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Tharptown cafeteria job now more than one-third finished

Superintendent expects project to be complete by December

By John Pilati

Franklin County superintendent of education Greg Hamilton told his board last week the Tharptown High School cafeteria project was more than one-third complete.

"The building is blacked in now, and they are starting inside," Hamilton said. "It's 38-percent complete, as of August 14. I don't have a date of completion, but I'd say they'll finish by Christmas break."

Hamilton updated the board on the system's enrollment for the new school year. Red Bay School (K-12) is the county's largest, with 852 students, followed by Tharptown Elementary School (526) and Belgreen School (525).

Enrollment at Phil Campbell Elementary is 406, and enrollment at Phil Campbell High School is 442.

Tharptown High School has 338 students, Vina School (K-12) 247 and East Franklin Junior High 220.

"It's about where we ended up last year. I anticipate it

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will go up a little more," Hamilton said. "We're still enrolling some students."

Hamilton said he was relieved not to see a large increase in enrollment, because most county schools are operating at full capacity.

"This is the third year of Russellville [City Schools'] tuition, so that has leveled off," Hamilton said. "Our enrollment is high for our facilities. Phil Campbell High

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Johnny Mack MORROW STATE SENATE



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Lt. Carroll Napier Langston's story continues to be told by way of Tom McKnight's presentation of a 24x36 laminated poster capturing Post 31's Color Guard honors to Tuskegee's mayor, the honorable Lawrence Haygood, 74 years after the pilot's death.

War hero's tale comes full circle

Submitted to the FFP

It took nearly a decade of research to track the remains of Lt. Carroll Napier Langston, who lost his life on the fateful day of 7 June 1944 after completing a sweep mission with 31 other P47 aircraft assigned to the 301st Fighter Squadron based at Ramitelli Air Base Italy.

Lt. Langston was forced to bail from his aircraft after experiencing oil pressure problems. Though he was

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Andress Lewis "AL" Bush, Russellville, age 88
Died Sunday, August 19, 2018. A family graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, August 22, 2018 at Fayette Memorial Gardens in Fayette. Spry Memorial Chapel of Russellville assisted the family.

Bobby Ray Justice, Russellville, age 82
Died Wednesday, August 15, 2018. Funeral held at Calvary Baptist Church. Interment in Decatur City Cemetery.

Grace Wells Searcy, Hoover, age 95
Died Tuesday, August 14, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

Lydia E. Stidham, Russellville, age 93
Died Monday, August 13, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Julia M. Vinson, Phil Campbell, age 94
Died Monday, August 20, 2018. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Pinkard Funeral Home of Russellville was assisting the family.

Vela Willmarth, Russellville, age 90
Died Saturday, August 18, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

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Murray joins staff at Retreat Day Spa

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Krystal Enchiff Murray dedicated more than 15 years of her life to helping people as a registered nurse.

When she gave birth two years ago to her youngest child, the former Russellville resident wanted to continue to help people, but she also wanted more independence when it came to her working hours.

The result for Murray was a decision to enroll at the North Alabama School of Massage. She completed her certification in January, and Murray is now part of the staff at the Retreat Day Spa in Florence as a massage therapist.

"I wanted to stay at least somewhat in the medical field, but not working as a nurse," Murray said. "I enjoy helping people, and now I have the ability to work my own hours."

The Retreat Day Spa is located at 2530 Florence Blvd. In addition to massage, the spa offers a variety of services including manicures, pedicures, aromatherapy, tanning, facials and more.

Murray, the daughter of Roger and Brenda Enchiff of Russellville, and her husband Chad have four children. They make their home in Tuscumbia.

Murray explained the many health benefits of massage, including help for anxiety, digestive disorders, headaches, insomnia related to stress, sports injuries, joint pain and more. Extensive studies have shown massage to be an effective treatment for reducing stress, pain and muscle tension.

"Massage can really help with anxiety," Murray said, "but I tell people if they are having problems or issues, it takes more than one session to help. The most common complaints I see are neck and upper back pain."

Murray offers 30- and 60-minute massages, with a variety of techniques including Swedish, deep tissue and aromatherapy.

With an average cost of about a dollar a minute, massage isn't cheap, but beyond the benefits for specific conditions, many people find massage to produce feelings of caring, comfort and connection.

Massages are done in a professional, private setting with respect for the privacy of the client, Murray said.

"I was nervous the first time I got one," Murray said. "I didn't know how they covered you and uncovered you. We respect your privacy at all times during the massage."

Murray began with Retreat Day Spa in June, and she's enjoying building a rapport with her clients.

"I had a girl tell me the other day it was the best massage she's had," Murray said. "She called back yesterday to book with me again. That makes me feel good, when you do a massage on someone and they come back to see me. It's all about helping other people."

For optimum relief for chronic conditions, Murray recommends massage therapy every two weeks or at least once a month.

For more information or to book a massage, contact Murray at 256-324-5521.



Krystal Enchiff Murray

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'CAFETERIA,' from page 1

School and Vina are the only two schools that could stand more student population. Everywhere else, facility-wise, we're pretty tight."

In other action at its August 14 meeting, the board:

- Approved a physical restraint policy in accordance with state law that states, in essence, physical restraint of a student will be used only when necessary to protect the student or others around him or her.

- Approved an out of state trip for the Phil Campbell FFA to attend the national convention in Indianapolis, IN, from October 23-26.

- Approved personnel moves including the transfer of Amy Gaston from special education aide at

Tharptown Elementary to special education aide at Tharptown High School; Betty Taylor from special education aide at PCHS to special education aide at PCES; Sarah Hardin from business education teacher at RBHS to counselor at Franklin County Career Tech Center.

- Approved the resignation of Sandra Sparks as bus refueler at Vina.

- Approved a leave of absence for Dana Whitten, CNP assistant at Phil Campbell, from August 2, 2018 thru May 23, 2019.

- Approved employment of Vanessa Moomaw as special education aide at Vina; Ross Glasgow as tobacco grant coordinator at Red Bay; Tonya Rhudy as special education aide at Belgreen; and

Kenny Lindsey as physical education teacher at Red Bay.

- Approved employment in supplement of Holly Kuykendall as head varsity girls basketball coach at Red Bay.

- Approved new teacher substitutes including Holly Comeens Aderholt (certified), Kaley Wagnon Frederick, Alena Freshour, Lori Miller McDonnell, Dolores Sparks, Barbara Todd, Tamatha LaShanda Wingo and Sarah Wright (certified).

- Approved volunteer coaches at Phil Campbell High School including David Palmer, Montrae McCoullough (football), Chris Nix, Eric Weeks, Joe Hardy and Trevor Farley (baseball), and Tracey Pace (basketball).

Honey Do: Just because

Today, I'm not writing about projects, maintenance, hardware or lawnmower issues. Why not? Just because.

There is a special day coming up on August 27 (next Monday) that, I think, bears mentioning. It is called National "Just Because" Day.

National "Just Because" Day began in the late 1950s, and I'll bet you never knew it. This is a great day to do something without a reason, not because we are required to, expected to or told to.

National "Just Because" Day began in the late 1950s, and I'll bet you never knew it. This is a great day to do something without a reason, not because we are required to, expected to or told to. It's a day to act on a whim.

It's a day to act on a whim. Go to a park and swing. Call someone

unexpectedly. Turn a cart wheel. Buy the guy's lunch in line behind you. The possibilities are endless, just because.

I also found that August 27 is a "two-fer" as special days go. Since 1994, it has been recognized as "Global Forgiveness Day." Started by a Christian group in Canada, this is a day to forgive and be forgiven. Sounds like a timely idea, with all the crazy goings-on in the world, doesn't it?

Maybe it would be a good day to forgive someone "just because."

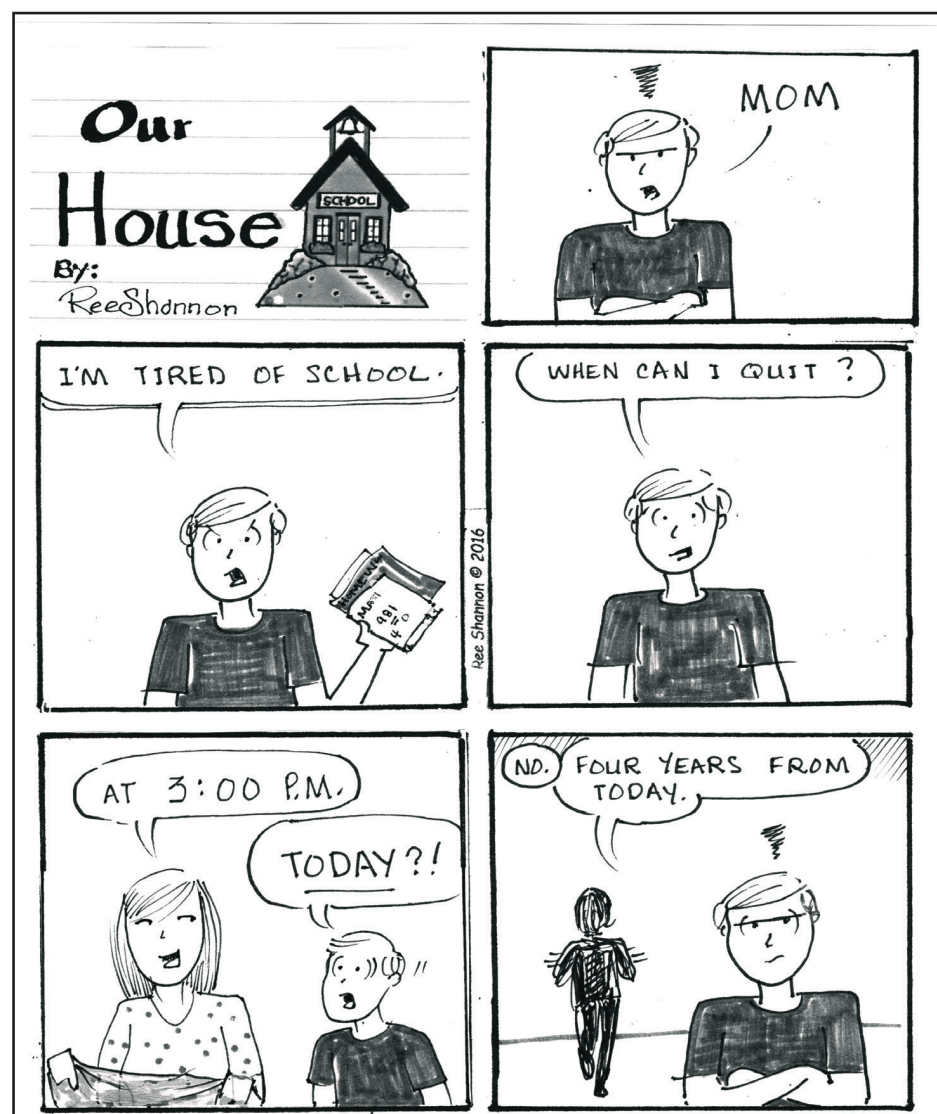
Next week we'll get back to projects, just because....that's what I'm supposed to do. Have a great day and remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



Doug Green

Letters to the Editor

We love to hear from you! Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoons, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com. For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to check us out online at franklinfreepress.net!



Finding ways to have more time

There's one thing this year, and every year, that most of us would love to have more of. No, not money. That would be nice too, but that's not it. Time.

When you think about it, you can get more of almost anything you want in life. If you want more money, you can earn it. If you want more stuff, you can buy it. If you want more friends, you can find them. Heck, even hair can be substituted with implants, wigs or extensions!

You and I and everyone else on this planet have the exact same amount of time—24 hours a day. So, how we manage it becomes a major factor in our ability to become successful. And while success is defined differently for everyone, there are three types of people when it comes to time management:

•The busy person with no time

Being busy isn't a bad thing. This type of person has a lot going on! They have many wonderful responsibilities, relationships and commitments that are important but, unfortunately, no time for anything else. As the saying goes, they're stretched a mile wide and an inch deep.

The problem comes when they don't have any free time for rest, creativity or strategic thinking. And because they're busy all the time, they can only be moderately successful. Eventually, they'll become frazzled, stressed and exhausted.

•The person who's not busy

This type of person has a ton of time, which is great for new possibilities, but they don't have much else going on. Most high-achieving people enjoy having several irons in the fire and would rather be slammed than slow. Having time is a good thing, but only up to a point. Not having anything going on is an indicator

they're missing out on many of the responsibilities, relationships and commitments that would add value to their lives.

•The busy person with more time

The person in this group is represented by a small overlap between the two extremes. It's the smallest section, because it's the hardest to achieve. This person is busy with important commitments and strategically saves time for recovery and new possibilities. Extremely successful people often fall into this category.

You and I and everyone else on this planet have the exact same amount of time—24 hours a day. So, how we manage it becomes a major factor in our ability to become successful.

How do they do it?

Successful people make it into this last category because they control their time on purpose. They are proactive instead of reactive, and they manage their time and commitments instead of allowing their time and commitments to manage them. They are the most successful because they maximize their limited time by efficiently filling it with things they decide are important, and by not letting themselves become maxed out with no room to spare. They intentionally leave room in their schedule for new options and new possibilities to enter.

Make no mistake, this doesn't happen by accident. Every decision this type of person makes is strategic. Every time they say "yes" to a commitment or "no" to an invitation, it's intentional.



Christy Wright

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by Dave Ramsey

Communicate and work together

Dear Dave,
My wife and I are not on the same page when it comes to money and our two teenage daughters. I think they should be learning the value of work and money, but she doesn't want them to work. She regularly hands them spending money and buys them expensive gifts. I want our girls to have some nice things, but this is starting to cause problems in our relationship. Do you have any advice?

Stan

Dear Stan,
Kids should learn to work and make money at an early age. We've given nice gifts to our kids, but the difference is they also worked and made money for themselves. The gifts we gave them were for special occasions. Showering our kids with money and expensive toys all the time was not our way of life.

In this situation, your wife is allowing them to be nothing but consumers. I know she loves them, but they're not learning how to work, and they're not learning how to save or give. This is setting them up for a lifetime of unrealistic expectations. If something doesn't happen to change things, you're going to end up with two spoiled little girls who think they should be given everything their entire lives.

Still, I think the biggest problem is you and your wife are experiencing a communication and marital breakdown. If the kids weren't in the picture, I've got a feeling the same problems would exist. The difference is they would manifest themselves in other ways.

Obviously, your wife needs to stop being so impulsive where the kids are concerned. Try sitting down with her and gently explaining your feelings. Let your wife know you love her and how generous she is, but you're worried this is having a negative impact on your children. Maybe you could try to establish some guidelines as to when really nice

gifts are appropriate, too. There's a middle ground you can reach, but it's going to take some time and effort. Most of all, it means the two of you are going to have to communicate and work together for the good of your kids.

Dave

Impress them!

Dear Dave,
I just graduated from college recently. Is it a waste of time to apply for a job if you have a degree in the proper field but no real work experience?

Daniel

Dear Daniel,
Absolutely not! The only sure-fire way to ensure you'll miss out on a job is by not applying for the position.

The only sure-fire way to ensure you'll miss out on a job is by not applying for the position.

Send a copy of your resumé to every job opportunity for which you have a reasonable chance of being hired. Then, when you get an interview, go in there with your head held high. Be articulate, enthusiastic, and carry yourself with purpose. Use your style, intelligence, education and confidence to sell yourself and your ability to jump in, learn quickly and get the job done. I've met lots of people who say they have 20 years of experience. But in a lot of cases it's more like one year of experience 20 times. That kind of "experience" is useless. I've also met many sharp, educated people without experience, but you can tell they're the kind who will put their minds to work, think outside the box and figure out a way to get the job done with excellence.

