10-8-2009

The Daily Egyptian, October 08, 2009

Daily Egyptian Staff

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Volume 95, Issue 33

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Students rally to restore MAP grant

Quinn: “Whatever is necessary, we’ve got to get it done”

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Chanting could be heard from the Student Center Auditorium Wednesday as students collectively asked, “Where is the money?”

Gov. Pat Quinn, SIU President Glenn Poshard and Chancellor Sam Goldman joined a room full of students Wednesday to urge the Illinois General Assembly to fully fund the Monetary Award Program.

While students are still receiving full MAP benefits during the fall, more than 5,000 students on the Carbondale campus will receive either none of the grant money or just half of what they are eligible to receive in the spring.

“We cannot have people coming home — 5,000 students from SIU-Carbondale coming back home because they don’t have a MAP grant for the second semester,” Quinn said. “We want you to go to college, we want you to do well. Illinois really believes in you.”

Quinn’s visit was part of his statewide campaign to save the grant by holding rallies on college campuses. The rally featured students from the university and surrounding community colleges who shared their stories of how the loss of the grant affects them.

Priciliano Fabian, president of Undergraduate Student Government, said he understands the critical nature of the issue because he is a grant recipient. Fabian said he is financing his own college career without the grant, he could be forced to drop out in spring.

“I want to break out in tears,” Fabian said. “It makes everyone just think. Am I going to be here next semester?”

Carina Beck, a senior from Scipioville studying university studies, said the loss of the MAP grant could mean the loss of her family’s stability. Beck said she, her husband and children were living in a homeless shelter just five years ago. With the help from financial aid and MAP, Beck said she and her husband came back to school. While her husband has earned his bachelor’s degree, Beck said she is just three semesters shy of earning her degree.

“I am faced with the possibility of having to give up my dream because my state legislator has already given up on me and thousands of others like me,” Beck said. “Giving up on my education … means giving up on my children’s lives, at least the lives I wanted for them.”

See MAP | 2

Priciliano Fabian, president of Undergraduate Student Government, left, speaks at a rally Wednesday at the Student Center Auditorium about restoring full funding to the Monetary Award Program. Gov. Pat Quinn, right, visited the campus as part of his statewide campaign to urge efforts to restore the program.

Isaac Smith
DAILY EGYPTIAN

Church extends cultural acceptance

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First Christian Church in Carbondale will vote Nov. 15 for the addition of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender orientations into its congregation.

Pastor Katherine Graves said the church’s stance is not official until two-thirds of the congregation votes in favor of accepting all sexual orientations into the church community.

Graves said the congregation already includes several different sexual orientations, but the vote will clarify its political and social stance.

“People cannot be as insulated as they once could afford to be,” Graves said. “It’s pretty hard to hide behind the mask of prejudice.”

Graves has been the pastor since November 1999, and said it’s important to include people regardless of economic status, race or sexual orientation.

Pastor Christian Church is not the only organization in Carbondale examining its acceptance toward people of all sexual orientations.

The Church of the Good Shepherd on Orchard Drive hosted a community pride picnic Sunday as part of GLBT History Month. Interim Pastor Sam Fixkey said it was the first time his church has been a part of a GLBT event, and more than 200 people attended.

Jackson County Health Department offered free HIV tests at the GLBT picnic. St. Cyril’s, HIV prevention and outreach coordinator, said being tested for HIV is responsible. He said the center offers weekly opportunities for free testing.

See GLBT | 3

MURPHYSBORO
WORKSHOP:
FOR MORE ON THE EVENT, SEE CURRENTS INSIDE.

Ray Loyd, an offensive lineman and defensive end, and Josh Thompson, a running back and linebacker for the Murphysboro Red Devils sink back into their lockers on Friday after the first half of the teams 46-0 loss to the Herrin Tigers. Head Coach Bob Stilley said Murphysboro was once a powerhouse, but now it is recovering from a slump that started in the late 1990s. The story about the Murphysboro Red Devils is one of many that will be featured on a Web site scheduled to launch Dec. 12. The Web site will include multimedia packages photosjournalism students from SIUC created during the A Weekend in Murphysboro event.

