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The Choctaw Sun

Shining Brightly Over Southwest Alabama



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3-peat!

Briefs

ATV accident victim dies

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN — Funeral services for James Michael Lewis will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, 2007 at Heritage Church of God with interment in the Old Lusk Cemetery. Visitation will be Friday evening

at 6 p.m. at the church.

Lewis, 21, died Jan. 17, 2007 as a result of serious head trauma he sustained in a four-wheeler accident in Toxey last Saturday afternoon.

He was thrown from the ATV onto the pavement after it hit a sign on Broad Street near the Toxey Volunteer Fire Department.

Lewis was transported by Choctaw EMS Ambulance to Washington Co. Infirmary, at Chatom, and later airlifted by LifeFlight helicopter to the University of South Alabama Medical where he died Wednesday.

Lewis was a graduate of South Choctaw Academy. A complete obituary will be published in Tuesday's edition of the *Sun*.



Moore

Bob Moore is new Loan Officer at First USB

BUTLER — Butler native Bob Moore has joined First United Security Bank's Butler office as loan officer.

Moore's responsibilities will include consumer and commercial lending in Butler and surrounding areas.

"I am appreciative of the confidence First United Security Bank has displayed in me look forward to being a part of the management team

See MOORE, page 3A



Choctaw Sun photo by Tommy Campbell
Rev. Doug Chapman looks at the detailed development plan for the Town of Gilbertown that was unveiled at Town Hall on Tuesday evening.

Gilbertown gets master development plan

Group believes the historically-authentic Sims War play, "A Prophet Without Honor", staged by the Ballet and Theater Arts Performing Companies, could do for Gilbertown what "To Kill A Mockingbird" has done for the city of Monroeville

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN — Three members of a team of architects and designers returned to Gilbertown on Tuesday evening to unveil the "draft" of a master revitalization and development plan for the town.

Cheryl Morgan, AIA, Gresham Professor of Architecture and Director of Urban Studio at Auburn University's Birmingham campus, said the designers' three-day visit in June served as an "assets-based" strategy session that the planners, architects, and landscapers used to draft a master development plan that is both comprehensive and "user friendly."

"One of the things that is so wonderful about this place is that it is in a part of west Alabama, the Black Belt, where so many of our natural resources are located," she said. "It's all within touching distance."

Gilbertown's proud heritage of being an oil- and timber-producing community is also one of its biggest assets, she said.

Morgan said that communities often know they want to make changes but don't know how to go about making those changes

happen.

"Where do you want to be in five, ten or twenty years?" she asked. "We have tried to take all of that into consideration."

The group has worked with 40 Alabama towns in the past six years to develop comprehensive plans that are now being successfully implemented.

"People come to rural parts of our state because of the hunting, fishing, and other assets," she said.

The group saw the former Burlington-Northern Railroad bed — which runs through the town's midsection — as being a "link" to tie the community together as well as create new recreational opportunities.

"The hunting and fishing is great, but you need to build a larger 'jumping off' base, you need to make your town a 'destination' so that people coming to your community have a larger choice of recreational activities, retail outlets, and essential services," she said.

Just as in so many of the communities in places such as the Smoky Mountains, for instance, small towns serve as "trailheads" for visitors who make their "camp" there — whether that is actual camping or stays in local motels or 'beds and breakfasts' — and return later in the day looking for other things to do.

The town's portion of the trail could even be a part of a much larger-scale walking or bicycle trail that parallels the western side of the state. In fact, she said, plans are already on the table for a national Underground Railroad walking trail that follows many stops on

See PLAN, page 2A

SCHS honored as Pilot School for Black Belt Arts Initiative

By Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN — Southern Choctaw High School has been selected as one of only 12 schools across the state to serve as a 2006-07 Pilot School for a new Alabama Black Belt Arts Education Initiative. On January 10, SCHS principal Betty McBride traveled to Montgomery for a ceremony honoring SCHS for its selection.

As a Pilot School, SCHS will be awarded grant funds in order to implement a new arts program at the school. During last week's ceremony, McBride, along with representatives of the other pilot schools, was presented with a resolution naming SCHS as a pilot school and praising the school for its interest in the arts.

The ceremony was preceded by an inspiring musical presentation of a drama based on *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Monroeville author Harper Lee, who was also in attendance. The presentation included a cast of students from two Alabama schools — Fairfield High Preparatory School and Mountain

See SCHS, page 2A

Relay for Life kickoff meeting, Jan. 29th

BUTLER — The kick-off meeting for the 2007 Choctaw Co. Relay For Life event will be held Monday, Jan. 29th at 6 p.m. at the Butler Volunteer Fire Department.

Persons who are interested in having a Relay team or just want additional information about Relay, are encouraged to attend.

Relay For Life is a county-wide event to raise money to fight cancer, and is sponsored nationally by the American Cancer Society.

For additional information, readers may contact Ron or Holli Mason at 205-459-5750 or Kim Edwards at 205-459-5590 or 5938.

Almanac

FRIDAY, JAN. 19

Scattered showers
Hi 52 • Lo 35
Rain chance 30%
Sunrise: 6:53 a.m.
Sunset: 5:16 p.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 20

Cloudy
Hi 50 • Lo 37
Rain chance 10%
Sunrise: 6:52 a.m.
Sunset: 5:17 p.m.

SUNDAY, JAN. 21

Thundershowers
Hi 57 • Lo 36
Rain chance 40%
Sunrise: 6:52 a.m.
Sunset: 5:18 p.m.

MONDAY, JAN. 22

Cloudy
Hi 54 • Lo 33
Rain chance 20%
Sunrise: 6:52 a.m.
Sunset: 5:18 p.m.

ITS ONLY A DRILL...
readers are reminded that an all-day terrorism response training drill will be conducted today, Friday, at SCHS and SCES. There is no danger to students or faculty members.

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... come see us!

