

## ■ Letters

From page 4-A

We would like to express sincere appreciation for the kind prayers, flowers, food, phone calls, cards, or your kind words of consolation.

A special thanks goes to Mrs. Rita E. Woods and the staff of Southwest Alabama Funeral Services.

May God bless each of you.

**The family of Charlie Ed Smith**

I was born and raised at Ararat and Butler. I have lived in Shreveport, Louisiana since 1949 but have always enjoyed the news from home! My check for renewing my subscription to the *Sun* is enclosed.

**Pat Sample Cole**  
Shreveport, LA

The family would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks for all the flowers, food, phone calls, visits and most of all, your prayers in the loss of our loved one. Please continue to keep us in your prayers.

**The family of Miriam Gunnels**

The family of Mary Lee Wright Gibson wishes to express our appreciation for the outpouring of sympathy following the death of our loved one. We also want to thank all those who sacrificed their time to prepare and deliver food.

The support and uplifting in Christ's name sustained us during this difficult time.

**Rhonda Persons and family**

## ■ SoundOff

From page 4-A

See what happens when you put Democrats back in power? The first thing they do is try to cut funding for the TGIF program. That TGIF program is one of the best sexual abstinence programs that we have ever seen in the school system, and I can say that as a teacher who has seen what a difference it makes in the lives of teenagers. Shame on those Congressional Democrats! They have shown us their true agenda. Christians need to be aware of these things and write letters and make phone calls!

I just wanted to wish Judge Stuart DuBose all the best as he begins his term of office. In my opinion, I believe that some of that crowd backed off of their anti-DuBose agenda because there are highly questionable issues in their own past that, shall we say, they would rather stay out of the public eye.

Sorry, but I just can't stand it, I gotta SoundOff! A one-month period of national mourning was proclaimed in memory of President Gerald Ford. I noticed with disgust and sorrow that a lot of area businesses and even a few schools chose to not honor our deceased president by flying the American flag at half-mast as they were asked to do. Shame, shame, shame.

Congratulations to the *Sun* on becoming a part of the Butler business community. I teach at CCES and it is nice to know that you have classroom supplies and that I can drop by your new office on my way from school.

I appreciate the *Sun's* fairness in dealing with the public school system and the African-American community. I just wanted you to know that. God bless you all.

I hear they are gonna clean up Butler. Good. I wonder if that includes all these run-down embarrassing buildings that are about to fall in from rot? And what about the piles of trash that the county left behind those old portable buildings behind the jail? Ala. 17 from the city limits to the top of Fire Tower Hill on the south side is as littered as they come.

A twice-weekly newspaper is one of the best things to happen to my home county in a long time. Congratulations for taking this giant step! I have lived in Ohio for 30 years but I still call Lisman HOME and I enjoy keeping up with the local news through the *Sun*. I look forward to seeing my Sun friends at the 2007 Choctaw Picnic in Atlanta.

I agree with the person who wrote about the trash in our county. Why is it in other places we see jail inmates doing public service by cleaning roads, but in Choctaw County they can get hired out to help private people or just walk around town? To stop the roadway trash problem, two things need to happen. First, we need to teach children and adults NOT to throw trash out of their vehicle onto the roadside. Second, the county needs to make those prisoners earn their keep by helping clean up our county roadways. What about it Sheriff Lovette?

Whoever keeps putting down the SoundOff column of this paper is ridiculous. Obviously, you must read it too, or you wouldn't ever know what was in there!

**(ED. NOTE: Thanks for the comment, but we really don't mind folks disagreeing with us, though .. that's what the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and this column is all about .. our readers' views But it does give us a chuckle sometimes, especially when we know from whence those little gibes are coming from! — Tommy.)**

Could the Commissioner of District Four please fix the Mt. Sterling Road if you're not to busy working your other two jobs. Thank you.

**(ED. NOTE: We aren't taking sides on this comment, but we do feel that it should be pointed out for the record that the office of a Commissioner is defined by law as a part-time position, and persons who hold that office are not barred from working at other jobs.)**

The Democrats in the Alabama Senate can't even decide if they want to work or go home, so how in the heck can they ever do anything good for the people? Looks to me like all they are there for is to draw that big, fat paycheck and argue politics. But, hey, a lot of people tried to tell ya'll back before the election that changes were needed in Montgomery, but NOOOOOOO! You wouldn't listen. Now you're gonna get just what you deserve out of Montgomery for the next four years -- absolutely nothing! That's my opinion.