Evan Davis
DAILY EGYPTIAN
MAP CONTINUED FROM 1

Nate Brown, student trustee, said students must continue to show how much they care about this program by telling their stories to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission and the General Assembly. Brown said a hearing would be held at 11 a.m. Monday in the Student Center Auditorium with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the group responsible for distributing the MAP funds. Another important day is Oct. 15, Brown said, when students will go to Springfield to lobby for the funding. “We need to make sure the scholarship program of our state is not just rescued this year, but it has a solid financial foundation for every year to come,” Quinn said. “Whatever is necessary, we’ve got to get it done.”

Madeline Lerman can be reached at 533-3311 ext. 254.

Eddie Pells
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Six months of shaky decisions and turmoil came to a head for the U.S. Olympic Committee on Wednesday when its acting CEO said she would step down, bringing more chaos to an organization that was humiliated when Chicago’s bid to host the 2016 Games fell flat.

Stephanie Strenter said she would not seek the USOC’s CEO job on a permanent basis, and that she would leave in the next five months.

The decision came just five days after Chicago’s humiliating, first-round exit in a vote by International Olympic Committee members, who ultimately picked Rio de Janeiro. It also happened on the same day leaders of America’s Olympic sports organizations said “No” in a 40-0 vote to this question on a survey they conducted: “Do you believe the acting CEO has the ability to be an effective leader of the Olympic environment?”

The United States contributes more money to the Olympics than any other nation, yet the USOC is rife with infighting and turmoil, perceived internationally as arrogant, and populated with leaders who are having trouble turning things around.

“I’m incredibly saddened by the developments, which I lay largely at the feet of the USOC, which has clearly lost its way,” said NBC Universal Sports and Olympics chairman Dick Ebersol. “It’s a combina-

tion of people who don’t have a full-time commitment to it, too many people who really don’t have an understanding of international sports and relationships. I don’t believe there will be another Olympics in the U.S. until the USOC really gets its act together.”

USOC Chairman Larry Probst conceded that-existing around the group’s international reputation is not a one- or two-year project.”I’m talking 10, 15, 20 years,” he said.

Chicago’s elimination in the first round was universally viewed as an embarrassment, and one of the biggest surprises ever handed down by IOC voters. One IOC member, Denis Oswald of Switzerland, went so far as to call it “a defeat for the USOC, not for Chicago.”

The USOC will hire a national recruiting firm by the end of the month to search for Strenter’s replacement. The next CEO will be the third to sit in that chair in the span of about a year. The latest up-

heated began in March when Tim Scherrie was forced out after six years of relative stability and success.

Police Blotters

There are no items to report at this time.

Corrections

In the Monday edition of the USOC Report, the story “United States boardroom battle to decide future” should have stated: In line with the demands of the former USOC Public Policy Board, the Board of Directors will support any future USOC Board of Directors.

Access here for more local news.

In the Thursday edition of the USOC Report, the story “Our fans have a voice” should have stated: In line with the demands of the former USOC Public Policy Board, the Board of Directors will support any future USOC Board of Directors.

If you spot an error, please contact the News Bureau at 51B-211, ext. 253.

Make a change or correction: News.Bureau@USOC.org

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National Depression Screening Day urges awareness

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The Counseling Center will offer free screenings to students today in an effort to evaluate two of the most common mental health problems—depression and anxiety.

Students who think they are experiencing depression or anxiety symptoms can take a free screening between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Student Center.

As Elam said, “We should extend these basic legal protections to all people in Illinois.”

The university’s GLBT resource center offers additional social support to those who experience issues related to sexual orientation.

Students encouraged to take mental health screenings

Caroline Elam, coordinator of the Counseling Center, said the general public could also benefit from the screening day.

“The real value of this is to educate the public that we’re doing something about these issues,” Cunningham said. “We do want people to know and have a better understanding of the various psychological disorders, including depression.”