As an employer, if I've got a choice between the two, *that's* the one I want on my team!

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 600 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.*



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

The Russellville High School Tiger Moms are holding a Gift Basket Raffle as a fundraiser. Drawing will take place at the Homecoming Game on October 12. Two baskets will be given away. Buy one ticket for \$5 or five tickets for \$20. Baskets include a variety of gift cards and items from local stores. Contact Melissa Andres at 256-460-5016 or any Tiger Mom for tickets.

The NACOLG SenioRx Medication Assistance Program supplies free and low-cost medications for anyone in Alabama with a disability or a chronic illness regardless of age that requires daily medication. Medicare recipients may also be eligible. For more information, contact NACOLG SenioRx today. There is no charge for this service. 1-800-AGELINE (1-800-243-5463). For more information, call 256-389-0530. This program is in partnership with the State of Alabama and Alabama Department of Senior Services.

The Russellville Farmer's Market invites you to a free meal of black-eyed peas and cornbread this Friday, August 24 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The Farmer's Market is located behind the A.W. Todd Centre.

A benefit for Tharptown student Ali Brooke Sanchez will be held this Saturday, August 25 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Chucky Mullins Center (814 Hamilton Street, Russellville, AL 35653). Ali Brooke was involved in a car accident on May 21. She was airlifted to Huntsville Trauma Center, where she was placed on a ventilator. She has a broken arm, eight broken ribs, a broken pelvic bone, a collapsed lung, a spinal injury and road rash on her right side from her shoulder to her ankle. She was transported to Children's Hospital in Birmingham, where she could have surgery and specialized treatment. She will endure months of recovery. There will be medical bills and travel expenses to and from therapy. Ali Brooke is a part of the National Honor Society and participates in many school activities at Tharptown High. She has a very bright future but a very long recovery ahead of her. If you can, please donate to help Ali's family with the expenses they are facing. Please pray for Ali, and join us this Saturday! There will be BBQ by Mitch, hot dogs, baked goods, an inside yard sale (tables for rent for \$10), many vendors, a gun raffle for a Delton AR-15 556/223 Echo Model/Dust Cover & Forward Assist (to be given away September 29, 2018), #AliBrookeStrong T-shirts for \$15, #Ali bracelets for \$3, and a performance by the band Mirror Effect. Thank you for your support!

You are cordially invited to attend a reception honoring Bert Fowler's 25th anniversary with First Baptist Church, Russellville, this Sunday, August 26 from 1:30-3 p.m. in The Green Room at FBC. The church is located at 213 Jackson Avenue North in downtown Russellville.

Waldrop Church in Haleyville will hold a special 100th Anniversary event this Sunday, August 26 from 2-4 p.m. This service will highlight Waldrop Church members and their families over the last 100 years! Please encourage extended family members and relatives to attend. There will be a museum of artifacts and historical documents, plus display boards depicting pastors and church events down through the years. Everyone is invited to enjoy a potluck lunch from 12-2 p.m., followed by time to view the display boards and church artifacts.

The Russellville High School Touchdown Club will begin meeting on Friday, August 31 at noon on the top floor of the RHS field house. The yearly fee to be a Touchdown Club member is \$175. Lunch is served. Each Friday, RHS football coach John Ritter will review the previous week's game and also look ahead at that night's opponent. For more info, call Joey Rushing at 256-710-4713.

The Cowboy Church of Franklin County (25100 Hwy. 24, Russellville) will hold a Youth Rally for students age 12 to 18 on Saturday, September 1 at 6 p.m. Chuck Wagon will serve the meal. Contests, door prizes and music, plus line dancing and arena games. Dress for weather. Arena events will take place rain or shine. Speaker will be Brian Welch. Best church sign wins a prize!

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Lt. Col. John W. Harris Jr., Camp #1833 will meet Thursday, September 6 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center on Ash Avenue. Camp #1833 meets the first Thursday of each month EXCEPT January and July. For more info, call 256-324-2317. Everyone welcome!

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert at the Roxy Theatre in Russellville Saturday, September 8 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.

The next meeting for American Legion Post 64 will be Thursday, September 13 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life of the Shoals invites you to their 2019 Kick-Off, as they Turn the Page on Cancer! The event will be Thursday, September 13, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Listerhill Credit Union Auditorium (4790 East Second Street, Muscle Shoals, AL 35661). A light meal will be provided. There will be special guest speakers, an awards presentation for outstanding volunteers and door prizes for attendees. Please RSVP to melmax34@yahoo.com. Funds raised help the American Cancer Society attack cancer in dozens of ways, each of them critical to achieving a world without cancer—from developing breakthrough therapies to building supportive communities, to providing empowering resources to deploying activists to raise awareness.

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

Attention Hunters & Outdoorsmen! Make plans to attend H.U.N.T. Outdoors Ministry's "Beast Feast," set for Saturday, September 15 at 5:30 p.m. at Mountain View Baptist Church, 2110 Hwy. 81 in Phil Campbell. Doors open at 5 p.m. Tickets are FREE and can be picked up at Mountain View Baptist Church. Enjoy food, fun, fellowship and prizes. The event will feature T.W. Norman, lead pastor at Little Chapel Church in Harrisburg, Illinois. He is an expert on growing and chasing mature whitetails. His heart's desire is to see people's lives changed and eternities altered by the saving power of Jesus Christ. The event will feature door prizes. Must be present to win. For more information, contact Jason Hester at 256-366-9126 or Benton Nix at 256-810-7747.

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life will hold a support group meeting for survivors and caregivers on Sunday, September 16 at 6 p.m. in the Community Room at ECM East (2111 Cloyd Blvd., Florence, AL 35630). Everyone is invited to come and share their journey. Light refreshments served.

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

Mountain Valley Hee Haw features live music every Saturday night. Show time is 6 p.m. Free admission. No alcohol or drugs. From Russellville, take 243 to Hwy. 79, turn right, go 1/4 mile, third building on left. For more information, please call 256-332-5479 or 256-810-4840.

New Life Ministries invites you to join them for Sunday School at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings and for worship services on Sundays at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. and Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. On the first Sunday of each month, there will be a fellowship lunch after morning services. You and your family are invited to come worship and fellowship with the Lord of Hosts and his children. New Life Ministries is located on Hwy. 24 west toward Red Bay, right behind Tompkins Feed.

TOPs (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) weight loss support group meets each Monday evening at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Recreation Center. Weigh-ins begin at 5:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to drop in for a free meeting visit. Call 256-446-5962 or 256-412-2855 for more information.

Village Square Apartments in Russellville host George's Country Boys each Monday night from 6-8 p.m. for some Gospel and Country singing. Come join in the fun!

Commission votes to name road in honor of Gist family

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission voted at its Monday meeting to name the road that enters the Mike Green Industrial Park after its first tenant.

Earlier this year, Road Gear officials announced plans to expand into the park, which is located on Hwy. 243. Road Gear will be the first business in the park.

Commissioners approved naming the right-of-way roadway "Gist Industrial Way" after the Danny Gist family, which owns and operates Road Gear.

In other action, the commission:

- Approved the resignation of David Numph from the Franklin County Solid Waste Department effective July 12, 2018, and approved the hiring of Ricky Johnston as a temporary employee effective July 30, 2018.

- Approved an interagency cooperative agreement through the Alabama Department of Environmental Management for reimbursement for the pick up of scrap tires on right of ways in Franklin County.

- Approved BFI as the lowest responsible bidder for the county's annual hauling contract to haul waste from the Franklin County Transfer Station to a qualified landfill.

- Approved the resignation of Trace Norris from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office effective August 10 and approved the request to advertise for a vacant corrections officer/dispatcher position.

- Approved the bid process for the annual contract to provide medical services for 125-130 inmates in the Franklin County Jail.

- Approved the bid process for the annual contract for janitorial supplies for Franklin County.

- Approved the hiring of Ronnie Gaston as a temporary part-time employee with the Franklin County Highway Department effective July 23.

- Approved MPE Services as the lowest responsible bidder for three generators for the Franklin County Highway Department with a bid of \$17,000. The

See 'ROAD,' page 8



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Morrow kicks off campaign for Senate District 6

Submitted to the FFP

RED BAY – State representative Johnny Mack Morrow of Red Bay has officially kicked off his campaign for State Senate District 6. Morrow will be on the ballot for Alabama State Senate in the General Election on November 6. Morrow is a state representative, a retired educator, a devoted husband, a parent and a grandparent.

“I believe I can take my experience from the House of Representatives and my love for this area and do a better job in Senate District 6 than what is being done now,” said Rep. Morrow. “More than anything, what I hear from people in this district is that they want someone who will bring people together and be a problem solver.”

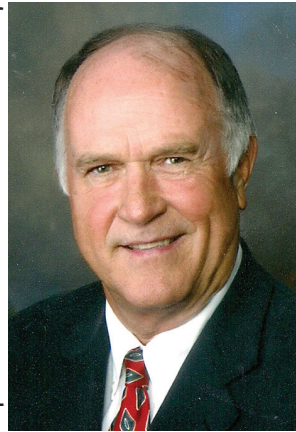
In the Alabama House of Representatives, Rep. Morrow, along with three Republican lawmakers, co-founded the only bi-partisan organization in the Legislature: The Rural Caucus.

“We founded the Rural Caucus to do two things: Put the needs of rural Alabama front and center in the Legislature, and bring Democrats

and Republicans together to focus on solving problems by working together,” said Rep. Morrow.

In addition to being one of the leading voices in the State Legislature for rural Alabama, Rep. Morrow has been a constant supporter of public education, school safety and the Retirement Systems of Alabama.

“I promise that I will represent the views and wishes of the people of my district, as I always have done in the Alabama House of Representatives,” Morrow said. “I also vow to be accessible and accountable to the people that make up Senate District 6. I have always been the kind of legislator that the voters could reach and talk to. That will not change when I go to the Senate.”



Morrow

As a conservative Democrat, Rep. Morrow has consistently voted pro-life, pro-2nd Amendment, and pro-family values. As a Member of the Alabama Legislature, Morrow has fought against attacks against Public Education and the Retirement System of Alabama. Since the passing of The Alabama Accountability Act in 2013, almost **\$8 million** has been taken from public school systems in Senate District 6. He has fought against the further erosion of funding for our public school system by opposing Charter Schools.

“I look forward to the upcoming campaign, where I will offer the voters a clear choice on the issue of public education as well as other issues important to our quality of life,” Morrow said. “I am ready for voters to compare my record to the incumbent. When people look at my record, they will see that I have always put people before politics.”

“Above all, I will work to bring other people together and put the focus back on solving real problems like improving our schools, creating good-paying jobs, the opioid crisis, mental health funding, and rebuilding our roads and bridges.”

‘TIME’ from page 4

when you do it you will begin to feel like you have more time.

Lastly, once you’ve aligned your schedule with your most important priorities, you must be willing to protect it. If you aren’t willing to set some boundaries, like saying “no” to requests that pop up or invitations that creep in, everyone will just push you around. There will always be something more deserving of your time if you don’t intentionally put your values at the top of your priority list. It’s ultimately up to you to protect your priorities, because if you don’t protect what matters to you no one else will.

When you look around you, you will see that the most successful people manage their time on

purpose. Because at the end of the day, when time is the only thing you can’t get more of, it’s the most valuable thing you’ve got!

**Christy Wright is the creator of Business Boutique, a Certified Business Coach and a Ramsey Personality with a passion for equipping women with the knowledge and steps they need to successfully run and grow a business. Since joining Ramsey Solutions in 2009, she has spoken to thousands across the country at women’s conferences, national business conferences, Fortune 500 companies and her own sold-out live events. Follow Wright on Twitter & Instagram @ChristyBWright and online at christywright.com or facebook.com/OfficialChristyWright.*

‘ROAD’ from page 7

county will receive a grant for 75 percent of the purchase price.

•Approved Rogers Group as the lowest responsible bidder for a project on County Road 60 at \$160,918.22 (grant received for \$133,123.40) and County Road 61 for \$193,225, for restriping and resurfacing from CR 22 to 36.

•Appointed commissioner Rayburn Massey to the Franklin Fiber of Alabama Committee, a 12-member board created by the Franklin County Water Service Authority to work on a broadband implementation plan for the county.

•Reappointed Beth Forsythe to the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Board.

•Set August 31, 2018, as the cutoff for purchase orders until the new fiscal year begins October 1, 2018.

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2018 Franklin County Watermelon Festival

PHOTOS BY KYLE GLASGOW

The 38th annual Watermelon Festival was held in downtown Russellville last Friday and Saturday. Entertainment included a performance at the Roxy Theatre by Eagles tribute band Seven Bridges (pictured at left, top and bottom). Also, winners of this year's Franklin County Watermelon Pageant were recognized during the Festival (below).



Watermelon Festival contest winners announced

Submitted to the FFP

Winners of this year's Watermelon Festival Contests were: Most Unusual – Donald Patterson (first place); Seed Spitting – Kevin Strickland (first place, 25'5"), Micah McCauley (second place,

22'), Lopena Bonilla (third place, 20'3"); Best Dressed – Aymar Bonilla (first place), Damaris Bonilla (second place), Mazlyn Dalrymple (third place); Best Tasting – (Greg Dalrymple, first place), Kim Dalrymple (second place), Wayne Phillips (third place); Largest Melon – Charles

Bently (first place, 229 pounds), Spencer Glasgow (second place, 209 pounds), Laura Restrom (third place, 200 pounds); Largest Franklin County Melon – Rhett & Reed Jackson (first place, 168 pounds), Chasity Jackson (second place, 45 pounds).

'WAR,' from page 1

able to parachute safely into the Adriatic Sea, his wing man reported the pilot's apparent difficulty inflating his rubber dinghy. The Tuskegee Airman's body was discovered 19 days later, 26 June 1944, by a U.S. Army ground patrol. Reportedly bearing "gun-shot wounds to the head and chest," and given the scarcity of materials in a combat zone, he was wrapped in a mattress cover and buried; a wooden cross and tags marked his grave.

Extensive research to determine the disposition of Lt. Langston's remains culminated in what Tom McKnight, cousin to the Airman, defines as "Divine Intervention and spiritually ironic blessings." Carroll Langston, Sr. and his wife, Vivian, fought a long battle to repatriate their son's remains. Extensive research confirmed exhumation from his shore-based grave and re-interment at Bari Military Cemetery, Italy, a site honoring World War I and II soldiers.

A letter written by Carroll's mother to one of his friends four-and-a-half years after his death surfaced, which read, "Carroll's coming home tomorrow." The letter, dated 6 December 1948, stated that "a private ceremony would be held at the Napier burial grounds." Carroll's remains were re-interred for the last time on 7 December 1948.

The unexpected receipt of the letter and other correspondence a little more than a year ago explained why there was no press coverage of Langston's final return, though the Napier, Cashin, Langston and Watkins were families of social prominence. Once the information dots connected, Tuscumbia's American Legion Post 31 Color Guard drove to Nashville, TN in convoy and conferred full military honors at Lt. Langston's gravesite on 10 June 2017, comprising flag fold, 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps.

Lt. Langston's story continues to be told, by way of McKnight's presentation of a 24x36 laminated poster capturing Post 31's Color Guard honors to Tuskegee's mayor, The Honorable Lawrence Haygood, 74 years after the pilot's death. It is "spiritually ironic" that Lt. Langston's story and ceremonial presentation eventually returned to the historic city where he received his flight training, wings and made his contribution to world history.

