



## It Takes a Team

The staff at the Russellville Public Library works together to serve the community and to promote the library and all its programs to local residents. See story Page 8.

## Final Destination

Destination Restaurant in Russellville closed its doors for good last week. See story Page 11.

PRSR: STD US POSTAGE  
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Russellville, AL 35663

# Bear Creek officials at odds on Twin Forks revenue issue

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

When it comes to the ongoing dispute among Bear Creek city officials regarding financial issues with Twin Forks Campground, one councilman and the mayor couldn't be farther apart in their opinions.

For councilman Daniel Green, who maintains the town is receiving significantly less than the revenue the campground should be generating and that deposits are not being made in a timely manner, he's been on a quest the last week to obtain extensive amounts of financial records from the town.

On the other side, mayor Connie Morrison says there are no discrepancies relating to Twin Forks revenue, or any other city financial issue for that matter.

"There is no discrepancy. He was told when he picked up the records that the month in question [May 2017] was not completed yet," Morrison said. "As far as any

financial issues, there are none. Since he's raised these allegations, we've turned everything over to our city attorney [Scott Hunt].

"Daniel Green has crossed the line."

"There is no discrepancy. [Green] was told when he picked up the records that the month in question [May 2017] was not completed yet," Morrison said. "As far as any financial issues, there are none. Since he's raised these allegations, we've turned everything over to our city attorney [Scott Hunt].

"Daniel Green has crossed the line."

Green, in his first term on the Bear Creek City Council, met with Rachel Riddle, chief examiner of public accounts with the State of Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts on April 9 of this year to present information about bank deposits he believes were "significantly less than the revenue that should

See 'REVENUE,' Page 10

# Updated appraisals equal higher property taxes for local residents

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Almost 15,000 Franklin County residents received an unwanted postcard recently, as the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner's mailed out updated property appraisal values.

Franklin County revenue commissioner Veronica Stancil said her office was working to bring assessments in Franklin County into conformity with recent updates made to the Code of Alabama sections that deal with property valuation.

The notices made property owners aware of the updated appraised values of their real property and the structures thereon.

"Every county is implementing these changes, if they

haven't already," Stancil said. "The base rates increased in several areas. We go by these books provided by the State of Alabama. And there hasn't been an increase since 2005."

"Every county is implementing these changes, if they haven't already," Stancil said. "The base rates increased in several areas. We go by these books provided by the State of Alabama. And there hasn't been an increase since 2005."

Stancil is referring to the 2005 Alabama Appraisal Manual from the Alabama Department of Revenue Property Tax Division. That manual was updated in 2015, and counties had four years to reappraise all property to come into compliance with the new calculations.

See 'TAXES,' Page 9

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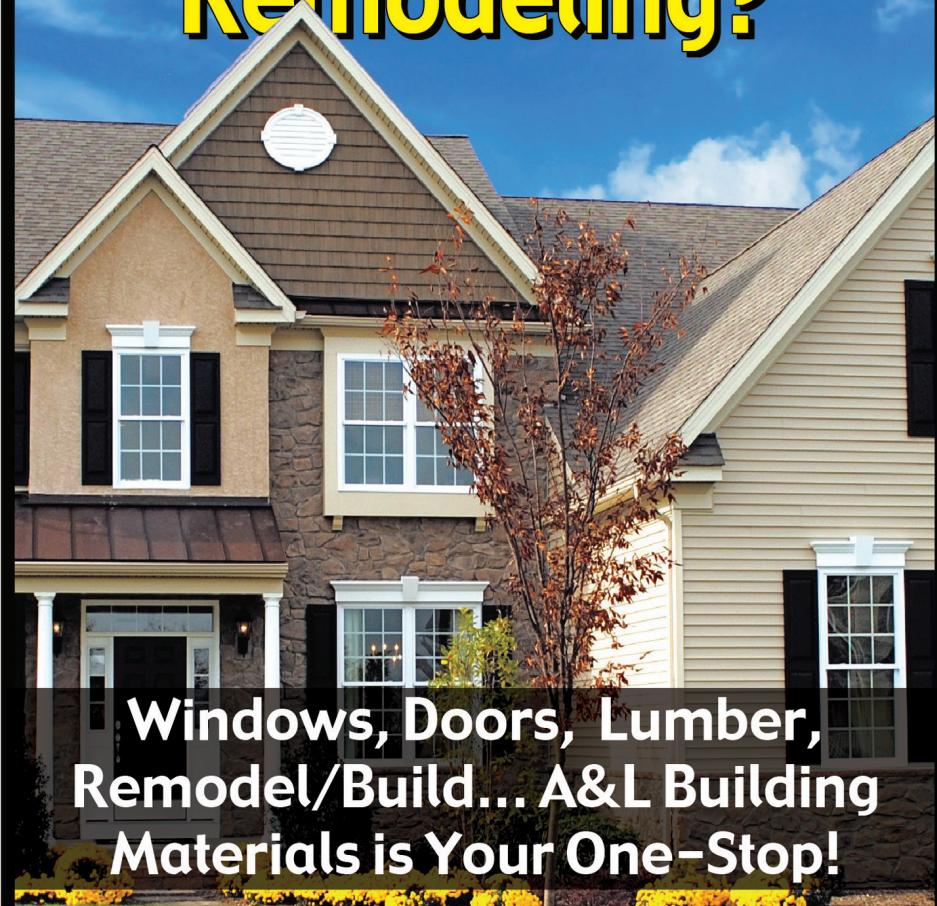
**James Floyd Heatherly**, Russellville, age 86  
Died Monday, June 25, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel.

**Joan Kay Kimmons**, Phil Campbell, age 64  
Died Saturday, June 30, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville.

**Joseph Daniel "Dan" Parker**, Muscle Shoals, age 90  
Died Wednesday, June 27, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

**Vernon Regina Willingham**, Falkville, age 95  
Died Tuesday, June 26, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in East Franklin Cemetery.

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# Former pharmacy owner facing federal indictment

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The former owner of a Russellville pharmacy has been indicted and charged with numerous felony charges as part of an alleged multi-million dollar prescription fraud conspiracy.

Jeff South, 47, who now lives in Florence, was among five employees of Haleyville's Northside Pharmacy, d/b/a Global Compounding Pharmacy, charged with participating in a conspiracy to generate prescriptions and defraud health care insurance companies and prescription drug administrators. The United States Attorney's Office of the Northern District of Alabama announced the charges last Thursday in a press release.

South opened Northside Pharmacy in Russellville and operated the business for less than one year before it was sold to Global Compounding Pharmacy of Haleyville.

The announcement of South's arrest comes as part of a massive nationwide health care fraud enforcement action that involves 601 defendants (including 165 doctors, nurses and licensed medical professionals) and more than \$2 billion in allegedly false billings.

The charges are based on alleged schemes that involved billing insurance companies for "medically unnecessary prescription drugs and compounded medications that often were never even purchased or distributed" to patients.

U.S. Attorney Jay Town said the case involving Global Pharmacy involved millions of dollars in fraudulent charges.

"The defendants in the north Alabama case helped their employer, Global Compounding Pharmacy, defraud millions from Medicare, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, and other insurance systems by pushing unnecessary medications and billing for reimbursement," Town said.

"The greed of these defendants, and this company, resulted in the distribution of medication when there was no need, with the primary focus on profit rather than the efficacy of care. The costs are not just monetary, but have social and health impacts on us all."

Global's compounding and shipping facility was in Haleyville. The pharmacy did its prescription processing, billing and customer service at its "call center" in Clearwater, FL.

Last Thursday's announcement was the latest in a series of charges against Global Pharmacy employees. Last year, four sales representatives were charged with fraud and one, Peter Eodice II, pled guilty in November to conspiracy to commit health care fraud, wire fraud and mail fraud.

The indictment alleges that Global, in an effort to maximize proceeds, was "automatically refilling and billing for prescriptions, regardless of patient need, and routinely waiving co-pays to incentivize patients to accept unnecessary medications and refills."

Other defendants announced last Thursday include Global District manager Angie Nelson, sales representatives Roddrick Boykin and Dawn Whitten, and biller Stacey Cardozo. Each defendant is charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, mail fraud and health care fraud. South, Nelson, Boykin and Whitten also face varying counts of health care fraud, and Whitten an additional charge of identity theft.

