Private employees at SIU receive public pensions

KARSTEN BURGSTAHLER Daily Egyptian

The only physical evidence of Michael Jacoby on SIU’s campus is a mailbox.

Technically, Jacoby and six other university employees — Brent Clark, Jason Leath, Sara Boucek, Julie Weichert, Alison Maley and Susan Bertrand — share the same office, Pullman 131, within the main office for the university’s Higher Education program.

The seven work for three different off-campus organizations: Clark and Boucek work for the Illinois Association of School Administrators, Leath, Weichert and Maley work for Illinois Principals Association, and Jacoby and Bertrand work for Illinois Association of School Business Officials.

But while the seven are off campus, their job is to work with the university as outreach consultants and bring students in to the College of Education. Clark said the group is excited to implement programs to achieve that goal.

“...I can guarantee if we keep taking chance,” he said. “Because I think a lot of people in this community, their job is to work with the university to solve the economic woes. "Frankly, I’m at a point that, and I think a lot of people in town are, where we just start taking chance,” he said. “Because if we don’t take a chance and try to get something going, we’re never going to get anywhere. And I can guarantee if we keep heading where we’ve been going, with city policy and university policy for the last 20 years, we’re going to continue down the same exact path we’ve been on.”

Please see RESEARCHERS · 4

Piccolo performance

LEWIS MARIEN · DAILY EGYPTIAN

Jan Gippo performs a rendition of Robert Beaser’s “Souvenirs” on the piccolo Monday at the Old Baptist Foundation Recital Hall. The School of Music organized the event that featured renditions performed by both Gippo and his wife Jane Carl on clarinet. Gippo was a piccolo and flute teacher at the Old Baptist Foundation Recital Hall.

The committee raised a discussion only when an increase for student insurance was brought up. Student Insurance would increase by 7.9% and would raise the fees by $52 a semester.

“First of all, this discussion needs to encompass a much larger issue,” he said. “Not only do we need additional revenue and funds to balance the yearly operating budget, but we need additional funds for community investment projects.”

Please see GPSC · 3

Budget woes plague city council

SETH RICHARDSON Daily Egyptian

The Carbondale City Council met Tuesday to discuss the city’s upcoming budget problems.

City Manager Kevin Baity read his preliminary budget report to the council and said the city is looking at a $731,000 budget shortfall. Baity said the city is looking at the roughly the same revenue, but an increase in expenditures through pensions, preexisting labor contracts and utility costs, among others, left the city in a deficit. Acting Mayor Don Mony said solving the budget crisis was going to take some sacrifice.

“This is a tough decision for the city council to have to face,” he said. “On the one hand, we have to balance — I’m trying to be careful with my choice of words here — the evil of raising taxes versus, on the other hand, the very unpleasant situation of reducing funding to our services.”

The council discussed several options including raising the sales tax, property tax, hotel and motel tax and cutting some community programs.

Councilman Lance Jack said the council is not doing enough to encourage business and development in the community. He said there were several ordinances and laws the council imposed over the last 10 years — such as the cap on liquor licenses and number of operable bars between Mill Street and Walnut Avenue — which drive away business and commerce.

“Frankly, I’m at a point that, and I think a lot of people in town are, where we just start taking chance,” he said. “Because if we don’t take a chance and try to get something going, we’re never going to get anywhere. And I can guarantee if we keep heading where we’ve been going, with city policy and university policy for the last 20 years, we’re going to continue down the same exact path we’ve been on.”

Please see COUNCIL · 2

GPSC votes on student fee increases

ADIE APPLIGATE Daily Egyptian

Graduate Professional Student Council voted on proposed student fee increases Tuesday night in Lawson Hall.

“Only four fee increases were passed by the student body. Facilities maintenance, night transit, information technology and the Student Health Center fee increases we all approved. Facilities maintenance passed with an increase of 2.7 percent, or $6, with 16 in favor, one against and one abstention. Night transit passed with an increase of 2.4 percent, or $1.08, with 15 in favor, two against and one abstention. The Student Health Center passed with an increase of 1.9 percent, or $4, with 14 in favor and four against. Information technology passed with an increase of 4.5 percent, or $3.60, with 13 in favor, three against and two abstentions.

