mean you lose, it's just not turning the

corner in terms of playing good baseball on a consistent basis."

In their last eight games, the Panthers have gone 4-4, winning one OVC series and then losing one the following week.

The Sycamores enter Coaches Stadium, winning two out of three games at Southern Illinois-Carbondale, which improved Indiana State's MVC record to 7-5.

Neither starting pitcher has been determined yet for either teams.

Schmitz said the Panthers have to elevate their play starting Tuesday, as they have five series left in the OVC to try and get into the top six to advance to the postseason tournament.

"Indiana State is really good and SEMO is as hot as can be, so we have to go into those games with a little more than just playing baseball, and it's a midweek game, and it's a weekend," Schmitz said.

Eastern is currently two games behind Morehead State and Eastern Ken-

tucky for the sixth spot in the standings.

First pitch against Indiana State is slated for 3 p.m. Tuesday at Coaches Stadium.

"It's another level of emotion that we have to start being on or else we're not going to turn the corner," Schmitz said.

Aldo Soto can be reached at 581-2812 or asoto2@eiu.edu.

Schmitz finds success during 1st year in OVC

By Aldo Soto
Assistant Sports Editor | @AldoSoto21

Editors note: This is the third installment in a series looking back at Eastern baseball coach Jim Schmitz's 20 years coaching the Panthers.

Jim Schmitz had back-to-back seasons coaching the Eastern baseball team to the Mid-Continent postseason tournament, but entering the 1997 season he had a new challenge.

Eastern was in its first year in the Ohio Valley Conference, but before Schmitz coached his first conference game, he had a lesson about gamesmanship to teach to Brandt Whitehead, a Panthers' catcher that season.

The lesson came early in the season, as the Panthers began their 1997 campaign with a four-game road trip to Arkansas State.

During one of the first few games, one of the Arkansas State players misplayed a ball in the air and dropped an easy pop up, Schmitz said.

Then, Whitehead began to mimic circus music, mocking the Arkansas State player's mistake, which Schmitz did not appreciate.

"I went, 'oh my god, what are you doing making fun of him,'" Schmitz said.

Eastern had already lost the first few games 9-4 and 3-1.

Schmitz does not remember ex-

actly when it happened, but sometime after Whitehead made fun of the dropped pop up, an Eastern player committed a silly error, which garnered this response from Schmitz.

"If they're the circus, then we're the guys shoveling the elephant crap in the tents," Schmitz said.

Eastern was swept by Arkansas State, losing the final two games 8-0 and 4-3, respectively.

From that moment on, Whitehead and every future Panther knew not to cue the circus music in front of Schmitz after the other team's mistakes on the field.

It is one of Schmitz's cardinal rules of the game — never laugh at the opposing team.

"Never make fun of the other team," Schmitz said. "It bugs me to death when we do that."

Following the Panthers' season opener on the road, Eastern played six more games before opening up OVC play for the first time.

It came early in the season and the Panthers found themselves hosting Tennessee-Martin.

March 15, 1997, the average temperature for that day in Charleston was 43 degrees.

Tennessee-Martin coach Vernon Prather thought that was too cold, Schmitz said.

"They pulled up in one of those mini 24-seat passenger buses that we all used to drive in back then and he barely opens the door and

says, 'Jimmy, what time does the game start,'" Schmitz said.

Prather did not leave the dugout during the three-game series because of the cold temperatures, but surprisingly for Schmitz, the Skyhawks won game one of the series 6-2.

"I remember that, they beat us in our cold game, our first OVC game," Schmitz said.

But the Panthers responded, winning the final two games of the series.

Eastern finished with an under .500 record at 25-28, but finished fourth in the OVC at 13-11 and made it to the OVC tournament.

It was a quick exit, though, for Schmitz in the tournament, as the Panthers lost to Southeast Missouri 6-5. Despite the disappointing end, Schmitz said it did not lessen the Panthers' success being in the OVC for their first year.

"A lot of people were saying how are you going to play in a southern conference, you know, warm weather, but we kind of showed right off the bat that it didn't matter," he said. "If you had some good players you were going to win."

But 1997 was only a glimpse to what Schmitz had in store for the OVC in the next couple of years.

Aldo Soto can be reached at 581-2812 or asoto2@eiu.edu.



JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern coach Jim Schmitz looks on during Eastern's game Sunday against Tennessee Tech. Schmitz has been coaching at Eastern for 20 years.