



BOE sets summer school dates, costs

By Tommy Campbell
and Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

GILBERTOWN — Southern Choctaw High School has a student population of 411 that is growing steadily, Principal Betty McBride told the Choctaw Co. Board of Education at its May 15th meeting, which her school hosted.

McBride said she is extremely proud of the 2007 senior class, which received more than \$1.3 million in scholarships.

"We try to instill a sense of community service in our students," she said. Many of the students serve as volunteers with local hospice services, volunteer fire departments, help at churches and with other community events, and even raised money to send to help rebuild the school in Enterprise, Alabama which was destroyed by a tornado earlier this year, she added.

The 23 new inductees in the school's Jr. Beta Club is the highest number in several years, she said.

"We have a newly formed drama club which is made possible by a grant of \$25,000," she said. "This is making it possible for us to bring things here that children would not otherwise be exposed to, such as a storyteller, musicians, and a very popular play that our students performed in recently."

The school has a very active journalism class, a student newspaper, and an exciting new course called Career Discoveries which helps students explore various jobs to find which one they are most interested in.

"We are trying to find acreage and money so that we can have a softball field," she said. "We have a strong group of parents and supporters who met last night, and we are going to ask for what we want — acreage to construct the kind of parks we want children to have."

Mrs. McBride said the group will be asking adjacent landowners for long-term leases or donations of land.

"Then we will start the grant-writing process," she said. "Want to ask the board to support us in this effort. We will bring our final plan to you for approval, but we want you to know that this is very important to our school."

Following McBride's comments about her school, the BOE rendered a variety of end-of-school personnel decisions.

Superintendent of Education Sue Moore made the following recommendations which were voted on and approved unanimously with a few exceptions (which are noted in parenthesis):

- Employed Gregory Harvey for summer school maintenance at Choctaw Co. Elementary School at the rate of \$11 per hour.

- Employed Brenda Cunningham for summer maintenance at Choctaw Co. Elementary School at the rate of \$8 per hour.

- Approved leave of absence for Dorothy R. Ruffin, an extension of Family Medical Leave from Feb. 5 through May 30, 2007.

- Accepted the resignation of Dana Harwell, School Improvement Specialist.

Moore said she would like to commend Harwell who is leaving to become a professor at the University of West Alabama.

"She has her doctorate and she is moving on to the next level — getting student teachers ready for us," Moore said.

- Voted to non-renew non-tenured and probationary employees. (See related article in this issue.)

- Approved the restoration of sick leave days for Mary Ann Bush, Janitor at CCHS.

- Reinstated and reassigned Johnnie Mae Eddie to SCHS as a teacher for the remainder of the cur-

rent school year and for the 2007-08 school year pursuant to her job description as a result of a Hearing Officer's findings. (See related story in this issue)

(The motion by board members Ronald Hampton and Shepherd was approved 4-1, with Wayne Taylor voting "no.")

- Approved the withdrawal of the previously approved retirement of Sgt. Houston Cunningham, JROTC instructor.

In other matters, the board gave approval for the use of Choctaw Co. High School as an alternate site for the food stamp program in the event of a large-scale disaster. Also, for Choctaw Co. Elementary and Southern Choctaw Elementary to be used as emergency shelters during such a widespread disaster.

Financial reports for the months of March and April were approved.

Board chairman Isaac Johnson said that a list of names for consideration as the BOE's nominees to the county's Board of Equalization would be submitted to the Superintendent at the end of the meeting. Those names were not stated publicly during the meeting, however.

Membership on the Board of Equalization is non-compensated with members meeting only when a taxpayer requests a hearing to review and try to find a solution for a disputed ad valorem (property) tax bill.

The board also approved a contract with Medicaid's services and reimbursement program, known as MAC, which provides a sum of money to the system for every Medicaid-eligible child whom the system serves.

The BOE approved the adoption of the school calendar for the 2007-08 school year, with Supt. Moore stating that the approved calendar — which is number two of four that were submitted for a vote by faculty mem-

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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. The deadline is 9 a.m. MONDAYS for that week's edition.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW for the Choctaw Co. Heritage Festival show featuring country music stars Clay Walker-Rhett Akins on Sat., June 2 at the SCHS Football Field. Advance tickets are \$25 each (for all ages) and available at all branches of First United Security Bank, Regions Bank (Butler and Gilbertown), West Ala. Bank and Trust, Naheola Credit Union (Pennington), Bonita Lakes Mall (Meridian), First Community Bank (Millry and Chatom), Merchants Bank (Jackson), The Village Shoppe, and Gilbertown Town Hall. Tickets can also be ordered online at www.ticketweb.com.

Thursday, May 24th
SIXTH-GRADE GRADUATION, Choctaw Co. Elementary, 9 a.m. in the gym.

Friday, May 25th
NEW HOPE FIRE DEPT. will be selling chicken and pork plates, 11 a.m., parking lot of the Choctaw Co. Historical Museum, Gilbertown. A singing will begin at 7 p.m. at the New Hope Fire Dept. on CR 9.

May 25th, 26th, 27th and 31st, June 3rd
SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN will be presented by the Ballet and Theatre Arts Performing Companies at the BTAS Theatre in Gilbertown as part of the 2007 Heritage Festival. Curtain times are 8 p.m. nightly on Friday, May 25, Sat., May 26, and Thurs., May 31, and at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 27 and June 3. Tickets are \$10 each and are on sale at the local businesses or by calling Fred or Svetlana Kimbrough at (251) 843-5138.

