

**SHOT IN THE ARM**



Plenty of flu shots; push on to use them.

Nation 3A

**ON STAGE**

Season begins with symphony.



Life 1D

**SEX CRASH**

**Man: Friends having sex caused crash**

MOSCOW, Idaho — A carnival worker who hit a telephone pole with his SUV blamed the crash on two friends having sex in the back seat. Joshua D. Frank, who had been living on the Latah County Fairgrounds, pleaded guilty Monday to a misdemeanor charge of failing to notify a police officer of a traffic accident. He was fined \$188. Frank told Moscow police he was driving near downtown early Saturday while a man and woman were having sex in the rear of the vehicle. According to a probable cause affidavit, he said the movement caused the SUV to become "tippy" and he lost control of it.

**ALL ABUZZ**

**Thousands of bees escape**

BILLINGS, Mont. — Thousands of bees got loose when the truck carrying their hives ran off a highway and overturned near a Montana community, the Highway Patrol said. State trooper Dell Aman said he was stung twice but didn't know of anyone else who was. "The public was in no way in danger, as long as they didn't stop to get out of their vehicles," he said. "If they did get out, they figured out pretty quickly that that wasn't the place to be — no pun intended." The truck, headed from North Dakota to California, veered into a ditch Tuesday along Interstate 94 near the exit for Huntley, a community just northeast of Billings, the Highway Patrol said. The truck was hauling 465 beehives — nearly 13.7 million bees, Aman said. Most of the bees stayed in their hives but a "couple thousand" got loose, he said.

**ONLINE TODAY**



Weekend Best Bets.

TimesDaily.com/multimedia

**WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?**

**Wednesday's question:** Do you feed your pet snacks that contain jerky?  
 Yes: 18.3%  
 No: 54%  
 No pets: 27.7%  
**Today's question:** How many years have you been married?  
 Vote daily online at: TimesDaily.com

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# TIMES DAILY

Florence • Muscle Shoals • Sheffield • Tusculmbia • Northwest Alabama

**THREE-AND-0H**

Rogers off to a rousing start, but still focused on the big picture.

Sports 1C



**MUSCLE SHOALS**



Jim Hannon/TimesDaily

Workers assemble a ride at the North Alabama State Fair in Muscle Shoals.

## Midway operators take the extra steps to make sure rides are safe

By Tom Smith  
 Senior Staff Writer

The music blares and bright lights flash and sparkle as people line up at their favorite attraction. Whether it's the Ferris wheel, roller coaster, scrambler or the Himalayan, people young and old board the attractions to experience the thrill of the fast-paced action. And visitors to the 2007 North Alabama State Fair have a chance to enjoy more than 30 rides. Before any of the rides are operational, each is inspected for safety. "The last thing we want to do is jeopardize someone's safety," said Corky Jones, unit manager for W.G. Wade Shows, which runs the midway shows at the fair. "Safety is No. 1 with us. None of us could live with ourselves if we knew we were putting someone in danger," said Jeff Williams, a marketing and public relations official with the company. Williams said every ride in the company has been inspected by an engineer. Jones said the company takes safety even further. "We do daily inspections before we open any ride and if something is not up to par, that ride is not opened until

**TODAY**

- Gates open at 5 p.m.
- Midway opens at 5 p.m.
- Exhibit buildings and children's activities building open 5-10 p.m.
- Admission is \$6 for ages 13 and up; \$4 ages 6-12; and 5 and younger admitted free. Armbands are \$15.
- 6 p.m. — High School major-ette, color guard and dance line competition (Grandstand)
- 6 p.m. — Youth Goat Show (exhibition barn)
- Daily — Skin and Bones Comedy Circus and Star Family Circus and Riverboat John
- Details — Call 383-3247

it is repaired or brought up to code," he said. "Every inspection is documented. We keep a record of everything that is done to the equipment," added John Ketcham, concession manger for Wade Shows. Ketcham said the company follows safety standards set by ASTM International, which provides safety guide-

lines for various industry. Jones said Wade Shows' insurance carrier also provides an inspector who oversees the rides, installation and operation. "The company goes one step further in that an independent third-party inspector is hired to come in and do periodic unannounced checks on the equipment," Jones said. "We do all we can to make sure everything is as safe as possible." Jones said ride operators are well trained to run the equipment. "We have seminars routinely, and we have handbooks that they are required to go by. Plus, we have supervisors who watch the employees to make sure everything is running smoothly and the operators are doing what they're supposed to," Jones said. He said the company has a very strict drug-testing policy as well as a dress code and hair code. "We have a good reputation, and we're trying to do everything we can to maintain that reputation," he said. Norman Ross, manager of the North Alabama State Fair, said the fair has had a long and healthy relationship

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**MONTGOMERY**

## Arthur appeal denied

Convicted murderer scheduled to be put to death on Sept. 27

By Dana Beyerle  
 Montgomery Bureau

The daughter of condemned inmate Tommy Douglas Arthur pleaded Wednesday for a stay of her father's scheduled Sept. 27 execution until a federal court can rule on a request to test DNA from the 1982 murder he was convicted of.