One in 10 SIUC students use the Counseling Center, she said. “It doesn’t mean there’s something odd or unusual about you because these disorders are pretty common,” Cunningham said.

Elam said she wants students to encourage their friends to come to the screening if they notice symptoms of depression or anxiety, such as trouble sleeping or thoughts of harming themselves.

“Being a friend means asking questions and making sure they get help,” Elam said. “We don’t want to lose anybody.”

Even if students are apprehensive to go to screenings or take the online screening test, taking the step to get help now will reward students who struggle with their mental health, Elam said.

“It’s important to care about your friends but it’s also important to care about yourself,” she said. “Just putting a little bit of energy into yourself can make it pay off the rest of your life.”

Erin Holcomb can be reached at 536-3311 ext. 255.
PAKISTAN'S MILITARY Rejects US Aid Bill

Nahal Toosi
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's powerful military on Wednesday rejected U.S. attempts to link billions of dollars in foreign aid to increased monitoring of its anti-terror efforts, complicating American attempts to strike al-Qaida and Taliban fighters on the Afghan border.

Although the U.S.-backed government of President Asif Ali Zardari has the final say on whether to accept the money, the unusual public criticism threatens to force its hand and undermine military cooperation with the Americans just as the Pakistani army prepares for what could be its most important offensive against extremists since the U.S.-led anti-terror campaign began exactly eight years ago.

Any breakdown in intelligence sharing and other types of cooperation would hurt the American fight against a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan. U.S. and NATO commanders say the war there cannot be won unless Islamabah does more to tackle extremists on its side of the border.

As Washington, President Barack Obama met with his national security team for a strategy session on Afghanistan after signaling that he was not considering a troop withdrawal. The session came amid new polls showing growing support for the war in the United States.

The military's criticism of the bill came in a brief written statement that said senior commanders, including the army chief, "expressed serious concern regarding clauses impacting on national security."

Among other things, the bill conditions U.S. aid on whether Pakistan government maintains effective control over the military, including its budgets, the chain of command and top promotions.

Some analysts said the military's statement had little to do with genuine dislike of a bill that stands to help crumbling schools, madras and hospitals. They said the army was sending a message to the Pakistani and U.S. governments about the limits of civilian control in a country that's been subject to military rule for nearly half of its 62-year history.

"Clearly the government is under direct pressure from the army," said Cyril Almeida, a columnist for Dawn newspaper. "The army's public statement indicates that it is sending a message that says look, we are in charge of security issues."

The military is believed to have increased its cooperation with U.S. forces over the past year, shared intelligence for numbers of U.S. missile strikes on militant targets — most notably the one which killed Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud. The U.S. military clearly hopes for more Pakistan cooperation in hunting down other targets as well, including al-Qaida and Afghan Taliban leaders who are less of a priority for the Pakistanis.

Political tension in Islamabad would pose another obstacle to U.S. war goals. The debate comes as the army stepped up preparations for a new offensive in South Wazistain, an operation that would face steep challenges, ranging from harsh terrain to well dug-in militants. An estimated 10,000 well-armed militants, including foreign fighters, are believed to be in the region.

Opposition lawmakers jumped at the opportunity to weaken a president widely viewed as a U.S. puppet, calling on the government to reject the legislation as an unacceptable intrusion into Pakistan's internal affairs. A recent poll by the International Republican Institute found that 80 percent of Pakistanis surveyed said they did not want the country to assist the U.S. in the fight against terrorism.

The aid bill, which Obama is expected to sign, would triple U.S. nonmilitary assistance to Pakistan, providing $1.5 billion a year over the next five years. U.S. officials say the goal is to alleviate widespread poverty, lessening the allure of Islamist extremists and supporting the country's transition to democracy.

Zardari has championed the legislation as a break from past U.S. aid packages, which he says came with more strings. He says the bill is proof that Washington is committed to helping the country long-term.
People who should know better play the race card

Kevin Ferris

In the 1966 movie “A Man for All Seasons,” Sir Thomas More and his future son-in-law argue over who deserves protection under the law.