Sat., May 26th – Sun. May 27th
REVIVAL, House of Prayer, Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at noon on Hwy. 17. Guest Speaker Prophet Terry. Contact Lois Philon at 251-843-2138 or Ollie Stephens at 205-459-3096 or 205-459-4560.

Saturday, May 26th
APPRECIATION FOR MINISTER OF MUSIC Bro. Royrick Calhoun, Salem Baptist Church, 7 p.m.

BENEFIT SINGING and PLATE SALE for Gary Turner (victim of hunting accident), Lusk Vol. Fire Dept., chicken and fish plates. Sale starts at 10:30 a.m. Singing starts in the evening.

Sunday, May 27th
TYSON FAMILY REUNION, descendants of Robert Simeon Tyson, Sarah Elizabeth Bush Tyson, and Ona Wilson Tyson, home of Roland and Pauline Tyson, 3686 Ararat Road. Lunch will be served. Bring your lawn chairs, a covered dish, photos and other family memorabilia.

14th YEAR ANNIVERSARY of Rev. and Sis. James E. Sheffield, Little Hope Baptist Church, 1:30 p.m. Rev. Levelle Anderson, of Meridian, guest speaker.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S DAY, Zion Chapel AME Church, 2:30 p.m., guest speakers: Evangelist Martha Blakley, Minister Claude Jordan, and others.

HOMECOMING, 11 a.m., Bogueloosa Baptist Church, Rev. Russell Wray, guest speaker. Noon meal will follow the service; singing in the afternoon.

Mon., May 28th – Fri., June 1st
REVIVAL, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (CR 25), 7:30 p.m. Rev. Curtis Morris, Pastor.

Monday, May 28th
MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE, 8 a.m. at Barrytown Cemetery on the Barrytown Road east of Gilbertown. All veterans and their families are extended a special invitation to attend.

BUTLER SENIOR CENTER will be closed for Memorial Day.

Wednesday, May 30th
HERITAGE FESTIVAL SOUTHERN GOSPEL CONCERT, Heritage Church of God, Gilbertown, 6 p.m.

Thurs., May 31st – Sat., May 2nd
GILFIELD DISTRICT CONGRESS will be held at Gilfield Missionary Baptist Church, Pushmataha, Thursday at 5:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday at 8 a.m. Rev. Theodis McSwain, Pastor.

Friday, June 1st
HERITAGE FESTIVAL BLUEGRASS, SOUTHERN GOSPEL CONCERT, 7 p.m., Southern Choctaw High School Football Field, tickets \$10 at the gate, bring lawn chairs. Concessions/food available. Featured groups: Crimson City Quartet, Culmburg Quartet, The Lindsey Family, Jimmy D. Mosley and Southern Praise.

Saturday, June 2nd
HERITAGE FESTIVAL COLGATE COUNTRY SHOWDOWN talent contest, 10 a.m., downtown Gilbertown.

CHAPTER #50, DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS meeting, 1 p.m. (not 4 p.m. as usual), clean-up day and fish fry. All disabled veterans/auxiliary members invited. Regular meeting will follow fish fry. Mitchell Helton DAV Center, on Smith Street next to South Alabama Gas.

HERITAGE FESTIVAL MAIN CONCERT, featuring country music stars Clay Walker and Rhett Akins, SCHS Football Field, Gilbertown, 7 p.m. Local talent will open the show beginning at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person (all ages) and are on sale now at local businesses and through www.ticketweb.com.

CHOIR NIGHT, Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, 322 Goodwill Circle, Bladon Springs, 7 p.m. Guest speaker Rev. Willie Causey along with Shady Grove Baptist Church Choir. Rev. Robert L. Jackson, Pastor.

ROLAND HUTCHINSON DAY, Choctaw Co. Historical Museum, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. For more information please call 251-843-2501.

WALK-A-THON, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Yantley, 8 a.m.

FAMILY REUNION, descendants of Charles Thomas Ezell, Ezell's Fish Camp in Lavaca, noon.

We need your help to get a Hospital for Choctaw County!

Rush Health Systems of Meridian, Miss., has been given approval to construct a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital to serve the needs of the people of Choctaw County.

The federal government requires that new Critical Access Hospitals must be 35 miles away from other existing hospital facilities. Since the hospital in York, Ala., is less than 35 miles away from Butler, the **proposed** site for our new hospital is approximately five miles south of Butler. The **preferred** site for our hospital is in Butler, directly across from two existing physicians' offices, and with water, sewage and natural gas on the site and with police and fire protection available.

In order to build a hospital on this site, a waiver from the federal government is required. If the hospital were to be built in the county (south of Butler rather than in Butler), the additional costs may exceed more than a million dollars. Why spend this extra money when the best site with all of the infrastructure needs already exists within the Town of Butler?

HELP US GET THE HOSPITAL FOR CHOCTAW COUNTY!

Call U.S. Congressman Artur Davis and U.S. Senators Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions and ask them to help us secure a waiver to the 35-mile rule for our Critical Access Hospital.

Do it today!

Call Congressman Artur Davis at 334-287-0860
Call Senator Richard Shelby at 251-694-4164
Call Senator Jeff Sessions at 251-414-3083