ARTICLES OF INTEREST
JULY 11, 2014 – JULY 17, 2014

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Open Enrollment for the Marketplace starts Nov. 15 and runs through Feb. 15, 2015. “We have always stated that moving into 2015 our bias would be to increase our exchange participation,” Calzadilla-Fiallo said. “In Alabama, we will use our experience serving more than 250,000 members to reach more individuals and respond to their specific needs with competitive product offerings that will be valuable in terms of quality, access, affordability, innovative design and service excellence.”

BCBS spokeswoman Koko Mackin said: “We welcome competition which is good for Alabamians and our state. We will continue to offer health plans in all metal levels in every county in Alabama. We have filed our 2015 product offerings with HHS and Alabama’s DOI and are awaiting their approvals.”

Fowler said the department is currently reviewing the plans for compliance with state law. “It’s important to remember that the state of Alabama is not participating in the operation of the Marketplace,” Fowler said via email. “The department is currently reviewing plans submitted from Blue Cross Blue Shield, Humana and United Healthcare. All three have filed plans that could be offered on the individual marketplace.”
Bentley: flat revenues make special session less likely

Mike Cason » mcason@al.com

Gov. Robert Bentley said that flat tax collections make it less likely he will call a special session this year to ask for a pay raise for education employees. Tax collections are running slightly behind projections and income taxes, the largest source for the Education Trust Fund, are below last year’s levels three-fourths of the way through the fiscal year.

Bentley asked the Legislature to include a 2 percent raise for education employees in the budget for fiscal year 2015, which starts Oct. 1.

Legislative leaders would not go along and said the state could not afford to pay for a raise and to help cover a shortfall in the Public Employees’ Health Insurance Plan. They said the insurance was the higher priority and put enough in the budget for PEE-HIP to prevent out-of-pocket increases for employees.

The pay raise issue became a standoff between the governor and the Republican leadership in the Legislature as the session wound down in early April.

The state Senate abruptly ended the session several hours early on the last night to keep from having to vote on an expected Bentley executive amendment for the teacher raise.

Bentley, who had threatened to veto the budget over the issue, waited until a week after the session ended to sign the budget.

At that time, he said he might consider a special session later in the year if the revenues were strong.

This week he said that was less likely.

Through June, net revenues to the EITC were up just 0.7 percent this fiscal year. They had been projected to increase by about 2 percent, Legislative Fiscal Office Director Norris Green said.

Bentley noted there was an uptick in income tax collections in June, exceeding the previous June.

"We will see the last quarter and things turn out," Bentley said. "Things have actually increased this last month. They’re better. Now whether or not they will improve enough to be able to do what we talked about, I don’t know. But we’ll just have to wait and see. But they are down. They are what they are."
BIRMINGHAM

City still lacking head of economic development

Joseph D. Bryant • jbryant@al.com

With Birmingham Mayor William Bell and Council President Johnathan Austin in England this week for an international air show, there's a noticeable absence from the roster of city officials.

Bell touts the trip to the Farnborough International Air Show as an economic development opportunity, but Birmingham has gone more than nine months without an official economic development director.

The post has remained vacant since Tracey Morant-Adams left City Hall in October.

Several AL.com inquiries to Bell's office about moves to fill the vacant post have not been answered.

Bell has said the city is participating in events this week as a recruitment expedition to possibly land an Airbus supplier to Birmingham.

The mayor last week only gave a partial answer when Councilwoman Lashunda Scales asked why no members of the city's economic development team were accompanying Bell and the city's delegation.

"I relish economic development, but I don't see any economic development staff going to this conference," Scales said in her inquiry.

Bell said he tried to limit the number of city officials making the international trip, but made no mention of the long-standing vacancy.

Significant event

Ahmad Ijaz, an economic researcher at the University of Alabama's Center for Business and Economic Research, said the lack of an economic development director doesn't necessarily hamper the city's efforts in London.

"The only reason someone has to be there is to talk to prospective companies who are planning on locating some of their operations to the U.S." he said. "It does not really have to be an economic development director. It could be anybody representing the city."

Ijaz called the London event significant because it brings together major aerospace businesses in one place where recruiters can make their pitches.

"The show is important because all the firms are there and a lot of aerospace industry-related business and deals are made at the show," he said.

Nevertheless, Ijaz said the absence of an economic development director could be felt when it comes to detailed negotiations between governments and businesses.

"It does to the extent that you are there and can talk to the people associated with the industry to see what their business plans are, and you can get some inside information that you would not be able to get if you were not present at the show, plus you can show them what you have to offer in terms of incentives and amenities," he said.

4 APPROVED FOR BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY POSTS

Inaugural members of the Birmingham Land Bank Authority have been approved:

- Charles Ball, executive director of the Regional Planning of Greater Birmingham
- Gwendolyn Bates Calhoun, president of the Hillman Neighborhood Association and Grisselli Heights community
- Heager L. Hill, retired U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development official and president of Republic Diversified Services LLC
- Adam Snyder, Adam Snyder, senior campaign adviser at The Nature Conservancy, secretary of Forest Park neighborhood association and president of the Friends of Avondale Park

The authority is designed to distribute thousands of abandoned and blighted properties for redevelopment.

Under the provision that created the authority, the council appoints four members while Mayor William Bell appoints three members of the land bank authority, including himself. The mayor has not yet announced his members.

Joseph D. Bryant
State, local leaders going to London

Tuscaloosa mayor, probate judge to join governor on economic recruitment trip to England air show

By Jason Morton
Staff Writer

Tuscaloosa elected and business leaders, including Tuscaloosa County Probate Judge Hardy McCollum and Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox, are joining Gov. Robert Bentley on an overseas economic recruitment trip to England.

Announced Thursday by Bentley’s office, the contingent is headed to the Farnborough International Air Show near London next week for talks aimed at expanding the aerospace industry in the state.

“Aerospace and aviation industries are extremely important to Alabama,” Bentley said in a press release announcing the approximately $100,000 trip. “The Farnborough Air Show is a special opportunity to meet with company leaders from many of the world’s largest aerospace and aviation companies and encourage them to choose Alabama.

“Companies like Boeing and Airbus already know the business climate in Alabama and have created good jobs for Alabamians. My goal for the air show is to create more jobs in this sector for the people of Alabama.”

Leaving today for a week is the Tuscaloosa team, which includes McCollum and Maddox as well as Dara Longgrear, executive director of the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Authority, and Tim Smith of the family-owned Smiths Machine fabrication company in Cottondale, along with officials from the University of Alabama.

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LONDON

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Bentley leaves Saturday and is joining a team of state officials that includes Greg Canfield, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce, and Bob Smith, the department’s assistant business director.

Maddox said the goals of the Tuscaloosa team include showing support of Bentley’s business recruitment efforts while showcasing Tuscaloosa as an area that is open to expanding into the aerospace industry.

“We are honored to be joining Gov. Bentley and the Alabama delegation ... (in) looking for business opportunities in aerospace and aviation,” Maddox said.

Tuscaloosa’s contingent also will meet with the Pucico Group in London to discuss its $50 million automotive plating facility that is being developed in Tuscaloosa.

“It’s always important to keep our community in the forefront of economic development, and we have an awful lot to offer and we’ve been working at expanding and diversifying our employment base,” McCollum said. “This is furthering the opportunity to maybe expand it into the aerospace industry and it’s a great match with automotive.”

Starting Monday, the Alabama team will hold meetings with aviation and aerospace companies over three days with the intent of highlighting Alabama as an aerospace prospect.

A goal for the Alabama team is to continue working toward securing links in the supply chain for the Airbus A320 Family Assembly Line in Mobile, which could result in thousands of new jobs, Bentley’s office said.

Another goal is to promote the state as an ideal location for aerospace research and development centers like the one announced last year by Boeing Co. in Huntsville, according to the governor’s office.

Reach Jason Morton at jasonmorton@tuscaloosanews.com or 205-722-0200.
London international airshow opens Monday

By Danica Kirka
The Associated Press

LONDON | A lot is at stake in the Farnborough International Airshow, the aviation industry's biggest annual event, which opens Monday.

The trade show is expected to see the first presentation of the world's most advanced fighter jet, new commercial aircraft as well as a host of new technological advances that promise to give a glimpse of the future of flying.

Held just outside of London, the show features 1,500 exhibitors from 40 countries and some 100,000 industry representatives. Manufacturers who attend find their closest comrades — and their most bitter competitors. Aviation giants Boeing and Airbus are

FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW

What: Major international trade show for aviation industry
When: July 14-20
Who: 1,500-plus exhibitors, including the biggest names in aviation, and more than 70 aircraft
Why we care: Alabama wants to attract aerospace companies to the state and hopes to use the event to make contacts. Gov. Robert Bentley is leading a delegation that includes Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox and Tuscaloosa County Probate Judge Hardy McCollum.
AIRSHOWN
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

expected to announce a string of new orders in their annual race for the title of the world's biggest plane maker.
Here's a brief look at what are expected to be the highlights of the show.

The sound of silence. Or not
Above all, there are two planes that aviation experts want to see at Farnborough—the F-35 Lightning II fighter and the Airbus A350—two feats of engineering that offer a contrast in the world of the skies.
The F-35 is the sort of plane that puts a rumble in your chest. What's important is that it combines stealth, maneuverability and attack capabilities in a single aircraft, so the U.S. and its allies can replace a variety of aging planes with the F-35. It's also loud and fast, the sort of thing that gets aviation enthusiasts excited.
"You don't get a new generation aircraft very often," aviation expert Howard Wheelon said. "This is something very, very new."
But there is doubt it will appear. The fighter, made by a group of companies led by Lockheed Martin, was grounded in the U.S. after an engine fire last month, and it remains unclear whether it will be on display at Farnborough. The F-35 missed its international debut at a military air show this week so there will be a lot of pressure to get it to Farnborough. While it's not unusual for planes in development to have problems, it's embarrassing to miss an event where you can strut your stuff before the politicians and the cameras.
On the other end of the noise spectrum is the other headline attraction, the A350, which is supposed to be very, very quiet.
Airbus's newest plane, the A350, has various configurations designed to seat 250 to 400 passengers and compete with a variety of Boeing aircraft. Airbus says this is the first commercial aircraft built mainly from "advanced materials," which will make it 25 percent more fuel efficient than existing planes. It's also supposed to be very quiet and offer more room for passengers.
Airbus is under pressure to give it a good showing and announce some new sales after Dubai-based airline Emirates canceled a huge order for 70 of them last month.

Just don't call them drones
They are unmanned aerial systems or vehicles to those in the know. Drones have a reputation as military aircraft that kill people. Besides that, some people find little whizzy things in the sky a bit scary. When the Los Angeles Kings won the Stanley Cup, for example, joyful fans attacked a drone hovering over the scene, throwing objects at it and knocking it into the crowd, where it was smashed to bits.
But manufacturers are hoping they can offer a makeover, promoting an array of other uses, from policing and surveillance to sports photography and wildlife monitoring. The Teal Group estimates that $89.1 billion will be spent on drones in the next decade, and some analysts suggest that the next aviation giant will be a drone maker.
"It's probably the most dynamic, innovative air sector at the moment," said Tim Robinson, editor in chief of AEROSPACE, the monthly magazine of the Royal Aeronautical Society. He compared it to the early days of aviation, with designers trying all sorts of variations to make their systems fly. "It's a little bit like the Wild West."
Delegates’ mission:
Looking for business

Kelli Dugan • kdugan@al.com

Southwest Alabama interests watching the 2014 Farnborough International Air Show from afar and expecting a flood of Airbus-related supplier announcements will most likely be disappointed.

“We do not anticipate immediate announcements. These will begin to occur once the (A320) final assembly line facility is fully operational and will develop over the coming years,” Bill Sisson, president and CEO of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, said before leaving for the global aerospace showcase and trade show near London.

1,500 exhibitors

The weeklong trade show, networking extravaganza and aerospace exposition opens Monday and is expected to draw some 1,500 exhibitors from across the globe, several dozen of whom have already booked one-on-one meetings with various members of an estimated 90-member Alabama delegation of elected, economic development and industry officials.

But what about the handful of “integral suppliers” economic development officials have been wooing to the Port City since the Toulouse, France-based planemaker announced plans two years ago to build its first final assembly line on U.S. soil in Mobile? With actual A320 production slated to being in Mobile one year from now, shouldn’t supply chain activity surrounding the project shift soon from recruitment to brick-and-mortar operations?