The committee raised a discussion only when an increase for student insurance was brought up. Student Insurance would increase by 7.9% and would raise the fees by $52 a semester.

“First of all, this discussion needs to encompass a much larger issue,” he said. “Not only do we need additional revenue and funds to balance the yearly operating budget, but we need additional funds for community investment projects.”

Please see GPSC · 3

Mississippi River research
See Pg 4

Piccolo master on campus
See Pg 6

Women prepare for MVC
See Pg 12
Illinois lawsuit worries watchdog groups

SOPHIA TAREEN
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — While a federal lawsuit against Illinois Treasurer Dan Rutherford has publicized salacious sexual harassment allegations, government watchdog groups say the lawsuit’s claims of political corruption are just as worrisome as the Republican campaigns for governor.

Rutherford, who has strongly denied allegations leveled by a former employee, is locked in a four-way Republican primary. He spent Tuesday — the day after the lawsuit’s filing — countering the claims in radio appearances. He maintained the suit is a politically motivated ploy meant to hurt his campaign weeks ahead of the March 18 contest.

In the lawsuit, Edmund Michalowski, a former lawyer and director in Rutherford’s office, alleges a “long-standing pattern” of being forced to engage in political activity while working for the state.

Even the hint of such political corruption could taint Rutherford ahead of the primary, and it raises troubling questions, experts say, especially in a state where two former governors — George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich — have gone to prison for corruption.

“It’s the question of appearance and it really wears on the voters,” said Doug O’Brien, who was chief aide to U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., while he was an Illinois congressman.

“The voters of Illinois are just so tired of having to put up with a lower standard for ethics among their elected officials.”

According to the lawsuit, Rutherford allegedly demanded Michalowski organize petition drives and parades, solicit donations and constantly check his political email account while at work. Michalowski claims he was pressured ... or otherwise coerced into performing any political activity,” Rutherford said.

Employees such as Michalowski have volunteered to perform political activity on their own time and using their own resources.”

Details about the study of the company's question: "Where should concealed carry be allowed?"

A- I support concealed carry everywhere
B- I support concealed carry except on government property i.e. schools and parks
C- I support concealed carry except on government and commercial property i.e. private businesses
D- I do not support concealed carry

Visit www.dailyegyptian.com to vote
CONTINUED

The SIU debate team and debate teams from around the country are preparing for the biggest tournament of the year, the National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence.

Like the BCS National Championship for football, the NPTE is the national tournament for collegiate debate teams where the best of the best compete against each other for a national title. The NPTE will be held from Saturday, March 15 to Tuesday, March 18 at Northern Arizona University.

Going into this weekend, the debate team pairing of Benjamin Campbell and Joshua Rivera are ranked first in the nation according to the 2014 NPTE rankings and have already accepted a bid for this year’s NPTE.

Todd Graham, the director of debate for the university, will lead his top-ranked team into the Tourname nt of Excellence.

Some items not available in some stores. We reserve the right to limit quantities.
Louisiana is losing a football field worth of wetland each hour. Based on a U.S. Geological survey, coastal Louisiana has lost 16.5 square miles a year for the past 25 years, and one professor was chosen to evaluate and recommend scientific advice to save them. Loretta Battaglia, an associate professor of plant biology, was appointed to the Water Institute of the Gulf’s River Diversion Expert Advisory Panel.

The panel reviews and evaluates plans for feasible and sustainable sediment diversions designed to build new land and restore wetland habitat in coastal Louisiana. "Louisiana contains our nation’s largest wetland," she said. "It’s a beautiful, special place that we are losing rapidly." The panel will advise the project being partially funded with $35 billion from the BP Oil spill settlement. As for the money, she said it is being distributed to the project.

Battaglia said the overall cost of the 50-year project to dump the river is $50 billion but the organization does not yet have all the money. Various parts of the project will carry out over time.