Federal investigators allege that Global hired sales representatives who were married or related to doctors and other prescribers in order to increase the number of prescriptions written. Global employees were also urged to volunteer at physicians' offices so they could review patient files and push Global products to the patients, the indictment alleges.

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# RCS Board approves hiring of three new employees

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Personnel moves highlighted a short meeting of the Russellville City Board of Education on June 26.

Three new employees were hired, including former Russellville High School baseball standout Jake Ward, who will serve as an At-Risk/ISS teacher and coach softball, basketball and middle school football.

Other new hires included Whitney Allen as Russellville Elementary School secretary/bookkeeper and Nathan Sawyer as RMS social sci-

ence teacher.

Other personnel moves included:

- Resignation in Position: Jennifer Warhurst, assistant principal at RMS; Derek Gober, RMS teacher; and Megan Swaim, WES teacher;

- Leave of Absence: Kendra Howard, RMS teacher, from August 16-September 9, 2018; and Brittany Sykes, WES teacher, from August 20-31, 2018.

- Temporary Employment: Nicole Clingan, 21st CCLC teacher.

- Transfer in Position: Chris Balentine, from At-Risk/ISS teacher to driver and traffic safety education teacher at RHS.

- Resignation in Supplement: Gayla Mills, assistant varsity volleyball coach and assistant varsity softball coach; and Tori Lee, middle school softball coach.

In other action taken, the board:

- Contracted with Brock Malone for contract labor to clean the RHS campus during the summer period.

- Approved the CNP Lunch/Breakfast prices as follows: Employee breakfast at RHS \$1.25; Employee lunch prices \$3.75; Visitor breakfast \$1.50; Visitor lunch \$4.00 and no charge for student breakfast and lunch as per the Community Eligibility Program.



# Honey Do: A true Patriot

In light of recent happenings that are getting a lot of attention, I thought it would be fitting to share this article from last July.

There is a lot of difference between an American and a Patriot. One can simply be born in this country or go through the proper channels and take the oath of citizenship to be an American, but a true Patriot has a heart for his country and his fellow citizens.

There is a lot of difference between an American and a Patriot. One can simply be born in this country or go through the proper channels and take the oath of citizenship to be an American, but a true Patriot has a heart for his country and his fellow citizens.

The definition of a "Patriot," as found on [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com): "Patriots (also known as Rebels, Revolutionaries, Congress-Men, or American Whigs) were those colonists of the Thirteen Colonies who violently rebelled against British control during the American Revolution and in July 1776 declared the United States of America an independent nation. Their rebellion was based on the political philosophy of republican-

ism, as expressed by spokesmen such as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Thomas Paine.

"As a group, Patriots represented a wide array of social, economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds. They included lawyers like John Adams and Alexander Hamilton; planters like Thomas Jefferson and George Mason; merchants like Alexander McDougall; and ordinary farmers like Daniel Shays and Joseph Plumb Martin."

Of course, this definition refers to the original Patriots of the American Revolution, who fought for independence and against oppression and whose efforts we celebrate this Wednesday, July 4.

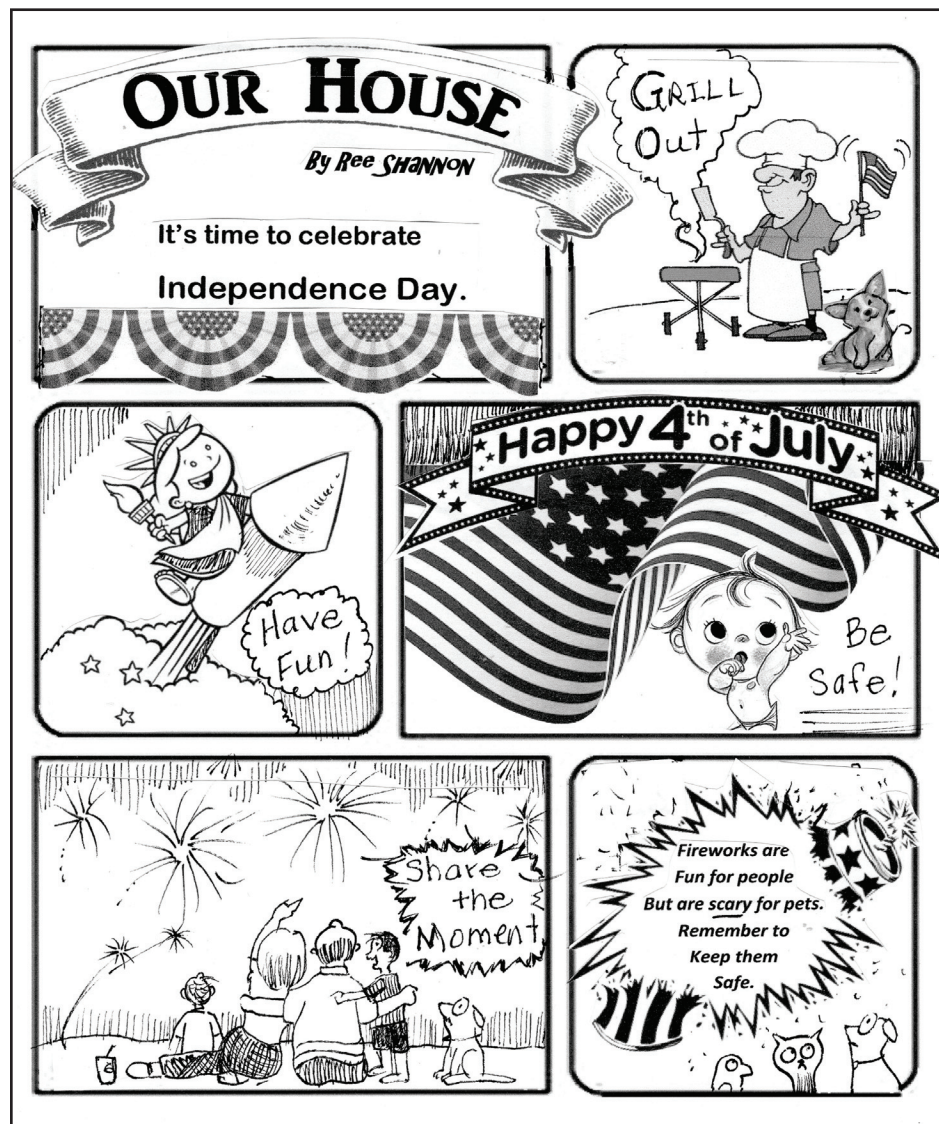
Are you a Patriot? To me, today's Patriot is someone who takes pride in their country and community, stands for what's right (for everyone) and speaks out against what's wrong. They don't take advantage of the system for their own good; instead, they work to support their community and country.

A Patriot is someone who works



Doug Green

See 'PATRIOT,' Page 5



## FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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The *Franklin Free Press* is published by hometown people, for hometown people. We urge contributions of all kinds, including guest columns, picture submissions, cartoons or letters to the editor. Send any letters to our office via U.S. Postal Service or e-mail, and we will gladly publish them. Letters must be signed and contain the hometown and phone number of the author. The *Franklin Free Press* reserves the right to edit letters for style, length and content.

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# My take A busy life can get on this... in the way of living

Well, hello again!

It's so good to be back, and I appreciate all the compliments and you telling me how much you look forward to my articles. [You know who you are. Ha!]

It's good to be missed. Thanks again. I enjoy writing, and I'm so glad you enjoy reading them as well. It makes me feel all fuzzy inside. Wait a minute! I ate a peach and didn't peel it. Reckon that has anything to do with these feelings?

No, that couldn't be. Could it?

I'll rephrase this just in case it did: Your compliments touch my heart deeply.

**That's just the way it is nowadays—no time to sit and relax. The days of sitting on front porches in the evening are fast diminishing. It's sad to me. Come to think of it, most of the newly built homes don't even have front porches.**

Any way, things have been busy. That's just the way it is nowadays—no time to sit and relax. The days of sitting on front porches in the evening are fast diminishing. It's sad to me. Come to think of it, most of the newly built homes don't even have front porches.

Have you noticed the ones who have front porches have them "staged." They are made to look beautiful and inviting. I call it "staged" because of all the pretty cushions placed on the rockers and porch swings. It's for looking at, not sitting on.

If there happens to be a front porch used [and I

am putting a lot of emphasis on the word "if" here], the first thing you have to do is to pick up that pretty cushion and hold it. You sure don't want to be the one who gets it dirty. Back in the day, our hands were used for holding sweet tea or lemonade, or even a good 'ol glass of cold water.

