

# Long-time Gilbertown physician retiring

## ■ Mazumder still plans to call the town of Gilbertown her home

By Dee Ann Campbell  
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN — “I’ve had God’s blessing here,” she says. “The people have not only been my neighbors and my patients. They are friends.”

For most of the past 28 years, she’s been an integral part of medical care in the southern part of Choctaw County. Through her practice, Gilbertown gained a valuable asset that the town had needed for a long time.

In the late 70’s, when other physicians were opting to set up their practices in large cities — with all the amenities offered by hospitals and all the financial benefits that come with a large patient base — Dr. Seba Mazumder chose, instead, to come to Gilbertown.

Through the years, she’s treated thousands of patients, from the elderly to the youngest of infants. She’s brought quality medical care to a population that, on many occasions, could not have traveled to another area to find it. She’s offered her services — and her friendship — to a community who welcomed her with open arms.

But this week was her last. After almost three decades of practice



Submitted photo  
Dr. Seba Mazumder in her office in Gilbertown.

in Gilbertown, Dr. Mazumder says it’s time to retire.

Mazumder first arrived in Gilbertown in July, 1979, joining the staff at what was then West Alabama Health Services. The move was one that required adjustment for the Calcutta, India native, but one that would result in a lifelong practice in a place she now calls home.

Following in the footsteps of her father who was also a physician, Mazumder’s medical career began in India where she attended Calcutta University. Following the completion of her residency, she took over her father’s practice for a short time, but soon decided to immigrate to the United States.

“I decided to come here to the States for several reasons,” she explains. “My brother

was also living in New York, so that’s where I came.”

Coming to the States had its drawbacks for Mazumder. Although she had already completed her training in Calcutta, she was required to do her residency again, and also gained some fellowship training while in New York.

It was then that she was invited to come in Alabama.

“James Coleman was CEO of West Alabama Health Services then,” she recalls. “They had wanted to open a medical facility in Gilbertown and were contacting doctors, but no one was agreeing to come. At that time, doctors were only going to bigger cities. No one wanted to start a practice in small towns.”

Through ongoing efforts by a group of Gilbertown residents — in

particular, then-mayor Marvin Merritt — the center was opened, with the search for a physician still in progress.

“I was in New York at the time and had gotten involved with a service that matched physicians with requirements at facilities that needed doctors,” she remembers. “They matched me with the center’s requirements, and Mr. Coleman wrote me a letter that he was interested.”

When Mazumder was first approached about coming to Alabama, she had thought that Coleman was looking for a physician in Eutaw, where the main center for West Alabama Health Services was located. But she soon learned that she would be headed for the tiny town of Gilbertown — a far different world from her hometown of Calcutta, which has a population of four to five million.

“I came here and had a meeting with some of the people,” she says. “I decided to give it a try to see if I liked it. I had wanted to go to a small town, but I didn’t know how small Gilbertown would be.”

Although the small-town atmosphere was much different from the large cities to which she was accustomed, she grew to love tiny Gilbertown. In particular, she says, she grew to love the people.

“I liked it so much,” she says. “The serenity, and most of all, the support and love of the people — without that, I wouldn’t have been able to make my home here.”

“My personality was that I was not a very outgoing person who was looking for lots of recre-

ation,” she admits. “I’ve told myself I was custom made for Gilbertown.”

Her adjustment to Alabama life was also made easier when her mother came to stay with her for an extended period during her first years at West Alabama Health Services.

In February, 2000, Mazumder left Gilbertown in order to travel with her ailing mother back to India. But after three years away, in June of 2003, she returned to Alabama, resuming her practice on a part-time basis with what had now become Franklin Primary Health Center.

Despite her time away, many of the patients whom she had treated previously welcomed her back to Gilbertown — as did the community as a whole.

Through the years, Mazumder says she has seen many changes in health care for small, rural areas. From positive changes like the availability of new technology and advances in medicine, to more frustrating changes like the lack of medical insurance for many patients, she has dealt with a gamut of issues through her work.

