

Rep. Brett Easterbrook charged with human trafficking in Escambia Co.

State Rep. Brett Easterbrook, whose House district takes in all of Choctaw County, was charged with first-degree human trafficking and prostitution in Escambia County on Friday, Oct. 2, according to jail records as reported by WKRG, Fox 10 and AL.com.

Satsuma City School Board President Kory Wesley was charged with first-degree human trafficking and attempting to elude a police officer, according to the same jail records as Fox 10 and AL.com reported them.

Both men were booked into

the Escambia County Detention Center on Oct. 2 and released within 30 minutes, according to jail records as Fox 10 reported them. The jail records did not list a bond, Fox 10 and AL.com reported.

The Escambia County Sheriff's Office confirmed both bookings, Fox 10 reported. Sheriff Heath Jackson said more information would be released in the coming days, Wiregrass Daily News reported.

Satsuma City Schools said in a Facebook statement that it is aware a board member was arrested,

will respect the legal process and will not comment, WKRG reported.

Easterbrook, a Republican from Fruitdale first elected in 2018, is not seeking re-election, AL.com reported. The Legislature lists his House District 65 as covering Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke and Washington counties, and all of Choctaw County is in the district under the 2021 House plan.

No court date had been announced as of Saturday, Oct. 3, Wiregrass Daily News reported.



Saints remain undefeated

Patrician's Sam Allen Hannah scores on a 45-yard pass from Bryson Reid in the second quarter of the Saints' 30-20 win over Banks Academy last week as Reid signals the TD. See more sports coverage inside. (Photo by Elizabeth Perry)

A more detailed look at the Choctaw County FY27 budget

BUTLER – The Choctaw County Commission approved the county's FY27 budget on September 21st, and according to the county treasurer's office, the following is a list of approved allocations by department:

General Fund budget – total \$5,192,514.30, which includes the following

- *Commission -- \$514,099.64
- *Courthouse -- \$109,480.00
- *Circuit Court -- \$13,999.33
- *Circuit Clerk -- \$4,020.00
- *Probate Office -- \$391,313.81
- *Revenue Commissioner -- \$583,581.51
- *Treasurer's Office -- \$30,800.00
- *Taxes and Insurance -- \$180,198.73
- *Election -- \$130,065.83
- *Board of Registrars --

- \$95,283.81
- *Veteran's Service -- \$1,500.00
- *Soil Conservation -- \$1,000.00
- *Airport -- \$30,107.79
- *Maintenance -- \$130,507.90
- *Sheriff's Department -- \$947,183.05
- *Jail -- \$877,220.81
- *Coroner -- \$16,814.40
- *Youth Services -- \$6,500.00
- *Public Safety -- \$4,976.33
- *Landfill -- \$216,127.40
- *Health Dept -- \$480.00
- *Animal Control -- \$27,000.00
- *Public Library -- \$2,333.34
- *Parks and Recreation -- \$7,000.00
- *Historical Society -- \$2,333.33
- *Extension Service -- \$10,180.00 (for facility)
- *Debt Service -- \$157,898.93
- Other budget revenues and allocations:
- Opioid Settlement funds -- \$10,000.00
- Solid Waste (revenues from 1-cent sales tax) -- \$2,542,069.72
- Gasoline Tax (earmarked for road and bridge) -- \$2,649,000.00
- Reappraisal -- \$718,867.02
- EMA -- \$82,548.00
- Jail Construction Fund -- \$2,633,151.62
- Rebuild Alabama Act fund (earmarked for certain road and bridge projects) -- \$1,739,035.84
- Federal Aid Exchange (for certain road and bridge projects) \$1,485,167.85
- E911-\$654,643.59

Butler Fest 2026 has been canceled due to the threat of inclement weather

New state laws on outdoor dogs, vaping and DUI deaths take effect

Several laws passed in this year's regular session of the Legislature took effect Thursday, Oct. 1.

Act 2026-427, sponsored by Sen. Garlan Gudger, allows a dog to be tethered to a stationary object only by a trolley system that meets the act's conditions, and not by a logging chain, choke collar or pinch collar.

A dog tethered or confined outdoors must have access to a fully enclosed shelter with a solid floor that keeps it dry and shaded. Violations are misdemeanors, and the act does not apply to dogs used or trained for herding, farming, hunting or retrieving.

Act 2026-505, sponsored by Sen. Gerald H. Allen, adds the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems to the Clean Indoor Air Act's definition of smoking, so vaping is now barred wherever smoking is. A private residence is still not a public place under the law.

Act 2026-64, the Devinee Rooney and John Wesley Holt Safe Streets Act, sponsored by Sens. David Sessions and Jack W. Williams, makes causing a death while driving a vehicle or operating a vessel under the influence manslaughter, a Class B felony. Leaving the scene of a crash that causes serious

physical injury or death is now a Class B felony as well.

Act 2026-498, sponsored by Sen. Tim Melson, allows parking in a space reserved for people with disabilities only when the driver is the lawful holder of a disability plate or placard or is carrying a passenger who is. The act also directs the Department of Revenue, on or after Jan. 1, 2027, to put a scannable barcode or QR code on placards that shows the holder's name and the placard's status, for use only by the department and law enforcement.

Act 2026-263, sponsored by Rep. Allen Treadaway, lets anyone holding a towed vehicle report it to the Department of Revenue right after the tow, through the department's Unclaimed/Abandoned Vehicle Portal. The law still requires anyone holding an unclaimed vehicle to report it within five calendar days of the date it is first considered unclaimed.

State employees' 2 percent raise under Act 2026-608, sponsored by Sen. Greg Albritton, begins with the first payday on or after Oct. 1; the act itself took effect when it was signed April 16. It also has the Employees' Retirement System pay a one-time longevity bonus

in October to people who retired before Oct. 1, 2025, and to beneficiaries, though retirees of local employers in the system get it only if their employer chose to take part.

Act 2026-63, Trey's Law, sponsored by Sen. Matt Woods, voids any provision of a nondisclosure, confidentiality, employment, settlement or other agreement that bars a person from disclosing an act of sexual abuse or the facts of it. It applies to agreements entered into, executed or amended on or after Oct. 1, and only to the parts about the abuse; other terms, such as compensation, stand.

Act 2026-55, the Child Predator Death Penalty Act, sponsored by Rep. Matt Simpson, makes first-degree rape, first-degree sodomy and sexual torture capital offenses when the victim is younger than 12. A person sentenced to life on one of those capital offenses must serve at least 30 years, day for day, before first being considered for parole.

Act 2026-316, sponsored by Rep. Napoleon Bracy, creates the crime of bail jumping in the third degree, a Class C misdemeanor, for a person released on condition of electronic monitoring.

Continued on page 7

Four proposed state constitutional amendments to appear on November 3 ballot

MONTGOMERY -- Four proposed statewide amendments to the state constitution will be listed on the General Election ballot on November 3, including three that affect public school districts in the state. The following is a summary of the proposed amendments.

AMENDMENT ONE:

This amendment, if passed, would mean that the position of Lieutenant Governor would be placed on a ballot if that office becomes vacant within the first two years of a term of office.

Under current law, if the office becomes vacant in the middle of a term, it remains vacant until the next regular election

for that office.

The amendment also authorizes the legislature to set the salary for the Lieutenant Governor's office and officers of the Legislature by joint resolution, and requires legislative funds that would be spent for travel of legislators to be approved by an officer elected by the legislature.

A 'yes' vote means that the voter is in favor of the amendment.

A 'no' vote means that the voter is not in favor of the changes.

AMENDMENT TWO

Statewide Amendment 2 creates a process for two or more county school boards to

merge into a single multi-county Board of Education. The measure would allow boards of education from contiguous counties to consolidate under a single board. The plan requires the State Board of Education to conduct an impact study before such a merger could take place. The amendment would also provide a process for the public to protest such a merger, and according to published information about the plan, if at least 25% of registered voters in an affected county school system submit a written protest about a proposed merger of school districts, a majority of

Continued on page 4

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“Pay-As-You-Go” Road and Bridge Improvement Project meetings announced

The Choctaw County Commission invites interested residents to attend one of the following community meetings to hear a presentation about the Road and Bridge Improvement Project, a proposition that will appear on the November 3, 2026 election ballot.

Toxey
October 6, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.
Toxey Community Center
(Just south of the Toxey Volunteer Fire Department)

Butler
October 8, 2026 • 5:00 p.m.
Big Courtroom, Choctaw County Courthouse

Silas
October 12, 2026 • 7:00 p.m.
Silas Town Hall

Gilbertown
October 13, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.
Gilbertown Town Hall

Pennington

October 15, 2026 • 5:00 p.m.
Pennington Town Hall

Lisman
October 19, 2026 • 5:00 p.m.
Lisman Town Hall

Needham
October 20, 2026 • 5:30 p.m.
Needham Town Hall

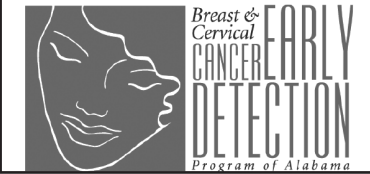
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scan the QR Code below,
or contact the hotline: 1-877-252-3324



Butler Municipal Court set for Oct. 15
Butler Municipal Court will be held at 1 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, according to a notice posted by the Town of Butler and the Butler Police Department.
No payments will be taken in the building on Wednesday, Oct. 14, or on Oct. 15 until after court, the notice says. Payments can be made online at butleral.govtportal.com.
The court's telephone number is 205-459-3794.

