

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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Dreaming of dance



LAURA ROBERTS | DAILY EGYPTIAN

Southern Illinois Dance Company president Whitney Siemsglusz, a senior from Belleville studying human nutrition and dietetics, leads current and hopeful SIDC members in a dance number Tuesday at Furr Auditorium. Ten dancers participated in the audition process. Vice president Emilio Velez, a junior from Oak Park studying radio-television, said the turnout for the spring auditions was higher than he anticipated.

Council members discuss departure

TARA KULASH
Daily Egyptian

Twelve candidates look to fill three open City Council seats in April's election.

The council is composed of six members and the mayor. Terms are staggered, so three members are up for re-election every four years. There is no maximum number of terms allowed for a council member.

With Chris Wissmann and Corene McDaniel not seeking re-election this year, Lee Fronabarger is the sole council member trying to retain his seat in the race.

Wissmann, who has been a council member since 2003, said he believes his time is up.

"After a certain amount of time serving in public office, you reach a point where it's not working anymore," he said.

His favorite part of being a council member, he said, was having a vote and city influence.

"Being able to help make those decisions and seeing the impact of those decisions is just the best thing," he said.

Wissmann said he's excited to see how well some of the candidates fare in the election, especially because some of them are brand new to the race.

"Maybe someone will really surprise and delight me, and I hope they do," he said.

McDaniel, who has served on the council for 12 years, said she decided not to run again because she doesn't agree with the direction the group is headed. She said she has enjoyed her time as a member but is beginning to believe some council decisions have not been in Carbondale's best interest.

"Maybe it's time for a change, and I thought that it would be better for me to go out on a high and feel good about it," McDaniel said. "I think it's just time for me to move on and do some other things."

She said one of her favorite memories

was when she spearheaded the expansion of the council from five members to seven. McDaniel said a majority of quorum was only two members when there were five, so two members could not get together to discuss issues. With seven council members, a majority of quorum is three, so two members are allowed to get together discuss agenda items.

"That was a turning point, and I just appreciate that the other council members felt the same way," she said.

McDaniel said she hopes the new council members research items they vote on and listen to Carbondale citizens' needs.

Instead of being voted into the council like most members, Fronabarger was appointed by its members to fill Mayor Joel Fritzl's previous seat in May 2011. He will seek re-election this year.

Please see COUNCIL | 3

University Hall to house upperclassmen

TAI COX
Daily Egyptian

To accommodate student requests and suggestions, University Hall will be reserved strictly for students who meet age and upperclassmen criteria starting this fall.

Juniors, seniors, graduate students or any student 21-years-old or older will be eligible to contract for a room in the residence hall, said Crystal Bouhl, assistant director of marketing for University Housing. Residents will receive a double room at a single room rate as well as an optional Grinnell, Lentz and Trueblood

meal plan, she said.

Bouhl said the decision to create an upperclassmen residence hall came from junior and senior requests for single rooms, optional dining plans and privacy requests. For the past few years, two Neely Hall floors have been offered exclusively to upperclassmen, she said.

"University Hall was a natural fit due to its size, as well as the location, which is separate from our other halls," Bouhl said.

This semester, a Brush Towers or University Hall double room costs \$5,074 per year, and a single room costs \$8,022, according to the University Housing

website. A west campus double or triple room costs \$5,368 per year, and a single room costs \$8,486.

University Housing administration believes graduate students will find the housing option interesting since Southern Hills, the 60-year-old apartment complex, will be unavailable next year. Lisa Marks, associate director of University Housing, said in an October Daily Egyptian article maintenance costs have become too expensive to continue Southern Hills operations.

Please see HOUSING | 3

Greeks top GPA average

MATT DARAY
Daily Egyptian

University fraternities and sororities received higher fall semester grade averages than non-Greek students, according to a report released Jan. 16.

