



## New engineer to start work April 9th

By Tommy Campbell  
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — William Garry Grantham was formally employed as the county's new engineer on Monday when he and the Choctaw County Commission signed a two-year contract.

Grantham, who is from Wilcox

County, thanked the board for its confidence in him and said he is looking forward to starting work on April 9th.

"I think we can work together to move things forward," he said. "There's some work to be done, but I believe we can handle it with the cooperation of everyone involved."

The state will pay 70 percent of Grantham's \$85,000 per-year salary. The commission is responsible for any fringe benefits such as insurance and retirement.

The motion to hire Grantham was made by Commissioners C.D. "Budd" Ruffin and Henry Lovette and passed unanimously.

## CPA backs out of landfill audit

By Tommy Campbell  
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BUTLER — Probate Judge D'Wayne May said at the March 12th meeting of the Choctaw Co. Commission that an independent CPA whom he had spoken with about performing an audit of financial records of the Choctaw Regional Landfill has backed out.

May said he provided some initial documents to the certified public accountant in Mississippi, who was not identified by name, and that the firm has since decided that it cannot perform a full audit.

"So, we are back looking for an audit firm," May said. One of the problems, he said, is that this is the middle of income tax-return season. "I called six or eight CPA firms, and all of them said would be end of March or mid-April before they could get to it."

In other matters, Commissioner C.D. "Budd" Ruffin gave a brief report on his trip last week to the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. (ED. NOTE: For a complete report on the conference, see the Friday, March 9 issue of the Sun.)

Ruffin said he appreciated the opportunity to represent the county at that meeting.

The board voted unanimously to approve Ruffin's expenses to attend the conference.

Also at the meeting on Monday, Bill Gibson, Director of the county's Emergency Management Agency, said that he had sent a letter to U.S. Senator Richard Shelby asking for help in finding money to replace the hurricane-damaged roof on the Courthouse. Gibson said he sent essentially the same letter to U.S. Rep. Artur Davis.

Gibson again asked the board to compile a list of its heavy equipment, such as dump trucks, front-end loaders, and the like, which could be used in the event of a disaster such as the tornado that struck in Wilcox County two weeks ago.

He said that the state is expecting to receive some travel trailers from FEMA, and asked if the commissioners were interested

in having the trailers for use as district offices, storage, or other purposes. All four commissioners expressed an interest, and Gibson said he would find out more details from FEMA regarding their availability.

Ruffin asked Gibson if he could give the board an update at the next meeting on all active fire hydrants in District Two. Ruffin had, several months ago, expressed concern because a number of hydrants in his district are not operational.

Gibson said he had discussed that subject with fire chiefs at the annual meeting of the Choctaw Co. Association of Volunteer Fire Departments last Friday.

Chip Harrigan, Chairman, and Nancy Gibson, Vice Chairman, of the Twin Rivers Economic Development Partnership, presented a copy of the group's new marketing brochure that will be used in trying to raise a five-year budget of \$1.5 million in the two-county region.

Harrigan said the group was formed in the spring of last year and has been busy.

"We have three directors from Choctaw County (Gibson, Kelvin Hill, and Earlae Nealey) and three from Clarke County," he said, in addition to a leadership team that includes Butler Mayor Ben Smith, Georgia Dozier, Shirley Perry, Danny D'Andrea, Gilbertown Mayor Bobby Graham, Lee McPhearson, Probate Judge D'Wayne May, Jennifer James, Cecil "Bud" Martin, Mitchell Presley, William Utsey and Angie Williams.

With an annual budget of \$300,000, Twin Rivers hopes to hire a full-time economic developer who will go out and actively seek new industry and business for the region.

Harrigan said the group hopes to raise 50% of its \$1.5 million goal in the private sector and 50% from public entities.

Bridget Shewmake, Campaign Coordinator, was also present for Monday's meeting.

"I am excited about this partnership," Mayor Smith commented. "As most of us know, economic development is very essential for our area in southwest Alabama.

The 10-12 counties here are among the poorest in state."

Smith said the Town of Butler was among the first to commit to helping the project.

"We have to move our search for industry to a higher level," he said. "Once we get to that position you will see a lot of change in both counties."

To do that, Smith said, will take a concerted effort, as well as full-time leadership.

"We need somebody who's a professional, who's out there hunting for us everyday," he said.

In other matters, McPhearson said he had spoken with a district engineer with the State Highway Department about a permit that needs to be signed in order to keep two "Welcome to Lavaca" signs on Ala. Hwy. 10 in that community.

McPhearson said that a permit application which was sent to the county was for a municipality and does not fit the county's situation, so the engineer is revising the permit and will be sending it at some point in the future.

"The county will have to execute it, but I don't know when we will get it," he said.

The state has decreed that the signs — which were erected by private citizens — are not properly permitted and must be taken down unless something is done by March 20th.

May asked McPhearson to see where the matter stands with the state, and that a special meeting could be called, if necessary, to take action to sign the permit before the state's deadline.

