

# The Tuscaloosa News

TUSCALOOSA, NORTHPORT, WEST ALABAMA

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2003 50¢

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## Auto parts supplier to open in county

By Katherine Lee  
Business Editor

TUSCALOOSA | A German auto parts manufacturer is expected to announce later this week the location of a new plant in Tuscaloosa County that will bring 80 to 100 jobs to the area.

A source close to the project said the company, Brose Group, based in Hallstadt, Germany, will make door modules and components for Mercedes-Benz U.S. International in Vance. The source declined to elaborate on how extensive the company's investment in the project will be, saying only that it was "substantial."

Dara Longgrear, executive director of the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Authority, declined to comment on the project.

David Azbell, press secretary for Alabama Gov. Bob Riley, said the governor's office had no comment.

Riley flew to Germany Sunday evening on what Azbell called a "business mission." He is expected to return to Alabama Friday.

"The governor's office has a policy of refusing to comment on industrial recruitment efforts," Azbell said. "But we expect Gov. Riley's visit to produce some very quick and very important results."

In the first five months of Riley's administration, the state has announced 34 industrial recruitment projects, a total of \$800 million in new investment. Of those projects, 14 were auto industry projects, 10 of them suppliers to Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, which is building a \$1 billion auto plant south of Montgomery.

Brose employs about 7,000 people in 30 locations, including manufacturing plants in Japan, Korea and South Africa, and sales and engineering offices in Japan, France, Sweden and the United States.

According to its Web site, the company makes seating components and door modules for 30 auto manufacturers, including DaimlerChrysler, Mercedes' parent company.

MBUSI is in the midst of a \$600 million expansion of its Vance plant, which makes the Mercedes M-Class sport utility vehicle. The expansion will also encompass production of the GST Vision.

**06.24.03**

SPORTS 1C

Rice beats  
Stanford, 14-2

HOW TO REACH US: 345-0505



Mostly  
sunny  
and hot

High 93,  
Low 69

Map and  
forecast:  
8B



Dow  
-127.80  
9,072.95

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TUSCALOOSA CITY SCHOOL BOARD

## WAR OF WORDS

### Meeting closes with heated argument; board agrees to discuss site for Central



Board member Bryan Chandler said recent comments made by Superintendent Louise Crawford could be counterproductive to the Central High issue.



Board member Milton Pearson said Crawford had "poisoned the well" of mediation between parties.



Superintendent Louise Crawford responded by saying Pearson intimidated her and threatened her job, and by questioning Crawford's involvement with the proposal to rebuild Central High School near Palmore Park.

STAFF PHOTOS | MICHAEL E. PALMER

By April Wortham  
Staff Writer

TUSCALOOSA | A city school board meeting called Monday to consider a peaceful end to the standoff with Black Elected Officials of Tuscaloosa County over the location of Central High School ended with a bitter exchange between two board members and Superintendent Louise Crawford.

Without taking a formal vote, the board agreed to meet with Black Elected Officials and members of an ad hoc committee of community leaders to discuss the school's location. But several board members said they did not feel comfortable rescinding their January 2002 vote to rebuild Central at its current location on 15th Street.

Spearheaded by Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama president Johnnie Aycock, the

racially balanced committee presented a proposal to the school board Friday that suggested it rescind its vote and "wipe the slate clean" by forming another committee to study the school's location.

That committee, which would include two or three school board members, members of Black Elected Officials and community members selected by the two groups, would be charged with finding an architect — preferably one from outside Tuscaloosa — to select the best site for the school, the proposal suggests.

Crawford, who supports rebuilding Central in west Tuscaloosa, spoke out against the committee's recommendation at a rally Saturday hosted by the Alabama chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

"We don't want the committee

talked about on yesterday," she said at the rally.

Board member Bryan Chandler said Monday that he is willing to work with any group with a better plan for rebuilding the third high school, but he expressed concern over Crawford's public comments.

"With such a comment made only two days in advance of the very meeting to discuss the issue, it is hard for me to envision how the process can be productive," Chandler read from a prepared statement.