The report, which was released by the Greek Council, indicates the combined Greek GPA average was 2.87 last semester, an increase from 2.73 in fall 2011 and 2.80 in fall 2010. Jesse Cler, Inter-Greek Council president and senior from Penfield studying economics, said fraternities and sororities generally post higher GPAs than other campus members, but they performed exceptionally well in the fall semester.

"In order to be in a fraternity or sorority on campus, it requires at least 2.5 grade point averages," he said. "So we hold ourselves at a high standard for academics because that's the number one reason we're here at school."

All Greek life members are required to attend academic speaker presentations and are offered academic opportunities, such as study groups, by Inter-Greek Council academics sub-chairs, he said.

"We did even better than we have in the past, so we're very proud of that and we really worked hard on grades, meeting a lot of different standards and requirements to get those grades," Cler said.

Andy Morgan, fraternity and sorority life coordinator, said Greek pledges need a 2.5 GPA to join a fraternity or sorority, and members must uphold similar or improved results each semester. Fraternities and sororities provide structured academic programs, so studies are a weekly focus, he said.

"I think that's a testament that our fraternities and sororities are recruiting better students, and they're doing a better job educating their new members on academics," he said.

Morgan said the groups' average GPAs were the highest he has seen in the last three years. Pledges showed higher fall semester GPAs than most of last semester's initiated members.

Please see GREEKS | 3

GPA Averages for SIUC Greeks

Combined Greek average = 2.87
University average = 2.80
Sorority average = 2.87
All women at SIUC = 2.80
Fraternity average = 2.80
All men at SIUC = 2.73
Combined Greek initiated members average = 2.86
Combined Greek average for new members = 2.89

SABRINA IMUNDO | DAILY EGYPTIAN

SOURCE: SIU Fraternity and Sorority Life Website

AT&T to buy Alltel

Associated Press

DALLAS — AT&T Inc. said Tuesday that it has reached a deal to buy remnants of the Alltel wireless network for about \$780 million to boost its spectrum holdings in rural areas.

The Dallas-based phone company is buying the licenses, retail stores and network assets, along with about 585,000 subscribers, from Atlantic Tele-Network Inc. The news sent the Beverly, Mass.-based company's shares up \$4.73, or 12 percent, to \$44.10 in late afternoon trading. AT&T shares added 30 cents to \$33.74.

The network, operated under the Alltel brand, covers about 4.6 million people in mainly rural areas across six states — Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, North Carolina, Ohio and South Carolina. It generated revenue of about \$350 million for the first nine months of 2012.

Alltel was a wireless network that operated in 34 states until it was bought by Verizon Wireless in 2009. Federal regulators made

Verizon sell off parts of the network to AT&T and ATN.

Analyst Christopher King at Stifel Nicolaus observed that ATN bought its six-state holdings for \$223 million in 2010, meaning it more than tripled its money in three years.

AT&T said it expects that as it upgrades the network in the acquired areas, mobile Internet service will improve for both Alltel and AT&T customers. However, it will need to convert the cell towers from the "CDMA" technology Alltel uses to the "GSM" technology AT&T's network uses. That means Alltel subscribers will need new phones.

The deal remains subject to approval by the Federal Communications Commission and Department of Justice. The companies said they expect the deal to close in the second half of the year.

AT&T said it doesn't expect the cost of buying and integrating Alltel to significantly affect its earnings or cash flow.

CORRECTION

In Tuesday's edition of the DAILY EGYPTIAN, the article "SIU sweeps second place in Champaign" should have said senior thrower Kim Forney and sophomore Bradley Sauer led the team's field portion through the weekend with individual first-place finishes. The DAILY EGYPTIAN regrets the error.

About Us

The DAILY EGYPTIAN is published by the students of Southern Illinois University Carbondale 50 weeks per year, with an average daily circulation of 15,000. Fall and spring semester editions run Monday through Friday. Summer editions run Tuesday through Thursday. All intersession editions will run on Wednesdays. Free copies are distributed in the Carbondale and Carterville communities. The DAILY EGYPTIAN online publication can be found at www.dailyegyptian.com.