Thanks for reading!



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Choctaw County wishes to levy an additional ad valorem tax of up to five (5) mills, beginning October 1, 2027, for no more than five (5) years, with all proceeds used solely for the projects in the Road and Bridge Plan, as advertised below, to improve safety for the traveling public and promote economic development for industry and businesses, and authorizing the Commission to finance such projects through county warrants payable from those tax revenues. The projects shall be completed no later than January 1, 2033.				
PAY AS YOU GO PROGRAM - ROAD AND BRIDGE PLAN (RESURFACING PROJECTS)				
PROPOSED ROAD NAMES & DESCRIPTIONS	TOTAL MILEAGE	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	PAY AS YOU GO FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS
BENT TREE RD (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 17)	1.46	\$438,000.00	\$438,000.00	
MT OLIVE RD (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 17)	0.50	\$152,500.00	\$152,500.00	
CR 42 (From Pine Grove Rd to End of Pavement)	3.35	\$988,250.00	\$988,250.00	
DAKOTA RD (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 17)	0.40	\$90,000.00	\$90,000.00	
LOTTS FERRY RD (From AL 114 to End of Pavement)	0.90	\$202,500.00	\$202,500.00	
WHITE OAK RD (From AL 114 to Grey Fox Rd)	0.35	\$80,500.00	\$80,500.00	
GREY FOX (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 114)	0.65	\$146,250.00	\$146,250.00	
TUSCAHOMA (From AL 10 to End of Maintenance)	4.26	\$1,482,250.00	\$77,000.00	\$1,405,250.00
CR 7 (From CR 32 to End of Pavement)	2.95	\$929,250.00	\$929,250.00	
TINKER RD (From CR 9 to End of Pavement)	2.26	\$644,100.00	\$644,100.00	
SANDY CUT RD (From Riderwood Dr to End of Pavement)	1.60	\$360,000.00	\$360,000.00	
DICEY RD (From Beginning of Pavement to Scott Mt Rd)	0.65	\$152,750.00	\$152,750.00	
MT NEBO RD (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 10)	1.27	\$292,100.00	\$292,100.00	
RIDERWOOD RD (From Sunday Dr to AL 17)	2.00	\$660,000.00	\$419,000.00	\$241,000.00
NARROW RD (From Land Road to Pinhook Rd)	3.12	\$936,000.00	\$936,000.00	
SINGLEY RD (From AL 17 to End of Pavement)	1.95	\$604,500.00	\$604,500.00	
LASSITER RD (From AL 17 to End of Pavement)	1.10	\$308,000.00	\$308,000.00	
SOUWILPA RD (From Beginning of Pavement to AL 17)	1.08	\$313,200.00	\$313,200.00	
TURNERTOWN RD (From Needham Rd to Brightwater Rd)	3.90	\$1,092,000.00	\$91,400.00	\$1,000,600.00
CLARK RD (From AL 17 to Barrytown Rd)	3.00	\$810,000.00	\$810,000.00	
SHADY GROVE RD (From AL 84 to CR 6)	2.50	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	
LUCAS RD (From Chapel Hill Rd to Wimberly Rd)	1.47	\$382,200.00	\$382,200.00	
BRIARWOOD RD (From Pleasant Hill Rd to End of Pavement)	1.40	\$294,000.00	\$294,000.00	
MOSLEY BRIDGE RD (From Barrytown Rd to Chapel Hill Rd)	3.98	\$1,134,300.00	\$88,500.00	\$1,045,800.00
TOTAL PROPOSED MILEAGE =	46.10	\$13,192,650.00	\$9,500,000.00	\$3,692,650.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED PAY AS YOU GO FUNDS =		\$9,500,000.00		

NEWS AND EVENTS

OBITUARIES

Deborah Lassiter Adams



Deborah Lassiter Adams, 75, of Millry died peacefully September 26 at her residence. She was born April 25, 1951, and lived her life as a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, educator and friend.

Deborah married her high school sweetheart, Larry Adams, in 1971. Over the next 55 years, they built a beautiful life and family together, raising three daughters and later welcoming six grandchildren who brought her tremendous joy.

Deborah had a lifelong curiosity and a genuine love of learning. She was known to happily sit and read from her prized Encyclopedia Britannica simply because she wanted to know more. She carried that love of learning into every part of her life and instilled it in her children, her students and later her grandchildren.

Deborah earned her bachelor's degree in sociology from Livingston University in the 1970s. After spending a number of years at home raising her family, she returned to school and earned her master's degree in education from Livingston University, now the University of West Alabama, in 1993.

She went on to devote more than 20 years to education, teaching at Fruitdale, Millry and McIntosh elementary schools. Deborah cared deeply about her students and took great pride in helping them learn, grow and succeed. Teaching was more than a career to her; it was a natural extension of her curiosity, generosity and belief in the importance of education.

Deborah found great joy in creating a warm and welcoming home for the people she loved. She was an exceptional cook, and food was one of the many ways she cared for others. Her famous seafood gumbo became a favorite among family and friends. She also loved tending to her garden, filling her yard with flowers and growing summer vegetables that she happily shared with others. Her creative spirit extended to watercolor painting, another pastime she enjoyed throughout the years.

The holidays were a special joy for Deborah, and she had a gift for making them feel magical. She loved preparing beautiful meals, setting festive tables and decorating her home with thoughtful, personal touches. Christmas was especially dear to her, from the beautifully decorated tree and magnolia greenery gathered from the woods to the personalized ornaments she chose each year for her daughters and grandchildren.

Family was at the center of Deborah's life. She took great pride in her daughters and grandchildren and found tremendous joy in being part of their lives, from the biggest milestones to the ordinary moments in between.

Deborah's legacy lives on in

the family she loved so deeply, the students whose lives she helped shape and the love of learning she passed on to generations around her. It also lives in the countless memories created around her table, in her garden, during Christmases filled with tradition and in the everyday moments she made special simply by being there.

Deborah was preceded in death by her father, Henry Lassiter; her mother, Vernice Brown; her sister, Cynthia Boggs; and her nephew, Wyatt Dearmon.

Deborah is survived by her beloved husband, Larry Adams; her daughters and sons-in-law, Ashley and Jeremy Becton of Millry, Dr. Lauren Adams-Kelly and Eric Kelly of Charleston, S.C., and India and Adam Sachitano of Oak Ridge, Tenn.; her cherished grandchildren, Estella Becton, Elijah Becton, Giada Sachitano, Tony Sachitano, Ada Mae Kelly and Edan Adams Kelly; her sisters, Shelia Dearmon and her husband, James DuMont Dearmon, of Millry and Monica Ard of Birmingham; her stepmother, Eunice Lassiter, and stepsister, Keturah Henson, both of Millry, as well as numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and dear friends.

A memorial service celebrating Deborah's life was held Sunday, October 4, at 3 p.m. at Lathan Funeral Home in Chatom, with Bro. Mike Gunn officiating.

Lathan Funeral Home directed.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Deborah's memory to the Millry High School Band, care of Millry High School, P.O. Box 65, Millry, AL 36558.

Donald Armstrong

Donald Armstrong, 43, of Pennington died September 27 at Ochsner Choctaw General Hospital in Butler. He was born June 20, 1983.

A memorial service celebrating his life will be held at a later date.

Weatherly-Studdard Memorial Funeral Home of Butler is in charge of arrangements.

Harold Butler

Harold Butler, 80, of Pennington died September 27 at his residence. He was born October 29, 1945.

Visitation will be held Friday, October 9, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Weatherly-Studdard Memorial Funeral Home in Butler. Funeral services will be held Saturday, October 10, at noon at St. John Missionary Baptist Church, 1634 Short Street, Ward. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Weatherly-Studdard Memorial Funeral Home of Butler is in charge of arrangements.

Judy Kay Crosby



Judy Kay Crosby, 75, of Sweet Water, a former restaurant cook, died September 26 at Greene County Hospital in

Eutaw.

She was born November 29, 1950, in Butler to Bennie B. and Johnnie Huckabee Barr.

She is survived by her children, Donna Glass (Billy), Kenneth Oneal Etheridge and Bonnie Faye Ford; six grandchildren, Chris Sewell, Leslie Sewell, Kevin Etheridge, Aaron L. Etheridge, Lindsey Etheridge and Vanessa Hudgins; and eight great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be offered at obryantchapelfh.com.

O'Bryant Chapel Funeral Home and Crematory of Thomasville directed.

KT Jenkins



KT Jenkins, 80, passed away Tuesday, September 22. He was born August 4, 1946, in Shuqualak, Miss., to Beatrice Minnie Jenkins, and was raised in Shuqualak with his family, where his roots and early memories were formed.

At an early age, KT left Mississippi and moved to East St. Louis, Ill., where he began building a life of his own. While living in the St. Louis area, he was employed as a longshoreman for many years at Continental Grain in St. Louis, Mo. While living there, he met Kathleen Stainback, and the two were married in 1971.

