

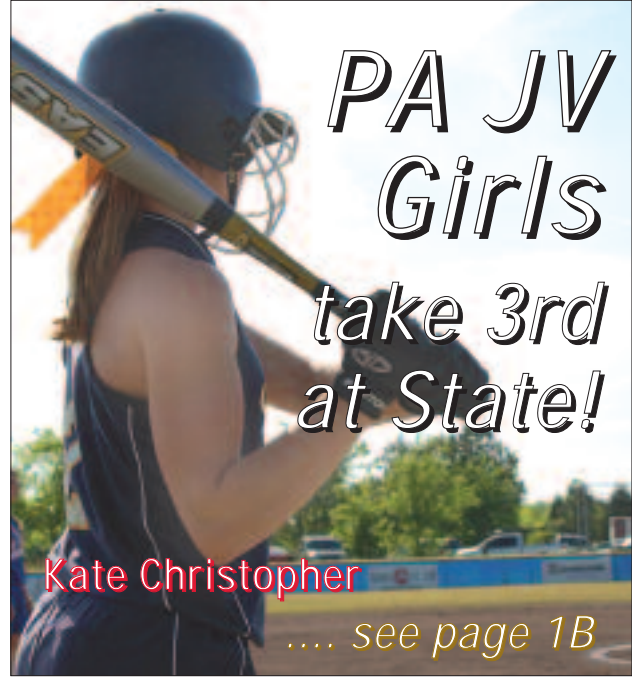
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The Choctaw
Sun

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Deputy sues county for overtime

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

MOBILE – A federal lawsuit filed by a Choctaw Co. Sheriff's Deputy alleges that he and other county employees have

failed to receive overtime pay for the past three years as required by law. Clifton Spears, who has been on extended medical leave after he was critically burned in the line of duty in May of last

year, filed the suit last week in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Alabama in Mobile. In the lawsuit, which presents only one side of the legal argument, Spears claims that

he and other employees of the Sheriff's Department and Choctaw Co. Commission worked as many as 65 hours per week, sometimes working through meal times, with only sporadic overtime pay or com-

pensatory time off. "I believe I have not been paid appropriately for all compensable time, which I have worked, including overtime,"
See LAWSUIT, page 4A

Thomas named principal of GCHS

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

EUTAW – A former administrator at a local school who left the Choctaw Co. Public School System under a cloud of controversy has been named principal of Greene Co. High School.



Dyana Thomas, who is also the Vice Chairman of the Sumter Co. Board of Education, has reportedly been officially hired but has not yet assumed the duties of the office pending contractual
See THOMAS, page 4A



Firefighters' home, car a total loss

WOMACK HILL – A Saturday evening fire completely destroyed the mobile home and a car belonging to Byron and Sherry Dickerson, on Chestnut Road in the Womack Hill community. The fire on April 21st had fully engulfed the residence by the time firefighters from Gilbertown and Lusk were notified and arrived on the scene. The couple was out of town visiting relatives at the time. A cause of the fire had not been determined at presstime, but – at the request of the Dickersons – the State Fire Marshall has been called in to investigate the scene. Firefighters were able to save Byron's pickup truck but all of their other possessions were lost in the fire. Pictured are Gilbertown Fire Chief David Dunn (right), and Lusk firefighter Doug Hare (left).

CCC may sue to resolve landfill issue

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – With the unresolved sale of the landfill now into its sixth year, Probate Judge D'Wayne May and the Choctaw Co. Commission took steps Tuesday to try and bring the matter to a close, even if those steps involve the filing of a lawsuit to allow a judge and jury to decide. But, May was quick to add, the process will take time and will not be cheap. "There are some ongoing discussions, but I still do not see much movement with the
See LANDFILL page 3A

WIRED grant working toward economic development for West Alabama and East Mississippi

ASCC hosts first in series of Regional Roundtable discussions

By Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN – "Nearly 100 regions in the nation applied for this grant," said Angie Williams, director of Alabama Southern Community College's Gilbertown branch. "Our region is one of only 13 chosen." On April 12, officials from community colleges and governmental agencies throughout East Mississippi and West Alabama came together at the Gilbertown branch of ASCC to put together a plan that could potentially affect over a million people in a region that encompasses portions of the two states. The group met with one goal in mind – the economic development of a region that is badly in need of such

efforts. Using the recently-awarded three-year WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) grant, the initiative could affect a 37-county region including a total of about 100 communities. Sponsored jointly by ASCC and Jones County Community College in Mississippi, last week's Regional Roundtable in Gilbertown marked the first in a series of discussions among the WAEM (West Ala./East Miss.) Region's officials to put together plans for the initiative. "We have five colleges here today," Williams told the Sun during the event. "They've committed to continue with workforce development here in this area."
See WIRED, page 4A



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