Mission Statement

The DAILY EGYPTIAN, the student-run newspaper of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, is committed to being a trusted source of news; information, commentary and public discourse, while helping readers understand the issues affecting their lives.

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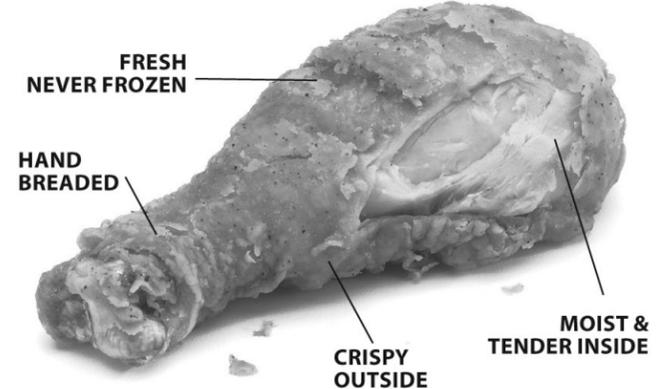


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Performing rhythmic puzzles



TIFFANY BLANCHETTE | DAILY EGYPTIAN

Southern Illinois West African Drum Ensemble members practice traditional West African songs and rhythms Monday at the Gaia House. From left to right, members include Sue Speers, of Carterville, Josh Buchheit, of Lick Creek, Tom Hensold, of Makanda, Larry Millard, of Makanda, and Brian Stanfield, of Carbondale. Speers said playing in the ensemble is fulfilling because it's a personal challenge and serious commitment. Stanfield said the djembes — the larger drums — and dounouns — the smaller hand drums — have a conversation throughout each song, and every drum must hold it together. "If you get it, you really want to get it and I was bit by the bug," Stanfield said. "It's a puzzle, like playing sudoku with sticks."

HOUSING

CONTINUED FROM 1

Jeremy Strabala, a two-year resident assistant senior from Streator studying architectural studies, said University Hall dining will close after the spring semester. Despite this, Strabala said University Hall's conversion is a good idea.

"I know several upperclassmen who have complained about having to share a dorm with freshmen who aren't mature or committed to school, so giving upperclassmen their own space is very necessary," Strabala said.

The single-room rate will help him financially as well, he said.

"I love having a single room and being able to have my privacy, so knowing I'll be able to pay less for it in the fall will be great," Strabala said.

Bouhl said freshmen and sophomore students who live in University Hall this year may move to other campus residence halls for fall if they want to remain in University Housing.

Tai Cox can be reached at tc Cox@dailyegyptian.com or 536-3311 ext 268.

GREEKS

CONTINUED FROM 1

Nicholas Simpson, Iota Phi Theta president and a senior from Homewood studying political science, said fraternities and sororities also manage their own requirements to achieve academic success. Simpson said his fraternity, which received the highest GPA average last semester, had two-hour study sections Mondays through Thursdays, and members attended at least twice a week. The fraternity kept an attendee record, he said, and students worked with non-fraternity members if they needed help studying.

Simpson said Greeks wanted to prove they can achieve good grades and use new initiatives to show the university their positive side.

"We're trying to put together a book club for students on campus, so the common reader and everyone can come together to think about higher reading or higher discussion," Simpson said.

Morgan said high GPA averages are nothing new with Greek groups, and the trend is likely to continue.

"Research shows that when students are involved in campus organizations, they typically have higher than average grade point averages," he said. "Our students who are involved with fraternities and sororities back that research."

COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM 1

City Manager Kevin Baity said if 13 or more people run for positions, be a primary election must be held to bring the number to six candidates. There were originally 14 in the running, but two candidates dropped so a primary won't be necessary.

"I was surprised to see the two drop that did," he said. "Not often

do people drop."

In order to file a petition to run for council, Baity said candidates must have a number of signatures equal to 1 percent of the total votes cast at the prior mayoral election.