Managing expectations

The answer, a familiar refrain since the $600 million Airbus project was first announced, lies in managing expectations and reminding Mobile’s relationship with its high-profile industry partner represents a long-term investment, Sisson said.

Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield did say developing the state — and specifically southwest Alabama’s — aerospace supply chain remains a key focus of the trade mission, but that sector is certainly larger than any one company.

“The capabilities of Alabama’s aerospace industry really span the spectrum in this dynamic sector,” Canfield said.

In fact, the Alabama Commerce Department estimates the state’s aerospace industry includes some 400 companies employing about 83,000 people.

So if Airbus-specific announcements are an unlikely outcome of the global air show, what can we expect from the Farnborough experience?

In a word, networking.

Looking them in the eye

“The magnitude of the decisions that have to be made for someone to locate a facility here is huge. They’re conducting their due diligence as we speak, but they want to look people in the eye they’re going to be dependent on,” said Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson, praising the planned collective presence of the city, county, state, Port of Mobile, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Mobile Airport Authority and Baldwin County partners during the show.

“We’re all telling (the potential suppliers) things we can do to enhance their locating here,” he said. “I want to know what the latest opportunities are, but for us, (the one-on-one meetings) just become increasingly important the closer we get to the day the first A320 takes off.”

Face-to-face meetings

Stimpson, who is attending his first Farnborough air show, said he has “probably two dozen” 30-minute, face-to-face meetings with potential suppliers scheduled during the two-day trade show, and he anticipates many more materializing while on site.

And those numbers appear the norm for other members of the Team Mobile delegation making the trek to London.

Sisson said he will be attending more than 25 scheduled meetings with potential suppliers and service providers representing “numerous European, Asian and American locations.”

Meanwhile, Lee Lawson, executive director of the Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance, also has scheduled meetings with 25 companies representing nine countries; Roger Wehren, executive director of the Mobile Airport Authority, and Jimmy Lyons, director of the Alabama State Port Authority, both have more than 30 scheduled meetings; and Mobile County Commissioner Connie Hudson said she will personally meet with “13 to 15 tier 1 and tier 2 suppliers to Airbus either through pre-arranged meetings or cold calls,” representing a variety of suppliers from airframe to component manufacturers.

Media expectation

Lawson pointed out that one reason the perception and reality surrounding supplier announcements is off-kilter is because the “outside/media expectation for this project was that there would be several supplier announcements before Airbus ever broke ground.”

Lyons agreed. “I don’t expect much (supplier) activity until we reach a production rate of four planes per month, but we have to continue to get in front of the prospects.”
The Stephens family: Patriarch and wife donated millions in last few decades of their lives.

Millions in donations

Before he died at the age of 93 in 2005, Stephens and his wife, who died in 1996, spent the last few decades of their lives donating millions to charity, educational institutions, the arts and various civic causes. While most of those contributions resulted in Stephens' name or names being attached to projects (the Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center at UAB or the Elton B. Stephens Science Center at Birmingham-Southern College), most were made without any such lasting recognition.

Stephens gave $1 million to the United Way of Central Alabama in 1997, one of many large personal donations he made to the charitable group. Stephens became one of the first members of the United Way's Million Dollar Roundtable of top contributors, and he established the Alabama Pension Club, which honors businesses that give 10 percent, 5 percent or 2 percent of pre-tax income to charity.

Depression driven

Those who knew him believe his philanthropy was driven by his own struggles growing up in Clino in Barbour County and living through the Great Depression. His success and wealth drove him to want to contribute to Birmingham and Alabama in ways that he felt would benefit the state, family and friends.

The Stephens family's generosity

Stephens was known for his, and his wife's, clear commitment to the arts. The American Symphony Orchestra, which gave its first performance in 1963, was named the Alys Robinson Stephens American Symphony Orchestra. The Alabama Symphony Orchestra was named for his wife, Alys Robinson Stephens.

The Stephens family was also known for its commitment to education. The Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center at UAB was named for Stephens' wife. The Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa was named for his wife.

The Stephens family's impact

Stephens was a founding member of the United Way of Central Alabama and the Alabama Pension Club. He was also a member of the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Board of Regents.

In 2005, the Alabama State Council on the Arts presented Stephens with the Lifetime Achievement Award. In recognition of his financial contributions to the arts, the Alabama State Council on the Arts presented Stephens with the Lifetime Achievement Award. In recognition of his financial contributions to the arts, the Alabama State Council on the Arts presented Stephens with the Lifetime Achievement Award. In recognition of his financial contributions to the arts, the Alabama State Council on the Arts presented Stephens with the Lifetime Achievement Award.
## America's Richest Families

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*Estimated
PATTERSON PASSES THE TORCH

UA gymnastics coach of 36 years hands reins over to Dana Duckworth

By Tommy Deas
Executive Sports Editor

When Sarah Patterson stepped to the podium Tuesday afternoon on the second floor of the Mal M. Moore Athletic Facility to formally announce her retirement from coaching, it marked the end of an era for the University of Alabama gymnastics program and for UA athletics.

The last remaining coach hired by the late Paul W. "Bear" Bryant, Patterson had compiled 1,005 victories, six national championships, and eight Southeastern Conference titles in 36 years.

The 58-year-old native of Binghamton, N.Y., who came to Alabama as a 22-year-old graduate of Slippery Rock State College in Pennsylvania, stepped down for medical reasons. She will undergo two knee-replacement surgeries in the coming months.

"This is what is in the best interest of Alabama gymnastics, and that is what's first and foremost," she said.

Sarah's husband, David, is also retiring from his role as volunteer coach. A former varsity diver at Alabama, David Patterson has been with the program since his wife was hired, retiring from full-time coaching six years ago due to back problems.

In 2015, Alabama will take to the floor without the Pattersons at the helm for the first time since 1979.

Wearing her latest national championship ring on one hand and her wedding band on the other, Sarah Patterson's voice broke with emotion as she reflected on her accomplishments.

"I think what I'm most proud of, overall of the success of our program, is David and I have helped a lot of women in 36 years to have great careers," she said. "We've tried to be a role model for them as great parents and as a husband-and-wife team."

Many of those former gymnasts reached out after UA announced the retirement Tuesday morning in a news release.

"I had to quit looking at my emails and my text messages today because it was so overwhelming, the things they were saying about how we impacted their lives," Sarah Patterson said.

UA Director of Athletics Bill Battle promoted assistant coach Dana Duckworth, a 42-year-old former Alabama gymnast, to replace the legendary coach.

"Now I get to take the torch and move forward," Duckworth said.

Patterson said she put her family and the Alabama program first when she made her decision.

She had known for some time that she would one day need knee surgeries, but didn't seriously discuss it with Dr. Lyle Cain until June. She waited until after she and her husband attended the Women's College World Series to watch their daughter Jordan, a senior catcher on the UA softball team, conclude her career with a run to a second-place national finish.

When Cain told her the surgeries couldn't be put off, she informed Battle, who, along with UA President Judy Bonner, tried to persuade Patterson to stay on as coach. They suggested a plan in which she would shift responsibilities to her assistant coaches for a year before resuming her head coaching role again on a full-time basis.

Patterson said no.

Other programs, she knew, would use the situation for a recruiting edge, and the back-and-forth coaching shift would be difficult on the team.

"She just decided it was time. This is the way she wanted to go," Battle said. "It was very unsellable on her part, as you would think she would be."

Sarah Patterson's retirement may have been unexpected, coming nearly three months after the Crimson Tide's fourth-place finish at the NCAA Championships in Birmingham in what turned out to be her last meet, but those close to the coach knew she had been battling pain.

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COACH
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"On multiple occasions this year, I knew Sarah had to not just slow down but flat-out stop because her knees looked like a couple of cantaloupes stuck on toothpicks," said Brian Raschulla, an assistant coach for the past 18 years who will remain on staff as associate head coach.

The gymnasts also noticed.

"You knew she was in some pain here and there," said Kayla Williams, who will be a senior next season. "She told us she didn't want to complain in practice and she wasn't going to complain either. I'm sure, I'm just glad that she went to the doctors to get it checked.

"She didn't complain, so we didn't know it was that severe." About 10 months ago, Patterson stopped working out at Northridge Fitness in Northport and moved to pool work out of Tuscaloosa's Spine Care Center. Supervising summer gym sessions in recent weeks, she had to sit on a stool.

"I can't walk on the treadmill," she said. "I can't walk for more than 10 minutes."

The family for some time had begun to figure David's chronic back problems might bring the Patterson era of UA gymnastics to an end. Sarah's knee issues, however, came more suddenly.

"The reality of it is, I didn't think it would be as much with back issues that would take me out at this point," she said. "I thought it would come later, like, you know, I've been through that—same thing with my knee."

Sarah Patterson also shed tears, but doesn't consider this a sad occasion.

"Some people were reacting like this is tragic, and I'm like, 'You know what, this isn't tragic,'" she said. "Eighteen years ago, we experienced that when we had two young daughters and David had cancer. That was hard. This is different.

"With the whole team, that's what I didn't know I would have a father for my two young daughters, they were 10 and 4 (years old) and I didn't know that he was going to make it—" I said the important things.

"I want David and I and our family to have some time together," Sarah Patterson said. She will remain on the UA athletic department staff in a fundraising capacity. She has scheduled her surgeries around duties to her family and to UA.

She will be measured for her new knee brace on Monday morning and begin undergoing an operation in late September to replace her right knee, timed so she can see daughter Jordan collect her SEC softball championship ring at halftime of the Sept. 6 UA vs. Florida Atlantic University football game and be there a week later when her last gymnastics team gets SEC title rings at halftime of the UA vs. University of Southern Mississippi game. She will also be at the Sept. 20 game against the University of Florida so she can meet with donors to help raise money for the athletic department.

The rehabilitation process after the knee replacement will take about four months. She will plan her left knee replacement operation so that she can be at the first home gymnastics meet of the 2015 season.

It took Patterson 10 years to win her first national championship. She added two more in the 1990s, two more in the 2000s and back-to-back titles in 2011 and 2012.

"It makes me feel really old when they said we've won championships in four decades," she said. "You've got to be kidding me. That makes me sound like I'm really ancient.

The legacy goes far beyond victories. Patterson's athletes have performed at a high academic level, with 73 gymnasts earning 189 Scholastic All-America honors since 1991. Last season, the NCAA awarded five postgraduate scholarships to gymnasts, three of them going to UA athletes.

Sarah Patterson has also been a force in the community. She started the Power of Pink initiative in 2004 with a pink-themed home meet every year to increase breast cancer awareness.

The program has raised more than $1.5 million for the DCH Breast Cancer Fund to pay for mammograms and screenings for women without insurance.

She has also been immortalized with the creation of the Sarah Patterson Champions Plaza on the UA campus, dedicated last October in a spot between Alabama's baseball stadium, Coleman Coliseum and the Mal Moore building. It recognizes the school's non-football national championship teams.

The gymnastics office in the upper loft of Coleman Coliseum occupies a hallway shared by fellow national championship coaches Jay Seawell (men's golf), Mike Potter (women's golf) and Patrick Murphy (football).

That same part of the coliseum is where Bryan's office was long ago, when he hired an untested coach who had just graduated from Slippery Rock. From that perch, Patterson has led a gymnastics program that has thrived and flourished in Tuscaloosa for many years,

"I remember there was a time when football won championships but really nobody else did, and it was funny, I just feel like the mentality here now is everybody is trying to contend for championships, and while the Champions Plaza is amazing, it wouldn't have been nearly as amazing if Jay and Patrick and Mike hadn't won their championships along with us."

Patterson has also filled the coliseum with gymnastics fans. The first sellout, drawing more than 13,000 fans, came in 1997, and the program regularly averages more than 10,000 attendees at its meets.

Patterson credits former Tennessee women's basketball coach Pat Summitt with giving her the drive to make her meets an attraction.

"We started out in Foster Auditorium. We probably had 50 people in the stands," she said. "I was always trying to figure out how to get people in the stands."

"If you don't work on it, you're going to compete in front of nobody. That's one of the things that we've had success with, that I'm most proud of."

Coaches, gymnasts and administrators talked Tuesday of the upcoming season and the coming season, when Sarah Patterson would no longer be coaching. After 36 years, it will take some time to get used to the idea.