During that chapter of his life, KT was blessed with children, including Kenny Thomas Stainback, who preceded him in death in 2008, Quentin Jenkins, April Jenkins, Terry Stainback and Shelia Stainback.

After 21 years of marriage, KT and Kathleen went their separate ways, but they remained very close friends throughout the years and continued that friendship until KT's passing.

Later in life, KT met Patricia Ann Labon. From their union came two children, Victor Labon and Erica Labon. Patricia Ann preceded KT in death in 2000.

KT later moved to Alabama, where he met Hannah in 1996. Their relationship grew into a lasting partnership, and the two were married in 1999. Hannah remained an important part of KT's life and stood by his side through his later years.

At an early age, KT confessed his faith in Christ. He later joined Fairview Missionary Baptist Church in Butler, where his faith remained an important part of his life.

KT was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He was a good man with a warm spirit who cared deeply for his family and the people around him. Those who knew KT will remember his smile, his kindness and the love he showed throughout his life.

KT enjoyed the simple things that made life good. He loved fishing, listening to the blues and gospel songs. Whether he was enjoying a peaceful day near the water, listening to his favorite music or spending time with the people he loved, KT knew how to appreciate the moments that mattered.

Above all, KT was a family man. His life touched many

people, and the memories, laughter, lessons and love he gave will continue to live through everyone who knew and loved him.

He leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife, Hannah Jenkins; his children, Quentin Jenkins, April Jenkins, Terry Stainback, Shelia Stainback, Victor Labon and Erica Labon; his beloved son, Kenny Thomas Stainback, who preceded him in death in 2008; his 11 grandchildren; his brothers, Jimmie Hibbler and Dennis Hibbler; his sisters, Suretha Hibbler, Loretha Hibbler and Clara Williams; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family members, friends, church family and loved ones who will forever cherish his memory; special thanks to Kennetta Smith and Mary Parks for caring for him during his illness.

Funeral services were held Saturday, October 3, at 1 p.m. at Fairview Missionary Baptist Church, 2975 Tuscahoma Road, Butler. Interment was in the church cemetery, with Pastor Wendell Charleston officiating.

Final arrangements were entrusted to Hayden & Butler Funeral Home of Lisman. Condolences may be posted at haydenandbutler.com.

Rev. John P. Luckie Jr.



God called the Rev. John P. Luckie Jr., 77, home September 28 in Ashland. He was born June 18, 1949, in Greenville to John P. "Pat" Luckie Sr. and Nell Heaton Luckie.

The family lived in Mobile and Pensacola, Fla., as he was growing up. He graduated from Whitworth College in Brookhaven, Miss., and during his life pastored churches in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana.

Bro. John has served as pastor at Pleasant Hill Methodist Protestant Bible Church in Ashland for the last 42 years and has served as principal of Maranatha Christian Academy during this time.

As a school bus driver for 29½ years in Clay County, he was known to be strict but fair. Almost everywhere he went, someone who rode his bus would say, "Hey, Mr. Luckie."

He loved life; he loved people; he loved laughter; he loved Alabama football; he loved the Lord and loved to preach. Bro. John loved the Methodist Protestant Bible Church, and all the pastors and members were like family to him.

He and Sharon served in many youth camps through the years doing puppets, gospel magic, lessons and recreation, and have a large "family" of camp kids that they love and who love them.

His motto was "Don't Quit." His message to all of us is "Set your house in order because Jesus is coming back sooner than many folks think."

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Sharon Kelley Luckie; his brothers, Eugene Luckie and Marvin Luckie; his nieces, Angie Luckie and Hope Luckie-Grasse; his nephews, John Luckie, Michael Luckie and Dillon Luckie; Sharon's

family, who became his own; his long-time friend, Jim Sherman, who is like a brother; and a host of friends and relatives.

Visitation was held Thursday, October 1, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Pleasant Hill Methodist Protestant Bible Church. The funeral service was held Friday, October 2, at 11 a.m. He lay in state from 10 a.m. until service time.

Pallbearers were Winston Hayes, Donnie Brown, Johnnie Lacey, Anthony Betton, Scotty Craft and Alan Rhodes. Honorary pallbearers were pastors of the Methodist Protestant Bible Church Association and all the men from Pleasant Hill Methodist Protestant Bible Church.

The family will hold a memorial service at Land Methodist Protestant Bible Church at a later date.

Benefield Funeral Home in Ashland handled these arrangements.

Memorials may be sent to Maranatha Christian Academy, 2296 Pleasant Hill Road, Ashland, AL 36251.

Special thanks to Hospice of Clay County and Benefield Funeral Home for their kindness and compassion to us.

James Delbert Mozingo



James Delbert Mozingo, 91, of Orange Beach died September 30 in Orange Beach. He was born March 9, 1935, in Moulton to Lewis Wesley and Maggie Lucille Mozingo.

Choctaw and Washington counties lost a notable and highly respected academic pillar when James passed away at the age of 91. He earned his Bachelor of Science in English education at the University of Livingston and completed two master's degrees in English, one at the University of Southern Mississippi and the other at the University of South Alabama. He also completed coursework and a thesis for a doctorate in linguistics from USA.

He served Choctaw County as principal at Gilberttown Middle School before leaving for Whitworth College in Brookhaven, Miss., where he was vice president and general business manager. He later returned to Choctaw County and taught for Patrick Henry State Junior College, then became Gilberttown campus director of Alabama Southern Community College.

Multi-talented, he published a book of poetry and wrote and acted in a play about the Sims War in Choctaw County, "Prophet Without Honor," which played for five sold-out performances at the Ballet and Theater Arts School in Gilbertown. He also wrote a book about the Stone of Scone, "Sojourners in a Strange Land." His impact as a brilliant scholar, educator and speaker will live on in the lives of the students and communities he touched.

He dedicated 30 years of his career to the Methodist Protestant ministry and served in various state and national offices of the organization, including treasurer and president. His last years in ministry were spent as pastor of Wimberly Methodist

Church. After retirement he served Laton Hill Baptist Church as guest speaker and teacher and conducted many special Bible studies before moving to Orange Beach.

He was preceded in death by his son, Gerald Frank Mozingo; his stepson, Derrick Shane Turner; his father, Lewis Wesley Mozingo; his mother, Maggie Lucille Burnam Mozingo; and his sisters, Eloise M. Lucus and Lois M. Gibson.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah Angie Williams Mozingo; his sons, James Carlos Mozingo (Beth) and Dwight Delbert Mozingo (Lori); his stepson, Robert Brett Turner; his grandchildren, James Guy Mozingo, Jacqueline Leah Diamond, Cortney Ann Richardson (Ryan), Colton Ford Mozingo (Annie), Ashby Jacob Turner, William Nathan Turner, John Riley Turner, Robert Lawson Turner and Avery Lee Turner; seven great-grandchildren; and his brother, Robert Lewis Mozingo.

Visitation was held Sunday, October 4, from 2 to 3 p.m. at Laton Hill Baptist Church in Chatom. Funeral services followed at 3 p.m. with the Rev. Nick Williams officiating, assisted by David Williams, Randy Goldman, Dr. Tillman Parnell and Nathan Turner. Interment followed in the Laton Hill Baptist Church Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Ashby Jacob Turner, William Nathan Turner, John Riley Turner, Robert Lawson Turner, Avery Lee Turner and James Grant Mozingo. Honorary pallbearers were Brian Clark, Jeff Cummings, Darren Divine, Steve Douglas, Randy Goldman, Dr. Tillman Parnell, David Williams and Bobby Williams.

Phillips Funeral Home of Gilbertown directed.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of him to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America at www.alzfdn.org.

Franklin Tucker

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Revelation 21:4)

Franklin Tucker was born March 4, 1954, to the late Robert Lewis and Lucy Kate Tucker.

Franklin Tucker was a lovely and wonderful person, better known to all of us as "Coot," the baby that his mother loved.

It is believed before he left this world that he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

He leaves to cherish three sons and one daughter, Franklin Bell Jr., Steven Bell, Terry Bell and Trisha Bell; nine grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Six brothers and three sisters preceded him in death.

Funeral services for Franklin "Coot" Tucker, 72, were held Saturday, October 3, at 1 p.m. at St. Matthews Baptist Church, 1159 Townsend Mission Loop, Cuba (Ward). Interment was in Gilfield Missionary Baptist Church cemetery, with the Rev. Michael Ruffin officiating.

Final arrangements were entrusted to Hayden & Butler Funeral Home of Lisman. Condolences may be posted at haydenandbutler.com.

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More amendments on ballot - from front page

voters would need to approve the merge at the next general election.

A 'yes' vote means that the voter supports the establishment of a process for two or more county school boards to merge into a single multi-county board of education.

A 'no' vote means that the voter is opposed to the establishment of such a process.

(NOTE: This amendment does NOT refer to any plans for consolidation of schools in Choctaw County.)

AMENDMENT THREE

Amendment Three would require local boards of education to adopt policies requiring each public K-12 school to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag at the beginning of each school day; and to require local boards to adopt a policy authorizing student-initiated and student-led prayer in public schools. Under the proposal, students would have the right to opt out of participating in the Pledge or the prayer.

