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The Choctaw Sun

Shining Brightly Over Southwest Alabama



Needham fighting to save its Post Office

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

NEEDHAM — The U.S. Post Office at Needham has been serving the community since May 3, 1910, and Mayor Quinnie Donald intends to do everything in his power to make sure it stays that way.

"We just can't lose our Post Office," he told the Sun.

Word has reached Needham that the powers that be in Washington are considering closing the tiny post office, and Donald is calling for help from U.S. Senators Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions, and U.S. Rep. Artur Davis to try and head off any

such move. He also told the Sun that members of the Needham community need to get involved by writing letters and making phone calls of their own.

"The sooner the better," he said. "If people don't get involved we could lose an important part of our town."

A spokesperson for the U.S.

Postal Service told the Sun that the Post Office is not on an official closure list — "yet" — but offered no further comments.

Mayor Donald said that, at this point, the community needs to rally to let officials know how much the Post Office means to the community.

"Letters and phone calls will

go a long way to helping keep it open," he said.

Since many state and federal officials get this newspaper, letters of support should also be sent to *The Choctaw Sun's* "Letters to the Editor" section.

The small building, sandwiched between a flower shop

See **NEEDHAM**, page 6A

Council to revisit business license decision

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

PENNINGTON — Pennington Mayor Jack Fendley said at a rescheduled meeting of the Town Council last Thursday evening that some adjustments may be forthcoming in regard to a controversial business license fee schedule adopted by the municipality last fall.

The fee schedule, which is said by some local business owners to be among the most expensive in the nation, went into effect on Jan. 1st.

"Yes, we are going to look at it, and yes, some changes may be made," Fendley said, responding to concerns from local business owner Mike Norwood about the ordinance.

The move to adopt the new schedule, which is based on the gross receipts of a business rather than the old "flat rate" fees as most municipalities have traditionally levied, came as a result of The Alabama Business License Reform Act of 2006 which was passed in last year's regular session of the State Legislature. While the Act doesn't have to be implemented until

See **COUNCIL**, page 5A



World War II veteran H.R. Stokley reads the names on the Veterans Memorial which was dedicated Saturday in Old Town Silas.

Old Town Silas dedicates Veterans Memorial Park

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

SILAS — A number of veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom from three states were on hand Saturday, March

31 for the dedication of the Old Town Silas Veterans Memorial Park.

"It's not often that you get to take part in something that means so much to so many people," Mayor Roy Davis said in welcoming those present. "We

See **VETERANS**, page 6A

COMMISSION:

County cannot continue to bear expenses of landfill

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — "When you are putting out the kind of money that we are on the landfill, I do not want people to think that the landfill is not being worked on or that the Choctaw County Commission has not resolved to find a solution to the landfill," Probate Judge D'Wayne May said at the April 2nd meeting of that board.

May said that most of the certified public accountants with whom he has spoken regarding getting a private audit performed of the landfill's finances have said that they are simply swamped until after the "tax-time crush" is over in mid-April.

"Hopefully, by the first meeting in May we will have something to report and a clearer vision of where we are going with this thing," May said of the financial quagmire that has put the county in one of the worst financial drains in its history.

Now into its sixth year, the landfill deal is draining money from the county's cash-strapped general fund at a rate of more than \$27,000 a month to pay the interest on a \$3.8 million bond issue ... a bond issue which was borrowed for the purpose of renovating the facility; with the understanding that a deal was imminent and that any amounts expended by the county toward that end would be reimbursed by the buyers at the time the deal was consummated.

That has not yet happened, and state and federal agencies, from the Internal Revenue Service to the Alabama Attorney General's office, continue to investigate the agreement.

In addition to the interest expense, legal bills alone add up to several thousand additional dollars a year that also must be paid from the general fund.

"There are so many things to consider when you look at the whole picture," May said. "The IRS, the bond issue, the fact that Choctaw County cannot continue to bear this expense."

See **LANDFILL**, page 6A

Egg hunt, singing planned at Needham

NEEDHAM -- There will be an Easter Egg Hunt and bluegrass/gospel singing at Broadhead Park in Needham on Saturday, April 7th beginning at 11 a.m.

Everyone is invited. Bring your lawn chairs.

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