

Montgomery Advertiser

montgomeryadvertiser.com

WEDNESDAY May 7, 2008 Montgomery Edition 50 cents

SINCE 1829

PROSTITUTION

Council wants harsher penalties

By Jill Nolin
jnolin@gannett.com

Prostitutes doing business in Montgomery soon may find themselves spending more time in the city jail, but they won't be in there alone.

Montgomery City Council members Martha Roby and Charles Smith are sponsoring a measure that would create tougher sentences for all parties involved in prostitution — including those who solicit sex from a prostitute.

"It's just a 3,000-year-old problem, but we're hoping (the change) will be helpful," Smith said after the council's work session Tuesday afternoon.

As of today, someone who is guilty of prostitution for the first time in Montgomery faces the penalty of seven days imprisonment or a \$100 fine. The two council members want to take the "or" out of the equation.

The proposed new law would mean a \$100 fine for a first-time offender and a seven-day stint in the city jail.

The fines and prison time would increase incrementally with each offense. The second offense would mean a \$300 fine and 30 days in jail, whereas under the current law, the offender would have the option of a \$300 fine or 30 days in jail.

An ordinance that would have amended the city's current law on prostitution was on the agenda for Tuesday's meeting, but was tabled until the next council meeting so the matter could be reviewed further.

Councilman Willie Cook expressed his concern over the wording in the proposed definition for prostitution. As written, the law would take the state's definition one step further and include the individuals who give someone money, "or other things of value," in exchange for a sexual act.

Roby said they added to the state's definition because addressing only the prostitutes would do little to fix the problem.

Cook said after the meeting that he has other concerns with the proposed changes. The city jail is already overcrowded. He also believes the city should look at providing substance abuse treatment to get at the root of what is causing these individuals to sell themselves — and sometimes as cheap as \$10, according to rates given during April's sting.

Cook said the city needs to do more than a "feel good let's-lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key" law and provide services that would help the women. He added that many of the prostitutes have sexually transmitted diseases, or other health problems that could require medical attention while in jail — something he feels would be a liability for the city.

"You've got to do something with them while you've got them," Cook said after the meeting.

Roby and Smith said they intend to work with agencies, such as the Council on Substance Abuse and Lighthouse, to provide such help.



Lloyd Gallman Advertiser

Elmore County High School students gather in the parking lot after riding bikes to school Tuesday. The students have begun riding bikes to school as a way to save on gas money.

Free wheelin'

Students battle gas prices with bikes

By Kenneth Mullinax
kgmullinax@gannett.com

Tracy Daar is alone no more.

Fed up with high gas prices, the 17-year-old parked his Honda Accord and started peddling back and forth to classes — 12 miles round trip from his home in Cent ral to Elmore County High School in Eclectic.

Now, a week later, Tracy finds he has more than 20 other schoolmates who have hung up their car keys. And he's even named his protest: the Boycott Gas Bike Ride Movement.

"I hope the folks in government hear that we aren't going to take this laying down," said Tracy, who spends nearly an hour and half on his bike each day.

"And I remembered from his-

tory books that many protest movements began with just one person who stood up for what they thought was right and stuck to it."

It wasn't easy going green, though. Tracy took ribbing for ditching his wheels — even on the homefront.

"My own mother said it was a crazy idea," Tracy said.

Justin Nettles was one of those snickering, but not for long. The smirk came off when he found out why Tracy was high-tailing it on two wheels instead of four.

"I thought it was a real cool idea to make a state ment to adults and to save

money at the gas pump at the same time," said Justin, also 17 and a junior.

As Boycotter No. 2, Justin



rounded up eight teens from his Flea Hop Road neighborhood to peddle the 3 miles to and from school. The ride in the morning starts at 6:45 a.m.

"We are dedicated to doing this because if we can get other students and grown-ups to join us, together we can all help bring gas prices down by using less," he said.

Justin estimates he saved more than \$25 last week in gas money, big bucks for him since he works at a restaurant to earn his spending money.

Students Page 7A

ASU hit with 668 NCAA violations

By Josh Moon
jmoon@gannett.com

The NCAA's nearly five-year investigation into Alabama State University's athletic department has uncovered at least 668 violations in four sports, according to a notice of allegations the university received last week.

Nearly 500 of the violations stem from ineligible football players being allowed to work out in the off season and 40 involve grades changed for football players without the knowledge of the instructors.

The most serious violation is for the university's lack of institutional control, including failure to train coaches on rules, failure to monitor the eligibility and advancement of players and poor record keeping.

"A lot of us saw this coming, because quite frankly, as this demonstrates, ASU simply is

without a regulatory infrastructure," said Montgomery attorney Don Jackson, who specializes in NCAA litigation. "But still, to hear that said out loud — '670 violations' — is amazing."

The university and all individuals named in the violations, all of which occurred between 1999 and 2003, now have until June 27 to respond. The NCAA's Committee on Infractions will examine the evidence and the responses and plans to conduct a hearing at its Aug. 8-10 meetings. After the hearing, the committee will issue a final ruling and impose penalties against the school and responsible individuals.