The new members will take office at the first council meeting in May, Baity said. The annual city budget will have been completed shortly before, so council members won't have to deal with budget issues for another eight months after, he said.

New members will have to attend a one-day training conference by the Illinois Municipal League, Baity said, which will teach them basic conduct guidelines for elected officials such as what can be discussed in a closed meeting.

Baity said the council will see a smaller May and June meeting agenda because of the budget creation.

One thing candidates need to know, he said, is that it takes four

of the seven members to get agenda items approved, so they will need to convince others to vote their way.

"A lot of times I encourage them: Don't try to come in and change the world," Baity said. "More times than not, they might create some divide among themselves and the ones who have been there."

He said new council members should try to work well with the rest of the group and gain a consensus on as many items as possible so their

term can run smoothly.

The 12 April election candidates are Blaine Tisdale, Brent Ritzel, Carolin Harvey, Lee M. Fronabarger, Jessica C. Bradshaw, Navreet S. Kang, William Graham, Jerrold Hennrich, Luke L. Adams Jr., Karim H. Abdullah, Tony D. Holsey and Pepper Holder.

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	Salsa	7:00-8:00 p.m.
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	Thai Box	7:00-8:00 p.m.
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Conference at a glance

DEMARIO PHIPPS-SMITH
Daily Egyptian

Tied for First



Creighton (17-2, 6-1): Junior forward and preseason All-American Doug McDermott is among the nation's leading scorers with 457 total points this season. The highly regarded player is also the team's second-leading rebounder (7.2). Senior center Gregory Echenique has been a productive post presence for the Jays as he averages 7.4 rebounds from the front court. The team's lone loss came Saturday at the hands of Wichita State, the No. 2 team in the Missouri Valley Conference.



Wichita State (17-2, 6-1): The Shockers have outplayed their preseason expectations and look to make a run for an NCAA tournament berth. WSU has yet to lose a game (11-0) at Charles Koch Arena or on neutral courts (2-0). Junior forward Cleanthony Early has been a solid offensive force all season, as he averages 15 points per game and shoots just under 50 percent from the field. Senior forward Carl Hall leads the team in rebounds (8.3), and senior center Ehimen Orukpe is the team's leading shot blocker with 38 rejections halfway through the conference schedule.

Indiana State (12-6, 5-2): The Sycamores haven't rebounded extremely well yet, but they've shot 44 percent from the field and 70 percent from the free throw line as a team. Junior guard Jake Odum leads the team in scoring (14.2 per game), assists (81), and steals (27).



Bradley (12-7, 4-3): The Braves have compiled a 9-2 home conference record behind the back-court Walt Lemon Jr. and Dyrucus Simms-Edwards combo. The defense-minded duo leads the team with 62 steals on the season and is the second-highest scoring player with 11.8 points per contest. Lemon Jr. leads the team in scoring (13.8 points) and assists (72).

Evansville (11-8, 4-3): The Purple Aces are the conference's biggest surprise so far. Senior forward Colt Ryan has been exploding offensively with an average of 17 points per contest and leads the offense. The Aces' guard Ned Cox has been on a 3-point shooting tear lately and shoots 43 percent from deep this season.



Missouri State (5-14, 3-4): Coach Paul Lusk's squad hasn't fared well on the road this season, as they have won only one game away from JQH Arena in seven attempts this season. Three of the Bears' victories have been in-conference despite losses to inferior opponents from less competitive conferences, including an ugly Dec. 22 defeat by New Mexico State 71-51. Missouri State's lead scorer Anthony Downing (14.2 points per game) posted 24 points in back-to-back conference wins against Drake (Jan. 5) and Illinois State (Jan. 8). Downing is the only player to average double-digit points and is the second-leading rebounder on a bad rebounding Missouri State back court.