Two other Airmen, Capt. Andrew Maples, Jr. and Lt. Maurice V. Esters, who also lost their lives on 26 June 1944 in the Adriatic are yet to be found. McKnight continues his mission in the search and repatriation of either their remains or recovered aircraft artifacts so that their honorable stories may be told.



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BUSINESS ADS

Garage sale this Friday & Saturday, August 24-25 at 489 Seminole Street in Russellville. Bedroom furniture, dining room furniture, desk, vintage toy trains and much more!
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Yard Sale this Friday & Saturday, August 24-25 at 406 N. Hall Street. Four families.

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ments for rent. Call 256-291-7572.

House for rent. 3 BR, 3 BA. Central heat/air. Deposit required. Call 256-436-4622. (1)

2 BR house, 2 BA. 1 BR duplex with large yard, patio. 1 BR duplex, furnished with patio and private entrance. Call 256-627-1916 or 256-332-5081. (4)

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Okra for sale. \$18 a bushel. \$10 a half-bushel. \$0.90 a pound. 256-446-8232. (2)

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Cuisinart Prep 11 Plus. Cup with two bowls. 3/4 hp motor. 3 sets of blades w/2 blade holders. Used less than five times. \$175. Call 256-332-3677. If no answer, leave a message. (3)

For sale: Two burial plots at Franklin Memory Gardens. Located in the Devotion Section, which is the oldest section of the cemetery, located in the center circle in the back. Plots are Section 40C, 3 & 4. Asking \$2,200 for both. Please call 256-483-5049. Serious inquiries only. (3)

Local honey for sale. \$15/quart. Call 256-332-1369. (4)

Two Murray riding lawnmowers for sale. One 38-inch cut, one 36-inch cut. 12.5 hp motor on both of them. Call 256-668-1914. (5)

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3 BR 1 1/2 bath house on Wilson Ave. Completely remodeled recently with big yard, Really nice house \$800.00 per month. 256-577-0030.

Eight local eateries earn satisfactory ratings

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Each of the eight Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of August 6-10 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.

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.

All of the eight Franklin County businesses listed in the most recent food and lodging establishment ratings scored 85 or above, within the satisfactory compliance range. The highest score was 98, received by Fourth Street Grill and Steakhouse, 607 4th St., Red Bay.

noted, resulted in the following scores:

- Backwoods Grill and Fish Camp, 2937 Hwy. 43, Phil Campbell, 86. (Unapproved bug spray, toxic items stored with paper hand towels, food not covered at hot buffet).
- McDonald's #23035 606 4th Ave. SE, Red Bay, 89. (Mold in fountain heads).
- Dollar General Market #13757, 212 4th St. SW, Red Bay, 89. (No backflow preventer on hose in produce area).
- Detailed Subs and Sandwiches, 1106 4th St. NW, Red Bay, 90. (Presence of rodents, painted long nails).
- Subway, 504 4th St. SW, Red Bay, 91. (No tissue in men's restroom).
- Red Bay High School Cafeteria, 800 Eighth Street, Red Bay, 95. (Spray bottle not labeled).
- City King Buffet, 520 4th St. SE, Red Bay, 96.

Of the 23 inspections done in Colbert County from August 6-10 one restaurant scored below the satisfactory range.

Fiesta Mexicana, 117B Hwy. 72E, Tuscumbia, scored a 64. (Bleach with food, walk in cooler out of temperature, items in cooler not correctly dated, mold on ice machine, strainer basket frayed, rinsing lettuce in hand sink).

The high score for the week in Colbert County was 99, scored by East Colbert Senior Center, 5929 River Road, Muscle Shoals.

Updated ratings are available at www.foodscores.state.al.us and may be viewed by city or county.

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SEC over/under: Will AL and UGA both finish 12-0?

Another season of college football is upon us, and it's time to make a few predictions on how every team in the SEC will fare this year, over/under style.



Mike Self
Sports Editor

For the record, these over/under win totals come courtesy of South Point Casino in Las Vegas and are for the regular season only.

Let's get to it, starting with the highest total in the league (Alabama at 11) and working our way down to the lowest (Vanderbilt at four). As is always the case, our picks are for entertainment purposes only.

Alabama (Over/under: 11 wins)
The Skinny: Is Alabama going undefeated this season or not? That's what this boils down to. If you take the over, it's 12-0 or bust.

Winning every game you play during the regular season is extremely difficult, even for a merciless championship-winning machine like the Crimson Tide. In 11 seasons under Nick Saban, Alabama has only managed to run the table three times—just once since 2009. Welcome to life in the SEC.

With that being said, I've got the Tide going 12-0 this year. Go ahead, find a loss on that schedule. I dare you. Louisville in Orlando in the opener? No Lamar Jackson, no chance. At LSU on November 3? Alabama has won seven straight meetings, and this looks like the least imposing Tiger team to come down the pike in quite a while. Home to Mississippi State on November 10? Maybe if the game was in Starkville—but, then again, maybe not, considering that Alabama has beaten the Bulldogs 10 straight times while holding them to an average of 9.4 points per game. Home to Auburn on November 24? Again, maybe if the game was at Jordan-Hare, where the Tigers have won their last 12 games—but not away from home, where they're an underwhelming 5-7 during the same stretch.

Granted, Alabama lost a ton of top-shelf talent on defense [sound familiar?]. But with a stable of stellar running backs, a dominant offensive line and a young receiving corps ready to catch passes from the most dynamic quarterback Saban has ever had in Tuscaloosa, the Tide has an excellent chance to average 40 points a game for the first time under the current regime.

Alabama will cruise through October virtually untested and then survive its three most challenging games of the season in November to finish unbeaten. Then the real fun begins.

FFP Pick: Over

See 'SEC,' Page 16

Crowd pleaser

Red Bay and Colbert Heights are ready to renew acquaintances in a rivalry well worth the price of admission

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

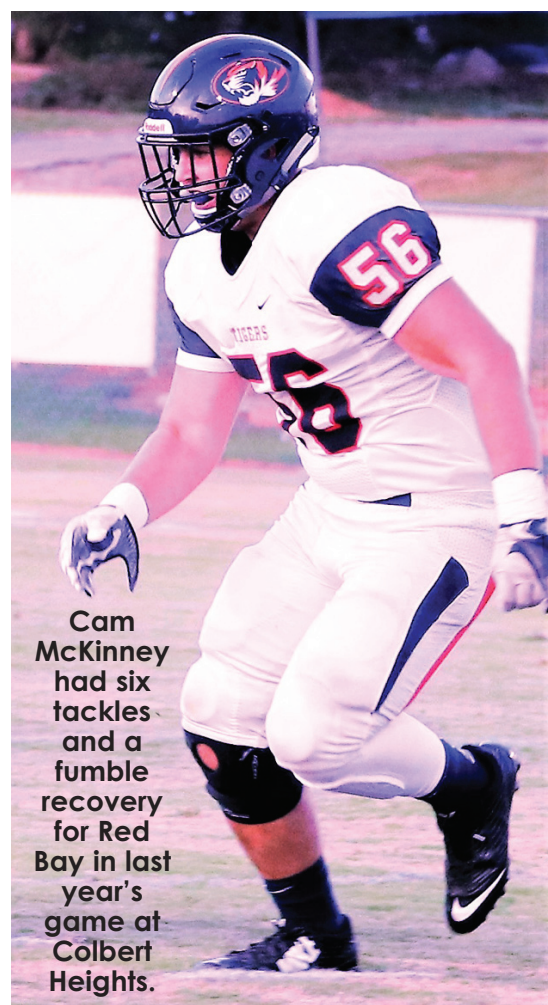
If the last couple of years are any indication, at least two things will be true of this Friday's season opener between Red Bay and Colbert Heights.

Number one, Fred Bostick Memorial Stadium will be filled to capacity with fans from both schools. And number two, those fans figure to get their money's worth.

"Recently, the last two years have been very competitive games," said Michael Jackson, who has guided Red Bay to three wins in four tries against Colbert Heights since taking over the Tiger program in 2014. "We look forward to the game. There's always a huge crowd there. It's always one of the biggest crowds of the year, and we expect a huge crowd Friday night at Red Bay.

"Our kids are excited. It should be a very competitive game. [Colbert Heights is] coming off their best year

See 'CROWD,' Page 14



Cam McKinney had six tackles and a fumble recovery for Red Bay in last year's game at Colbert Heights.

Ritter, Russellville working to build 'culture of competition'

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

With the 2018 season opener against rival Deshler merely nine days away, first-year Russellville football coach John Ritter has the majority of his depth chart already filled out. In pencil, that is.

The way Ritter sees it, nothing is set in stone—or even in ink, for that matter. Every position is fair game.

"The way we practice, every spot we've got is open every day," Ritter said. "We're creating a culture of competition. We have starters, sure, but they're never safe. Once they feel like they're safe, complacency sets in and they may not work as hard. Every spot we've got is up for grabs."

"The way we practice, every spot we've got is open every day," said Ritter, whose previous head coaching stops included two years at Red Bay and three at West Morgan, where he took

the Rebels from 10 losses in 2015 to 10 wins in 2017 before leaving to take over the Golden Tiger program. "We're creating a culture of competition. We have starters, sure, but they're never safe. Once they feel like they're safe, complacency sets in and they may not work as hard. Every spot we've got is up for grabs.

"The more people we can put on the field that are competitive, the better we're gonna be. That's why we're creating a culture of winning every day."

With that in mind, Ritter and his staff will be evaluating Friday night's preseason game against East Limestone [kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Golden Tiger Stadium, and the game will be broadcast live on WGOL AM 920 and 100.7 FM) with watchful



John Ritter

See 'RITTER,' Page 18

'CROWD' from page 13

ever, so our kids know they'll be very confident about what they're doing because of the success they had last year. That adds another element to it. Our kids have had a year to get older, so hopefully that will make a difference for us."

A year ago, Colbert Heights held off a late push by a young Red Bay team to win 14-6 at Amos Mitchell Stadium, snapping a six-game losing streak against the Tigers and taking the first step toward what would become a record-setting season on The Mountain. [The Wildcats went on to win 11 games and reach the state quarterfinals, neither of which they had ever done in program history.] Two years ago, at the Fred, Colbert Heights overcame an hour-long lightning delay in the first half and a two-touchdown deficit in the second half to tie the game late in the fourth quarter, but Red Bay prevailed 33-26 when then-sophomore quarterback Kolby Bragwell hooked up with Max Bullen on a 38-yard touchdown pass with less than 30 seconds remaining.

"What stands out the most to me is how competitive the games are," said Taylor Leathers, now in his third season as the Wildcats' head coach. "I hope we can live up to our end of the bargain this year. That first year, I had just taken over, and it was the first time I'd seen this team play. We got down early, but then we came out and fought our way back in it and had a chance to win it at the end. We fell short, but it was a super-competitive game. It was the same way last year. We should have put the thing away a little earlier, but it was another really good game."

"The competitiveness of this game, early in the year, is just great. I'd also say the crowd is always huge. I know the Colbert Heights community can't wait to see the first football game of the year. They'll all travel down there this week. And the Red Bay community, with the tradition they have, they're all gonna be there. It's almost a playoff atmosphere. I would say the game we played last year with Red Bay—with the exception of the playoffs—was one of the largest if not the largest-grossing games we had in terms of ticket sales. That's huge."

Colbert Heights was the more experienced team a year ago, but the shoe will most certainly be on the other foot come Friday night. The Wildcats lost 18 seniors—including two 1,000-yard rushers and their top five tacklers—to graduation, and Leathers will be breaking in as many as seven or eight new starters on both sides of the ball this week. Red Bay, meanwhile, returns eight players on offense and nine on defense who started at least one game in 2017.

"Coach Jackson does a great job down there, and they've got a lot of guys coming back with experience," said Leathers, who is 15-8 in two years at Colbert Heights and was named Class 3A Coach of the Year by the ASWA last season. "They've got eight or nine guys on both sides of the ball who played last year, and we're almost the complete opposite of that. We lost eight or nine on both sides. That puts a little twist into it. But at the end of the day, I'm really excited about the game and about seeing what these guys can do under those Friday-night lights."

"It's a new team. Each year is a new team, but when you don't have a lot of returners, that's really true. Coach Jackson has four [starting] offensive linemen back; we've got one. But the exciting part for me as a coach is to see how these guys compete, to see these guys go out on the field and see how they handle adversity. How do they handle it if we get down in the game? How do they fight their way back? I'm excited to see what our players look like in a live contest versus a really good Red Bay team."

Foremost among those returning starters for the Tigers is Bragwell, now a senior and the first three-year starting quarterback Jackson has had in his 17

seasons as a head coach. Bragwell's first varsity start came two years ago at home against the Wildcats, when he threw the game-winner to Bullen in the final minute. Last year at Colbert Heights, he found his rhythm in the fourth quarter and finished the game 8-for-16 for 133 yards and a touchdown while also rushing 11 times for 58 yards in the 14-6 loss.

By season's end, Bragwell had been responsible for 18 total touchdowns while throwing for 888 yards and rushing for 569 more on 88 carries. He'll be making his 22nd overall start—and his third against Colbert Heights—on Friday night.

"Kolby, we've watched film on him for the past couple of years," Leathers said. "He's a great game manager. That's one thing that comes to mind. He's gonna make sure they're in the right place, running the right play. When Coach Jackson sends it in there, they're gonna get it right. Another thing about Bragwell when you're preparing for him—they don't throw the ball a lot, but he's got a cannon. He can absolutely flat-footed throw it a long way, so you've gotta be prepared for that."

"I expect them, based on history, to be very run-oriented in the game, but I do think he's a dual threat as far as his passing capabilities. They made an attempt to climb back in the game last year with his arm. He's got great arm strength and accuracy, and that's something we've gotta be prepared for. He's not a guy who's just gonna hand the ball off. I also think they'll use him more running the ball, so that's another possibility for us to prepare for."

Jackson had high praise for his senior quarterback on Sunday night.

"You can line up every quarterback in north Alabama, from any classification, and I would take him," Jackson said of Bragwell. "He's 6'1, 215 pounds, he can run and throw, and he's got a lot of experience. We're excited about where he's at. I feel really good about the things Kolby has been able to do—especially throwing the ball. We're actually throwing the ball really well. I'm very excited to see him come out and play."

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On the other side is a quarterback who will be doing precisely what Bragwell was doing two years ago in this game—making his first varsity start as a sophomore. Technically, Carson Shaw is no stranger to the Friday-night lights; he started all 13 games for Colbert Heights last season at cornerback and made 47 tackles, most among returning players. Taking the snaps and running the show on offense, however, represents an entirely new level of responsibility.

"It will be a little different for him as the triggerman," Leathers said of Shaw, a dynamic athlete who rushed for 168 yards and two scores on 30 carries in limited duty on offense in 2017. "I'm really interested to see how Carson handles this environment and this atmosphere. He's been very even-keeled and very businesslike in his preparation, even though he's a sophomore making his first varsity start at quarterback. How does he handle that? Will he be nervous for this game? Or is he gonna be a smooth operator?"

"I don't think the stage will be too big for him."

Containing the elusive Shaw is a primary concern—but by no means the only one—for Jackson and the Tigers heading into Friday night.

