

## Allyssa DeHaan reaching for big things

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# The State News

## Timeline of Israel's relationship with Gaza

- June 1967**  
Israel captures the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip during six-day Mideast war. An Israeli census put the population at 380,000, at least half of whom were refugees from Israel. Today the population stands at about 1.5 million. The U.N. lists just more than 1 million as refugees and their descendants.
- December 1987**  
A clash in the Jebaliya refugee camp sets off Palestinian uprising, which lasted until 1993 and claimed the lives of more than 2,000 Palestinians and 192 Israelis. The militant Islamic Hamas is formed early in the uprising.
- September 2005**  
Israel withdraws its troops and all of its 8,500 Jewish settlers. It retains control of Gaza's airspace, coastal waters and border crossings.
- June 2007**  
Hamas violently seizes control of Gaza after routing forces loyal to rival Fatah faction of President Mahmoud Abbas.
- June 2008**  
Hamas and Israel reach truce to halt the cross-border rocket attacks and end Israeli offensives in Gaza.
- Nov. 5, 2008**  
Palestinians resume rocket and mortar fire into Israel after Israeli incursion.
- Dec. 19, 2008**  
Hamas formally declares the truce over, rocket fire on Israel intensifies.
- Dec. 27, 2008**  
Israel launches a fierce air offensive, killing more than 200 Palestinians in the first day. Most of the casualties are security forces, but Palestinian officials said at least 15 civilians were among the dead.
- Jan. 3, 2009**  
Thousands of Israeli troops launch a ground offensive in Gaza.



NICK DENTAMARO/THE STATE NEWS

Ali Aqel has just returned from a trip to the Middle East after renewing his Palestinian ID so that he can have residency in the West Bank. He is wearing his kuffiyeh — a scarf historically used for protection against the elements — but now his black-and-white garment is a symbol of Palestinian nationalism.

## BREAKING FROM VIOLENCE

By Allison Bush  
THE STATE NEWS

"Nobody wanted to go anywhere because everyone was feeling down. I was worried that something would break out in the West Bank and I wouldn't be able to leave."

Ali Aqel, computer engineering senior

Computer engineering senior Ali Aqel was walking to his cousin's house on Dec. 27 when he heard what he thought was a sonic boom. In reality, the noise was the beginning of Israel's airstrike against Hamas, the Palestinian authority in the Gaza Strip. The airstrike killed at least 140 people. "I got to my uncle's house, everyone was watching the news and everyone was horrified," he said. "Within two hours, I saw burning tires from Hebron, which is about 5 kilometers away, and news came in that there were Palestinian kids gathering, having a protest."

Aqel spent his winter break in Yattah, a city about 30 miles from the Gaza Strip, to obtain his Palestinian ID in order to keep his residency rights for the West Bank.

The air attacks, which were followed by ground attacks days later, were Israel's response to repetitive rocket firings into Israel from Hamas. The most recent rockets were launched after Israel closed checkpoints and stopped materials from entering Gaza, said Kenneth Waltzer, MSU director of Jewish studies.

The conflict between Israel and Hamas has been ongoing since 2007. See GAZA on page 2A

For an audio slideshow, visit [statenews.com/multimedia](http://statenews.com/multimedia)

## CRIME

### ELPD arrests break-in suspects, football players

By Kyle Feldscher  
THE STATE NEWS

While many MSU students were away on winter break, police in East Lansing concluded investigations into a string of home invasions and made arrests related to the Oct. 19 brawl between members of the MSU football and hockey teams.

A six-month investigation into break-ins at several student rental properties in East Lansing culminated in four arrests on Dec. 23. Sgt. Mike Phillips, records bureau supervisor at the East Lansing Police Department, said the frequency of home invasions has returned to normal following the streak.

"We always have home invasions, but what these guys were doing — stealing the big screens and stuff — that has stopped," Phillips said. "It's really back to normal ... just to one or two a week usually."

Phillips said the 15 home invasions between Dec. 12 and Jan. 7

compared with last year's total of 12 during the same time frame. The past two years represented a considerable decrease from 2006-07 winter break, when 29 home invasions were reported.

East Lansing police Sgt. Scott Wriggelsworth said in addition to arrests, falling temperatures also have contributed to the decrease in the number of invasions.

"With the weather, a lot of the risks are taken away," Wriggelsworth said. "When it warms up, we just have to remind people to close and lock their doors and windows, just to always have them secured."