Northern Iowa (10-9, 3-4): The Panthers have an undefeated record at home during non-conference play because of their balance on offense. UNI has five players averaging more than 9.5 points per game this season. Guard Marc Sonnen has been excellent from behind the arc, as he's connected on 46 3-pointers for the year. The Panthers big man Jake Koch is the team's leading rebounder (6.4) and adds more than 10 points per game for the Northern Iowa post attack.



Drake (8-10, 2-5): The Bulldogs have struggled in away games this season. Despite the team's well-balanced offensive attack, there is only one player who averages double-digit points. The team's most productive player, senior forward Ben Simons, shoots 85 percent from the free-throw line and averages 14 points.

Illinois State (10-9, 1-6): The Redbirds were slated as the conference's No. 2 team coming into the season. ISU performed well earlier this season and accomplished a 9-3 non-conference record. Senior forward Jackie Carmichael has been one of the most dominant post players this season. Carmichael pulls 9.2 rebounds and 18 points per game. Redbirds senior guard Tyler Brown has shot well from the field (43 percent) and the free throw line (80 percent), but he shoots less than 34 percent from 3-point range. Illinois State won its first conference game of the season against the Salukis Sunday in Carbondale.



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THEIR WORD

Imagining immigration reform

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Most of the nation's many parts — voters, the Supreme Court, lawmakers and the president — all have agreed in one way or another about the value that immigrants bring to the nation.

What they haven't agreed on is reforming the nation's immigration laws. But they're getting closer.

The sticking point is the thorny problem of what to do about the 11 million or more undocumented immigrants estimated to be living in the United States.

There are also concerns about the nation's borders and how to secure them.

Before the November election, the subject was off the table. Republican opposition to reform was just too strong. But that has changed since Latino voters sent a huge message to the Republicans that they were tired of the party's anti-immigration stance and then proceeded to give President Barack Obama 71 percent of their vote.

The growing power of the Hispanic vote has given the GOP cause to seek a more practical approach to immigration reform.

Republican Party leaders, such as newly elected Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, a Tea Party favorite, see the writing on the wall. And it isn't in English.

"If Republicans do not do better in the Hispanic community, in a few short years, Republicans will no longer be the majority party in our state," Mr. Cruz told Ryan Lizza of *The New Yorker* magazine.

As Mr. Cruz noted, the implications of that shift would reach far beyond Texas.

"In not too many years, Texas could switch from being all Republican to all Democrat. If that happens, no Republican will ever again win the White House," he said.

The data support that contention. With New York (which has 29 Electoral College votes) and California (with 55 votes) solidly in the Democratic column for the future, the GOP absolutely must have Texas' 38 electoral votes to reach the 270 necessary to elect a president.

Along with Mr. Cruz, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., is looking for a way to bring sense to immigration reform without distressing many in his party. And Latino leaders in the public sector have warned both parties that they are watching them.

Clarissa Martinez de Castro, the director of immigration policy at the National Council of La Raza, said recently that "Republicans must demonstrate a reasoned approach to start to rebuild their relationship with Latino voters (and) Democrats must demonstrate they can deliver on a promise."

Mr. Obama and Senate Democrats are expected to propose a comprehensive plan to overhaul the system that will include a path to citizenship for most of the undocumented immigrants in the country.

The plan would not wipe the slate clean. It includes financial penalties — such as fines and the payment of back taxes — as well as other steps to obtain legal status.

Mr. Rubio came out with a reform plan of his own Tuesday. Acknowledging that the "immigration issue is a gateway issue for Hispanics," Mr. Rubio said his proposal is a "comprehensive package of bills" to address the problems.

His plan, which looks an awful lot like the president's, includes more access to legal status for highly skilled workers and a guest worker program for low-skilled workers. Mr. Rubio is also on the record in support of workplace enforcement and stronger border security.

Mr. Rubio said his plan does not include "blanket amnesty or a special pathway to citizenship" for undocumented immigrants. He said they would have to apply for legal status and meet the requirements necessary, but they would not have to return to their home countries to start the process.