Now I don't want the ones who decorate their porches to think I'm making a mockery of your lifestyle. No way! I used to decorate my porch a long time ago. It just so happened my neighbor's dog liked those pretty cushions as much as I did. You can probably visualize that. She sure didn't use them for sitting on. It was more like a dessert.

But, you know, that turned out to be a blessing for me, my family and even my friends. We no longer had to remove cushions to sit down. Our hands were free to hold lemonade or sweet tea or sodas. We could even have a snack, too! After all, we now had two free hands.

On that note, I think I'll go sit on my front porch. Doesn't that sound good? I can even pet my neighbor's dog. She likes my front porch because she doesn't have one.

Oh, I just remembered some things I have to do. So the porch-sitting will have to wait until this evening.

Yep, it's true what they say. A busy life gets in the way of living.

Until next time....



Gail Motes





**Stop playing with gold and silver, and pay off that debt!**

Dear Dave,  
I make about \$240,000 annually, and I will be maxing out my 401(k) contributions this year. I have \$60,000 in student loan debt I'm trying to pay off and a small amount left on my home mortgage; plus I've been investing in a lot of gold and silver. Those investments are worth about \$30,000 right now. In addition to this, I've got \$10,000 in cash just sitting in a savings account for emergencies. Should I stop the gold and silver investing and focus on paying off the loans, or keep splitting my money between them?

Adam

Dear Adam,  
I'd stop investing in gold and silver completely. I don't put money in precious metals at all, because they have a lousy long-term track record. My advice would be to cash out every bit of your gold and silver, and put the money toward paying off

your student loans. That would instantly cut your student loan debt in half. Then, with your salary, you should be able to pay off the rest in just a few months.

The key will be to start living on a very strict budget. Don't spend on anything that's not absolutely necessary. I also want you to temporarily stop contributing to your 401(k). Do this just until you get the student loan debt wiped out, then pick it up again like before.

If you want to put even more toward retirement, you could check with a quality investment professional—one with the heart of a teacher—to see if you're eligible for a back-door Roth IRA. When it's all said and done, Adam, I want you to have 15 percent of your yearly income going toward retirement.

You already know the value of saving and investing. With your income, once you knock out your debt and begin investing again, you have the very real potential to become a millionaire in just a few years!

Dave

*\*Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 14 million listeners each week on 585 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.*

## Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

The members of Mt. Zion Baptist Church would like to give our heartfelt appreciation to the Franklin County Baptist Association, James McCullar and all those who gave of their time, expertise, financial support and, most importantly, their prayers.

With the Lord's help, the fellowship hall was completed without injury or incident, and we are so thankful for a place to serve the Lord.

Shannon Skidmore

## 'PATRIOT,' from page 4

hard to support their family and looks for ways to make their community a better place to live. Even those unable to work a "job" can find ways to contribute to the cause.

Support your local churches, charities, businesses and governing bodies. Put your shoulder to the wheel with your fellow neighbors. Cast your vote at election time for people who exhibit patriotism, civic pride, and good morals and values.

It's never been said better than when President John F. Kennedy addressed the nation: "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country".

It takes a Patriot, it takes a village, it takes a community to build and maintain a great country. On the honey-do list....celebrate Patriotism. Teach it to your kids. Look for ways to be a Patriot.

Have a happy, safe and Patriotic Fourth of July, and remember, when it comes to your projects, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.

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# What's Happening


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EVENTS OF INTEREST • FAMILY REUNIONS • PLAYS • CHURCH GATHERINGS • EDUCATIONAL • CLUB MEETINGS


 The Russellville Farmers Market is now open! Weekly schedule is Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 6 a.m.-1 p.m. Manager Greg Stanford. Located behind the A.W. Todd Centre.


 Attention all young ladies of Colbert, Franklin and Lauderdale counties entering 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in the Fall of 2018!!! The Distinguished Young Women Scholarship Program will be held Saturday, August 4 at Norton Auditorium on the campus of The University of North Alabama. Young ladies entering the 12th grade will have the opportunity to compete for cash scholarships as well as many other scholarships to colleges and universities. Also, each county winner will have the opportunity to represent her county at the state program in Montgomery in January of 2019. Young ladies entering the 10th and 11th grades have the opportunity to be "DYW Little Sisters." For more information, contact Susan Hargett at 256-710-9239 or Katernia Cole-Coffey at 256-332-8880, or check information on our Facebook page at Distinguished Young Women of Northwest Alabama, or email dshargett@aol.com. Other information and sign-up is available at [www.DistinguishedYW.org](http://www.DistinguishedYW.org).


 The Cotton Flats Cruisers will hold their ninth annual Car Show this Wednesday, July 4 at Sloss Lake on Hwy. 24 East in Russellville. All cars, trucks and bikes are welcome! Registration is from 7-11 a.m. Registration fee is \$25 for the first car, truck or bike, and \$15 for each additional entry. Multiple registrations must have the same name and address. There will be a grand prize of \$1,000 cash, plus a 50/50 drawing and many other cash prizes. There will also be a People's Choice Award, Mayor's Choice Trophy and Memorial Trophy. Swap meet space is available as space permits. Open to car, truck, bike parts and tools only. Fee is \$10 for 20' X 20' space. For more information, call Barry at 256-332-6585, Daryl Gholston at 256-436-2499 or Gary Hester at 256-394-3904.


 The Shoals Area Chapter of the Order of St. Luke will meet in the Sheffield Room at Park Place, 501 N. Montgomery Avenue in Sheffield, this Thursday, July 5 at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Jim Anderson will teach from John Chapter 9 (Jesus heals the blind man). We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. All are welcome.

 Come get "Shipwrecked" at Vacation Bible School at Gateway Church of God (Russellville Church of God)! VBS for pre-school children ages 2-4 and grade-school children ages 5-12 will be held Monday through Wednesday, July 9-11, from 6-8:30 p.m. The church is located at 15988 Hwy. 43, Russellville, AL 35654. For more information or transportation needs, call Lisa at 256-577-3998 or Janet at 662-554-1518.

 Time travelers wanted!! Mountain View Free Will Baptist Church (Hwy. 243 in Russellville, just past the airport) will have Vacation Bible School (theme: Time Lab) July 9-11 from 6-8 p.m. each night. See Jesus Christ throughout history in the 2018 Answers VBS Time Lab Vacation Bible School!

 The next meeting for American Legion Post 64 will be Thursday, July 12 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

 The Welch Reunion will be held Saturday, July 14 at the Mountain Valley Hee Haw building starting at 10 a.m. Anyone related in any way to the Welch family, please come on out! Each family should bring what they like for sandwiches (meat, cheese, lettuce, tomato, chips, drink, etc.) A donation will be collected to help pay for use of the building. No alcohol or drugs, please. For more information, call 256-627-7635 or 256-810-4840.

 The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guest Coby Greer at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville on Saturday, July 14 at 7 p.m. General admission seating. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Call 256-335-4356. The KGB will be the featured act at a show sponsored by the Franklin County Arts Council at the Roxy on the second Saturday of each month.



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The Russellville Public Library staff includes, from left, Ashley Cummins, Perla Marcelo and Peggy Harrison.

## Staff works together to help local library thrive

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Russellville mayor David Grissom routinely talks about how it takes teamwork for city government to succeed.

You won't find a closer team in the city than the staff of the Russellville Public Library.

Librarian Ashley Cummins, library assistant Perla Marcelo and library clerk Peggy Harrison work together each day not only to run the library but also to promote it to as many residents as possible.

"It's been wonderful working with them," Cummins said. "I could have never dreamed of or asked for a better staff."

Marcelo began working for the library after she did a 390-hour internship there as part of Northwest-Shoals Community College's Youth Success Program. Harrison, who's worked at Russellville Hospital and the medical office of Dr. Leonides Santos, was a long-time volunteer before she started working as a library employee.

Cummins and her staff have a variety of events each year. Some are designed as fundraisers, but most are done in an effort to increase awareness of the services offered by Russellville Public Library.

Activities include the annual Zombie Walk and a summer reading program for all ages. Marcelo works with pre-schoolers in that program while Cummins handles the teen program.

Cummins said her staff has worked hard to learn and showcase the library's new automation system.

"This is a big step for us," Cummins said. "Everything is accessible online, including what we have on the shelf, our e-books and audio MP3s."

