Loans and credit and rates, oh my. A look into managing your money. News, PAGE 3

Americorps lend a much needed helping hand to communities. News, PAGE 5

Track and field walk-on enjoys early success. Sports, PAGE 12

South takes hit in remap, supporters look to back
Congressman takes fight on the road
MARK LAMBETH Daily Egyptian

OLNIX, Ill.—From his belly pulpit, U.S. Rep. David Phelps, D-Eldorado, delivered a message Saturday of saving the South from the remapping of the North during a week long tour of his district.

During the week, Phelps made stops in nine communities from Metropolis in the south to Oickey in the north, in Oickey about 18 core-hard supporters came to the Oickey City Park to rally around his congressman.

Saturday’s event was kicked off by John Hill, superintendent of the East Richland school distict. Hill is also the chairman of the Richland County Save Southern Illinois committee. The Save Southern Illinois committee was formed to educate the public about the new congressional district and raise funds to fight the new map in court.

“The issue raised by the new map is beyond Dixie,” Hill said. “If this map stands, both Southern Illinois representatives will be from the metro-east area of St. Louis.”

Ruth Evans, chairman for Save Southern Illinois, told the audience that this committee was a biracial effort with Democrats and Republican united. House was also bipartisan in placing the blame.

“Make no mistake, we are angry at the Republican Senate, the Democratic House, the Republican Governor and the congressional delegation,” House said.

Before turning the stage over to Phelps, House said this was a “David and Goliath” battle. Comparing the political machine of systems to the biblical giant who was killed by the little shepherd boy.

Phelps did not use the stage and microphone that had been provided for him, preferring to get close to his constituents. Immediately Phelps said this issue was bigger than just about saving his job and more about saving Southern Illinois voice in Congress.

The congressman bashed politicians on both sides of the aisle for looking out for their own interests rather than what was good for the state.


Phelps said slow growth in the South during the past ten years was one reason downtown districts lost out in the remap. Southern Illinois grew in a narrower than the collar counties around Chicago.

Earlier this month Phelps and the Save Southern Illinois committee filed suit against the Illinois State Board of Elections in Saline County Circuit Court. Phelps said it is likely that the case will progress to an appellate court, the State Supreme Court and possibly to federal court.

Before leaving Oickey for the next scheduled event of the day, Phelps asked the assembled for monetary support.

“At a pop can we are good at pustin the hat,” Phelps said.

FIGHT FOR THE LAND

To support the Save Southern Illinois committee, send donations to P.O. Box 6111, Moline, IL 61265.

Library serves students with IM

On-line chat reference, quick help for students
STACEY ROBINSON Daily Egyptian

SIUC students who need help with research or library information can now contact a librarian with just a stroke of a few keys.

The library has installed a new on-line instant messaging system to help students chat with librarians. The system is a chat reference system, where students can contact a chat live with a librarian and have their questions answered via the Internet.

Jodie Fagan, a social sciences librarian, said the idea has already been initiated on most college campuses. Fagan and other administrators began the program in January 2001 and started using it at the beginning of the summer semester.

“The reason we thought it would be a good idea is that people do so much work on computers, we decided why not let them ask questions on-line,” Fagan said.

The program is in its testing stages for the summer and will not be available to students until the fall semester. The future of the program after the summer will depend on its support and acceptance by students and administrators.

The program works when a student sends a question or comment to a librarian through the application. They can just click on the “Chat with a librarian” link and type a question in the input box. Through the instant messaging system, a reply is returned within 30 seconds. If the question is not difficult or requires more time, the librarian will request a visit to the library or make the call.

Civil-Service union strikes tentative deal
ALEXA AGUILAR & CHRIS MARCHA Daily Egyptian

The second meeting between the civil service union and the administration ended in a conceptual agreement Tuesday night.

Ruth Pouvier, president of the Association of Civil Service Employees, was fed up with the status of the new contract and wanted it released at their next meeting on July 26.

“I am so stoked that we were able to come to an agreement so expeditiously,” Pouvier said, adding that she had expected a tougher battle than what
Pregnancy Testing and Counseling

....For FREE
Shawnee CPC
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215 W. Main St.
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Sunday thru Thursday
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Would you help a woman being raped by a stranger?

How about a woman being raped by a friend?
New Bankruptcy Reform Act may make it harder for students to get out of debt

ANDREA PARKER  DAILY EDITION

When Lenore Davis graduates in December, who will owe $85,000 in credit card debt, she said it seemed almost impossible to obtain loans for her education.