The activity surrounding immigration also involves a bipartisan group of senators,

including Dick Durbin, D-Ill. and Republican Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, who are writing a bill they hope to introduce in March.

When Mr. Obama signed the pro-family, pro-jobs executive order in June that incorporated parts of Mr. Durbin's DREAM Act (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), some of the president's critics claimed it was a politically motivated move. If so, it worked.

Now that some Republican politicians have seen the reality of what their opposition meant for their political futures, they are no longer moaning about the president's action.

Closer to home, Illinois legislators passed a bill last week to grant temporary driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. It suggests that common sense immigration policies are on the rise.

The combination of political practicality, moral responsibility and reality in the shape of 11 million people, has given momentum to making immigration reform a reality. It's time to treat immigrant families with the respect and dignity they deserve, to allow them to continue to strengthen our workplaces and economy and to help them provide better futures for their children.

The truth is, they are here to stay.

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Letters and guest columns must be submitted with author's contact information, preferably via email. Phone numbers are required to verify authorship, but will not be published. Letters are limited to 400 words and columns to 500 words. Students must include year and major. Faculty must include rank and department. Others include hometown. Submissions should be sent to opinion@dailyegyptian.com.

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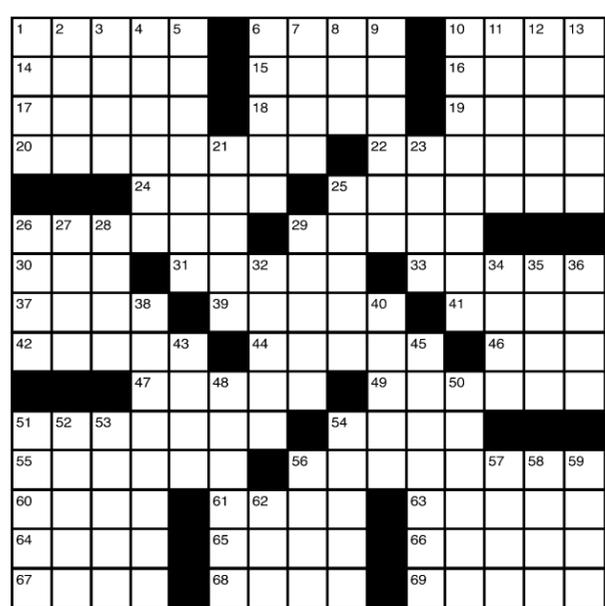
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Crossword

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Jacqueline E. Mathews

- ACROSS**
- High __; baby's kitchen seat
 - Native of Aberdeen
 - __-bodied; fit
 - Row of shrubs
 - Bananas
 - Sketch
 - Actor Jeremy
 - Gal., qt. & pt.
 - Voice amplifier
 - Certain
 - Black eye
 - Small flaps
 - Wobbles
 - Valuable holdings
 - Surround and assail
 - Sorority letter
 - Spine-chilling
 - Good buys
 - Ending musical passage
 - __ Korea; neighbor of China
 - Faucet problem
 - Personnel
 - Each __; one another
 - Actress Lupino
 - Sudden burst of light
 - Home for William & Kate
 - Opposite of freshest
 - Alpha's follower
 - Quarrels
 - Giving alms
 - Weathercock
 - Creative notion
 - Part of the leg
 - Genesis home
 - Scorch
 - Kick out
 - Take a nap
 - Bills with Hamilton's face
 - Office furniture



- DOWN**
- __ in; contribute
 - Main character in a story
 - Hubbubs
 - Set on fire
 - Say again
 - Poles and Czechs
 - Arrive
 - Sept.'s follower
 - Throws
 - Fessed up
 - Seawater
 - Los Angeles hoopster
 - Water jugs
 - Playwright Henrik __
 - Pay attention to
 - Molars, e.g.
 - Rainbows
 - Injection
 - Fountain order
 - Give __; have a baby
 - Perch
 - Parched
 - Venetian beach
 - Reach across
 - Wealthy
 - __ of Troy
 - Run away
 - Turned
 - Lend a hand
 - Original inhabitant
 - Pack rat
 - Exchange
 - Actress __ Moorehead
 - Wild hogs
 - College official
 - Long-legged bird with a curved bill
 - In the __ of time; almost too late
 - Prison guns
 - Cee's follower