Will Roper is aghast when he hears how far More will go. “Now you give the devil benefit of law!” “Yes,” More replies. “What would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the devil?” “Yes,” is the vehement reply. “I’d cut down every law in England to do that.”

I was reminded of Roper’s zeal to root out evil after hearing some recent accusations of racism.

Eliminating racism is certainly a worthy goal, but lately some people who should know better seem ready to cut down professional ethics, due process, and even facts in order to get their way.

And that way seems to have little to do with challenging racism.

Often, the real goal is to silence political opposition.

Start with Joe Wilson, the congressman who chose the path of bootstraps to become a household name.

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd declared that Wilson didn’t just shout “You lie!” to President Obama during a joint session of Congress. She wrote that she also “heard ... an unspoken word in the air”: Wilson really meant “You lie, boy!” because he couldn’t stand the thought of a black president.

The evidence? Slim to none. But Wilson is Southern. He’s white. He’s conservative. He’s Republican.

Any of those means racist in certain circles.

I accept that newspaper journalists must try new things for the industry to survive. However, regurgitating the voices inside our heads as fact should be one of them.

Then Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former President Jimmy Carter weighed in.

“I think an overwhelming portion of the intensely demonstrated animosity toward President Obama is based on the fact that he is a black man, that he’s African-American,” Carter told NBC.

And he knows because right up until the day before Obama’s inauguration, conservatives were advocating for hundreds of billions in economic stimulus, universal health care regardless of cost, a tax-heavy cap-and-trade program to deal with global warming, trillion-dollar deficits, federally financed benefits for illegal immigrants, and enough tax increases to pay for all of the above.

Only racism explains why conservatives suddenly might be against such things.

The current president wisely didn’t take the bait. He understood, as he did during the ’08 campaign, that blanket, evidence-free accusations, while a matter of faith for some, don’t help you win elections—or re-election.

Besides, why remind voters of his own “the heck with due process” moment, when he sided with his friend, the black Harvard professor, over the white Cambridge police officer, without benefit of evidence, in what was incorrectly labeled a racial-profiling case?

Next, consider the ACORN videos, in which a fake pimp and prostitute seek help from the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now to set up a brothel, commit tax fraud, and engage in sex trafficking of underage illegal immigrants.

ACORN employees at five offices seemed happy to help. When the tapes were shown on Fox News, ACORN trotted out a variety of weak defenses, including racism.

“It is clear and not coincidence that Fox continues to attack and divide our nation along racial lines,” Margaret Williams, an ACORN board member from Maryland, said in a statement.

So to challenge ACORN is to attack the black and Hispanic communities it serves.

Clearly a desperate ploy, but the Washington Post lent credence to the charge in a Sept. 18 story on the “pimp,” James O’Keefe: “... he said he targeted ACORN for the same reasons that the political right does: its massive voter registration drives that turn out poor African-Americans and Latinos against Republicans.”

Except O’Keefe didn’t say that in the story, nor in real life, as the Post admitted in a subsequent correction after being challenged by the blog, Powerline.

It’s hard enough sifting through legitimate accusations of racism and discrimination, with their mix of facts and accusations, and with the need to divine intent and impact.

But crying wolf cheapens the charge into irrelevance. Race becomes merely an easy fallback to taint, and thus silence, political opposition. Perhaps it pleases elements of the Democrats’ base, but this strategy is fraught with peril.

Take note of Sir Thomas’ reply to Will Roper: “And when the last law was down, and the devil turned round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? ... Do you really think you could stand upfight in the winds that would blow them? ... Yes, I’d give the devil benefit of law, for my own safety’s sake.”

So should we all.

Ferris is assistant editor of the editorial page of the Philadelphia Inquirer.
A Weekend in Murphysboro

The images in this article are selections from six different stories gathered over the weekend by Daily Egyptian photographers participating in a Weekend in Murphysboro.

