

Weather

Partly sunny today. High 92, low 68. Thursday, high 93, low 70. Details, 3B



HATTIESBURG AMERICAN

Fedora not ready to name QB yet, 1B

WEDNESDAY, August 27, 2008

A Gannett newspaper

50 cents

INSIDE

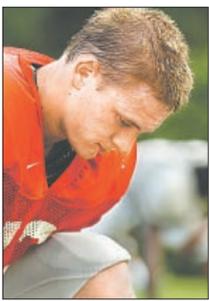
Exciting times

Just in time for a new season, south end zone expansions bring excitement to the Southern Miss athletic department. Story, 3A; photo gallery at www.hattiesburgamerican.com

Scoring high

Mississippi's 2008 SAT scores rate above average in three sections. Story, 5A

The Web



Special sections

Get the scoop on the new football season from preps to colleges to national football at hattiesburgamerican.com/football. See what's going on at the Democratic National Convention at hattiesburgamerican.com/DNC. Be prepared for a hurricane. Get helpful information at hattiesburgamerican.com/hurricane.

Blog spot



Get daily updates from USM sports reporter Patrick Magee.

Stay informed

Get information on area crime, fires, bankruptcies, restaurant inspections, marriages, divorces and more at Data Central, hattiesburgamerican.com/data.

Events

Find more than 50 events today with our online calendar at hattiesburgamerican.com/calendar.

Log onto www.hattiesburgamerican.com for local and national news 24 hours a day.

Deaths

Laymon Q. Allday, Hollis L. Creel Sr., Jaydon T. Jackson, Gertie L.K. Moore, Jessie L. Nichols

Full obituaries, 6A

Index

- Annie's Mailbox 7B, Asimov quiz 11B, Birthdays 2A, Bridge/Jumble 7B, Calendar 2A, Classified 8B, Comics 6B, Crime scene 9A, Crossword 6, 7B, Movie listings 12A, Nation/World 5B, Opinion 11A, Pine Belt 3A, Sports 1B, Spotted 2A, Television 7B



Feds hold 595

Largest sweep of suspected illegal workers in one area

U.S. Immigration says focus of search was Howard Industries

By TIM DOHERTY, American Staff Writer

Following their early-morning raid Monday at the Howard Industries Inc. plant in Laurel, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents wound up with the largest round-up of suspected illegal workers since the founding of the Department of Homeland Security.

The final tally of detainees reached 595 Monday night, a 70 percent increase over the initial 350 figure released by the agency earlier in the day, said Brandon Montgomery, ICE public affairs spokesman.

"This was (ICE's) single largest sweep ever in one area," Montgomery said late Tuesday afternoon during a phone conversation shortly before boarding a plane for his office in Washington, D.C.

Montgomery said 475 detainees had been sent to a federal detention center in Jena, La., where they are expected to remain for at least a month while waiting to go before an immigration judge for a hearing.

"The hearings are done expeditiously so as not to keep someone held any longer than is necessary," Montgomery said. "The average stay in detention is 32 days as they go through the process."

That time can be extended if either the government or detainee decides to appeal the ruling. Montgomery said about 100 detainees were released through "alternative detention," which allowed them to go home to make arrangements for their children.

Eight detainees made first appearances Tuesday in United States District Court in Hattiesburg, each charged with aggravated identity theft. Another eight were found to be minors, and those 17-year-olds were turned over to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Montgomery said.

Montgomery said agents were at the plant from 7:30 a.m. to nearly 10 p.m. Monday. After initial interviews,



A STEADY STREAM of prospective employees lined up outside the offices of Howard Industries in Laurel Tuesday. Almost 600 workers were removed from the business following a federal raid Monday.

Editor's note

To our readers: Although the Hattiesburg American generally does not use anonymous sources in staff-written stories, we made an exception for stories covering the immigration raid at Howard Industries. Howard employees we interviewed, both those still working there and those detained, asked that their names not be published. Their stories and descriptions corroborated each other, and gave a better sense of what happened inside the plant.

Kathleen Williams, Executive Editor

595 employees "were deemed (by ICE) to be here illegally," Montgomery said.

"We (did) a sweep of the facility from head to toe," he said.

India Lazaro, a Panamanian native who has lived in Jones County for 35 years and works as a bail bondsman, had one word for the feelings in the Hispanic community.

"Chaos," Lazaro said. "People won't go outside, even if

See SEARCH, 8A



DETAINEES LEAVE U.S. District Court in Hattiesburg Tuesday following their first appearance before a federal judge.



