Bus routes expand service to city

New transportation could allow more access to education

Sean McGahan
DAILY EGYPTIAN

New public transportation routes through southern Illinois unveiled Monday have Denise Abell seeing more opportunities for people in her rural community.

Abell, a resident of Harrisburg, said the expansion of Rides Mass Transit District bus routes to run from Harrisburg through SIUC, John A. Logan College and other stops along Illinois Route 13 will provide more affordable travel options for people throughout southern Illinois.

"It’s really been a blessing to a lot of people,” Abell said.

As a home health care nurse for the Harrisburg Medical Center, Abell said she has seen many of her patients use the bus routes to travel to doctor appointments as far as Paducah, Ky., and Evansville, Ind. But the newest addition to the service could go further to provide an affordable avenue to education for her 19-year-old son, who is considering transferring to SIUC next year, she said.

Access to education was a prime motivator for many involved in getting the new routes off the ground, said Bill Jung, chief executive officer of Rides Mass Transit District. He said many in the 16 southern Illinois counties the service serves had expressed about traveling to SIUC and other colleges.

See TRANSIT, Page 2

Student Affairs to get new administrator

Four candidates remain for dean of students

Jeff Engelhardt
DAILY EGYPTIAN

After nearly five years of doing double duty, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Larry Dietz is ready for a little help.

The search for a new associate vice chancellor for student affairs/dean of students has narrowed to four finalists from 45 applicants. The position has been vacant since Jean Paratore retired in December 2003.

Dietz said renewable the position would allow him to focus more on long-term goals within the university.

“We have some new initiatives and programs that I am going to need additional time to work on,” Dietz said. “I need some help, so the new person will be running the day-to-day operations and I will be doing the long term projects.”

Dietz said he needs to devote more time to the First-Year Experience program, Greek housing, the new student services building and other capital improvement projects on campus.

The associate vice chancellor will supervise the Counseling Center, Rainbow’s End Program, Student Judicial Affairs and Legal Services, Career Services, Disability Support Services and Student Development.

The candidates include Zauyah Waite, associate vice president for student affairs at University of Toledo; Randi Schneider, director of enrollment management at the Trumbull Campus of Kent State; Cheryl Green, chair of the counseling department at Chicago State and Peter Gittas, dean of student life at University of Duisburg. Each candidate is scheduled to make an open presentation in the Student Health Center.

See AFFAIRS, Page 2
During heavy academic pressure, students of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, a public research university located in the state of Illinois, are faced with several challenges. One of the main concerns is the increase in grades they have to achieve to stay eligible for their scholarships. The student-athletes are required to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better in the first semester on campus to continue their studies. Those who fail to meet the GPA requirement may lose their eligibility and financial aid.

The university has also implemented a new policy where the student-athletes will be given the option of playing in the mid-season livens or attending to schoolwork and basketball work if they need to. This policy is designed to help the players manage their responsibilities and ensure that they can go it alone.

On the other hand, the university is also taking steps to prevent the occurrence of mid-game leaks. They have put in place strict protocols to ensure that the information is kept confidential. The university is also working with the student-athletes to find what they need to do to improve their grades and stay eligible for their scholarships.

In conclusion, the university is taking proactive measures to ensure that the student-athletes can continue their education without compromising their athletic performance. They are also providing support and resources to help the student-athletes manage their responsibilities and stay eligible for their scholarships.

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Straw-bale construction could bail out planet, pocketbook

Eco-friendly bed and breakfast to open in Makanda

Justin Lange  Daily Egyptian

The Makanda Inn, set to open in October, will feature a straw-bale building design, use recycled and natural materials and be as energy efficient as possible, said contractor Butch Dunn.

Dunn, a native of southern Illinois, started his alternative building company EcoLogic Construction five years ago. Dunn has been involved with construction since age 9 when he first went to work with his father. After attending a building seminar in Washington 12 years ago, Dunn decided to involve himself with eco-friendly construction.

“I feel that we’re all going to have to (practice eco-friendly living) eventually,” Dunn said. “We can only keep burning materials up the way we are for so long and then we’ll have to make some changes. It just feels like the right thing to do.”

Dunn said the building’s main focus is its straw-bale construction and natural building materials. Settlers in the Midwest first built straw-bale homes in the 1800s. While building methods have changed, straw-bale constructed dwellings remain inexpensive and eco-friendly as alternatives to conventional homes, he said.

