Ex-student charged with intentionally rear-ending administrator’s car

Jeff Engelhardt  

A recently expelled student said Wednesday he is innocent of claims that he purposely struck the car of an administrator after he reportededly made threats in her office.

Scott Toomsen, a 38-year-old undeclared freshman of Carbondale, was expelled June 24 for charges that included threatening Director of Disability Support Services Kathleen Plesko and staff two days before he hit Plesko’s car at a red light. In the official recommendation for expulsion, charges included a statement by Plesko that she believed Toomsen hit her car intentionally.

Toomsen and Plesko were treated for injuries at Memorial Hospital after the June 19 collision. Plesko said she is continuing physical therapy. She would not comment about either of the incidents. Toomsen said he would never intentionally hurt Plesko. She has always been helpful during his time at the university, he said. Toomsen was previously enrolled at SIUC in 2006.

University spokesman Red Steven said police were called to Woody Hall June 17 in response to a complaint that Toomsen was creating a public disturbance and making threats. The threats were made toward Disability Support Services staff, including Plesko, Steven said.

Todd Sigler, director of SIUC Police, said officers arrived on the scene and did not escort Toomsen from the premises. He was allowed to leave on his own, Sigler said.

Two days later, Carbondale police responded to a car accident in which Toomsen hit the back of Plesko’s car at the intersection of South Illinois Avenue and Pleasant Hill Road. Toomsen was arrested on a charge of driving under the influence and failure to reduce speed.

Toomsen said his temper got out of control during the Woody Hall incident. He said he did not mean to hit Plesko’s car. “I would never do anything wrong to Kathleen but she said I did it intentionally,” Toomsen said. “That about kills me.”

See EXPEL, Page 2

Border states capitalize on fireworks sales

Justin Lange  

When commuters cross the Chester Bridge into Missouri, fireworks stands are the first thing they’ll see.

Many southern Illinois residents are making the annual trip over the border to Missouri, Kentucky or Indiana to purchase fireworks that are illegal in Illinois. These include all explosive fireworks that contain more than .025 grains of explosive compound, according to the Illinois Fireworks Use Act.

“Most of our business comes from Illinois,” said Alicia Moore, operator of Fernow’s Fireworks in Perryville, Mo.

Moore lives across the river in Chester where the fireworks she sells are illegal. She and her mother, Donna Fernow, have sold fireworks less than a half-mile across the river in Missouri since 1984, she said.

Many of Moore’s family members are also making money off fireworks stands in Missouri. Her sister operates in Pacific, Mo., and her cousin has a stand in Arnold, Mo., she said.

Illinois continues to lose out on lucrative tax revenues that are generated from the fireworks sold in those stands and other stores each year, Moore said. “That, however, does not concern her mother.

“I’m happier with them not issuing a fireworks license in Illinois,” Fernow said.

“It’s much more lucrative for us.”

Fernow said fireworks retailers in Missouri are required to pay $25 each for both a seasonal retailers license and a county license. The licenses allow dealers to operate between June 20 and July 10 as well as the week between Christmas and New Years. For $800, they can operate all year long.

Andy Kelley of Chester said he crosses the river every year to purchase cheaper cigarettes and gasoline.

See FIREWORKS, Page 5

Andrei Bode says I didn’t know that there was a Carbondale 500.
EXPEL

When asked if university officials believed the car accident was related to the Woody Hall disturbance, Stevens responded, "Absolutely."

Toomsen said his face was partially paralyzed and he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder after a car accident in 1996. The driving under the influence charge, he said, was given because he was on his medication, Fioricet. "Absolutely," Toomsen said of the charge. "One of the officers said I had alcohol on my breath. I was slurring my speech," Toomsen said. "But when you have a half-paralyzed face, it's easy to slur words."

Stevens said Toomsen's issues with multiple faculty members on campus had been escalating for some time, though he could not say how long. A news release from the Carbondale Police Department confirmed an investigation of the car accident is under way.

Toomsen said he would like to return to campus and is looking for a lawyer.

Allison Patti contributed to this report.

Jeff Engelhardt can be reached at 536-3311 ext. 268 or jengelhardt@uis.edu.

DAILY EGYPTIAN

Sudoku page 9

"Call 549-5326 Quatro’s... Deep Pan Pizza"

FEBRUARY 2009

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230
320
1medium 1-topping pizza & 2 20 oz. bottles of Pepsi

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Rosemary Simmons, director of the Counseling Center, did not respond to a phone message Wednesday afternoon.