"They're gonna have an athletic quarterback," he said, "and we know their confidence level is high, so they're gonna play that way. It's gonna be just like it has been the last two years—a very competitive game. We know we have to control their athleticism as far as the quarterback goes. They also play really good defense. Last year, they played a really good game against us defensively. We were still trying to figure out what our identity was at that point, but we really had to go to some different things when we played them, because they did such a good job with being very sound on defense."

Coordinator Lonnie Robinson's defensive unit—which held opponents to just 13.5 points per game last year—has been largely remade, but four starters do return: Senior end Tyler Tubbs (9.5 tackles for loss last year), senior linebacker Riley Fuller (43 tackles in 2017), senior corner Braden McCaig and Shaw. All four will play vital roles on both sides of the ball for the Wildcats on Friday night. [Tubbs is also the team's lone returning starter on the offensive line; Fuller is taking over as the featured runner at fullback; and McCaig, who had a 91-yard touchdown run negated by a penalty in last year's game against Red Bay, returns as a starting slot back.]

"Tyler Tubbs is a guy I expect to step up and play good football this year," Leathers said. "I expect to see him make plays on Friday night and play with great effort. He got the experience as a starter last year. I expect him to be that leader on the field for the linemen, on both sides of the ball."

"In the backfield, Braden McCaig is a quiet player, in terms of leadership;

See 'CROWD,' page 13

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'CROWD,' from page 14

he's not really verbal, but he leads by example. Braden has been in this game before. He ran a counter play for a long touchdown last year that got called back. He's played a lot of football, so we expect him to rise up and show some of that experience.

"Riley Fuller is a guy we have really high expectations for on both sides of the ball. He didn't start for us early in the season last year, so he's not necessarily in this game before, but he became a starting linebacker for us and we expect Riley to show that experience."

Meanwhile, Jackson will be keeping two keen eyes on the action in the trenches this Friday night, where 5'11, 250-pound senior Elijah Ingle (a three-year veteran who starts at guard on offense and tackle on defense) leads a strong and experienced group of linemen for Red Bay. Juniors Dylan Hester (5'11, 240), Levi Raper (6'0, 180) and Caleb Seeley (5'10, 240) are all returning starters on the O-line, and the D-line features Ingle alongside massive senior Devin Nichols (6'2, 350) at tackle, with sophomores Alex Kennedy (6'1, 215) and Logan Scott (6'1, 225) at end.

Jackson hopes to see his team win the battle at the line of scrimmage—something he says they failed to do in last year's loss to the Wildcats.

"Evaluating last year's game, I don't think we attacked them well coming off the ball, and when we did we were at a disadvantage from an athleticism standpoint," Jackson said. "We had all new linemen, basically, on both sides of the ball, besides one [Ingle]. How we get off the ball and attack is gonna be a big key to this game. We have to attack on both sides of the ball with these guys on both sides of the line."

Conditioning always plays a critical role in season openers, with players on both sides transitioning from practice mode to game mode and the summer heat and humidity still very much a factor.

"The last two weeks, I've never had a team in any classification condition like this team," said Jackson, who spent nine seasons as the head coach at Buckhorn and three at Russellville before arriving at Red Bay. "This is the hardest-working group I've had. The last six months, with what they've been doing, some of them have made great strides. I know how hard they've worked, and it's good to get a payoff for that. You want them to play well so they'll feel confident about what they've done, and so they'll continue to work in the same manner."

"I talked to our team about how getting off to a good start and getting that first win really helped Colbert Heights have the season they had last year. For us, our goal Friday is gonna be to play well in this game, because we want to validate what we've done the last six months. Our goal is always to get to game ten and be the best and strongest team we can be. It's great to take that first step in game one."

Leathers, meanwhile, expects Friday's visit to Red Bay to provide a good early indication of how far the Wildcats have come in the reloading process—and how far they still have to go.

"What it will do is show us exactly where we are as a team," he said, "and from there we can find out where we need to get to. We've been doing a lot of summer competitions, beating and banging on each other for the past couple of weeks now. Competing against another team, especially one the caliber of Red Bay, right out of the gate will be a great measuring stick for us."

"Our first few games are gonna be a test for us. Red Bay is maybe the toughest opponent we play. I expect them to be a really good football team."



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Bragwell (left) will be making his 22nd start at quarterback for Jackson and Red Bay on Friday against Colbert Heights.

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'SEC,' from page 13

Georgia (Over/under: 10.5 wins)

The Skinny: Well, that didn't take long. In year number two under Kirby Smart, the Bulldogs went 13-2, won their first SEC title since 2005 and came within a whisker of winning their first national championship since 1980. Now they find themselves in a position similar to that of Alabama—reloading on defense amid mass changes in personnel, but absolutely stacked on offense with exciting young talent.

Unlike the Tide, Georgia figures to be tested early; road trips to South Carolina on September 8 and Missouri on September 22 will put that reshuffled defense through the ringer right out of the gate. If the Bulldogs win both of those, we could be headed toward a showdown of unbeaten in Atlanta come the first week of December.

Back-to-back October games at LSU and against Florida look daunting on paper, but, again, questions abound in Baton Rouge, and Georgia has a bye week in between. A home date with Auburn looks to be the only stiff test in November.

The guess here is that Georgia slips up once in September (probably at South Carolina) and then runs the table the rest of the way as the defense gels and that young talent on offense continues to mature.

FFP Pick: Over

Auburn (Over/under: 9 wins)

The Skinny: A 10-win regular season is not outside the realm of possibility for the Tigers, who return a record-setting quarterback in Jarrett Stidham and a ferocious front seven led by one of the top defensive lines in the country. Still, the schedule poses a problem.

Georgia and Alabama are among the consensus three or four best teams in the country right now, and Auburn must play both on the road to close out SEC play. The last time the Tigers beat both of their arch-rivals away from home in the same season was 1987. Given that Auburn is a combined 0-6 in Athens and Tuscaloosa over the past seven seasons (and given the way Smart and Saban have their respective programs rolling right now), it seems reasonable to assume the Tigers will drop at least one—and probably both—of those games this November.

That leaves Auburn zero margin for error in its pursuit of 10 wins, but the rest of the schedule looks pretty daunting as well—particularly the opener against No. 6 Washington in Atlanta and an October 6 visit to Starkville, where a 5-0 Mississippi State team could be lying in wait. All told, there's a strong possibility Auburn winds up facing four Top 10 teams this season—none of them at home.

Factor in questions about the offensive line, injuries at receiver and the lack of a proven bell cow in the backfield, and eight wins seem more likely than ten.

FFP Pick: Under

Mississippi State (Over/under: 8.5 wins)

The Skinny: Don't sleep on State, which returns 16 starters from last year's nine-win team and boasts one of the top D-line tandems in the country in Jeffery Simmons and Montez Sweat (combined 15.5 sacks and 27.5 TFL last year). The Bulldogs also bring back a 1,000-yard rusher in Aeris Williams and four starters on the offensive line.

There's a very good chance State will be 4-0 when former head coach Dan Mullen and Florida come calling on September 29; the season's defining stretch continues throughout October with games versus Auburn, at LSU and versus

Texas A&M. If the Bulldogs emerge from that mid-season gauntlet with no more than two losses, then nine wins should be well within reach. There's only one game on the schedule—November 10 at Alabama—that looks like a sure-fire loss.

The wild card here is Nick Fitzgerald, who could be poised to have his best collegiate season under new head coach and renowned quarterback whisperer Joe Moorhead—provided he doesn't suffer any lingering effects from the gruesome ankle injury he sustained in last year's Egg Bowl.

FFP Pick: Over

Florida (Over/under: 7.5 wins)

The Skinny: The Gators have questions at quarterback, which is reason enough to rein in expectations, but if Dan Mullen could squeeze at least eight regular-season wins out of Mississippi State in three of the past four years, surely he can hit that mark in year number one in Gainesville?

He should be halfway there by the final week of September, when he'll return to his old stomping grounds in Starkville for one of the year's most intriguing matchups. Games with LSU, Missouri and South Carolina are all toss-ups, but it helps that all three will be played in The Swamp.

There's enough talent on defense and enough of a track record for Mullen on offense to buy Florida as an eight-win team. Anything more than that, and Mullen will be getting serious Coach of the Year consideration.

FFP Pick: Over

Missouri (Over/under: 7.5 wins)

The Skinny: Things have certainly turned around for the Tigers, who were on the brink of disaster midway through last year before closing the regular season on a six-game win streak during which they put up an average of 51 points. Drew Lock finished the season with an SEC-record 44 touchdown passes, and he'll be working with an abundance of talented, productive options at the skill spots in 2018.

Changes at offensive coordinator (from Josh Heupel to Derek Dooley) and in offensive style (from spread to more of a pro-style look) bear watching, but the Tigers should still score plenty of points. Given their struggles on defense a year ago (12th in the SEC in points allowed, dead last in passing yards allowed), they better.

A friendly early schedule quickly turns into a meat-grinder with games versus Georgia, at South Carolina and at Alabama in a four-week span. A soft closing stretch (versus Vanderbilt, at Tennessee, versus Arkansas) should have Missouri threatening the eight-win mark, but we'll hedge our bets. Heupel seems like the kind of coordinator/play-caller whose departure could have a greater impact than expected.

FFP Pick: Under

LSU (Over/under: 7 wins)

The Skinny: This is an unusually low number for LSU, which righted the ship after a rough start last year and wound up winning nine games in the regular season. Speaking of rough starts, another one could be in store for 2018, what with games against Top 10 opponents Miami (in Arlington on September 2) and Auburn (on the road on September 15) dotting the early schedule.

There's also a road trip to Florida, a cross-divisional game with Georgia and a November 3 date with Alabama. And don't look past an October 20 home date with Mississippi State, which smoked the Tigers 37-7 a year ago. Worst-

case scenario, LSU could find itself sitting at 3-6 after what will inevitably be an eighth straight loss to the Tide.

Getting transfer quarterback Joe Burrow from Ohio State should help the offense, but Ed Orgeron's promotion of Steve Ensminger to coordinator and play-caller drew more than its share of skepticism, and for the first time in a long time there is no proven running back to lean on. Dave Aranda's defense still has some big-time players and should keep the Tigers in a lot of games, but—as crazy as this sounds for LSU—six wins seem more likely than eight.

FFP Pick: Under

South Carolina (Over/under: 7 wins)

The Skinny: This number seems low for the Gamecocks, who won eight regular-season games in 2017 and now get game-breaker Deebo Samuel back from injury. Samuel's return could help Jake Bentley take the next step and truly become a big-time quarterback—which would be nice, given South Carolina's ongoing struggles to establish a consistent running game.

Will Muschamp knows what he's doing on defense, particularly when it comes to limiting big plays and forcing opponents to finish drives. The Gamecocks also forced an SEC-best 28 turnovers last season, which is outstanding but also very difficult to replicate from year to year. Factor in South Carolina's 6-1 record last season in games decided by one possession, and a little regression in 2018 wouldn't come as a big surprise.

Samuel—who scored six touchdowns (three receiving, two on kickoff returns and one rushing) in just three games last season before getting hurt—is a true difference-maker, though, and the schedule is manageable. Between a visit from Georgia on September 8 and the finale at Clemson on November 24, every game looks eminently winnable.

If the Gamecocks knock off UGA in Week 2, an SEC East title will be in play. Even if they don't pull the early upset, eight wins seem well within reach.

FFP Pick: Over

Texas A&M (Over/under: 7 wins)

The Skinny: Jimbo Fisher leaves Florida State and the ACC Atlantic behind for the SEC West, and, lo and behold, his first big game at Texas A&M comes against...Clemson, which visits College Station on September 8. Two weeks later, the Aggies head to Tuscaloosa, so a 2-2 start to Fisher's tenure seems highly likely.

The schedule eases up after that—but not by much. A mid-season stretch of three straight road games at South Carolina, Mississippi State and Auburn looks particularly tough, and the Aggies' next win over LSU will be their first since joining the SEC.

Fisher's track record suggests that, given time, he'll move Texas A&M toward the front of the line in the SEC West. For now, though, a fourth- or fifth-place finish seems more likely. Seven wins is probably right on the number, but eight feels like a best-case scenario. We'll lean in the other direction.

FFP Pick: Under

Arkansas (Over/under: 6 wins)

The Skinny: Arkansas parted ways with Bret Bielema after a 4-8 season, but it will take new head coach Chad Morris at least a year or two to recruit the right players—specifically a quarterback—for his spread offense. In the meantime, the Razorbacks are a team in total transition,

'SEC', from page 16

which generally doesn't bode well in the SEC West.

The non-conference slate is soft, and drawing Vanderbilt (at home) from the East helps. But unless veteran coordinator John Chavis coaxes drastic improvement out of a defense that yielded a conference-worst 36.2 points per game last season, six wins seems like the absolute ceiling. Don't bet on a bowl bid just yet.

FFP Pick: Under

Ole Miss (Over/under: 6 wins)

The Skinny: Let's start with the positive. Ole Miss has perhaps the nation's best receiving corps in A.J. Brown, DaMarkus Lodge and D.K. Metcalf, who combined to catch 155 passes for 2,596 yards and 25 touchdowns last season. The Rebels also have a quarterback (Jordan Ta'amu) capable of getting them the ball on a regular basis; they should be the favorites to lead the conference in passing yards per game for a fourth straight year.

Now, the bad news: A defense that surrendered at least 28 points in every SEC game and allowed a league-worst 459.5 yards per game has a long, long way to go, and the offense will be rather one-dimensional unless the ground game improves significantly.

Ole Miss scrapped its way to six wins last year, and six seems to be right on the number again this season. Pushes are for wimps, though, so we'll man up and take the under.

FFP Pick: Under

Kentucky (Over/under: 5.5 wins)

The Skinny: Can Mark Stoops get Kentucky to a bowl game for a third consecutive season? Given the complete and utter lack of Division One experience at quarterback, it won't be easy. Benny Snell may go down as the best running back in program history, but he can carry the offense only so far by himself; despite Snell's SEC-high 19 rushing touchdowns last season, the Wildcats ranked just 10th in the league in scoring at 25.5 points per game.

Kentucky may enter the stretch run needing to win road games at Tennessee and Louisville to reach bowl eligibility. It says here they fall just short.

FFP Pick: Under

Tennessee (Over/under: 5.5 wins)

The Skinny: New head coach Jeremy Pruitt made his bones as a national championship defensive coordinator, and one of his first tasks at Tennessee is fixing a run defense that has been sub-par for years and bottomed out last season (251.3 yards per game allowed, worst in the SEC). Unfortunately, Pruitt is powerless to do anything about the Vols' 2018 schedule, which is brutal.

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The opener in Charlotte against West Virginia will be a tall order, and it's doubtful that any team in the country will face a tougher five-game stretch than the one UT will endure from September 22 through October 27: Florida at home, at Georgia, bye, at Auburn, Alabama at home, at South Carolina. Two of those games (and maybe three) are flat unwinnable at this point, and the Vols will likely be underdogs in all five.

With Stanford grad transfer Keller Chryst stabilizing the quarterback spot and a healthy Jauan Jennings back in the fold at receiver, an offense that ranked dead last in the SEC in both points and yards per game last year should be improved. But six wins seem like too much to ask for against that schedule.

FFP Pick: Under

Vanderbilt (Over/under: 4 wins)

The Skinny: Derek Mason has always been able to coach defense, but the bottom fell out on Vandy's D last year. The Commodores gave up 59 points to Alabama, 57 to Ole Miss and 40-plus to three other SEC opponents. No team in league history has ever surrendered more points (346) in conference play than Vanderbilt did in 2017.