"It's hard to imagine Alabama gymnastics without Sarah," Williams said. "She's the boss, but the fun mom at the same time."

Reach Tommy Deas at tommy@tidesports.com or at 205-722-0224.
AN OPEN LETTER FROM SARAH PATTERSON

Wednesday, July 16, 2014

The Tuscaloosa News

After much thought and prayer and after much consultation with Athletics Director Bill Battle and our president, Dr. Judy Bonner, have decided to step down from the only job I have ever known since graduating from college. Though I haven’t shared my physical problems outside my family and a few close friends, they have degenerated to a point where I will have multiple surgeries over the coming year. While not life threatening, things have progressed to the point where my physicians have mandated that I have both knees replaced and they have estimated that I will be over a year until I am fully recovered.

I will have the first surgery after we receive our 2014 SEC championship rings at the Southern Miss football game and celebrate an amazing season with that team. I will have the second surgery in the spring after recovery from the first surgery.

I would like to thank Coach Battle and President Bonner for offering me the opportunity to take a complete year of medical leave and then return to coaching. But David and I came to the conclusion that having a staff that changes multiple times in a significant way over a two-year span is not in the best interest of our gymnasts or the continued success of our program.

Coaching is a 24/7 job that requires being at our best on a daily basis. I know myself well and need to put my health first and foremost for the quality of my life in the future and I do not feel that I can do that and give my best as a coach.

I am grateful that for 36 years, David and I were able to implement our coaching philosophy of trying to develop well-rounded young women who are ready to make a difference in the lives of others upon their graduation from this University. I would like to share how blessed David and I have been with the unconditional love and support of our daughters, Jessie and Jordan throughout our careers and this decision. They — along with our son-in-law, Brett — have been our biggest fans and together we have all shared our love for this University and the amazing experiences that we have had.

This is not the joyous time for David and I as we step away from jobs that we have loved every day along the way, but I know it is the right decision for us personally, as well as it being the best decision for the long-term success of the gymnastics program. I want to thank Coach Bryant for taking a chance on a 22-year-old graduate of Slippery Rock State College and hiring me for the best coaching job in the country.

I want to express my appreciation and fond memories of Mal Moore for his support, and the overall vision he had for this department, and for hiring the coaches that have helped turn this vision into the championship program we enjoy as a department today.

Our current Athletic Director Bill Battle is one of the best leaders I have ever worked with and his vision will continue to give our department the opportunity to compete at the highest level.

To Dr. Judy Bonner, one of the highlights of my career, and one of the very few times I was ever late to practice, was standing in the back of the room when you were announced as our president. I felt like at that point, I could go back to our ladies and tell them that at the University of Alabama, you could truly be whatever you wanted, even president.

I also need to thank Marie Robbins, a member of our first championship team in 1988 and now an associate athletic director and our senior woman administrator. From your first moments on campus, through this latest decision — your guidance, counsel and unwavering support have meant the world to us. I can't imagine how we would have managed without you.

I would like to give a heartfelt thank you to our staff and coaches, both past and present. Each one of you made a difference for our program. In the past, your guidance, counsel and unwavering support have meant the world to us. I can't imagine how we would have managed without you.

I would like to give a heartfelt thank you to our staff and coaches, both past and present. Each one of you made a difference for our program. In the past, your guidance, counsel and unwavering support have meant the world to us. I can't imagine how we would have managed without you.

And more than anyone, I want to thank our ladies. From our first class, who took a chance on us when we began this journey and then took us to the national championships as seniors, to the freshmen of 2014, you are all a part of our championship legacy, a part of the tradition of excellence that this program has highlighted for the last 36 years. You are all in our hearts and we can't begin to express what it has meant to us to continue to be a part of your lives.

While we close this chapter on our careers, this is not the end of the story. I am very much looking forward to the future and continuing as a part of the Alabama family, the Tuscaloosa community and the sport we love so much as a member of the NCAA Gymnastics Committee.

Thanks to everyone for their support over the many years and of course, Roll Tide!

Sarah Patterson

See next page
PATTERSON’S KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- NCAA-best 27 NCAA Championship top-four finishes.
- NCAA-best 22 NCAA Championship top-three finishes.
- NCAA-best 20 Super Six team finals.
- 4 NCAA Today’s Top VIII honorees.
- 1 Honda Cup (National Woman Athlete of the Year).
- 8 Honda Awards (National Gymnast of the Year).
- 25 individual NCAA titles.
- 18 NCAA postgraduate scholarships.
- 5 NCAA Elite 89 honors.
- 66 athletes have earned 302 All-America honors.
- 73 athletes have earned 189 Scholastic All-America honors (since 1991).
- 5 SEC Athletes of the Year.
- 3 SEC Scholar-Athletes of the Year.
- 60 individual SEC titles.
- 88 All-SEC honors.
- 11 SEC postgraduate scholarships.
- 275 SEC Academic Honor Roll accolades.
- 6 SEC Gymnast of the Year honors.
- 5 SEC Gymnastics Scholar-Athlete of the Year honors.
- 3 SEC Freshman of the Year honors.
- 8 NCAA Region Gymnast of the Year honors.
- 145 individual NCAA Regional titles.
PAINFUL DECISION

Andrew Gribble
agribble@al.com

Sarah Patterson hid the pain because she knew no other way. Even when her knees looked like "a couple of cantaloupes stuck on toothpicks," as longtime assistant Bryan Raschilla described, Patterson rarely relented during her 36th season as Alabama's gymnastics coach.

She caved only in small ways, swapping etiotes for flats at the Crimson Tide's meets and reluctantly coaching from a stool whenever the pain escalated during a lengthy practice.

The clues of what ultimately came to light Tuesday — when Patterson announced her stunning resignation — were small because the Patterson thousands of Alabama fans saw throughout another successful season displayed the same kind of energy as she did when Paul "Bear" Bryant hired her as a 23-year-old graduate out of Pennsylvania's Slippery Rock State College.

"I was an athlete and I'm not going to complain," Patterson said.

Presented with the option to take a year of medical leave, Patterson, who led Alabama to six national championships in four different decades and is viewed as one of the leading voices in women's college sports, simply stepped down. Her spot was promptly filled by longtime assistant Dana Duckworth, who learned of Patterson's decision early Monday, interviewed later in the day and learned she had the job just before midnight.

Raschilla, who also interviewed to replace Patterson, will remain on staff as an associate head coach.

Patterson's husband and longtime coaching companion David, who served the past six years as a volunteer coach, also announced his resignation.

"We both said we would never do this without the other one," Patterson said. "The reality is I didn't think it would be my health issues that would take us to this path."

"If you're asking me if I'm shocked? Yes. I never would have guessed that."

Patterson, 58, will remain with the athletic department in some capacity as a special assistant to Alabama athletics director Bill Battle, but her upcoming knee replacement surgeries and long recovery will take precedence.

Two of Patterson's closest mentors at Alabama, Bryant and athletics director Mal Moore, fell ill health shortly after their respective retirements. That wasn't lost on Patterson, who said she wanted to "do it differently."

"I want David and I and our family to have some time together," Patterson said. "Years."

One of the greatest coaches in college gymnastics history, Patterson collected her first national championship in 1988 and collected her final two in consecutive fashion in 2011 and 2012. Her final season ended with the Crimson Tide's eighth SEC team championship, its 32nd straight NCAA Championship appearance, its 29th regional championship and a fourth place finish in the Super Six.

Dana Duckworth will take over as Alabama's gymnastics coach. (Vasha Hunt/vhunt@al.com)

In Oct. 2013, Alabama opened Sarah Patterson Champions Plaza, a new campus landmark outside Coleman Coliseum and Sewell-Thomas Stadium dedicated to Alabama's championship-winning programs. ESPN recently profiled Patterson and her longtime rival, Georgia's Suzanne Yoculan, in the documentary "Sarah & Suzanne."

Patterson was the last coach in Alabama's athletics department who was originally hired by Bryant.

The early days saw her work the team through non-air-conditioned practices at the old Armory. Her salary was $5,000.

"She built the program from literally nothing," Battle said.

Patterson choked up on numerous occasions throughout an eight-minute speech Tuesday in front of a smattering of friends, family and former gymnasts. She quoted legendary coach Vince Lombardi and only mentioned the pain she coached through when asked.

"She's a tough cookie," Duckworth said. "Sarah has fought for women's athletics, she has fought for our program, she's a fighter."
Patterson leaves
UA gymnastics
in tip-top shape

Dana Duckworth has an unenviable task ahead of her; just ask Ray Perkins. Following a legend is never easy. And that is exactly what Duckworth, the University of Alabama’s next gymnastics coach, must do.

Sarah Patterson didn’t coach Alabama gymnastics. She was Alabama gymnastics. It was an afterthought, perhaps even a program doomed to extinction, when she arrived on campus in 1978. It is now an almost national brand. UA gymnastics is to NCAA women’s gymnastics what UA football is to college football — a dynasty.

Patterson, who announced Tuesday that she is stepping down, will forever be compared to the man who hired her, Paul W. “Bear” Bryant, and she is among the last ties to that era. Superficially, the two are a study in contrast. Bryant was craggy, wrinkled, towering and intimidating, with a Chesterfield cigarette and a voice like it came from a bottomless gravel pit. Patterson, strawberry-haired and petite, lithe and light on her feet, charms effortlessly with a smile.

But peel back the exterior, and they were quite alike — relentless competitors with the hearts of champions, driven to succeed and committed to the success of the people they coached. Perhaps Bryant, who also served as athletic director, could see that very thing 36 years ago as he peered down from the regal heights of his high-backed chair at the tiny woman sitting on the old couch in his office, the one with the saggy seat that ensured even the biggest football players would have to look up at him when they sat on it.

Alabama fans and alumni would love to believe that he could see what she was made of. If he were here, he might just take a drag of his smoke, exhale and mumble, “Aw hell, I just got lucky.”

Whether it was luck or exceptional insight into character and ability, Bryant made the home run hire that athletic directors dream of. Over the next 36 seasons, Patterson’s teams won six NCAA national championships and eight SEC titles. They appeared in the NCAA tournament 32 times, won 29 regional titles and reached the Super Six team finals 20 times — all while her gymnasts racked up countless academic honors.

In truth, Patterson did Bryant one better. He resurrected a football program on hard times, but it was a program with a storied history of conference and national titles. UA gymnastics had no history when Patterson arrived. She molded what it is from the humblest beginnings. Who would have dreamed when she arrived that her gymnasts would compete to the roar of 15,000 voices in Coleman Coliseum?

There’s one more thing — and this, more than anything, might bring a smile to her old boss’s face — she won while upholding the highest standards of integrity, class and sportsmanship. She never took the low road, even when it would have been ever-so-tempting and understandable to do so. There was never a moment when Alabama fans and alumni weren’t proud to have Sarah Patterson representing them.

We wish her a long and happy retirement.
Saban, school jet stay on the go

By: Michael Casagrande

Most of Tuscaloosa woke up in a daze Dec. 2. Alabama's Iron Bowl meltdown was still fresh two days later, but Crimson Tide linebackers coach Lance Thompson was up early that Monday morning.

There was no time to sulk. A small nine-seat private plane was waiting for him at Tuscaloosa Regional Airport. It departed at 7:37 a.m., bound for Elizabethtown, Ky., where Thompson would meet with five-star defensive lineman Matt Elam.

That short flight kicked off the whirlwind that is the last two months of college football's other season – the recruiting sprint to National Signing Day. Between Dec. 2, 2013, and Feb. 1 of this year (save for a Dec. 16-Jan. 15 dead period mandated by the NCAA), head coaches and their staffs crisscrossed the nation, logging thousands of miles trying to lure the most coveted recruits of what would be the Class of 2014.

Not even perhaps the most successful coach in the nation was immune to becoming just another frequent flyer in search of new talent. To determine just how frenzied this period was for Nick Saban, AL.com, through the Freedom of Information Act, obtained the logs of the 24-year-old plane (N1UA) registered to the Crimson Tide Foundation — the fundraising arm of the Alabama athletics department — that carried Saban and his staff to their destinations. (The plane's movements cannot be accessed otherwise because the school had the tail number blocked from flight-tracking websites.)