Toomsen said his outburst in Woody Hall came after he was sent from office to office while trying to resolve a dispute about his class schedule. He said the incident was the latest in a long line of frustrations he has encountered at the university.

He produced copies of letters from Vice Chancellor for Advancement Larry Diets and interim Provost Don Rice, which he received after filing a formal grievance against a professor in 2006. Toomsen said he was frustrated by administrators' sluggishness to respond to his problems with the professor, who still teaches at the university. "Again, thanks for your patience with this issue and our apologies for the difficulties that you have had at your University," Diets wrote in the March 3 letter.

Toomsen said the SIUC police officers that responded to the Woody Hall incident accused him of intoxication, but he said he was sober at the time.

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University driver shares miles of memories

Mark Robinson has driven Reba McIntyre and the foreign minister of Afghanistan. But he won’t talk about it.

Robinson, who chauffeured in private business before he became transportation assistant manager in the SIUC travel service department, protects his clients’ privacy with a simple credo: “What happens in the sedan stays in the sedan.”

Robinson’s job requires him to be on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, no matter what the weather, he said. He typically drives guest speakers, panel members or applicants for high-ranking positions.

In effect, he is the first representative from SIUC to meet many officials who visit the campus.

His boss, Kim Bernadoni, said she is sure he makes a good impression. “Mark’s a real go-getter,” she said. “He’s extremely easygoing, easy to get along with.”

Robinson shared a story in which he and one of Bill Clinton’s spiritual advisers laughed together over dinner shortly before the Monica Lewinsky scandal broke in 1998.

“Robinson said he glanced at a magazine and casually mentioned the resemblance between Linda Tripp and Donald Trump, which sent the pastor into hysterics.

“He said, ‘I’m going to tell Bill that,’” Robinson remembered. “Could you imagine if this guy and Bill Clinton had a laugh over a joke that I told him at a Fazoli’s? It makes me feel like I’m this close to history.”

Robinson said he encourages student workers who work in Travel Services to train for their commercial licenses to drive buses and passenger vehicles.

Jeremy Laminack, a sophomore from Carterville studying history, is one student worker who hopes to learn from Robinson.

Laminack said he plans to read a manual before starting his lessons, but Robinson had taken him to one of the university’s buses and taught him about air brakes.

“He loves air brakes. He loves to talk about air brakes,” Laminack said.

Donel Choice, who has worked in Travel Services since fall 2007, agreed that Robinson is a good boss.

“He’s always willing to lend a helping hand,” said Choice, a junior from Chicago studying information systems technologies.

Robinson said he had some advice for graduates: “If you enjoy your work, the money will come. Don’t get a crappy job because in the long run, you’re going to wish you hadn’t. Work for two bucks less for a job that you really enjoy.”

“I’m just a regular guy who’s just had an extraordinary time with what he enjoyed doing,” Robinson said.
Amanda Feild THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BIG SUR, Calif. — Authorities ordered most of the remaining residents of this scenic coastal area to evacuate Thursday because an out-of-control wildfire, one of hundreds in California, had jumped a fire line and was threatening more homes.

New mandatory evacuation notices were issued for a 10-mile stretch along the eastern side of state Highway 1, bringing to more than 25 miles the evacuated area to more than 25 miles, emergency officials said.

“The situation is not looking good right now because of the wind and because of how dry things are and how early in the year it is,” said Paul Paulson, head of the Monterey County Office of Emergency Services.

 Authorities have now evacuated more than 16,000 homes and have called for fire crews from around the world to combat the blaze. A lightning complex that nearly all of the area hampered firefighters, said Ron Bowen of the state fire department.

Paulson said the evacuation he saw was orderly. “The only thing going wrong is that this area is not heavily populated like we saw in Southern California last year,” he said.

Michael Esper, a researcher with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, said weather conditions were ripe for fires.

“The governor’s office said the this is the first time since 1977 that California’s national guard and national guard had been called for fire-fighting purposes of about 45 people in the footprints of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Officials said that fire had burned up the acreage of heavy brush Wednesday and about 100 homes were threatened.

Rough terrain in the Santa Ynez area hampered firefighters, Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown told the Los Angeles Times. The area is a ferry route for Southern California. In southern California, a fire in the southern extension of the Los Padres forest north of Santa Barbara has forced evacuation orders of about 40 people in the Boyes Mountain area. Firefighters said Wednesday that the blaze had covered 500 acres — just over 2 square miles — and that it was 15 percent contained.