The process typically starts by pouring a concrete foundation and erecting a wood framework for the walls. Stacking and tying together straw bales, covering them with a wire mesh and coating them with an inch-and-a-half of concrete form the two-foot-thick walls, Dunn said.

The benefits of straw-bale construction are numerous, said Charlie Howe, a Green Party candidate for state representative of the 115th District. Howe said the building supplies cost roughly half those of a conventional building, that it is environmentally sound and the concrete coating makes the walls virtually fireproof.

Dunn also described several of the eco-friendly building alternatives that will help the inn stay as energy efficient as possible. The basement alone will contain more than four innovations designed to save on utility costs, he said.

Specially designed floors made of paver stone set atop sand and Styrofoam insulated concrete forms will help collect heat let in by the massive bay windows. A masonry heater fireplace and a water heater without a tank will help to provide visitors comfort for relatively little money, Dunn said.

The heater warms water as it runs through the pipes, rather than constantly heating a standing supply of water, he said.

The improvement to insulation alone is enough to save some serious cash. Dunn currently owns a straw-bale home similar to the inn and he said his average utility bill does not exceed $90 per month.

Janelle Weber, future manager for the inn, said she is excited to offer a unique experience for visitors. She said her stepfather, Greg Wellman, decided to open the inn after he taught aviation classes at SIUC. His love for the area and eco-friendly buildings led him to purchase the 18-acre piece of land adjacent to Giant City State Park.

Weber said she hopes the inn will be the first of several built.

Justin Lange can be reached at 536-3311 or jlange@siuc.edu.

When the university ushered in the promise of a new year, one of its top administrators said goodbye.

President for Academic Affairs John S. Haller plans to retire Dec. 31 after 18 years in the position.

“I’ve spent 40 years now in higher education and I think it’s time to turn it over to some younger people to carry on. It’s been a wonderful job I’ve had here,” he said.

Haller, 68, said he plans to work for the university on a voluntary basis and teach Honors courses.

President Glenn Pushard described Haller as a workaholic and one of the finest men with whom he had ever worked.

Haller and Pushard typically mix about 10 times a month.

“I’m either walking down to his office or he’s walking over to mine,” Pushard said.

He said it would be difficult to find someone who could quickly learn Haller’s many duties, including technical grant writing, and dealing with academics across SIUC, SUIE, SIU and SIU School of Medicine campuses.

Duane Stucky, vice president for financial and administrative affairs, said in charge of the internal search to replace Haller.

The goal date for Oct. 1. The board approves the recommendation.

The position is to find a replacement by Oct. 1, Stucky said, to give the new person time to work with Haller before his departure.

Allison Petty can be reached at 536-3311 ext. 258 or allison.petty@siue.edu.

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System-Wide Internal Search

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

President Pushard is initiating a search internal to the Southern Illinois University system for the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs to succeed Dr. John H. Haller, who resigned December 31. The Vice President for Academic Affairs reports directly to the President, the chief executive officer for the University.

The Vice President serves as the chief academic officer of the University, providing leadership to the campus academic Vice Chancellors, constitutions, and academic Chancellors, and support to the President on all academic matters. He or she is the University’s spokesperson and representative in discussing academic programs with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (BBHE). The Vice President also staffs the Academic Matters Committee of the SIU Board of Trustees. For a more detailed job announcement, please visit this web site. http://www.siu.edu/affairs

Qualifications: Required: A successful candidate will have received tenure at the rank of Professor within the University. Preferred: Administrative experience at a campus or central level within a complex university which offers a range of programs through the doctoral level with current national dialogue on education issues; and, some acquaintance with academic policymaking at the State level.

For full consideration, nominations or applications should be received by August 1, 2008. Responsibilities will begin in October 2008. The salary is competitive. Submit a cover letter, resume, and list of at least four references (electronic submission is encouraged) to:

Dr. Diane Stucky
Senior Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs
Mail Code 4801
Southern Illinois University
1400 Douglas Drive
Carbondale, IL 62901
Phone: (618) 453-3404
Fax: (618) 453-3404

Please visit our web site at:

http://www.siu.edu/affairs

SIU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer that strives to enhance its ability to develop a diverse faculty and staff and to increase its potential to serve a diverse student population. All applications are welcomed and encouraged and will receive consideration.
in Iraq for the Baghdad bombings. It was still investigating the Kirkuk attack, underscoring the more complex nature of the threat. But city police spokesman Brig. Gen. Barhath Qaidar said the terror network behind the attack was the same as in Kirkuk.