The aircraft – an 1125 Westwind Astra built by Israel Aircraft Industries in 1990 -- made 66 trips marked "football recruiting" on the logs. Saban was on board for 53. The plane touched down in 15 states from coast to coast. It logged nearly 53 hours of flight time leading up to National Signing Day on Feb. 5.

N1UA made trips as short as 10 minutes (between Gadsden and Talladega) and as long as four-plus hours (from Tuscaloosa to Long Beach, Calif.). Every assistant coach made at least one trip, with defensive coordinator Kirby Smart (12 documented trips) and former secondary coach Greg Brown (10) leading the pack. New offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin made just one flight — a return trip from New Orleans to Tuscaloosa on Jan. 30.

How did Saban bide his time while airborne? "I take a computer with me and watch film, watch recruits, watch Oklahoma, watch juniors that are coming up next year," he said on December 17, as he prepared for the Sooners in the Sugar Bowl. "Travel doesn't wear on me as long as I get home at a decent hour."

Michael Shaw and Glen Plugge are listed as pilot and co-pilot for most flights; they're also on the official staff directory of the Alabama athletics department. Plugge was paid more than $94,000 in 2013, according to Alabama's financial database.
As one would imagine, operating N1UA isn't cheap. Each flight hour costs an estimated $2,700, according to a spokesman for Gulfstream, which bought the plane's manufacturer in 2001.

In all, Alabama spent $983,721 on football recruiting in 2013, according to the financial report UAla filed with the NCAA in January. That total includes use of university airplanes.

Of course other modes of transportation were used for recruiting during this frenzied period. (Indeed, passenger lists vary from stop to stop, showing that some coaches traveled to the destination by commercial air or car; N1UA, however, is the hub of the most important trips.) Saban drew headlines when he took a helicopter to Meridian, Miss., on Dec. 4 to visit eventual Ole Miss signee C.J. Hampton.

Here's an account of some of the busiest days:

-- Dec. 5: Saban hit the Manassas, Va., home of 5-star defensive line commitment Da'Shawn Hand) before going wheels-up to Columbia, S.C. about 400 miles away to meet with 4-star linebacker Christian Miller. (Hand and Miller eventually signed with Alabama)

Dec. 12: First, Saban flew to Hinesville, Ga., to see 5-star linebacker Raekwon McMillan, then 370 miles to Palm Beach to see coveted 4-star receiver Travis Rudolph, the nation's No. 6 player at his position. (McMillan signed with Ohio State; Rudolph, with Florida State.

(A day later, Saban agreed to a contract extension through 2020, paying him an average annual salary of $7 million.)

Things got progressively busier on the recruiting trail in the final weeks. Between Jan. 20-24, the plane took off 15 times. After a weekend of official visits to campus, N1UA went wheels-up 23 times between Jan. 27-31.

-- Jan. 16: The men go west, their longest trip of the two-month period. After heading to Mobile in the morning, Saban and Brown made the four-hour-21-minute flight to Long Beach, Calif. The next day they made a 17-minute flight to Oxnard, less than 10 miles from Ventura where 5-star quarterback Ricky Town lives. Saban and Brown left Oxnard for a 50-minute flight to San Francisco, which is close to eventual signee Dominick Jackson's junior college. They left for the return trip to Tuscaloosa at 11:10 p.m., arriving at 9:43 a.m. the following day. (Town, after committing to the Tide, announced in April he'd attend nearby USC.)

-- Jan. 23: Saban and Brown took a 13-minute over to Shelby County where four-star defensive back commit Ronnie Clark lived, the first of five flights that day to Columbus, Ga., (home of 2015 receiver Mekhi Brown), Auburn (to see five-star linebacker Rashaan Evans) and Montgomery (Clark and Evans signed with Alabama, and Brown committed to Alabama in April.)

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Jan. 27: After hosting a handful of recruits on campus over the weekend, Saban left on Monday and made four stops in the fertile hunting grounds to the south. The Florida swing included two stops in Jacksonville, one in Lakeland, and another in St. Petersburg. The only 2014 signee from the vicinity of those stops was Plant City, Fla., offensive lineman Montel McBride.

Jan. 30: A day after Saban ventured to Miami to visit commit Chad Thomas, Kiffin joined him for one more shot at top receive: Malachi Dupre in New Orleans. (Thomas signed with Miami and Dupre, with LSU, just six days after the Alabama visit.)

The log also shows the now-famous flight to Auburn on Feb. 1 when Alabama coaches attended Evans' grandfather's birthday party. N1UA left Tuscaloosa at 3:53 p.m. with Smart, Lance Thompson, Burton Burns and Bo Davis on board. It returned at 10:23 p.m., after they hit the dance floor — all in a night's work when competing for a coveted linebacker.

N1UA was used for several other purposes in December and January. Flights included Saban's trip to Indianapolis for ESPN College GameDay on Dec. 7 and seven different trips to New Orleans for the Sugar Bowl.

There was also a Dec. 23 visit to junior defensive lineman Jeoffrey Pagan's North Carolina home with Saban and his wife, Terry. Pagan declared for the NFL draft after the season. The Sabans also took a weekend vacation following the Sugar Bowl, flying to Coral Creek airport 60 miles south of Bradenton, Fla. Saban's contract allows 25 hours of flight time annually for "personal, non-business travel."

Despite the relative convenience of travel by private jet, the trips weren't always seamless.

"I guess the only tough night I had is when I didn't get home 'til — plane broke down in St. Louis — and I didn't get home [presumably via commercial flight] one night until 2 in the morning," Saban said. The log includes a Dec. 9 flight from Northwest Arkansas to St. Louis landing at 7:16 p.m. The plane didn't leave until the following afternoon and did not include any passengers.

Three days later, N1UA was back on the move at 7:40 a.m., making three flights to Georgia and Florida.

In all, the trips to Auburn were most fruitful as Evans was the only last-minute addition to the 2014 class. A few big fish got away in Dupre, McMillan and Rudolph. Elam, the target visited two days after the Iron Bowl, signed with local favorite Kentucky.

Still, Alabama secured the No. 1 class in the nation, according to every recruiting service. By December, the hay, for the most part, was already in the barn. But many of the trips during this period helped plant seeds for the next crop of recruits, including visits with rising seniors Will Gragg (four-star tight end), T.D. Morton (four-star defensive tackle), and Drew Richmond (four-star offensive tackle).

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It never ends for Saban and NIUA, not when their chase for the next All-American is just a flight away.
Are in-state students being edged out at UA?

Melissa Brown • mbrown@al.com

What makes a state university? The University of Alabama is home to a powerhouse athletics program, the state's highest-paid public employee, groundbreaking research and a rapidly expanding student body and campus.

UA also is referred to as Alabama's "flagship university" by a number of higher education authorities, a label it touts with pride on its website and in promotional material.

But each year UA's sidewalks and classrooms are filled with more students from outside of Alabama than the year before.

If trends hold, students who graduate from Alabama high schools could be a minority class in the undergraduate student body very soon.

This is not a unique trend — in fact, most Alabama public institutions and other "state schools" have seen increases in out-of-state student enrollment in recent years.

But few have seen significant increases like UA.

Since 2011, the majority of first-time freshmen at UA have been from outside Alabama.

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COLLEGE

From Page 1

In-state student enrollment dropped from 57 percent to 49 percent in Fall 2011, according to enrollment data from UA's Office of Institutional Research.

When UA welcomed its biggest freshman class in history last fall, only 40 percent were from Alabama.

However, with the 34,852 students that make up its undergraduate and graduate student body, the entire student body still skews slightly in-state at 54 percent, according to 2013 enrollment data.

For at least seven years, overall in-state enrollment has steadily declined and each freshman class has surpassed its predecessor in number.

READ MORE ONLINE

Follow AL.com this week as we look into this growing higher education trend of out-of-state recruitment, the motives behind it and how it is changing campuses, annually through 2013.

University officials declined to provide 2014 freshman enrollment data, stating they do not release new school year numbers until classes begin in mid-August.

Deborah Lane, associate vice president for university relations, said in a statement this week the growth is not accidental.

"The University of Alabama's increase in enrollment of both in-state and out-of-state students over the last decade has been the result of a carefully planned effort to grow with quality," Lane said.

A decade ago, UA received 8,129 applications for the freshman class. Last year, 31,000 students vied for a spot in the fall 2013 freshman class.

To date, all 50 states and 77 countries are represented in the student body.

"Since 2003, The University of Alabama has actively recruited top students from Alabama and from across the country," Lane said. "Our recruiting efforts have been extremely effective in encouraging more students to apply."
Hands-on experience

UA program aims to boost interest in science careers

By Ed Enoch
Staff Writer

Hillcrest High School rising senior Jakeias McGee is trading a two-month chunk of his summer for a taste of lab work and a glimpse at what a career as a researcher might look like.

"I'm not really sure what I want to do, but I wanted to try it," McGee said.

The 17-year-old is one of eight high school students participating in the Nanoscience and Engineering High School Research Internship program at the University of Alabama's Center for Materials for Information Technology. The MINT Center internship lasts from June 2 to Aug. 1. Students are paid a $1,500 stipend.

The internship program is meant to spark excitement among the students for science, technology, engineering and mathematics research careers. The students apply for the program and are selected by the MINT Education and Outreach Committee.

The students are expected to "pick up and read up" and contribute to the basic research, according to Tim Mewes, associate physics professor in the MINT Center and chairman of the education and outreach committee.

The center includes faculty from physics, chemistry, chemical engineering, electrical engineering.

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MINT
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

metallurgical and materials
engineering and biological
engineering in research
teams working on materials
science problems, according
to its website.

The high school students
are integrated into their men-
tor's research groups, work-
ing with the faculty members
and graduate and undergradu-
ate students. McGee said
he usually works from 9 a.m.
to 4 p.m.

The faculty, who volun-
tarily participate in the pro-
gram, provide descriptions
of the research for the stu-
dents to consider, Mewes
said. The students get to re-
quest the research programs
that interest them, ranking
their favorites. Most of the
students are placed in their
top programs, he said.

McGee is helping conduct
tests on the magnetic prop-
ties of samples of ash from
an eruption of the Fuego vol-
cano in Guatemala. The tests
are part of research by a ge-
ology faculty member about
the effect ash has on com-

The tests and subsequent
processing of the data takes
about a day, McGee said.

McGee admits being sur-
prised by how much waiting

was involved with the work,
but grins as he talks about
his time in the lab with vari-
ous electromagnets, some
small enough to sit upon ta-
ble tops and other larger
models reminiscent of indus-
trial machinery that sit on
the floor.

McGee has a general inter-
est in science but said he
didn't have any specific aspi-
ations for a career. He hopes
the summer internship will
help him decide what he
wants to do.

"I like to see how things go
and see how I like things," he
said.

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722-0209.
THE AVIATORS

Jessica Sawyer Rigby / jsawyer@al.com

Winston Groom just celebrated the 20th anniversary of his 1986 epic novel's "Forrest Gump" turn as a blockbuster movie, but the Alabama author hasn't slowed down in producing interesting, informative works of literature since then.


"I just got to musing one day, I'm a 20th-century guy: Who were the great heroes of the 20th century?" Groom said from his home in Point Clear. "These three names - Eddie Rickenbacker, Charles Lindbergh, Jimmy Doolittle - kept coming back up again."

In the 464-page book, Groom seamlessly examines how the men - each a celebrity in his own right - helped define the groundbreaking age of flight by weaving together their intertwined stories.

The three World War I-era pilots made their fame early: Lindbergh by flying the Atlantic in 1927; Doolittle by perfecting instrument flying in the late 1930s; and Rickenbacker as an ace in World War I and, later, as the owner and president of Eastern Air Lines.

"When World War II came along they could have sat it out. They were middle-aged, they were rich and famous, but they did do something," Groom said. "They did the most dangerous things in their careers in World War II while they were anywhere from 44-54 years old. That really interested me, that these guys came right up when nobody would have blamed them if they sat that war out. I think they were three great heroes of the 20th century."

For Lindbergh, first a race car driver "when race car driving wasn't a great way to spend your time," worldwide aeronautical fame took him by surprise. As Groom tells it, a night flight into Paris opened Lindbergh's eyes to his transcontinental popularity.

"Of course he'd never seen this airport, he's thinking. 'Well, I wonder if anything's open where I can get something to eat,' he was wondering where he was going to stay," Groom said. "But word of his flight had preceded him. When he got to the airport he said, 'There could be a factory down there or something.' There were 150,000 people at 10 o'clock that morning, all waiting for a glimpse of the pilot."