In Southern California, a fire in the southwestern town of Anaheim, a veteran was killed on Wednesday when his military contractor team was ambushed in Afghanistan.

According to the affidavit, police were called to a house at San Jode, Wednesday, after getting login information from a computer at the same house, and after a planned briefing Thursday morning.

The girl said she was led to believe that the 12-year-old “would have sex with adult males” during the abduction.

The teenager said she and Bennett wanted to go to the beach, and before Jacques took her to leave and took his niece upstairs. The witness said she left the house with her boyfriend and didn’t see Bennett again.

The 14-year-old said she herself had not been in her uncle’s house, where she was living, since she was 9, and she felt safe there.

Bennett’s former stepfather, Raymond Gagnon, appeared in federal court Wednesday for an extradition hearing. Bennett was to be transferred to Connecticut.

Gagnon also told police he had downloaded child pornography onto the laptop, according to the affidavit.

Bennett’s mother, Cassandra Gagnon, told police she was "very surprised" by her ex-husband’s alleged involvement.
Unfunded pension leaves some concerned

City officials: Carbondale should not be affected

Jenn Lofton
DAILY EGYPTIAN

Though police officers and firefighters across the state are worried about uncertain pensions, Carbondale officers have no need to fear, city officials said.

After the Illinois Municipal League discovered a $4 billion deficit in statewide pension funds, state officials have taken measures to fill the void. Only Carbondale officers expecting to retire soon could be affected, said Lt. Paul Michalesko of the Carbondale Police Department.

According to the City of Carbondale Police Pension Fund’s annual report, the department is not one of the 600 cities across the state affected by the deficit.

“It continues to get managed wisely, there shouldn’t be a problem,” said Michalesko, who has served on department’s pension board for the past three years.

Illinois Municipal League legislative representative Joe McCoy said he has been working with the state in order to come up with a plan to tighten up surveillance of reports and make them more accurate.

“It has become a concern and it is time to begin a pension reform,” McCoy said.

IML’s pension reform plan, which unanimously passed in the Senate and the House, was put on Gov. Rod Blagojevich’s desk Monday. McCoy said Blagojevich has 60 days to sign the bill and if he does it will be in effect immediately.

Echols said roughly 24 percent is missing in the Carbondale fund. The city, which owes the money, is on an installment plan until the money is paid back in full.

Martin Voss, president of the pension board, said the city has done a good job following all the legal procedures to make sure the pension fund stays intact.

Voss said the department currently has $17 million and has come a long way since he served on the board as secretary back in 1973.

Although more money will be needed as time passes and there are more retirees, Voss said everything should be handled properly without any concern.

“We’re 76 percent funded now and should still be in strong financial position,” Voss said.

Jenn Lofton can be reached at 518-3311 or jlofton@eiu.edu.

Some sparkler safety tips

Officer Randy Mathis works at his desk Wednesday at the Carbondale Police Station. Mathis is one of many officers that does not have to worry about his pension being in danger.

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DAILY EGYPTIAN

“Tris up to the individual consumer,” Mathis said. “If they’re going to cross the border and buy illegal fireworks, they need to understand they can buy them there and use them there but once they cross into Illinois, they become illegal.”

If someone would like to hold a fireworks display legally, the Illinois Fire Marshal’s Office approves several applications every year for public and private displays, said Carbondale Fire Chief John Michalesko. City officials must approve an application as well, and the city does not allow for private licenses, he said.

For those tired of sparklers and smoke bombs, The Carbondale Lions Club will sponsor a fireworks display held at the Abe Martin Field, south of the SIU Arena, 9 p.m. Friday.

Justin Lange can be reached at 518-3311 ext. 258 or at jlangd@eiu.edu.
V O I C E S

PAGE 6 • THURSDAY, JULY 3, 2008

TWO MINUTES OF TRUTH

When you think about the time our employers take from us on a daily basis when they assign you overtime or give you those daunting tasks that take extra time, you may not think about the fact that they control your time. When you think about it, we are just as guilty as other countries.

When parents no longer have a conscious thought about eye contact, the warmth of a hearty hug or handshake is so important in establishing and maintaining connections. The exchange of eye contact, the warmth of a hearty hug or handshake is so important in establishing and maintaining connections. What are we turning into? What kind of country uses religious threats in giving people “choices” of how they live their lives, raise their children and spend their time?

Think about this.

