

■ Veterans

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want this to honor our military people from the past, the present, and those who will fight for America in the future.” Members of the Southern Choctaw High School Jr. ROTC Color Guard presented the American flag, and SCHS student Neshia Johnson sang the National Anthem.

Rev. Don Whigham, Pastor of Silas Baptist Church and himself a Vietnam veteran, thanked God for the blessings of freedom and liberty, and for the sacrifices made by America's men and women in uniform over the years.

“Psalms 33:12 tells us that blessed is the nation who's God is the Lord,” Whigham said. “Sometimes it is so easy to forget the people who have served. In World War Two, there were many people who, just like today with the war in Iraq, simply do not understand why it is better to fight the enemy there rather than here.”

Whigham said America will remain a blessed nation only if it recognizes that God is in control and continues to do what is right.

“We are here to honor the men and women who fought and died to win the freedom that we enjoy today,” he said. “The voices of thousands of fallen soldiers call out to us, saying, ‘do not forget!’”

An emotional Whigham recalled that America was as divided over Vietnam as it is over Iraq.

“I remember being spit on,” he said, his voice breaking. “I remember being cursed. It came to the point that we sol-

diers could not wear our uniforms in public, we had to wear civilian clothes. Yet today, America is blessed because of what all of our veterans did to secure the blessings of freedom for our own people and those people of other nations.”

Whigham reminded everyone that freedom is far from being free.

“There is a high price for what we enjoy today,” he said. “That is why we must never, ever forget.”

It is hard for skeptics to understand why America's men and women are willing to put on the uniform and go off to foreign lands to fight and die for people they don't even know.

“Why do we do it? Why do we make these sacrifices for places like Iraq, and Afghanistan? So that people there can enjoy the same freedoms that we enjoy.”

Medford Taylor, a member of the Veterans Memorial committee, is also a Vietnam veteran, and thanked the mayor and town council for allowing the memorial to be built.

“It means a lot to the veterans and our families,” he said.

He also thanked everyone who donated their time, talents, and money toward the project.

“I can't name everyone, but I do want to especially thank Buddy Davis, James Welford, Jamie Welford, Freddie Campbell and Cotton (Sylvester) McGrew, and all of those who believed in what we wanted to do.”

Taylor said the project actually began in 2002 while former mayor Debra Fox was in office.

“It is being dedicated today but it is not ‘complete,’” he said. “It is a living entity and there are spaces for many more names to be added.”

Taylor, who was a Staff Sergeant with the 1st Air Cavalry Division, saw combat action in southeast Asia.

“Military service is special to veterans,” he said. “Its something they never forget.”

Taylor said that the men and women who served in World War II came home to ticker-tape parades and heroes' welcomes.

“The men and women who served in Korea were pretty much ignored, while Vietnam veterans came home as ‘killers’. Yet all veterans share a common experience of service to their country when their country called. This thread forever binds all veterans together. A veteran's service should be important to all of us because that is why we are still free.”

The memorial, he said, helps to establish a permanent reminder of each veteran's sacrifice for his or her country.

“This memorial will help us to keep them in our hearts and our minds,” Taylor said. “The next time you go to the polls to vote, the next time you attend a house of worship or pick up a newspaper, remember these names of this wall and remember that it was their sacrifices, and those of thousands of other soldiers, who gave you those freedoms and privileges. Like the sign says, this memorial is a place where heroes have not fallen but will be forever remembered.”

Many of the Vietnam veterans present for the occasion wore patches that read, “We went there as strangers and came home as brothers.” Many wore the somber black on white Prisoner of War / Missing In Action patches.

Henry Arceneaux, a friend of Taylor's and himself a Vietnam veteran, said that he and his wife have been visiting Silas

for some time.

A state official in the Louisiana American Legion Post, Arceneaux said that he is humbled because his own name is included on the wall.

“My name is not on any memorial even in my home state,” he said, “so I thank you and I am grateful.”

More than 2,500 American soldiers are still listed as MIA in southeast Asia, he said. Even though it has been more than 30 years in some of their cases, reports continue to filter out of Vietnam of sightings of persons believe to be live American POW's.

“We still don't know what happened to all of them,” Arceneaux said. “But we need to be finding out! If Vietnam is not going to send them back to us then they need to send us back so we can go get them!”

A reception in the Silas Community House followed the ceremony.

Persons who would like to honor a family member or friend with a plaque on the wall may do so for \$25 per name. To order a plaque, send a check or money order for the proper amount to the address listed below, along with the following information on the veteran:

- Name
- Branch of Service
- Rank
- Years served

Contact information for the person placing the order (name, mailing address, telephone number, email address, etc.) should also be included.

Town of Silas
370 First Street
Silas, AL 36919

■ Needham

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and Needham Grocery, is part of the “heart and soul” of the historic former railroad community, Mayor Donald said.

If it isn't the smallest Post Office in the United States – in terms of square footage – it is certainly one of the smallest, which in itself is a unique distinction that could even be used to the facility's advantage.

