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## EIU Homecoming Events to Include Annual Breakfast, Race, Parade

Oct-13-2009

A week-long series of events in celebration of Homecoming 2009 at Eastern Illinois University will culminate Saturday, Oct. 17, with a fun-filled day of activities, including an annual all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast, 2.5K race and parade.

Early risers can start off with a warm meal, courtesy of the Charleston Rotary Club. Serving for the **10th annual pancake breakfast** will take place from 6:30 to 11 a.m. in the parking lot of Domino's Pizza, located at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Seventh Street. Prices are \$6 for adults and \$3 for children under 10. The menu includes pancakes, sausage, milk and coffee.

All proceeds from the breakfast will go to support local Rotary projects, including customized "I Like Me" books, presented to Charleston first-graders in order to promote reading skills and self-esteem.

Well-fed individuals can then cheer for their favorite athletes as they participate in the **10th annual EIU/Charleston 2.5K (1.5-mile) Homecoming race**, which begins at 9 a.m. Runners/walkers will begin at the corner of Seventh Street and Lincoln Avenue, make their way north on Seventh Street to the Charleston Square, then return to EIU's Old Main via Sixth Street.

Runners may register from 7:45 until 8:45 a.m. in EIU's Old Main (the "Castle") the day of the race. The entry fee is \$9. Awards will be given to the first-place male and female in each category (run, walk and wheelchair). In addition, McDonald's will provide a gift pack, food and drink to all racers, and prizes will be given for best full-body costumes.

This year's parade participants will experience a modification in the traditional route. **Eastern's 2009 Homecoming parade** begins at 9:30 a.m. As is customary, the parade will begin at the intersection of Seventh Street and Lincoln Avenue, travel north to Monroe Avenue, west on Monroe to Sixth Street, then south on Sixth.

Instead of ending at Old Main, however, parade participants will turn west onto Polk Avenue until they reach Division Street. Heading south on Division, they will cross Lincoln and head for Grant Avenue (a.k.a., Panther Way), winding up at the tailgate area at O'Brien Stadium.

On-lookers will see the traditional parade floats, as well as the EIU marching band and Pink Panthers, decorated cars and more, representing this year's Homecoming theme, "EIU: Back to Blue."

As the newly expanded parade route will include Morton Park, community members are encouraged to bring lawn chairs for a safe and relaxing view of the parade. Family-oriented activities will be provided at the park's west pavilion from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and will include a bounce house, a couple of carnival games and EIU cutouts, perfect for photo ops!

The annual **Homecoming football game**, in which the EIU Panthers host Tennessee Tech, begins at 1:30 p.m. Tickets may be purchased the day of the game at O'Brien Stadium at a cost of \$15 for adults, \$13 for EIU staff, \$7 for high school students and \$5 for children (ages 4 through middle school). EIU students will be admitted free with their Panther Card ID.

Football fans are invited to arrive early and show their Panther Pride at this year's **Tent City/Billy's Backyard**, where representatives and alumni from each of Eastern's colleges will be gathered to renew old friendships and begin new ones. This tailgating event, scheduled to officially begin at 11:30 a.m., will be located behind O'Brien Stadium, and is open to all.

Earlier events occurring this week include a **pep rally** at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, on the South Quad (rain location: McAfee Gym). Community members are invited to come and help cheer on the EIU Panthers. Admission is free.

Other EIU Homecoming 2009 events are also planned:

◆ **Yell Like Hell! and Who Wants to be a Mascot? Competitions**, 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, McAfee Gymnasium.



◆ **"Bleed Blue" Red Cross Blood Drive**, noon to 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, Andrews Hall basement.

For up-to-date information on all of these events, plus other events open to the general public on EIU's campus, please see <http://www.eiu.edu/calendar/events>.