Have you ever had the feeling that you stumbled upon something that was so profoundly impacting that it could actually change your life? If so...

After much thought, a few recommended books and several leadership summits, I came to a conclusion.

We are NOT free.

A long time ago, a document was signed that gave America its freedom. However, 232 years later, America still has not been given ours.

Before you go accusing me of being unpatriotic, allow yourself the time to continue reading with an open mind.

Think about this.

How many hours a day do you think the average American sits down in front of a television? In a 65-year life, that person will have spent 9 years glued to the tube. A.C. Nielsen Co., a marketing research company, tells us.

What could you do with this wasted time?

Think about the time our employers take from us on a daily basis when they assign you overtime or give you those daunting tasks that take extra time outside of work. Conversely, think about the fact that they control your time.

This is time that could be spent working on a part-time project that would decrease your reliance on that job as your sole source of income.

This is precious time that we can never get back. And to think of all the parents out there that do not spend enough time with their children.

Kate Lorenz of CareerBuilder.com reports that 37 percent of working dads would quit if his spouse or partner could support the family. Do you know any of these dads? Are you one of these dads?

This same time could be spent reading a book or listening to information that could help you become more positive.

Despite the survey on happiness done by World Value Surveys saying the United States ranks 16 out of 52, the everyday person you run into is still insanely negative.

Think about it.

Think about the addiction to cellular phones that has risen in popularity over the last few years. People do not even talk any more; they just text.

Again, do not get me wrong. I text a little here and there as well, but it should not be a substitute for that person-to-person interaction.

I will admit it: sometimes I drive like an old man. I try to follow the speed limit and obey the rules of the road. I am courteous to other drivers and let them pull in front of me when there is a line or if they are trying to get over.

Most importantly, I use my turn signal to indicate my intentions, which seems to becoming a lost art nowadays. Being a conscientious driver, one of the biggest challenges for me was getting used to the way people drive in southern Illinois, especially Carbondale.

I’m not sure if southern Illinois has different traffic laws than the rest of the state, but it sure seems that way.

Anytime I drive just south of Carbondale are not afraid to drive like an idiot and driving like an idiot and turning driving through Carbondale into the total NASCAR experience saves you what, like one minute, thirty-eight seconds in your trip from Wal-Mart back home?

Some of the dangerous areas I have found are anywhere near the tracks, the four-way stop on Grand Avenue and Lewis Lane and the University & College intersection, just to name a select few.

Crosswalks ultimately could be the most dangerous areas for people to use as a result of the “Speedy Gonzales”-like driving habits of most drivers within the area. I have seen students almost get hit in the Recreation Center crosswalk on an almost weekly basis.

The rest of the campus isn’t safe either, as this has been a big problem over the past few years. In a town as small as Carbondale, it does not take very long to get anywhere.

The city itself is only about 12 square miles large so getting from point A to point B should not take very long.

Next time you hop into the car, relax, chill out and slow down for crying out loud, or else you could land yourself in some trouble.

I mean who actually wants to hit a pedestrian, get into a fender-bender or get to kick me not.

That is why I drive like an old man.

Fruth is a graduate student in curriculum & instruction.

Mission Statement
The Daily Egyptian, the student-run newspaper of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, is committed to being a trusted source of news, information, community and public discourse, while helping readers understand the issues affecting their lives.

Quote of the Day
“The people who can least afford this are getting hit the worst.”

Glen Falk
read pricing manager at the Oil Price Information Service, on the effect of soaring gas prices on rural residents.
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3 Bedroom townhouse, 1 block from the University, $400 with all utilities, call (618) 745-7362.

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3 Bedroom apartment, 1 block from the University, heat, air, electricity, washer & dryer, 2 bathrooms, 1st floor, very clean, $300.

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2 Bedroom, 1 bath apartment, 2 blocks from the University, heat, air, washer and dryer, parking, $400.

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2 Beds, 1 Bath, 2nd floor, 4608 2nd Ave., $450, includes utilities, gas, water, very clean, call (618) 531-7200.

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2 Bedroom townhouses, heat, air, washer and dryer, 661-2nd Ave., very clean, $400.