Bob Moore, 77, grinds corn for feed at his farm outside of Murphysboro Friday. Moore has raised livestock and cared for his 60-acre farm with only the help of his wife Shirley for the past 50 years. Moore raises sheep and rabbits for meat and also sells hay and straw. “I don’t have to do this . . . it doesn’t make any money, but it gives me something to do. The rabbits eat $300 of feed each month . . . so I have to keep selling them,” Moore said. Moore sells the rabbits for about $6, or roughly $2 a pound.

Tony Rendleman performs aerobatics over the Murphysboro countryside Sunday. Rendleman, the regional game warden, said he has been interested in flying since he was young and had aspirations on joining the military to become a pilot. Because of government restructuring, he was unable to enlist and instead, in the early 1990s, he pursued training on his own and received his pilot’s license. Now Rendleman owns his own plane, hangar and runway. He said he enjoys trick flying the most and his aircraft is specially designed to withstand the stresses of aerobatics.
More than 30 SIUC journalism students and 16 visiting professionals set up shop in Murphysboro last weekend with one goal in mind: to tell stories.

Sleep took a backseat to journalism, with some students waking up before 4 a.m. to capture images.

Professors in the SIUC School of Journalism created A Weekend in Murphysboro to give students an intense lesson in story gathering while providing them access to top professionals in the field. As students documented the lives of Murphysboro residents, industry professionals worked with the students to improve their skills.

Mark Dolan, assistant professor of journalism, spearheaded the project.

“I know from experience what a workshop like this can do. It had a huge impact on the students’ growth,” Dolan said. “It was incredible. The students learned how to approach their subjects and their photography improved aesthetically and technically.”

Gemma Ord, a sophomore from Flora, said the weekend workshop was a valuable opportunity she could not pass up.

“I learned it takes more than 15 minutes to make a good picture,” Ord said.

Gail Fisher, senior photo editor at National Geographic Magazine, was Ord’s editor for the weekend. She had been a student of Fisher and knew he could inspire the students.

“I heard that Fisher made students cry during editing, but she was really encouraging and it was an awesome experience to have someone like her coaching me,” Ord said.

“My style is to be pretty tough, because the mentors I had that were toughest on me taught me the most,” Fisher said.

Murphysboro residents were very receptive to the workshop and excited to participate in the project, Dolan said.

“They were very receptive as a community . . . from 17th St. BBQ, providing food for our welcome reception to all the marques around town welcoming us . . . they were very open,” Dolan said.

Murphysboro mayor Ron Williams appointed Barbara Dallas, member of the Murphysboro tourism commission, to be the city’s project coordinator.

“Barbara was our ‘fixer’ — she was a tremendous help,” Dolan said.

Dallas said it was a privilege for Murphysboro to host such an educational and important project.

“It was absolutely awesome for my hometown to be involved in such a wonderful teaching experience. It is an honor,” Dallas said.

Students in Dolan’s class will spend the remainder of the semester editing images and audio for a Web site that will feature the project’s completed stories.

Devin Miller, a professional media graduate student from Carterville, was involved in the workshop and will help assemble the Web site.

“We have to edit literally thousands of images and a lot of video over the next few months,” Miller said.

Students plan to host a gallery exhibit in Murphysboro that will coincide with the Web site launch on Dec. 12.

“I think this is going to be huge for the journalism department,” Dolan said.

Miller said the lessons learned would stay with the students throughout their careers.

“I was surprised how quickly students improved this weekend,” Miller said. “I will never forget it for the rest of my life.”

Sarah Jines, a 7th-grade student at Murphysboro Middle School, finishes class work Friday in her science class. Jines said she hopes to be a singer or astronomer when she grows up.

(Left) Bailey Melvin, 23, a special education teacher at Murphysboro High School, babysits Bryant Moniger, 3, while she paints the school’s mascot on the window of the Murphysboro General Store for homecoming weekend. “It’s called, Paint the Town,” she said. The theme this year is “A Haunted Homecoming.” “We’re haunting the Red Birds this year,” she said of the West Frankfort football team. Homecoming starts this week.