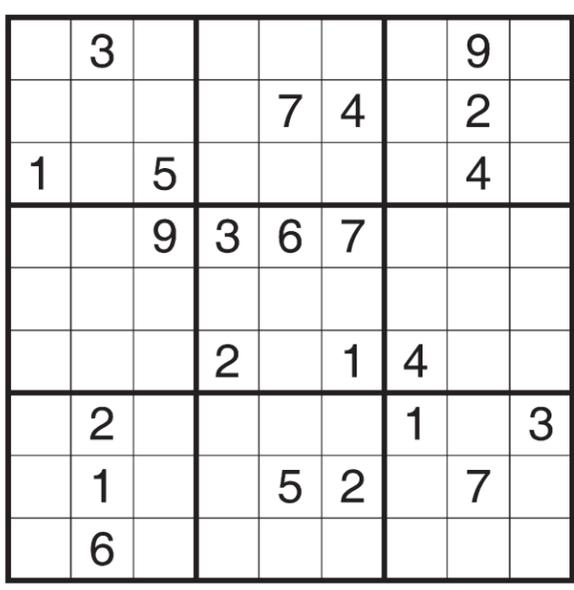
Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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Level: 1 2 3 4

Tuesday's Answers:

9	7	2	8	4	1	6	5	3
6	8	1	5	9	3	7	2	4
4	3	5	7	6	2	1	9	8
2	4	9	3	7	5	8	1	6
7	6	8	1	2	9	3	4	5
5	1	3	4	8	6	9	7	2
3	9	7	2	5	8	4	6	1
1	2	6	9	3	4	5	8	7
8	5	4	6	1	7	2	3	9

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

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.
 MIXED UP BY:

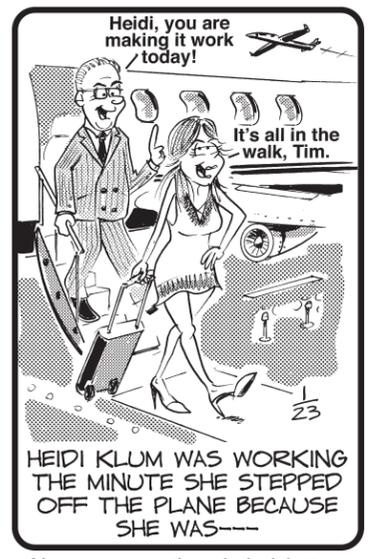
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GLEPED
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NOYRED
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○



Answer: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Tuesday's Answers: PLUME ABATE SNEAKY SNITCH
 The doctor would recover from his injuries if he could — BE PATIENT

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Aries — Today is a 7 — Communication is key; luckily it comes easily right now. Don't sell yourself short, as there's far more to you than you give yourself credit for. Travel virtually.

Taurus — Today is a 6 — You're especially creative with your money-making capabilities. Others are impressed. Find a way to increase your savings. Pinch yourself to see if you're dreaming.

Gemini — Today is a 9 — Go for what you want, making certain that's really where you want to be. A temporary rush of overwhelm brings out your creativity. Outwit the competition.

Cancer — Today is a 5 — There's no need to fight, as you both see the path to follow. You're learning quickly. A traveler from distant lands inspires. Continue to invest in family.

Leo — Today is a 9 — Your optimism is attractive; keep it up. Embrace the contributions that your friends are to you and your quality of life. You get more by giving. There's good news from far away.

Virgo — Today is a 6 — Consult an expert, then trust your intuition to solve the puzzle. Say more about what you need, and what you need to hear. Support your team.