The expert team then provided scientific advice about diversions and future planning to policy makers and those implementing the project on the ground. "The Mississippi River has migrated toward a lot in her floodplain and particularly where the river meets the sea," Battaglia said. "The river naturally moved around, seeking the closest route to the sea, and abandoning previously occupied lobes. Under natural conditions, this building and abandonment of lobes occurs on a several thousand-year cycle."

Louisiana’s lobes are former deltas that were built and abandoned by the river, and no longer replenish sediment. "The Mississippi diverts sediment away from the delta," Battaglia said. "This sediment is a growth factor for the organisms in the coastal marshes, which enables salt water to intrude, Battaglia said. She said all of these diversions add up to dramatic land losses in the area. So, you have salt water coming into the system, conversion to open water, and ultimately loss of all this habitat," she said. So, one of the approaches that has been suggested, and there have been a couple of early projects that have done this, is that we need to open some lobes, Battaglia said. "The idea is to initiate land building and offset ongoing land loss."

Battaglia said some members of the public, including commercial fishermen of the area, are concerned because the nutrient rich water from the river may alter habitats for many plants and animal species, some of which are economically valuable.

The local fishermen concerns are just a few of the many matters discussed during panel meetings. Millien said the meetings are public, so anyone may acquire the recommendations. "I assume that these will be some involvement of the public and the people of the state of Louisiana, and deciding on how this diversion issue will proceed," she said.

The panel had their inaugural meeting Jan. 8 and 9 in Baton Rouge, La. At the first meeting, they identified and discussed the uncertainties of the project. Panel members are appointed for three years, during which they meet three to four times each year.

"Our charge is being an advisory panel," Battaglia said, "Meaning we don’t make any decisions. All we can do is meet with the people who are involved in the planning and the implementation of the diversion. They present their plans to us and we ask a lot of questions, and we go into our panel meeting and discuss it."

She said there are 12 freshwater diversions in various stages of planning, implementation and operations.

Minello said there are several specifications to be appointed this position, and not living in Louisiana was one. Louis Achenbach, interim dean of the College of Science, said the panel is a handful of experts around the country. "This is a real honor for Loretta, but for the institution as a whole, to be part of a process that could result in policies for water use on the Mississippi," Achenbach said.

Battaglia said this is one of the biggest hydrologic restoration projects in the world.

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Football player in a league of his own

JACK ROBINSON

Daily Egyptian

For the first time in history, a future player in the National Football League came out as an open gay man.

Since Michael Sam, University of Missouri defensive end shared his sexual orientation it is questioned how teams will receive a gay player and how different the locker room will be for Sam now. Is the NFL too ‘macho’ for an openly gay player? This has rendered mixed emotions among athletes, journalists and other professionals who work in the sports industry.

Sam is not just some random NCAA player. He is an All-American defensive lineman from University of Missouri. He was named 2013 co-defensive player of the year in the Southeastern Football Conference, which is no doubt the nation’s strongest Division I football conference.

Sam came out to his teammates in August, before the 2013 football season began. Missouri went on to post an 11-2 overall record and went 7-1 in the SEC, which is a drastic improvement from a 5-7 seasonal record and a 2-6 SEC record just a year prior.

Sam posted career-high statistics with 11.5 sacks, 19 tackles for losses, two forced fumbles and 48 total tackles. He also played a major role in helping the Tigers to the 2013 SEC Championship game, where they lost to eventual NCAA runner-up, University of Auburn. The Tigers went on to grab a win in the 2014 Cotton Bowl Classic over former Big 12 conference rival Oklahoma State University.

If having an openly gay player in the locker room is supposed to kill camaraderie and team chemistry, why did the Missouri Tigers not show that?

Sam’s skill set and determination would undoubtedly make an impact on almost any NFL team. But NFL experts claim his announcement might negatively affect his draft status, and some NFL executives said that they believe he will not even be drafted because of the potential problems.

That seems absolutely absurd. Numerous players in professional sports have much bigger issues than Sam.