Kyle Shurmur is coming off a breakthrough year at quarterback in which he threw for 2,823 yards and 26 touchdowns with 10 interceptions, but any hope of matching last year's total of five wins rest with shoring up the defense. Vandy won all four of its non-conference games last season, but a road trip to Notre Dame in mid-September renders that an unlikely scenario in 2018.

The Commodores could (should?) have three non-con wins by the end of September, but can they find a way to win two conference games? Smart money says probably not.

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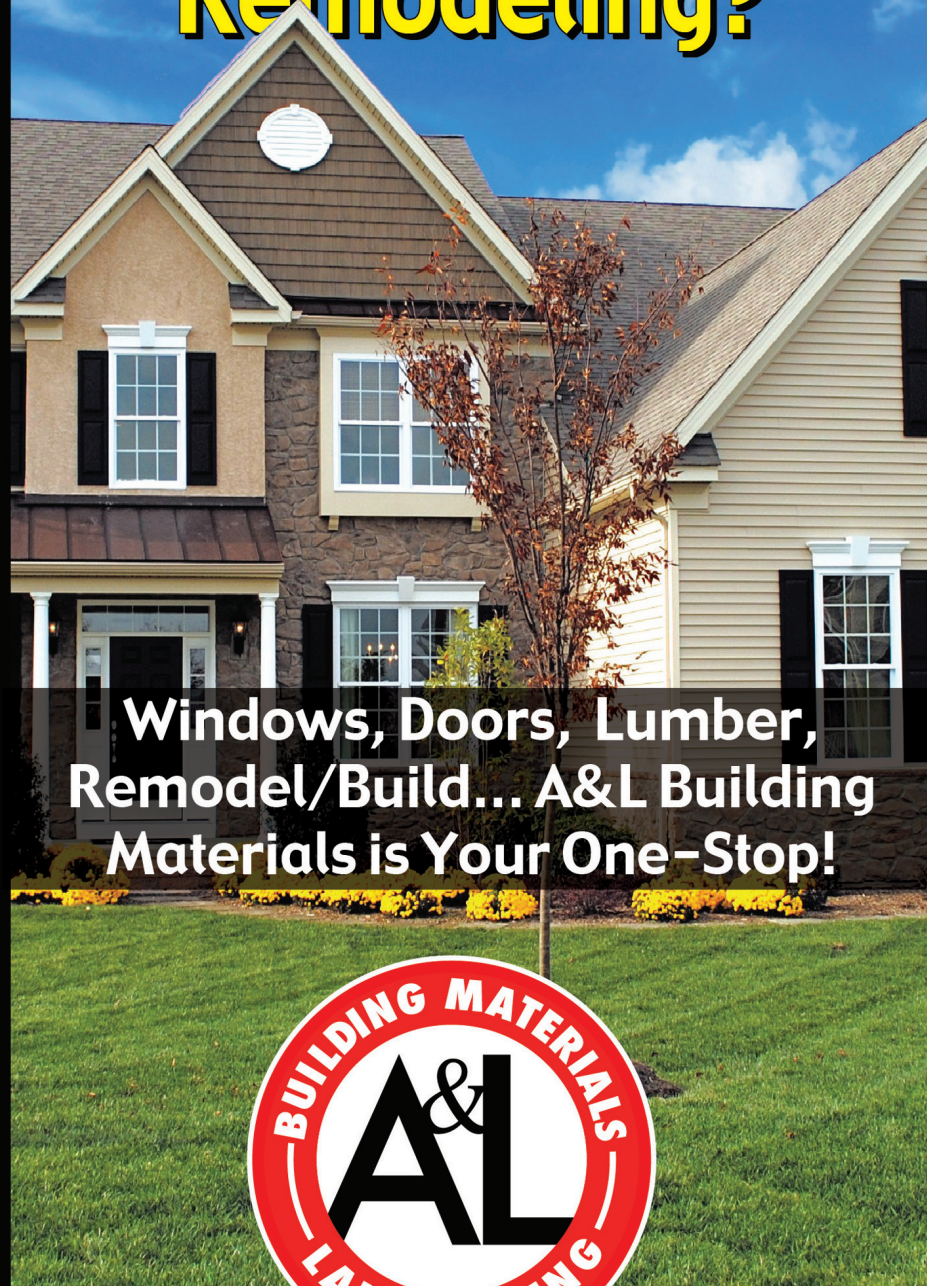
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'RITTER,' from page 13

eyes. He expects to get every available player on film before the night is through.

"I'll talk to [East Limestone] Coach [Jeff] Pugh, of course, but our plan is to play our older guys, our starters, in the first quarter," Ritter said on Sunday. "Then we'll play our second bunch and our jayvee guys in the second and third quarter. In the fourth quarter, anybody that we haven't got on film, we'll get those guys on the field in the last quarter.

"The jamboree is a big deal for the guys we're not really sure about. The ones we feel like are our starters, we feel like we know what they can do. This is a great opportunity for some of those back-up guys to prove what their role could be for this football team."

And, perhaps, to work their way up that ever-fluid depth chart. But individual position battles aren't the only thing to monitor on Friday night. Ritter wants to see how smoothly his team functions under the bright lights with an actual opponent waiting on the other side of the ball.

"Offensively," Ritter said, "the communication aspect is big—getting lined up fast, getting the play call, the execution of the play, playing with great tempo. Defensively, it's the same things—making sure we get lined up, making sure we get the call and making sure we're running to the football at full speed. Those are three simple things we can evaluate on film in two or three drives. Then we can build off that for the first game."

Ritter had initially planned to transition the Golden Tigers from a wristband system to a signal-based system on offense in terms of getting the play call in from the sideline, but he ultimately made the decision to stick with wristbands.

"About fifty or sixty percent of our offense, we felt very comfortable doing on signals," said Ritter,

whose run-heavy, option-based attack powered West Morgan to an average of 38.8 points per game last season. "There were just a couple of things that were throwing us for a loop, some formation tweaks and just having guys in other positions that they weren't normally used to. So we're using the wristbands, just to make the transition a little smoother. We had a scrimmage Friday, and everything went well."

Ritter said he and his staff tried to make last Friday's intrasquad scrimmage as much like the genuine article as possible.

"We did a lot of good things. We wanted it to be as close to a Friday-night game setting as it could possibly be," Ritter said. "We went through all our kicking teams and transitioned them on and off the field. We went first offense, first and second defense. I thought it went well. We communicated well on offense.

"We've got three personnel packages we're using right now, and we were able to communicate that and get people on the field and get people off the field pretty quick. It was a good warm-up for Friday night."

Russellville and East Limestone are certainly familiar opponents, having met each of the past 10 seasons in region play. The Golden Tigers got their most significant—and arguably their most satisfying—win last season on October 20 at East, when they edged the Indians 17-13 to keep their playoff hopes alive. [Russellville ultimately finished 3-7 and missed the postseason for just the second time in 18 years; East Limestone finished 5-5 and also fell short of the playoffs.]

Ritter was asked if the Indians would provide a good tune-up for next week's regular season opener against Deshler.

"Yes and no," he said. "From an athletic standpoint, everything we hear about East Limestone is that they're very athletic. So it will prepare us on that end. Schematically, no. They're the polar opposite offensively of what Deshler does. Defensively, they run a 4-3, and Deshler is a 3-4 team. So from a schematic point of view, it won't help us much, but from the standpoint of athleticism and physicality, yes it will."

With fall practice winding down and the season essentially upon us, Ritter said he still hasn't pinpointed what his first Russellville team's biggest strength is going to be.

"No, not really. It's kind of been back and forth," he said. "The first scrimmage we had, offensively we got the better of the defense. We did a bunch of good things. Then this last scrimmage we had, the defense got the best of us. That's the way it goes in the fall. I'm very anxious to see what goes well on Friday night against somebody else—on both sides of the ball.

"We're still working to establish our identity, and it may take a couple of weeks to do that well. We've got some new guys in different spots, and half of our coaching staff is brand new."

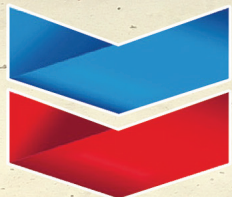
One thing's for sure—Russellville's coaches and players alike are chomping at the bit to line up against somebody in an opposing uniform for a change.

"Yeah, it's been a long summer and a long fall camp," Ritter said. "For two weeks, it's been high-level intensity every day. With the physicality we bring most every day, I think our guys, and even our coaches, are ready to play somebody else. All of us are. We're ready to line up against somebody in a different uniform and see what we're all about."



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Wildcats**

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**Vina
Red Devils**

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Russellville Golden Tigers

Head Coach: John Ritter
(first season at Russellville)

Record at RHS: N/A
Career record: 33-23 in five seasons
Playoff appearances: Four (2-4 record)
Previous head coaching stops:
•Red Bay (2012-13)
•West Morgan (2015-17)

Assistant Coaches (Offense)

Brett Voss - Quarterbacks
Tony Buckhalter - Tailbacks
Mason Willis - Fullbacks
Jess Smith - Inside Receivers
Corey Flanagan - Outside Receivers
Tony Bonds - Offensive Line
Derek Blagburn - Offensive Line

Assistant Coaches (Defense)

Chris Balentine - Coordinator
Paul Czervionke - Defensive Line
Bryant Bonds - Defensive Line
Tim Townley - Inside Linebackers
Ronnie Ritter - Outside Linebackers
Jermaine Groce - Cornerbacks
Trey Stanford - Safeties

Positional Preview:

Quarterbacks

Senior Lucas McNutt, back on the football field for the first time since his freshman year, has the athleticism and intangibles necessary to thrive as the triggerman for Ritter's option-based attack.

"Lucas is an athlete," Ritter said in July. "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."

"Being the point guard on the basketball team, Lucas is accustomed to being in that leadership role, and he brings an athletic dimension to our offense that we're excited about."

Junior Jacob Davis and freshman Gabe Amick fill out the quarterback depth chart behind McNutt.

Running Backs

After playing last season at Lawrence County High in Moulton, former RHS standout Zaye Boyd is back in the Black and Gold. As a Golden Tiger sophomore in 2016, Boyd amassed at least 100 yards from scrimmage in each of Russellville's 12 games, scoring three or more touchdowns in five of them and finishing the season with a total of 25 TDs (21 rushing, four receiving). He ran for 1,401 yards on just 168 carries, a sparkling average of 8.3 yards per attempt. Boyd gave the Golden Tigers a major big-play threat, breaking off scoring runs of 88, 71, 65, 52, 46 and 44 yards.

Assuming Boyd reprises his role as the featured ball carrier, he'll lead a talented group at tailback that also includes seniors K.J. Hamilton and Xavier Hollingsworth, junior Austin Ashley and freshman Airreon "Boots" McCulloch.

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.

Receivers

With senior Devin Buckhalter back from injury and key contributors like senior Theron Pounders and sophomores Rowe Gallagher and Cole Barnett also 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 this summer. "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 [he led the team with 35 catches for 514 yards], but Ritter plans to feature the 6'0, 194-pound speedster in a variety of ways this season.

"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 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. Fleet-footed junior J.D. Price gives Russellville another potential weapon at receiver.

Offensive Line

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.

"We've gotta set the tone up front," Ritter said. "We've stressed a physical brand of football. 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 bench-presses 340 pounds and squats 545], experience and a tough-minded work ethic to the interior of the line.

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) were in the mix this summer at right tackle, along with sophomore Dakota Andres.

Defensive Line

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."

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.

Linebackers

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

Russellville's 2018 Schedule
(with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/31	vs. Deshler	13-5 (won last 6 at home)
9/7	at Corner*	N/A (never met)
9/14	vs. Hayden*	N/A (never met)
9/21	at West Point*	6-0 (never lost to WP)
9/28	at Halyeville	N/A (last met in 1999)
10/5	vs. LCHS*	9-1 (RHS 20-6 all-time)
10/12	vs. Hamilton*	N/A (last met in 1995)
10/19	at Jasper*	6-2 (2-1 record in Jasper)
10/26	vs. Dora*	N/A (met once, in 1987)
11/2	at Central	N/A (last met in 1983)

*-Class 5A, Region 7 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

Week 1	at Deshler	L, 3-35
Week 2	at Lee*	L, 0-45
Week 3	vs. LCHS*	L, 6-25
Week 4	at Jemison*	L, 10-56
Week 5	at Hartselle	L, 0-51
Week 6	at SJPJH*	W, 42-21
Week 7	vs. Brooks*	L, 21-54
Week 8	at East Lime*	W, 17-13
Week 9	vs. Ardmore*	W, 44-6
Week 10	vs. Colbert Co.	L, 16-23

Record: 3-7 (3-4 in Class 5A, Region 8)

Points per game: 15.9

Points allowed per game: 32.9

*-Class 5A, Region 8 opponent

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 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.

Defensive Backs

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 on a given play. Ritter liked what he saw in the 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.

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

Specialists

Kenner Perez, who made a couple of big field goals last season in clutch situations, will handle kickoffs and extra points, with fellow senior Roberto Perez providing depth. Brooks Scott will serve as the long snapper, and fellow sophomore Grayson Eady will handle the punting duties.



Best of Luck to All Golden Tiger Athletic Teams



Russellville City School Board of Education. Front row from left: Judy Pounders, Greg Trapp, Superintendent Heath Grimes. Back row from left: Brett Gist, Jerry Groce, Greg Batchelor.

Russellville City Schools 2018-19 Calendar

Sept 3 - Labor Day

Oct 12 - Homecoming - Half Day

Oct 22-24 - Fall Break

Nov 12 - Veteran's Day

Nov 21-23 - Thanksgiving Break

Dec 19 - Student Half Day

Dec 20-Jan 4 - Christmas Break

Feb 15 - Teacher Work Day

Feb 18 - President's Day

March 25-29 - Spring Break

April 19 - Spring Holiday

May 24 - Half Day/Last Day

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No place like home

Russellville's coaching staff is filled with Golden Tiger grads

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

In terms of sheer size, John Ritter's coaching staff at Russellville is by far the largest he's had in six seasons as a varsity head coach. But there's something else about the current Golden Tiger football staff that's even more noteworthy.

Eight Russellville football coaches (five at the varsity level and three at the middle school level) are former Golden Tigers themselves, having graduated from RHS.

"I think it's a rare thing, to have almost....I guess it's about 33 percent of our staff is from here," said Ritter, who previously served as the head coach at Red Bay (2012-13) and West Morgan (2015-17). "That's amazing. It speaks volumes about the tradition here and the commitment by those guys to come back and make sure they're doing their part for Russellville to get back on top and then stay on top."

The five RHS alumni on the varsity football staff are Bryant Bonds (a 2005 graduate who helps coach the defensive line), Tony Bonds (Class of 2001, offensive line), Corey Flanagan (Class of 2008, outside receivers), Jermaine Groce (Class of 2003, cornerbacks) and Mason Willis (Class of 2010, full-backs). On the RMS staff, Heath Boyd (Class of 1991, defensive coordinator), Chase Gilmer (Class of 2009, quarterbacks) and Jake Ward (Class of 2010, receivers) are all Russellville graduates.

"They bring a sense of pride about this place," said Ritter, whose team is scheduled to kick off its 2018 schedule with a preseason game at home against East Limestone this Friday, August 24. "All our coaches do, but when you go [to school] somewhere and it's your home school and you wore this jersey, you're a little more invested. That's not to say anything negative at all about our other coaches; it just speaks to what it means to play here and the respect those guys have for the team and the school system."

