



Weather  
Mostly sunny

High 67° | Low 51°

Three-day forecast, Page 2

Michigan State University's independent voice | [www.statenews.com](http://www.statenews.com) | East Lansing, Mich. | Monday, May 18, 2009

State officials met to discuss budget appropriations, for more, visit [statenews.com](http://statenews.com)

**Zombies attack East Lansing residents in search of food,**  
CAMPUS+CITY, PAGE 3

CRIME

## Court clears MSU, worker in 2005 death

By Brittany Shammass  
THE STATE NEWS

MSU and one of its employees were found to be not liable for a fatal 2005 traffic accident in which a man was struck and killed by a stolen MSU vehicle that was left unattended, a Michigan Court of Appeals decided May 8.

The vehicle, a 2003 Chevrolet pickup truck, was running and locked when it was reportedly found by a then-19-year-old drunken Marshall, Mich., man who drove it into oncoming traffic along Grand River Avenue. The vehicle struck and killed John Hawkins, an Okemos resident, who was driving along the avenue.

MSU electrician Alan Almy left the MSU pickup truck outside the Physical Plant building at about 5:15 a.m., March 18, 2005, while he went inside, the court opinion stated.

The court of appeals reversed a lower court decision, stating that Almy's actions do not constitute gross negligence.

The truck was reportedly stolen by Alexander Hamil, who had no affiliation with MSU. Hamil was visiting friends and drinking alcohol in the dormitories before he noticed the unattended truck, the opinion stated.

Hamil drove the truck on Grand River Avenue and crossed the centerline into oncoming traffic, striking and killing Hawkins, the opinion read.

Lawyers for Hawkins' estate argued Almy's actions, which they believe represent those of MSU, were seriously negligent and thus that both Almy and MSU were liable for Hawkins' death.

"Hamil wasn't trying every car door on every thousandth vehicle and checking to see if someone left keys under the doormats," said Larry Nolan, an attorney for Hawkins' estate. "It was a situation where he was drawn to the vehicle because it was running. ... It's like the 11th commandment — thou shall not leave thy keys

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COURT

## STUDENT TO STAND TRIAL FOR ACCIDENT

MSU junior Melissa Rumrill will be tried for drunken driving causing one count of death and two counts of serious injury stemming from an accident that caused the death of MSU junior Joe Barton, Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunningis III said.

A May 7 preliminary hearing determined Rumrill, a Food Industry Management junior, will face charges that could lead to up to 15 years in prison, Dunningis said.

Prosecutors say Rumrill was intoxicated when she drove the wrong way on U.S. 127 and caused a 3-car collision that killed Barton and seriously injured two others in August.

The trial date has not been set, Dunningis said. Rumrill's lawyer did not return interview requests made by The State News.

BRITTANY SHAMMASS

# Economic artistry



KATIE RAUSCH/THE STATE NEWS

**Annie Goatley, left, laughs while speaking to a customer as she spins at her booth Saturday afternoon at the 2009 East Lansing Art Festival. Started in 1964, the festival has grown to include 230 vendors and thousands of patrons. Goatley said this was the sixth or seventh year she had come to the festival.**

## E.L. Art Fest brings business downtown, supports new artists

By Kate Jacobson  
THE STATE NEWS

The smell of barbecue and the sounds of celebration rose from downtown East Lansing as the streets were packed with people and white tents. East Lansing's 46th annual Art Festival brought artists from across the country to the city. From photography, painting, pottery to piano, the community came out, with an estimated 70,000 in attendance despite the state's economic slowdown.

Operating with a tighter budget, festival organizers were pleased with the turnout, which provides a boost for the city's businesses.

### Crafting a financial plan

The festival had to cut about \$5,000 from its funding this year because of a lack of sponsorship and grant reductions.

Each year the festival has had to face funding cuts and organizers estimate next year they will cut more than \$2,000.

"We began planning for next year now that this year is over," said Corinn VanWyck, arts program coordinator for the festival.