Aldon Smith, current San Francisco 49ers linebacker, and NFL All-Pro, was arrested in September 2013 for suspicion of driving under the influence and possession of marijuana when he crashed his car into another vehicle around 7 a.m. This was Smith’s second DUI offense in two years; he was arrested in January for a DUI in Miami Beach. A month after his September arrest, he was charged with three felony counts of illegal possession of an assault weapon, related to a 2012 incident.

The 49ers and Smith are expected to negotiate a lengthy contract extension this offseason, despite his legal troubles. To add another element, Smith, like Sam, was suspended for getting involved in a verbal altercation with a Texas Tech University fan and showing him during a game. He was issued a technical in the game, and suspended for three games after the Big 12 reviewed the situation.

One would think the incident would provide a great deal of concern for NBA executives when they consider drafting him. However, a football game is a battle, and there needs to be trust among soldiers as there are with athletes.

If a player thinks he or she has to hide their true identity on a yearly, monthly or even daily basis, where is the trust in that? Where is the camaraderie among teammates when a player has to be uncomfortable at all times just to avoid offending anyone?

Being gay is far from the other trials and tribulations he has had to go through in his life. Players are not objectified in the media or locker rooms for one’s political beliefs or religious preferences, and a right-minded individual would apply the same mentality to gay players.

Sam stresses he can make an impact on any NFL team with his skill set, and his numbers clearly back up his statements. Sam saw his older brother get shot and killed in front of his eyes, his second oldest brother went missing in 1998 and he was the last one to see him, and later identified his body.

Former NFL player Deion Sanders said in a tweet early Monday there are gay players in the NFL, they simply are not just open about it. Sanders is one of the best NFL analysts, and he has numerous relationships with players on every team. If anyone was to know if a player was gay, it is assumed Sanders would know.

There will hopefully come a day when players will not have to make a big ordeal over sexual orientation. It will simply just be a fact about them similar to their hometown or date of birth. It will not be a concern.

The best sports stories are usually about a team or individual overcoming adversity for a successful outcome. This truly is a story about overcoming adversity. However, Michael Sam’s story has just begun.

M ichael stated with great poise and confidence who he is as a person and football player and I have tremendous respect for him in the way he conveyed his thoughts and the courage it took to state them publicly.

— Phil Emry, Chicago Bears General Manager
Follow your DE Pulse writers @kburgstahler_DE and @saundersfj

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

Pulse

Painting through perception

Kerra Taylor, a doctoral candidate in art and design from Warsaw, Mo., finishes a painting Monday at the Glove Factory. Taylor said the painting is one of the art pieces she will present in the department’s annual review Feb. 21 in the Surplus Gallery. The piece represents her personal life and childhood, she said. “Whenever I finish a painting I am always my biggest critique,” she said. “Finding your comfort zone in your work is important.”

After a brief intermission, Carl performed solo on “Scholastic” with the intro “Fast, Aggressive, Driving, Dramatic,” a song which certainly lives up to its name. The next pieces followed suit: “Flowing, Singing,” “Fast, Abrasive, Contentious” and “Slow, Lyrical Expressive.” Gippo took the stage again to perform the piece “Spindrift” accompanied by piano. The harmonies built and broke away in haunting and serene melodies. The tempo began to race and roll into haunting dynamics and finally into a graceful and playful characteristic. The piccolo bounded through varying sounds and escalated with ease around the keyered harmony.

As the evening concluded, the duo presented their fullest composition “Wild Flowers,” comprised of “Dense Blazing Star,” “Missouri Primrose” and “Mexican Hat.” The polyphonic tempo sang as if flowered petals were bird-broken and blown into the wind. Gippo and Carl created a billowing harmony of piccolo, clarinet and piano rhythms, intermingling and changing notes with beautiful effortlessness. Our could imagine the piccolo and clarinet as the beautiful and flowing flora while the background piano served as the soothing and billowing wind.

The evening was an oasis of melodic waves, clean currents of harmonic high notes with the occasional undertow from key bass notes in a subtle breathing symphony. I just do it because I love it and I try to find the music and present it,” Gippo said.