Flanagan, a former two-sport athlete who played both football and baseball at RHS, is now in his fourth season coaching at his alma mater after spending two years on staff at Deshler High School.

"For me, personally, it means so much to be able to coach at Russellville, a place I have called home for the majority of my life," said Flanagan, a 2008 graduate of RHS. "I love coaching here and being able to give back to a place that has given so much to me. I was a part of the Golden Tiger tradition as a student-athlete when I was in school here, and I do my best every day to pass that down to the kids I teach and coach."

"For me, personally, it means so much to be able to coach at Russellville, a place I have called home for the majority of my life," Flanagan said. "I love coaching here and being able to give back to a place that has given so much to me. I was a part of the Golden Tiger tradition as a student-athlete when I was in school here, and I do my best every day to pass that down to the kids I teach and coach."

"The people in this community are so special, and they truly love the Golden Tigers. It's awesome to be a part of it."

The 2018 season will be the eighth on Russellville's varsity football staff for Groce, whose playing career with the Golden Tigers ended in 2002.

"Coaching at my alma mater is special because I'm a product of this great community and school system," Groce said. "It's an honor and a privilege to come back to RHS and inspire the next generation of student-athletes to accomplish the impossible. The history of excellence here at RHS helps to create a unique culture and expectation of winning. That motivates me every day to strive to become the best coach I can possibly be in order to give each athlete the very best opportunity to become a champion."

Ritter knows what it's like to go back and coach at the school where you once wore the uniform. A standout prep quarterback at Lauderdale County High, he returned to Rogersville as a volunteer coach on his father Ronnie

See 'HOME,' page 25

'HOME' from page 24

Ritter's Tiger staff after his collegiate playing career at the University of North Alabama came to a close.

"Fifteen years later, I still look to see how Lauderdale County did," Ritter said last week. "We played them this past year [at West Morgan], and dressing in the visitor's field house was very weird for me. I grew up in that stadium, on that field, in that field house. I get what it means to those eight guys to come back and coach here, and I'm proud to have them on staff."

Boyd, now entering his 16th season as an RMS football coach, is the longest-tenured of the Russellville alums on staff. Tony Bonds played offensive line at Ole Miss after graduating from RHS. Groce, Bryant Bonds, Gilmer, Ward and Willis all played in at least one Super Six during their time as Golden Tigers.

"It's an honor and a privilege to come back to RHS and inspire the next generation of student-athletes to accomplish the impossible," said Groce, a 2003 RHS grad. **"The history of excellence here at RHS helps to create a unique culture and expectation of winning. That motivates me every day to strive to become the best coach I can possibly be in order to give each athlete the very best opportunity to become a champion."**


"We talk about the way it was when they were [playing] here," Ritter said, "the similarities between my vision and the vision of some of the past coaches. And we've got guys who may not be alums, but they've been here a long time. Coach [Tim] Townley has been here a long time. He jumps on board with those guys who played for all those state championships."

"We do a lot of comparison type stuff, but it's not really comparison in a negative way as far as what we should be doing or should not be doing."

Ward and Willis were seniors on the Russellville team that lost 27-14 to Demopolis in the Class 5A championship game at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa in 2009. The Golden Tigers haven't been as far as the state semifinals since, but Groce says the fervor of the fan base and the entire Black and Gold community is still going strong.

"The passion for sports here is electric, and I'm excited to be a part of it," Groce said. "This place is special, and I wouldn't trade it for any other. It's truly great to be a Golden Tiger."

**Good Luck To All Area Teams
Have a Great Season!**



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From left: David Palmer, William Nale, Mayor David Grissom, Gary Cummings, Arthur Elliott, Jamie Harris

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Colbert Heights *Wildcats*

Head Coach: Taylor Leathers* (third season at Colbert Heights)

Record at CHHS: 15-8 (9-5 in Region 8 play)
Career record: 15-8 in two seasons
Playoff appearances: One (2-1 record)
Previous head coaching stops: None

Assistant Coaches

Lonnie Robinson - Defensive Coordinator, LBs
Justin Helms - Offensive/Defensive Lines
Scott Hunter - Receivers/Safeties, Kicking Game
Isaac Fuller - Running Backs/Corners, ST
Jon Russell - Head Junior High Coach
Phillip Willingham - Asst. JH, Varsity Off. Asst.
Cody Counce - Varsity Assistant (Friday nights)
Brent Oliver - Athletic Trainer
Tommy Johnson - Head Athletic Manager

*-Leathers serves as Offensive Coordinator and QBs coach

Positional Preview:

Quarterbacks

Kevin Shaw, who rushed for 1,110 yards and nine touchdowns on 198 carries last season, moved on in May. The Wildcats will now turn to Kevin's younger brother, Carson Shaw, to take over as the triggerman for their option-based attack. Only a sophomore, the younger Shaw is a dynamic athlete who rushed for 168 yards and two scores on 30 carries in limited duty on offense in 2017. [He started on defense all season and was the team's top corner, making 35 solo tackles and picking off two passes.]

"Carson is a phenomenal athlete," said Leathers, who serves as the Wildcats' offensive coordinator and play caller. "He's got great potential to be a very, very special football player for us here at Colbert Heights. He's a very intense competitor. He wants to win, and he's very eager to do that."

Kevin Shaw made major strides as an on-field leader for the Wildcats toward the end of his career, and Leathers is hoping to mold Carson into the kind of player who can assume those same responsibilities.

"We're progressing him as a leader, toward being the commander in chief of the offense," Leathers said in July. "That's a little difficult for a sophomore going into his first year as the starter, but he did play a lot of running back last year, and he has had Friday-night game experience. Now it's about being the signal man, the triggerman, and making sure the offense is in the right formation, running the right play, getting everybody aligned correctly and managing the clock—doing the critical things it takes to run the offense."

Running Backs

The Wildcats typically deploy a fullback and two slot-backs in their base offense, with the fullback serving as the featured ball carrier. Dylan Chandler flourished in that role last season, rushing for 1,212 yards and 22 touchdowns on 202 attempts. Chandler was one of 18 seniors who graduated in May, so Leathers is looking for a new bell cow to step in and carry the load. Enter Riley Fuller, a senior who started at linebacker last year.

"Riley was one of the few non-seniors who played a lot on last year's team," Leathers said this summer. "He did a tremendous job for us on defense. He didn't run the football on offense, but we're transitioning him into being our running back. Riley is physical. He's athletic and fast, of course, but he's gonna be a physical type of runner. That's what we're looking for out of him, and that's why he's in that position."

Colbert Heights looks to be in good shape at the

slot-back position, where senior Braden McCaig is coming off a productive season and athletic newcomer Cayne Balta—another senior—is poised to make an immediate impact. The speedy McCaig rushed for 236 yards and two touchdowns on 42 carries last season while also catching eight passes for 77 yards and another score.

Receivers

Another newcomer from within Colbert Heights' own halls is senior Skyler Gault, who will slide in as a starting receiver. Providing depth is fellow senior J.J. Michael, a converted safety who didn't catch a pass last year but did make 13 tackles.

Senior Evan Norton, who had 115 yards and two touchdowns on just five catches as a junior in 2017, will provide another target in the passing game and an extra blocker when the Wildcats use their tight end formation.

Offensive Line

The O-line was as responsible as any other group for the Wildcats' deep run last year, and now four starters—including All-State left tackle Cain Phifer—must be replaced up front. The lone returner is senior Tyler Tubbs, who started at right tackle in 2017 but will slide over to guard this year. Fellow senior Ryan Sanderson will start at tackle, along with sophomore Ethan Seal.

"Tyler Tubbs is gonna be our anchor on the offensive line," Leathers said. "Last year, Cain Phifer was our man, our vocal leader. Tyler is gonna take on that role for us this year. He and Ryan Sanderson have done a good job, being seniors on the line, showing leadership throughout the summer months."

Junior Logan Simpson will join Tubbs at guard, with Trey Robinson set to take over as the starting center. Patrick Holt, who played significant snaps on the defensive line last year as a junior, could factor into the O-line mix as a senior this year, and sophomore Mason Lee provides depth.

Defensive Line

As is the case on the offensive line, the Wildcats will lean heavily on Tyler Tubbs to anchor their four-man defensive front as well. Tubbs had a very productive season at defensive end in 2017, recording 9.5 tackles for loss and 33 total stops. Junior Logan Simpson is projected to hold down the end spot opposite Tubbs, replacing an All-State performer in departed senior Bud Pratt.

Leathers said that Patrick Holt, who played a lot of valuable snaps at shade (nose guard) for Colbert Heights last season, is expected to start in that spot this year. Senior Ryan Sanderson will play the three-technique defensive tackle position, and seniors Andrew Richardson and Cody Richardson are in line to contribute along the defensive front. There could also be a role in the D-line rotation for freshman Cory Martinez.

Given that at least three of the four projected starters on the defensive line are also expected to start on the offensive line, building depth along the defensive front is essential for Colbert Heights going into the season. That's true across the board, according to Leathers.

"I can't emphasize enough the importance of creating depth, due to the large number of two-way players we have," he said. "We knew this was coming. It's just one of those cycles you go through at our level of school. What we're trying to do is really create a mentality in our players where they're ready to play iron man football."

Linebackers

Evan Norton will line up at inside linebacker

Colbert Heights' 2018 Schedule (with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/24	at Red Bay	4-10 (lost last 3 at RB)
8/31	at Wilson	N/A (last met in 1995)
9/7	at Westminster*	N/A (never met)
9/14	vs. LCHS*	4-8 (last home W '09)
9/21	vs. E. Lawrence*	1-1 (2-2 all-time)
9/28	vs. Cherokee	13-3 (won 12 straight)
10/5	at DHCA	N/A (never met)
10/12	at Lexington*	6-10 (2-6 at LHS)
10/19	vs. Clements*	8-2 (won 5 straight)
10/26	at Phil Campbell*	7-1 (won 7 straight)

*-Class 3A, Region 8 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

Week 0	vs. Red Bay	W, 14-6
Week 1	at PCHS	W, 30-0
Week 2	at Clements*	W, 17-14
Week 3	at W. Morgan*	L, 25-45
Week 4	vs. Lexington*	W, 27-7
Week 5	at Sheffield	W, 35-0
Week 6	vs. Elkmont*	W, 15-13
Week 7	vs. CCHS*	W, 35-7
Week 8	at LCHS*	W, 28-13
Week 9	vs. E. Lawrence*	W, 44-2
Round 1	vs. Locust Fork	W, 28-0
Round 2	at Weaver	W, 36-35
Round 3	vs. Piedmont	L, 13-34

Record: 11-2 (6-1 in Class 3A, Region 8)

Points per game: 26.7

Points allowed per game: 13.5

*-Class 3A, Region 8 opponent

alongside returning starter Riley Fuller, who made 43 tackles last season as a junior. Senior Tyler Taylor is slated to take over at one of the outside linebacker spots, with Skyler Gault starting on the other side. Leathers said this summer that he expects two young players, sophomore Blane Holt and freshman Andrew Tedford, to come in and make an impact at linebacker this season as well.

Defensive Backs

On a typical snap, the Wildcats will line up with two corners and one safety in their Cover Three scheme, though Leathers did say they plan to work in some two-safety looks this year. Carson Shaw, the team's leading returning tackler with 47 total stops last year as a freshman, is back at one corner spot, with Braden McCaig—who saw plenty of snaps at corner over the final three or four games of 2017—returning to start on the opposite side. Leathers said that Shaw's athleticism and versatility make him an immensely valuable piece on defense.

"Carson started thirteen games at corner for us last year and did a great job, but he's the type of athlete who can play anywhere," Leathers said. "If we need him at safety, at outside linebacker, even at inside linebacker, he'll be able to play those spots. The number one thing we're focusing on as a coaching staff is realizing the small number of names that we're penciling in. We're gonna have to create our own depth."

Leathers loved what he saw this spring from newcomer Cayne Balta, who will take over for Kevin Shaw as the team's starting safety. Senior J.J. Michael has a lot of game experience and will work in at corner. Leathers said in July that he expected junior Jacob Millender—who suffered a broken leg on the first day of spring drills—to make it back in time to contribute this season at either outside linebacker or in the secondary.

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Senator Larry Stutts

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Phil Campbell **Bobcats**

Head Coach: Kevin Barnwell*
(first season at Phil Campbell)

Record at PCHS: N/A

Career record: N/A

Playoff appearances: N/A

Previous head coaching stops: None

Assistant Coaches

Jonathan Raper - Receivers/Linebackers

Lucas Gilbert - Receivers/Defensive Backs

Jordan Benford - Strength & Conditioning/QB/LB

David Palmer - Defensive Line

Trevor Allison - Defensive Line

Darby Allison - Offensive Line

Montre McCulloch - Offensive Line

*-Barnwell serves as Offensive Coordinator and also coaches QBs and RBs

Positional Preview:

Quarterbacks

Sophomore Luke Barnwell (Kevin's oldest son) will be at the controls of Phil Campbell's new no-huddle spread offense. Barnwell took his lumps at times last year while starting all ten games for Russellville as an undersized freshman at the 5A level, but he also demonstrated a strong, accurate arm and the moxie to be an effective leader.

Against East Limestone, for instance, in a critical late-season game on the road, Barnwell was lights-out on third down, making several clutch throws and completing 6-of-9 attempts for 82 yards, one touchdown and five first-down conversions in a 17-13 win.

The Golden Tigers won only two other games, but Kevin Barnwell believes Luke (who completed a solid 60 percent of his passes on the season for 1,314 yards and 10 touchdowns with 10 interceptions) will reap great benefits from the trial-by-fire experience of his freshman season.

"It helped him develop some toughness and learn how to compete, more than anything," Kevin said. "One thing he'll do, he'll go out there and compete. The offense I'm running is new to him. Everything is new to him, so he's learning to read progressions with everything we do."

"I probably stay on him more than I do anyone else, but he's gotta learn the whole playbook and know what everyone's doing. He's gotta know the concepts of what we're running and what we're trying to do. It needs to be second nature, him knowing where his open receiver is gonna be."

Running Backs

The straight hand-off probably won't be a staple of the Bobcats' offense, but when they do look to run the ball they'll likely give it to sophomore Austen Baker. Freshman Blaine Goodson is also in the backfield mix, and rugged junior Imer Ordonez provides a physical, between-the-tackles presence after rushing for 119 yards and two touchdowns last season on 39 carries.

Receivers

This version of the spread often features four receivers—an X (split end), a Y (tight end), a Z (flanker) and an H (fullback or inside receiver in the four-wide look)—and Barnwell sees great potential in a promising group that goes eight or nine deep. Junior Ben Williams, who caught 10 passes for 124 yards and two touchdowns last season, will rotate between X and Z. He missed much of the summer after breaking his collarbone in the spring game in May, but Williams stayed ahead of the game from a mental standpoint.

"He's a really bright guy," Barnwell said in July. "He knows every route. He's actually learned the concepts of what we're doing, and during our

seven-on-seven he goes with us and tells the players the routes. He helps me a lot. He'll be over on one side of the field, and one of our coaches will be on the other side.

"He'll be a big piece of the puzzle. He's got a good attitude, he works hard, and he plays hard. He never wants to come out, and he never complains. He's a great team guy."

Phil Campbell's leading returning receiver is sophomore Ridge Raper, who caught 19 passes for 157 yards and a touchdown last season. He'll spend a lot of time at the H-receiver spot, among others.