The Chicago native arrived in Carbondale in 1997 and was lured by the Illinois campus. Davis was instructed to fill out "humiliating" credit card applications in order to receive free gifts like shirts, pens, key chains and soda. She believed if she received the plastic in the mail, she would just tear it up. But Davis' idea didn't go as planned.

She used it immediately.

"I thought that if I kept it, I would just use it for emergencies," Davis said. "But I ended up going to the mall." After focusing in the first credit card, Davis found it seemed easier to use plastic instead of cash to buy clothes, train tickets and books, and applied for three more credit cards in less than two years.

"Credit cards are very addicting," Davis said. "They are like drugs, and everyone who gets a credit card needs to read the fine print because there are so many things that the companies don't tell you.

She was surprised to learn that when she did not make her minimum monthly payments on time that her annual interest rate climbed from 18 percent to 24 percent. Now, after accumulating debt she said was unnecessary, Davis said she has noticed the problems that many freshmen face: the difficulties of learning to manage debt.

"Many freshmen just can't handle that kind of freedom," Jackson said. "But young people do have to learn to manage debt." Jackson said the upsurge of the fall semester, the University may take a look at the credit card vendor policy on campus and see what can be done to prevent lending this first into a pool of credit that they cannot handle.

"They (Jackson County) run 30 percent of graduates and retail trade and professional services, such as doctors and lawyers, also dominate Jackson County's economy, each making up 20 percent of the county's employment picture. Jobs like these don’t normally make a lot of credit or turnover."

"Especially with the University, if a student graduates and goes up and gets a bartending job, another student takes that job and it has little import on the market," Jackson said. "With the mail in Carbondale, people often move from one mail job to another."

Jackson County's economy includes less than 5 percent manufacturing jobs, another stabilizing factor. Other counties with a heavier industrial base, such as Alexander County, have as high as 12 percent of the jobs tied to manufacturing.

Southern Illinois as a whole saw a dip in unemployment rates from April to May, with only six of 23 counties showing an increase. The rate in Jackson County was 3.9 percent.

"This is probably a one-time chance to fix in on a pretty decent interest rate."
**Our Word**

**Pastors for Peace doing right by aiding Cubans**

When someone thinks of Cuba, they might immediately visualize the face of Fidel Castro, the dictator who has occupied four decades of American presidents, much to the ills of the U.S. government.

But what of the Cuban people whose aid is withheld due to the harmful, ineffective embargo America has against the country? They do not receive the steady stream of medical supplies the United States citizens take for granted.

Pastors for Peace, a special ministry of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, refuses to let politics get in the way and sends aid to a people desperately in need of food and medicine.

The unlicensed humanitarian organization traveled through Caridad, this past weekend and gathered humanitarian aid from locals. The caravan was 12 of 12 that is stopping in nearly 100 Canadian and U.S. cities. The caravans will converge in San Antonio, Texas on June 29, and travel to Mexico where goods will be shipped to Cuba.

Mexico doesn’t have an embargo against Cuba.

The 40-year-old embargo, which causes the Pastors for Peace to go to such extreme lengths to give the Cuban aid, is much harsher reality to the Cuban than North Korea and China. The two Communist nations have what the United States considers far more desirable human rights records than Cuba and are far from receiving military threats to the United States.

We applaud the Pastors for Peace for their dedication and willingness to maneuver around the embargo that is harming the Cuban people.

**Everything’s Political**

**By Daphne Retter**

gautier@hotmail.com

Smoking is getting cooler all the time.

Do you remember adolescence?

For us kids, smoking was a social ritual. I knew this because I have caught myselfхоoting positive words, such as, current, with that about-always-of-a-life公交 agency.

The door to childhood blues has just slammed behind us and the gate to adult independence is momentarily behind us for the first time in our lives.

The development of these feelings and capabilities can make us891s into something vicious and petty, urgently inaccurate and body choices are being made upon us for what, everyone but you — show me someone who enjoyed adolescence, and I’ll show you an individual.

It’s so dizzy and generally embarrassing, but so necessary.

Now more than ever, the decision to select a career for oneself can be considered an acceptable and necessary step in adult life.

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**Letters**

**Reader takes exception with Mayor’s comments**

**Dear Editor:**

I would like to applaud the columns by Daphne Retter in the Daily Egyptian. This issue, and to do it with high notes from the Editorial Board.