The Baghdad bombings left piles of rubble and shattered glass on the streets alongside crumpled cars and sandbags from panicked militiamen, many of whom had slept at rest areas before rising at dawn to begin their annual march to the golden dome of one of Islam’s most holy shrines. Hospital emergency rooms were overwhelmed with bloodied bodies, including a young boy, a handbag-wielding woman who dropped her bag as she was held by a bomber, and a man whose face was maimed.

“I Israeli women and children and friends and family members were left to awaken to a new street,” Mustapha Abbas, a 32-year-old transit driver who was injured in the stomach and legs, said to a reporter from the Associated Press.

At least 32 people were killed and more than 100 were wounded, said police spokesman Col. Steve Stover. It was the deadliest attack in the capital since June 17, when a truck-bombing killed 63 people in Hurriyah.

In a throwback to more violent times, the Iraq government announced a 24-hour curfew in Baghdad starting at 5 a.m. Tuesday.

The attacks in the capital began about an hour after the ceremony, when the women detonated their explosives belts in quick succession less than 200 meters apart.

The bombers were walking among pilgrims streaming toward the golden dome of the eighth-century imam. The shrine, the focus of a major Shiite festival this week, gives its name to the northern neighborhood of Kazimiyah which has been a center ofSunnia-Shiite conflict. Iraqi security forces had deployed about 200 women this week to search the pilgrims who took the attack along the processions of the shrine. There were too few women guards to search people in groups.

The blasts started with an explosion near the National Theater in the city’s east, followed by a bombing near a food stand set up for the pilgrims for a performance. At least 1,000 pilgrims were killed in a Baghdad Neighborhood. The wave of carnage jolted refugees in a suicide bomber in 2005.

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The Duke report

Field trip: Washington D.C.

Andrew O. Conner
andrewconner@mail.siu.edu

In North Korea, when Dear Leader gives you lemons, you hail the glory and benevolence of Dear Leader. In America, when greedy self-interest drives us toovers us fiscal and energy crises, we come up with words like “Staycation.” This year I was fortunate enough to go on a summer trip, so this week my column is via correspondence from the belly of the beast— Washington D.C.

My mother, her fiancé, his son and I spent the last week in our nation’s capital. At high noon, you could smell an egg on Justice Scalia’s head.

The first stop in our tour was a stop of Capitol Hill. Last summer I interned for Sen. Dick Durbin at his Chicago office. Although the job did not pay, it did come with a perks package. The first was finding out I want nothing to do with electoral politics. The other is VIP tours in D.C.

We started our tour by taking a small 20-person open-seated train through underground tunnels from his Senate office to the Capitol. The train kind of epitomized the madness of politics in this country and began to make us feel like we are in a version of the Emerald City in the Wizard of Oz.

Some things were inspiring, like the uni-sculpted bust on a statue of famous female pioneers revered for the first woman president. There were the things of more depressing sort, such as a mural depicting Sept. 11. That has a twin mural to be painted at the end of the War on Terror (you know, the day we finally vanquish evil from the world). There was also a painting at the very top of our capitol dome that depicts George Washington as God (entirely with his 13 angels). That manages to violate both the Illinois State government’s impotence in allocating highway and infrastructure money. They even assured me personally that Amtrak service would continue to Carbondale.

The entire trip was honestly a great time. The food was great, the local scene was not bad and we actually only dealt with one act of God (a monsoon in Georgetown). But as this is a column, and not a series of updates on twitter, I guess I need some reflection.

I realized that I love my country like I love my family. I love my country not because it is, or was ever, will ever be perfect. I love my country because it consists people trying to do their best. You have to love people for their flaws just as much as their strengths.

Our short, sometimes brutal history is being made every day. The great thing about history is it is infinite. Walking through the corridors of power was like pulling back the veil and seeing the man behind the curtain, only this is not one man — but many men and women working toward their own ends and doing the best they can.

Like with our families, we see great potential that would be hard not to live up to. And like with our families, we realize that we are not perfect, but some things are perfect for us.

I will leave you with a quote that left me speechless. On the wall at the Jefferson Memorial it reads, “Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy as a civilized society tourd to one of the regiments of their barbarous ancestors.”

I love this town.

O’Connor is a junior studying political science.