“We are doing more in small towns now,” explains Mazumder. “I have regularly attended medical conferences to keep up-to-date. If we are going to do our best for the patients, we have to be up-to-date with the best medical care. If it is not available here, we send them to a bigger facility. Even practicing in a small town, I’ve always been studying, learning. Before, there was no internet, and I missed having a large library so much. But God

arranges everything. A lot of medical journals came by mail, and I had to do a lot of reading. I still do.”

“But the frustrating thing about small town practice is that the majority of people don’t have medical insurance,” she adds. “It’s frustrating to know that something needs to be done for a patient, but they can’t afford to have it done.”

Fortunately, Mazumder says, many medical centers have worked with her over the years to help with those patients who have inadequate or no insurance to cover needed procedures.

On Wednesday — her last day of practice in Gilbertown — Mazumder was honored with a retirement dinner on her behalf. Attended by fellow staff members, long-time patients, officials with Franklin, and members of the community, the event was an opportunity to say ‘thank you’ to a physician who made an undeniable impact on the area where she served.

Following her retirement, Mazumder will be traveling to India for a short visit. But, she says, she will be returning to the place she now calls home. Although she will no longer be practicing medicine, she says she wants to live in the area where she has felt so welcomed, an area where the people have come to mean so much to her.

“I’ve never had difficulty with people accepting me here,” she says. “Maybe I talk differently, but they’ve accepted me.”

“I’m going to Calcutta in February for about three months,” she adds. “Then I’m coming back to Gilbertown.”

## ■ Taxes

From page 1-A

Office, which will mean even more penalties will be added. Under state law, parcels of property with taxes still due are advertised for sale in April and a public auction, if necessary, held in May.

Choctaw County is the only county in Alabama that Sparrow is aware of that, in more than 35 years, has not sold a single piece of property to recoup a tax bill.

“And we want to keep it that way,” he said. Sparrow said that even though his office mails out thousands of notices each fall to every property owner on the books, invariably, hundreds of those notices usually come back marked “undeliverable” because the person has moved and left no forwarding address, married, or died.

Others are misplaced, lost in the mail, or received and simply set aside and forgotten about.

“It’s usually just an honest oversight when somebody doesn’t pay their taxes,” Sparrow said. “We have people who live out of the state, for example, who have relatives that live here who are supposed to pay their taxes. Well, if that relative forgets to pay the bill, then the property owner usually doesn’t know about it until somebody calls and says they saw their name in the paper.”

Problems also sometimes occur that involve persons whose homes or property are mortgaged and whose ad valorem taxes are paid through automatic escrow accounts.

“What happens is, the tax notice gets sent to the mortgage company and they sometimes overlook paying it, or either the notice is sent to the owner and they forget to send it on to the mortgage company,” Sparrow said.

He also said that while his office makes every effort to contact the property owners, some of them simply cannot be reached by mail or phone.

If anyone has contact information for out-of-county or out-of-state persons or companies, they can call his office at (205) 459-2412. Also, if a person has paid their taxes already and their name is listed in error they should call Sparrow’s office so that the list can be corrected before the next publication date.

He added that persons should always notify his office anytime their mailing address changes.

## ■ Ty

From page 1-A

already the CD is the 11th most downloaded album on iTunes, a popular internet music site.

“This CD is a lot about me, who I am and where I came from,” Herndon told the *Sun* in an interview on Tuesday. “It’s the first time in my life that I can say I am truly happy with a CD. It’s a little bit gospel, a little bit soul, blues, country, you name it. And that’s me, man! It represents me as a hometown boy because growing up in Butler I was exposed to those types of music and it had a profound impact on my life.”

Herndon said that over the past few years he has done a lot of soul searching, and has found an inner peace and a newfound purpose for his life.

“I am finally at a place in my life where I am not trying to be somebody I am not,” he told the *Sun* in the interview from his home in Nashville. “I am a spiritual man and I believe that I was put on

this earth to make music. I wouldn’t take anything for being from Choctaw County. I am very proud of my roots and the prayers and guidance from my family ‘back home.’”