A 'yes' vote indicates that the voter is in favor of the requirement for the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited at the beginning of the school day, and in favor of the authorization of student-led prayer in public schools.

A 'no' vote means that the voter is against the proposal.

AMENDMENT FOUR

Amendment Four would amend to the state constitution to require local boards of education to adopt policies requiring each public K-12 school to broadcast or sanction the performance of the first stanza of The Star-Spangled Banner at least once per week during school hours, or a school board could allow the first stanza of The Star-Spangled Banner to be performed during school hours by a school-approved band, choir, vocal group, or vocalist using the version archived by the Library of Congress.

A 'yes' vote means that the voter is in favor of the amendment to require school boards to do so.

A 'no' vote indicates that the voter is opposed to the proposal.

National Newspaper Week

Sustaining a free press isn't free, nor is it easy

By Benjy Hamm

When the Declaration of Independence was signed 250 years ago, newspapers throughout the colonies shared the life-changing news with their readers.

With all of the enormous changes in this country and media since 1776, it's noteworthy that more than 5,000 newspapers are still informing their communities about what their leaders are doing and how those actions affect them.

Often, newspaper reporters are the only journalists who cover the actions of the local school board or city council or youth sports teams. The 2025 State of Local News report by Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism revealed that there are more than 1,500 counties in the United States served by only one news media outlet. In almost all of those counties, the news source is a local newspaper.

It used to be hard to imagine how different communities would be without local news sources. But in recent years, the changing business models for news organizations have led to an increasing number of so-called news deserts, places where residents don't have access to independent coverage of their communities.

Research shows that the lack of news coverage can lead to a number of problems: fewer people voting, more corruption, higher costs of government and a reduced connection among residents.

One of this country's most famous founders, Thomas Jefferson, wrote, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

That doesn't mean Jefferson always liked what newspapers wrote about him, his decisions or his policies. He often disagreed vehemently. But he and other founders inherently understood the importance of having a government watchdog and independent voices that are free to challenge policies and leaders, with the goals of better informing residents about the world around them and improving society.

The founders understood this nation needed guarantees to protect vigorous discussions and disagreements, particularly about the government. So, they created the Bill of Rights in 1791, starting with the First Amendment that ensures free speech and a free press.

Sustaining a free press isn't free, nor is it easy. The type of news coverage that helps to change laws and change lives, including exposing problems and wrongdoing in communities that some would prefer to keep hidden, can be difficult, time-consuming and expensive.

It was true 250 years ago, and it's still true today.

Some critics have been predicting the death of newspapers since at least the invention of radio, and those predictions have increased with the creation of television, the internet and social media. Yet, newspapers have persevered, adapted their business models and remained as essential institutions in their communities.

In this time of another upheaval of the media business model, newspapers are yet again adapting for the future. Their news is shared not just in print as it was in 1776, but also to millions of readers online and through social media by the news organizations themselves and countless other people.

Surveys that cite how many Americans receive news from their "phones" these days don't consider where those phones get their news and information.

Many readers don't know the origin either. But much of the commentary and sharing of news that is abundant online and in social media can be traced back to the original sources: journalists.

As we celebrate National Newspaper Week during Oct. 4-10, it's important to reflect on why the founders believed so strongly in the need for a free press to cover this nation without government control, without fear or favor and without undue influence from powerful people.

The value of a free press is not simply to protect the press, but to protect democracy. It's based on the belief that a better-informed citizenry is essential for the United States to not only survive, but to thrive.

In today's crowded media market, where misinformation and disinformation are abundant, it's crucial that newspapers continue to serve in their role as watchdogs and as trusted sources to inform, inspire, educate and connect the communities they serve.

There's no way to predict how the United States will change and evolve over the next 250 years. But it's certain we will continue to need a free press and independent journalists to document those changes and provide the important news coverage that is vital for this nation's future.

Benjy Hamm is director of the national Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues and an associate professor at the University of Kentucky's School of Journalism and Media. He previously served as editorial director for Landmark Community Newspapers and as an editor at The Virginian-Pilot, The Associated Press and the New York Times Regional Newspaper Group.

LOCAL ARREST RECORD

The following is a list of individuals arrested by local law enforcement over the past two weeks.

All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in court.

From the Choctaw County Sheriff's Office	(Poss. Contr. Subs.).	10/3/2026	Probation Revocation, Probation Revocation, Probation Revocation.	
ason Lee Mosley	James Eric Williamson	10/5/2026	Public Intoxication.	
10/2/2026	Sex Offender	Beverly N. Chaney	10/5/2026	Failure to Pay (Criminal Trespass 2nd), Failure to Pay (Attempt).
Registration Notification Act Violation.	10/4/2026	Failure to Appear (Exceed Max Speed Limit).		
Joshua Martin Thompson	10/3/2026	Failure to Pay	Demereo Derell Young	

CHOCTAW COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION
107 TOM ORR DRIVE
BUTLER, AL 36904

Board Meeting
NOTICE
October 5, 2026

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Choctaw County Board of Education has been set for Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Choctaw County Board of Education in the conference room.

published 10/7/26

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Thanks for reading! Choctaw Sun-Advocate

Butler Police plan Trunk or Treat Oct. 29

The Butler Police Department will hold its Trunk or Treat on Thursday, Oct. 29, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., according to the department's flyer. Anyone who would like to decorate a trunk can call City Hall at 205-459-3794 or 205-459-3795.

Halsell Church of God homecoming Oct. 11, revival Oct. 12 to 14

Halsell Church of God, 14975 County Road 9, Lisman, will hold its homecoming program at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, with Pastor Dewayne Charleston as guest speaker. Revival services follow at 7 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, Oct. 12 to 14, with Pastor Marvin Cherry as guest speaker.

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NEW CONTACT INFORMATION for The Choctaw Sun-Advocate

By Email:

sunadvocate@tombigbeenewsgroup.com

By Phone: 1-251-843-6397

By Mail:

P.O. Box 541 • Demopolis, AL 36732

CHOCTAW LIVING

Upcoming Events

Gilfield Missionary Baptist marks 152nd anniversary Oct. 25

Gilfield Missionary Baptist Church will hold its 152nd annual church anniversary celebration Sunday, Oct. 25, at 2 p.m.

The guest speaker will be the Rev. Craig B. Scott of Mt. Ararat Missionary Baptist Church in Prattville. The Rev. Terrance L. Burrell Sr. is the pastor.

New Mt. Mariah plans Family and Friends Day Oct. 11

New Mt. Mariah Missionary Baptist Church, 40439 Alabama Highway 10, Sweetwater, will hold its Family and Friends Day program Sunday, Oct. 11, at 1 p.m.

The church invites its family and friends to celebrate the day with the congregation, whose motto is "One Body. One Soul. One Goal."

BBCF Throw & Go contest offers Magic City Classic tickets

The Black Belt Community Foundation's Throw & Go contest is open, with the winner receiving two tickets to the Magic City Classic football game between Alabama A&M and Alabama State in Birmingham, plus a two-night stay at a Birmingham hotel.

Entries are \$5 each, with bonus entries for donations of \$20 or more. Proceeds support the foundation's community grants in its 12 Black Belt service counties.

The last day to buy entries is Thursday, Oct. 15, at noon, and the drawing is Friday, Oct. 16. Enter at blackbeltfound.org/throwandgo.

ABSTON FAMILY

REUNION,

October 11, Gilbertown Nutrition Center, beginning at 10 a.m. Bring covered dish.

Sewell taking applications for military service academy nominations

U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell's office is accepting applications from students in Alabama's 7th Congressional District who want a nomination to one of the nation's military service academies, her office announced Sept. 23.

Applicants must be legally domiciled in the district; be at least 17 and not yet 23 on July 1 of the year they would enter; be U.S. citizens; be unmarried and not pregnant; have no legal obligation to support children or other dependents; and meet the academic, medical and physical requirements of the academy they apply to. A nomination packet includes the application, standardized test scores, three letters of recommendation, a high school transcript and a college transcript if the student has one.

Completed applications must be postmarked by Wednesday, Nov. 18, and sent to the Office of Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell, Attn: Military Service Academy Nominations, Two 20th Street North, Suite 1130, Birmingham, AL 35203. A selection committee will review the applications and interview applicants before recommending nominees. A nomination does not guarantee admission; each academy makes the final decision.

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy and the Merchant Marine Academy re-

quire a congressional nomination. The Coast Guard Academy runs its own admissions.

Eligibility requirements and application materials are at sewell.house.gov/service-academy.

Patrician Academy receives AISA President's Award

The Alabama Independent School Association has awarded Patrician Academy its President's Award for the 2025-2026 school year, according to an announcement of the award.

The association established the award to recognize member schools that achieve academic excellence during the school year. It goes to one school in each academic classification, and the classifications are based on enrollment.

The criteria include academic achievement, professional development, extracurricular involvement and school improvement, the announcement said.

The announcement credits the school's board, administration, faculty and staff.

Fairfield CME Church marks 116th anniversary Oct. 25

Fairfield CME Church in Lisman will celebrate its 116th anniversary at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 25, with Bishop Richard D. Shaw, presiding prelate of the 2nd Episcopal District, as guest speaker.