See 'LIBRARY,' page 9



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# Five local eateries earn satisfactory ratings

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Five of the six Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of June 18-22 had scores that fall into the "satisfactory compliance" range.

Health ratings are required to be prominently posted in all food/lodging establishments. Scores are graded by the Alabama Department of Public Health inspectors on a 100-point scale.

Establishments with scores of 85 to 100 are considered to be in "satisfactory compliance" and are routinely inspected. Establishments scoring between 70 and 84 will be inspected again in 60 days, and those scoring between 60 and 69 will have another follow-up within 48 hours. Any establishment scoring below 60 will be immediately closed.

The website, [www.russellvillepubliclibrary.com](http://www.russellvillepubliclibrary.com), allows visitors to easily navigate to see what their local library offers. And the website shows visitors new selections as well as the most popular items available.

With Russellville's large Hispanic population, Cummins said it's been a blessing to have Marcelo on her staff to provide Spanish language information for Hispanic visitors to the library.

"That's been wonderful. She not only helps communicate with the patrons, she's really helped us see what the Hispanic community needs from the library," Cummins said. "That used to be a big group we were missing out on."

Cummins said Marcelo and Harrison each offer their unique talents to help the library.

"Perla has two young children," Cummins said, "so she does a great job with kids and our preschool program. And Peggy knows everyone in

As you might guess, all of those calculations led to increased property values.

For example, a rural structure (like a barn) classified as a B42 structure up to 5,000 square feet increased from \$3.90/square foot to \$11.40/square foot.

Stancil's two certified appraisers, Dennis Holland and Lori Penick, have been working to bring Franklin County into compliance with the new Department of Revenue guidelines.

"It's hard to tell with different types of barns why one went up and one didn't," Stancil said, "but we have to follow these state guidelines for reappraisals."

Property in Alabama must be reappraised every four years, and this is the first reappraisal for Franklin County under the new manual. Stancil said any property owner whose land value increased received a postcard from the Franklin County Appraisal Department. If there was no change in value, no notice was mailed.

The notices are important, Stancil explained, because they explain the process for property owners to file a written protest in the event they believe the appraised value exceeds the market

Areas of inspection by ADPH include management and personnel; food storage, preparation and service; equipment; utensils; linen cleanliness; plumbing and waste; poisonous or toxic material storage; and an inspection of the physical facility or property.

Five of the six Franklin County businesses listed in the most recent food and lodging establishment ratings scored 91 or above, within the satisfactory compliance range. One scored a 76.

The highest score was 98, received by Wal-Mart #0403 Market and Wal-Mart #0403 Deli, 13675 Hwy. 43, Russellville.

Inspections of Franklin County businesses, with critical item violations noted, resulted in the following scores:

- Vulcan Food Mart, 28485 Hwy. 24, Russellville, 76. (Excessive amount of flies in kitchen area, no drying device available at kitchen handsink, no

calibrated food probe thermometer and food 40 degrees off temperature, employee donning gloves and handling ready to eat food without first washing hands).

- Pollo Lo-Quillo, 115 Franklin St., Russellville, 91. (No soap at hand sink).

- Wal-Mart #403 Bakery, 13675 Hwy. 43, Russellville, 96.

- N&F No. 1, Inc., 12301 Hwy. 43 South, Russellville, 96.

Of the 15 inspections done in Colbert County from June 18, 2018 through June 22, 2018, no restaurants scored below the satisfactory range.

The high score for the week in Colbert County was 99, received by the Palace Soda Shop, 100 South Main St., Tuscumbia.

Updated ratings are available at [www.food-scores.state.al.us](http://www.food-scores.state.al.us) and may be viewed by city or county.

## 'LIBRARY,' from page 8

town. There's rarely a person who comes in the door she doesn't know."

The Russellville Public Library will have a booth at the Franklin County Watermelon Festival this year and will offer karaoke for visitors to the booth.

**"It's been wonderful working with them," Cummins said. "I could have never dreamed of or asked for a better staff."**

"Our summer theme is 'Libraries Rock,' so I'm wearing band T-shirts all summer, and we're carrying that theme into the Watermelon Festival," Cummins said.

With a lifelong love of books, Marcelo said taking a job at the library was a natural fit for her.

"I like being close to home, and I love my co-workers," Marcelo said. "I also love books. One thing we do is go online and see what other libraries are doing to help promote Russellville

Public Library. I have visited other libraries to see what they're doing and what they offer."

The Russellville Public Library will soon offer laptops, Kindle eReaders and Wi-Fi hotspots for checkout to help patrons read at home and allow students the use of internet in areas that otherwise may not be serviced by broadband.

For Harrison, the library offered her the opportunity to continue working with the public, something she loves.

"Sometimes it gets very hectic here, but I've always liked dealing with the public and talking with people," Harrison said. "Ashley and Perla handle all the computer and technology parts of the job, and I help out on the rest."

The Russellville Public Library is located at 110 Lawrence Street East. Library hours are Tuesday-Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

## 'TAXES,' from page 1

value.

The protest must be in writing, and mailed to the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner at P.O. Box 248, Russellville, AL 35653. And they must be received within 30 days from the notice date on the valuation notice.

The first step after such notice is received is for Stancil's office to take a second look at the property and see if there are any grounds for reconsideration.

"If not, we let the taxpayer know and if they are dissatisfied, they can go to the Board of Equalization for a hearing," Stancil said.

Penick stressed the importance of property owners sending in written notice in that 30-day window, or they lose the right to contest the reappraised value.

"Most of the adjustments are with the depreciation value, but in some cases we can't do anything," Penick said. "The biggest problem is when the taxpayer receives notice and does nothing, then waits until October to pay their taxes and gets upset. At that point, it's too late and they can't do anything."

Taxpayers are allowed to submit written docu-

ments in support of their contest of the increased appraised value. These can include recent appraisals, for example. But Stancil said foreclosure sales are not taken into consideration.

While there may be some sticker shock to residents, Stancil said she believes the reappraised values to be correct. It's been more than a decade since there has been any increase in how the values are calculated.

"They are probably adjusted fairly, but it's been such a long time span between the last adjustment," Stancil said.

Property owners in Alabama have a legal obligation to notify the Revenue Commissioner's Office about improvements made on their property, including things like saferooms, entertainment pavilions or outdoor kitchens.

Stancil said a flyover is done every four years to take aerial photos that help appraisers see improvements.

For more information on the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner's Office, land parcels, property descriptions, values and aerial photos of property, log onto [isv.kcsgis.com/al.franklin\\_revenue](http://isv.kcsgis.com/al.franklin_revenue).





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## 'REVENUE,' from page 1

have been generated from Twin Forks' 80 campsites," Green said.

The Town of Bear Creek entered into a 30-year lease with the Bear Creek Development Authority in 1986 to operate and manage Twin Forks Campground. That lease expired in 2016, but Morrison said the parties' agreement continues to operate based on a BCDA Board of Directors' vote on September 9, 2008, when the board voted to renew the lease "for the maximum allowable time according to the TVA/BCDA contract."

Morrison said TVA officials are still reviewing the proposed lease renewal.

"It takes time with TVA to approve the lease," Morrison said. "Our attorney for BCDA [Jeff Bowling] continues to work on this for us."

Green contends that Twin Forks' 80 campsites that rent for \$300/month are regularly at full capacity and should generate \$24,000 or more in fees each month. Green said the town receives additional revenue from tent camping fees.

Morrison disputes Green's assertion that Twin Forks regularly operates at full capacity.

"The campground is not always full. Some sites are just for daily use and not rented every day," Morrison said. "And a campsite may be occupied for a week, then not occupied for two weeks. Sometimes we rope them off when a camper leaves so we can clean them. These sites are not full every month. As a matter of fact, rarely do we have all 80 sites rented at one time."

Green said he requested last year that all campground fees be paid by check, money order, cred-

it or debit card. He says he was given a variety of reasons why that was not feasible and no action was taken.

Morrison said that, as of July 1, cash fees will no longer be accepted. She explains this was under consideration by the town council for some time.

**"[Morrison] wants it to look like I was being very burdensome to the town and that I was asking for things all of a sudden," Green said. "In reality, I have been asking for all these records for the last year-and-a-half to be brought to the council table. The sad thing is, they never have."**

"She will take cash for tent sites, for example. We decided not to do that any longer, not because of any discrepancy, but for safety," Morrison said. "She is in a camper like everyone else. People know when she collects rent, and we don't want her stuck in a camper over the weekend with several thousand dollars in cash where someone might break in and steal it."