Two minutes of truth

Guide them from day one

Paul Flowers

The hardest decisions in life always come at a cost. The most important things in your life: ultimately come as a result of your choices. Taking responsibility for those choices gives you power over your life. This gives you the control to steer your life in whatever direction you see fit. The only problem is deciding what move to make at what time.

We are all faced with interesting moments in our lives when we sit back and think, “What should I do?” It happens in every area — school, work, and relationships.

Most freshmen come to college fresh out of high school with a glorified idea of what college is. Thanks to a million of the movies and television shows that depict college life as a big party some, many people come here with that attitude. That attitude alters their decision-making processes when the time comes to choose between going out to a party or staying in and studying. Sadly, many students choose the former. The results of these choices compounded over time are populations of students who would rather enjoy evenings and weekends of dollar disarray and sense stimulation as opposed to mental manufacturing and value creation, where real fun can be found.

Solution? Let us give high school (and some college) students the proper mentoring that they need to come into college with a better right attitude. This will carry over throughout their college years and result in truly lasting the best years of their lives.

Once the degree is earned, students are faced with the ultimate decision, where do they want to spend their most valuable years? Where do they want to do their time? For those who do not know what time I am referring to, it is the 40-40-40. You work 40 hours per week, for 40 years of college, to retire on about 40 percent of what you were making, which was not enough to live on in the first place. This is the choice that worries many.

Solution? Give students the real information on the corporate world, private sectors and other industries that they plan on entering after receiving the expensive receipt called diploma. Start guiding them from day one with inspiration for creativity and independence, instead of putting them into the same assembly line of classes that spits out the carbon-copied, drone-like, programmed re-treaded mind that is so abruptly planted into their prospective positions. Positions pumped up with glamorous titles and “competitive salaries” that fool you into believing that the usually low numerical value is what you are truly worth.

As for the relationships, choose wisely. Some may stay with you for a lifetime; others may come into your life, turn it upside down and leave you having no idea. Relationships are a tricky topic. At times they seem so simple that if they are exactly what you may want or need in your life, other times they can take your heartful honesty and turn it into ammunitions. Others with listen to you with an open ear and are the student-run newspaper of Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Mission Statement

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

Quote of the Day

“i reminded her that she was not God.” — Michele Elizabeth. Weatherillard/times-herald, email message, 07/25/2008

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Early childhood education deserves more funding

Dear Editor:

SUIC has one of the best Early Childhood Education programs in the country. The most important part of this program is the Child Development Laboratories also known as CDLs. Students, such as I, enrolled in the program must do a number of practicums in order to be trained to be excellent teachers.

CDL serves children between the ages of six weeks to six years.

It is a play-based program in which the children learn from a variety of hands-on activities. Because CDL is a lab school, the children see many different teachers each day. Just when they start to get used to one set of teachers, a new set arrives.

CDL has been trying desperately to get more funding in order to improve the program. They want to hire more teachers that would be in the classrooms constantly.

Imagine how difficult it would be to have a class where every few weeks there is a new teacher. The new teacher does everything differently than the previous teacher. Just when you begin to adjust to the new teachers ways, another completely new teacher takes over the class. This is exactly what the children are going throughout each semester.

Children thrive on routine and consistency. They get very little consistency due to all the teachers who are in and out on a daily basis. CDL is asking for a lot more funding from SUIC to improve the program. SUIC just received major funding so CDL surely deserves some.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Cox
Senior studying early childhood education.

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Bill could help parents defer autism costs

Anthony Cuvo, director of the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders at SIUC, said an autistic child’s therapy is crucial to his or her future well-being. It is also even more important that parents are able to afford to help their children, he said.

The father said we can provide intervention, the better they will be in the future. The on-campus center is one of 27 agencies in the Autism Program Network in Illinois. The state-funded network provides families with treatment, diagnosis, education and support at a lower cost than other agencies in the state.

Cuvo said places said that treat children with autism require $100 per hour, a service that insurance companies cannot afford. However, SIUC’s center costs $200 per semester and provides the services.

Melanie Swanson, whose son is enrolled in SIUC’S program, said she is fortunate the center is available at such low costs.

Swanson said she would not be able to afford treatment anywhere else because the closest locations charge at least $350 per hour.

Pritchard said he has spoken with families such as Swanson. Other parents, he said, are not as lucky and have to pay all of the high medical costs at other centers.

