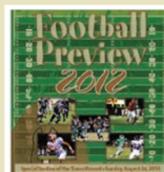


# TIMES RECORD

TODAY IN BUSINESS

**BARGE TRAFFIC MOVES ALONG** PAGE 7B

**TODAY IN SPORTS**  
**'12 HIGH SCHOOL FALL FOOTBALL PREVIEW'S HERE**  
 SEE SPECIAL PULLOUT **\$1.00**



A Stephens Media LLC Newspaper Serving Fort Smith, Western Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma

COLLEGE PREP EXAMS

## Arkansas ACT Scores On Rise

UAFS SEEING HIGHER AVERAGE IN FRESHMEN

By Chad Hunter

TIMES RECORD • CHUNTER@SWTIMES.COM

As ACT scores hold steady nationwide and rise in Arkansas, the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith is attracting a growing number of students ahead of the curve.

The latest ACT report shows the national average unchanged at 21.1, while Arkansas jumped from 19.9 to 20.3. The newest crop of UAFS freshmen — the second-largest in the university's history — boasts

an ACT average of 21.96. "It tells you that as an institution, we are attracting better students," said Ray Wallace, provost and senior vice chancellor. "This will be our third year in a row above 7,000 enrollment. It's our second biggest first-year, full-time class, which is great. That's big news for us, and that our ACT has gone up so much."

Educators say that in addition to a high school GPA, the standardized ACT test is held in high regard.

"The ACT is a notation of someone's ability to succeed," Wallace said. "Because it's a nationally normed test, it is of a lot of importance for us at the university. It gives us a good measuring stick where we can look at someone and say, 'OK, this is where you fall on this test.'"

The average for all students at UAFS is 21.7 this year, up from 21.5 in 2011 and 20.4 a decade ago. The exam is scored on a scale from 0 to 36.

SEE UAFS PAGE 4A

### UAFS ACT Scores

Average ACT scores, by year, of first-time, full-time students entering the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith from 2009-12.



AREA RESULTS OFTEN BEAT STATE, NATIONAL NUMBERS

By Mary L. Crider

TIMES RECORD • MCRIDER@SWTIMES.COM

Students in Alma, Fort Smith and Van Buren posted higher scores on the ACT college-readiness tests than the state and national averages, according to an annual ACT Inc. report and officials at three large area schools.

According to test results provided by Alma, Fort Smith and Van Buren school officials, in composite scores and in every benchmark area,

their 2012 graduating seniors' average scores were higher than the Arkansas statewide average scores. All three districts fell slightly below the national average in mathematics, and the Van Buren district fell slightly below the national average in science.

Alma Assistant Superintendent Ronnie Newton said the Alma district places high importance on encouraging all its students to take the ACT because school

SEE AREA RESULTS PAGE 4A

## Arkansans Pumped For Convention

By Peter Urban

STEPHENS WASHINGTON BUREAU  
PURBAN@STEPHENS MEDIA.COM

WASHINGTON — The threat of Tropical Storm Isaac isn't keeping Arkansas Republicans from heading to Tampa where the party faithful will gather this week to formally nominate Mitt Romney as their presidential candidate.

The convention will give the Arkansas Republicans a chance to witness first hand where Romney and his running mate, Paul Ryan, hope to lead the nation.

"We are all ears. We want to get to know Mitt Romney," Jonathan Harris of Springdale said Friday on his drive down to Tampa.

Harris, 43, is serving as an alternate delegate. His wife, Julie, is a delegate. They both attended the GOP national convention four years ago in Minnesota.

Harris had initially backed another candidate but now supports Romney and says convention goers need to unite behind the Romney ticket.

"We need to show our support," he said. "We are beat hands down if we are divided."

As to Tropical Storm Isaac, Harris said he was hoping it would weaken before passing by Tampa. Still, he planned to keep apprised.

Arkansas is sending 36 delegates, 33 alternates and dozens of guests to the convention. The delegation had a welcome dinner planned on Saturday and a formal delegation meeting today. The dinner is sponsored by Bentonville-based Walmart.

On Saturday, the Republican National Committee announced that Monday's events had been postponed because of the storm, possibly scrubbing opening-day speeches by two Arkansans. Rep. Tim Griffin, R-Little Rock and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee.

"This party is going to be very unified and very excited," said Republican Party of Arkansas Chairman Doyle Webb. "We have a ticket that can restore the economic engine of our country and put people back to work."

SEE CONVENTION PAGE 10A

REPUBLICANS DELAYING CONVENTION EVENTS PAGE 5A

## BEN GEREN SAFETY ZONE



JAMIE MITCHELL • TIMES RECORD

Alex Lopez of Mid-South Painting works Saturday on the graphics painted on the side of the new storm shelter at Ben Geren Park. The shelter is part of the ongoing development at the park and is scheduled to be completed in the next few weeks. Other projects on tap in the park are the complete remodel of the tennis center as well as updated bathrooms, softball fields and soccer fields.

## Analysts: Role Shows GOP Has Plans For Griffin

By John Lyon

ARKANSAS NEWS BUREAU  
JLYON@ARKANSASNEWS.COM

LITTLE ROCK — The selection of U.S. Rep. Tim Griffin as a speaker at

the Republican National Convention is an indication that the national



Griffin

party sees him as a rising star, political observers say.

Griffin was invited to address GOP delegates Monday, opening day of the convention in Tam-

pa, Fla., but on Saturday the Republican National Committee announced Monday's events had been postponed because of Tropical Storm Isaac. It was not immediately

clear when or if Griffin would speak, but the invitation was seen as sign the party has hopes for the first-term congressman from Little Rock.

SEE ROLE PAGE 3A

GETTING STARTED

IN THE NEWS

### Arkansas Ranks High In Generosity

The Chronicle of Philanthropy recently conducted a study to examine charitable giving in every ZIP code, city, town, county and state across the country and compiled the data into a report, "How America Gives." Arkansas ranked seventh out of the 50 states, and Oklahoma came in at No. 11.

FULL STORY, 1B

After a decade of carpet woes at the Fort Smith Public Library's main branch, relief is tantalizingly close for those who walk the bubbling, duct-taped aisles daily. "The carpet is in town," library executive director Jennifer Goodson said. "The first thing Monday morning, it's really going to happen."

Bubbling carpeting throughout the 67,000-square-foot library has been a problem since its opening in 2001. Library staff has been on alert for years to the potential for accidents.

SEE CARPET PAGE 6A

By Chad Hunter

TIMES RECORD • CHUNTER@SWTIMES.COM

## Library Carpet Replacement Set To Begin



TIMES RECORD FILE PHOTO

Signs are posted throughout the Fort Smith Public Library cautioning patrons about bubbling and uneven carpeting.



INDEX

TIMES RECORD

Volume 130, Number 239, 40 Pages

Amusements	2B	Markets	8B
Business	7-9B	Obituaries	9-10C
Classified	Section D	Opinions	8-9A
Crossword	7A, 6B	Sports	1-8C
Living	1-6B	Weather	10B

**TODAY'S DEAL**  
**COOL DEALS \$5 for \$10**  
 to spend at  
**Goody's Frozen Yogurt**  
 SEE INSIDE A SECTION FOR DETAILS

WEATHER

87/72

70% Chance of Rain  
FULL REPORT, 10B