"As a matter of fact he had to blow them off the landing field just to get there with the plane because he had nowhere to land." Groom said, "Then they started tearing his plane apart. They went stark staring crazy." With a Ph.D. from MIT in aeronautical engineering under his belt, Doolittle, a well-known air racer in the 1920s and 1930s, was responsible for perfecting instrument flying. "To fly on instruments, you have to be accurate down to half an inch or more," Groom said. "One day a big fog rolled in off of Long Island Sound and Doolittle walked out and he had a 10-hour drizzle that they used. He got into it and he pulled this big canvas cover and he covered the whole cockpit of the plane. He couldn't see anything but the instruments, he taxied, he took off, he flew around and he landed, in 1929 now, looking at nothing but instruments. That took some courage right there." Courage again sustained the pilot through World War II when he organized a raid on Japan that "essentially changed the war in the Pacific at the Battle of Midway." "Before the Doolittle raid we read maybe 10 percent of the Imperial Japanese Navy code, after it we read 99 percent and we knew they were coming to Midway," Groom said. "Those are big-deal things." From those stories to many more, "The Aviators" offers readers a glimpse into the men who comprise the backbone of aviation's golden age.

Winston Groom is photographed at his home in Point Clear. Pictured on the wall of his study is a poster from the 1994 motion picture adaptation of Groom's novel "Forrest Gump." (Mike Brantley/mbrantley@al.com)
Crews removing bleachers from Sewell-Thomas Stadium

$35 million expansion, renovation to begin later this month

Staff report

Crews, removing the aluminum bleachers from the University of Alabama's Sewell-Thomas Stadium, expect to complete the job by Thursday.

That's being done so work on a $35 million expansion and renovation of the baseball stadium can begin later this month.

Removal of the bleachers along the baselines at the stadium began two weeks ago, said Cecil Thomas, who won the bid for the removal.

The seats were sold as surplus and are not part of the construction bid, said Tim Leopard, UA assistant vice president of construction.

Work on the renovation and expansion of the stadium is scheduled to be bid on Thursday and

Austin Thomas uses a power drill to remove bolts and screws from the bleachers as part of the demolition of the third base side seating area so renovations can be made.
work is expected to begin during the last week of July, Leopard said. Construction is scheduled to be completed by November 2015. The expansion will increase the size of the facility — currently 32,801 square feet — by 96,199 square feet. The expanded stadium will be 129,000 square feet. Davis Architects Inc. of Birmingham is the design firm for the project, which is meant to make the park among the premier venues in the Southeastern Conference.

The renovations will add new fan and player amenities, including improvements to seating, concessions and player practice and workout facilities. The stadium expansion will be paid for with $15 million in revenue bonds and $20 million from the Crimson Tide Foundation and gifts.

Cecil Thomas, 82, of Greensboro sits in the shade at Sewell-Thomas Stadium as his son and grandson take over the demolition of the third base side seating area on Monday. Thomas placed a bid through the university to be hired for the demolition. He has been retired from the Air Force for 20 years and from the United States Post Office in Greensboro for 20 years. While employed at the post office, Thomas said he worked on different projects in his community. “I do this to keep happy.”
UA increases parking permit rates for fall

Parking permit rates for students, staff and faculty at the University of Alabama will increase for the 2014-2015 academic year.

The rates, which increase between $10 to $30 based on the permit, saw similar hikes last fall.

Specifically:
- Perimeter permits will increase $10 to $180.
- Handicap permits will increase by $10 to $180.
- Student commuter permits will increase by $20 to $265.
- Student residential permits will increase by $20 to $320.
- Reserve permits will increase by $30 to $540.
- Green permits for faculty and staff will increase by $20 to $265.
- Rose Administration reserve permits for faculty and staff will increase by $30 to $560.

Motorcycle permits will remain at $75 for the academic year.

Student registration for the fall term began July 9.
UAB reaches halfway mark of $1 billion fundraising campaign, the largest in school history

By: Jesse Chambers

Birmingham, Alabama-- The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is halfway to reaching the $1 billion goal of its current fundraising drive, the largest in the history of the school, and officials say the money raised will benefit the city and region, not just the campus.

More than 74,000 donors have contributed more than $500 million to The Campaign for UAB, according to a UAB news release on Monday.

The public phase of The Campaign for UAB launched in October 2013 and will run through 2018. The campaign allows donors to choose what efforts their donations support.

The money donated is to be used for a wide variety of purposes, including support for research, economic development and technology-transfer efforts, recruitment of top-quality faculty members, enhanced campus facilities and improvements to the student experience on campus.

UAB officials and others working on the campaign say that the monies raised will have economic and cultural benefits not just for UAB but for Birmingham and the entire region.

"Together we are transforming the future of Birmingham and Alabama -- creating new treatments and potential cures for disease, exciting new avenues for the arts, academic programs that inspire and equip students for 21st century careers, and the innovations and startup companies that make us very competitive in a global, knowledge-based economy." UAB Vice President Shirley Salloway Kahn said in the release.

"The scope and impact of this campaign will extend far beyond our campus," UAB President Ray L. Watts said.

The campaign will leverage UAB's "incredible resources" and will "nourish economic and cultural development in our city and state for decades to come," Johnny Johns, president and CEO of Protective Life Corp and campaign co-chair, said.

The campaign includes money for the arts. The release refers to the Cultural Arts Corridor anchored by The Alys Stephens Center for the Performing Arts and including the new Abroms-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts. There will also be money spent on art education and other community initiatives.

"We are now fostering in Birmingham the caliber of arts opportunities and venues that we used to associate strictly with bigger metro areas nationally and globally," said Theresa Bruno, co-chair of the campaign.

UAB is also in the midst of a comprehensive strategic planning process to establish priorities to guide the spending of the money raised, according to the release. "These priorities give a targeted purpose to each philanthropic gift," Watts said.
Evicted from UAB dorm, student files lawsuit

Evan Belanger, ebelanger@al.com

A University of Alabama at Birmingham freshman is claiming his civil rights were violated and his character defamed when he was evicted from his dormitory over an incident involving a non-firing toy gun.

A lawsuit filed by Shelby County resident Jonathan Parker claims university officials embellished and fabricated evidence to bolster their case, failed to follow their own policies and denied him due process on the basis of his gender.

The suit names as defendants the school’s board of trustees and nine university officials, including two student members of a conduct-review committee. Parker was banned from all UAB dormitories as a result of the Oct. 16 incident involving the toy.

"UAB staff charged this student with conduct that does not violate UAB policy. The same staff then fabricated evidence to manipulate the student conduct review committee. Their conduct was intentional and outrageous," said Parker’s attorney, French McMillan of Sewell & Sewell LLC in Jasper.

UAB officials declined to comment on the matter, saying they do not discuss pending legal issues. Efforts to obtain comment from individual defendants were unsuccessful.

The suit alleges Parker was carrying a red-tipped, nonfiring toy pistol that he uses to practice self-defense disarmament maneuvers when he knocked on the door of two female students in his dorm to invite them to dinner.

The legal complaint gives few details about the exchange other than that only one of the women was in her dorm room at the time, that she asked about the gun, that Parker removed it from its case, showed it to her and told her it wasn’t real, and that she declined to go to dinner.

The suit claims she later sent Parker a text stating she was sorry she “freaked out” and that he had made her feel “uncomfortable.”

Following that incident, at approximately 5:45 p.m., the suit alleges someone knocked on the women’s door between 10 and 10:30 p.m. They notified their resident adviser, who called UAB police.

The women refused to open the door for the two men who knocked, and the suit alleges they mistakenly reported the visitors were Parker and his roommate because the peephole of their handicapped-accessible room was too low to see the men’s faces.

At that time, the suit claims UAB records show Parker had been off campus for nearly two hours.
AIDS ‘IS STILL HERE’

Casey Toner ctoner@al.com

When she was 34 years old, Cynthia Boykin treated her HIV diagnosis like a death sentence.
She ignored her doctor’s advice, skipped her daily medication, and waited to die. Seven years later, she
amost did.
Boykin’s white cell blood count, a key indicator of her immune system, dipped perilously low. An upper
respiratory infection in 1998 nearly killed her.
Two years later, the Mobile resident saw hope for herself and others when she started to volunteer for community HIV/AIDS or-
ganizations. She began to take her medication.
“I know had I not taken (the medicine), I’d be dead today,” said Boykin, 56. “I know it without a doubt.”
Boykin is hardly alone with her condition. About 339 of every 100,000 Americans lived with an HIV/AIDS
infection in 2010, according to data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.
That year, Alabama had the 10th highest HIV incidence in the United States, with 20.4 people of every 100,000 testing newly
positive for HIV. A total of 11,408 people lived with HIV/AIDS in Alabama in 2010.
Last year, 10.81 Alabamians of every 100,000 tested newly positive for HIV, according to preliminary statistics
from the Alabama Department of Health. The statistics also show that a total of 18,416 in Alabama lived with
HIV/AIDS last year.
AL.com is examining the state’s HIV/AIDS numbers as part of a larger look at Alabama’s sexual health. Previ-
ously, AL.com reported sexually transmitted disease cases for chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis in Alabama are
nearly double the national average based on population.
Nine Alabama counties exceeded the national HIV/AIDS prevalence in 2010: Barbour, Bullock, Dallas, Jefferson,
Lownes, Macon, Mobile, Russell and Montgomery. Prevalence refers to the total number of cases and inci-
dence refers to the number of newly diagnosed cases.
Maryland led the nation in its HIV incidence in 2010. A total of 38.3 of every 100,000 people were newly infected.
The state is adjacent to Washington, D.C., which led the
country in HIV incidence. Inside the nation’s capital 172.6 people of 100,000 were newly diagnosed with HIV in 2010.
“AIDS is still here,” said Michael Saag, director of University of Alabama at Birmingham’s Center for AIDS
Research. “The majority of the people who transmit the virus don’t know it.”
“A disease of poverty”
Saag has spent his career treating HIV and AIDS patients. He calls it a “disease of poverty” that dispro-
portionately affects underserved populations.
“It turns out a lot of the people who have HIV who haven’t been tested are disproportionately poor and
disproportionately live in rural areas where healthcare access is pretty spotty,” Saag said. “You can sort of look at
a map of Alabama by income and it probably would superimpose upon prevalence of HIV in the state as well. That’s
true around the country.”
For example, the average household in Madison County, which borders Tennessee, earned $58,242 and
9.1 percent of its families lived in poverty in 2012, census figures show. With 212 of its 100,000 residents living with
HIV/AIDS in 2010, Madison County’s rate is about 40 percent lower than the national prevalence.
Lawrence Robey, Madison County’s health officer, says the northern part of the state historically benefits health-
wise from its relative affluence.
“This part of the state has higher education levels, higher income levels and a very robust health care sys-
tem,” Robey said. Those factors tie together to help decrease the rates of sexually transmitted disease.”
On the flip side, the average household in Montgomery County earned $44,401 and about 16.3 percent of all families there lived in poverty in 2012, according to census figures. Montgomery County has about 2.2 times the
national HIV/AIDS prevalence.
The average household in Jefferson County, the state’s most populated county, earned $43,160. About 13.9 per-
cent of its facilities lived in poverty in 2012, according to the census figures. It has about 1.7 times the national
HIV/AIDS prevalence.
The HIV/AIDS prevalence in Tuscaloosa County, home to the University of Alabama, was 36 percent lower than the
national average, data shows.
Mobile County, which had the second highest state population in 2010, had 1.5 times the national average of
HIV/AIDS prevalence.
Students turn motorized wheelchair into photo robot

Deborah Storey
For AL.com

Robots are great for doing monotonous and even dangerous chores, but not everybody can afford one.

College students — who are often experts at doing things on the cheap — have turned a $250 motorized wheelchair into a picture-taking robot worth 10 times as much.

Student employees at the Systems Management and Production Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville found the wheelchair on Craigslist. After getting the owner to knock off $50, they set out to turn it into a geopositioning robot.

Jessica Sisk, a senior who hopes to work for NASCAR someday, said the team initially wanted a zero-turn robot to adapt for photography.

"The more I got to thinking," she said, "you can buy an electric wheelchair much cheaper.