Through this column, Jackson established a deep devotion to the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, a ministry of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, that refuses to let politics get in the way and sends aid to a people desperately in need of food and medicine.

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**Applaud to Retter’s courage**

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**The Word**

**Grade inflation**

(FL-WIRE, Knight-Ridder Newspaper editorial)

Grade inflation is a controversial topic on many campuses these days. We refer to not so much the gloomy topic of bad grades, but to the relative new issue of too many good grades.

Principal Atwood says inflation in the grade of students has become pervasive in American higher education over the past couple of decades. It is said that the gentleman's C- is long considered an acceptable grade by students of body, brains, faculty and nation-paying parents have tuned into the gentleman's B+, even the gentleman's A.

Grade inflation in various curricula has been seen at nearly all campuses. In grading, as in so many areas, student-constumers are getting more of what they demand, whether they need it or not. Attempts to deal with the problem by enforcing institutional-wide standards have run into resistance by faculty members' characteristic insistence on establishng and policing the academic substance of the course.

There isn't much that these faculty members can do about the overall trend, but some continued pilots are going on.

Jeffrey Mansfield, a distinguished professor of government at Harvard, has long had a reputation to be tough (but unfair). Several refer to him as Harvard's "Cold Fury" Mansfield. In any case, he has instituted a two-tiered grading system for students. Under this system, students are classified as "sympathetic" or "controversial" for their classwork. One grade, the modernity's infallible one, will go on their official transcripts; the second, sympathetic grading system, representing what he thinks they deserve, will be discussed in private with them individually and privately.

Under this system, his students will presumably be able to see the difference, being harmed (in graduate school applications, etc.) for having significantly lower grades than the peer, at Harvard or elsewhere.

But, for their own consideration, they will be given an opportunity for the professor's unsolicited assessment of their work.

This approach is not universally applicable. For example, it may not be appropriate for faculty interested in how graduate school admissions committees view their applications than in how Jeffrey Mansfield views their work. Nonetheless, this is an important problem that isn't going away by itself.

During the 1999-2000 academic year, more than 77 percent of Harvard undergraduates received grades of B or better in their courses. That's cardiac, indeed.
AmeriCorps help local community

One-on-one tutoring programs educate at-risk children

BETH GRADMAN DAILY EGYPTIAN

For Martin Luther King Day, AmeriCorps member Cindy Stamm wanted to teach the children at DeSoto grade school a lesson about racism. Randomly tying colored ribbons on their fingers, she and her fellow students were not allowed to talk to people with different colored ribbons.

At the end of the day, the children wrote reflection papers for many of the children. Mythili Rundblad, coordinator of Student Development, said Rundblad.

"We allow everyone to come to the table and take the literature on their own," Cutrano said. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. members sit at the table greeting those who walk past. Each hour, two members, usually from different countries, anxiously spend an hour encountering the passerby.

The types of literature they pick up are the same that they would have in their textbooks, but they are still learning, said Rundblad. "Some people say there are not enough teachers," said a student.

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Chi Alpha uses their book table as a ministry

ANDREA PARKER DAILY EGYPTIAN

Joy Cutrano strolled into the Student Center with a hopeful smile Friday as she spotted the bare table that she would spice up later by adding colorful, spiritual literature and candy for those who would decide to stop by the weekly Chi Alpha book table to take a peek.

Cutrano, a graduate student in sports management, has been in charge of the Christian Registered Student Organization's book table for the past year. She said before she was even involved in Chi Alpha, just walking past the book table and seeing the smiles on members' faces provoked her to learn more about the group.

"We do not solicit anything," Cutrano said. "We allow everyone to come to the table and take the literature on their own." Some people mistake Chi Alpha for a fraternity or sorority because of the Greek words, but Chi Alpha is an international student ministry and the Greek words mean "Christ Ambassadors." The group meets to worship every Friday at 6:30 p.m. in the Davis Auditorium of Wham Education Building.

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It's a beach: For more information on the Community Appreciation Days call the Student Recreation Center at 536-5531.

LIFE'S A BEACH
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There are other options for children and community members in the area for swimming like the LIFE Challenge to Excellence Community Center, which has a pool, and the Carbondale Park District, which sponsors a beach at Cedar Lake. But the Campus Lake Beach may be a cheaper alternative at a cheaper price and a chance for more children in the community to interact with each other.

"It's a very simple program, but it's designed to offer something to everyone in the area, not just the SIU community," Ravellette said.

