

# The Birmingham News

www.al.com EM123

Wednesday, August 27, 2008 ♦ COMMUNITY NEWS EDITION

30¢ home delivery ♦ 50¢ newsstand

TEAM PREVIEWS

SCHEDULES

RECORDS

SUPER SENIORS

The News  
**POWER POLL**

22-PAGE SPECIAL REPORT | Section K

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW

Six games to watch | Preseason All-Metro team

Birmingham News Super Senior  
Brandon Heavens of Jess Lanier



DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

## Clinton: Time to unite



Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., acknowledges the crowd as she prepares to address the Democratic National Convention in Denver on Tuesday.

### Rallies supporters to back Obama

*New York Times News Service*  
DENVER — With her husband looking on tenderly and her supporters watching with tears in their eyes, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton deferred her own dreams on Tuesday night and delivered an emphatic plea at the Democratic National Convention to unite behind her rival, Sen. Barack Obama, no matter what ill will

lingered. Clinton, who was once certain that she would win the Democratic nomination this year, also took steps on Tuesday — deliberate steps, aides said — to keep the door open to a future bid for the presidency. She rallied supporters in her speech, and, at an earlier event with 3,000 women, described her passion about her own campaign. And her aides

See CLINTON | Page 8A



A delegate wears buttons showing support for Clinton and Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.

INSIDE

- ▶ Artur Davis draws attention / 7A
- ▶ Alabama delegates: Hillary pulled party together / 8A
- ▶ Feds doubt men were credible threat to Obama / 8A

JEFFERSON COUNTY SEWER DEBT

## Riley, law firm to handle talks on bankruptcy; Slaughter fired

By BARNETT WRIGHT  
*News staff writer*

The Jefferson County Commission unanimously voted Tuesday to authorize Gov. Bob Riley and a Birmingham law firm to take over negotiations with creditors to restructure the county's \$3.2 billion sewer debt while preparing a plan for bankruptcy. The commission's 4-0 vote authorized attorney Patrick Darby of the firm Bradley Arant Rose & White to begin work on what would be the largest municipal bankruptcy on record. The move toward bankruptcy came on a day with other key developments: ▶ The county fired the team of advisers led by lawyer Bill Slaughter that had been representing the county in negotiations with Wall Street creditors since July. ▶ Riley said in an interview it was probable that Jefferson County would seek court protection under Chapter 9 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, eclipsing the previous municipal bankruptcy record, a \$1.4 billion filing by Orange County, Calif., in 1994. ▶ A nonbinding referendum on the county's financial crisis sought for Nov. 4 is unlikely, Probate Court Judge Alan King said, after the



Gov. Bob Riley  
"... if there's a way to stay out of bankruptcy, we should. But to transfer that burden to the taxpayers of Jefferson County is something I would have a difficult time understanding."

See SEWER DEBT | Page 10A

## Victims shocked, beaten in drug-linked contract killing

By JEREMY GRAY and MALCOMB DANIELS  
*News staff writers*

Five men found slain last week in a north Shelby County apartment were beaten and shocked in a brutal murder-for-hire related to drugs and money, authorities said Tuesday. Four men have been charged with capital murder in the slayings, which Shelby County Sheriff Chris Curry described during a news conference as being connected to a drug organization that transports cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana. All the suspects either received or paid money in connection

with the slayings, he said. Curry did not say how much the men were alleged to have been paid to do the killings, but he said the slayings may have been in retaliation for embezzling money from the drug organization. He said there are no books to check, but authorities believe the amount was in the neighborhood or \$400,000 to \$450,000, based on what they have been told. "It revolves around money, and that money revolves around drugs," Curry said. Curry said others may have been targeted for death and

See MURDER | Page 6A

## Alabama Power seeks double-digit rate hike

By DAVID WHITE  
*News staff writer*  
MONTGOMERY — A typical residential customer of Alabama Power Co. would pay \$197.40 a year more for electricity, an increase of 14.6 percent, starting Oct. 9 under a request the company filed Monday with the state Public Service Commission. Alabama Power wants to raise its energy cost recovery rate to pay for the higher costs of coal and natural

gas that it burns at its power plants, said utility spokesman Michael Sznajderman. A typical residential customer of Alabama Power uses 1,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month, which now costs \$112.74, including taxes. That cost would rise \$16.45 per month, to \$129.19, if the PSC allows the requested increase. The annual cost of electricity would rise

See POWER | Page 10A

WHAT'S NEW

A proposed electricity rate increase of 14.6 percent would cost the typical residential customer \$16.45 more a month.

THE REASON

Alabama Power Co. says it has lost money on fuel costs as the prices of coal and natural gas have risen.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Public Service Commission plans a hearing Sept. 23 to approve, reject or change the request.

INSIDE

### Russia honors breakaways' independence

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev stunned the West on Tuesday by announcing his country will acknowledge the independence claims of two breakaway Georgian regions. 3A

### CAMPAIGN 2008 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

<b>HOMEWOOD</b> Scott McBrayer ousts Barry McCulley 1B	<b>PELHAM</b> Don Murphy, Gary Waters in runoff for mayor 3B	<b>ALABASTER</b> David Frings wins third term without runoff 3B	<b>GARDENDALE</b> Oscar Mann, Othell Phillips in runoff for mayor 3B	<b>IRONDALE</b> Tommy Joe Alexander wins re-election as mayor 4B	<b>FAIRFIELD</b> Mayor Michael Johnson battling for runoff spot 3B	Results from Jefferson, and Shelby counties and parts of St. Clair County SECTION B
--	--	---	--	--	--	--

## At least 7 incumbent mayors defeated in Jefferson County

By HANNAH WOLFSON  
*News staff writer*

At least seven incumbent mayors in Jefferson County lost their bids for re-election Tuesday, including Homewood's three-term executive,

Barry McCulley. Voters in Argo, Brighton, Clay, Leeds, Lipscomb and West Jefferson also ousted their mayors, and mayors in Columbiana and Fairfield could be facing runoffs, according to

preliminary results. The most dramatic results may have been in Homewood, where City Councilman Scott McBrayer earned 72 percent of the vote to McCulley's 28 percent. McBrayer, who said he

was endorsed by most sitting council members as well as the city's police and fire departments, promised to take a stronger role in the city's top office and push through items on the city's strategic plan. Two incumbent

Homewood City Council members — Thomas Hamner Jr. and Sam Brasseale — also lost their seats.

In Leeds, voters turned out in

See MAYORS | Page 6A

INDEX

Classified	1F	Money	9C
Comics	6G	Movies	5G
Deaths	6B	Scene & Heard	2A
Editorials	12A	Sports	1C
Food	1G	Tech Report	12C
Local News	1B	Television	4G

WEATHER  
Details / 8B

High 86 Low 66



COMING THURSDAY  
Losing weight before having a baby

For home delivery, call 205-325-4444