Libra — Today is an 8 — Start by realizing how much you have to learn. You can maximize your career, and your welfare. Keep most of what you know secret, for now.

Scorpio — Today is a 6 — Stick to your good judgement. Let people know what you need, emotionally or financially. It's a good time to ask for money. Send out bills.

Sagittarius — Today is an 8 — When in doubt, count your blessings, again. Don't be afraid to ask for what you want, and find support around you, near and far. Express your love in words and pictures.

Capricorn — Today is an 8 — Quick thinking wins, but you're going to need the stamina. Get plenty of rest and eat healthy. Exercise also helps get your ideas flowing. Get help building your dream.

Aquarius — Today is an 8 — Your creative juices are flowing. There may be a tendency to want to stop the flood. Let yourself run with the ideas instead. Make a long-distance call for additional benefits.

Pisces — Today is a 9 — Talk about dreams for the future and then get into action. Spreading the word helps find supporters. Keep an important appointment. Love finds a way.

Bouncing back from injury



LAURA ROBERTS | DAILY EGYPTIAN

Senior diver Anna Beeck practices on a trampoline Tuesday in the Dr. Edward J. Shea Natatorium. The swim team is preparing for Saturday's meet at Washington University in St. Louis. Beeck will compete in her first meet after a two-month absence because of a broken hand. "I'm scared, but excited," she said.

TENNIS

Doubles pair nationally recognized

TERRACE PEACOCK Daily Egyptian

Seniors Anastacia Simons and Melanie Delsart have known each other for four years. They lived in the same residence hall since they were freshmen and now share an apartment together.

They also share the achievement of being the second doubles pair in Saluki history to earn a national rank from the Intercollegiate Tennis Association.

According to the ITA, the duo is ranked No. 5 in the central region and No. 36 nationally.

The two have chemistry off of the tennis court, and they use that chemistry to trump the competition on the court. Delsart and Simons have won 11 of their first 12 season matches.

Coach Audra Nothwehr said Simons and Delsart have become very familiar with each other, so it didn't take any time for the tandem to play well as doubles partners.

"It usually takes doubles teams at least a whole fall semester to get that chemistry that they had," she said.

Nothwehr said it took the duo a couple of matches, and she knew they would excel after they started to play better competition.

"After the first couple of matches I was like, 'Wow! This is really going to work,'" she said.

Simons credits their four-year SIU experience as a reason they have played so well this year.

"As you play matches, you learn more of what you are doing wrong and what you are doing right," she said. "Then you can apply that to your practice and hopefully

learn from that as you go forth."

Simons said the two complement each other well on the court. She said one player thrives in a quality the other might lack, which makes them a very dangerous combination.

"I know Melanie is very aggressive from the back and she likes to hit power shots from the back," she said. "I like being up at the net and trying to finish off the point, so we kind of set each other up."

Delsart also earned a singles ITA regional ranking for the second consecutive year. Delsart, the 19th ranked tennis player in the ITA central region, said the two are close and their friendship corresponds with how well they play on the court.

"We're like sisters," she said. "We fight, we argue, but then the next day we just laugh about it."

Senior Jennifer Dien has played with Simons and Delsart for four years and is also roommates with the two.

Dien said the duo's success has set the tone for the rest of the team to play better.

She said the pair has given the rest of the team a good image to imitate, making the team hungry to share the same success as Simons and Delsart.

"They both are very hard workers and they both are determined and committed to what they want to do and how they want to make themselves better and the team better," Dien said.

This is Simons and Delsart's last season at SIU and their goal is to finish their career with a conference championship.

The two will continue their quest for a conference championship Friday at Lindsey Wilson College in Louisville, Ky.



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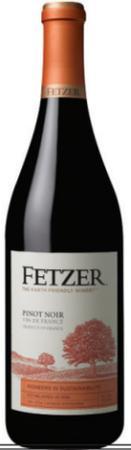
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