

"After all these years ..."



Choctaw Sun photos by Dee Ann Campbell

WWII, Korean War vets to receive high school diplomas

A Choctaw Sun exclusive page 2C

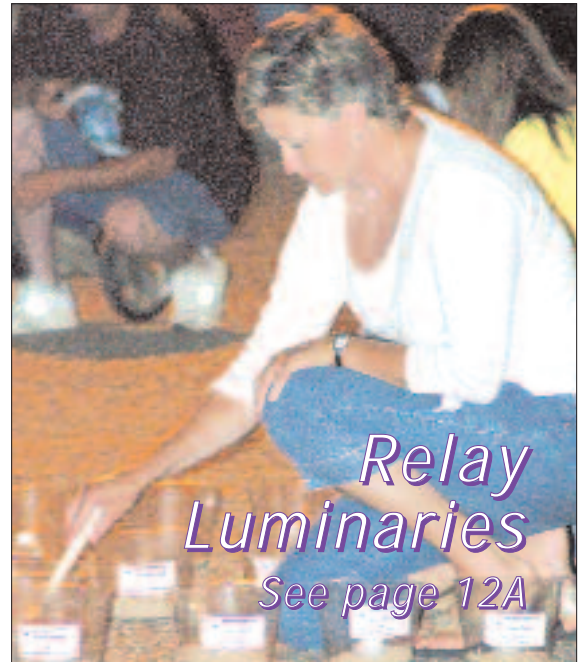
WEDNESDAY
May 16, 2007

Our Fourth Year • No. 37
48 pages, 4 sections

Special 24-page
Salute to the Grads
begins on page C1



Shining Brightly Over Southwest Alabama



Relay Luminaries
See page 12A

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Committee asks public to call in support of hospital

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – Concerned that inattentiveness by elected officials in Washington may end up forcing a promised new hospital to be built outside the city limits of Butler, two local men have formed a committee for the purpose of convincing Alabama's two senators and District Seven U.S. Representative to secure a Congressional waiver of a regulation that is currently holding up construction of the facility at the preferred site.

Dr. Bubba Martin, a retired pathologist from Meridian who now has a home in Butler, and J.W. "Jimmy" Cowan, Jr., the Executive Director of Choctaw Emergency Medical Services, Inc., the local ambulance service, said they formed the New Hospital Now Committee to encourage citizens to contact Senators Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions, and Rep. Artur Davis and ask them to speed up the process of getting a waiver of the frustrating "35-mile rule".

"People need to call them immediately," Cowan
See HOSPITAL, page 5A

Top of the Class of 2007

Choctaw County High



DANIEL DYKES
Valedictorian



ERIN BRYAN
Salutatorian

Patrician Academy



KAILA GARCIA-RIOS
Valedictorian



TONY RANDOLPH, JR.
Salutatorian

South Choctaw Academy



LAURA ABSTON
Valedictorian



LAUREN JACKSON
Salutatorian

Southern Choctaw High



PHILLIP PHILON
Valedictorian



TRENT SINGLEY
Salutatorian

Good news for fishermen, boaters

State may rebuild McCarty's Ferry boat ramp

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER — Vance Wood, a game and fish officer with the Alabama Dept. of Conservation, told the County Commission on Monday that — if everything works out — the State will come in and rebuild and maintain the boat ramp at McCarty's Ferry Landing, if the county will agree to maintain the rest of the Tombigbee River park.

The property is owned by the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and has been closed for several years due to the unsafe condition of the boat-launching ramp and major sedimentation problems with river-borne silt and mud.

Wood, however, said he has been in talks with the Corps for some time in an attempt to get them to lease the property to the county.

"I need for that lease to be signed as soon as possible because an engineering survey

will have to be done," Wood said. The Corps is going to a fee-based system for providing such services in the future, and Wood said he had been given verbal assurance that if the project happened soon, the Corps would not charge a fee for its services.

"I want this ramp to be opened back up so the citizens can access some good fishing areas," Wood said. "We have looked at it and we believe it's workable."

The State proposes to move

the landing slightly downriver and at a different angle that won't require as much maintenance, Wood said.

"We have already met with local citizens who have been trying to keep it clean, and I am real excited about what they have done," Wood said. "I think they should be recognized. If we had more citizens like that we would be in great shape."

Wood said he and Commissioner Henry Lovette met with Corps officials and residents in

the area, and that as soon as the county signs the lease, the state will sub-lease the property so that construction can begin on a new boat ramp.

The project will also include opening up an area on the riverbank for "bank fishing", Wood said.

"The state is ready to step in and partner with you, and I'm excited because this is going to come to Choctaw County," he said.

See MCCARTY'S, page 5A

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