“Some parents have to mortgage their house, have their car repossessed and some even go bankrupt,” he said.

Swanson said she expressed her concerns and showed support by sending mass emails through the Autism Speaks network and staying informed about the latest updates.

As of now, the proposal to add autism costs to state aid on the table and most likely will not be discussed until next year, Pritchard said.

“You have hope in this case,” Swanson said. “You just want to make sure the children are able to get the care they need.”

Jenn Lofton can be reached at 536-311 ext. 273 or jlofton@siu.edu.
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Stupidity, irony mesh in ‘Step Brothers’

Sean McGahan
DAILY EGYP TIAN

“Step Brothers”
Rated R
Starring: Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Mary Steenburgen
Directed by: Adam McKay
Runtime: 95 minutes

George W. Bush said it best when he eloquently stated, “...our nation finds hope, where our nation finds hope,...”

For Ferrell fans, think “Elf” with a penchant for perversion. For “Boogie Nights” fans, imagine Reilly’s Reed Rothchild after he hit his head at the bottom of the pool a few hundred times.

Two reals, as they did in “Talladega Nights,” steal every scene they share with the cutting room floor, so the patient viewer would be wise to wait for the DVD and all its blooper extras.

For Ferrell fans, think “Elf” with the inconsistent and painstakingly unrealistic parents, played by the usually delightful Mary Steenburgen and Richard Jenkins.

The film contains a litter of cannon, most of which do not work. Two notable exceptions are Seth Rogen’s dreadnought job interviewer and Horatio Sanz as a fed-up Billy Joel cover band front man.

It is basically that combination, coupled with some over-medicated Floridians, that got Bush elected in the first place.

And if the studio execs are paying attention, they would be wise to cast their vote for Ferrell and Reilly’s next pairing immediately.

Too much time is also spent with the inconsistent and painstakingly unrealistic parents, played by the usually delightful Mary Steenburgen and Richard Jenkins.

Sharks actually use sonar, which detects changes in electrostatic forces in the water. So, if you start to flail around and freak out, you will be much easier to find, Bicky said.

James E. Garvey, associate professor of zoology, said most sharks would not eat humans unless they were very, very hungry. Sharks would most likely look for an item, that would be easy to handle and force down their mouth quickley, he said.

“The real danger lies in mistake- identity. Garvey said. “In murky waters or when much debris (or lots of prey fish) are present, sharks may mistake an item on your swimsuit, a dive mask, a foot, etc., as an edible morsel.”

Pulse Chatterbox

When television entertainment news show “Extra” returns for its 15th season, it will be without current host and former Sugar Ray front man Mark McGrath. The show has been in the news with some recent changes and new host stories have been added.

See answers to this chatterbox and past ones online only at siuDE.com

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402 S. Washington

Two Bedroom
514 S. Beveridge #4, 7
311 W. Cherry #2
405 W. Cherry Court
406 W. Cherry Court
407 W. Cherry Court
408 W. Cherry Court
409 W. Cherry Court
409 W. Cherry Court
410 W. College #7
*1201 W. College
703 S. High

Three Bedroom
409 Cherry Court
405 W. Cherry Court
406 W. Cherry Court
407 W. Cherry Court
408 W. Cherry Court

Four Bedroom
208 W. Hospital #2 (behind DQ)
820 W. Walnut #1
501 University

*1201 W. College
208 W. Hospital #2 (behind DQ)
614 S. Logan
400 W. Oak #1
402 W. Oak #W
505 N. Oaklade
501 S. University #2
820 W. Walnut #1
820 W. Walnut #2
208 W. Hospital #2 (behind DQ)
820 W. Walnut #1
501 University

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Hold on to him for the season and wait and see what happens. If I am Gil Tho Epstein I am looking at this year’s team and seeing a legitimate chance at winning two straight World Series. Manny will stay for Boston and produce even if he is unhappy. You cannot trade away your best hitter in the middle of a heated pennant race. Wait until the end of the season and then trade him.

Unloading Man-Rami’s Green Monster-sized contract now will save the Red Sox some future embarrassment, but it won’t help them win now — unless they got a great deal from a playoff bubble A.L. team desperate for a DH (who come to mind: I could still be the Sox, but David Ortiz has that spot locked up. I say trade him now while he still has some value on the market.

While “Manny being Manny” has helped propel the Sox back into the upper echelon of N.L.B. in recent years, parting ways at this point is probably the best option.