Inside

The mood in Laurel is somber as residents assess the raid, 3A

What federal, state penalties Howard Industries may face, 3A

Women who were detained describe what happened, 4A

Hispanic-owned business

owners claim the pervading mood is fear in their community, 4A

Jones County schools note drop in attendance, 4A

Click it!

Continuing coverage today, photo galleries, www.hattiesburgamerican.com

Oil industry battens down

The Associated Press

HOUSTON - Oil companies ramped up preparations to evacuate some facilities as Hurricane Gustav made its way toward the U.S. Gulf of Mexico, becoming a potential threat to the region's extensive oil and natural gas production.

Oil prices spiked briefly Tuesday and traded higher throughout the day after Gustav developed south of Haiti and the National Hurricane Center predicted it will gather strength over the Gulf's warmer-than-usual waters. It could enter the U.S. Gulf as a major storm this weekend.

The storm was "still a long way from oil and gas infrastructure, but gas traders will be keenly focused on direction/magnitude of this summer's first storm to potentially impact energy markets," securities firm Tudor Pickering Holt & Co. said in a note to clients Tuesday morning.

Gustav struck Haiti and meteorologists said the storm could become "extremely dangerous" even before it reaches the Gulf.

The hurricane roared over Haiti with top sustained winds near 90 mph at about 1 p.m. EDT, about 40 miles from the capital of Port-au-Prince.

Oil companies with operations in

the Gulf watched the storm's path closely. The companies have strict protocols for removing workers from rigs, platforms and other facilities when a storm enters the Gulf. Already this summer, Hurricane Dolly and Tropical Storm Edouard prompted the evacuation of hundreds of workers, though neither storm had a significant impact on production.

"We've been monitoring this one for several days already," said John Christiansen, a spokesman for Anadarko Petroleum Corp., the largest independent deep-water producer in the Gulf of Mexico.

Royal Dutch Shell PLC said it could begin evacuating some workers as soon as today.

Even the fear of a hurricane entering the Gulf can send prices spiking.

After trading down \$2 per barrel for much of the morning Tuesday, the price for a barrel of oil shot up \$5 dollars. Some traders appeared spooked by the speed at which the storm was upgraded to a hurricane.

Gustav dumped torrential rains across southern Haiti on Tuesday, killing at least one man and threatening crops amid protests over high food prices.

Trees toppled as the storm lingered

Gustav hits Haiti

Hurricane Gustav swept through Haiti Tuesday and is expected to intensify as it heads toward the Gulf of Mexico.

Hurricane Gustav CATEGORY 1 LOCATION MOVEMENT MAX WIND 18.2° N NW 10 mph 90 mph 72.8° W Hurricane warning Hurricane watch



for hours over Haiti's poor, deforested southern peninsula, and water levels were rising in banana, bean and vegetable fields. One man was killed in a landslide in the mountain town of Benet.

Clinton salutes Obama

Senator urges convention delegates to get behind Democratic nominee

By DAVID ESPO, The Associated Press

DENVER - Hillary Rodham Clinton summoned millions of voters who supported her in the primaries to send Barack Obama to the White House Tuesday night, declaring in a Democratic National Convention speech that the man who defeated her "is my candidate and he must be our president."

In a prime time address, the former first lady added, "we don't have a moment to lose or a vote to spare."

The packed convention floor became a sea of white "Hillary" signs as the New York senator strode to the podium, and thousands of Democrats cheered as she took a pre-speech sip of water.

While her prepared remarks included a full-throated endorsement of Obama, she did not indicate whether she would have her name placed in nomination or seek a formal roll call of the states when the nomination is awarded by delegates on Wednesday night.

Calling herself a "proud supporter of Barack Obama, she dismissed Republican John McCain with a few choice words. "No way. No how. No McCain," she



HILLARY CLINTON addresses the Democratic National Convention Tuesday night.

said as the hall erupted in cheers. "We don't need four more years ... of the last eight years," she added.

Like other failed candidates at conventions past, Clinton recalled her own quest for the White House.

"You taught me so much, you made me laugh and ... you even made me cry," she said to supporters in the Pepsi Center and millions more watching on nationwide television.

"You allowed me to become part of your lives, and you became part of mine."

"I want you to ask yourselves, 'Were you in this campaign just for me?'" she asked.

See CLINTON, 8A

Mabus raises profile, 5B