The church is at 13157 County Road 9. Everyone is invited. The Rev. Dorothy Caves is pastor.

Choctaw County High homecoming parade set for Oct. 15

Choctaw County High School will celebrate homecoming Oct. 13 to 16 under

the theme "Lost at Sea, Trapped in Tiger Territory."

The homecoming parade begins at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, in Butler, with lineup at 5 p.m. and judging at 5:30 p.m. A bonfire and community pep rally at the high school will follow.

Parade entry forms and the \$5 entry fee, cash only, are due at noon Tuesday, Oct. 13. Floats, cars, trucks, walking groups and other entries are welcome. Vehicle entries must include copies of the driver's license and proof of insurance. Participants in school-sponsored entries must return permission forms to Angenetta Anderson, the school's homecoming coordinator, by 3 p.m. Oct. 13 to participate.

Entries must approach the lineup area from Pushmataha Street (Highway 10), turn onto Rogers Avenue and then onto Smith Street. Lineup will take up both sides of lower Smith Street below the barricade near the Black Warrior building/old gym. Vehicles not in the parade must park at the top of the hill before the barricade or in the adjoining parking lots. Lineup maps will be posted on social media once entries are final and will be available at the lineup site. Drivers should expect traffic delays, the Butler Police Department said in a post Oct. 5.

Friday, Oct. 16, is Trapped in the Tigers' Den Spirit Day, featuring the official homecoming T-shirt and Hawaiian or beach accessories. The official homecoming shirt is the only T-shirt students may wear on campus that day. The spirit rally begins at 1:30 p.m. in the gym.

Pregame presentations begin at 6 p.m. with the Lisman Early Head Start Court, the Butler Youth League Court, the Choctaw County Elementary School Court and representatives of the high school's organizations. The Tigers play the Fruitdale Pirates at 7 p.m. The homecoming court will be presented at halftime, when the homecoming king and queen will be crowned.

Game admission is \$10, at the gate or through GoFan, and parking is \$5. Admission is required for both the stadium and the tailgating area, and reentry requires another ticket.

Tailgating spaces are \$125 and include five game tickets. Reservation forms, cash payment and the names of the five ticket holders are due at the high school's main office by noon Wednesday, Oct. 7.

Tailgating is in the West Field, through the large gate past the field house. Setup is at 3:30 p.m. Thursday or from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Friday, after the buses leave campus, and must be finished by 5 p.m. Friday; the tailgating gates close at 5:30 p.m. One vehicle is allowed per space, and additional vehicles must be removed by 5 p.m.

Tailgaters must silence their music during the pregame and halftime presentations, clean their spaces and remove tents and supplies before midnight. Choctaw County High is a tobacco-, alcohol- and drug-free campus and is not responsible for items lost, stolen or damaged if left overnight.

For more information, call the high school at 205-459-2139.

Museum moves 'Mapping Black Communities'

talk to Oct. 17

The Choctaw County Historical Museum has moved Justin Rudder's presentation from Saturday, Oct. 3, to Saturday, Oct. 17, the museum said Oct. 3.

Rudder, a digital asset archivist at the Alabama Department of Archives and History and a speaker in the Alabama Humanities Alliance's Road Scholars Speakers Bureau, will talk on "Mapping Black Communities" in the Choctaw County area. The museum received a grant from the alliance for the talk, which is free and open to the public.

The museum also said it has been named Organization of the Year by the Choctaw County Economic Development Alliance, the former Chamber of Commerce.

The museum, at 40 Melvin Road in Gilbertown, is open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon. After-hours and group tours can be arranged by calling 251-843-2501 or emailing choctaw.museum@mail.com.

Butler Library story-times set for Oct. 9 and Nov. 13

The Choctaw County Public Library will hold storytime at the Butler Library at 10 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9, according to the library's flyer.

The theme is Woodland. As the library gears up for fall, it is celebrating the woods and their animals, the flyer says, and a small activity is expected after the story.

Another Butler storytime, on the theme Autumn, is at the same times Friday, Nov. 13.

Children of all ages are welcome.

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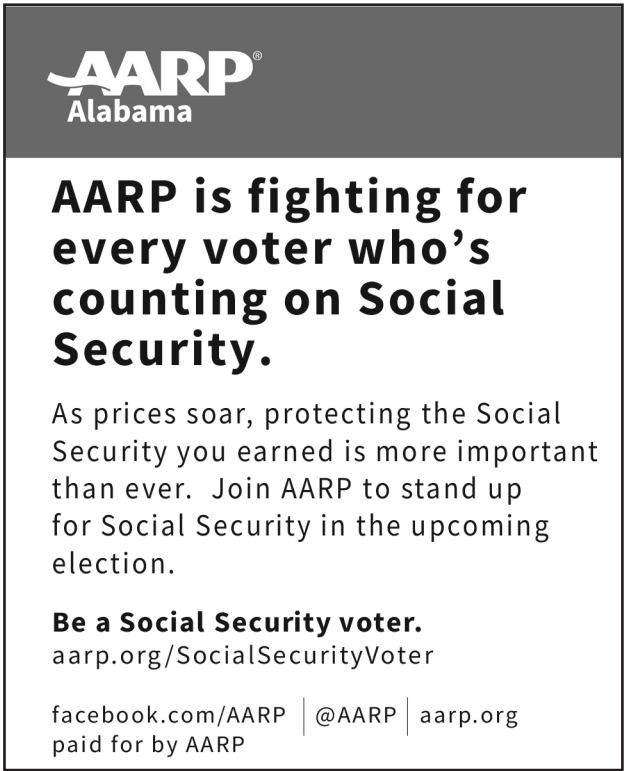
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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CHOCTAW COUNTY, ALABAMA IN RE: The Estate of GUY COLUMBUS LUKER, JR., Deceased. CASE NO. S-2026-00062

Letters of Administration of said deceased having been granted to the undersigned on the 17th day of September, 2026, by the Honorable JASON B. STURDIVANT, Judge of the Probate Court of Choctaw County, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said Estate are hereby required to present same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

STEPHANIE LONG LUKER, Administratrix of the Estate of GUY COLUMBUS LUKER, JR. published 9/23; 9/30; 10/7/26

LEGAL NOTICE STATE OF ALABAMA PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS the Alabama Legislature at its 2026 Regular Session enacted Act No. 2026-341 (SB271), Act No. 2026-378 (HB380), Act No. 2026-379 (HB511), and Act No. 2026-424 (SB5), proposing amendments to the Constitution of Alabama of 2022;

WHEREAS, in conformity with Section 284 of the Constitution of Alabama of 2022, as amended, the Legislature has ordered an election by the qualified electors of the state upon such proposed amendments; and

WHEREAS notice of this election, together with the proposed amendments, is required by law to be given by proclamation of the Governor, which shall be published once a week for at least four successive weeks immediately preceding the day appointed for the election;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, as Governor of the State of Alabama, do hereby give notice, direct, and proclaim that on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, an election will be held in the State of Alabama in the manner and form provided by law upon the following proposed amendments to the Constitution of 2022 of the State of Alabama:

AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY ACT NO. 2026-341

PART I.

Section 127 of the Constitution of Alabama of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

“Section 127

(a) In case of the governor's removal from office, death or resignationIf a va-

cancy occurs in the office of the governor, the lieutenant governor shall become governor.

(b) If both a vacancy occurs in the office of the governor and the office of the lieutenant governor be removed from office, die or resign more than sixty(60) days prior to the next general election-, at which any state officers are to be elected, a governor and lieutenant governor shall be elected at such election for the unexpired term., and in the event of a vacancy in the office, caused by the removal from office, death or resignation of the governor and lieutenant governor, pendingDuring such vacancy and until their successors shall be elected and qualified, the office of governor shall be held and administered by either the president pro tem tempore of the senate, speaker of the house of representatives, attorney-general, state auditor, secretary of state, or state treasurer in the order herein named.

(c) In case of the impeachment of the governor, his or her absence from the state for more than twenty days, unsoundness of mind, or other disability or incapacity to serve, the power and authority of the office shall, until the governor is acquitted, returns to the state, or is restored to his mind, or relieved from other disability no longer incapacitated, shall devolve in the order herein named, described in subsection (b) upon the lieutenant governor, president pro tem tempore of the senate, speaker of the house of representatives, attorney-general, state auditor, secretary of state, and state treasurer. If any of these officers be are under any of the disabilities herein specified, the office of the governor shall be administered in the order named by such of these officers as may be are free from such disability.

(d) If the governor shall be is absent from the state over twenty days, the secretary of state shall notify the lieutenant governor, who shall enter upon the duties of governor; if both the governor and lieutenant governor shall be are absent from the state over twenty days, the secretary of state shall notify the president pro tem tempore of the senate, who shall enter upon the duties of governor, and so on, in case of such absence, he or she shall notify each of the other officers named in their the order of succession herein provided, who shall discharge the duties of the office until the governor or other officer entitled to administer the office in succession to the governor returns.

(e) If the governor-elect fail or refuse from any cause to qualify, the lieutenant governor-elect shall qualify and exercise the duties of governor until the governor-elect qualifies.; and in the event both If both the governor-elect and the lieutenant governor-elect from any cause for any reason fail to qualify, the president pro tem tempore of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the attorney-general, state auditor, secretary of state, and state treasurer, shall, in like manner, in the order named, administer the office until the governor-elect or lieutenant governor-elect qualifies.