Rlanda is still a great hitter, but his defense is getting worse by the month and his antics are here at times taken center stage ahead of the team. If he’s a DH he could still help the Sox, but David Ortiz has that spot locked up. I say trade him now while he still has some value on the market.

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Five members of the team made

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semester and 11 players maintain a

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Assistant athletic director for

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Academic Center requires all fresh-

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If the student-athletes earn a GPA of

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mitment to maintaining good grades and attendance.

Perhaps the most difficult time of the year to maintain grades is during

the season, Eklund said and her fellow coaches adjust schedules to help the players. In the spring the workload is divided amongst the staff and the players and coaches have monthly meetings to check up on academic matters.

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Women's basketball earns second straight academic honor

Brandon Aupsburg

The Saluki women's basketball team has plenty of brains and the Women's Basketball Coaches' Association has noticed.

The women's team earned an overall GPA of 3.371 during the 2007-2008 school year and was ranked No. 12 in the WBCA's Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for Division I teams.

The Salukis joined four other MVC teams on the list — Indiana State ranked first with a GPA of 3.591, Northern Iowa was sixth with a GPA of 3.535 and Wichita State was 21st with a GPA of 3.289. This is the fourth time in the past five years that the women's team has been selected to the honor roll, according to Saluki Media Services.

Women's coach Dana Eikenberg said in an e-mail that her players' academic success is just as important to her as their success on the court. She said academic diligence is the first thing she stresses on the recruiting trail. It gives her players a leg up on the court and in the classroom, she said.

Our recruits know we pay attention and they also realize the likelihood of going pro in our sport. Discipline in the classroom usually follows suit on the floor.

— Dana Eikenberg

head women's coach

See HONOR ROLL, Page 11

Shaw signs with Spain

Former SIU basketball forward Matt Shaw signed a one-year, $40,000 contract Friday to play for La Palma of the Spanish LEB league. Shaw said the financial compensation was not as important as just playing basketball again.

"I didn't care how much they were going to pay me," he said. "I'm just getting a chance to continue to play basketball and get paid for it now."

La Palma is on Isla De Gran Canaria, a part of the Canary Islands located southwest of the Iberian Peninsula.

Shaw is from Centralia. Despite Shaw's move to paradise, he will have a great deal of work to do in helping La Palma win games. Last season La Palma finished 17th of 18 teams in the Gold Division, ending with a 12-22 record.

The LEB league is the second highest league in Spanish basketball behind the ACB league.

Final piece, final predictions

Ian Preston

This will be my final column for the DAILY EGYPTIAN. So for today's final topic, let's talk about my final baseball predictions. This is one of the more difficult predictions I have had to ever make because it is still July. For today I am going to give you whom I feel will be this year's Fantasy MVPs and CY Young's. I will also throw in my playoff predictions up until the World Series (but I will not say the winner).

Fantasy MVP's

National League, Lance Berkman, 1B, Houston

He is playing out of his mind this season. He got off to a torrid start this year, but has cooled off a bit. His stats are no longer among the league leaders but look at his line for fantasy numbers; .344 avg, 22 homeruns, 76 RBIs and 15 steals. He is even stealing bags. Bottom line, he is the biggest points producer in fantasy base-ball whose owners should be very happy campers the rest of the year.

American League, Carlos Quentin, OF, White Sox

I will be honest this is a toss up. Josh Hamilton has just as much argument for this as Quentin's. It is hard to look past Hamilton's 100 RBIs at the end of July, plus his average is 15 points higher than Quentin's. This is still July and a lot can change in two months.

Quentin has more experience playing full seasons in the majors. His swing is also the Jessica Alba of swings — beautiful.

CY Young's

National League, Rich Harden, SP, Cubs

Logic would dictate that Brandon Webb should be here, but only because Harden missed a month due to injury. Had Harden not been on the shelf, he would have had the best numbers of any pitcher in baseball by now. I boldly predict Harden will stay healthy and continue to be the best pitcher in the National League for the remainder of the season.

American League, Cliff Lee, SP, Cleveland

As Far as I thought this guy's hot start was just a typical early season fluke you see from average players every year. Usually those players are back on Earth by now, but not Lee. He is the best pitcher in base-ball and, barring an injury, he could make a run at 25 wins.

Top Rookie

National League, Geovanni Soto, C, Cubs

No surprise here. He is also the best catcher in baseball right now.