Over the last week, Green has sent several email requests to Morrison and outgoing town clerk Ava McCurley for various financial records. Morrison said these records have been available at council meetings since Green was elected, while Green says no records are brought to those meetings.

"He's been on the council two years and says he's never been given records, and that's just not true," Morrison said. "He's been given everything he's asked for, and he never even one time when these records were brought into council meetings

asked to look at those campground receipts."

Green says he's asked for the records at numerous council meetings but they were never produced.

"[Morrison] wants it to look like I was being very burdensome to the town and that I was asking for things all of a sudden," Green said. "In reality, I have been asking for all these records for the last year-and-a-half to be brought to the council table. The sad thing is, they never have."

Another unresolved issue revolves around a \$25 per month increase in campsite fees imposed in 2017. Green says \$12.50 of each \$25 was to go to maintenance and campground operation and \$12.50 was to go to the Parks and Recreation Department.

"So far, not one single dollar has gone to the Parks and Recreation account," Green said. "And when I started asking about the Park and Rec money, Connie steps in and makes the comment she did."

"I was told that, for some reason, the Park and Rec money was being put into a savings account instead of the Park and Rec account that we have had for years. I then asked for the balance to that account, which I have yet to receive...To be scorned by her for doing what I am doing is definitely a save-face before the people that were copied on these emails [which includes the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts, Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow and several media outlets]. I was never supposed to have had to go this far."



# Destination Restaurant closes doors

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Destination Restaurant closed its doors for the final time last week as owner Hieu Bui announced the end of the restaurant in downtown Russellville.

In a social media post last Tuesday evening, Bui confirmed that Destination Restaurant would be closed permanently.

"I believe we have reached our final destination with our restaurant. It is time for me to pull the plug on this one," Bui said. "It is sad for myself and our staff to see this great restaurant go away."

Bui expressed his appreciation to his customers and staff for their support and indicated there was a possibility the location could remain a restaurant under new ownership.

"Currently, I am talking to a few people who may want to turn this into another great restaurant for the Russellville community," Bui said.

Destination's closing continues a trend of downtown restaurants going out of business. Permanent closings have included the Jackson Avenue Deli, the Bricks Restaurant, Tropical Lounge and the Old School Cafe.

The former Bricks location was purchased by MS Industries II, and there are plans to open the location as a Doe's Eat Place franchise later this summer according to city officials.

## Rebels with a cause



**COURTESY PHOTO**

East Franklin Junior High School students collected 87 pounds of pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House as part of a Franklin County 4-H Club community service project this past school year. Pictured above, left, are EFJH fourth-grade 4-H Club officers Bailey Latham, Ava Hall and Avery Cummings; above, right, are fifth-grade 4-H Club officers Matthew Hubbard, Cohl Welborn and Ayla Stowe. "The students at EFJH did a great job collecting pop tabs!" said Janet Lovelady, 4-H agent at the Franklin County Extension Office.

## Banner achievement



**COURTESY PHOTO**

From left, Northwest-Shoals Community College students Logan Trousdale of Florence and Patrick Smith of Killen were set to represent the state of Alabama at the 54th annual SkillsUSA National Competition last week. Smith won first place in Carpentry at the State SkillsUSA competition in late April, and Trousdale won first place in Cabinetmaking.

## Lending a hand



**COURTESY PHOTO**

Employees of CertainTeed in Russellville recently volunteered to work at the Rustic Youth Camp on Cedar Creek Lake as part of a community service project by the company. Employees spent the day weeding, planting flowers, and working on other beautification efforts for the camp. Fourteen employees attended the work day. They were paid by the company to take a personal day and give their time to the youth camp. The annual Rustic Youth Camp is in full swing for the summer with 250 people attending a recent session. Jackie Richardson, Rustic Youth Camp director, expressed his appreciation to the company and its employees for taking their time to help out.



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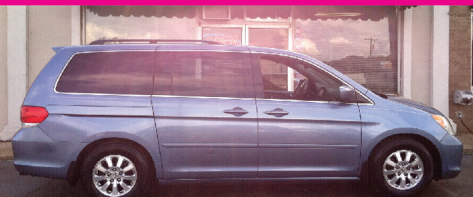
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## Jackson rallies to win Cypress Lakes tourney with closing 64

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

Aaron Jackson's final-round performance at the Cypress Lakes Collegiate last Wednesday provided more than a few highlights—six birdies in an eight-hole stretch starting with No. 3; a beautiful three-wood off the tee to within 12 feet of the pin on the short par-four 15th; and, finally, a hard-breaking, downhill 18-foot putt on No. 18 that he drained for his eighth birdie of the day and a six-under 64.

But the game of golf—much like life—is oftentimes less about achieving greatness and more about managing adversity. Don't misunderstand—greatness is...well...*great*, but there's only so much of it to go around. Greatness is nothing if not fleeting, especially on the links. Golf, like life, is a grind, and the grind rewards those who possess the fortitude to keep moving forward when things go sideways.



Aaron Jackson

Sometimes, it's all about damage control.

"Definitely," said Jackson, a 2014 graduate of Russellville High School who has one year remaining in his golfing career at UNA. "Sometimes you're just trying to salvage the best you can, so you don't mess up the round or put yourself in a position where you can't come back from it."

Jackson, who says he tries to play Cypress Lakes "a few times a week," arrived in Muscle Shoals last Monday with a simple goal in mind for the tournament, which is part of the Southeastern Collegiate Golf Tour.

"Really, just to win it," he said. "I knew some of the guys who would be playing in it, and, knowing the course as well as I do, I thought I could definitely compete."

It didn't take long, however, for things to go sideways a bit. Jackson started slowly in Monday's first round and found himself three-over through four holes.

"I just got myself out of position in some spots," he said. "I had a few three-putts, but out of position was really what it was. On some holes [at Cypress Lakes] you definitely have to bear down and hit a good tee shot or you'll find the water hazard. It's a short course, but it's a very challenging short course. Some of the tee shots out there can get tough, the greens can

See 'JACKSON,' Page 19

# On the Rebound



PHOTO BY  
KYLE GLASGOW  
Boyd (16) and Scott (36) were two of the team's leading tacklers in 2017.

## Healthy, hungry and hankering to hit someone, the new-look Golden Tigers are primed for a bounce-back season

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

July is upon us, which means team camps and play dates for basketball, baseball, softball, etc. have wrapped up and football is once again front and center in the world of high school sports.

Seven-on-seven competitions and organized team activities (OTAs) fill the calendar this month, with fall camp right around the corner and the opening week of the 2018 season hot on its heels.

Those Friday-night lights will be shining bright before you know it.

For just the second time this century, Russellville heads into a new season having missed the playoffs the year before. Including first-year head man John Ritter, the Golden Tigers have five new coaches on a staff that Ritter says is "the best staff in Alabama, in all classifications."

Chris Balentine, who helped Ritter turn West Morgan into a 10-win region champion in 2017, brings his aggressive, attacking 3-4 scheme to RHS as the team's new defensive coordinator. Ronnie Ritter (John's father and a coaching legend from his days at Lauderdale County) has also

See 'REBOUND,' Page 19



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## 'REBOUND' from page 13

joined his son's staff and will coach outside linebackers. Finally, Tony Bonds—a former Golden Tiger great who played college football at Ole Miss—will share offensive line coaching duties with fellow newcomer Derek Blagburn.

There are new faces—albeit familiar ones—in key places on the playing field as well. Senior Lucas McNutt, back in the fold for the first time since his freshman year, is the front-runner to claim the quarterback job left vacant following the departure of Luke Barnwell (who followed his dad, Kevin, to Phil Campbell). McNutt will look to build a quick rapport with dynamic senior receiver Devin Buckhalter, who missed all of last season with a foot injury and is aiming to pick up where he left off following a breakout sophomore season in 2016.

Then there's athletic senior running back K.J. Hamilton, who played last season at Tharptown. Hamilton is back at Russellville and figures prominently in a by-committee backfield that should see plenty of action in Ritter's triple-option-based, run-heavy attack.

Buckhalter's injury in a preseason game at Athens last August—combined with a handful of other key losses in personnel—completely sunk Russellville's offense for the first five weeks of the 2017 season. To their credit, the Golden Tigers circled the wagons and won three region games down the stretch, but they still fell just short of earning a playoff berth.