Stamp and postal history collectors – or philatelists, as they are called – love to collect letters and postcards from small, rural post offices that still “hand-cancel” postage stamps with a local postmark. Properly promoted through philatelic journals, magazines and newspapers, a steady stream of letters and postcards from collectors around the world could be realized as those persons seek to get a piece of mail

with the “Needham, Alabama” postmark for their collections. And that could translate into “numbers” – or pieces of mail processed by the local facility – which is something postal authorities in Washington understand.

Another thing that could help ensure the facility's viability is for people to use it more often – not only in mailing letters and packages there, but to also buy stamps, money orders, and to take advantage of other postal services.

Melinda Covington, who was named Officer-In-Charge on Sept. 29, 2006, told the *Sun* that the Post Office serves about 45 families through Post Office box delivery, and more than 270 on a rural route.

Historically, according to Postal officials in Washington, Elysha J. Kirksey was appointed the first postmaster of Needham on May 3, 1910. He was succeeded by John L.

Skinner on Dec. 24, 1919, followed by William Felix Broadhead who was first appointed Acting Postmaster on Jan. 1, 1922 and then Postmaster on Oct. 3, 1922. Broadhead's wife, Nora Thelma Broadhead, succeeded her husband when she was appointed Acting Postmaster on July 31, 1954 and Postmaster on Oct. 11, 1954. The Broadheads' son, Arthur Broadhead, was appointed Officer-In-Charge on Jan. 12, 1979, and Postmaster on June 14, 1980. He retired last September.

An earlier Post Office was established at Bogueloosa on Sept. 3, 1857 with Isaac H. Simmons as Postmaster. That office was closed on April 20, 1859.

(PUB. NOTE: Readers may call Sen. Shelby's Mobile office at 251-694-4164; Sen. Sessions' Mobile office at 251-414-3083; and Rep. Davis' Demopolis office at 334-287-0860.

■ Landfill

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May said the Commission is charged with making sure the county doesn't “go bankrupt in the process.”

“There has to be a lot more thought and preparation put into getting out of this than was put into it going in,” he said. “Frankly, it was a bad decision on Choctaw County's part, in my opinion, and I want Choctaw County to come out of this above water. The citizens expect the Commission to resolve this, and I want them to know that we are working on it and hopefully will have clearer view of where we are going within the next 30 days.”

Commissioner Clyde Dixon said the unresolved landfill deal is getting to be a thorn in the side among his employees as well as the citizens of his district.

“My men say if we can pay this landfill thing why won't we pay them more,” he said. “When is this Commission going to set a date to end this? Are we

going to just sit here or make them do something?”

Attorney Lee McPhearson said that by the May meeting, the board may be in a much better position to make some informed decisions as to where the landfill deal is headed.

“Litigation is not free, as we all know,” May said. “It costs a great deal of money. We have been preaching ‘budget, budget, budget’, and I feel like it is incumbent upon me as chairman and you as commissioners to have a clear view of where we are going.”

May said that no one likes to think in terms of bankruptcy or laying off employees.

“But we have to be real honest about this, it would be hard to go out and borrow money for any reason right now,” he said. “We are sitting here with a \$3.8 million landfill bond, a bond issue from 2002 that indebted some of our gasoline tax money to pay off yet another bond issue, and then the Commission so graciously issued a \$19 million bond issue when they decided

to go into the school business.”

May said that the Commission – through it's decision to allow the county's good name and credit to be used to borrow money for the construction of the county's three new schools – actually owns the schools and leases them back to the Board of Education.

“I'm not saying that some things are not necessary, but it behooves people to put much thought and preparation into a decision than I see that has been put into some of these,” he said. “Just because someone has something that glitters like gold doesn't mean its gold. If you hear ‘FREE’ you better check it out because nothing is free in this world except our salvation.”

May said that he wants to see the landfill issue settled as much as anyone, but does not intend to jump off into “deep water” until all of the facts are on the table and the Commission has looked at all viable options.

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John Higdon
 Vice President, Butler

- trips to the post office ... too many to count
- 21 years at First United Security Bank
- 39 years in banking
- 7 great-nephews and-nieces, all great (and more that call him uncle)
- 8—month when football returns every fall!
- 15 miles plus walked each week
- Active member of the Industrial Development Board where thousands of lives have been impacted

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The *Sun's* offices in Gilberttown and Butler will be closed on April 6th for **Good Friday** in grateful appreciation for what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ did for us by giving his life on the Cross.
May you have a Blessed and Happy Easter!

Calvary Baptist Church
 Ladies Ministry of Butler, AL
 Cordially invites you to
The First Annual Ladies Retreat
 April 28th 2007
 The Theme: "Scrap Booking Memories"
 Your Walk With God
 Schedule: 9:30 am
 1st Session - 10:00 - 11:30 am • Lunch 11:30 am - 12:30 pm • 2nd Session 12:30 - 2:00 pm
 A Nursery will be provided with advanced registrations!
 Please Contact Stephanie Bonner at bonner2696@yahoo.com or call 877-640-2873
 Registration Forms may be mailed to:
 Diane Barlow 605 Gibbons Blvd. Butler, AL 36904
 113 Pickens Ave. • Butler, Alabama

Registration Form

Name _____ Address _____
 Phone #(s) _____ E-mail _____
 Number to attend \$ _____ Total Paid _____ Yes, I will need the nursery for _____ Children.
 \$10.00 each
 List Childrens Names and Ages _____

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