



146 YEARS OF SERVING THE GREATER GADSDEN AREA

The Gadsden Times

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EDUCATION

New school evaluation system set

BY DANA BEYERLE
Times Montgomery Bureau

MONTGOMERY — Alabama public school students going back to class this month may not know it, but they'll be on the forefront of a new emphasis on learning and individual goals.

Called Plan 2020, the state Department of Education is implementing it as the successor to the nationally standardized No Child Left Behind assessment system. Plan 2020 is a homegrown plan that emphasizes individual student performance and readiness for college, technical training and a career.

Plan 2020 features four priorities that include students, school systems, teachers and administrators and school support.

"I would describe it as radically groundbreaking," deputy state school Superintendent Sherrill Parris said Thursday during a briefing on the plan that begins this month with the math component. The new reading course of study will debut in August 2013.

Objectives starting this

'I would describe it as radically groundbreaking.'

— **SHERRILL PARRIS**
Deputy school superintendent

year will be increasing the high school graduation rate, improving student learning and achievement, closing the learning gap and increasing the number of students who are college and career ready, according to the Plan 2020 synopsis.

The plan would mean an end to the federally directed No Child Left Behind and its annual Adequate Yearly Progress reports.

Alabama education officials are seeking approval from the U.S. Department of Education to waive a requirement that Alabama students perform proficiently in math and reading on AYP by 2014.

If the waiver is granted, next week's release of the state's AYP results will be the last. They will be based on the same benchmarks as the 2010-2011 year.

PLEASE SEE SCHOOL | A5

CRIME

More drug-facilitated rapes reported in city

BY LISA ROGERS
Times Staff Writer

More women have come forward to report they were sexually assaulted and raped after their drinks at local bars were spiked with some type of drug, Gadsden Police Capt. Regina May said.

May said there were a few reports initially, but more women have come forward after information was released earlier this week about drug-facilitated rapes.

"We still want women who are victims or anyone who knows anything to come forward," she said.

Details of the additional reports still are unclear, May said, and it is unknown whether the women's drinks were spiked at the same places or the extent of the assaults.

May on Monday said several women have told police they were sexually assaulted and raped.

The release of the information prompted more women to come forward.

Detectives still are trying to determine how many victims there are.

CONTACT POLICE

Anyone who believes she has been a victim of such an assault is asked to call the Gadsden Police Department at 256-549-4630.

May said the drugs being used render a woman incapable of consent and are powerful and dangerous. They usually have no color, odor or taste and are slipped into a drink or food unnoticed. If the drugs are mixed with alcohol, they become even stronger and can take effect in 10 to 20 minutes.

Some symptoms are loss of muscle control, nausea, loss of consciousness, drowsiness, dizziness, sweating, vomiting and memory problems. With a strong enough dose, a victim is rendered incapacitated, but may look intoxicated. Too strong of a dose can cause coma or death.

Anyone who believes she has been a victim of such an assault is asked to call the Gadsden Police Department at 256-549-4630.

WORLD'S LONGEST YARD SALE



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Kim Carter of Rainbow City shops with her mother-in-law, Doris Carter, on Tabor Road on Thursday as the World's Longest Yard Sale gets under way in Gadsden. This was their first time shopping at the sale. For more photos, visit www.gadsdentimes.com.

Anything Goes

Annual event under way

BY KENDRA CARTER
Times Staff Writer

LaDean Brown called herself a repeat offender.

Brown, from Eden, Ga., was out at the World's Longest Yard Sale at 7 a.m. Thursday — her sixth year coming to the sale — after traveling 250 to 300 miles from home.

"We never come expecting anything," said Brown, who traveled with her husband, brother and sister-in-law. "We come hoping we'll find something we can't live without."

The World's Longest Yard Sale, also called the 127 Corridor Sale, spans 690 miles to Gadsden from five miles north of Addison, Mich.

The sale officially began Thursday, though many vendors lined both sides of Tabor and Nocalula roads by Wednesday.

Laura and Keith Nelson of Heflin were selling items for the third consecutive year. They had come to shop in previous



SARAH DUDIK | GADSDEN TIMES

A stoplight was available for purchase Thursday.



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Samson Mallett, 4, of Leesburg plays with a pay phone while his father shops on Tabor Road.



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Above, a "Six Million Dollar Man" lunch box was available for purchase Thursday. Left, an interesting array of tongs are seen on Tabor Road.

years, but decided to again rent space off Tabor Road and sell. Laura Nelson said it's more fun to shop than sell.

"If you're looking for something, and you go up to the end, you'll find it somewhere," Keith Nelson said.

Teresa Jackson of Grant hopes that's true.

PLEASE SEE GOES | A5

INSIDE TODAY

- Around Here..... **A2**
- Ask Amy..... **C2**
- Business..... **A11**
- Classifieds..... **B6**
- Comics..... **C3**
- Crossword..... **C3**
- Features..... **A7**
- Funerals..... **A5**
- Horoscopes..... **C2**
- Lotteries..... **A2**
- Obituaries..... **A5**
- Opinion..... **A4**
- Sports..... **B1**
- TV Listings..... **C2**



DAY OF HOPE

Daylong event planned to raise funds for Rainbow of Hope, a women's transitional home. **A7**

TODAY'S WEATHER



Clouds and sun with a shower or storm possible. High **92** Low **72** For details, see **A12**

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