With Buckhalter (who led the team two years ago as a sophomore with 35 catches for 514 yards) healthy again and a few other playmakers now in place, the offense has a chance to be vastly more productive than it was last season. Factor in an experienced defense that Ritter says "is ahead of the offense at this point," and Russellville is in prime position to rebound from last year's 3-7 finish and contend immediately in a virtually brand new Class 5A, Region 7.

"We talk every day about our goals as a team," said Ritter, a two-time selection as Coach of the Year by the ASWA (first at Red Bay in 2012, then at West Morgan in 2016). "We're not gonna blow smoke up our kids' tails, but we talk very openly about what we want to do. Our goal at Russellville is to win a state championship. That's been the goal here for a long time. If we're not working to reach that goal, then why even bother going through the motions?"

"We talk every day about our goals as a team," said Ritter, a two-time selection as Coach of the Year by the ASWA (first at Red Bay in 2012, then at West Morgan in 2016). "We're not gonna blow smoke up our kids' tails, but we talk very openly about what we want to do. Our goal at Russellville is to win a state championship. That's been the goal here for a long time. If we're not working to reach that goal, then why even bother going through the motions?"

"Our first goal is to put a good product on the field and to play to the level of our own expectations. If we do that, the winning stuff will take care

of itself."

Here's a position-by-position breakdown of where the Golden Tigers stand heading into the month of July:

### Quarterbacks

**Position Coach: Brett Voss**

According to Ritter, McNutt is competing with junior Jacob Davis and freshman Gabe Amick in what amounts to "an open contest" to claim the starting spot.

Ritter, who believes a 60-40 split in favor of the run is ideal, isn't looking for a quarterback to put the ball in the air 30 times. He values leadership, savvy, instincts and athleticism at the position.

"Managing the game is very important," he said.

"Lucas is an athlete," Ritter said. "As far as the quarterback side of it, he's a little bit raw and rusty, but we really feel like we can develop him into fitting what we need. A lot of what we do on offense is triple-option-based, and the better your quarterback can run, the more deadly the triple option is and the more zone-read type stuff we can do."

"Lucas, being a senior, is a little bit ahead of the other two. Being the point guard on the basketball team, he's accustomed to being in that leadership role, and he brings an athletic dimension to our offense that we're excited about. Each of those guys brings a different dimension to what we want to do. We're excited about that position, because we know we've got some guys who can play."

Ritter, who believes a 60-40 split in favor of the run is ideal, isn't looking for a quarterback to put the ball in the air 30 times a game. He values leadership, savvy, instincts and athleticism at the position.

"At this point, managing the game is very important," Ritter said. "Making sure we get lined up right, making sure we're communicating. Our system is signal-based, so there's a lot of communicating non-verbally. One [key] is that communication. Two is making sure the ball gets where it's supposed to be, making the right read with our zone-read stuff, handling things smoothly with our dedicated tailback runs. In the passing game, it's about making good decisions and getting the ball to guys so they can make plays."

### Running Backs

**Position Coaches:**

**Tony Buckhalter (tailbacks)**

**Mason Willis (fullbacks/tight ends)**

K.J. Hamilton is in the mix at tailback along with fellow senior Xavier Hollingsworth, junior Austin Ashley and freshman Airreon "Boots" McCulloch. Ashley, who rushed for 22 yards on seven carries last season, is the leading returning rusher in a completely remade backfield. [Departed seniors Bernard Phinzee and Robert Hamilton combined last season for 1,044 yards on 205 attempts.]

Ritter said that the freshman McCulloch "brings another athletic dimension" to the position.

"Any of those four guys can help us be successful," he said. "They're all pushing for those top two

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# 'REBOUND,' from page 14

spots.”  
Ritter’s offense involves a lot of two-back formations, and he said situations will dictate whether the second back is a blocking fullback (a position likely to be handled by Gage Cook or Angel Martinez) or another tailback.

“That’s kind of what we’re figuring out now,” he said last week. “What will we be better suited to do? At times we’ll have a fullback, a blocking-back sort of guy, and at other times when we’re in more of our spread look we’ll wanna go with another tailback guy for that spot.”

Last year at West Morgan, Ritter had the luxury of leaning on a dynamic runner in Isaac Huguley, who rushed for 1,800-plus yards and earned small-school Player of the Year honors from the *Decatur Daily*. Ritter anticipates more of a committee approach to the ground game in his first season at Russellville.

“[Huguley] could do everything,” Ritter said, “so we didn’t have to do it by committee. Right now, with our personnel, we’ll do something different.”

**Receivers**  
**Position Coaches: Jess Smith (inside), Corey Flanagan (outside)**  
With Buckhalter back and key contributors like senior Theron Pounders and sophomores Rowe Gallagher and Cole Barnett returning, Ritter believes this to be a position of strength for the Golden Tigers.

“We’re very excited about the depth we have at receiver,” Ritter said. “We’ve got five or six guys who can make plays for us on any given Friday night.”

**Buckhalter emerged as a dangerous deep threat during his breakout sophomore season two years ago, but Ritter plans to feature the 6’0, 194-pound speedster in a variety of ways as the lynchpin of the offense.**

**“We’re gonna get him the ball a lot of different ways,” Ritter said. “He brings an element to our offense that you’ve gotta have.”**

Buckhalter emerged as a dangerous deep threat during his breakout sophomore season two years ago, but Ritter plans to feature the 6’0, 194-pound speedster in a variety of ways as the lynchpin of the offense.

“We’re gonna get him the ball a lot of different ways,” Ritter said. “We’ll use him as our pitch-back, we’ll run the jet with him, we’ll throw screens to him, and we’ve got those vertical combinations in our passing game. He brings an element to our offense that you’ve gotta have. The way we can manipulate him and move him around, playing him inside, playing him outside—with the simplicity of our offense, moving him around helps us create the combinations we want to create.

“As a defense, when you start worrying about him and where he’s lined up, we’ve got you where we want you, because all of a sudden you’re not dedicating seven people or eight people to stopping the run. That’s just gonna create more opportunities for guys to make plays.”

Buckhalter missed spring practice while helping the Golden Tiger baseball team make a fourth straight trip to Montgomery, but he took measures to make sure he wasn’t falling behind on the football side of things.

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PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

**BUCK IS BACK** - After leading Russellville with 35 catches for 514 yards in 2016 (above), Buckhalter (33) missed all of last season with a broken bone in his foot. He is healthy again and poised for a big senior year.

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## 'REBOUND', from page 15

"The first time we saw him was in June," Ritter said, "but as soon as I got the job he started texting me and asking a lot of questions about route combinations and 'What's our install gonna be?' They felt like they had a good shot at baseball to make a deep run, so we both knew he probably wouldn't go through spring. But he did some work on his own, on weekends and stuff, and after baseball ended he got together with those quarterbacks and just worked on running the routes he's gonna be running, just perfecting his game.

"We had seen him play at seven-on-seven last summer, so we know what he's capable of."

The supporting cast of receivers around Buckhalter is strong. Gallagher caught 20 passes for 156 yards and a touchdown in his first varsity season, and Barnett also saw significant reps as a freshman. Ritter raved about the route-running ability of Pounders, who will join Buckhalter at inside receiver.

"[Pounders] had a great spring, and he's had a great summer," Ritter said. "He's not overly fast, but he runs great routes. He's a good possession-type guy to have."

Fleet-footed junior J.D. Price gives the Golden Tigers another potential weapon at receiver.

"We pulled him from the track team," Ritter said, "and he had an outstanding spring. He's another guy that can really run."

#### Offensive Line

#### Position Coaches: Tony Bonds and Derek Blagburn

Ritter preaches a physical, impose-your-will style of play on offense, and he believes firmly in running the football until the defense stops it—a stark contrast to the pass-first spread attack employed by former head coach Mark Heaton. Russellville's new offensive approach places a heavy burden on the offensive line to dominate in the trenches.

"We've gotta set the tone up front," Ritter said. "We've stressed a physical brand of football. Our philosophy, our way of doing things is a lot different than the way they were doing things here before. That's not to say that Coach Heaton did it the wrong way; we just do it a different way.

