



'The most amazing experience'

A semester abroad left Eastern Illinois University student Alana Toolie raving about an experience that educators says "opens your eyes" and "broadens your vision."

Link, Page B1



Howard steps in
The Fighting Illini select Jerrance Howard as the team's new assistant men's basketball coach.

Sports, Page C1



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GOOD Morning
OUTSIDE
88/62
 Thursday
 September 20, 2007
 Partly sunny.
 See page A4.

LOCAL

Changes to 'tax cap' law hurt property owners

As area residents continue to howl over dramatic hikes in the taxes they pay to the Neoga school district, officials try to get to the root cause of the spike in rates.

Page A3

LOCAL

Annual Relay for Life steps off Saturday

Coles County's overnight fund-raiser for cancer research still is open for more teams as the 12th event nears.

Page A3

NATION

Senate refuses to regulate troops' home time

Coming up four votes short, the Senate on Wednesday blocked a bill that would have required troops to spend as much time at home training with their units as they spend deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Page A8

NATION

Flu vaccine plentiful, but many don't get it

This year, the supply of the flu vaccine is solid, but new government data shows that only a fraction of the people who need flu shots the most actually get them.

Page B8

NATION

U.S. about to bump into current debt ceiling

Congress heard Wednesday from Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson that the government will hit its debt ceiling on Oct. 1, and he asked for a quick increase in the limit.

Page D2

TOP THIS

Upset cargo from truck creates quite a buzz

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Thousands of bees got loose when the truck carrying their hives ran off a highway and overturned near a Montana community, the Highway Patrol said.

State trooper Dell Aman said he was stung twice but didn't know of anyone else who was.

"The public was in no way in danger, as long as they didn't stop to get out of their vehicles," he said. "If they did get out, they figured out pretty quickly that that wasn't the place to be — no pun intended."

The truck, headed from North Dakota to California, veered into a ditch Tuesday along Interstate 94 near the exit for Huntley, a community just northeast of Billings, the Highway Patrol said.

The truck was hauling 465 beehives — nearly 13.7 million bees, Aman said.

Most of the bees stayed in their hives but a "couple thousand" got loose, he said.

The driver, Robert Esper, 66, of Winnemucca, Nev., was uninjured. Aman said Esper wasn't speeding but was cited for alleged careless driving.

Aman said the escaped bees returned to their hives as the weather cooled in the evening. "The temperature dropped about 10 degrees while I was there, and they started going home," he said.

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FRIDAY
PICKING UP STEAM!
Full steam ahead
 Get a look at today's Mattoon business expo.

TIF district helps facilitate work at Cross County Mall

By HERB MEEKER
Staff Writer

MATTOON — Plans are already blooming for business development in the proposed Broadway Avenue East tax increment financing district.

Some of the plans include renovation of the Cross County Mall, including installation of tree-lined traffic islands and a new entrance, as well as extension of Crestview,

Swords and Detro drives north to Ill. Route 316, plus improvements to the Alamo Restaurant.

Mattoon City Administrator Alan Gilmore reviewed some of the projects during Tuesday's Mattoon City Council caucus session.

"There are some major renovations ahead for Cross

TIF/A2



People exit via the main Cross County Mall entrance Wednesday afternoon. Renovations are planned for the mall.

Ken Trevarthan/Staff Photographer

ON THE MEND



Ken Trevarthan/Staff Photographer

Coles County animal control officer Jason Wallace gives some attention Wednesday afternoon at his home to one of the two horses he is caring for that were rescued from the Ernest Rose farm about six weeks ago.

By DAVE FOPAY
Staff Writer

Help still needed to care for dozens of neglected horses

CHARLESTON — Horses removed from a farm near Charleston are receiving care, but food and other donations for them are still needed, the manager of Coles County's animal shelter said Wednesday.

Nearly 60 horses were taken on Sept. 12 from the farm at 1050 W. Coolidge Ave., Charleston, that belongs to Ernest Rose. That was the same location where several dead and neglected horses were found when county authorities

investigated the farm on Aug. 1, and soon after that removed some of the horses there.

Julie Deters, manager of the County Animal Rescue and Education Center, said all the horses removed from the farm are being cared for at other locations. What the shelter needs is donations of horse feed, hay straw and other items, she said.

"We've had a lot donated, but there are so many," Deters said. "Trying to get them all taken

HORSES/A2

AT THE EXPO



Ken Trevarthan/Staff Photographer

Susie Carruthers of Windsor fine-tunes the display at the back of the BeautiControl spa treatments booth Wednesday at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon while setting up for the annual business expo. The event is today from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with Taste of the Expo from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ramada Inn under new ownership

By HERB MEEKER
Staff Writer

MATTOON — The Ramada Inn sign is under wraps, but the hotel is still open, the new owner of the business said Wednesday.

A blue plastic tarp covers the tall Ramada sign on Broadway Avenue East. But new owner Ahwin Trivedi of Williamsburg, Va., was in the hotel office with other employees.

"Yes, we're open for business. I'm not sure if that many people in town know of the sale," he said. "This is a wonderful town. I feel people are very friendly here."

Harion International

RAMADA/A2



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