

## MSU softball begins a doubleheader against Penn State today

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JOSH RADTKE/THE STATE NEWS

Rounding the bases after hitting a home run, freshman designated player Brett Williams is congratulated by head coach Jacquie Joseph at third base. The Spartans won the first game, 5-1, of a doubleheader Thursday against Oakland at Old College Field.

# The State News

## SHOWING ITS TEETH

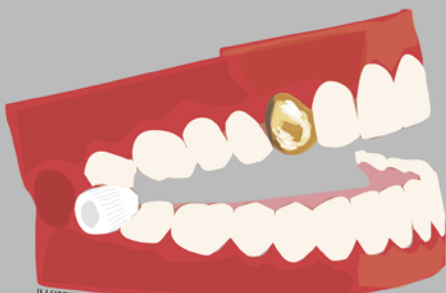


ILLUSTRATION BY CRISTINA MENCIA | THE STATE NEWS

"The recession definitely hit a lot of people and you have a lot of factory workers that had dental coverage they lost, but there's always a need for dental work no matter what."

Brian Evanski, MSU Pre-Dental Club president

### Local dentists fear recession makes patients prioritize finances over care

By Jacob Carpenter  
THE STATE NEWS

For East Lansing-based dentist Brian Ruster, keeping an eye on the business of dentistry never has been more important. Despite working in a profession that, according to industry reports, was one of few to weather the recession with some bite in the past year, Ruster has had to cope with the plight of Michigan residents, customers losing dental insurance and patients taking more economical approaches when choosing procedures.

"Dentistry gets picked on all the time, whether it's because of the economy or not," said Ruster, a 1989 MSU graduate with an office at 1500 Watertower Place. "It's easy to skip an appointment for dentistry because the weather's nice outside or something. That's just part of our normal world. But when (General Motors Corp.) shuts down a plant, people lose their insurance."

According to surveys by Sage-worx Inc., a North Carolina-based analyst of privately held companies, the dental industry posted a 19 percent increase in profit nationwide in the past 12 months, with sales jumping 8 percent in the same time period.

The data was collected from dentists' accountants, but a Sage-worx official declined to specify how many accountants were surveyed.

In Michigan, though, the out-

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## HEALTH

## MSU plans for possible swine flu spread to Mich.

By Pat Evans  
THE STATE NEWS

MSU and state officials said they are preparing for the worst, as reports of swine flu cases continue to come in throughout the state.

As of Tuesday evening, Ingham County Health Department officials said they were investigating five local reports of illnesses they suspect could be swine flu.

Several more suspected cases throughout the state are raising concerns that the flu could spread through Michigan in the near future, said James McCurtis, spokesman for the Michigan Department of Community Health. "We're being cautious," McCurtis said. "We are asking people to help us in taking the proper steps to prevent any spreading."

MSU is working with local and state officials to better pre-

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Barbara Straw, MSU professor and swine disease expert

pare for the possibility of an outbreak at MSU, university spokesman Jason Cody said. He said the university has had a pandemic plan in place for several years, since the avian flu scare in 2003. "Everyone is taking the proper steps to prevent an outbreak," Cody said.

In the case of a pandemic, MSU likely would cancel classes, send students living on campus home and limit research done at the university, according to the MSU pandemic planning Web site.

University Physician Beth Alexander called for students to stay cautious in wake of the outbreak in an e-mailed letter sent to students Monday evening.



A man wears protective face masks on Tuesday in Mexico City. World health officials raised a global alert to an unprecedented level as the swine flu was blamed for more deaths in Mexico and the epidemic crossed new borders.

RODRIGO ABB/DAP

Symptoms of swine flu include fever, cough, sore throat, chills and fatigue. To avoid spreading the disease, students are urged to wash hands frequently, cover their nose and mouth when coughing, and stay home and call a health care provider if they experience symptoms.

Swine disease expert and MSU professor Barbara Straw said genetic differences in the

strain potentially could cause problems.

"It's so different from normal flu; it will be more dangerous," Straw said. "It's so different that none of the current vaccines will be useful against it."

A vaccine for swine flu hasn't been developed yet, but medicine can be issued to treat those who test positively, Ingham County Health Depart-

ment spokesman Marcus Cheatham said. The state currently has mass amounts of the drugs Tamiflu and Relenza to counter an outbreak.

"People who have a bad case of the flu can get a prescription," Cheatham said. "The question is, do we need to do something more, will

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## PROGRAM

## ASMSU looks to keep free newspapers on campus

By Chris Vannini  
THE STATE NEWS

Free copies of The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal might not be free to students next year, but MSU's undergraduate student government might step in before the university stops the presses.

More people are getting news online, and the provost's office believes this is a reason to discontinue its newspaper readership programs as a part of budget cuts. The programs include The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal in places such as Case Hall and Berkey Hall.

The provost's office decided to discontinue the program in its budget cuts, because students can get news in other ways, said Douglas Estry, associate provost for undergraduate education.

"We started looking at the need to find ways to be sure that we retained quality and student learning, but at the same time looked at better use of our funds," Estry said. "We're eliminating the readership program because we have the newspapers available to students in other kinds of formats."

Most mainstream newspapers are free online, and the MSU Library offers online newspapers as an e-resource at www.er.lib.msu.edu.

"It didn't make sense for us to continue to pay for the hard copies to be delivered when we could still make these papers available to the students, and more simply be having them go online," Estry said.

Members of ASMSU said the provost's office pays about \$20,000 for its readership program.

ASMSU began its own readership program April 6 as a trial version of USA Today's Collegiate Readership Program.

The papers are free to students and include USA Today, The New York Times, Detroit Free Press and Financial Times.

The four-week trial — which ends Friday — was free, but ASMSU has to pay for the program if it is to continue for the 2009-10 academic year.

On April 23, ASMSU's Student Assembly allocated up to \$50,000

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East Lansing prepares to collect students unwanted items, page 3A

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