Excellence program still motivates gifted students in its 18th year

College of Education promotes program for summer campers

Stacey Robinson
DAILY EDITION

Mac Rice believes that some students who excel faster than others are singled out by their peers.

But Rice, a senior at Edwardsville High School, was the only one who did not feel that what was considered normal. Rice has engaged in SIUC's Challenge to Excellence program to be with students who just feel it doesn't always go that way.

The Challenge to Excellence program is in its 18th year on the campus and was initiated by the College of Education and Human Services.

"I presume that the program has expanded over the years and that the first time I have been involved in it," the 14-year-old said. "This is a good place where like minds can gather."

John McIntyre, director of the Challenge to Excellence and associate dean for teacher education, said that the program has been well received by students.

"The program gives me the opportunity to expand my learning experience beyond the normal course," Rice said.

In addition to classes, students go on field trips and visit academic departments around the campus, like the Law School, the SCUC Museum, the Recreation Center and other colleges, libraries and programs on campus.

Gardner Beasley, a teacher at Lincoln Middle School and math instructor for the Challenge to Excellence program, said he enjoys interacting and motivating the students in the program.

"They are so bright they feel like they don't fit into the normal population," McIntyre said. For those students who feel neglected or shunted from normal society because of their academic talents, the Challenge to Excellence is an opportunity for them to gain motivation.

Students are chosen on the basis of IQ scores of more than 120 or by having percentile test scores and a number of children from the program. Usually the students exceed the requirements.

"It is a nice thing. I like to be with people who have energy that I don't have," Rice said. The program gives me the opportunity to expand my learning experience beyond the normal course.

"I like the opportunity to provide them with something new and fresh," Beasley said. "These kids are motivated and want to be here; there needs to be more of these camps available to kids." Beasley said that most camps are usually recreationally oriented and must not do justice to academic talent.

"This is an opportunity to provide them with something new and fresh," Beasley said. "These kids are motivated and want to be here; there needs to be more of these camps available to kids."

"This is a first year in the program, and I like it a lot," Beasley said. "There needs to be more of these camps available to kids."

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DAILY EDITION
WILLSON
Boneless Sliced Ham
99¢ 99¢
SAVINGS 1.50 LB
SAVINGS UP TO 2.20
COUNTRY TIME
Lemonade Mix
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SAVINGS UP TO 2.20
ICEBERG Head Lettuce
98¢ 99¢
SAVINGS 41 HD
DEER PARK
Spring Water
99¢ 99¢
SAVINGS UP TO 1.50
8 A.M. THURS. TO 10 P.M. SAT.
3 TO 12 OZ. APPLES, CRISP APPLE, CHEESE OR PEACH
Sara Lee Fruit Pies
LIMIT 4
TOTAL SAVINGS 3.40
GROUND CHUCK
89¢ 99¢
LB.
SAVINGS 1.10 LB
SUGAR-SWEETENED DRINK
MAKES 1 (6) CANS
WILSON
30-DAY MEGA HOLIDAY SALE!
Study finds automakers producing less fuel efficient cars

Michael A. de Yonnina
COLORADO DAILY (U. COLORADO)

BOULDER, Colo. (U-WIRE) - A study finding that an overwhelm-
ing majority of automakers are produc-
ing cars less fuel efficient than a decade ago has been endorsed by Colorado environmentalists and Rep. Mark Udall.

The Colorado Public Interest Research Group (CoPIRG) said Monday that it considers the state to be on the front lines of the issue because of its high percentage of SUVs and other light trucks.

The study, "Driving in Detroit: Tapping Auto-maker Ingenuity to Build Safe and Efficient Automobiles," released late last week by the Union of Concerned Scientists, said that 83 percent of the auto industry - Ford, Daimler Chrysler and General Motors - are today producing less fuel-efficient vehicles than 10 years ago, spurred a rise in fuel prices and global warming.

Fuel efficiency peaked in 1988, according to the study. The decline is attributed to a three-fold rise in the sales of light trucks.

In calling for "greener" SUVs, scien-
tists built a test model to the same standards as the Ford Explorer XLT but with a lighter weight, higher-fuel efficiency standards and lower-pollu-
tion production.

Fuel economy increased by nearly 50 percent compared to the Explorer currently available to consumers, according to the study. The Explorer's combined city/highway miles per gallon is 19.3, compared to the test model's 28.4, according to the study.

Ford Motor Co. said the study declined or acknowledge statement the company made last summer that it would improve the efficiency of its SUVs by 25 percent by 2005. "That's something we've said before the study," Ford spokesman Sara Takash said. "It wasn't everything." Parker said, "It was a compromise. I have two kids."