The students stripped it down and rigged it with a metal "mast" that held four GoPro cameras. The work started last October, and by Christmas the device was operated by remote control. Stitching together the images was slow going, though, so the next task was to rig it with a Ricoh panoramic camera.

"It's a whole lot quicker than what it was," said Derek Johnson, a graduate student and team member. "We had four cameras mounted on a stand. You had to turn the stand.

For the first task, they sent "Johnny Five" into the new student center to photograph and document it. The next step will be to make it fully automated using GPS information so they can turn it loose on a task.

"Eventually it will go to each point on its own to take the picture so we won't have to touch it," Johnson said.

"We're looking at making it autonomous so we can put in georeferenced waypoints and just let it go," Sisk said.

"We're adding sensors so it will pick up stairs or chair legs," added Johnson.

Down the road, multiple cameras streaming data all at once will enable an Oculus Rift-style viewing experience remotely.

An emergency responder using a similar device will know the exact layout inside a particular building. In the short term, schools or police departments can use an adaptation of Johnny Five for security purposes or to document buildings and update contents for insurance purposes.

The low-cost unit can be used for "evolution of the blueprint for planning and information systems," said SMAP research scientist William Sabados.

"It's like a photographic Roomba," said SMAP principal research scientist Norven Goddard. He and Sabados supervised separate teams to combine the hardware and software for the project.
Though Scorned by Colleagues, a Climate-Change Skeptic Is Unbowed

By: Michael Wines

Huntsville, Ala. — John Christy, a professor of atmospheric science at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, says he remembers the morning he spotted a well-known colleague at a gathering of climate experts.

“I walked over and held out my hand to greet him,” Dr. Christy recalled. “He looked me in the eye, and he said, ‘No.’ I said, ‘Come on, shake hands with me.’ And he said, ‘No.’ ”

Dr. Christy is an outlier on what the vast majority of his colleagues consider to be a matter of consensus: that global warming is both settled science and a dire threat. He regards it as neither. Not that the earth is not heating up. It is, he says, and carbon dioxide spewed from power plants, automobiles and other sources is at least partly responsible.

But in speeches, congressional testimony and peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals, he argues that predictions of future warming have been greatly overstated and that humans have weathered warmer stretches without perishing. Dr. Christy’s willingness to publicize his views, often strongly, has also hurt his standing among scientists who tend to be suspicious of those with high profiles. His frequent appearances on Capitol Hill have almost always been at the request of Republican legislators opposed to addressing climate change.

“I detest words like ‘contrarian’ and ‘denier,’ ” he said. “I’m a data-driven climate scientist. Every time I hear that phrase, ‘The science is settled,’ I say I can easily demonstrate that that is false, because this is the climate — right here. The science is not settled.”

Dr. Christy was pointing to a chart comparing seven computer projections of global atmospheric temperatures based on measurements taken by satellites and weather balloons. The projections traced a sharp upward slope; the actual measurements, however, ticked up only slightly.

Such charts — there are others, sometimes less dramatic but more or less accepted by the large majority of climate scientists — are the essence of the divide between that group on one side and Dr. Christy and a handful of other respected scientists on the other.

“Almost anyone would say the temperature rise seen over the last 35 years is less than the latest round of models suggests should have happened,” said Carl Mears, the senior research scientist at Remote Sensing Systems, a California firm that analyzes satellite climate readings.

“Where the disagreement comes is that Dr. Christy says the climate models are worthless and that there must be something wrong with the basic model, whereas there are actually a lot of other possibilities,” Dr. Mears said. Among them, he said, are natural variations in the climate and rising trade winds that have helped funnel atmospheric heat into the ocean.

Dr. Christy has drawn the scorn of his colleagues partly because they believe that so much is at stake and that he is providing legitimacy to those who refuse to acknowledge that. If the models
are imprecise, they argue, the science behind them is compelling, and it is very likely that the world has only a few decades to stave off potentially catastrophic warming. Continue reading the main story

And if he is wrong, there is no redo.

“It’s kind of like telling a little girl who’s trying to run across a busy street to catch a school bus to go for it, knowing there’s a substantial chance that she’ll be killed,” said Kerry Emanuel, a professor of atmospheric science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. “She might make it. But it’s a big gamble to take.”

By contrast, Dr. Christy argues that reining in carbon emissions is both futile and unnecessary, and that money is better spent adapting to what he says will be moderately higher temperatures. Among other initiatives, he said, the authorities could limit development in coastal and hurricane-prone areas, expand flood plains, make manufactured housing more resistant to tornadoes and high winds, and make farms in arid regions less dependent on imported water — or move production to rainier places.

Dr. Christy’s scenario is not completely out of the realm of possibility, his critics say, but it is highly unlikely.

In interviews, prominent scientists, while disagreeing with Dr. Christy, took pains to acknowledge his credentials. They are substantial: Dr. Christy, 63, has researched climate issues for 27 years and was a lead author — in essence, an editor — of a section of the 2001 report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the definitive assessment of the state of global warming. With a colleague at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Dr. Roy Spencer, he received NASA’s medal for exceptional scientific achievement in 1991 for building a global temperature database.

That model, which concluded that a layer of the atmosphere was unexpectedly cooling, was revised to show slight warming after other scientists documented flaws in its methodology. It has become something of a scientific tit for tat. Dr. Christy and Dr. Spencer’s own recalculation scaled back the amount of warming, leading to further assaults on their methodology.

Dr. Christy’s response sits on his bookshelf: a thick stack of yellowed paper with the daily weather data he began recording in Fresno, Calif., in the 1960s. It was his first data set, he said, the foundation of a conviction that “you have to know what’s happening before you know why it’s happening, and that comes back to data.”

Dr. Christy says he became fascinated with weather as a fifth grader when a snowstorm hit Fresno in 1961. By his high school junior year, he had taught himself Fortran, the first widely used programming language, and had programmed a school computer to make weather predictions. After earning a degree in mathematics at California State University, Fresno, he became an evangelical Christian missionary in Kenya, married and returned as pastor of a mission church in South Dakota.
There, as a part-time college math teacher, he found his true calling. He left the pastoral position, earned a doctorate in atmospheric sciences at the University of Illinois and moved to Alabama.

And while his work has been widely published, he has often been vilified by his peers. Dr. Christy is mentioned, usually critically, in dozens of the so-called Climategate emails that were hacked from the computers of the University of East Anglia’s Climatic Research Center, the British keeper of global temperature records, in 2009.

“John Christy has made a scientific career out of being wrong,” one prominent climate scientist, Benjamin D. Santer of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, wrote in one 2008 email. “He’s not even a third-rate scientist.”

Another email included a photographic collage showing Dr. Christy and other scientists who question the extent of global warming, some stranded on a tiny ice floe labeled “North Pole” and others buoyed in the sea by a life jacket and a yellow rubber ducky. A cartoon balloon depicts three of them saying, “Global warming is a hoax.”

Some, including those who disagree with Dr. Christy, are dismayed by the treatment.

“Show me two scientists who agree on everything,” said Peter Thorne, a senior researcher at Norway’s Nansen Environmental and Remote Sensing Center who wrote a 2005 research article on climate change with Dr. Christy. “We may disagree over what we are finding, but we should be playing the ball and not the man.”

Dr. Christy has been dismissed in environmental circles as a pawn of the fossil-fuel industry who distorts science to fit his own ideology. (“I don’t take money from industries,” he said.)

He says he worries that his climate stances are affecting his chances of publishing future research and winning grants. The largest of them, a four-year Department of Energy stipend to investigate discrepancies between climate models and real-world data, expires in September.

“There’s a climate establishment,” Dr. Christy said. “And I’m not in it.”
Dr. Roy Spencer: Science Knows 'Almost Nothing' About Global Warming

By: Warner Todd Houston

At the Heartland Institute's 9th International Conference on Climate Change in Las Vegas, Nevada, this week, Dr. Roy Spencer wowed participants with his presentation titled "What Do We Really Know About Global Warming?" wherein he noted that claims of global warming have been greatly exaggerated.

In 2012, The Economist called the Heartland Institute "the world's most prominent think tank promoting skepticism about man-made climate change," and this conference certainly lived up to that reputation. You can see many of the speeches at the conference website and at Heartland's Youtube channel.

As to Dr. Spencer, buttressed by a series of graphs projected on the screen behind him, the Principal Research Scientist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville began his July 9 address by warning attendees that the "science" of global warming really isn't much by way of science and that bias is everywhere in the field.

"Too many people think that all areas of science are created equal," Spencer said, "and that scientists objectively look for the answers, but no, there's two kinds of scientists, male and female. Other than that they're the same as everybody else, and in many instances [in the climate sciences] more biased than your average person."

Spencer went on to criticize the temperature data of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) because it has never taken into account the phenomenon of urban heat island effect.

"A lot of us still think that a lot of the warming we are seeing in the thermometer record is just urban heat island effect. In fact Las Vegas, here, even though it's built in the desert basically... in the last forty years or so, nighttime temperatures here have risen by ten degrees Fahrenheit because of urbanization."

"This is an effect that they can't take out of the thermometer record," Spencer continued. "Their algorithms can't take it out because you can't separate it from global warming. If you've got a long-term warming trend because of urbanization there's no way NOAA can take out that effect because it's indistinguishable [from other temperature readings]."

Spencer then insisted that the longer the temperature record and other climate facts are looked into the less we know about the possible future effects of climate.

"After working on global warming for the last 20 plus years, what do we know about it now?" he rhetorically asked his audience. "The longer you go [into the research] you get more questions than you get answers. So, what do we really know about it? Almost nothing."
Spencer continued, saying that science really doesn't know certifiably "how strong global warming is, what it's caused by, whether it makes severe weather worse, when it started, when it will end, or whether it's good or bad."

He said that we do think global warming might be caused by some combination of human activity and Mother Nature.

"I have to admit," Spencer said, "adding Co2 to the atmosphere should cause some warming, but I think it's an entirely open question... how much warming we're going to get from adding Co2 to the atmosphere." And this factor "makes all the difference between Al Gore's Armageddon and 'who cares it's probably a beneficial thing.'"

Spencer then went on to illustrate how easy it is to make assumptions based on "data" by showing a graph on the screen that showed how the rise in UFO sightings coincided with the rise in ocean temperatures and joked that maybe aliens are causing global warming.

It was a joke that Hearland chief Joe Bast later thanked Spencer for because those that want to ridicule the conference will now say that climate deniers blame global warming on aliens from outer space.

The UFO joke graph was the first of a series of more serious graphs that Spencer presented to show that much of the alarmist rhetoric over global warming is not supported by facts.

For instance, after the humorous graph, Spencer showed one that revealed that nearly every century since Roman times has experienced either global warming or global cooling proving that the "norm" is wild change and not some grand mean leveling. The graph also shows that the Roman and Medieval warm periods were just as warm as today's temps.

His next graph was one that compared the actual global temperatures to those predicted by various scientific computer models. The graph shows that the real temperatures were much, much lower than all the computer models predicted they'd be.

Another graph detailed the temperatures in America's corn belt since the year 1900. This one showed that climate models came nowhere close to the real temperatures and that more recent models were far and away hotter than the real temperature ever was.

Spencer also noted that tornado and cyclone activity is lower than it has been in decades previously. Nor does snowfall show any major patterns that can predict disaster.

But it was his crop yields graph that was most interesting.

"Global warming is going to destroy agricultural productivity, right?" Spencer began when he flashed his crop yield graph on the screen. "This is what we keep hearing."

"These are plots since 1960 of the increase in crop yields... that's per acre productivity, not planting more acreage," Spencer said, "and there has been a steady increase in productivity by a
factor of, since 1960, a 3 to 5 increase in grain productivity. I mean, could Paul Ehrlich have been more wrong?"

Ehrlich, you may recall, made himself famous with his 1968 book The Population Bomb in which he predicted that the whole world would be starving by now. Almost nothing in his celebrated book has come to fruition, but on the food front, the world is better fed now than any time in human history. In fact, a recent study found that the world is getting too fat because there is too much food available!

"There's no sign of global warming hurting productivity yet," Spencer added. "But the IPCC – which seems to be immune from facts – continues to insist that global warming is hurting our crops... when there's really no observational evidence for it. They are more and more in the realm of theory which is increasingly divorced from observation from the real world."

Spencer also showed attendees a graph showing how the world has turned greener over the last century. This growth in greenery, Spencer said, is likely due to the fact that we are putting more Co2 into the atmosphere, the gas that is "necessary for life on earth."

