

The Anniston Star

Thursday, September 20, 2007

A home-owned newspaper

50 cents

annistonstar.com

Behind The Star blog:
An inside look at the
operations of The Star

SPORTS, 1C



DIFFERENT PATHS

Bama looks to shore up its defense; AU's offense will have a new look.

SPORTS, 1C

SEEING DOUBLE

Dale Earnhardt Jr. unveils his number, sponsors, paint schemes for 2008.

REGION, 1B



MOVING OUT

Foothills Community Partnership relocates families after new pollution found.

NATION, 7A

SILVER ANNIVERSARY?

Majority of U.S. marriages end before 25 years, census finds.

OBITUARIES, 4B

- Norma Allen, Ashland
- John Carter Collins, Anniston
- Robert 'Frank' Gilmer, Anniston
- Sharon Patrice Lawson, Talladega
- Agnes M. Noles, Woodland
- Macon McCollister Ogletree Jr., Lawrenceville, Ga.
- William Millard Pate, Anniston
- Rev. Burdette Ridley, Oxford
- Mary M. Swain, Alpine
- Herbert Walter Waldrop, Heflin
- John Franklin Wallace, Piedmont

INDEX

- Calendar 2B
- Classifieds 8C
- Comics 7B
- Lottery 2B
- Movies 5D
- Stocks 3B
- Television 6D

WEATHER, 8B



Madison Carroll, DeArmanville

MOSTLY SUNNY

HIGH: 85 LOW: 67

Vol. 127, No. 263

(USPS 026-440)



6 56000 11111 7



SUE'S HERE

SEE ESCAPES FOR T.REX FACTS, BOARD GAME, COLORING CONTEST AND MORE

www.annistonstar.com/sue

Joan Frazier guides Anniston City Schools in interim period

TAKING CHARGE



Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star

Joan Frazier talks to students on Wednesday at Anniston High School during a class change. The Anniston Board of Education appointed Frazier in August as interim superintendent.

BY STEVE IVEY
Star Staff Writer

Joan Frazier doesn't talk like a caretaker superintendent.

She peers over the top of the multi-color-rimmed glasses resting low on her nose at stacks of paper varying in neatness and height. She describes her plans in dynamic terms, eschewing the vocabulary of a placeholder, of someone keeping a seat warm.

Frazier has had an "interim" in front of her new title since the Anniston Board of Education appointed her last month. That tag will stay there until at least February, once Sammy Lee Felton comes off paid administrative leave and the board completes his contract buyout.

What happens then is still unsettled, as the board hasn't discussed plans to search for a permanent superintendent. In the meantime, Frazier has moved down the hall into Felton's old office.

"My style of leadership is to talk to administrators and principals, so there can be a kind of collegial contribution," she said.

"I realize I'm the one out on the limb, but we don't always have a lot of input in education. You have to make your plan and get some things prioritized to make sure the system keeps moving in the right direction."

Born in Germany, Frazier traveled all over the United States with her father's Air Force career. She attended grades 3-7 north of San Francisco, where she first gained a love of public education.

Part of the curriculum there in Marin County, Calif., allowed students to spend the last hour of each day helping in other areas. Frazier spent her hour with children with disabilities.

"It was instantaneous: this is what I want to do," she said. "I never deviated from that."

Her father's civilian career landed him in Kettering, Ohio, a southern suburb of Dayton. After earning degrees from Miami and Wright State universities in Ohio, she met a native Annistonian, married him and moved here in 1990.

A week later, she had a job teaching special

Please see FRAZIER I Page 6A

Strong words

Crime victims stand with Alabama AG in dispute with DAs

FOR STORY, SEE PAGE 6A

State's infant mortality is down, teen births are up

Calhoun's infant mortality remains below state rates

BY MARKESHIA RICKS
Star Capitol Correspondent

MONTGOMERY — Calhoun County's infant mortality rate remained well below state rates in 2005, and on par with national rates, according to a report from the Alabama Department of Public Health.

State Health Officer Don Williamson said at Wednesday's meeting of the State Committee on Public Health that overall, the state's infant mortality rate dropped from 9.3 deaths per 1,000 births in 2005 to nine last year, but he's not pleased with the decline.

"The infant mortality rate did go down, but we're still almost 50 percent higher than the rest of the country," he said.

Meanwhile, Calhoun County's infant mortality rate dropped from 8.8 in 2005 to 6.6 in 2006, which is the same as the national infant mortality rate. The county's three-year average rate is only slightly above the national average at 6.8 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Officials with the Calhoun County Department of Public Health said they couldn't take too much responsibility for the favorable numbers.

The department no longer provides prenatal services for mothers-to-be. Those services are contracted through Medicaid.

In Calhoun County, Alabama Baby Care works with low-income women to provide services before and after they deliver.

Please see STATE I Page 6A

Iraqi Prime Minister: Contractors will be held liable for deaths

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki called on the U.S. government to sever ties with Blackwater USA, a private security firm whose guards were involved in a shootout in downtown Baghdad on Sunday that left at least nine and as many as 28 people dead. His comments came as the State Department announced the formation of a joint U.S.-Iraqi government commission to examine the security forces that protect American diplomats. The commission will suggest ways to improve U.S. and Iraqi policy governing private security contractors.

FOR STORY, SEE PAGE 4A

Running for bucks: 'Run@Work' day set for Friday

BY MATT KASPER
Star Staff Writer

If it pays to exercise, the monetary reward will never be better than Friday.

In an effort to promote running as an everyday exercise, people who run during the work hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Friday in Calhoun County will be eligible to receive a \$50 bill from the Anniston Runner's club.

"We're going to give away 10 \$50 bills," said Bob Pearl, vice president of the club, who said the only requirement for

eligibility is online registration at the ARC Web site at www.annistonrunners.com.

The second annual "Run@Work" day, a national event sponsored by the Road Runners Club of America, is a spin-off of a campaign other running clubs have started in big cities promoting people running to work.

Run@Work day works better in towns like Anniston, or other rural areas, Pearl said, because cars are usually required to get to work and running is not always an option. Instead, he said the day is designed

for people to run at any point in the day.

Employers and businesses are also encouraged to participate because the place with the highest number of registered participants will be awarded free advertising on the ARC Web site for one year, he said.

Members of the club are teaming up with the radio station WVOK to draw attention to the day.

"The whole idea is to get people running and get people who don't run to recognize the health benefits," said Pearl.