Closing the mpg gap is impor-
tant, according to environmentalists. Boulder's chapter of the Sierra Club and CoPIRG joined to push for legislation to compel automakers to achieve higher standards.

"This would be a good thing for Colorado," Judy Fleming of CoPIRG said.

Fleming said that if efficiency standards are increased by 2012, 374 million tons of pollution could be reduced annually. . . . R~La.

"Mark supports the legislation because it would save us literally mil-
thions of gallons of petroleum a day," Udall's spokesman Lawrence Parkinson said.

Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., is on the committee hearing the bill - the Energy and Commerce Committee, chaired by Billy Tauzin, R-La.

No other Colorado representa-
tives support the measure. Another study predicted a decrease in gas prices this summer.

If "you're a second-year law student, you don't do any criminal work. You do landlord-tenant issues and consumer fraud," Brasham said. "Most of these issues are violations.

Fleming said, "I do city ordinance violations."

However, it cannot handle certain cases like student versus stu-
dent problems or cases dealing with the University.

Betsey Stammer has been working as an attorney for Students' Legal Assistance since its inception in 1977. The office handles over 2000 cases per year, the majority of which are landlord-tenant cases. According to Stammer, "Having legal assistance is benefi-
cial to students involved in such issues.

"Most students go through their four years in college without hav-
ing any legal problems. When they do have problems, it's often for the first time," Stammer said. "They're at a disadvantage because they are dealing with business people and, in most cases, landlord-tenant laws are fixed in favor of landlords."

Stevie Rogers, an attorney with SLA since 1981, has simple advice for students dealing with rental housing.

"You have no, you have no, you have no," Rogers said.

He advises students to read leases before signing and to bring them to the legal assistance office to go over them with one of the attorneys.

"We will review [the leases] with them to make sure they know what they are getting into," Rogers said. "Frequently we can point out specific things that they need to agree on."

CoPIRG said Monday that it would make part of President Bush's energy policy moot, Fleming said. If we had better efficiency, Bush wouldn't be looking at drilling on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Fleming said.

Members of Congress, including Mark Udall, D-Colo., are pushing for higher mpg for the same reason. Udall has joined 45 other representatives to cosponsor a bill that would require manufacturers to hike higher mpg standards.

"Mark supports the legislation because it would save us literally mil-
thions of gallons of petroleum a day," Udall's spokesman Lawrence Parkinson said.

Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., is on the committee hearing the bill - the Energy and Commerce Committee, chaired by Billy Tauzin, R-La.

No other Colorado representa-
tives support the measure. Another study predicted a decrease in gas prices this summer.

Students' legal service gives University free advice

Attorneys and Law students help

William Alonso
DAILY EGYPTIAN

When it comes to obtaining help from Students' Legal Assistance, Amanda Brasham has one piece of advice for stu-
dents: do not wait until the last minute, because help will be lim-
ited.

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out anything expecting anything in return. It feels great and professional and professionally I feel fortunate personally and professionally. I feel lucky and to do good," Rogers said.

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You can see a few other aimed recently introduced to
the market, is a hybrid, running on a combination of gas and electric power. It yields 46 mpg, combined city and highway.

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out anything expecting anything in return. It feels great and professionally and professionally I feel fortunate personally and professionally. I feel lucky and to do good," Rogers said.
Junior College point man Eugene Bates left, Bates would be a welcome addition to the Huskies. At 6-feet tall, Bates averaged 15 points, 6.5 rebounds and 4 assists a game as a sophomore at Lincoln, all the while shooting 59 percent from the floor for a 7-8 team.

"Jay's a real hard worker and had an excellent season at Lincoln College," Judson said. "He was all-area and all-region on a very good team at Lincoln. I think he'll be a really good addition at NIU."

NIU's signing of Gordon Tech High School star, 6-foot-6 point guard Julian McElroy, was supposed to bolster their attack from the perimeter and contribute strength to the team with his size and versatility. McElroy is still expected to do all that, but his debut in working out with the Huskies has been pushed back by a couple of weeks.

Coming down hard in a pickup game, McElroy strained his PCL, but fortunately won't need surgery. "He has to remain athletically inactive for the next couple of weeks," said NIU coach Rob Judson about McElroy, who averaged 17 points, 12 assists and seven rebounds a game in his senior campaign with the Rams.