The board, without discussion, voted unanimously to reappoint William Drinkard to the Choctaw-Edna Water Authority, and also to appoint Judge May to serve as a Trustee of the county's pension plan.

Commissioners voted to amend the pension plan so that employees with benefits of \$5,000 or less could receive those funds in a lump sum rather than over a period of months or years.

The board also approved an application for the retail sale of table wines (off premises) for J&E Changing Times, of Cullomburg.

## Sun Country Calendar

*There is no charge to list an upcoming non-profit or charitable event for your church, school, civic group, fire department, etc. Meetings of governmental entities may also be included. Send your announcement as far in advance as possible. Calendar items may be mailed, faxed, emailed, delivered in person to our offices in Butler or Gilbertown, or left in our drop box at The Country Corner in Butler.*

**Monday, March 12 – 16th**  
SPRING REVIVAL, 7 p.m. nightly. Rev. J.C. Wilkes of the Miles Chapel C.M.E. Church, of Reform, will be the evangelist for the week.

**Tuesday, March 13th**  
CHOCTAW CO. RETIRED TEACHERS meeting, 10 a.m., Rush Medical Clinic in Gilbertown.

CHOCTAW CO. BOARD OF EDUCATION meeting, 5:30 p.m., Southern Choctaw Elementary School, Gilbertown.

CLEAN SWEEP meeting, to plan a county-wide clean-up day for Choctaw County on Sat., March 31, 7 p.m., Old Buddies Restaurant, Butler. All fire departments, teachers, churches, civic groups, elected officials, and concerned citizens are urged to come and take part. For more information call Tommy Campbell at 251-843-6397.

**Wednesday, March 14th**  
RECORDING ARTISTS BILL AND VICKI SKY will present a special program of gospel music at Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church, Melvin, 7 p.m. The family has appeared on TBN and PTL networks and others. No admission charge but love offerings will be accepted. For more information, Call 601-776-0308.  
FOOD SOURCE DEADLINE, Choctaw Community Development Center.

**Thursday, March 15th**  
CHOCTAW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER, Inc. will host an Associate Workshop for the Black Belt Community Foundation, 5:30 p.m., at the Old East Choctaw School on Ala. 10 East.

PUBLIC MEETING — The Choctaw County FEMA Board of Directors will meet on March 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in the Board Room of the county office located at 1003 South Mulberry Avenue.

**Fri., March 16th – Sun., March 18th**  
WEEKEND REVIVAL, SINGING, HOME-COMING, Wimberly Methodist Protestant Church, Friday night (7 p.m.) Rev. James "Skippy" Gates; Saturday night (7 p.m.), the world-famous Sullivan Family from St. Stephens will be singing, with refreshments served afterward; Sunday morning will be Homecoming with dinner following the service.

DANCE, sponsored by Choctaw Community Development Center, 8 p.m. - 11:45 p.m., old East Choctaw School on Ala. 10 East. Admission \$5.

**Saturday, March 17th**  
BENEFIT PROGRAM for Akeria and Janae Williams and Jeanifer Monghan, New Mt. Mariah M.B. Church, Nanafalia, 6:30 p.m. Rev. Alphonso Bowen, Pastor and Sis. Sheila Spears, Chairperson.

THE LEGENDARY SULLIVAN FAMILY, bluegrass gospel recording artists, will sing at Wimberly Methodist Protestant Church at 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken.

**Sunday, March 18th**  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY DAY, Calvary Baptist Church, Pickens Avenue, Butler. Fellowship will begin at 9:30 a.m. with coffee in the fellowship hall, Sunday School at 10 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m.

BENEFIT PROGRAM for J.L. Cunningham, 7 p.m., Pleasant Chapel Baptist Church of Silas. Rev. Bobby Ray Bolton, Pastor.

A CELEBRATION OF LOVE for Minister Pierre McGrew, 3 p.m., Greater C&J Holiness Church, Millry. Guest speaker Rev. Claude Jordon of Mathersville, MS. The Pastor is Apostle J.E. Johnson.

CCHS CLASS OF 1978 REUNION MEETING, Ezell's Fish Camp, 5 p.m. All interested classmates are urged to attend. For more information contact Sylvia Bunn Thomas at 205-398-3966 or by email at sbthomas@tds.net or Gladys Bishop Eddie at 398-2106.

NOTE-BURNING CEREMONY, Heritage Church of God, Gilbertown. Guest speaker, Tim Brown.

WOMEN'S DAY PROGRAM, Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Butler, 1:30 p.m. Rev. Cleo McGrew Sr., Pastor.

WOMEN'S DAY PROGRAM, Wahalak Missionary Baptist Church, Butler, 11:30 a.m. Sis. Stephanie Steele will talk and Pastor James T. Steele will do the sermon.

**Tuesday, March 20th**  
CHOCTAW CO. BAPTIST ASSOCIATION Vacation Bible School Clinic, Toxey Baptist Church, 7-8:30 p.m.

**Fri., March 23rd - Sun., March 25th**  
TWO-NIGHT REVIVAL, 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, culminating at 11 a.m. Sunday. W.A.V.E. Ministries/Vision Church, Butler Civic Center. For more information contact Mia (Grice) Wilkes, Pastor and Overseer at 251-406-2499.

