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Shining Brightly Over Southwest Alabama

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Briefs

County may get funding for summer mosquito control

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — Choctaw is one of several southwest Alabama counties that could be receiving funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control for mosquito abatement programs.

Jackie R. Holiday, Area Seven Administrator for the Alabama Dept. of Public Health, told the Choctaw Co. Commission on Monday that mosquito populations in the region have surged as a result of Hurricane Katrina, and that Choctaw, Baldwin, Mobile, Washington, Clarke, Marengo and Monroe counties may be receiving funds, along with a number of municipalities in the region.

"This funding will not be enough to maintain a comprehensive countywide program, but it will allow spot treatments," he said.

At the county's discretion, the money could also be used to get rid of illegal tire dumps and other trashy areas where mosquitoes breed.

He asked if the commission is interested.

"You could start today, as far as I'm concerned," Commissioner C.D. "Budd" Ruffin said. The other three commissioners expressed their own interest.

Commissioner Dandy Brown asked Holiday if there are any reported cases of West Nile Virus in the county.

"There have been positive cases identified in Choctaw and many other counties," he said. "We don't monitor for it anymore because we know it's here."

Holiday also presented a brochure and briefly discussed a wide range of services offered by the Choctaw Co. Health Department.

Almanac

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

Thundershowers
Hi 81 • Lo 55
Rain chance 50%
Sunrise: 7:05 a.m.
Sunset: 7:01 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15

Scattered thundershowers
Hi 79 • Lo 47
Rain chance 40%
Sunrise: 7:04 a.m.
Sunset: 7:01 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

Partly cloudy
Hi 71 • Lo 38
Rain chance 10%
Sunrise: 7:02 a.m.
Sunset: 7:02 p.m.

Commission tells department heads:

Cut OT, unnecessary costs

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — Probate Judge D'Wayne May asked the Choctaw Co. Commission and all department heads in the county to take whatever steps necessary to curb employee overtime and to other expenses.

"We have had an inordinate amount of overtime since Jan. 1st in several areas," May said at the March 12th meeting of.

The judge said the county has some major issues that will have to be addressed

soon, one of which is a new roof on the Courthouse.

"Also, the landfill is a major monthly expenditure and the budget just cannot stand any unnecessary expenses," May said.

The judge said he goes over the budget on a weekly basis trying to determine if there are any unnecessary expenditures that can be trimmed.

"The cost of everything is going up," he said, while the county's tax millage remains essentially as it was in the 1980's. Even though one mill of ad valorem tax is worth

about \$50,000 more today than 25 years ago, the cost of fuel, salaries, and the overall cost of providing services has continued to climb, overshadowing any gains made in the increased value of the tax.

May said that one mill of property tax today brings in about \$170,000.

The board unanimously agreed for all department heads to be present at the April 2nd meeting to discuss the budget and what can be done to cut overtime and other costs.

PLANTING FOR A PRETTIER TOWN



Choctaw Sun photo by Tommy Campbell

BUTLER — As part of an on-going clean-up and beautification project in the City of Butler, a group of volunteer adults and young people gathered Saturday morning to clean out flower beds and plant caladium bulbs at City Hall. The workers included Sarah Green, Danielle Anderson, Kaylee Scarbrough, Anna Elizabeth Pope, John Matthew Green, Bailey Agee, Gladys Norton, Phil and Terri Pope, Lisa Agee, Commissioner Henry Lovette, Mayor and Mrs. Ben Smith, Tasha Green, Council Member John A. Boney, Jackie Martin and Nancy Gibson.

Airport board unaware of state report

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — Members of the Choctaw Co. Airport Authority said at Monday's meeting of the Co. Commission that they did not receive copies of a Dec. 14, 2006 letter from the State Dept. of Transportation stating that the local airport's license was being suspended pending the correction of a number of deficiencies at the facility.

According to discussions at Commission meetings in 2006 and early 2007, the terms of Authority board members have all expired, but the county has not yet voted to reappoint them.

"We need to know where the Authority is in regard to board members and an operational plan," Probate Judge

See AIRPORT, page 3A

New officers of the CCAVFD

BUTLER — David Dunn, Fire Chief of the Gilbertown Volunteer Fire Department (right), was elected president of the Choctaw Co. Association of Volunteer Fire Departments at the group's annual meeting last Friday evening in Butler. Vice President Josh Lewis, of the Scott Mountain VFD (left) was re-elected for another term as Vice President. Not pictured is James "Hoot" Bonner who was elected as Secretary-Treasurer of the group, which represents the county's 14 fire departments. Former president Larry Roberts and secretary-treasurer Scott Dees did not seek re-election. (ED. NOTE: A full report on other activities from the meeting will appear in this Friday's "WEEKEND" issue of the Sun — Tommy.)

Choctaw Sun photo by Tommy Campbell



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