**"Our philosophy and the way we teach things is all about getting those guys to play nasty up front," Ritter said of his offensive line, "to be physical and to create a dominating type of attitude. Every time we go out, we want to dominate, and that all starts up front."**

"Our philosophy and the way we teach things is all about getting those guys to play nasty up front, to be physical and to create a dominating type of attitude. Every time we go out, we want to dominate, and that all starts up front."

Senior Will Rushing and sophomore Edgar Amaya are Russellville's two returning starters in the trenches. The 6'1, 220-pound Rushing, who has shifted to guard after starting at left tackle in 2017, brings strength [he benchmarks 340 pounds and squats 545], experience and a tough-minded work ethic to the interior of the line. Ritter said last Wednesday that Rushing has been chomping at the bit to return to full action after suffering a torn meniscus on the first day of spring practice in May.

"We've had to keep a tight rein on him," Ritter said. "He's a winner, a really good kid. We just have to make him understand that, 'Hey, this is June.' We want him to be full-speed in August. He's due to get released this week, and he'll do as much as he can."

Rushing leads a guard rotation that also includes senior Herson Rodriguez, who has started in the past, and junior Jonathan Vargas. The 6'4, 270-pound Amaya played guard as a freshman in his first season at the varsity level, but he'll man the left tackle spot in 2018. Juniors Noah Pounders and Matt Williams (6'5, 322) are vying for time at right tackle, along with sophomore

See 'REBOUND,' page 17



# 'REBOUND', from page 16

Dakota Andres. Junior Trenton Hollimon and sophomore Braden Williams are both in the mix to start at center.

**"It's been my experience that if you take a guy who's an average football player, and he plays every snap on one side of the ball and gets all his practice reps on one side of the ball, that average guy is gonna play above-average," Ritter said. "At the same time, if you take your best player, and he never comes off the field, what are you really getting from him in the fourth quarter?"**

With 78 players currently on the roster, Ritter says the Golden Tigers are in a position where they don't plan to play anybody both ways.

"We're gonna have some crossover people—probably about five guys on offense and five on defense—who will learn another position just to establish depth," Ritter said, "but barring injuries or something freakish happening we're gonna play everybody strictly one way. It's been my experience that if you take a guy who's an average football player, and he plays every snap on one side of the ball and gets all his practice reps on one side of the ball, that average guy is gonna play above-average. At the same time, if you take your best football player, and he never comes off the field, what are you really getting from him in the fourth quarter?"

"At West Morgan last year, we beat Colbert County [42-41 in Leighton on September 22] because we two-platooned everybody and they didn't. We still couldn't tackle [Kobi] McCoy very well, but we tackled him just enough to win the

game. We were not quite as tired as they were."

### Defensive Line

#### Coaches: Paul Czervionke and Bryant Bonds

In the 3-4 scheme they've deployed with great success at multiple schools, Ritter and Balentine do not ask their three down linemen to simply occupy blockers at the point of attack.

"We do not do any two-gap reading," Ritter said. "We're not gonna ask those guys to stuff gaps. We're a slanting front, and we try to create havoc with those front three. We're gonna move those guys around and free them up by slanting. We want them to play fast and low and physical, and we're gonna move them around."

"If they do get double-teamed, then they'll fall to the ground and create a big wad of humanity."

Senior Andres Tomas, a returning starter whom Ritter describes as "very tough to block," will anchor the D-line at nose guard after recording 29 tackles and two sacks in eight games last season. Ritter said he's expecting big things from sophomore Anthony Ruiz, who heads up a rotation at defensive tackle that also includes senior Josue Sanchez, junior Jose Gaspar and sophomores Angel Moreno and Omarion Jackson.

"We feel good about those six guys playing on Fridays," Ritter said. "They're all playing one way, and we've got enough depth there that we should be able to keep them fresh and playing at full-speed, not taking plays off."

### Linebackers

#### Position Coaches: Tim Townley (inside), Ronnie Ritter (outside)

Sophomore Brooks Scott (6'1, 195) returns at

inside linebacker after making 62 tackles (including three for a loss) as a freshman in 2017. Junior Albaro Francisco has shifted inside after seeing significant reps at outside linebacker last season. Fellow juniors Mario Cruz and Jaxon Hallmark round out the rotation at inside 'backer.

Outside linebacker should be a position of

See 'REBOUND,' Page 18



COURTESY PHOTO

**NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT** - Ritter believes it's best to stay away from playing guys on both sides of the ball. He says West Morgan's 42-41 win over Colbert County last season was made possible by the Rebels' superior depth, which allowed them to use far fewer two-way players and avoid fatigue late in the game.

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# 'REBOUND,' from page 17

strength, with physical senior Nate Green returning from injury and athletic junior Jamaal Hubbard looking to build off a productive sophomore season that saw him make 29 tackles, pick off two passes and break up two more in seven games. Freshman Nathan Brockway is also in the mix at outside 'backer, and sophomore Grayson Eady—who missed last season with an illness—is a safety who will often spin down as a linebacker to give the Golden Tigers a little more thump in the box.

"We've been very pleased with our linebacker play in the spring and summer," Ritter said. "We like the progression those guys made into June. Overall, we feel really good about our defense. At this point, the defense is ahead of the offense, and it should be. *See the ball, go get the ball*—it's a lot easier, if you play with the right mindset."

**Defensive Backs**  
**Position Coaches: Trey Stanford (safeties), Jermaine Groce (corners)**  
Ritter said Balentine's defense does not designate a strong safety and a free safety, but rather a right safety and a left safety—either of whom could spin down into the box to provide run support. Ritter liked what he saw this spring from senior safeties Wylie Boyd and Donald Ramson.

"They both had a great spring," he said. "They picked up on what we did very, very easily, and that allowed them to play at a high rate of speed." The hard-hitting Boyd played in all 10 games for Russellville a year ago, making 51 tackles, forcing three fumbles and intercepting two passes. He and Ramson are joined by sophomore J.D. Bishop in the safety rotation.

"When you take a new job, you really have no expectations as far as personnel goes," Ritter said. "Every place is different. Every kid is different. Every situation is different. Our expectations are to start molding these guys into what we want and how we do things. There's a certain type way we do things, showing great attention to detail."

"We don't have ten D-One football players on our team. What we do have is a bunch of guys that if they'll play hard, get after it and do the little things right, they'll be successful. People automatically judge success on wins and losses. Our expectations are to put a product on the field that's up to the standard expected in Russellville. If we do that, the wins and losses part will take care of itself."

Sophomores Caden Watts and Ashaad Williams (three pass break-ups in 2017) will man the corner spots, with senior Ali Moore providing depth.

## Russellville Golden Tigers 2018 Varsity Football Schedule

Date	Opponent
8/24	vs. EAST LIMESTONE <sup>^</sup>
8/31	vs. DESHLER
9/7	at Corner*
9/14	vs. HAYDEN*
9/21	at West Point*
9/28	at Haleyville
10/5	vs. LAWRENCE COUNTY*
10/12	vs. HAMILTON*
10/19	at Jasper*
10/26	vs. DORA*
11/2	at Central-Florence

<sup>^</sup>-Preseason Game  
\*-Class 5A, Region 7 opponent  
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"They're progressing well," Ritter said of his cornerbacks. "What we do is a little bit different, in terms of the type of coverage we play, the way we play it and how it's disguised. A lot of the stuff we do is subtle."

Ritter was asked if the personnel on hand matched up with the expectations he had when he arrived at Russellville in late March.

"When you take a new job, you really have no expectations as far as personnel goes," he said. "Every place is different. Every kid is different. Every situation is different. Our expectations are to start molding these guys into what we want and how we do things. There's a certain type of way we do things, showing great attention to detail."

"We don't have ten D-One football players on our team. What we do have is a bunch of guys that if they'll play hard, get after it and do the little things right, they'll be successful. People automatically judge success on wins and losses. Our expectations are to put a product on the field that's up to the standard expected in Russellville. If we do that, the wins and losses part will take care of itself."

The month of July is unofficially 7-on-7 season for high school football, but you'll have to forgive Ritter for not doing cartwheels in celebration. He's not a big fan of 7-on-7. [It must be those triple-

option roots.] "It's not real football," he grouched last Wednesday. "You can't run the ball. The defense knows you're gonna pass it. They've got seven guys, and you've got six receivers."

"We use seven-on-seven to work on timing, to work on our play-action, to work on our quick game, our boot-legs. We do everything we're gonna do on Friday nights, except for screens. But we're not gonna put in [new] plays or do things just to win a seven-on-seven, because you're taking away from what your identity is."