(f) If a vacancy occurs in the office of the lieutenant governor more than 60 days before the next general election at which any state officers are to be elected, a lieutenant governor shall be elected at such general election for the unexpired term.”

PART II.

The following provision is added to the Constitution of Alabama of 2022 to read as follows:

Notwithstanding any other provision of the constitution:

(1) The Lieutenant Governor and officers of both houses of the Legislature shall be paid an amount set by joint resolution; and

(2) Any expenditure of funds appropriated for use by members of the Legislature for travel shall be approved by an officer of the Legislature elected from the full membership of the respec-

tive chamber.

AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY ACT NO. 26-378

(a) Whenever two or more contiguous county boards of education deem it advisable to consolidate the administration of their respective county school systems under one remaining controlling multi-county board of education, each county board of education shall adopt and record within the minutes of each board an agreement providing for the consolidation. A formal resolution adopted by all members of the agreeing boards shall detail and provide for the payment of their respective indebtedness, specify how the consolidation will take place, identify how the remaining controlling multi-county board of education will operate, provide for the roles and duties of the resulting multi-county board members, and designate the time frame during which the consolidation will be implemented. Subject to subsection (c), the consolidation shall be finalized as designated in the formal resolution.

(b) Before a consolidation may occur, the State Board of Education shall conduct an impact study on the potential effects of the proposed consolidation, including, but not limited to, the impact on students, families, educational quality, educational programs, staff, facilities, transportation and operations, finances and taxes, community identity, and governance. At least 30 calendar days before adopting the formal resolution finalizing the consolidation, the State Board of Education shall post a copy of the impact study on the public website of the State Department of Education.

(c)(1) If, within 30 days after the adoption of the formal resolution, 25 percent of the qualified electors residing within the boundaries of any of the school systems proposing consolidation submit a protest, in writing, to any of the affected county boards of education, the consolidation may not occur unless the consolidation is approved by a majority of the qualified electors residing in each county or counties wherein all affected county school systems are located who vote in a referendum election as provided in this subsection.

(2) The consolidation shall become operative only if approved by a majority of the qualified electors who reside within the combined territory of the affected county school systems who vote in a referendum election to be held on the date of the next regularly scheduled general election. The order setting the election shall be entered by the judge of probate of each affected county within one month after the expiration of the 30-day time period provided in subdivision (1). Notice of the election shall be given by the judge of probate of each county, and the election shall be held, conducted, and the results canvassed in the manner as other county elections. The ballots shall have printed at the top a statement of the purpose of the referendum election and directly underneath, in plain type and on different lines, the words, “For Consolidation,” and “Against Consolidation.” If a majority of the qualified electors voting in the combined territory of the affected county school systems vote to approve the consolidation, the consolidation shall be finalized as designated in the formal resolution.

(d) The consolidation shall not operate to relieve any board of education, or other governing body, of liability for obligations previously incurred, or to impair rights existing before the consolidation. The agreement and formal resolution shall be binding on the combining county boards of education. If a consolidation occurs, the remaining controlling multi-county board of education shall have the right to compel the execution of contractual obligations made to any of the boards before the consolidation.

(e) The State Board of

Education shall adopt rules as necessary to provide for the implementation of this section.

(f) The Legislature, by general or local law, may enact legislation to implement approved board consolidations pursuant to this section.

AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY ACT NO. 2026-379

(a) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy requiring each public K-12 school under its jurisdiction, at the beginning of each school day, to conduct The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and give all students the opportunity to voluntarily recite The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

(b) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy requiring each public K-12 school under its jurisdiction to allow a prayer to be conducted, provided that:

(1) The prayer must be initiated by and led by a student; and

(2) No student may be required to participate in a prayer.

(c) Any policy adopted by a local board of education pursuant to this section shall ensure that students have the right to opt out of participation in the Pledge of Allegiance or the prayer based on their own beliefs.

(d) Violations of this section may be reported to the local superintendent of education. The local superintendent of education shall review the violation.

AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY ACT NO. 2026-424

(a) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy requiring each public K-12 school under its jurisdiction to broadcast The Star-Spangled Banner during school hours, at least once per week.

(b)(1) A local board of education shall select for broadcast, pursuant to subsection (a), any recording of the first stanza of The Star-Spangled Banner that is archived within the Library of Congress and available on the Library of Congress website.

(2) A local board of education, alternatively, may adopt a policy allowing, during school hours, for the performance of the first stanza of The Star-Spangled Banner from original sheet music, archived within the Library of Congress and available on its website, by a school-sanctioned band program, choral program, vocal group, or vocalist.

FURTHER, I proclaim and direct that this proclamation shall be published once a week for the four successive weeks immediately preceding Tuesday, November 3, 2026, in every county as required by law.

published 10/7; 10/14; 10/21; 10/28/26

LEGAL NOTICE MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

Default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured by that certain mortgage executed by Harvey Lance Pruitt and Ashley Nicole Whittington, originally in favor of Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Legends Bank, its successors and assigns, on June 8, 2022, said mortgage recorded in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Choctaw County, Alabama, in MORT Book 391 Page 42; the undersigned NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, as Mortgagee/Transferee, under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in said mortgage, will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash, in front of the main entrance of the Courthouse at Butler, Choctaw County, Alabama, on November 10, 2026, during the legal hours of sale, all of its rights, title, and interest in and to the following described real estate, situated in Choctaw County, Alabama, to-wit: PARCEL ONE TOWNSHIP 11 NORTH, RANGE 5 WEST SECTION 11: Beginning at the Southwest corner of Section 11, Township 11 North, Range 5

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act, the Alabama Fair Housing Law, and the Mobile Code, which make it illegal to advertise any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, familial status, or ancestry, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. To report discrimination, call the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at (800) 669-9777. The HUD TTY number for the hearing impaired is (212) 708-1455.

West; thence North 6 degrees West 4.83 chains; thence South 85 degrees East 7.84 chains to Point of Commencement, which Point of Commencement is located upon the North Right-of-Way line of the highway from Melvin, Alabama to Quitman, Mississippi; thence South 85 degrees East along said Right-of-Way line 2.11 chains; thence North 4.15 degrees West 2.06 chains; thence North 85 degrees West 2.11 chains; thence South 4.15 degrees East 2.06 chains to Point of Commencement, being one-half (1/2) of an acre, more or less, lying, situated and being in the SW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 11, Township 11 North, Range 5 West, Choctaw County, Alabama. PARCEL TWO TOWNSHIP 11 NORTH, RANGE 5 WEST SECTION 11: Beginning at the Southwest corner of Section 11, Township 11 North, Range 5 West of Choctaw County, Alabama; thence North along quarter-quarter line a distance of 318.78 feet and to the North Right-of-Way line of Choctaw County Highway 14; thence South 87 degrees East 422.18 feet along North Right-of-Way line to the Point of Beginning; thence South 87 degrees East 95.26 feet along North Right-of-Way to iron post and now being Tim Pearson's Southwest corner; thence North 135.96 feet along Tim Pearson's West line to a fence post and now being Tim Pearson's Northwest corner; thence North 86 degrees 50 minutes West 95.26 feet to a fence post and now being Black Warrior Electric Membership Corporation's Northeast corner; thence South 138 feet along Black Warrior Electric Membership Corporation's East line to the Point of Beginning. Acreage being 0.3 acre, more or less.. Property street address for informational purposes: 9716 Melvin Rd., Melvin, AL 36913. THIS PROPERTY WILL BE SOLD ON AN “AS IS, WHERE IS” BASIS, WITHOUT WARRANTY OR RECOURSE, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED AS TO TITLE, USE AND/OR ENJOYMENT AND WILL BE SOLD SUBJECT TO THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION OF ALL PARTIES ENTITLED THERETO. Alabama law gives some persons who have an interest in property the right to redeem the property under certain circumstances. Programs may also exist that help persons avoid or delay the foreclosure process. An attorney should be consulted to help you understand these rights and programs as a part of the foreclosure process. This sale is made for the purpose of paying the indebtedness secured by said mortgage, as well as the expenses of foreclosure. The successful bidder must tender certified funds in the amount of the winning bid made payable to Tiffany & Bosco, P.A. at the time and place of the sale. The sale will be conducted subject to:

(1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, (2) final confirmation with the Mortgagee/Transferee, and if applicable, (3) collection of purchaser information needed to comply with the reporting requirements under the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's Residential Real Estate Reporting Rule (31 C.F.R. Part 1031) and reimbursement of any fees and expenses incurred as a result of the collection of such information. The Mortgagee/Transferee and Tiffany & Bosco, P.A shall not be liable for any damages whatsoever. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the purchaser

chaser

at the sale shall be only entitled to a return of the bid amount.

