

Landfill lawsuit may be just around the corner

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – Unless a settlement can be worked out – and soon – to settle a controversial six-year-old agreement in which the county announced its intention to sell its solid waste landfill to a local private business concern, the Choctaw County Commission intends to take legal steps to let a court do what neither side is apparently able or willing to do.

At Monday's meeting of the board, Probate Judge D'Wayne May said asked for and received the Commission's approval to hire the Mobile law firm of Maples and Fontenot, LLP, to represent the county in litigating the matter.

May said he spoke with Mr. Maples by phone, sent him copies of the contracts and other documents, and that Maples visited in the county last Tuesday and discussed

the situation in person with Judge May.

"He will take the case with regard to filing a lawsuit to resolve the landfill situation if that becomes necessary," May said.

The law firm will charge \$150 per hour for attorneys' time, \$55 for paralegal services, with additional expenses for faxes, photocopies and any necessary travel.

The county will be billed monthly and bills will be payable upon receipt, May said.

"I have personally worked with these people for more than 30 years and I recommend them highly and ask CCC to approve bringing them on board," he said.

The board, on a motion by Commissioners C.D. "Budd" Ruffin and Henry Lovette, voted unanimously to approve the request.

At an earlier meeting, officials said that the county cannot continue to pay out the \$25,000+ each

month that is coming out of the general fund to pay the interest on a nearly \$4 million loan which the Commission borrowed and a private company used to renovate and re-license the formerly closed 40-acre sanitary landfill.

In an unrelated legal matter, May said that the county's liability carrier, Meadowbrook Insurance, has agreed to defend the county in a federal lawsuit filed against the Sheriff's Department and Co. Commission by Sheriff's Deputy Clifton Spears.

According to May, even though the lawsuit was filed several weeks ago, the county has still not been formally served with the complaint, which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Alabama in April. Spears claims that he was not paid overtime on numerous occasions as required by federal law.

Mobile home heavily damaged

BLADON SPRINGS – A mobile home on the Blue Dirt Road near Bladon Springs was heavily damaged by fire and smoke Friday afternoon. Volunteer firefighters from Silas and Gilbertown responded to the call.

Choctaw Sun photo by
Tommy Campbell



Former Choctaw Countian killed in oilfield mishap in Mississippi

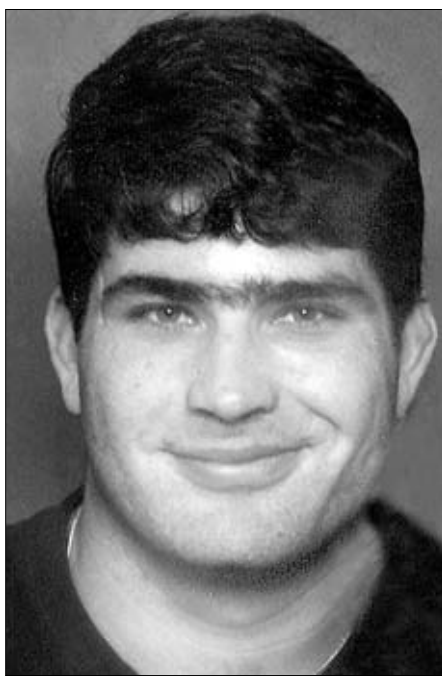
By Tommy Campbell
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TAYLORSVILLE, Miss. – Authorities are investigating the on-the-job death of a former Choctaw County man who died last Wednesday on a land-based oil rig in Mississippi.

Samuel Roland Ford, 29, an oilfield worker with Workover Specialties, LLC, a Lafayette, Louisiana-based company, was on a job near Taylorsville, Miss., at the time.

"From what we were told, he went to the bathroom and when he didn't come back they found him with his chest crushed," his stepmother, Yvonne Ford, told the *Sun*.

Smith County (Miss.) Sheriff Charlie Crumpton said that his department received a call about 10 or 10:30 a.m. on May 2 that Ford's body had been found by co-workers at a nearby oil rig.



Ford in a 2002 photo

"It appears that he received a fatal lick from a counterweight on a pump jack," Sheriff Crumpton said. "OSHA came and investigated, but I didn't see any evidence of foul play. It just looked like a freak accident to me."

Ford's body was sent to the Mississippi Forensic Science Lab in Jackson for an autopsy but the results were not available at presstime.

Ford was born Nov. 29, 1977 in Lauderdale Co., Miss. He was a graduate of Choctaw Co. High School and resided in Quitman with his wife and three children.

Graveside services were held May 7th at Harmony Cemetery.

He was the son of Billy Joe and Yvonne Ford, of Needham, and William and Linda Christian, of Quitman. A complete obituary can be found elsewhere in this week's issue of the *Sun*.

Don't miss the
GRADUATES OF 2007 ...
... coming next Wednesday in *The Sun*

Village Jewelry & Sports
Mother's Day Sale!!