(Below) Phyllis Hays of West Frankfort walks through the General John A. Logan Museum in Murphysboro Saturday. She was with Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional teachers association, which has been a member of for the past 61 years. Delta Kappa Gamma meets once a month and chose the museum for its October venue.
‘Glory Box’ focuses on gay rights

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An internationally renowned performance artist will make his way to SIUE today to present his solo performance “Glory Box.”

Tim Miller will perform at 8 p.m. in the Marion Kleini Theatre. Miller said “Glory Box” is the most emotionally intense and funny piece he has ever produced.

“Glory Box” is a funny, sexy and charged exploration of any journeys through the challenge of love, gay marriage and the struggle for immigration rights for gay people and their partners,” Miller said in an e-mail.

Miller said the play reflects his real-life struggles with his Australian partner Alistair McCartney.

Craig Gingrich-Philbrook, a professor in the Department of Speech Communication, said McCartney could not become a U.S. citizen because of same-sex marriage laws.

“Their relationship has this sort of extra burden of dealing with these questions of immigration that a heterosexual couple wouldn’t face,” Gingrich-Philbrook said.

In addition to his performance, Miller said he will conduct a workshop with 16 students to prepare for their performance “Body Maps: Stories From Our Lives,” which they will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday.

Gingrich-Philbrook said the performance is a collection of autobiographical stories about the students.

Shauna MacDonald, a graduate student in speech communication and a performer in the show, said there are five workshops this week. The workshops last three hours and are very intense, she said.

“It’s the type of experience where you know you’re there for three hours, but while you’re in it, it doesn’t feel like three hours,” she said.

The students are excited to work with Miller because of all the experience he brings, she said.

“It’s the chance of a lifetime in some ways,” she said.

Reagan Ostry, a senior studying speech communications, said Miller is fun to work with because he brings out the best in his students.

“It’s been an amazing experience,” she said. “He’s brilliant and deeply caring.”

Gingrich-Philbrook said Miller conducts workshops across the country to share the value of solo performance to students.

“I ask the group to look under their big racks and find the hot and wet places of their stories,” Miller said in an e-mail. “I ask them to own their fierce living and bring that forward into performance.”

Gingrich-Philbrook said the department is able to attract artists because of the Fine Arts Activity Fee, which funds events.

“It provides the students the opportunity to see people of all kinds in the arts,” Gingrich-Philbrook said.

Gingrich-Philbrook said the workshops represent a great opportunity for the students to grow as performers.

“It provides confidence and a sense that they really can do it, that our experience matters and the art we make out of our experience matters,” Gingrich-Philbrook said.

Both performances will take place in the Marion Kleini Theatre, located on the second floor of the Communications Building. Tickets are free, but must be reserved in advance by calling 618-453-5618.

Travis Bean can be reached at 536-3114 ext. 275.
**Saluki Insider**

Rush Limbaugh has expressed interest in becoming a part-owner of the St. Louis Rams. Limbaugh would share ownership with current Blue owner Dave Checketts. What do you make of this?

To avoid angry e-mails, I’ll stay out of politics in this. Rush has money and is willing to buy the team. Why deny him? Sure, you’ll never have a chance at signing McNabb if he becomes a free agent, but at least he can help the team if any of his players need some pain medication.

I think this will mark the next coming of the greatest show on turf. How can the other, liberal creampuff NFC East teams stand a chance against the radical Republican Rams? The left-wingers may have performed a die-cutting of the fans on Sunday, but it was all just a liberal conspiracy. The higher-ups were competing against both future teams. Obama himself called an audible to make this happen. When Rush takes over, that kind of thing won’t happen again.

**Robbins’ Nest**

**Twins inspire faith in playoff formula**

There are a lot of reasons to hate big-market teams. The copious amount of money teams such as the Yankees, Red Sox, Dodgers and Cubs spend to sign top performers is a little disheartening (or misspend in the case of the Cubs). When the New York Yankees win the World Series, questions such as “Did they buy it?” always pop up.

There is one team without a big budget that is in contention on a yearly basis. The Minnesota Twins give people a team to root for when their team has been knocked out of contention.