Carl said the duo will perform the program again in a few weeks at Oklahoma University in Stillwater, Okla.

Jake Saunders can be reached at jsaunders@dailyegyptian.com, on Twitter @saundersfj or 536-3311 ext. 254.

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Street music welcome

ADIE APPLEGATE
Daily Egyptian

Carbondale sidewalks may soon be filled with musical talent.

In a Feb. 2 press release, former Mayor Joel Fritzler invited street musicians to perform in public areas. Musicians are allowed to play non-amplified instruments and accept donations while keeping the sidewalks clear.

Fritzler said in the press release he wanted to support the arts as part of reviving downtown Carbondale.

Carbondale Mayor Don Monty said he welcomes those who wish to display their musical talent on Carbondale’s sidewalks.

“Someone who is on the public right of way who is singing or playing an unamplified instrument and not disrupting businesses or the public is not a problem,” he said. “It could be a good thing for some businesses. This may bring more consumers to businesses that have street musicians outside of them.”

Businesses have the right to deny the musicians if it interferes with their customers or sales. Chawk Somkroot, manager of Carbondale Cycle, said the musicians could be a welcome addition for the store.

“As long as they do not interfere with customers then they are welcome around here,” he said. “I think it could bring more customers, which is always good.”

Monty said while musicians can accept donations, they are not allowed to solicit them.

“The city has tried to differentiate between panhandling and street musicians,” he said. “Street musicians are seen as a cultural expression, whereas panhandling can be seen as a commercial enterprise. A musician cannot outwardly ask for money or other forms of donation. They can, however, have a violin box open or a hat with a ‘Please Donate’ sign. It’s tightly constrained as to how you can do it.”

Panhandling is still prohibited in Carbondale.

Monty said musicians will create a vibrant atmosphere for downtown Carbondale and show an appreciation for artists.

“My life has been in Carbondale for over 40 years and street musicians have always been a part of downtown,” he said. “They bring atmosphere to people and show art in different cultural forms. It’s been welcome for decades and is a historical part of Carbondale. If people want to sing while they’re walking down the street and they’re not disturbing those around them or traffic, then why not let them share their talent.”

Adie Applegate can be reached at aapplegate@dailyegyptian.com or 561-5311 ext. 251

Remembering Shirley Temple’s moments

SUSAN KING
Los Angeles Times

Shirley Temple Black, 85, who died Monday at her home in Woodside, Calif., sang and danced away Depression-era blues in a series of 1930s heartwarming musicals.

Some of the top composers of the day including Richard Whiting, Harry Revel, Mack Gordon and Jimmy McHugh penned the songs for her uplifting films. She worked alongside legendary performers such as song-and-dance man Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Alice Faye, Jack Haley, Bert Lahr, Joan Davis, Buddy Ebsen and Frank Morgan.

Temple’s best known songs are “On the Good Ship Lollipop” from 1934’s “Bright Eyes,” and “Animal Crackers in My Soup,” but it’s one of the highlights of the film.

“Polly Wolly Doodled”: Temple’s best on-screen musical partner was Robinson. A tap virtuoso, the two shine in “Polly Wolly Doodled” from 1935’s “Curly Top,” but her films were filled with memorable tunes, including: “Baby, Take a Bow.” Temple is at her most adorable performing this tune from one of her earliest films, 1934’s “Stand Up and Cheer!”

“When I Grow Up”: This delightful little tune from “Curly Temple” has been overshadowed by “Animal Crackers.” It’s one of the highlights of the film.

“Turkey in the Straw” tap-dance routine: “My Old Kentucky Home”. Temple and Robinson are at their best in this classic tap routine on the stairs set to Stephen Foster’s standard in 1935’s “The Little Colonel.”

“Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off”: Tempest褪s and Robinson are reunited for this upbeat number from 1938’s “Little Miss Broadway.”

“Swing Me an Old-Fashioned Tune”: Temple performs this peppy song in the otherwise forgettable 1938 film “Little Miss Broadway.”