All
• Diamonds (Including the Journey Styles)
• Gold • Watches (Citizen, Pulsar & Fossil)
• Fashion Jewelry

On Sale NOW Thru Mother's Day
Also: Good Selection of Candles, Windchimes and
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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.

Month of May
BARRYTOWN COMMUNITY CEMETERY clean-up. Please plan to clean your lots and remember to bring a bag for your trash.

Through Fri., May 11th
YOUTH REVIVAL, New Rock Baptist Church, Millry, 7:30 p.m. nightly. Rev. Barte, pastor of Altar Baptist Church, Shubuta, MS, will be the guest speaker. Dr. Johnnie Heartfield, host pastor.

Thursday, May 10th
CEMETERY CLEANING, Camp Springs Methodist Protestant Church. For more information call Dottie Hearn or Nancy Whately at 205-398-3342.
CHOCTAW LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE meeting, 1 p.m. in the EMS (Ambulance) building in Butler.
YARD SALE, Heritage Church of God, Gilbertown, one day only, half price sale, fill a bag for \$1.00.

Friday, May 11th – Sat., May 12th
CHOCTAW CO. RELAY FOR LIFE county-wide event, old Vanity Fair property, Butler. Late afternoon through the night.

Saturday, May 12th
10TH ANNUAL CHOCTAW CO.-UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA GOLF SCRAMBLE, Country Club. Registration 11 a.m., entry fee is \$280 per four-person team, lunch at noon. Tickets for lunch are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children under 12 with tee-off at 1 p.m. Proceeds benefit UA-Choctaw Co. Chapter Alumni Scholarship Fund. For more information contact Nena Beth Morris, Tournament Chairman or Mark Ezell, Chapter President at 205-459-3739.

CCHS CLASS OF 1988 Reunion meeting, 2 p.m., Ezell's Fish Camp.

BENEFIT SINGING/BBQ, Lusk Volunteer Fire Dept., bluegrass and gospel singing; fish, chicken and pork plates, \$6 per plate, served from 10 a.m. until. Singing starts at 6 p.m. Orders being taken for Boston Butts \$20. Contact any member of the VFD to place order.

CEMETERY CLEANING, Paragon Cemetery. Cemetery will be cleaned, short business meeting will be held, lunch afterward (bring covered dish).

GOSPEL EXPLOSION, St. Thomas A.M.E. Zion Church, Pine Grove Road, Ward, 7 p.m., featuring The Inspirations of Lauderdale, Miss., Bro. Aquilla Pack and the Meridian Spiritualaires, and the New Arising Gospel Singers of York. Rev. Charles Phillips is the pastor.

Sat., May 12th – Sun., May 13th
34th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SILVERLETTE SINGERS, Saturday, 7 p.m., guest speaker, Rev. Andrew George Manager, of the Praise Gospel Singers of Laurel, Miss.; Sunday, 1:30 p.m., guest speaker Rev. Larry McLaurin, pastor of New Truelight Baptist Church, Millry. All services at Pleasant Chapel Baptist Church in Flatwood community off CR 21. For more information call 251-843-2030 or 251-843-2359.

Sunday, May 13th
MEMORIAL SERVICE, Camp Springs Methodist Protestant Church, 10:45 a.m. Rev. Ben Gerald will be the speaker. Lunch will be served afterward.
MEMORIAL DAY / MOTHER'S DAY PROGRAM, Little Hope Baptist Church, noon. Sermon by Rev. James E. Sheffield, Pastor.

Monday, May 14th
GIRL SCOUT AWARDS PROGRAM, appreciation celebration, 5:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Butler. Graduating seniors, high cookie sellers, and supporters of Scouting will be honored.

Wednesday, May 16th
PEOPLE AGAINST A LITTERED STATE (PALS) will make a presentation on Litter Control at the Chamber of Commerce office, 11:30 a.m. All persons interested in keeping our county clean are invited to attend.

Thursday, May 17th
GRADUATION EXERCISES, Southern Choctaw High School, 7 p.m., Gilbertown.

Friday, May 18th
GRADUATION EXERCISES, Patrician Academy, 7 p.m., Butler.
GRADUATION EXERCISES, Choctaw County High School, 7 p.m., Butler.
GRADUATION EXERCISES, South Choctaw Academy, 7 p.m., Toxey.

Saturday, May 19th
OLD TOWN SILAS MOW DOWN, 10 a.m. until, a day to celebrate all things rural, lawn mower races, singing, Choctaw Co. Cruisers Car & Truck Show, 18-foot slide for the kids, dog show, much more! Arts and crafts and food vendor space available (\$20 and \$25). Registration for races from 11 a.m. – noon in front of Town Hall, entry fee \$50 (8-22 HP), races begin at 1:30 p.m. Bring lawn chairs, but leave alcohol at home. For more information call Town Hall at 251-542-9505.

BENEFIT SINGING for Wilbur Newton (Lou Gehrigs-ALS patient), Clarke Co. High School Auditorium, Grove Hill, 6 p.m. Featuring The Revelators, Good News and Final Answer. Tickets \$10 each; all donations appreciated.