Sherrie Arthur Stone said DNA testing of evidence could exonerate her father who, in a recent telephone interview with the Times-Daily, said he is innocent in the shooting death of Colbert County businessman Troy Wicker.



Arthur

"All we're asking, and ever have, is to test the DNA evidence that was found but never tested," Stone said. "Whether you believe in the death penalty or not, you should test the DNA evidence." Arthur, 65, lost one federal appeal and is quickly running out of options as his scheduled date with the lethal injection chamber at Holman Prison nears. Arthur was convicted three times and sentenced to die for Wicker's death. Wicker's widow originally said a black man broke into their home, raped and beat her, and that when she came to, her husband was dead. She later testified she hired Arthur to kill her husband. Arthur lost one of his latest appeals when a panel of federal judges said he waited too long to challenge the constitutionality of Alabama's use of lethal injection. In a 2-1 opinion and without addressing the merits of his appeal, a three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a U.S. District Court ruling. The opinion was released Monday. "There is no justification for Arthur's failure to bring this lethal injection chal-

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**JENA, LA.**

## Town gears up for march in support of 6 black teens charged in school fight

By Mary Foster  
 Associated Press Writer

The streets around this tiny town's courthouse began filling with protesters Wednesday, a day ahead of a planned march in support of six black teenagers jailed in the December beating of a white classmate. Today's march was expected to draw thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of people, dwarfing Jena's population of about 3,500. Participants said they hoped to rekindle the spirit of the civil rights movement. "This is the first time I've done anything like this, on this magnitude at least," said Nathaniel Ford, 47, a computer technician who traveled from Richmond, Va. At the center of the protests is a group of black teenagers who have come to be called the Jena Six. Months after declining to charge three white high school students who were briefly suspended for hanging nooses in a tree, local prosecutors charged five of the six with attempted



Ann Heisenfelt/Associated Press

Members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference pray in front of the LaSalle Parish Courthouse in Jena, La., on Wednesday.

Please see **Town**, Page 4A

## Majority of marriages end before 25 years, census finds

By Sam Roberts  
 New York Times News Service

Don't stock up on silver anniversary cards. More than half the Americans who might have celebrated their 25th wedding anniversaries since 2000 were either divorced, separated or widowed, according to a census survey released Wednesday. For the first time since at least World War II, married people had a less than even chance of still being married 25 years later. The latest survey by the Census Bureau confirmed that most Americans eventually marry, but they are marrying later and are less likely to be wed only once. Those trends continued, although the proportion who have ever been divorced, about one in five, remained constant. "Basically, it looks like we're pretty much holding steady," said Rose Kreieder, a Census Bureau demographer. "There are not radical differences." Among people in their late 20s, a majority of men — 54 percent — had never married, as had 41 percent of women. In 1996, the comparable proportions were 49 percent among men and 35 percent among women. At that time, about 69 percent of men and 76 percent of women age 15 and older had married only once. In the latest anal-

ysis, 54 percent of men and 58 percent of women had married only once. The oldest baby boomers recorded the highest divorce rates. Among people in their fifties, 38 percent of men and 41 percent of women had been divorced. In 1996, the comparable figures were 36 percent and 35 percent. One statistical constant has been the so-called seven-year itch, as popularized in the play and film about errant husbands. Couples who separate do so, on average, after seven years and divorce after eight. The duration of first marriages that end in divorce appears to have increased slightly among men. Among adults 25 and older who had been divorced, 52 percent of men and 44 percent of women were married. On average, people who remarry typically wed again in about three-and-a-half years. Second marriages that end in divorce last about 8.6 years for men and 7.2 years for women. In 2004, 12 percent of men and 13 percent of women had married twice. Three percent each had married three or more times. The survey of the civilian, non-institutionalized population found disparities on the basis of race and ethnicity. Among married women, nonHispanic whites were the only group in which a majority had marked their 15th anniversary.