

Pre-Paid Promotions

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- NO Connection Charges
- NO Hidden Charges
- NO Bait
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You've Never Had So Much Fun With A Phone Card!

ACE'S CALL

5 MINUTE PRE-PAID PHONE CARD

GAMBLING?

Company wants Tyson to retract comments on phone cards/1B



THIRD DAY OF DEPOSITION
SCRUSHY GRILLED ON FINANCES/2A

PRESS-REGISTER

BRINGING MOBILE AND THE GULF COAST SINCE 1813

TUESDAY

October 20, 2009

\$1

MOBILE EDITION



Mark Ingram, Tim Tebow

CAN'T WAIT!

FINEBAUM: CANCEL REST OF SEASON, GET RIGHT TO BAMA VERSUS FLORIDA COLUMN/1C

MEDIA OUTLET EYED IN BALLOON BOY CASE/5A

CENTRAL MOBILE

Mother arrested as 3 kids left alone



Chandy Smith
Child endangerment charge

► Mom, 18, says she went to nearby apartment to call for diapers and formula

By **ROBERT McCLENDON**
Staff Reporter

An 18-year-old mother was arrested Friday after she left her three young children unattended in an apartment in central Mobile, police said in a news release.

Chandy Smith was charged with endangering the welfare of a child, taken to Mobile County Metro Jail and released on \$1,000 bail.

Police responded to the Palmier Apartments on Westwood Street, just south of Government Street, at 3:30 p.m. after neighbors told them they heard the incessant sound of crying children, according to the release.

The three children, ages 3, 1 and 3 months, were found alone inside, police said.

Smith, who spoke to the Press-Register on Monday, said her arrest was unnecessary.

She was at her cousin's apartment only 30 feet away, she said, and the children were left alone for less than 30 minutes.

Cpl. Charles Bagsby, a police spokesman, said children of that age should never be left alone for any period of time.

See **Teenage** Page 4A ▶

Today 74° Fair & dry

Tonight 55° Mild & dry

Complete Weather 8B

A big thank you

Satsuma High grateful for funding



Photos by **MIKE KITTRELL**/Staff Photographer

Above: Satsuma High School student Whitney Corgill, left, presents Mobile County Commissioner Merceria Ludgood with flowers Monday at the school during a program to honor her and Commissioners Mike Dean and Stephen Nodine for approving additional school funding. The County Commission approved splitting \$200,000 among four local public schools: Satsuma and Baker high schools, Hutchens Elementary and Phillips Preparatory. The money will help teachers purchase classroom supplies.

In the smaller photo, Satsuma High School cheerleaders, from left, Jessica Gates, Darcy Kaul and Deanna Hayes hang a banner thanking Ludgood.



98 settlement removes block to first section

By **BEN RAINES**
Staff Reporter

The settlement reached between Mobile Baykeeper and the state Transportation Department in the U.S. 98 lawsuit removes a major impediment to completing the first section of the roadway.

The settlement includes examples of sloppy construction practices by the Transportation Department that brought the project to a standstill for months.

It also requires the agency to deliver

several improvements demanded by Mobile Baykeeper and agreed to months ago, such as a hazardous spill containment system on the bridge over Big Creek.

Mobile Baykeeper, Attorney General Troy King and the Mobile Area Water and Sewer System sued the transportation agency after numerous violations of state and federal environmental laws discovered by the Press-Register in September 2007.

See **U.S. 98 settlement** Page 4A ▶

ADEM ENFORCEMENT

WATER FINES DOWN 78%

► During 2009 fiscal year, state assessed \$286,100 for pollution violations, down from \$1.2 million in each of two previous years

By **BEN RAINES**
Staff Reporter

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management assessed just \$286,100 for water pollution violations during the 2009 fiscal year, compared to more than \$1.2 million in each of the two preceding years, according to environmental groups working together as the ADEM Reform Coalition.

That represents a 78 percent decline in penalties assessed against Alabama polluters, the coalition said.

ADEM officials said the decline doesn't necessarily mean there has been a reduction in the agency's vigilance when it comes to protecting Alabama's rivers, creeks and lakes.

"Our goal is to assure facilities operate in compliance, not to assess civil penalties," said Scott Hughes, an agency spokesman.

The agency also issues warning letters and violation notices, which Hughes said "require fewer internal resources" than issuing monetary penalties and provide "a better use of our limited resources."

The Reform Coalition in August gave ADEM's governing body evidence suggesting that penalties as well as inspections were down significantly this year over years past.

See **ADEM water** Page 4A ▶

"Their inspections are down, their enforcement is down. All that will lead to companies that are looking to save money abandoning their compliance activities."

— *David Ludder, environmental lawyer*

Holmes again asks Riley not to sign computer pact

By **BOB JOHNSON**
Associated Press Writer

MONTGOMERY — The chairman of a legislative oversight committee has repeated his request that Gov. Bob Riley not sign an extension to a \$13 million no-bid computer contract with a company that has no listed phone number and no



Holmes



Riley

Web page.

The Legislature's Contract Review Committee's 45-day hold on the contract between the Finance Department and Paragon Source LLC expired Monday. Reporters and television cameras followed committee Chairman Democratic Rep. Alvin Holmes of Montgomery as he tried to personally deliver

the contract to the governor's office in the afternoon.

He was initially told that Riley was busy, and finance director Bill Newton accepted the contract.

"Tell the governor that I ask that he not sign this," Holmes told Newton.

See **Riley** Page 4A ▶

PRESS-REGISTER

ADEM ENFORCEMENT

During 2009 fiscal year, state assessed \$286,100 for pollution violations, down from \$1.2 million in each of two previous years

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

By BEN RAINES

Staff Reporter

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The Reform Coalition in August gave ADEM's governing body evidence suggesting that penalties as well as inspections were down significantly this year over years past.

At the time, ADEM responded that the agency had \$800,000 in penalties "pending — at public notice or not finalized yet."

Since then, \$139,600 in new penalties have been finalized, according to information provided by the Reform Coalition. That leaves the just-completed fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, with about \$1 million less in penalties than in 2008.

"When you look at the number of penalties, that's really not a good measure," of the agency's enforcement actions, Hughes said. "We have inspectors out in the field each and every day conducting inspections and reviewing paperwork on site to ensure facilities are operating in accordance with their environmental permit."

David Ludder, an environmental lawyer and former ADEM employee, analyzed ADEM's enforcement records for the Reform Coalition.

He said other enforcement indicators are off as well, in particular noting that the number of companies filing required paperwork related to their water permits had declined dramatically.

Penalties, Ludder said, are the only effective way to enforce the law.

"Their inspections are down, their enforcement is down," Ludder said. "All that will lead to companies that are looking to save money abandoning their compliance activities. We're already hearing ... that ADEM is absent, and the companies are feeling that they can get away with more."