

BLOWING OFF STEAM



ALI SAJJADI *The Daily Illini*

Steam billows out of a blow out pipe outside the Abbott power plant Thursday evening. It was a planned procedure to pump 700 degree steam through the pipes at the plant to clean out the system before bringing a new turbine online, said Matt Wilson, engineer for Cogen Cleaning Technologies.

Marines to join troops in Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — About 85,000 U.S. troops have been alerted they will soon be sent to Iraq to relieve forces who have been there for up to a year, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Thursday.

In addition, nearly 47,000 National Guard and Reserve forces are in the process of being notified that they will be activated to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan, Rumsfeld said at a Pentagon news conference. Even more Army soldiers could be alerted soon to add to those deployments, Rumsfeld said.

The Pentagon's plan for rotating U.S. troops in Iraq next year includes a return of the Marine Corps and a net reduction in the total American force.

Some of the troops rotating into Iraq will be returning for their second tour of duty there — and some only a short time after they were sent home, Rumsfeld said.

Reservists will be called up for a maximum of 18 months, with a year in Iraq, Rumsfeld said. The Marines will be activated for a year.

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KATY MULL *The Daily Illini*

The victim of an alleged armed robbery in the parking lot on the southwest corner of Springfield and Gregory in Urbana gives a University police officer a description of the suspect and what happened on Thursday afternoon. The victim was walking home from the library when he was held at gunpoint in broad daylight.

UI student reports robbery

BY MEGAN LOISELLE AND KATY MULL
Staff writers

A 20-year-old University student reported he was robbed at gunpoint by an unidentified man on Thursday afternoon in the parking lot at the intersection of Springfield Avenue and Gregory Street.

The victim, who asked to remain anonymous, said he was coming back from the library. "I had office hours," he said.

The victim said the suspect was a black man in his late 20s or early 30s, about 5'9", 220 lbs., had braids and crooked teeth.

"He took my money, change and earrings," the victim said. "He said he's killed before and he'd do it again."

The victim said the police had heard the same description from other crimes in the neighborhood.

University police Sgt. Joan Fiesta said she had no infor-

mation on the suspect.

"If the opportunity presents itself, (students) can become a victim of crime," Fiesta said. "We can't stop all crime."

Fiesta encouraged students to know where all the emergency posts are located on campus.

"We encourage them to call," Fiesta said. "That's what we're here for. We're more than happy to take calls."

She said to stay alert, walk in groups in populated areas and not to fight back.

"You don't need to be a hero," she said. "We can replace money and jewelry but not ourselves."

Fiesta said it is also usually a good idea to stay at the scene of the crime after it happens if you are no longer in danger.

"Once the person is leaving, draw attention to yourself," Fiesta said. "You want to create a witness-rich environment — we rely heavily on witnesses."

University police were continuing to question possible witnesses Thursday evening.

Floating checks floats away with bill

BY ANASTASIA USTINOVA
Staff writer

If you have a habit of writing a check before payday, hoping that by the time it gets cashed there is some money on your debit account to cover the cost, you might have to change your budget planning.

New legislation signed by President George W. Bush last week paves the way for a major technological change in the banking industry, which will end the practice called "floating" that some University students rely on.

The float for paper checks is between two and five days, during which banks verify the legiti-

imacy of the check.

Under the new bill, called "Check 21," electronic images will substitute for paper checks, which would be sent via e-mail instead of being physically transported from one bank to another, said George Pennacchi, director of the Office for Banking Research at the College of Commerce. This process will shorten the span between when a check is deposited into an account and when the money becomes available.

"(The new law) will lower the flow of paper checks and will reduce the cost for checking accounts," he said.

Don Schlorff, executive vice

People are expecting a deposit to go through close to the time when (the check) is going to be cashed. That's the gambling.

ALLAN BORST
Graduate student in LAS

president of Busey Bank, 201 W. Main St. in Urbana, said the bank staff is looking into the procedures, and he does not know what the long-term consequences of the new legislation are.

"It should not impact the customers," he said.

The new regulation will not go into effect for another year, but it might make some students change their money management habits.

The practice of floating checks is not uncommon among the students, said Allan Borst, graduate student in LAS.

"People are expecting a deposit to go through close to the time when (the check) is going to be cashed. That's the gambling," Borst said, pointing out that it is especially true for graduate students because of the time between

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ISG assembly removes president from office

Fuentes forced out for not holding office hours as student group continues to face difficulties

BY JEREMY PELZER
Staff writer

Illinois Student Government assembly members decided to remove ISG president Marcia Fuentes from office, to abolish the Constitutional Review Board and to replace most members of the Student Elections Commission at Thursday's assembly meeting.

Assembly members hailed the moves as upholding the ISG constitution and reflecting the will of the student body, while opponents called it a blatant abuse of

power designed to force out student government officials who disagree with assembly members on an upcoming referendum that could abolish ISG.

Thursday's actions now pit ISG assembly members against the Constitutional Review Board — each side claiming they voided the actions of the other side.

Fuentes was removed from office Thursday for not fulfilling her office-hour requirements, according to a press release from ISG Chief of Staff Ben Wagner.

ISG by-laws state that executive board members must maintain 10

office hours a week, Wagner said.

"After a member of the assembly accumulates four unexcused absences," the press release said, "he/she will be 'automatically and immediately removed from office.'"

Wagner said he sent a letter and two e-mails to Fuentes last week informing her of her possible removal.

"It's absolutely not political at all," Wagner said. "She did not fulfill her duties as specified in the ISG by-laws."

Fuentes refuted the charges of shirking her office hours, and said she received no letters or e-mails about her office hours.

"They're lying," Fuentes said. "It's because they're mad that I

don't play their game."

In August, she temporarily suspended voting rights of all six committee chairs, citing what she said was a "suspicious" election process. Last week, Fuentes refused to issue an executive order to place an ISG-created reform proposal on the fall ballot, against the wishes of the ISG assembly.

"When you have an elected body, and 100 percent of that body is prevented from doing their job by an individual ... I'm going to fight to remove those obstacles," said assembly member Dave Fried.

Assembly members refused to let Fuentes chair Thursday's meet-

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PRINCESS AND THE PEA



JOHN PAUL GOGUEN *The Daily Illini*

Courtney Lewis, sophomore in LAS, sings a song from the IUB fall play, *Once Upon a Mattress*, while wearing a pea costume on the Quad Thursday.