Incoming players get head start

For the first time, the NCAA is letting players be on scholarship the summer before their first year at a university, and NIU is taking full advantage of the rule change. "We are going to have our incoming players up here the whole summer," Judson said. "I think this is really a rule change that was made for the better."

Already in DeKalb for the summer are McElroy, Bates and Minnesota's 6-foot-3 Jannel Stemen. The Huskies are still waiting on word regarding Harlan's 6-foot-5 swingman Chris Lawson.

With his most recent ACT testing results not in, his score could be the determining factor for Chris bring a Huskie or taking another route such as junior college. If Chris does not achieve the necessary score on his test, but is eligible to come to NIU as a partial qualifier, Judson has said that they would meet his presence with open arms. As a partial qualifier, he would be eligible to be on scholarship and practice with the team, but not travel and play with them, which is similar to what occurred to Illinois State transfer Perry Smith last year.

Old coaches on the move

Former NIU assistant coaches Ryan Marks and Andre Peavy have both headed head coaching jobs since moving of NIU. Marcus Jankus has departed, as well as tailback so the freshman could enter the high school, said Peavy, "I want to get farther away from NIU.

"It seemed like they were really good addition at NIU."

Northern Illinois tailback arrested, charged with burglary

Out with the old, in with the new

After performing at NIU on scholarship for two years, Canada native Marcus Jankus has departed, and the opening he left behind on the squad is being filled by Lincoln junior College point man Eugene "Jay" Bates.

"It was his decision to leave," said Judson, regarding Jankus' departure to Mercyhurst College and the opening he left behind on the squad is being filled by Lincoln junior College point man Eugene "Jay" Bates.

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Move over, Rudy

High jump walk-on shows you don't have to wait for success

JENS DEU
DAILY EGYPTIAN

Most know the story of your most famous walk-on, Daniel Finkle, thanks to the movie bearing his name, "Rudy." Rudy was a walk-on to the University of Notre Dame's football team and his career culminated in 27 seconds of glory when he got to be jumping a half over the old record of 5-10. DeNoon said. "She's trying to put all her tough stuff together and keep her sanity at the same time and I admire that." Although she has already accomplished a lot, Gray is far from being done. Her current goal is to make it back to the NCAA's and to have a stronger showing than she did this time around. She also agrees with DeNoon's belief that she can top the six foot mark.

"The by 1 time I graduate I want to be jumping at 6-4, " Gray said, "I'm still friends with Blanco will once again fill the No. 1 slot. Although she has already have five good players who arc-woodcom­-. "Gosh, you say she has five `w ith Stark either at the No. 6 spot, but is cur~ some how managed its way into the summer. I lud the unsightly pleasure of sitting behind someone at last season left. to be played :ind another month before the July 31 trading deadline to pick up Brant ." Andy Egenes
DAILY EGYPTIAN

A short memo to all Chicago Cubs fans for Old and New.

Every Cub fan that I seem to run into has reminded me of the fact that their team is in first place and they usually seem to know how many games the St. Louis Cardinals are out of and how they swept the Cubs at Wrigley Field.

I have to admit, I really didn't understand the passion Cubs loyalists have in their team. I'm sure I attended a family gathering last month. One of my friends from college, who also went to high school with, showed up (I think he get wind there was free beer) and greeted somebody that I know he hadn't seen in at least two years.

No hi. No hello. Just a simple comment about those first place Cubbies," he asked, followed by a beautiful laugh.

Typically, it's someone from a Cubs fan box more hot under the collar than a young school they go on his way to the prom. The Cubs are always trailing and they always seem to have the same game plan. They never have the same amount needed to play. They have all the components of a winning team, including relief pitching. Usually, it's the relievers that give you the edge and add some more players.

As a blood Cardinals fan, I'm making a commanding editorial decision to remind all Cubs fans about the fact more than three months of the season left to be played and another month before the 31 trading deadline to pick up Brandon Brown.

I remember reminding people of the same thing in late April, which continued throughout May and somehow managed its way into the summers. I had the unsightly pleasure of sitting behind someone at last Sunday night's game who told me he was moving to Chicago next month to watch the World Series.

This guy was also the same person who submitted his Cubs history lecture about obscenities describing how great the franchise supposedly is.

As for the Cubs this season, they're 87 more games this season to pull a Ray Finkle. Or is that Brant Brown?

Andy Egenes welcomes comments from all Cardinal fans. He can be reached at aegegenes@siu.edu.

Laces out

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