3 Bedroom Apartments

3 Bedroom Townhouses

3 Bedroom Townhouse, 1 block from the University, heat, air, washer and dryer, parking, $500.

4 Bedroom Apartments

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5 Bedroom Apartments

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Sudoku

**Sudoku by The Mepham Group**

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

**Sudoku Brought to you by:**

**Girls and Sports**

**by Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein**

**THE Daily Crossword**

**Edited by Wayne Robert Williams**

**Wednesday's Puzzle Solver**

**ACROSS**

1. Monroe's rival — 6. Times rival
11. Make lace — 14. 6:00
15. Robbery — 16. Expression of confusion
17. Start of a quiq — 19. Pride in unusual

**DOWN**

7. Longish hair — 8. Take a chair

**exceptions to:**

5. Star-shaped
6. Storage
7. Longish
8. Take a chair
9. Some crystals
10. "The Stunt Man" star

**THE Jumble**

Unscramble these four Jumbles to form four ordinary words.

**Answers tomorrow**

**The Duplex**

**by Glenn McCoy**

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**HUNGRY?**

check out the online menu at...

**DAILY EGYPTIAN**

Thursday, July 3, 2008

**Girls and Sports**

I'M GONNA TEXT THAT GIRL I MET LAST NIGHT.

WHY DON'T YOU CALL HER?

BECAUSE, JOANNE, I DON'T HAVE TO TALK TO HER.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK TO THE GIRL, THEN WHY DO YOU WANT TO DATE HER?

DON'T LOOK AT ME, YOU GOT YOURSELF INTO THIS MESS.

**Girls and Sports**

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DON'T LOOK AT ME, YOU GOT YOURSELF INTO THIS MESS.
"Dance Crew" misses a beat

‘Dance Crew’ misses a beat

Amber Fijolek

There’s no reality like the realization of a dream. Today’s version of “Star Search” is divided into individual reality TV talent shows designed to capture the American journey to stardom. As watching countless entries confidant vocalists belted out Whitney Houston remake on “American Idol” grows tedious, the draw for dance competition is at high demand.

That may be why producers have made dance the new talent to watch, and last season of “Randy Jackson Presents America’s Best Dance Crew” may be the reason for this season’s craze, which began three weeks ago.

The third episode of the second season airs tonight. Thank goodness for that, considering how many times viewers have seen repeats of past episodes without the constant 24-hour rule in between whatever other marathons MTV overplays.

Dancing their way onto the small screen in this televised talent competition are twelve “crews” of four to 10 nonprofessional entertainers who use more street moves than skill.

Like any other talent competition, one crew a week is booted off by an uneven combination of viewer polls and judge commentary. It is a familiar formula, but after someone who can keep any deserving crew from their dreams with a day’s worth of computer clicks by voting for their hometown heroes. Each week sees Darwin, host, Mario Lopez, brings aborning shonky commentary as filler to an already filled-up presentation of routines America has falsely labeled “dance.” The familiar face may have looked good during his “Season” by the Bell’s days, but his fluffly rhetoric becomes an ear-wore upon the hour-long show’s finish.

The show is as boring as it is enthralling — each fast-paced, trick-packed act is ushered in with lengthy, sappy background tales of each crew’s musical origins in completing its tasks. The min-biographies capture the day circumstances the dancers face in overcoming challenges, but when it comes down to showtime, some faces are on and the flawless combinations pop turns, pict, good, break, and drop it like hot. Granted, these are no mundane tasks, but any chore takes a little sweat — and the judges know it.

Critique by N Sync’s JC Chasez, oppor Lil’ Mama and cheerleader Shane Sparks for the most part deals out more punch on the back than harsh criticism, unlike judges from other hit dance competitions such as NBC’s “So You Think You Can Dance.” Instead of technique they praise stunts and “fear factor.” Snarled showdowns can certainly be oversaturated and other dance elements traditionally considered to be merited worthy. Regardless of their inconsistently and poorly valued judgments, Chaunce, Lil’ Mama and Sparks are crowd favorites with their sensational syntax and outrageous style.

Do not misunderstand: the dance numbers will surely captivate, especially in the coming weeks after some of the not-so-good crews have been weeded out. However this amateur one-dimensional representation is really just a taste of what truly amazing dancing is.

This show pales in comparison to the later weeks’ talent of “So You Think You Can Dance.” A third- ranked dance troupe at almost any national dance competition at the high school or collegiate age- level would out these dancers and their routines to shame — not to mention the professional teams busy with master workshops and shops to booted with reality TV.

It is the best exhibit of the exceptional art, but not the worst entertainment prime-time TV can offer. The show’s shortcomings have been overlooked as the show promises a new hour of alluring amusement every week. If you’re sick of “American Idol” and looking for a new competition to tune into (or out of), check it out tonight.