Herndon said that his uncle Truman Todd has already dubbed the new CD “ordained.”

“He will never know what that meant to me because I know it came from his heart,” Herndon said.

He is also on the road again, traveling nationwide and even worldwide this summer, having accepted an invitation to sing at an event in Greece.

“The summer’s looking great, we’ll be playing a lot of fairs and festivals,” he said. “The phone hasn’t stopped ringing and that’s a blessing.”

In addition to the title track, the CD features Herndon’s powerful vocals on “Someday Soon,” “In the Arms of the One Who Loves Me,” “You Still Own Me,” “Mighty, Mighty Love,” “Love Revival,” “Hide,” “Mercy Line,” “We

Are,” “If I Could Only Have Her Love Back,” and “There Will be A Better Day.”

Herndon’s “What Mattered Most” shot up to #1 on Billboard’s Hot 100 Country Chart in 1995. It won Song of the Year at the annual Music Row magazine awards, and Herndon was named Best New Artist at the 1995 Country Radio Music Awards.

Two years later, after several other hits, he captured an American Music Award Nomination and a Contemporary Achievement honor from the Alabama Music Hall of Fame.

His “What Mattered Most” and “Living in a Moment” albums both were certified as “Gold” sellers, and during the late 1990s, Herndon sold more than four million CDs.

He also scored hits with “Hands of a Working Man,” “Living in a Moment,” “Loved Too Much,” “It Must Be Love,” “A Man Holdin’ On (To a Woman Lettin’ Go)” and “I

Want My Goodbye Back”.

He is the first country artist to be signed by Titan-Pyramid Records, whose talent roster includes stars such as The Band, Eric Carmen, The Doobie Brothers, Dave Edmunds, Asia, The Stray Cats, Joe Walsh, Edgar Winter, Stephen Stills, Snoop Dogg, Sha Na Na and Earth, Wind & Fire.

Herndon said that he wants all of his family members, friends and fans back home in Choctaw County to know how much he appreciates them.

“You guys are the reason why I do what I do,” he said. “I love you all and I hope to see you soon!”

(ED. NOTE: Fans can buy Ty’s new CD at Wal-Mart or other large retail outlets, or the 11 songs can be downloaded from the iTunes website — [www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com) — at a cost of 99 cents each. Fans may also want to check out Ty’s website, [www.tyherndon.com](http://www.tyherndon.com).)

Get more.  
Get the Sun.

## Rick Justice

Need a Car?

Come see Myrna Moore  
At Rick Justice  
Chrysler, Honda, Jeep

You can be financed  
Good, Slow or Bad Credit

Call Myrna at 601-693-4651  
Huge Inventory  
of new and used autos

601-693-4651  
507 Front Street Ext., Meridian, MS




Located between Rick Justice  
Pontiac/Buick/GMC and Anders Furniture

**Stafford Contract Services**  
COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL SERVICES  
• Appliance Repair • Electrical Services  
• General Home Repair • Plumbing & Gas Fitting

**TIM STAFFORD**  
STATE CERTIFIED  
MASTER PLUMBER/GAS FITTER  
Maintenance Service Contracts Available for  
Commercial Property Owners

Local Phone (205) 459-2687      Cellular Phone (334) 341-1279

## TALK-N-TAN

### TANNING PACKAGES

<p>40 - Bulb • 12 Minute Bed \$30.<sup>00</sup> Monthly \$20.<sup>00</sup> for 2 Weeks \$ 5.<sup>00</sup> Per Visit</p>	<p>28 - Bulb • 20 Minute Bed \$20.<sup>00</sup> Monthly \$15.<sup>00</sup> for 2 Weeks \$ 3.<sup>00</sup> Per Visit</p>
---	---

New 2007 Lotions In-Stock  
MAKES A GREAT VALENTINES GIFT!  
1/2 Off selected Lotions!  
Price Good Thru 3-1-2007

13474 Choctaw Ave. Gilbertown • 251-843-3118