VanWyck and a See ART on page 2



KATIE RAUSCH/THE STATE NEWS

**Veda Krumpo, 8, of Ohio, has her homemade hair ties adjusted by a friend of her mother's Saturday at the 2009 East Lansing Art Festival. Krumpo has been creating the hair ties for about two years.**

To see a video of the East Lansing Art Festival, visit [statenews.com/multimedia](http://statenews.com/multimedia).

FISCAL YEAR

## City of E.L. to approve expanded budget

By Kate Jacobson  
THE STATE NEWS

The city of East Lansing plans to approve its \$95 million budget for 2009-10 fiscal year during its meeting Tuesday.

And despite the downturn of Michigan's economy, East Lansing Mayor Vic Loomis said the city has managed its budget well.

"The city has done a very good job at conducting itself from a financial standpoint," he said. "We have benefited from some smart growth in the city."

The \$95 million budget is a 41.5 percent increase from last year's \$67 million budget. The main reason for the increase is because City Center

II bonds were incorporated into the budget, specifically money for a theater and parking ramp planned for the project. The City Center II project would revamp the area bounded by Grand River Avenue, Abbot Road and Valley Court Park.

Several large park projects also are adding to the total funds for the new budget.

Loomis said there were no planned job cuts for current employees, but some open positions would go unfilled, including some in the city clerk's office.

"Job preservation is very important to me. The last thing I want to do is to reduce positions," he said.

City officials are concerned about receiving decreased revenue from the state, after the state treasurer and state fiscal agencies

### By the numbers

**\$21,500** will be decreased from expenditures for personal service in the city clerk's office.

**\$29,650** will be decreased from the sidewalk repair program.

SOURCE: EAST LANSING

met at the Capitol on May 15 and voted to accept the lowest revenue estimate since 1991, which is \$7.4 billion. That's \$871 million below a January estimate.

"I think we distinguish ourselves for having a budget that is balanced and that doesn't raise taxes," East Lansing City Manager Ted Staton said. "Our ability to do that next year will be significantly challenged."

City officials plan to advocate for fewer cuts for communities at the state Capitol before in October. Without funding from the state, the city could face cuts in all departments, Loomis said.

"We already think we know what the worst case is for East Lansing."

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UNIVERSITY

## New ANGEL update adds features for faculty use

By Marissa Cumbers  
THE STATE NEWS

MSU upgraded ANGEL late last week, enhancing grading and discussion functions, among others.

Changes in ANGEL version 7.4 include grading rubrics that enhance student-faculty communication, updated discussion forums that allow more people to engage in a dialogue and an easier tracking system for instructors to monitor course participation, said Katherine Ball, a spokeswoman for the university's Academic Technology Services.

The upgrade was installed on Thursday and Friday at no additional cost for the university outside of the annual system maintenance fee.

Some faculty and staff previewed the software before the update and were pleased with

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## Editor's note

### SN to focus on Web presence, print changes

Everyone has a friend who uses summer as a time to reinvent him or herself. New wardrobe. New haircut. New attitude. Yet somehow, when they return from summer vacation, they are still who they always have been.

This summer, The State News is that ever-changing friend. We're making some adjustments that will make us better in the long run. But ultimately, we'll still be your reliable, trustworthy campus news source.

We've tweaked our design to maximize space to fit all the news you need to know — something that will be important as we scale production back to four days per week for the summer.

Fewer papers in the racks doesn't mean there is less news to deliver, and it certainly doesn't mean we're taking it easy.

Our online presence will be revamped up as we learn to better utilize [statenews.com](http://statenews.com) and [lansingulowdown.com](http://lansingulowdown.com) to bring readers breaking news updates and more Web-only content throughout the week. We want to keep you informed and entertained in print and online.

We've also made it easier for you to keep tabs on us 24/7. Become a fan of The State News on Facebook and follow @thesnews on Twitter.com to receive news updates throughout the day.

Think of this as our new summer haircut. A few minor changes to our appearance won't change what The State News has been all about for the past 100 years.

*Whitney Johnson*

—Whitney Gronski, editor in chief