"The idea that everything humans do hurts nature is a religious view; it isn't necessarily true," Spencer concluded from this slide.

Spencer also insisted that we can't rely on renewable energy for the massive amount of energy the peoples on this planet need. Renewables just can't supply that much power. "You can't stop using fossil fuels without killing people" and destroying our economies, he said.

With his concluding statements, Spencer went back to his point that nature loves mankind's output of Co2. He said that at least half of the Co2 we produce is immediately gobbled up by the earth's vegetation, and this holds no matter how much we produce.

"So, given all of this evidence, why aren't scientists advocating producing more carbon dioxide?" he asked.

In answer to his own question and in summation, Spencer said that "the reason why more scientists don't advocate putting more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is because the driving force behind the global warming debate, I hate to say it, isn't science."

There are plenty more videos of those who addressed the Heartland Institute's 9th International Conference on Climate Change in Las Vegas, Nevada, on the conference website.
New Stillman president has big ideas for college

Millet wants more degrees, community involvement

By Ed Enoch
Staff Writer

Roughly a week into his presidency, Stillman College President Peter Millet's immediate priorities are maintaining the level of academic excellence, adding new degrees and increasing community engagement at the small private Presbyterian institution.

Millet officially began his tenure as Stillman's sixth president on July 1 following an announcement last month. The former provost had served as interim president since September 2013. Ahead of the start of the fall semester, he discussed his plans and priorities for his administration.

New academics

This fall, Stillman plans to propose a new undergraduate degree and its first graduate degree, according to Millet.

Stillman is considering an undergraduate degree in special education, Millet said.

The college is also preparing to propose a master's degree program in education. The graduate degree track will most likely be in early education, Millet said. The degree was chosen because the college already has the faculty capable of teaching the graduate courses, he said.

The graduate courses will be offered in the evening, which is meant to allow teachers to pursue...
MILLET
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the degree without having to take off work, Millet said.

Stillman is working on an evening and weekend program geared toward non-

traditional students seeking undergraduate degrees that would possibly launch sometime during the 2015-2016 school year.

"You are starting to see increasing numbers of jobs that require education beyond high school," Millet said.

The college is also studying the feasibility of offering engineering, computer science and supply chain management courses.

"Those are highly sought-after degrees and would supply immediate needs in our area," he said.

Community service

Increasing community engagement by the college remains a goal for Millet. He envisions more community members spending time on campus and Stillman spending more time helping out and interacting in Tuscaloosa.

"I believe the institution is service-minded, as am I," he said.

He noted plans for a community service day this fall, where students would help with cleanup projects or other tasks and visit with community members.

"That's going to be a core part of what we do with the college," Millet said.

The new president said he believes the institution has an obligation to work to improve the community.

The college is also considering mentoring programs on campus that would pair Stillman students with children in the community.

This fall, the college will also offer K-12 students the opportunity to come to home football games for free.

"We are going to try to use athletics to open up the campus to the community," he said.

The effort has been ongoing since his term as interim. He noted community groups were already using campus as a meeting place.

"This is all part of bolstering our community service," he said.

Stillman's new leader also wants to partner more effectively with local schools in the city and county.

Historically, he believes there has been less than optimal communication between secondary and higher education. Millet wants to find ways to increase the collaboration as a way to help students be
successful throughout the education system.

Enrollment

Millet said he anticipates enrollment will increase in the fall as Stillman works to reach out to more potential students. Enrollment for the college was about 900 for the fall last year.

"We are hopeful that trend will continue," he said.

This year, Stillman has rolled out a series of programs to attract more students and help them transition to college life. The efforts include an agreement with the state's community college system that grants associate degree graduates automatic admission to complete four-year degrees and a summer bridge program for incoming freshman who want extra help.

The college plans to offer partial scholarships for both community college graduates seeking four-year degrees and traditional students beginning this fall, Millet said.

All of the two-year graduates will get some partial scholarships for tuition and some for housing if they choose to live on campus, he said. The tuition scholarships would be available for two years, about how long it is expected for them to complete their degrees, and the residential scholarships for one year. The partial scholarships will be available for traditional students every year, Millet said.

While Stillman hopes to make final arrangements for its designation this fall to be a veteran-friendly Yellow Ribbon School, the college is still working to establish programs to recruit Hispanic and Latino students and possible distance learning programs for prison inmates. Millet said the college remains committed to reaching out to those groups.

Stillman, like its private school peers, depends on enrollment for funding, Millet said. Nationally, higher education has seen a decline in enrollment. Among the particular challenges for historically black colleges and universities were changes to the Pell Grant and Parent Plus loan programs, which cut the amount paid to students.

Stillman had to implement furloughs earlier this spring, but Millet was quick to note that no one has been laid off.

"However, we believe the future looks bright," Millet said.
CONSTRUCTION: 
OFFICIALS HOPE PHASE II OF ALABAMA CENTER FOR THE ARTS IN DECATUR WILL ATTRACT MORE STUDENTS FROM IN-STATE AND ELSEWHERE.

Lucy Berry  iberry@al.com

DECATUR — Athens State University President Bob Glenn said he hopes the addition of a $13.5 million music and drama building will make the Alabama Center for the Arts in downtown Decatur a “destination” program for students from Alabama and across state lines.

Glenn and Calhoun Community College President Marilyn Beck joined state and local leaders to break ground on Phase II of the Alabama Center for the Arts, which opened on 133 Second Ave. in August 2012.

The college, a collaborative effort between Athens State and Calhoun, already serves between 500 to 600 visual arts students. Glenn said he hopes the new 44,000-square-foot building, which will open in fall 2016, will attract even more students and spur economic growth in Decatur for years to come.

"Since we've been here, five new restaurants have opened," he said. "We think having highered in the metropolitan area is a powerful economic driver, because it brings new blood into the community every day."

In the past two years, Mellow Mushroom, Moe's Original Bar B Que, Jefferson's, Zaxby's and Gyro Uno have opened eateries within walking distance of the arts college. Several small businesses have also popped up in the city center, which was recently one of three towns selected by Main Street Alabama for its downtown revitalization program.

To maintain visual consistency and the architecture of the downtown Decatur area, Glenn said Phase II will look similar to Phase I. The building will include a 200-seat black box theater, classroom space, dressing rooms, set preparation areas, studios, faculty offices and a recital room that fits 150.

Project bids will go out later this month, Glenn said.

"We're probably looking at a September construction date, assuming everything goes our way," he said. "If all the bids come in where we hope they will, we'll start to turn dirt in September; no later than October."

Birmingham-based LIVE Design Group has been selected as the architect for the multi-million dollar project.

Ellen Didier, founder and president of Red Sage Communications in downtown Decatur, was among dozens of attendees at the groundbreaking. Didier said the new college has had a positive impact on her staff and company, which is in the heart of the recent downtown growth.

"Any time you have a large group of creative, young people that are gathering in one place for education, that creativity and energy naturally spills into the surrounding area," she said. "We've seen that directly with new restaurants opening. It's just been fun to see the new generation coming up in the arts and getting access to that and collaborating with that energy."

Mark Heinrich, chancellor of the Alabama Community College System, said the new building provides the framework for many to benefit from the arts, which is important for neurological development in the young and old.

Before Phase I opened almost two years ago, Rep. Terri Collins, R-Decatur, said Morgan County was one of the largest of its size that had "absolutely no higher education" presence.

"As we work in Decatur to promote this area and reach out in cultural arts, this is the perfect foundation for that," she said.
Patterson had winning formula for 36 years

There is a reliable measurement for judging if someone has done a good job, not just in coaching, but in life.

"Leave it better than you found it."

Sarah Patterson blew the top off that scale. In 36 years as the University of Alabama's gymnastics coach, she didn't just improve the program. By any sensible measure, she created it, certainly as a modern competitive entity.

What she inherited as a 22-year-old out of Slippery Rock State College was as much a diversion as a sport, a pastime that was scheduled to be phased out in a year. There may have technically been a foundation, but it was as close to being rubble as rocks. Unlike most other great coaches in the pantheon, she did not, in Sir Isaac Newton's words, "stand upon the shoulders of giants."

Sarah Patterson built a program, transformed it into a champion and, at the same time, made it friendly and familiar, like its fans were part of a family. And that is far, far beyond what anyone—except Sarah and David Patterson—could have ever foreseen.

Instead, she stood upon a frayed, sweaty mat left over from the UA wrestling program. That wasn't the loftiest vantage point, but even from that place, Sarah Patterson had a vision, simple but effective.

First, recruit the kind of athletes of whom you can be proud. Then take those recruits and win. Then win enough and promote enough and work hard enough that people will come to see you win. Lots of people.

That formula hasn't changed in 36 years and Patterson's greatest wish is to see it continue.

There's a second part to "leaving it better than you found it." That second measuring stick is to leave it moving forward, a legacy of more than just trophies gathering dust, but of a program that can keep right on winning those trophies. Not coincidentally, Patterson said that was a lesson that she had learned from observing Nick Saban — "how to keep things going."

Patterson has been a great observer of coaches. She said Tuesday that she learned about building attendance from former Tennessee women's basketball coach Pat Summitt. She learned multiple lessons as well from Paul "Bear" Bryant, who hired her to coach the program back in 1978, although the main lesson she learned from Bryant might surprise some people.

"I learned that it was family first," she said.

The Alabama gymnastics program has been a family operation, with David Patterson taking a quiet but important role in all the success, while Sarah stood in the spotlight, serving as spokesman and tireless promoter. But she spoke revealingly about the strength of her family ties in a couple of anecdotes on Tuesday.

She took the podium to make the announcement with a good supply of tissues, and there were moments of emotion. But, asked about those feelings later, she put them in perspective.

"This wasn't tough," she said. "When David had cancer, and we had two little girls, 10 and 4, and I didn't know if they were going to..."
HURT

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have a father around, now that was tough. Not this."

Later, she was asked which of her six NCAA
Championships "meant the most" to her.

It is the sort of question that coaches often deflect
with an answer like "you can't compare" or "all of
them."

Instead, Patterson identified 2012. That was the
year that the gymnastics team won their sixth title and then, a couple of
months later, the softball team — with her youngest daughter, Jordan, on the
team — won a national championship as well.

"That was special," she said.

That is the sort of perspective that has truly made Alabama gymnastics
special over the years, and part of why the decision came as a bit of a shock to
the community.

Sarah Patterson built a program, transformed into a champion and, at the
same time, made it friendly and familiar, like its fans were part of a family.

And that is far, far beyond what anyone — except Sarah and David Pat-
terson — could have ever foreseen.

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Tide will play USC in Arlington in 2016

By Aaron Suttles
Sports Writer

The rumored University of Alabama versus Southern California match-up that first surfaced in May is rumored no more. It's reality.

Alabama will face USC Saturday, Sept. 3, 2016, in the Cowboys Classic in Arlington, Texas, UA released Wednesday.

The two teams last played in 1985 in the Aloha Bowl, a 24-3 Alabama win. The Crimson Tide leads the series history 5-2, including four memorable games in the 1970s.

"We are excited to participate in a game that is such an attractive matchup for the nation's fans," USC head football coach Steve Sarkisian said. "The 2016 Cowboys Classic not only brings together two of college football's most tradition-laden and successful programs, but teams that in 1970 played a significant role in shaping the history of the game.


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BETTING ON THE TIDE

Vegas oddsmakers, bettors like what they see in Alabama, despite concerns for the upcoming season

By D.C. Reeves
Sports Writer

Alabama will have a new quarterback this fall. It will have a new offensive coordinator. It lost team captains on both sides of the ball. There are issues in the secondary, too.

The oddsmakers in Las Vegas, the most nonpartisan experts of all, don't seem to mind. And so far, bettors don't either.

Jay Rood, the vice president of race and sports at MGM Resorts, has set Alabama's odds to win the 2015 national championship at 6-1 (a $100 bet on Alabama would win $600). Alabama is tied with Ohio State and Oklahoma with the second lowest odds to win just behind the betting favorite, defending national champion Florida State (5-1).

It's not that Rood, who oversees the betting lines at 12 Nevada sportsbooks including the MGG Grand, Mirage, Bellagio and Mandalay Bay, and his colleagues are unaware of the question marks surrounding the Crimson Tide this season. It's just that with Alabama, they know better than to react to annual roster turnover.