Fellow board member Milton Pearson agreed, saying Crawford had "poisoned the well" of mediation between Black Elected Officials and the school board.

"I find it really and truly incredible that our superintendent would make such a statement, that we are not going to

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## Alabama last state to restrict smoking

The Associated Press

MONTGOMERY | The state's new law restricting smoking in public buildings and retail businesses will take effect Sept. 1, making Alabama the last state in the nation to enact a law curtailing smoking.

State Sen. Vivian Figures, who suffers from bronchitis and asthma, spent six years trying to get the Alabama Legislature to pass a law to restrict smoking in public places. The compromise version that finally passed on the final night of the 2003 session June 16 doesn't end her quest.

"It really was watered down so much. It's not strong at all," Figures, D-Mobile, said Monday.

Gov. Bob Riley signed the bill into law Thursday.

Figures' original version would have banned smoking in indoor workplaces if a majority of the employees wanted to work in a smoke-free environment. The final version leaves it up to employers to decide if they want to have a smoking policy in their private businesses and factories.

State Health Officer Don Williamson said the power of the tobacco industry and concerns about government intruding in private business contributed to Alabama being the last state to enact a law.

In the Legislature, business owners raised the most objections.

"Do we really want to establish the crime of cigarette smoking? I don't think so," said Republican Rep. Dick Brewbaker, a Montgomery car dealer.

Williamson said the best feature of the new law is that it allows local governments to have anti-smoking ordinances that are stronger than the state law. Some states do not permit that, they said.

In the new law, smoking is not allowed in common areas used by the public but may be allowed in separate, enclosed, well-ventilated areas. These cover a range of businesses and offices, such as child care facilities, hospitals, doctors' offices, government buildings, schools and the public areas of retail businesses, except for restaurants.

The designated smoking area of any business or government building may not contain any area used by nonsmokers, such as the public restrooms.

Under the new law, a violation can bring a fine of \$50 against a business and \$25 against a smoker.

### FINE IMPOSED

Under the new law, a violation can bring a fine of \$50 against a business and \$25 against a smoker.

## Court rules on admissions, Internet porn

### Justices favor library porn filters; Tuscaloosa says it might not comply

By Gina Holland  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON | A divided Supreme Court ruled Monday that Congress can force the nation's public libraries to equip computers with anti-pornography filters.

The blocking technology, intended to keep smut from children, does not violate the First Amendment even though it shuts out some legitimate, informational Web sites, the court held.

The 6-3 ruling reinstates a law that told libraries to install filters or surrender federal money. Four justices said the law was constitutional, and

two others said it was allowable as long as libraries disable the filters for patrons who ask. The court described pornography in libraries as a serious problem.

"To the extent that libraries wish to offer unfiltered access, they are free to do so without federal assistance," the main ruling said.

Judith Krug, with the American Library Association, predicted that many libraries would consider turning down the money rather than installing filters.

At the Tuscaloosa Public Library, which has resisted installing filters, library officials

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### Ruling limits role of race in college admissions process

By Scott Parrott  
Staff Writer

TUSCALOOSA | The two split decisions made by the Supreme Court Monday on affirmative action should have no bearing on the University of Alabama, where race plays no role in the admissions process, officials said.

In the two decisions, the high court ruled that minority applicants may be given an edge when applying for admissions to universities but limited how much a factor race can play in the selection of students.

"It does not affect us because we're not set up in that fashion," said Mary Spiegel, director of undergraduate admissions at UA.

The court struck down a system used

by the University of Michigan that awarded points to nonwhite applicants in the admissions decision-making process. But it also upheld a separate program at the University of Michigan law school that gives race less prominence.

The ruling affects tax-supported universities and other institutions that have looked for ways to boost minority enrollment without violating the Constitution's guarantee against discrimination.

The University of Alabama, which is easier to enter than institutions like UM, tries to boost minority enrollment through its programs, instead of during the admissions process, officials said.

Programs such as the engineering schools' Multicultural Engineering Program and the communication school's

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