“I’ve Lived in Carbondale for Over 40 Years and Street Musicians Have Always Been a Part of Downtown,” he said. “They Bring Atmosphere to People and Show Art in Different Cultural Forms. It’s Been Welcome for Decades and Is a Historical Part of Carbondale. If People Want to Sing While They’re Walking Down the Street and They’re Not Disturbing Those Around Them or Traffic, Then Why Not Let Them Share Their Talent.”

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SOCHI, Russia — The motto for the 2014 Winter Olympics is “Hot. Cool. Yours.” Unfortunately, it is getting a little too hot in subtropical Sochi.

After Monday’s temperatures reached the balmy upper 50s and Tuesday’s temps appeared headed toward that direction, Russian officials went with Plan B and broke out snow stored from last winter.

“I cannot tell you how much. I just don’t know,” said Aleksandra Kosterina, spokeswoman for Sochi 2014 in an article from Olympic News Service. “I mean, I don’t know the specifics but I know that we did.”

Some athletes were appreciative. “It’s nice out,” joked USA snowboarder Shaun White. “The sun’s out. I don’t know what the temperature is.”

Temperatures dropped as night fell on the halfpipe finals Tuesday, and Seamus O’Connor of Ireland said the snow was better because the bottom of the pipe had re-frozen.

Balmy winter weather forces Sochi officials to tap snow reserve
The Shockers were able to hit 24 of 32 free throw attempts while the Salukis finished a disappointing 14 of 24 from the line. WSU sophomore Ron Baker led his team with 19 points and hit three 3-pointers. Preseason MVC Player of the Year, senior Cleantony Early finished with 18 points and was 11 of 12 from the free-throw line. The Shockers had five players with at least 10 points and the Wichita State bench outscored SIU 26-14. Wichita State lived and died by the 3-pointer. They attempted 27 in the win and were able to hit eight. Hitting 8 of 11 shots from beyond the arc was one of the positives the Salukis can take away from the game.

Wichita State’s men and women’s teams have the best-combined record in the country with 46-2, which puts them ahead of schools like the University of Connecticut, the University of Gonzaga, the University of Louisville and Duke University.

Source: ESPN

### Women's lacrosse looks to become official club

**TYLER DAVIS** Daily Egyptian

With more than 40 sport clubs, the Recreation Center has a lot to offer students, from quidditch to club baseball, and everything in between.

Ultimate Frisbee and club basketball are staples on campus and have been around for decades, while others, like women's lacrosse and the skateboarding club, are just getting their start.

Groups with enough interested members are required to fill out an application and go through a process involving the Sport Club Executive Board to make sure they have the resources and membership necessary to start a club.

Assistant Director of Intramural Sports and Sport Clubs Shane Bennett, said sometimes one club branches off into two.

"Our women's ultimate Frisbee club broke away from the men's side because they were a co-rec team and they developed their own," he said. "It's a natural participation on the women's side to where they could create their own club."

Bennett said there is nothing wrong with a club starting this way, as long as there is an active league for the prospective club to join.

While this is not the most common way clubs are formed, the process does not change. There is still a period when the club must prove it can sustain success.

Johnathan Flowers, president of the Sport Club Executive Board, said, "As president of the Sport Club Executive Board, I meet the new clubs with the executive board itself when they are so open and they wanted to join."

"[Some girls] actually started practicing with the boys' team for a while," said Bennett.

"They were so open and they wanted us to join because they wanted a girls team also so the sport would be more recognized," Bennett said. "We need at least 10 members, they need to be active and they need a faculty advisor," Flowers said. "This is to ensure the potential club has the support and determination needed to be successful."

"We just need to make sure they know all the things they need to be doing as a sport club," he said. "We met with them last week and they've been working closely with men's lacrosse to get their feet under them." Flowers said when they become official, they still do not have the full leeway other clubs have. They will be in a testing period while the board monitors their progress, as it customarily other sport clubs.

"When we approve a club, it's with certain restrictions as based in our sport clubs manual," he said. "They put clubs on probation for a year to see how they're doing, to see if they can maintain that critical mass of members and that forwards momentum that got them started." After that, Flowers said they are on their own, but still have to maintain the club created in the first place. Flowers said active membership is key to any club success.