Russellville will travel to Samford for a 7-on-7 camp on Thursday, July 12. The Golden Tigers will host Sheffield for an OTA on July 24, and teams from more than 20 schools will come to Russellville's campus on Thursday, July 26 for a 7-on-7 competition. Fall camp is slated to kick off on August 6.

Roughly three months into his tenure as the Golden Tigers' head coach, Ritter said things have been running wide-open since the moment he set foot on campus.

"It's been crazy, but part of that is self-inflicted," he said. "Russellville is a great program—the top program in the state, in my opinion. But we want to take it to another level, to do great things for our kids. We want to do some new things with the game-day experience and just take everything to another level. So a lot of the busy-ness is self-inflicted."

"We're making sure we put things in place to take our brand and market it and make it better than it's ever been."

## Class 5A, Region 7 Alignment for 2018-19

Team	2017 Record
Corner Yellow Jackets <sup>^</sup>	5-6
Dora Bulldogs•	9-3
Hamilton Aggies•	3-7
Hayden Wildcats <sup>^</sup>	5-6
Jasper Vikings+	3-7
Lawrence County Red Devils#	5-6
Russellville Golden Tigers#	3-7
West Point Warriors <sup>^</sup>	6-5

<sup>^</sup>-Realigned from Class 5A, Region 6  
•-Reclassified from Class 4A  
+-Reclassified from Class 6A  
#-Realigned from Class 5A, Region 8

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## 'JACKSON' from page 13

get really fast, and the pin placement was challenging this week. We saw pins we'd never seen before."

Jackson has played enough golf in his life to understand that damage control is a skill, just like chipping or putting.

"After making a few bogeys, you just try to make a few pars and settle down, maybe get a birdie here and there to salvage the round so you're not out of the tournament after the first day," he said. "You want to make sure you still have a chance to win."

With that in mind, Jackson birdied No. 8 to get his Monday round back on track. He followed up with another birdie on No. 10 and then flirted with an ace on the 157-yard par-three 12th, throwing a pitching-wedge dart to within three feet. He kicked in that birdie putt on his way to shooting four-under on the back nine and two-under 68 for the day.

"I would say the back nine [at Cypress Lakes] is easier," Jackson said last Thursday night from Sea Island on the Georgia coast, where he was due to be fitted for a new set of clubs the next day. "I feel like I put up better scores on the back. There's a par four down the stretch that's drive-able, and there are a few holes where you can hit short wedge shots into them. If you're able to hit some good wedge shots and capitalize on those, you can go pretty low on the back nine."

Near the top of the leader board after round one, Jackson faltered last Tuesday and shot five-over 75 to drop a handful of strokes behind tournament leader Sam Murphy of Calhoun Community College, who carded a second-round 66. Going into last Wednesday's final round, Jackson's goal was to put up a low number on the front nine and get himself back into contention heading down the stretch.

"I thought if I could shoot three or four under on the front," he said, "I'd be tied or one back going into the back nine."

Jackson came out scorching on Wednesday, riding a hot putter to birdies at three, five, six, eight, nine and ten. Occasionally, though, a little damage control is required even in the midst of such greatness. Jackson went into the hazard off the tee on the par-four fourth, but he was able to scramble and sink a clutch 15-foot putt to avoid a double-bogey that might have derailed his final-round charge before it really got going.

"Making that fifteen-footer to salvage bogey on that hole sort of gave me a kick-start to the round," he said. "It led me to put up the score that I shot."

Jackson cooled off a bit after his birdie at No. 10, missing good looks at 12 and 13 and then finding the hazard with his tee shot on the par-five 14th. He scrambled again and saved another bogey with a nice up-and-down from across the green, leaving him at four-under for the round with four holes to go.

At that point, Jackson says he heard that Murphy (playing in the final group with Trent Jones of Arkansas State and Eli Hodges, a teammate of Jackson's at UNA and another former Golden Tiger) was also four-under on the day and still solidly in the lead.

"With four holes to go," Jackson said, "I knew I needed to make something happen."

He did exactly that, slicing a three-wood to the middle of the green on the short, 270-yard par-four 15th. He missed a 12-footer for eagle but tapped in for birdie to get to five-under for the day. Jackson squandered a good tee shot and approach on No. 16, misreading a short, downhill putt and settling for par.

"I really thought I was out of it at that point," he said.

**"It was downhill, breaking hard left," Jackson said of his tournament-winning putt on No. 18. "I knew I didn't want to three-putt, just in case they made bogey. I had to put some decent speed on it, but I didn't want to run it by too much. I hit my line, and halfway there I saw that it was still high enough. I thought, 'This has a real good chance.'"**

There was a wait on the 17th tee, however, and Jackson learned during a brief consultation with Hodges that he was only one shot back with two holes remaining. The 17th at Cypress is a par three over water, and Jackson overcame a "mediocre" tee shot with a solid two-putt from 50 feet to stay at five-under for the day. He headed for the 18th tee thinking that a birdie would potentially earn him a spot in a sudden-death playoff.

A 430-yard par four, the 18th at Cypress is not exactly a birdie hole—particularly when it's playing into the wind, as it was last Wednesday. Jackson rose to the occasion, though, hitting what he called his "best tee shot of the day" to within 125 yards. He flattened out a pitching wedge to try and keep his approach out of the wind, leaving himself that downhill 18-footer.

Again, Jackson believed that anything short of a birdie would almost certainly eliminate him, but he also didn't want to give away par in the event that Murphy or Jones ran into trouble on the last.

"The putt was downhill, breaking hard left," Jackson said. "I knew I didn't want to three-putt, just in case they made bogey. I had to put some decent speed on it, but I didn't want to run it by too much."

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"I hit my line, and halfway there I saw that it was still high enough. I thought, 'This has a real good chance.'"

The ball found the bottom of the cup, giving Jackson eight birdies on the day and leaving him at three-under 207 (68-75-64) for the week. After Murphy made bogey and Jones settled for par at 18, Jackson's birdie had done more than earn him a spot in a playoff—it had won him the tournament outright. Murphy and Jones both finished at 208, one shot back.

"It's been a while since I've had that feeling," said Jackson, who picked up his first win of 2018. "It felt good. It sure did."

Hodges shot 74 on Wednesday and finished at 215. Thomas Luther, another teammate of Jackson's at UNA, shot a final-round 67 to finish fourth overall at 213. UNA's Brant Bishop shot two-under 68 on Wednesday and finished the tournament at 219.

Jackson said his fellow Lions were glad to see him take home the crystal trophy.

"They were happy for me," he said. "We actually all played pretty well the last day, as a team. So they were pretty happy."

Jackson, who is on track to graduate from UNA in the spring of 2019 with a degree in sales and marketing, is still mulling his post-collegiate golfing future.

"I've thought about it," he said, "but I really haven't made any kind of a decision about what I want to do yet."

In the meantime, Jackson has plenty to keep him busy during the short term. In the month of July alone, he's set to play in the Spirit of America Tournament at Burningtree Country Club in Decatur, the U.S. Amateur qualifying tournament (also at Burningtree) and the Alabama Open at Capitol Hill in Prattville.

And, of course, there was the trip to Sea Island last week to get fitted for new clubs. It was already on his calendar, but why not consider it part of the spoils of victory?

"It was already planned," Jackson said with a smile, "but I guess we can say it was a little bit of a reward."



# Tenth Annual City of Russellville Jam on Sloss Lake Wednesday, July 4th

## Morning Line Up

8:00-8:50 a.m.

Buford Parker

*"Tribute to Ray Price"*

9:00-9:50 a.m.

Jacob Green

10:00-10:50 a.m.

Still Here

11:00-11:50

KGB

12:10-1:10

South Bound

## Evening Line Up

3:50-4:40 p.m.

Purpose

4:50-5:40 p.m.

Joseph Baldwin

5:50-6:45 p.m.

Rewind

6:55-7:50 p.m.

The Midnighters

8:00-9:30 p.m.

Darryl Worley

*After Concert...*

*Fireworks Begin!*

**Inflatables**  
  
**Food**  
  
 Lots of fun  


**7:00a.m.-2p.m.**  
*Cotton Flats Cruisers*  
**Car Show**

**Darryl Worley**

Sponsored by



Activities and music will take place on the West side of Sloss Lake next to the Lee Sports Complex. We'll see you there!