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SAFETY

Accidents raise state's awareness

By Melissa Sturtevant & Jennifer Brown
News Editor & Administration Editor

With the amount of fatalities on roadways this summer, attention is being drawn to driver safety.

David Craig, a Charleston Police Department patrolman, said accidents are down 7 percent from last year, however.

"People are using better judgment while driving," Craig said.

Many local and state programs are being implemented in order to try to allow safer driving on the roadways.

Josh Kauffman, a spokesperson for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) said fatality numbers have also gone down.

"In 2009 to 2010 Illinois experienced less than 1,000 fatalities on Illinois roadways across the state and those numbers date back to 1920s," Kauffman said. "There have been historic lows in last two

"I think the fatal accidents are going to bring more attention. People have more of a chance of surviving with seatbelt on."

David Craig, Charleston Police Department

years, and we hope that trend continues in the future."

Craig said that there is more of a chance of accidents in the winter months because of the weather conditions.

Sharon Larson, the traffic records clerk at the Charleston Police Department, disagreed with Craig, saying accidents may not be weather related.

"It's just random," Larson said. "A lot of the deer ones are in early evening and early morning. We have more accidents when the students are here, but not many with injuries."

Seven people were ejected from a van, June 1, not having been wearing safety belts, according to a police report. Two people died in the accident.

"I think the fatal accidents are going to bring more attention," Craig said. "People have more of a chance of surviving with a seatbelt on."

Kauffman said the accidents that happen in the summer could possibly be related to the fact that it is easier for many people to visit friends and family.

Throughout Illinois, Kauffman said safety belt usage is at an all-

time high, this year.

"There is almost 93 percent safety belt usage throughout the state," Kauffman said. "We understand safety belts save lives. The primary law was implemented in 2003. Fatalities decrease as safety belt usage continues to rise."

Along with seatbelt safety, things such as texting and driving, and drinking and driving are being addressed.

IDOT has put in place programs such as "Click It or Ticket" and "You Drink & Drive, You Lose."

"(IDOT) will try to continue as much as we can in implementing traffic safety programs with state and local police departments," Kauffman said.

Since April, there have been nine injury accidents in Charleston. Five of those were in April alone. Larson said there have been no deaths in those accidents.

"You don't know where accidents are going to happen," Larson said.

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COURT

Hearing in Graywood murder case Monday

Staff Report

A status hearing is set for Monday at 9:30 a.m. in the Coles County Courthouse for one of the two former Eastern students charged in the death of Paul McCann.

Marquis A. Harmon, 22, will have his second status hearing at the courthouse, after the first took place May 23.

Harmon was charged with 1st degree murder in the death of McCann in January.

Keyun D. Newble, 25, was also charged with 1st degree murder.

In a Jan. 27 article in *The Daily Eastern News* State's attorney Steve Ferguson said they would be charged with 1st degree murder and criminal negligence.

Harmon and Newble attacked McCann over a food dispute, Ferguson said in the article.

McCann, who was 42, was a client of the Graywood Foundation.

Ferguson said in the article Harmon would also be charged with obstruction of justice for denial of the accident.

This was not the first incident that has occurred at a Graywood Foundation facility.

In 2008, Dustin Higgins was murdered in a Graywood Foundation facility at 1511 B. St. in Charleston.

STATE

Bill aims at keeping students in state

By Melissa Sturtevant
News Editor

Senate Bill 1798, sponsored by Rep. Chapin Rose, has passed in both houses.

The idea for the bill, Rose said, was given to him by the administration from Eastern. SB 1798 was put into place in order to help keep students within the state, Rose said.

The bill requires all state universities to report to the Board of Higher Education annually on certain programs that have ceased to be a help to the university. Reasons such as low enrollment or performances are why a program would have to be reported.

"It has a two-fold immediate goal: To help keep kids here in Illinois, and second, to add a little more to Eastern's operating budget," Rose said.

The bill provides students with financial incentives in order to allow them to be able to go to school within the state.

"We are being out-competed by other states," Rose said. "After this, hopefully we will be able to replicate this around other schools around the state."

According to Rose, SB 1798 will bring more money into Eastern because it provides a partial tuition waiver, not a full tuition waiver.

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CITY

Council approves flood maps

By Jennifer Brown
Administration Editor

Charleston City Council approved the new flood maps for Charleston, which are intended to replace the previous maps in use since 1989.

John Inyart, mayor of the city of Charleston, said updating the flood maps for the city had to be done.

"It has to do with flood insurance," Inyart said. "Each community is covered under the same standards."

The new maps are scheduled to take effect July 18 and will be in the city hall office.

"It tells [people] where the flood areas are in the city," Inyart said. "State and federal regulations have standardized it."

Council member Larry Rennels said the federal government has made some changes to the regulations.

"If we don't have our ordinance updated by July 18, people could lose their ability to buy insurance," Rennels said.

Rennels said the ordinance the city approved will be used in City Hall and the zoning department.

"It's advice on the appropriate action we need to take," Rennels said.

Scheduled repairs to the Up-Towner are expected to start in the next week or two, Inyart said.

The council approved the \$4,950 grant from the TIF fund, which is to be used for repairs to

Adding the finishing touches



MARCUS SMITH | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Davide Prete, a graduate student from Fontbonne University, finishes cleaning his sculpture "Icarus" Wednesday in the sculpture studio at Doudna Fine Arts.

the building.

"We're going to be doing sidewalk work," Inyart said. "There's work to be done on window wells and air conditioner units."

The border line of the TIF district consists of the downtown Charleston area, Inyart said.

The remainder of the funds toward the redevelopment project

will come from the city of Charleston, according to the ordinance.

The sidewalk repair to the building is expected to begin during the summer and fall.

The council removed the three-way stop from the agenda at the start of the meeting, Inyart said.

This came at a request from Eastern officials while they look into oth-

er options for the intersection.

"We're waiting for Eastern to come back about the stop sign," Rennels said.

Council said this may be an issue that may never be voted on by the city.

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