**Saturday, March 24th**  
BENEFIT, Pleasant Hill Vol. Fire Dept., fish and chicken plates served from 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Boston Butts also available. To place an order see any fireman or call 205-459-3228.

**Sunday, March 25th**  
APPRECIATION PROGRAM for The Silver-tones of Silas, 5 p.m., Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Silas. Rev. T.L. Ware, Pastor.  
STEWARDS AND DEACONS PROGRAM, Shiloh C.M.E. Church, Cromwell, 2 p.m. Guest speaker Rev. Charles Paul of Troy, NY. Rev. Larry Williams, Pastor.

## Obituaries

### Elmer Lee Busby

SILAS — Elmer Lee Busby, 70, died on March 4, 2007 at his home in Silas.

Services were held March 7, 2007 at the Pentecostal Church in Silas with Rev. Clifford Moore officiating. Interment was in the Stewart Cemetery at Chapel Hill.

Survivors include his mother, Ethel Busby, of Silas; his wife, Suzie Marie Busby, of Silas; three sons, Henry L. Busby, of Silas, Eddie Levasseur, of Memphis, TN, and Gary Paul Eckardt, of Minooka, IL; two daughters, Jeanine Eckardt, of Lockport, IL, Kelly Sue Barham, of Meridian, MS; one brother, Charles Busby, of Souwilpa; one sister, Jean McGuire, of Silas; and 13 grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, Dennis A. Busby, one daughter, Dot Busby, and one grandchild Lisa Marie Webb.

Pallbearers were Gary P. Eckardt, Anthony Busby, Edward Levasseur, Wade Barham, David McIlwain, and Garyie Davis.

Phillips Funeral Home in Gilbertown was in charge of arrangements.

### Leon Carter

CHATOM — Leon Carter, 81, died March 6, 2007 at Washington County Nursing Home in Chatom.

He was retired from the State of Alabama Highway Department as a Supervisor and was a former resident of the Morgan Chapel community.

He was the son of the late Lewis and Alma Wilson Carter.

Funeral services were held March 8, 2007 at Pleasant Hill Methodist Church with Rev. William Carter officiating. Interment was in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife, Sarah Jane Carter, of Toxey; five sons, William Leon Carter and Clifton Leon Carter, both of Toxey, Lee Carter of Baton Rouge, LA, Conrad O'Neal Carter, of Butler, and John Andrew Clark Carter, of Linden; four daughters, Virginia Norris, of Toxey, Patsey Joyce Wilson, of Foley, Betty Frazer, of Meridian, MS, Janice Helen Boykin, of Fruitdale; one sister, Susie Alma Dawson, of Bessemer; 29 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Joshua Carter, Allen Clanahan, Jeremy Wilson, David Carter, Duke Taylor, Christopher Stanford Wilkinson and Willie "Peanut" Wilkinson.

Bumpers Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

### Susie Carter Dawson

BIRMINGHAM — Susie Carter Dawson, 93, died March 10, 2007 in Birmingham.

Services were held at Bumpers Funeral Home Chapel in Butler on March 11 with Thomas Dawson officiating. Interment was in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

Survivors include one son, Thomas Dawson, and a host of nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers were Stan Wilkison, Peanut Wilkison, Joshua Carter, Thomas Dawson, Buddy Norris, Allen Clanahan, and Alton Boykin.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of the arrangements.

### William Riley Johnson

BUTLER — William Riley Johnson, 59, died March 9, 2007 at Rush Foundation Hospital in Meridian, MS.

Services were held at Mt. Sterling Cemetery on March 11 with Rev. J.D. Weed officiating. Interment was in Mt. Sterling Cemetery.

Survivors include three sisters, Betty Jay May and Patty Allen Young, both of Butler, Helen Clark of Meridian, MS; and his mother, Katie Whiddon Johnson, of Butler.

Pallbearers were John W. Jay II, Terry Beck, Earl Young, Steve Bryant, Joe Littlepage, and J.R. Littlepage.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of the arrangements.

### Whitted E. Mosley

BUTLER -- Services for Whitted E. Mosley, of the Scott Mountain community, were held on March 13, 2007 at Bumpers Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Leon Ross officiating. Internemt was in the Stewart Cemetery.

Mr. Mosley, 72, was born on Nov. 16, 1934 in Choctaw County and died on March 10 at Jeff Anderson Regional Medical Center in Meridian.

He was a self-employed air conditioning and refrigeration repairman, and a U.S. Navy veteran of World War Two.

He is survived by a son, Randall Mosley, of Butler; two half-brothers, Larry Thomas, of Georgia and Lamar

Thomas, of Mobile; a sister, Snooks Newton, of Gilbertown; two half-sisters, Jo Ann Bankston, of Mobile and Willie Rae Yagerton, of Laurel, MS; and two grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Terry Kelly, Terry Tyson, David Turner, Roy Copeland, Bobby Kelly, Hoss Kelly, and Carl Bankston.

Bumpers Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