Because of Alabama's track record, a talent-rich roster and Nick Saban, its decorated head coach, sportsbooks believe no team in the nation is more immune to a few preseason concerns than the Crimson Tide.

"Alabama totally overrides everything," Rood said. "Saban knows how to recruit, he knows how to develop talent, and they have quite a few returning starters on offense. That's where most of (Alabama's high regard in Vegas) comes from; it's the foundation that is already in place and what's built on top of that."

The betting public has reinforced his belief: The team with the most money backing a title run at Rood's sportsbooks this offseason? Alabama.

Rood said that he has taken the most total bets (individual bets of any value) on Ohio State — with Alabama in a close second — but that the total dollar figure bet on the Crimson Tide is the largest of all.

Florida State, the betting favorite, is "a distant third" on total tickets.

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and dollar amount with Oklahoma (6-1) in fourth.

Part of the influx of support is, simply, the belief that Alabama can win it. Another part, especially among professional bettors, is value.

Since Alabama's rash of success began in 2009, the preseason odds on Alabama to win the title have been slightly stingier for bettors prior to this year.

"I can't imagine they've been more than 9-2 the last five years or so with us," Rood said. "I would venture that this is as high as (Alabama) been the last 4-5 years and it's still only 6-1."

At Bovada, an offshore sportsbook, Alabama is also at 6-1 with only Florida State (11-2) as a heavier favorite. In the summer before each season, Bovada had Alabama as a 3-1 favorite to win the 2014 BCS title, 11-to-2 to win the 2013 title and 11-to-2 to win the 2012 crown. That makes this year's 6-1 the highest odds on the Crimson Tide in the past four seasons.

Typically, losing a quarterback — Alabama will have to replace three-year starter and Heisman finalist AJ McCarron — equals a significant hit on a team's title odds. For example, if Florida State lost Heisman Trophy winner Jameis Winston before this season, Rood estimates the Seminoles would drop from 5-1 to 15-1.

"Whoever the Alabama quarterback in waiting is will probably be light years better than 70 percent of starters in college football. That's not a concern," Rood said.

Then there's the Saban factor. His presence alone will keep the Crimson Tide among the nation's top tier.

"Overall, it's the development that he brings," Rood said. "He brings in men and makes better men. They're able to recruit physical specimens that are already considered men while other schools are having to develop them. Alabama and eight or 10 other programs can say that, but obviously Nick Saban has a magic wand that works pretty well."

Las Vegas and the betting public remain bullish on Alabama, and if history holds true, so will the media.

Other than Alabama, no team has been ranked in the top 10 of the preseason Associated Press poll in each of the last four seasons. The Crimson Tide has been ranked in the top two of each poll.

Alabama is a shoo-in to crack the top 10 and has a decent chance to make it five straight starts in the top two when the poll is released next month.

If those preseason concerns blow up into major problems, things can change. But for now, Rood will wait for Alabama to prove him wrong.

"If they come out and struggle in the first game or two, and that's glaringly obvious the first week or two than obviously we make adjustments" Rood said. "But until then we have to assume they will continue to be as good as they've always been."

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Tide's Reed arrested for DUI

By Aaron Suttles
Sports Writer

University of Alabama defensive lineman Jarran Reed was arrested early Sunday morning on a charge of driving under the influence.

Reed, a junior college transfer, is the second UA football player to run afoul of the law in a little more than a week.

According to a release from the Tuscaloosa Police Department, Reed, who was driving a 2011 Dodge Charger, was backing out of a parking space in the 2400 block of University Boulevard in downtown Tuscaloosa when he collided with another vehicle at about 1:50 a.m.

A police officer who observed the collision ordered Reed to stop and "smelled the odor of alcohol coming from inside the vehicle," according to the release.

Reed was given a field sobriety test and then transported to the Tuscaloosa County Jail.

His blood alcohol content was 0.13 percent, the release said. The legal limit is 0.08 percent.

Alabama coach Nick Saban released the following statement Sunday afternoon:

"We are disappointed in Jarran’s actions and this is obviously not the kind of behavior we expect from our players. It is a privilege to represent the University of Alabama and there are responsibilities that go along with that privilege. We’ll evaluate the situation and determine the appropriate discipline so better choices and decisions can be made in the future.”

Over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, junior running back Kenyan Drake was arrested on a misdemeanor charge in downtown Tuscaloosa of disobeying police and crossing a barricade into a crime scene while attempting to retrieve his car.

Reed, a 6-foot-4, 310-pound transfer from East Mississippi Community College, is expected to be a major contributor on the Crimson Tide’s defensive line this season.
SEC happy with revision of targeting

By D.C. Reeves
Sports Writer

HOOVER | Last year's targeting rule couldn't escape scrutiny from the start.

One of the men charged with enforcing the NCAA Rules Committee's new policy, SEC coordinator of officials Steve Shaw, heard about its key problem every week. Texts and calls came in from coaches. Fans let him hear it through email and social media.

Last year, if a defender was flagged for targeting — hitting a defenseless player in the head or neck area — the offending team would be penalized 15 yards and the offending player would be ejected.

But here's the rub: The foul could be reviewed, and if it showed that the player did not target, the player could remain in the game, but the 15-yard penalty would still stand.

It was an absence in logic left for Shaw's officials and others to administer.

"It just didn't feel right," said Shaw, who gave his annual presentation on rules changes during SEC Media Days on Wednesday. "I think this is one of the changes this year that really started midseason last year. In situations See targeting | 4C"
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where they were overturned and we put the player back in the game, it just made sense to not walk off the penalty (yardage)."

This offseason welcomed a logical change. During review, both the disqualification and the penalty can be overturned.

The rule was conceived by the committee prior to the 2013 season in the name of player safety. The idea was that the threat of ejection should prevent players from delivering unsafe blows, and Shaw said the numbers backed that up. He called the rule "probably the biggest change in my officiating career."

SEC officials called targeting penalties just 19 times in 2013 — a downturn from season’s prior — seven of which were overturned. Still, that was seven automatic first downs and 95 penalty yards that were assessed without a penalty being committed, valuable commodities that could change the complexion of a crucial SEC game.

This year’s version of the targeting rule should be another step in the right direction. And make life easier on Shaw.

From a coordinators perspective, absolutely it’s easier," he said.

"If that foul is overturned we don’t want to walk off the penalty. So I think it’s a great change, I think it’s a very good thing."

Shaw discussed other notable revisions entering the 2014 season:

■ To improve player safety, an "unabated" defender can not hit the quarterback at the knees or below or a 15-yard penalty will be assessed.

■ The SEC will experiment with one eight-man officiating crew that will call a game each week throughout the 2014 season, adding one official from the current standard seven-man crew. Shaw pointed out that the change was made to help in the face of faster offense, it was not made to help speed up the game. "It will not move any faster or slower than a seven-man crew," he said.

■ The list of reviewable plays will grow in 2014. Teams can now review (1) the location of a passer in his own end zone to determine whether a safety should be rewarded (2) all cases of catching or recovering a fumble in the end zone and (3) backward pass/lateral and their location going out of bounds.

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Slive reaffirms support for autonomy

By D.C. Reeves
Sports Writer

HOOVER | Not “deaf to the din of discontent” surrounding collegiate athletics when it comes to the financial support of student-athletes, SEC Commissioner Mike Slive used his annual spotlight here to reaffirm his league’s stance on ending such noise. Slive reiterated his league’s desire for autonomy for the “power-five” conferences in college football — ACC, SEC, Big 10, Big 12, Pac-12 — during his address to kick-start SEC Media Days on Monday.

“In the words of former President Dwight David Eisenhower, I quote, ‘Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him,’” Slive said. “With Eisenhower’s admonition in mind, we have created the initiative to restructure the NCAA in accordance with our vision for the 21st century with the support of student-athletes at its core.”

In theory, that change — allowing the five major conferences to set their own rules amongst themselves — would allow the bigger programs to create a governing system that would allow those larger schools that can afford to compensate student-athletes on the full cost of attendance to do so.

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"The ongoing review of the NCAA governing structure is intended to provide for the introduction of new strategies and new ideas," Slive said. "With a new structure in place, amongst other goals, we seek to support the educational needs of our student-athletes through the provisions of scholarships linked to cost of attendance rather than the historic model of tuition, room and board, fees and books."

The next step comes Aug. 7 when the steering committee on governance issues its final recommendations to the NCAA on autonomy. Slive mentioned that date, and didn’t sell his desire for the NCAA to allow autonomy short. Slive implied that the big conferences would further examine a fourth division on their own, outside of the NCAA’s umbrella, if autonomy isn’t achieved.

"As I have said before, if we do not achieve a positive outcome under the existing big tent of Division I, we will need to consider the establishment of a venue with similar conferences and institutions where we can enact the desired changes in the best interests of our student-athletes," Slive said.

Among governance talk, Slive didn’t leave out his yearly staples, either. It was his chance to put his league out front to a national audience. It was his chance to gloat about his league’s successes; the “annual SEC brag bag” he calls it. He mentioned the league leading the nation in football attendance (more than 76,000 fans per game on average). He acknowledged the league competing for its eight straight football national championship and “coming up just one minute short” — Auburn lost to Florida State 34-31 — and pointed out that in the last three years, half of the programs in the SEC have competed for a national title in football, men’s basketball or baseball.

Big wasn’t just saved for talk of NCAA changes and notable achievements. Slive went big to drive his points home, quoting Eisenhower, Muhammad Ali, Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela.

"As Muhammad Ali said, "It’s not bragging if you can back it up," " Slive joked.

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Appeals Panel Upholds Race in Admissions for University

By: Tamar Lewin

In a long-running affirmative-action case, a three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit on Tuesday upheld the University of Texas at Austin’s consideration of race as one of many factors in admissions.

“We are persuaded that to deny U.T. Austin its limited use of race in its search for holistic diversity would hobble the richness of the educational experience in contradiction of the plain teachings of Bakke and Grutter,” Judge Patrick E. Higginbotham wrote, referring to two previous affirmative-action rulings by the Supreme Court.

William C. Powers Jr., the president of the University of Texas at Austin, said he was pleased with the decision upholding the admissions policy.

“This ruling ensures that our campus, our state and the entire nation will benefit from the exchange of ideas and thoughts that happens when students who are diverse in all regards come together in the classroom, at campus events and in all aspects of campus life,” he said.

Last year, after hearing the initial appeal of the Texas case, Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, the Supreme Court ruled that public colleges could consider race in admissions under certain conditions, but sent the case back to the appeals court to determine whether the University of Texas’ admissions policies used race narrowly enough to meet the standard laid out by the justices.

Texas’ “Top Ten Percent Plan” guarantees the top graduates of every high school in the state a place at the flagship Austin campus or other universities in the state system, and because many Texas high schools are largely segregated, many black and Latino students are admitted to the university under the plan.

“While the Top Ten Percent Plan boosts minority enrollment by skimming from the tops of Texas high schools, it does so against this backdrop of increasing resegregation in Texas public schools, where over half of Hispanic students and 40 percent of black students attend a school with 90 percent-100 percent minority enrollment,” said the majority opinion, in which Judge Higginbotham was joined by Judge Carolyn Dineen King.

While the University of Texas does get some diversity from the plan, the majority opinion said, it can constitutionally make further efforts to increase diversity.

“U.T. Austin has demonstrated a permissible goal of achieving the educational benefits of diversity within that university’s distinct mission, not seeking a percentage of minority students that reaches some arbitrary size,” the opinion said.
Judge Emilio M. Garza wrote a lengthy dissent, arguing that while the university claims that its use of race was narrowly tailored to meet its diversity goal, it never defined that goal, making it impossible to say whether the use of race actually was tailored to meet it.

The Texas case was filed by Abigail Fisher, a white student who was not in the top 10 percent of her high school class and was denied admission to the university for the fall of 2008, a year in which Top Ten Percent applicants got 81 percent of the seats in the class. The remaining 19 percent were admitted through a holistic review process, in which the university considers not only applicants' academic records, but also their individual achievements and experiences.

In that context, race may play a role — but whether minority status helps an applicant is not at all clear. In fact, the holistic process accounted for only 12 percent of the black students in the class, and 16 percent of the Hispanics.

Ms. Fisher said Tuesday that she would continue to press her lawsuit, even if it meant another appeal to the Supreme Court. She has since graduated from Louisiana State University.