"A club can stand and fall on how well the officers and its members do their job," he said. "If your president, treasurer and secretary aren't up on top of your funding, your membership and your room reservations, then your club will suffer." Flowers said he does not foresee being an issue for the women's lacrosse team because of the excitement of its members and officials to get started.

"We expect them to be active," he said. "The president and vice president seem passionate about their sport and dedicated to keeping the club going." Flowers and Moser said the team is recruiting new members and will hold informational meetings later this semester, and plans to schedule matches next semester.

**JESS STAPLETON**

Jess Stapleton, a senior from Naperville studying health education, guards Ruth Ann Suddarth, a senior from O'Fallon, Mo., studying geography and environmental resources, during a women's ultimate Frisbee practice in Davies Gymnasium Tuesday. Established in 2010 after splitting from the men's team, the women's club is halfway through their fourth season. A group of women's lacrosse players, which had a similar start, will soon finish the process of becoming a recognized sports club.

"They were so open and they wanted us to join because they wanted a girls team also so the sport would be more recognized," Bennett said.

"Basically, we get a feel for what the club wants to do, how they want to do it, who they are and then we decide whether or not we should approve them," he said.

"The process of creating and approving a club is not an easy decision. Club sports are only allotted a certain amount of money, so fundraising is left to the club members. It is a big commitment, Flowers said.

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Salukis hope to end Missouri State’s run

The Saluki women’s swimming and diving team has prepared all season for this weekend.

SIU will host the Missouri Valley Conference swimming and diving championships at the Edward J. Shea Natatorium in the Recreation Center. Preliminaries start Thursday at 11 a.m. and the events will be spread out until Saturday.

The women’s team finished third in the tournament last season behind Illinois State University and Missouri State University, which won the previous six MVC titles in swimming and diving. The Salukis women lost to the Bears by two points during the fall tournament in Springfield, Mo.

Freshman Sarah James said two points in swimming is not much, and the Salukis will have an advantage swimming in their own pool with parents and fans in the stands to cheer them on.

“We swim in this pool every day,” she said. “Whenever you’re racing in the same pool you’re training in, you know it like the back of your hand.”

Coach Rick Walker said despite being at home, the Salukis do not have an edge in the tournament. He said even though everyone can come and go at their own leisure and will get to sleep in their own bed, the team has to contribute a large amount of time running the meet.

“Other coaches get to walk on deck and remain 100 percent focused on their team,” he said. “We go through the meet partially distracted at times.”

Walker said this year’s team is one of the best prepared for the tournament, and they are hungry to win.

“The best thing we can do is come in and be fighters,” he said.

Full coverage of the tournament will be on the MVC website and live-tweeted from @DEsalukis on twitter.

AARON GRAFF
Daily Egyptian

The team trained in Puerto Rico during winter break and freshman Kristina Ksarjian said since the training, the team thinks it can do anything.

“We’ve put in all the hard work,” she said. “We’ve got a great chance to win.”

This will be the first conference tournament for Ksarjian and James. James said her teammates, who have competed in the tournament before, told her words could not describe how exciting it is.

“It’s a whole new experience,” she said. “We’re seeded really well this year. I think it’s going to be exciting and totally different than something that I’ve ever done before.”

SIU will have one more school vying for the top spot this year. The University of Arkansas-Little Rock joined the conference in swimming earlier this season. The Salukis beat the Trojans 177-60 in January. The Salukas have faced every conference opponent this season except Northern Iowa University. They have beaten Evansville University twice, and competed against Illinois State in the Saluki Miller.

Walker said the team is getting excited as a group, which can be huge to the team’s success.

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Junior freestyle swimmer Mardi Buchanan, a junior from Overland Park, Kan., practices the backstroke Tuesday during practice in the Edward J Shea Natatorium. The Salukis will host the Missouri Valley Conference championships Friday and Saturday. The SIU women’s swim team last won the tournament in 2007.

REMY ABROUGHT · DAILY EGYPTIAN