The Mortgagee/Transferee reserves the right to bid for and purchase the real estate and to credit its purchase price against the expenses of sale and the indebtedness secured by the real estate. This sale is subject to postponement or cancellation. NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, ("Transferee") Tiffany & Bosco, P.A., 2501 20th Place South, Suite 300, Homewood, AL 35223 www.tblaw.com TB File Number: 26-15653-SM-AL 10/07/2026, 10/14/2026, 10/21/2026 published 10/7; 10/14; 10/21/26

NOTICE OF HEARING STATE OF ALABAMA CHOCTAW COUNTY IN THE PROBATE COURT FILE NO. S-2026 - 00071

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF SAMUELA. STAFFORD, DECEASED TO: KATHERINE STAFFORD, LARRY PRICE, DIANE PRICE, JEFF PRICE, DEANA DAVILA, and any unknown heirs-at-law and next of kin of SAMUEL A. STAFFORD, DECEASED.

You will please take notice that on the 1ST day of October, 2026, a certain paper in writing, purporting to be the Last Will and Testament of SAMUEL A. STAFFORD was filed in my office for Probate, by DEWAYNE DUNN and that the 30TH day of November, 2026 at 9:00 A.M. was appointed a day for hearing thereof, at which time you can appear and contest the same, if you see proper.

Given under my hand, this 1st day of October, 2026.

JASON B. STURDIVANT
PROBATE JUDGE
published 10/7; 10/14; 10/21; 10/28/26

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CHOCTAW COUNTY, ALABAMA IN THE MATTER OF: THE ESTATE OF RANDALL KEITH MARS, Deceased PROBATE COURT FILE S-2026-00069

LETTERS TESTAMENTARY of said decedent having been granted to the undersigned on the 29th day of September, 2026, by The Honorable JASON B. STURDIVANT, Judge of the Probate Court of Choctaw County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

RICHARD T. MARS, JR., Executor published 10/7; 10/14; 10/21/26

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PUBLIC NOTICES
STATE OF
ALABAMA
CHOCTAW COUNTY
IN RE: THE ESTATE
OF SHELBY JEAN WAL-
LACE, DECEASED.
IN THE PROBATE
COURT
CASE NO. 5-2026 -
00056
NOTICE OF
APPOINTMENT

Letters Testamentary of said deceased having been granted to the undersigned on the 5th day of october 2026 by the Honorable JASON B. STURDIVANT, judge of the Probate Court of Choctaw County, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present same within the time allowed by law or the same

will be barred.
BILLY RAY WAL-
LACE, executor of the Estate
of SHELBY JEAN WAL-
LACE,
4360 Blackwell Nursery
Road W.,
Semmes, AL 36575
published 10/7, 10/14,
10/21/26

More laws beginning Oct. 1 - from front page

itoring who violates any condition of that court-ordered monitoring. It is a defense, which the defendant must raise, that the violation was unintentional or unavoidable and beyond the defendant's control.

Act 2026-536, the Alabama Property Protection Act of 2026, sponsored by Sen. Arthur Orr, makes the fraudulent sale or lease of residential property a Class D felony, and a Class C felony when the offender received money or the owner is 70 or older. It lets the Alabama Securities Commission investigate title fraud, void fraudulent conveyances and impose civil penalties of up to \$100,000 per transaction, and it requires settlement agents to verify a seller's identity before closing in certain sales.

Act 2026-220, the Highway Safety and Fairness Act, sponsored by Sen. Lance Bell, makes it a Class D felony for a driver with a commercial license from a foreign government to drive a commercial

vehicle in Alabama without the additional federal entry documents the act requires in hand. It also requires every commercial driver to read and speak English well enough to meet the federal standard, with fines of up to \$1,000 for the driver and \$2,000 for the carrier on a first violation.

Act 2026-381, sponsored by Rep. Allen Treadaway, creates the Alabama Law Enforcement Officers' Family Scholarship Program to pay tuition and mandatory fees, up to \$2,500 a semester or quarter, at participating Alabama public colleges and training programs for children under 24 and current or surviving spouses of officers with at least 15 years of full-time service at an Alabama agency. Awards depend on money in the program's fund, which gets most of the extra \$50 a year for a new black license plate with white lettering, first issued for the licensing year that begins Jan. 1, 2027.

Act 2026-166, sponsored by Sen. Matt Woods, has the State Board of Education create a one-time, nonrenewable teaching certificate, good for five school years, for veterans with 48 months of active duty and an honorable discharge or medical separation. Applicants also need 60 college credits with at least a 2.5 grade-point average, a passing Praxis content score, a background check and a recommendation from a superintendent or private school administrator.

Act 2026-610, sponsored by Sen. Lance Bell, sets the test for the Public Service Commission's approval of a utility's contract to serve a data center expected to draw 150 megawatts or more. Such a contract is in the public interest when the commission finds its pricing and terms are expected to recover the added cost of serving the data center and to benefit the utility's other customers.

Patrician, SCA, Choctaw County win; Southern Choctaw loses to McIntosh

10/1 and 10/2
Patrician 30, Banks 20
Patrician Academy rallied from a 14-0 deficit to beat the Banks Academy Jets 30-20 on the road Friday, Oct. 2.

Ethan Carr carried 29 times for 201 yards and two touchdowns, on runs of 1 and 22 yards, and ran in two two-point conversions, according to the game's statistics sheet. Ridge Russell added 85 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries, and the Saints ran for 317 yards on 48 carries.

Banks led 14-0 in the first quarter on Jaylon Southall's 41-yard touchdown run and a 73-yard touchdown pass from Jaden Stephens to Jamil Young, with Stephens running in the conversion. Carr's 1-yard run and Russell's conversion made it 14-8 at the end of the quarter.

Russell's 8-yard run tied the game at 14 in the second quarter, and Southall answered with a 46-yard touchdown run for a 20-14 Banks lead. Bryson Reid's 45-yard touchdown pass to Sam Allen Hannah tied it again, and Carr's conversion run gave the Saints a 22-20 halftime lead.

Neither team scored in the third quarter. Carr's 22-yard run and his conversion in the fourth made the final 30-20.

Patrician had 18 first downs

to the Jets' seven and converted five of 13 third downs and two of three fourth downs. The Saints were penalized six times for 60 yards and Banks three times for 23. Each team lost a fumble.

Southall ran nine times for 101 yards, and Stephens carried seven times for 39. Stephens completed one of three passes and was intercepted twice, by Mac Martin and Russell.

Reid led the Saints' defense with five and a half tackles, and Zack Thompson, Russell and Cash Chapman had two each.

South Choctaw Aca. 50, Wilcox Aca. 14

The Rebels outgained the Wildcats 410-30 on the ground as South Choctaw Academy piled up the yards and the points.

Dawson Sikes rushed 8 times for 152 yards.

Kamden Fuller recovered a fumble for SCA.

Choctaw County 52, Washington Co. 29

Choctaw County beat Washington County 52-29 at Butler on Thursday, Oct. 1, as Tracy Poke scored five of the Tigers' seven touchdowns.

Poke scored on two runs, a 53-yard catch, a 76-yard kick-off return and a 70-yard punt return, according to the statis-

tics head coach Leon Walker provided. He carried six times for 150 yards, including a 64-yard run, and finished with 349 all-purpose yards.

Roderick Crawford completed eight of 11 passes for 92 yards and a touchdown and ran eight times for 57 yards and a touchdown. Jaydon Thomas caught five passes for 36 yards and ran three times for 21 yards and a touchdown. The Tigers ran 18 times for 231 yards.

Choctaw County scored five two-point conversions. Thomas caught two and Jadian Taylor one, and Crawford and Miles Ray ran in one each.

Crawford and Tyderrious Ruffin led the defense with 13 tackles each, and Ruffin had the Tigers' only sack, for a 7-yard loss. Crawford recovered a fumble and returned it 10 yards. William Ruffin and Ray had seven tackles each and Javonte Fitch six.

Ivan Constantine broke up two passes and forced a fumble, and Fitch and Cardarius Chaney broke up one pass each. Michael Black punted twice for a 24-yard average.

The win puts Choctaw County at 3-3. The Tigers play at Marengo on Friday, Oct. 9, at 7 p.m.

McIntosh 12, Southern Choctaw 0



CCHS has big win versus Washington Co.



Patrician takes care of business at Banks

Ethan Carr runs the ball for Patrician. Carr rushed for 201 yards during the contest and logged two rushing TDs. (Photo by Elizabeth Perry)

Salvation Army takes Angel Tree applications through Oct. 16

Angel Tree application packets are available at the Salvation Army's Demopolis Service Center, which serves families in Choctaw County and in Dallas, Lowndes, Marengo, Perry and Wilcox counties, the Salvation Army said in an Oct. 4 post.

Completed packets are due back by Friday, Oct. 16, "no exceptions," according to the Salvation Army's flyer.

Packets have been available since Wednesday, Sept. 16. They are limited and given out on a first-come, first-served basis.

The service center is at 900 U.S. Highway 80 East in Demopolis, and its phone number is 334-289-6090. The Salvation Army said more information will be shared on its Facebook page.