Tommy, I know you were at the wreck where a dear friend of mine died, and from the bottom of my heart I thank you and *The Choctaw Sun* for not plastering a picture of them getting her dead body out of the car on the front page of your paper. All this did was to rub salt in an already open wound. The family was grieving from having lost another loved one only a few days before that tragedy happened. They did not deserve to have to go through seeing the sheet-covered body of their loved one on the front page of a newspaper. Thank you and God bless you.

# Dr. King's day has devolved into a misrepresentation of what he stood for

## Opinion By Mychal Massie

As we marked our nation's annual commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we received many reminders that it's time for America to remember the injustices he fought.

Preachers preached special sermons, teachers had special lesson plans and politicians — coupled with the usual merchants of immiseration — gathered for photo-ops. All recalled that Dr. King fought for the freedom, equality and dignity of blacks. However, the marches, chants and choruses of "We Shall Overcome" were also carefully designed to omit the fact that much has already been overcome.

While we overcame, there are still problems to conquer. But demagogues focus on the perceived and politically profitable splinter of discontent while ignoring the blatant beam of trouble actually facing us.

Sadly, but certainly not unexpectedly, Dr. King's day has devolved into a misrepresentation of what he actually stood for. It has become a day in which too many people use his name to slam capitalism and conservative values while fomenting feelings of misery and resentment.

I have long since wearied of the falsities surrounding Dr. King's life and words and submit that it is time to honor his memory with truth and honesty.

Dr. King literally put his life on the line for his beliefs. He didn't retreat, apologize or distort the truth. Instead, he offered it up for America and the world to

see. This undiluted truth was a sulfuric colonic to the racist elements of his day.

Dr. King didn't need to invent injustice. The fact that blacks were denied the right to vote and to live, shop and eat where they wanted didn't need inventing. Beatings, fire hoses and attack dogs in the hands of those filled with hate didn't need embellishing - it needed only be shown on the evening news for the conscience of America to demand change.

The truth can be denied by the darkness of hatred, but it can never be disproved. Nor can it be diminished.

While there are any number of scholarly positions that would be open to cogent and reasoned debate if Dr. King were still alive, what should not be open for debate is his position on segregation - codified or self-imposed - or his position on harboring thoughts of contempt and resentment:

In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggles on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence... The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers... have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedoms we

cannot walk alone. (August 28, 1963)

I believe this gives us an indication of what Dr. King would think of the Jacksons, Sharptons, Farrakhans and Julian Bonds of today. They are purveyors of discontent, preying on feelings of anger and resentment.

It may also suggest his opinion of people such as National Urban League president Mark Morial, who praised Planned Parenthood as a "good organization." It is a tragedy that so many unborn black babies are destroyed through the procedure of abortion.

Furthermore, what might Dr. King think of his Dream today if he saw the devastating effect that personal and social irresponsibility has had on the black family? There's no doubt he'd be horrified by the gangs, drugs, educational laxity, generational welfare and the damning results of Great Society programs.

Perhaps instead of preening for photo-ops, the feckless fantasia that is the liberal establishment and black leadership would better spend their time trying to remember exactly what Dr. King's dream really was.

**(ED. NOTE: Mychal Massie is the chairman of the black leadership network Project 21. Comments may be sent to Project21@nationalcenter.org. A New Visions Commentary paper published January 2007 by The National Center for Public Policy Research, 501 Capitol Court NE #200, Washington, D.C. 20002, E-Mail: Project21@nationalcenter.org.)**

## ■ Smoke

From page 1-A

*Bible for a Roadmap, I'll Fly Away* and many more — and hilarious stories from the more or less devout sanctified Sanders ensemble provide a richly entertaining evening that has audiences clapping, singing, laughing and cheering.

BTAPC has put together a cast for this show that has really come together as a "singing family". The musicians in the Sanders' Family

Band include Nadine Richardson (piano), Naman Broadhead (mandolin and harmonica), Tommy Campbell (acoustic guitar), and John Thomas Lindsey (fiddle). The two ladies in the Amen Corner are Miss Maude, portrayed by Joy Lewis, and Miss Myrtle, played by Carol Snow.

The Cast, in order of appearance, include: Rev. Mervin Oglethorpe (Ian Kimbrough), June Sanders (Sydney Mosley), Burl Sanders (Bobby F. Jackson), Vera Sanders (Georgia Dozier), Stanley Sanders (Kenny Richardson, who

also plays electric bass guitar), Denise Sanders (Melissa Snow), and Dennis Sanders (Ryan Allen).

