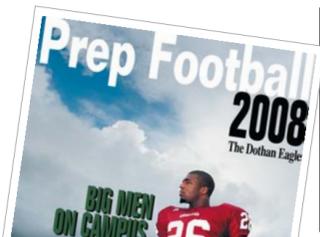


Today:  
Mostly sunny  
20% chance of showers  
High 95°  
Low 70°



**INSIDE**  
Start the  
season with  
our prep  
football tab



## Brown, set, hut

Trojans kicks off  
season with new  
offensive coordinator

1D



Joe Biden  
accepts  
nomination  
for VP

1B

Thursday, August 28, 2008

# DOTHAN EAGLE

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## Local emergency officials get ready for Gustav

Lance Griffin  
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It was the meeting Clark Matthews didn't want to have but knew he needed to have.

Matthews, the Houston County Emergency Management Agency director, met with local law enforcement and emergency response officials Wednesday to make sure the area had the equipment and manpower it needed to respond in case of an emergency created by Tropical Storm Gustav.

While Gustav's trek remains uncertain, one possible track has the storm making landfall in Louisiana some

time Monday. If the storm intensifies, personnel from other areas could be deployed to assist affected regions.

"You hate to use the word," Matthews said. "But we have to be prepared for the possibility that this storm could be a (Category) four or five, another Katrina."

Matthews said Houston County could be asked to send teams to assist with law enforcement issues, heavy rescue needs and communication needs.

Dothan Fire Chief Larry Williams said he believes the emergency response teams are ready to go if called.

"All we need is two hours notice, and we can roll," Williams said.

Police, fire and emergency officials were asked to make sure there would be enough personnel on standby over the Labor Day weekend to make sure the teams could respond. Cots, trucks, radios, fuel, water, chainsaws, MREs and tents were all on the checklist for the different teams.

Meanwhile, Matthews said EMA officials will continue to keep an eye on Gustav's track and personnel will be prepared to take care of the Wiregrass if necessary.

"Obviously, if it came close to here, we would be the last teams to be deployed somewhere else," Matthews said. "And we have to make sure that if it hits

somewhere else and we are asked to deploy, that we have the manpower and resources to make sure Dothan and Houston County are taken care of.

"We know, by Fay, the storm could go anywhere, any time," Matthews added.

State EMA officials are also keeping an eye on the storm.

"The Alabama Emergency Management Agency has been in contact with FEMA and the National Hurricane Center throughout the day and will continue to be until the storm is no longer a threat to Alabama," State EMA Director Brock Long said in a prepared statement.

Storm tracker

Visit [www.dothaneagle.com](http://www.dothaneagle.com) for the latest updates on Tropical Storm Gustav.

Type keyword: hurricane.



Inside:

Gustav kills 23 in Haiti

1B

## 'Soldiers' at home

Original song gives military wives a voice



Danny Tindell / dtindell@dothaneagle.com

Jamie Clark and son, Bailey, 8, of Newton pose for a photo in their front yard Wednesday.

Lance Griffin  
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Jamie Clark sat at her kitchen bar in Newton four months ago with a pen in her hand and a blank notepad in front of her.

She knew her husband of 17 years was about to be deployed to Iraq. She knew she would be experiencing a different role as father and mother. She would soon have to learn to patch a fence on her own and watch her 8-year-old son play football from a new perspective.

Listen

To listen to Jamie Clark perform "The Soldiers Left Behind," click on this story at [www.dothaneagle.com](http://www.dothaneagle.com).

She knew she would have to explain to her son what his father's deployment meant. She knew she would have to look him in the eye many times during her husband's deployment and tell him that dad



would be coming home soon, knowing all the time that there are no guarantees in war.

She knew mothers all over the country have to tell their sons the same thing.

So she sat down and wrote. Thirty minutes later, she had the lyrics to a song she believes speaks for military wives everywhere.

*The days drag by and sometimes we cry*

*We don't understand the fight, but we know why*

*We are warriors of a very differ-*

*ent kind*

*Proud to be "The Soldiers Left Behind"*

Clark said her song sums up a myriad of emotions wives feel when their husbands are at war — pride, fear, loneliness, confusion, sadness.

Overall, she said she hopes "The Soldiers Left Behind" gives a voice to the wives who must take on the role of both parents while their husband is deployed.

See SONG, 3A

## New Hope Road resident asks Dale County for improvements

Ebony Horton  
ehorton@dothaneagle.com

Elijah Jones agrees other lives should not be risked for a school bus to try to bring his child directly in front of their New Hope Road residence in Midland City, where a Dale County school bus overturned Aug. 12 after sliding on the slippery dirt road.

What Jones doesn't favor are other dangers posed to drivers who live on the road. Jones told Dale County commissioners that trucking companies, a concrete plant and a

Your opinion

Should county commissioners make paving New Hope Road a priority? Tell us what you think at [www.dothaneagle.com](http://www.dothaneagle.com).

landfill along the road make traffic heavy and child play unsafe.

He went before the commission Monday to ask for improvements.

"I'm willing to stake my life

it's not another dirt road in Dale County that has as much traffic as we do. Then they've built subdivisions there, people drive four-wheelers, and initially trucks were supposed to go one way. Now they use both ways," Jones said.

"We pay taxes just like everybody else, and I just want to see what we can do to come to a conclusion. I've worked for the county 30 years. I just come to y'all with my hands out asking for help."

See ROAD, 3A



Gravel has been laid down on New Hope Road to help manage the dirt road for when it rains again. New Hope Road residents are asking the Dale County Commission for help after a bus wreck earlier this month.

Max Oden / [mmoden@dothaneagle.com](mailto:mmoden@dothaneagle.com)

## Bond set at \$100,000 for suspect in bank robbery

Man confessed to police

Matt Elofson  
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A Dothan police investigator said Wednesday that a Georgia man charged with, and who has confessed to, the robbery of a Dothan Wachovia Bank has previously been convicted of rape and sodomy.

Investigator Chris Barberree testified at a bond hearing for Randy Peterson which was held in front of District Court Judge John Steensland. Peterson, 47, of Blakely, Ga., who faces a first-degree robbery charge, has been held without bond in the Houston County Jail since his arrest.

Peterson is charged with robbing the Wachovia Bank branch at the intersection of West Main Street and Park Avenue on Aug. 11.

Steensland heard arguments from lawyers and set a \$100,000 bond in the case.

Eric Davis, Peterson's defense lawyer, asked the court for a bond to be set in the range of \$2,500 to \$5,000. Davis argued the language of the complaint filed against his client only charged him with third-degree robbery.



Randy Peterson

See BANK, 3A

## Scholarship program helps about 100 at Wallace College

Jim Cook  
jcook@dothaneagle.com

Jade Brown is a self-starter. The 18-year-old Dothan High School graduate is a self-taught Japanese speaker, works weekends at the Bistro downtown and spends a lot of her spare time helping out with events at Dothan Christian Fellowship.

The daughter of a divorced mom of three, Brown is funding a large part of her college education on her own. A new scholarship from the Wiregrass Foundation is helping her.

"I have to pay for all my own stuff," she said. "My mom likes to stress being independent and being able to handle stuff on your own."

Earlier this year, the Wiregrass Foundation started a scholarship program for Houston County and Dothan high school graduates that covers up to \$800 in costs to attend Wallace Community College that are not covered by other scholarships and grants. Combined with federal Pell and other

See WALLACE, 3A



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