THE SALVATION ARMY
DEMOPOLIS SERVICE CENTER
900 US HIGHWAY 80 EAST
DEMOPOLIS, AL 36732
(334) 289-6090

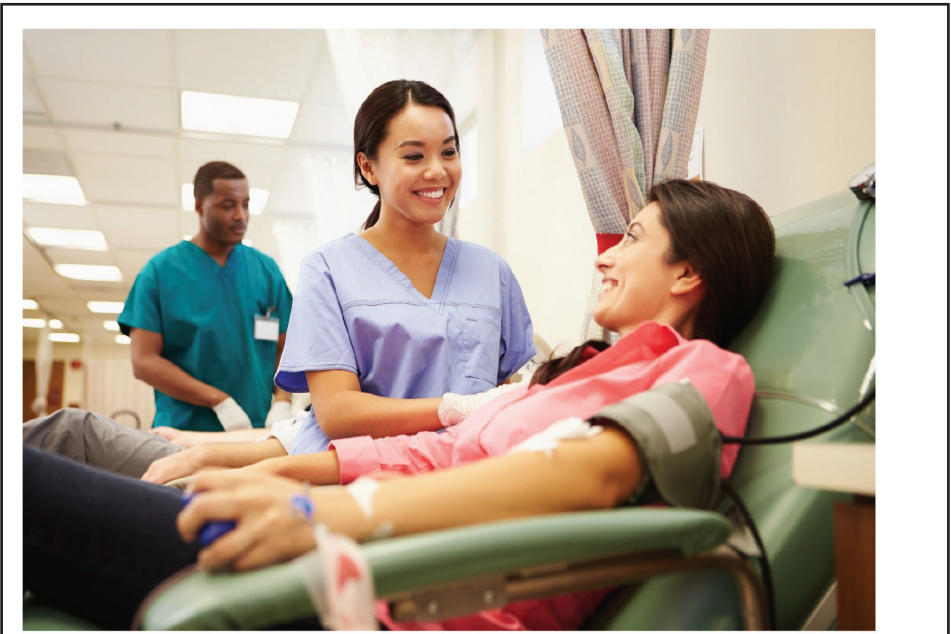
ANGEL TREE
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STARTING
WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
PACKETS ON A FIRST COME BASIS

RETURN DEADLINE
FRIDAY,
OCTOBER 16, 2026
NO EXCEPTIONS!

ANGEL TREE

MORE INFORMATION
WILL BE SHARED ON
OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.



Ochsner Choctaw General Hospital is asking if you can roll up your sleeve and make a blood donation this fall with them to help others in our community

Can you make a pledge to donate blood?

A pledge would mean that you would make an appointment to donate when **Vitalant** comes to our location this fall. We need at least 15 Volunteers. If you can not donate, please find someone who can.

Please contact deidra.aldridge@ochsner.org or 205-459 9177 to let her know to put your name on the list that you are interested. She will circle back to you with instructions of how to sign up for an appointment slot.

If you wonder if you are eligibility to donate, please call Vitalant @ 877-258-4825.

Find us @vitalant:



HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL THIS WEEK

- **Patrician Aca. at Bessemer Aca. (10/8)**
- **South Choctaw Aca. at Banks Aca. (10/8)**

- **Choctaw Co. at Marengo**
- **Southern Choctaw vs Millry**

Note- please check with the host school for schedule changes

Harvest Ministries holds breast cancer awareness health fair Oct. 10 in Lisman

Harvest Ministries, with Fairfield CME Church, John the Baptist Church and Restoration Life Ministries, will hold a Breast Cancer Awareness and Community Health Fair on Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Cromwell-Halsell Volunteer Fire Department, 2872 County Road 7, Lisman, according to a flyer posted by Annie Walton.

The day begins at 8 a.m. with a Walk for the Cure led by Fairfield CME Church. The health fair and screenings start at 9 a.m., and a ceremony with speakers and recognition of breast cancer survivors follows at 11 a.m.

The speakers are Luerese Jackson, a breast cancer survivor, and Kathy Ford, a coordinator with the UAB O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center. Blood glucose and blood pressure checks will be free, and uninsured people can sign up for free mammograms and Pap screenings.

Humana Medicare specialist Lillie Crockett, UnitedHealthcare specialist Lorenzo Tyler and representatives of the Rural Alabama Prevention Center will be there, and health care professionals and specialists will be available to answer questions.

The day also includes a balloon release and lunch. Everyone is invited, and those who come are asked to wear pink.

The fair is funded by a grant from the Black Belt Community Foundation, the flyer says.

For more information, call Annie Walton at 205-609-8002.

John the Baptist Missionary Baptist Church marks 140 years Oct. 18

John the Baptist Missionary Baptist Church in Lisman will celebrate its 140th anniversary at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18.

Pastor Samuel Duff of Open Hearts Ministries in Lisman will be the guest speaker.

Choctaw County High JAG students collecting socks for shelters through Oct. 31

Choctaw County High School's JAG students are collecting new socks of all sizes through Oct. 31 for shelters around Alabama, part of JAG Alabama's statewide Socktober service project.

The students have set a goal of 500 to 700 pairs, according to a post by Natasha President-Jones. A collection box is in the school lobby, and she offered to pick up donations.

Questions about the drive can go to JAG Alabama at 334-694-4748 or hello@alabama-jag.org.

CCHS Announces Homecoming Parade and Festivities

Choctaw County High School invites alumni, families, and community members to celebrate Homecoming October 13–16, 2026, under the theme “Lost at Sea, Trapped in Tiger Territory.”

The Homecoming Parade begins at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, October 15, in Butler, with lineup at 5:00 p.m. and judging at 5:30 p.m. A bonfire and community pep rally at CCHS will follow.

Parade entry forms and the \$5 cash-only entry fee are due Tuesday, October 13, at noon. Floats, cars, trucks, walking groups, and other entries are welcome. Vehicle entries must include copies of the driver's license and proof of insurance. For school-sponsored entries, participants must have permission forms returned to Ms. Anderson by 3:00 p.m. October 13 to participate.

Entries must approach the lineup area from Pushmataha Street (Highway 10), turn onto Rogers Avenue, then onto Smith Street. Lineup will occupy both sides of lower Smith Street below the barricade near the Black Warrior building/old gym. Non-parade vehicles must park at the top of the hill before the barricade or in adjoining parking lots. Lineup maps will be posted on social media after entries are finalized and available at the lineup site.

Friday, October 16, is Trapped in the Tigers' Den Spirit Day, featuring the official Homecoming T-shirt and Hawaiian or beach accessories. Only the official Homecoming T-shirt may be worn as a T-shirt by students on campus that day. The Spirit Rally begins at 1:30 p.m. in the gym.

Pregame presentations begin at 6:00 p.m., featuring the Lisman Early Head Start Court, Butler Youth League Court, Choctaw County Elementary School Court, and CCHS organization representatives. The Tigers face the Fruitdale Pirates at 7:00 p.m. Halftime will feature the Homecoming Court and the crowning of the Homecoming King and Queen.

Game admission is \$10, available at the gate or through GoFan. Parking is \$5. Admission is required for the stadium and tailgating area; reentry requires another ticket.

Tailgating spaces are \$125 and include five game tickets. Submit reservation forms, cash payment, and five ticket recipients' names to the CCHS main office by noon Wednesday, October 7.

Tailgating is in the West Field, through the large gate past the field house. Setup is

Thursday at 3:30 p.m. or Friday from 3:30–5:00 p.m., after buses leave campus. Setup must be complete by 5:00 p.m. Friday, and tailgating gates close at 5:30 p.m. One vehicle is allowed per space; additional vehicles must be removed by 5:00 p.m.

Tailgaters must silence music during pregame and halftime presentations, clean their spaces, and remove tents and supplies before midnight. CCHS is a tobacco-, alcohol-, and drug-free campus and is not responsible for items lost, stolen, or damaged if left overnight.

For more information, call CCHS at 205-459-2139. Join us in celebrating Tiger pride!

Southern Choctaw Elementary students out for fall break Oct. 8 to 12

Southern Choctaw Elementary School students will be on fall break Thursday, Oct. 8, through Monday, Oct. 12, the school said in a post.

Monday, Oct. 12, is a professional development day for teachers, with no school for students. Students return to school Tuesday, Oct. 13.

Postal Service hiring holiday clerks in Meridian at \$21.44 an hour

The U.S. Postal Service is hiring holiday clerk assistants at \$21.44 an hour in Meridian, Miss., and at seven other locations in Alabama and Mississippi, the Postal Service said in a release Oct. 5.

The holiday assignment lasts four weeks, between Saturday, Oct. 31, and Friday, Dec. 25. Applications are taken online at jobs.usps.com from Friday, Oct. 9, through Tuesday, Oct. 13, and again from Friday, Oct. 16, through Tuesday, Oct. 20.

The other clerk openings are in Athens, Greenville, Hazel Green, Huntsville, Robertsdale and Troy, and in Picayune, Miss. Clerks handle distribution, sales and customer service at the retail counter, and their duties may include selling postal products and services and accepting and delivering packages and mail, the release said.

The Postal Service is also hiring city carrier assistants in Decatur and Huntsville at \$21.21 an hour, with applications taken on the same dates. Carriers deliver and collect mail on foot or by vehicle.

Full-time postal jobs are posted online each Friday and stay up through the following Tuesday, the release said. More information is at about.usps.com/careers/how-to-apply.

SunTV FOOTBALL



Georgia-Pacific

THURSDAY, OCT. 8
7:00 p.m.
Patrician Aca. at
Bessemer Aca.

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