"Ridge is a sure-handed guy. In seven-on-seven, he's come up with some big catches," Barnwell said this summer. "He's gonna be a guy we lean heavily on and ask a lot from. We'll use him at multiple spots, and he'll play on both sides of the ball. He's gonna play some quarterback, play some receiver, maybe even play some tight end. He understands the game so well, and he can play a lot of positions."

Seth Baker figures to see significant snaps at the X-receiver spot, and fellow seniors Trent Gonzales, Ty Leindecker and Nate Owens are also expected to contribute at receiver. There's plenty of young blood, too, including freshman Andrew Green, an East Franklin product, and John Randle Herring, another ninth-grader poised to make an immediate impact. Speedy sophomore Trey Leindecker (Ty's younger brother) could be yet another playmaker at the receiver position.

"We don't have a lot of linemen," Barnwell said. "We will try to do some downhill stuff, but we're gonna have to use a lot of receivers and try and spread people out."

Offensive Line

A lack of experience and depth up front is something the Bobcats have worked hard to address.

"We're trying to get our kids up front to play with an edge," Barnwell said, "with toughness, to be more man than the other team."

There is experience on the interior of the line, where veteran guards Kaleb Solis (a junior) and Dakota Mansell (a senior Barnwell says the team is counting on for "physicality") both return. They'll play alongside sophomore center Eli Smith, a Russellville transfer.

"He's doing a good job of working on getting stronger," Barnwell said last month of Smith. "He's pulling double-duty as far as workouts go, doing two a day. He's really worked to improve his strength, and he's come a long way. He knows the game, and he understands what we're trying to accomplish up front at the center position."

Logan Hill, a senior who did not play last season, is holding down one tackle spot, with promising sophomore Johnson Lee at the other.

"He's gonna be a good player if he stays with it," Barnwell said of Lee. "We're counting on him a good bit. He's a stronger kid."

Senior Joseph Reynolds and sophomores Justus Stancil and Kendrick Baker are also in the mix for playing time up front.

Defensive Line

Barnwell said the Bobcats will alternate between using three and four down linemen, but they will base out of a four-man front. Either way, they plan to lean heavily—pun intended—on massive senior Dustin Orrick in the middle of the line.

"He's gonna help us a lot if he stays with it," Barnwell said in July. "They call him Cornbread. Dustin is 6'7 and probably somewhere between

Phil Campbell's 2018 Schedule
(with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/31	vs. Red Bay	3-15 (lost 12 straight)
9/7	at Lexington*	0-8 (out-scored 325-105)
9/14	at Clements*	2-2 (last win was 2005)
9/21	vs. Vina	2-0 (won 8 straight)
9/28	at Phillips	2-8 (PC 23-17 all-time)
10/5	vs. Westminster*	1-1 (last met in 2009)
10/12	vs. LCHS*	N/A (last met in 1993)
10/19	at E. Lawrence*	0-2 (PC 1-3 all-time)
10/26	vs. C. Heights*	1-7 (lost 7 straight)
11/1	at Hackleburg	3-15 (lost 15 straight)

*-Class 3A, Region 8 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

Week 0	at Tharptown	W, 54-6
Week 1	vs. C. Heights	L, 0-30
Week 2	vs. Lamar Co.*	L, 12-54
Week 3	at Sheffield*	L, 14-35
Week 4	vs. Sulligent*	L, 6-35
Week 5	at Phillips	L, 21-33
Week 6	OPEN	
Week 7	at Mars Hill*	L, 20-48
Week 8	vs. Hatton*	L, 8-40
Week 9	at Red Bay*	L, 20-22
Week 10	vs. Hackleburg	L, 16-30

Record: 1-9 (0-6 in Class 2A, Region 8)

Points per game: 17.1

Points allowed per game: 33.3

*-Class 2A, Region 8 opponent

350 and 400 pounds. He's gonna play nose guard for us, and once we get him where he can go both ways he'll play on the offensive line, too."

Joining Orrick up front will be sophomore tackle Jeremiah Malone, who could also see snaps on the O-line. Senior Logan Hill and freshman John Randle Herring will hold down the end spots, with junior Eli Jackson working in at both defensive end and linebacker.

Linebackers

Senior Dakota Mansell, the team's leading returning tackler, brings experience to the middle of the defense after making 42 stops a year ago. Sophomore Isaiah Oliver, a new arrival from East Franklin, also figures into the mix at linebacker, as does senior Ty Leindecker. Promising freshman Boone Swinney projects as the starter at Sam linebacker and, according to Barnwell, just needs a little seasoning to become a steady playmaker.

"He's gonna be a good player before he graduates," Barnwell said of Swinney. "Once he learns his angles, as far as how to take the correct angle when you're making a tackle, he's gonna be good. That's just something you have to work on and be taught."

Sophomores Justin Jewell and Daniel Potts (another East Franklin product) offer depth at linebacker.

Defensive Backs

Sophomores Ridge Raper and Austen Baker project as the starting safeties, with Jewell and freshman Austin Douthit also expected to contribute. Junior Ben Williams and freshman Blaine Goodson will see time at corner, along with newcomer Rowdy Elliott, a sophomore who caught Barnwell's eye this summer.

"Playing corner, there's a lot of responsibility that goes with that, but he's coming along really well," Barnwell said last month of Elliott. "He works hard, and he's eager to learn."



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Red Bay *Tigers*

Head Coach: Michael Jackson* (fifth season at Red Bay)

Record at Red Bay: 33-11 (18-6 in region play)
Career record: 104-73 in 16 seasons
Playoff appearances: Nine (8-9 record)
Previous head coaching stops:
•Russellville (2011-13)
•Buckhorn (2002-10)

Assistant Coaches

Jamie Purser - Defensive Coordinator
Richard Maggerise - Defense
Jason Vinson - Defense
Kenny Lindsay - Defense
Anthony Pounds - Offense
Kelby Hallmark - Offense
Heath Isom - Offense
Adam Hester - JV and Stats
Dale Saint - Technology Support
*-Jackson serves as Offensive Coordinator

Positional Preview: Quarterbacks

Kolby Bragwell, who took over the starting job as a sophomore in 2016, is poised to become the first three-year starter at quarterback Jackson has had in his 17 seasons as a head coach. The 6'1, 215-pound Bragwell carried a heavy load last season as one of the Tigers' few players on offense with any real game experience; he was responsible for 18 total touchdowns, throwing for 888 yards and rushing for another 569 yards on 88 attempts.

Jackson believes that Bragwell will be better in 2018 with a more seasoned supporting cast to help him.

"I expect him to be one of the top quarterbacks in north Alabama," Jackson said. "I'm looking for him to be a complete quarterback now. He can throw the ball, he can run the ball—I would definitely list him as a dual-threat guy. He does a good job of running the football, even though sometimes I don't run him as much.

"Kolby's job is handling the offense and handling the team. He did that last year, too, but with eight new starters around him, that was a tall task for him. Now he's got more confidence in the guys around him, because he's got more experience around him."

Waiting in the wings to take over once Bragwell moves on is athletic sophomore Jalen Vinson, who flashed his dynamic play-making ability early last season with a 46-yard touchdown run in a 53-7 rout of Tharptown. The 6'0, 160-pound Vinson will start at receiver, though Jackson said he also plans to deploy Vinson at quarterback in certain special packages.

Running Backs

Jackson's run-heavy offense has produced three different 1,000-yard rushers (Tyler Reach, Tate Ozbirn and Aaron Lewey) in four seasons, and 6'0, 170-pound junior Colbie King is poised to take over as the featured back in 2018. Last season as a sophomore, King spelled Lewey on occasion and finished the season with 23 carries for 167 yards and two touchdowns; he also caught three passes for 75 yards and a score. Jackson said King is ready to handle a heavier load.

"He played a lot last year at different positions, and now we're moving him to tailback exclusively," Jackson said. "I'm very confident he can do it."

Colyn Humphries (a 5'10, 165-pound junior) and Hunter King (a sophomore and Colbie's younger brother) will provide depth in the backfield.

Receivers

Luke Rooker, who graduated in May, was on the

receiving end of roughly 60 percent of Bragwell's completions last season, but Jackson is excited about the potential of this year's young group. Vinson, whose primary contributions as a freshman came on defense, will start at the Z-receiver spot after putting together a strong summer.

Vinson is joined by three other sophomores in the re-made receiving corps. Mason Holt, the younger brother of former Red Bay standout Reed Holt, flashed big-time potential in the Tigers' spring scrimmage back in May, catching half a dozen passes from Bragwell and finding the end zone twice. He'll start at X-receiver. Alex Kennedy, who finished second on the team in tackles last season as a freshman linebacker, is now expected to be an impact player on offense, too, as a versatile tight end. The 6'1, 215-pound Kennedy broke out in the spring game with seven receptions and obviously possesses the size and strength to help out in the run game as well.

"He's big enough to block, and he can catch the ball," Jackson said in July. "He can do it all. We're expecting him to be a real dual-threat tight end for us, which is something we haven't had in a while. He's had a really good summer."

Hunter Burks, another sophomore, is also in the mix at receiver, and the Tigers can bring the thunder at the H-back/fullback spot with a pair of sophomores in 6'1, 241-pound Cam McKinney and 6'1, 225-pound Logan Scott.

Offensive Line

Red Bay returns four starters up front, none more valuable than senior left guard Elijah Ingle. The 5'11, 250-pound Ingle is matched only by Bragwell in terms of experience, leadership and the other intangibles he brings to the table as a three-year starter on both sides of the ball.

"[Ingle] has been one of our best linemen for years," Jackson said. "Him and Kolby do all the talking. They're the two guys who handle all the interviewing and stuff like that, and they do a really good job. This is the first time I've had two seniors who pretty much handle all of that. It's not divided up among a bunch of guys—they speak for everybody."

Junior Dylan Hester (5'11, 240) is back to anchor the middle of the line after starting all 10 games at center last season. Junior Levi Raper (6'0, 180) has shifted over to right guard after starting at tackle a year ago. Returning starter Caleb Seeley (a 5'10, 240-pound junior) and newcomer Noah Haines (a 6'3, 240-pound senior) will man the tackle spots in 2018, with sophomore Connor Sides serving as a utility lineman capable of plugging in at any of the five spots.

The Tigers averaged just 23.0 points per game last season, down from 27.9 per game in 2016 and 40-plus per game in 2014 and 2015. Part of that drop-off may have resulted from a slower tempo necessitated by an overall lack of depth. With better depth in 2018, Jackson expects to see his offense pick up the pace again.

"[Depth] shows up primarily in the fourth quarter, but it also shows up in the tempo of the game," Jackson said. "Our tempo is a lot faster now than it was last year. At one time last year, we were playing twelve guys on offense and twelve on defense, and our tempo was thrown off. If we can increase the number of kids getting out there, that'll help with everything."

Defensive Line

Red Bay runs a split 4-4 scheme on defense, and Ingle returns to anchor the interior of the line

Red Bay's 2018 Schedule (with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/24	vs. C. Heights	10-4 (won 6 of last 7)
8/31	at PCHS	15-3 (won 12 straight)
9/7	at Hatton*	18-0 (won 22 straight)
9/14	at Addison*	2-3 (won 2 straight)
9/21	at Belmont	9-3 (won 6 straight)
9/28	OPEN	
10/5	vs. Sheffield*	4-2 (lost 2 straight)
10/12	vs. Colbert Co.*	N/A (last met in 1961)
10/19	at Tanner*	4-9 (lost 5 straight)
10/26	vs. Tharptown*	4-0 (Total points: 233-21)
11/1	vs. Wilson	1-2 (last met in 2012)

*-Class 2A, Region 7 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

Week 0	at C. Heights	L, 6-14
Week 1	at Tharptown	W, 53-7
Week 2	at Mars Hill*	L, 24-26
Week 3	vs. Hatton*	W, 32-30
Week 4	vs. Belmont	W, 24-7
Week 5	OPEN	
Week 6	at Lamar Co.*	L, 12-21
Week 7	vs. Sheffield*	L, 28-35
Week 8	at Sulligent*	L, 7-35
Week 9	vs. PCHS*	W, 22-20
Week 10	vs. Cherokee	W, 22-14

Record: 5-5 (2-4 in Class 2A, Region 8)

Points per game: 23.0

Points allowed per game: 20.9

*-Class 2A, Region 8 opponent

alongside 6'2, 350-pound senior tackle Devin Nichols. Kennedy, who came on strong as a freshman last year with 45 tackles over the final five games, has made the switch from inside linebacker to defensive end, where he'll start opposite fellow sophomore Logan Scott.

Hester, junior Dakota Vinson and Tyler Murray are also expected to rotate in along the D-line.

Linebackers

McKinney earned All-Area honors from the *Free Press* as a freshman in 2017 after recording five games with double-digit tackles—including a career-high 18 against Sheffield in Week 7. He closed on a high note with 11 tackles and an interception in the Week 10 win over Cherokee, finishing the season with a team-high 101 stops.

Now that Kennedy has moved down to defensive end, McKinney will be joined at inside linebacker by Gavin Edgeman, a 5'9, 180-pound sophomore. Jackson said Kennedy will still see occasional snaps at linebacker when he's not lining up at end. Senior Tanner Nichols (5'10, 160) returns at outside linebacker, with junior Jake Pounds (5'7, 160) at rover and Hunter Burks providing depth.

Defensive Backs

The secondary should be a strength for Red Bay, with Bragwell (51 tackles last season) providing a veteran, physical presence at safety and Jalen Vinson (32 tackles, two interceptions) shuffling between safety and corner. Colyn Humphries will man the other corner spot, with sophomores Kiser Jackson and Hunter King providing depth.

Specialists

Hunter King will kick field goals and PATs, with Bragwell handling the punting duties. Kennedy will once again serve as the long snapper.

"He does an excellent job snapping," Jackson said. "He's one of the best snappers I've ever coached."

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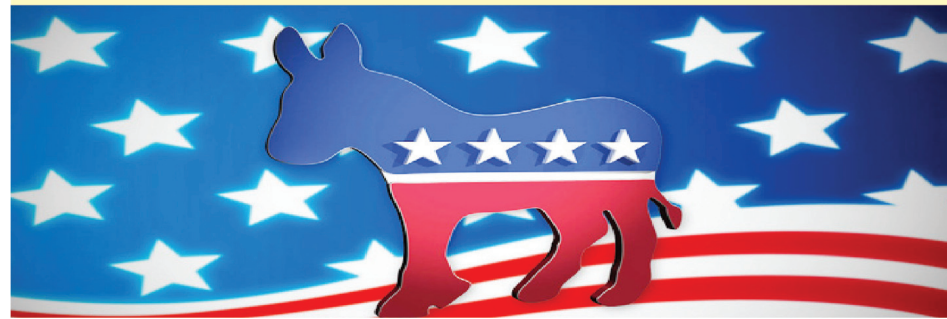
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Tharptown Wildcats

Head Coach: Kevin Lacey* (third season at Tharptown)

Record at THS: 3-17 (3-9 in region play)
Career record: 3-17 in two seasons
Playoff appearances: None
Previous head coaching stops: None

Assistant Coaches

Marc Tracy - DC (Offensive/Defensive Lines)
Gary Gunderman - Special Teams, Receivers
Thomas Horton - Running Backs/Linebackers
Joseph Brown - Receivers/Defensive Backs

*-Lacey serves as Offensive Coordinator and QB coach

Positional Preview:

Quarterbacks

Carson Petree has taken the bulk of the snaps at quarterback over the past two seasons, but Lacey has expressed a desire to utilize the quick and athletic senior as a playmaker at other positions this season. Tharptown lacks proven weapons at the skill spots, further necessitating a move by Petree to either receiver or running back in the Wildcats' flex-bone, double-wing offense.