*Smoke On the Mountain* will be presented at the BTAS Theatre in Gilbertown, Friday, Jan. 26, Sat., Jan. 27, and Monday, Jan. 29 at 8 p.m. nightly, and on Sunday, Jan. 28th at 2 p.m.

Tickets are on sale now at the usual banks and businesses in Choctaw and Washington Counties. For reservations and information readers may call (251) 843-5138.

## ■ Butler

From page 1-A

but it just isn't working in some instances," Smith said. "The bottom line is, if you are going to own property in the town of Butler you're going to have to take care of it, and if you don't, we're going to pull out our ordinances and use them to get it done."

Smith said the town would rather not have to take that step, but will do so if necessary.

"We hope that people will get excited about this and sign up to volunteer to help so that everyone can step back and look at the end result with the satisfaction that teamwork and a sense of community pride made it happen," he said.

The mayor said the town has recently been awarded another

state beautification grant to plant trees and install decorative lighting down Mulberry Street to the Butler Service Center and First United Security Bank, on Hamburg Street on the west side of the Courthouse, and on east Pushmataha Street to Hardees.

A community-wide street clean-up day is being planned for the near future, Martin said

"All of this is designed to provide a fresh, new look to Butler, OUR TOWN," she said. "The committee earnestly solicits the help, support, suggestions and prayers of the community."

Butler, she said, is a great place to live, worship, work, raise a family, retire, hunt, fish and enjoy top-notch sports, and the committee only wants to make those opportunities more attractive not only for local residents but for visitors who pass through the town as

well.

"Together, we CAN make a difference!" she said.

To volunteer for the committee, or to list your business or professional clinic as a participant in the beautification and clean-up effort, call Town Hall at (205) 459-3795.

**(ED. NOTE: To show our support for this worthwhile community project, The Sun will be fixing up the front of our building at 214 West Smith Street in Butler. A little paint, elbow grease, some flowers, new signage and getting rid of litter all go a long way toward improving the look of our community, and we hope that others will join us. If you plan to do any work on your property, call the Sun and we will be glad to come and make "before" and "after" pictures. — Tommy.)**

## ■ Dee Ann

From page 4-A

the team that I had followed all my life give me more than enough reason to hope and to be proud.

This year's season was undeniably special for the Saints. It was the season of hope for a city

that had seemed to have none. It was the season of victory for a city who needed it so badly.

But for me, it was more than just about New Orleans. It was personal. It was individual. It was the season to no longer hang my head on Monday morning, but to raise it in pride.

It was a season that made me

long for those Sunday afternoons at our house, with all of us gathered around the television to watch our team play ball together.

And I wish Mama had been here to see it, to watch them from her chair, to holler and yell and stomp her feet with every victory. She would have been so proud.

*I wish it could have been.*

## ■ Tommy

From page 4-A

under our pillow.

I am thankful for the good feeling that I get from being able to wave at folks I meet on the road and having them wave back, knowing that they are friends and neighbors all.

I am thankful for Gilbertown ... which is home to me and my family. We love it here. We love our neighbors (by the way, thank you, Mrs. Catherine Maten for that fine bowl of collard greens and "nanner puddin'" you brought by the house last week ... it sure was good!)

Our little town has been blessed with so many of the amenities, cultural and sporting opportunities that even larger cities in Alabama do not have — a wonderful community college in Alabama Southern, a "gem" of a

little theater in Fred and Svetlana Kimbrough's Ballet and Theater Arts School and Performing Companies, a Choctaw Co. Historical Museum that I feel is second to none in the state, and a spacious youth softball complex.

I am thankful for the many churches in our community, churches whose members often cross racial and denominational lines to work and worship together in harmony.

I am thankful that many of our county's public meetings are still opened with prayer ... prayers that are often led by elected officials in spite of the politically correct "let's-not-do-anything-to-upset-the-atheists" fear that grips Christian officials in other areas.

I am thankful that there are still honest-to-goodness service stations left here — gas stations where the attendant still comes out to check your oil and tires and scrub the bug innards off your

windshield while he fills your tank.

I am thankful for the progress we have made in mending fences with brothers and sisters whose skin colors are different than our own. In spite of attempts by the left-wing liberal "big news media" to label Choctaw Counties as backwoods racists, we know better than that. Black folks and white folks alike get along better now than we can ever remember, and, God willing, it will continue to improve.

And I am thankful for all of you readers who come by our offices in Gilbertown and Butler and stick their heads in the door just to say "how ya'll doin' today?"

You can't buy blessings and friends like those.

That's only a small part of what I am thankful for on this cool, rainy winter's day.

What's on your list?