When Billy Beane took over the Oakland Athletics in 1998, the team got a lot of attention as a small-market team, which went out and competed every year. Beane’s approach was highlighted in the book “Moneyball.”

Teams now use Beane’s methods to evaluate players. Underprivileged stats like OPS (On Base Plus Slugging) and WHIP (Walks and Hits per Innings Pitched) are no longer underestimated and a new way needs to be discovered.

Perhaps the Twins have found something useful. Since 2001, the Twins have only had one losing season. That’s better than the A’s, which just finished their third-straight losing season.

The Tigers recorded payroll of $115 million, the fifth-highest in baseball. The Twins recorded a payroll of $85 million, which is the seventh-lowest in baseball. Clearly the Twins are doing something right.

Every year, even when players such as Jhon Santana are traded away or lost to a free agency such as Torii Hunter, the Twins are competing. How can a team lose its best players and still be in the thick of things every year?

What would happen if the Cubs lost Aramis Ramirez? Given that its organization is the only one dumb enough to hire a 12-year-old kid to close games, (though, to be fair, the Twins were owned by a 12-year-old at one point) the loss of Ramirez would create pure chaos. Yet, the Twins put up with situations like this every year.

It is October, and the Twins are there yet again. The Twins, who were trailing the Tigers for most of the regular season, found a way to make it.

Detectors of the Minnesota team will point out that of the five playoff appearances it made this decade, it only won one series. The same case was made against Billy Beane’s Oakland A’s.

The thing is, getting to the playoffs is what matters. It does not matter what a team’s record is, does it? Does it matter what a team’s stat sheet looks like — it just matters if they make it in. Anything can happen in a short series. Case in point, David Eckstein won World Series MVP once! When a sample size is only a couple of games, statistics can be thrown out the door.

If the 2006 St. Louis Cardinals can win it all, so can a Twins team any given year. All it requires is getting hot.

If your team has been elimi- nated from World Series contes- tion, the team to root for should be Minnesota. The Twins represent something baseball fans from Chi- cago to Pittsburgh to Kansas City can appreciate: hope. If a team with a budget like that can win on a yearly basis, so can your team.
Redbirds carry momentum into Carbondale

Illinois State comes into Saturday’s game having already ruined North Dakota State University’s homecoming last week 27-24 at the Fargodome in Fargo, N.D. The Redbirds scored the go-ahead touchdown on a two-yard run by Genn Blue with 1:24 remaining. The Redbirds boat a formidable pass offense led by a southern Illi- nois native at quarterback.

Freshman quarterback Matt Brown helms the No. 15 passing attack in the nation, averaging 253 yards a game. He has completed 103 of 160 passes for 1,047 yards and five touchdowns, but has thrown four interceptions. He also has two 300- yard passing games in four starts.

But before leading the Redbirds, Brown played quarterback for the Wildcats of Marion. Brown said he is not thinking too much about playing in front of friends and relatives.

“I am just looking at it as another game to try to showcase my ability and try to win for my team,” Brown said. “It’s going to be a tough game. We know that.”

Illinois State’s stand- out wide receiver Eyad Sa- lehmen should lessen the pressure on Brown.

The current MVFC Offensive Player of the Week has burned de- fenses all season. Sahlem is averaging 82 yards a game, with three touchdown receptions on the season. Sahlem is coming off a career- game against the Bison, with 14 receptions for 172 yards and a touchdown.

Sahlem said the chemistry between him and Brown has improved with each game.

“Matt has grown up ten- fold from the very first game at East- ern Illinois,” Sahlem said. “I’m really proud of him and really happy with the strides he’s made. I’m completely confident in him and his ability.”

With the Redbirds defense, scor- ing points is the only way Illinois State stays in games.

Illinois State allows 367.8 yards per game, including 201.8 yards on the ground. Redbird head coach Brock Spack said the defense has underachieved and has the potential to be much better.

“There is definitely room for im- provement in the secondary; they haven’t been our strongest unit,” Spack said. “However, we’re going to keep coaching them up and hope to see some improvements.”

Ryan Voyles can be reached at 536-3114 ext. 256.