"Carson's a great quarterback when it comes to running the football, and he's great at running the offense," Lacey said. "At the same time, he also knows he's not a true quarterback when it comes to the passing game. Carson's a strong receiver who runs good routes and gets open. He would definitely help us on the receiving end. He's quick, too, and we'd like to utilize more of his speed."

"The quarterback's job in the offense is to distribute the ball. We're trying to find more ways to get him the ball without him taking the snap."

Whether or not the Wildcats are able to accomplish that depends greatly on the development of junior Yovani Gomez, who has been splitting reps at quarterback with Petree this fall after playing receiver as a sophomore in 2017.

"Those two guys are taking all the reps at quarterback right now," Lacey said during the first week of fall practice. "We're still working it out, looking at both of them."

Running Backs

Leading rusher Peyton Price graduated in May, leaving the door open for a new featured ball carrier to emerge this season. Petree is a candidate, along with fellow senior and converted receiver Luis Macias.

"Luis was a receiver for us last year, but now we're moving him over to be our primary running back," Lacey said. "He's looked really good so far."

Tharptown has better depth and more options on the offensive line than at the skill positions, which has allowed Lacey to move former O-lineman Ruben Alfaro to fullback. The rugged junior will split time there with freshman Blake Daily.

"He played fullback for us last year at the end of the year," Lacey said of Alfaro. "He's a big, stocky kid, and he runs hard."

Wide Receivers

The Wildcats are young and thin at receiver, which is why Petree's playmaking ability would be so welcome on the perimeter. Daily could also see time at split end, according to Lacey. The head coach is high on the potential of sophomore tight end Nathan Lucas, who is emerging as perhaps the team's most reliable pass catcher.

"He's got really good hands," Lacey said of Lucas. "By the end of the year last year, he was one of our primary guys. He's a big kid, and he's learning more of the offense. He got more playing time toward the end of the season. He really came along."

Offensive Line

The Wildcats may be "hunting for skill guys," as Lacey put it, but he likes the depth his team has in the trenches. Sophomore Travis Staten, who started at tackle last season, now anchors the line at guard, and 6'4 senior Evan Franks has made the move from tackle to guard.

Freshman Tyler Amos leads a tackle rotation that also includes junior Eric Espinosa and freshmen Bryson Wilkins and Gabe Compton.

"Tyler Amos is probably 6'3, 6'4, and he's gotten stronger over the summer," Lacey said. "As he develops, we expect him to really become a big, strong kid."

Defensive Line

Nathan Lucas, Tyler Amos and junior Cody Palmer will all see time at defensive end in Tharptown's 4-4 front. Seniors Alex Flores and Alex Matias are part of a rotation at defensive tackle that also includes Gunner Lane and Evan Franks.

Linebackers

Travis Staten, who played some defensive end last season as a freshman, has moved to outside linebacker, where he'll start opposite Blake Daily. Ruben Alfaro and Eric Espinosa will handle the inside linebacker spots.

Defensive Backs

There is plenty of experience and playmaking

Tharptown's 2018 Schedule (with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/24	vs. SCS	1-8 (0-4 at home)
8/31	OPEN	
9/7	at Sheffield*	N/A (never met)
9/14	vs. Colbert Co.*	N/A (never met)
9/21	vs. Tanner*	N/A (never met)
9/28	vs. Brilliant	1-1 (last met in 2009)
10/5	OPEN	
10/11	at Hatton*	0-4 (shut out last three)
10/19	vs. Addison*	0-2 (last met in 2011)
10/26	at Red Bay*	0-4 (out-scored 233-21)
11/2	at Vina	3-8 (won 3 of last 4)

*-Class 2A, Region 7 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

Week 0	vs. PCHS	L, 6-54
Week 1	vs. Red Bay	L, 7-53
Week 2	at SCS*	W, 38-28
Week 3	vs. Hackleburg*	L, 17-48
Week 4	OPEN	
Week 5	vs. Lynn	L, 0-39
Week 6	at Waterloo*	L, 3-35
Week 7	vs. Phillips*	L, 0-48
Week 8	at Cherokee*	L, 0-70
Week 9	vs. Vina*	L, 7-14
Week 10	at DHCA	L, 0-55

Record: 1-9 (1-5 in Class 1A, Region 8)

Points per game: 7.8

Points allowed per game: 44.4

*-Class 1A, Region 8 opponent

ability on the back end, with Carson Petree and Luis Macias locking down the corner spots and Yovani Gomez patrolling the middle of the field as the starting safety.

Petree and Macias are part of a senior class that Lacey said has handled its leadership role well.

"We've got a really good senior group. I've really gotta brag on them," he said. "This is the most positive senior group we've had. They're really doing a good job working with the underclassmen."

Lacey said Tharptown had 28 players out for fall practice in grades 7-12.

"The numbers are getting better every day," Lacey said early on in fall practice. "The first few days went really well. We had good energy. We've got more players out everyday."

"By the time the season starts, we'll definitely have everything set and ready to go."

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Vina Red Devils

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Head Coach: Jason Harris*
(second season at Vina)

Record at Vina: 1-9 (1-5 in Region 8)
Career Record: 1-9 in one season

Assistant Coaches

Terry Swinney (Offensive Line/LB)
Talon Thomas (Receivers)
Ben Guin (Offensive Coordinator)
*-Harris is Defensive Coordinator

Positional Preview:

Quarterbacks

Junior Braden Moomaw, who played receiver last season, has made the switch to quarterback and will take the snaps in Vina's old-fashioned, Power-I offense. Harris said Moomaw, who is taking over for departed senior Blake Hardin, made major strides this summer as he continued to adapt to his new position.

"This is his first year playing quarterback for us, and it's gonna be a learning process," Harris said. "He got better as the summer went on. In the spring game [against Hatton and Phil Campbell], he did okay. It was his first time to play quarterback, and he was a little green. But when we went to a seven-on-seven at Waterloo in June, it was amazing how much he had improved."

Running Backs

Vina is ready to roll in the backfield

with a trio of experienced options. Senior Jacob Lewis is healthy again after going down midway through the 2017 season with a knee injury. He'll team with fleet-footed junior Jackson Landers, who rushed for more than 300 yards in last year's 60-58 shootout loss to Shoals Christian, to form a dynamic duo at tailback.

"Jackson had a really good year for us last year," Harris said. "He carried the load after Jacob got hurt, and he did a really good job of it. He's really fast. He's still kind of learning the position, so I expect him to be even better at it this year."

Harris said Lewis's recovery from knee surgery has gone well.

"He seems like he's a little quicker, actually, and he's definitely stronger."

Isaac Harper, a 250-pound senior, will once again see time at fullback—particularly in short-yardage and goal-line situations—when he's not lining up at one of the guard spots on the offensive line.

Wide Receivers

Senior Chance Kennedy is Vina's most experienced receiver, and newcomer Glen Ashley—a 6'1 sophomore—is also expected to make an impact in the passing game.

Sophomore Elijah Whitfield didn't

play last season, but Harris expects the 6'1, 220-pound tight end to make a big impact as both a blocker and a downfield receiver.

"He's gotten a lot faster since he played in our junior high program," Harris said. "He'll be involved in the passing game as well."

Offensive Line

This young but experienced group returns every starter from last season and is the strength of the entire team, according to Harris.

"They're pretty athletic, and they've gotten quicker also," the coach said. "We're expecting a lot of good stuff out of our guys up front. They blocked really well in the run game last year, and they've kind of been the workhorses around here this summer. We went back to some old-school weight lifting, and they have gotten so much stronger."

"They've got really good size, and they're pretty athletic. Most of our O-line guys play basketball and baseball, and they're pretty good at it. They're the heart and soul of this football team. Our offensive line guys are our leaders, without question."

Harper (6'2, 250) and sophomore Zack Davidson (6'0, 220) will handle the guard spots, with plenty of help from 6'3, 290-pound senior Kyler Blackburn. The tackle spots belong to 6'3, 315-pound junior Nash Humphres and 6'0, 220-pound sophomore Dawson Miller. Junior center Shannon Upton (5'10, 200) is back to anchor the middle of the line.

Defensive Line

With a roster of 27, the Red Devils will have to employ more than a few players on both sides of the ball. The limits of endurance figure to be tested, especially in the early-season heat and humidity.

"We worked really hard on our conditioning this summer," Harris said. "We had a few to quit, and one of the factors was because of the conditioning we were doing. But the ones that have been here for it and stuck with it are gonna be a lot better because of it. We've really put an emphasis on conditioning around here."

Zack Davidson and Elijah Whitfield will start at defensive end in Harris's 4-3 scheme, with Kyler Blackburn and Nash Humphres manning the interior of the line at defensive tackle. Harris also expects newcomer Scott Presley, a junior who did not play last season, to provide a different look at tackle and to disrupt things in the opposing backfield with his quickness off the ball.

Linebackers

Isaac Harper is back to anchor the front seven at middle linebacker, with Jackson Landers and Dawson Miller flanking him at the outside 'backer spots.

Defensive Backs

There is experience on the edges, where seniors Jacob Lewis and Chance Kennedy will man the corner spots, and youth in the middle, where sophomore Glen Ashley and eighth-grader Nate Stidham are expected to be the starting safeties.

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Vina's 2018 Schedule
(with record vs. opponent since 2000)

Date	Opponent	Record since 2000
8/24	vs. Marion County	N/A (last met in 1993)
8/31	at Brilliant	1-7 (Vina is 4-18 all-time)
9/7	vs. Phillips*	2-16 (lost 13 straight)
9/14	at Cherokee*	0-6 (lost 10 straight)
9/21	at Phil Campbell	0-2 (lost 8 straight)
9/28	OPEN	
10/5	vs. Mars Hill*	1-1 (Vina W by forfeit in '16)
10/12	at Waterloo*	6-5 (lost 2 straight)
10/19	vs. SCS*	2-13 (lost 2 straight)
10/26	at Hackleburg*	1-15 (lost 14 straight)
11/2	vs. Tharptown	8-3 (lost 3 of last 4)

*-Class 1A, Region 8 opponent

2017 Schedule and Results

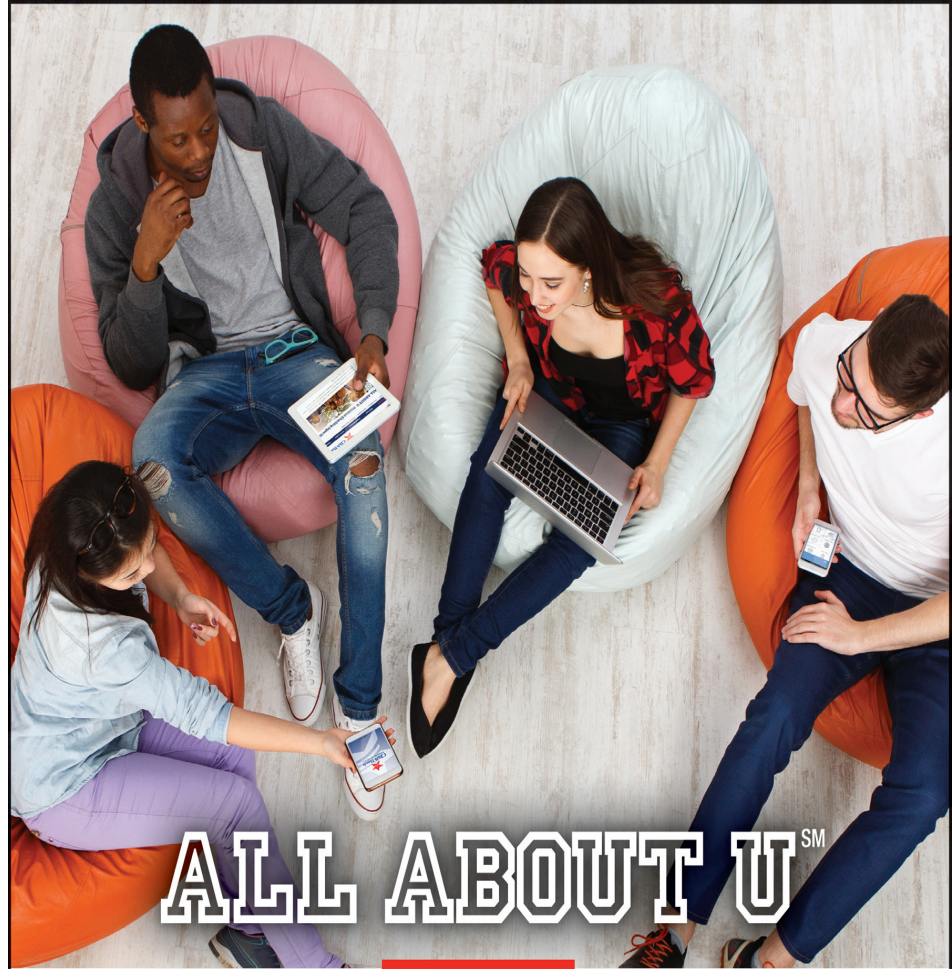
Week 0	at Mars Hill	L, 0-48	Record: 1-9 overall (1-5 in Class 1A, Region 8)
Week 1	vs. Brilliant	L, 12-14	
Week 2	vs. Waterloo*	L, 22-42	Points per game: 15.2 Points allowed per game: 37.7
Week 3	at Phillips*	L, 6-32	
Week 4	vs. Cherokee*	L, 0-35	*-Class 1A, Region 8 opponent
Week 5	vs. Meek	L, 14-47	
Week 6	at ASD	L, 20-50	
Week 7	at SCS*	L, 58-60	
Week 8	vs. Hackleburg*	L, 6-42	
Week 9	at Tharptown*	W, 14-7	

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Go Teams.

No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers



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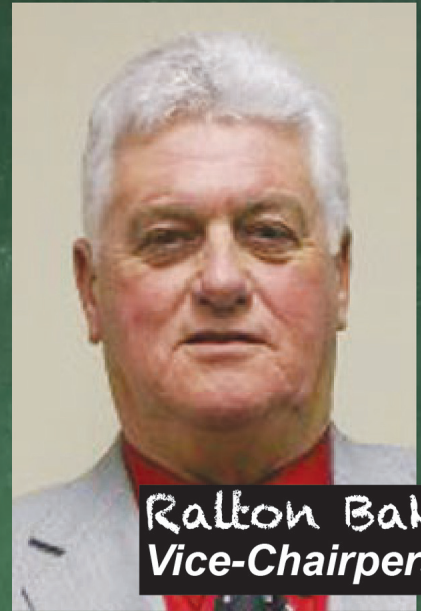
Good Luck to All County Teams!



Greg Hamilton
Superintendent



Mike Shewbart
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Ralton Baker
Vice-Chairperson



Terry Welborn
Board Member



Shannon Oliver
Board Member



Pat Cochran
Board Member

2018-19 Important Dates

Sept 3: Labor Day
Oct 18: School 1/2 Day
Oct 19: Fall Break
Nov 12: Veteran's Day
Nov 19-23: Thanksgiving
Dec 19: School 1/2 Day

Dec 19-Jan 4: Christmas
Jan 3-4: Teacher
In-Service Day
Jan 7: Students Return
Jan 21: Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day

Feb 18: President's Day
Mar 25-29: Spring Break
Apr 22: Teacher Work Day
Students Off
May 23: Last School Day
May 23-24: Graduations