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Stop Making Sense still makes sense

Chris McGregor

"Hi, I got a tape I wanna play," says Talking Heads frontman David Byrne.

What follows these simple words is art in its highest form — the Talking Heads concert film. "Stop Making Sense." The music slowly builds around Byrne (the driving force) and cultivates in a full-out funk jam involving several backing members from Parliament with the film’s highlights being the song “Burning Down the House,” “Life During Wartime” and “Once in a Lifetime.”

The film does not glorify any member but respects the fact that music is entertainment and the band members are musical gods. There is no emphasis on the crowd in the film; another missing element usually prominent in concert footage is the annoying ten-minute, glorified guitar solos. Instead, the film takes a look at the band as a whole. This must have been a relief to the consumer in 1984, a place in time when hair metal was replacing arena rock. Talking Heads removed the excess from rock music; used no props and dressed in simple clothes. The reason the film remains so popular is that the boundaries the band was pushing at the time are still fresh today. Bands still struggle with identity. Talking Heads had established their identity early on. They also pushed many creative boundar- ies unexplored until then; consid- ered to be one of the first “art rock” bands, Talking Heads practically invented the genre. Those boundar- ies were much more subtle and much more meaningful than perhaps Jim Morrison just wanting to be naked because he was a drugged idiot.

This film is similar to a good Corn Brothers film in the fact it contains no gimmicks. All the little things have been thought out care- fully and delivered perfectly.

It set the standard for creativity in not only music but in film. The band may be the last great pop group to push the boundaries of music since The Beach Boys or Bob Dylan.

The greatest thing about “Stop Making Sense” is not how influ- ential its is but how influenced the music is. The film starts as an acous- tic piece and finishes with a bit of everything. Watching the film is almost like watching the evolution of music. African rhythmic drum- ming which feels almost instinctual heavily influences the band’s work in the film.

For this reviewer, “Stop Making Sense” reinvigorated my hope in music. The fact this film can accomplish that two decades after its release is a testament to its stay- ing power and the band’s creativity.
Barry Bonds’ 756th home run ball arrived at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum Tuesday. Mark Ecko, who purchased the ball for more than $1.5 million, decided to unconditionally donate the ball to the hall for some speculation that he might just be tired of it for display. The hall accepted the donation and apparently will now display the baseball, which Ecko had branded with an asterisk to denote the dubious circumstances surrounding Bonds and the record. Bonds said he would boycott the Hall if they display the asterisk ball. What should be done to resolve this debate?

As a journalist and a fan of the game, I refuse to give that man and anything he has done any more words. He cheated the game, the fans that he had and most importantly himself. I do not care about that ball because until I have physical proof he did not cheat, his numbers mean nothing to me.

Bonds would be smart to boycott the Hall. It would save him the embarrassment when the all-time home-run record is not shown as a first-ball Hall of Fame. If he really wants to redeem himself, he should join Mark McGwire in teaching children the dangers of performance enhancing drugs. It could be just like that high school health class where they gather around a projector and show slides of their acne-ridden backs.

“T’int please with the progress,” Winkeler said. “Of course I would like us to get even better, but we’ve come a long way and now we’re competing with the teams at the top.”

The Salukis will have many new faces on the team this year, as the roster is filled to the brim with 16 players on the team.

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“T’ll take raw athletes and develop them into good volleyball players,” Laughlin said. “T’m pleased with the progress,” Winkeler said. “Of course I would like us to get even better, but we’ve come a long way and now we’re competing with the teams at the top.”

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Bonds should be forced to eat on a nation-wide tour some specula-tion, but it should be fun through.

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Ian Preston can be reached at idpreston@comcast.net.
Saluki coach has high hopes

Ian Preston

Head coach Brenda Winkeler is excited about what her team could do this fall. So much so, she believes this year’s team could be one of the best SUU has seen in a long time.

Winkeler believes her squad is not only good enough to make it back to the Missouri Valley Conference tournament, but also to compete in a conference that sent four teams to the NCAA tournament last season and finished last season with a 15-16 record and won only five of their last 17 matches.

“Anything can happen,” Winkeler said. “I think the key will be that we just don’t over think and improve upon what we did last year.”

Winkeler said she believes the difference this season will be that all six starters are returning and will have good depth behind them. Last season right side hitter Kristie Berwanger was so tiny. The Illini finished last season with a 15-16 record and won only five of their last 17 matches.

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