The four individuals arrested in the case were Leondius Kirksey, 21, of Clinton Township; Deon Jackson, 21, of Detroit; Henry Francis, 20, of Lansing; and Timothy Walton, 20, of Pontiac.

See BREAK on page 2A

## INVESTIGATION

### Questions remain in MSU student's death

By Jacob Carpenter  
THE STATE NEWS

One year after an MSU student was found dead on an Indiana golf course, her mother is seeking answers from authorities investigating the case.



Cotter

Nancy Cotter, whose then-20-year-old daughter Rylan Cotter died Jan. 9, 2008, after police say she jumped from an electrical tower in Chesterton, Ind., is questioning an Indiana coroner's ruling in her daughter's manner of death. She also is questioning whether her daughter jumped from the tower, which is 28 feet from where Rylan Cotter's body was found.

Residents who live near the tower where Rylan Cotter was found have told her mother that Cotter would not have been able to climb the tower without aid and that other towers were more

accessible for somebody to commit suicide.

Police have not established why Cotter, an international relations junior, was in Chesterton, which is about 20 miles from the Michigan-Indiana border near Lake Michigan. They also don't know why Cotter was at Brassie Golf Course, where her body was found in an area two-and-a-half miles from the nearest major road.

"For her to go to Chesterton, somebody would have to guide her there," Nancy Cotter said.

Rylan Cotter was seen in Chesterton twice on the day of her death — once on a surveillance camera buying a box cutter and allergy medication and later by a resident walking along a trail where Cotter's car was parked — but she was never seen with anybody. A small, bandaged wound was found on her left wrist and a toxicology report found nonlethal doses of diphenhydramine, commonly known as the allergy medication Benadryl, in her system.

Nancy Cotter and a for-

mer coroner in the county where Rylan Cotter was found said there is not enough evidence to call the death a suicide with absolute certainty.

"Unless you can prove the person took their life and you have no other manner of death you can prove, you have to call the death 'indeterminable,'" said John Evans, a Porter (Ind.) County commissioner who was the county's coroner for more than 20 years.

In addition to asking for further investigation into her daughter's death, Cotter wants Porter County Coroner Victoria Deppe's manner-of-death ruling changed from "suicide" to "indeterminable." Deppe, who said in March that she had "painstakingly looked at all the evidence" and determined Cotter jumped to her death, did not return

See COTTER on page 2A

## LABORATORY

### MSU PHYSICS LOOKS AHEAD AFTER FRIB SELECTION

By Justin Harris  
THE STATE NEWS

For five months last year, the future of MSU's Cyclotron hinged on its bid for the federally funded Facility for Rare Isotope Beams, a half-billion dollar nuclear physics research site.

If FRIB didn't end up in East Lansing, the physics lab likely faced its closure.

On Dec. 11, MSU was chosen as the home for FRIB, marking the end of the competition for the next-generation physics laboratory and breathing life into the Cyclotron for decades to come.

"We've gone through a range of emotions," Cyclotron spokesperson Geoff Koch said. "We were stunned at first, then elation and now realizing all the work that's ahead. We have the tiger by the tail now and now we've got to deliver the project and build the machine."

FRIB is a \$550-million project funded by the Department of Energy that will make MSU a worldwide leader in nuclear physics. Since July 2008, the university has campaigned for the project, competing against the federally-funded Argonne National Laboratory, located in Illinois.

With construction scheduled to start in 2013, the project is expected to bring \$1 billion in economic growth for Michigan through the creation of jobs and research.

"This may be the biggest accomplishment in the history of Michigan State," MSU Trustee Faylene Owen said. "Getting FRIB tells the entire world what an excellent university Michigan State is."

The facility, which will expand the university's Cyclotron, will study rare isotopes, which are unique nuclei not usually found on earth. They exist for less than a second and are involved in cosmic processes, such as exploding stars. Research done at the facility also could be useful in fields such as medicine and national defense.

The DOE's decision was made after officials from MSU and Argonne lobbied in Washington, D.C., and department representatives made site visits to both locations.

Although Koch said professors at the Cyclotron were excited, there's still a lot of work to be done.

"You can't buy a superconducting linear accelerator off the shelf," he said. "You've got to build it from scratch and design

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**BACK FOR BUSINESS**  
Brother's Grill one of several new restaurants to fill vacancies in East Lansing, 3A



Weather

Monday

High 26° | Low 21°

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