ASU will meet all deadlines imposed by the NCAA but not comment otherwise, ASU attorney Kenny Thomas said Tues-

day. The total number of violations is likely to rise after ASU responds to the notice.

In the notice, for example, the NCAA reported 42 ineligible athletes certified to compete by ASU's compliance department. ASU must provide a list of games, practices and workouts participated in by the ineligible athletes. Each athlete could have participated in dozens of games, practices or workouts, and each instance would count as another violation.

"It could be 1,670 violations," Jackson said.

In a rare move, the NCAA named five former athletic directors, two former compliance officers and a former faculty athletic representative when detailing the university's lack of institutional control.

"(Former compliance officers John Ivery and Robert

ASU Page 7A

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES

INDIANA



Clinton



N.C.



Obama



► More election coverage 3B

Grocery tax plan under fire

By Sebastian Kitchen
skitchen@gannett.com

► Related stories 1B

Democratic state Rep. John Knight said Republicans are trying to kill a bill that would take the state sales tax off of groceries by tying its fate to ending annual property appraisals.

Senate Minority Leader Jabo Waggoner, R-Vestavia Hills, didn't disagree. He said considering the two bills together would probably kill the grocery tax proposal.

Republicans, including Waggoner and Gov. Bob Riley, have said they do not support taking the state's 4 percent sales tax off of groceries and that they will kill the grocery tax bill if Democrats do not also bring up the bill that would move property appraisals to every four years.

Lawmakers have introduced the latter bill for years, but the proposals have never made it to the floor of the House or Senate for debate.

When asked why the Republicans did not allow the bills to stand on their own merit, Waggoner said "ours will never stand on its own because it will never come out of committee."

"This is the only way we feel like we have a chance," he said.

Knight, D-Montgomery, was joined at a news conference Tuesday by officials with the AARP, the Alabama Silver-Haired Legislature and Alabama Arise, a coalition of religious organizations that seeks to improve the lives of low-income residents.

Democratic state Sens. Hank Sanders of Selma and Quinton Ross of Montgomery were also at the news conference.

They urged the Senate to pass the grocery tax bill, which has already passed the House. Voters would then decide in the November election whether they wanted a constitutional amendment to bring about the change.

"What harm can it do to allow the people of this state to vote on this," Knight said.

Joan Carter, executive director of the Alabama AARP, said

90 percent of people on fixed income would benefit from the bill. With the tough economy and the rising prices of gas and groceries, she said senators needed to consider the bill.

Bill Adams, an 85-year-old former state lawmaker who is now speaker of the Silver-Haired Legislature, said the plan is fair and equitable.

"Taking the tax off of food is the right thing to do," Adams said. "I realize there are a lot of families in Alabama who live at the poverty level or below who struggle to feed themselves and to buy medication."

Although Waggoner said he is upset that Democrats refuse to consider the appraisal bill, he said he has other reasons for opposing the grocery tax bill. His major one is that the revenue the state loses by removing the grocery tax will have to be paid by other Alabamians. He said the lost revenue would have to be raised by not allowing people to deduct the money they pay in federal income taxes on their state income taxes.

"It would cost a lot of people some more money and some Alabamians a lot of money," Waggoner said.

The bill, if passed by the Legislature and voters, would generate an additional \$25 million for the education budget. If passed, the legislation would also raise the threshold at which a family of four starts paying the state income tax from \$12,600 to \$20,000.

Democrats said the wealthiest 20 percent of people in Alabama would pay more with most of the increases being minimal.

Knight said the tax increases would be small for most Alabamians except for the wealthiest 5 percent and "I submit they can afford it."

"A lot of that 5 percent lives in my district," Waggoner said.

Grocery Page 7A

A Gannett Newspaper
28 pages

Volume 181, Number 128
© 2008 The Advertiser Co.

For home delivery
877-424-0007
Toll free



50¢

INDEX

ABCs to ACTs	2D	Jumble	8C
Alabama	1B	Metro	2A
Annie's Mailbox	4D	My Life	1D
Bridge	8C	Movies	4D
Business	9A	Nation/World	4B
Classified	7C	Obituaries	5A
Comics	3D	Sports	1C
Crossword	8C	Sudoku	4D
Cryptquote	8C	TV listings	4D
Editorial	2B	Weather	10A
Horoscope	8C		

WEATHER

84° Partly sunny

62° Partly cloudy, breezy

For more weather updates go online at montgomeryadvertiser.com

CHECK IT OUT ONLINE

@ www.montgomeryadvertiser.com

Going out to dinner? Check out our guide of dining reviews

Have an opinion? Get involved in our forums



\$49 WATERFORD CRYSTAL MARQUIS CROSS for Mother's Day

334-270-0074 • Cornerstone at Vaughn & Taylor Roads

www.marquirettes.com

