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Russellville, AL 35663

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09.05.18

## Nickels, family celebrate one-year milestone in Russellville

Brady Petree  
Franklin Free Press

Lee Nickels has known for a while that being in the insurance business was something he would be extremely well suited for. After all, Nickels' dad was in the insurance business for the majority of his life.

However, the one thing Lee did not know is where exactly he would be working and what company he would be selling insurance for.

Last week marked one year since Nickels set up shop in Russellville as a certified agent for State Farm  
See 'NICKELS,' Page 8



COURTESY PHOTO

Local State Farm agent Lee Nickels and his wife Mary (not pictured) have four children (from left): Harrison, age 6; Jacob, age 2; Callie, age 8; and Sadie, age 4. The Nickels are expecting their fifth child in November. Last month, Lee celebrated the one-year anniversary of his family's move to Russellville.

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## Substation project 'on schedule'

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Favorable summer weather has work on schedule for the new industrial substation for the Russellville Electric Board.

The substation, located at 490 Walnut Gate Road next to MS Industries II, LLC, will provide a backup source of electricity to Russellville in case of a catastrophic event like the April 27, 2011 tornadoes.

The new substation will be 30 MVA, 161 KV/12.47 KV with seven feeder breakers and associated feeder regulators.

According to Russellville Electric Board manager Charles Canida, the project is "on track and schedule," and is projected to be completed and operational by spring of 2019.

"The concrete piers and platforms have been bored for the transformers and structural steel that will go in them," Canida said. "If the weather doesn't turn crazy on us

between now and then, we should be okay with the spring completion date."

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The project will require distribution line improvements/additions to include 0.4 miles of single circuit improvements/additions as well as 4.3 miles of double circuit improvements/additions. The project's estimated cost is \$6,640,000.

The new substation was part of a five-year plan the  
See 'SCHEDULE,' Page 8

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**Phillip Dwight Broadway**, Russellville, age 46  
Died Sunday, August 26, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel.  
Interment in Jonesboro Cemetery.

**Bruce Duff**, Phil Campbell  
Died Monday, September 3, 2018. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville was assisting the family.

**Cavylene McLemore Keller Hawkins**, Phil Campbell, age 76  
Died Saturday, September 1, 2018. Visitation will be held from 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday, September 5, 2018 at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Funeral will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, September 6, 2018 at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment will be in Liberty Hill Cemetery.

**Demaris Pace Jones**, Russellville, age 80  
Died Monday, August 27, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel.  
Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

**Jewell Nale**, Russellville, age 91  
Died Sunday, September 2, 2018. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Pinkard Funeral Home was directing.

**Rammie T. Oden**, Tuscumbia, age 95  
Died Tuesday, August 28, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in Bond Cemetery.

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# Wilson Dam considers opening up tours again

Brady Petree  
Franklin Free Press

Tours of the Wilson Dam in Florence (pictured below, bottom left) were a popular attraction for tourists and local residents alike. Class field trips were often taken to see the dam and go on the tours, and people young and old enjoyed the history and science behind the massive structure.

However, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the tours were shut down due to safety concerns. Although there has been hope that the tours may resurface again one day over the past 17 years, there has been no luck. Until recently.

TVA and the Wilson Dam opened up for three guided tours this past summer, in which tourists had to be approved and screened before being allowed to enter into the dam. The premise of the three tours was to serve as a trial run in an effort

to try and reopen the tours, potentially, to the general public in the future.

Each tour consisted of about 15-20 participants, and while the tours were not as extensive as ones from years ago, the tour guides made sure to give an in-depth look at the dam as best they could.

Participants were taken down to the third floor of the dam and shown the generators and turbines (pictured below, bottom right) that help power most of the Tennessee Valley. Then they were taken up to see the control room (pictured below, top right) and auxiliary room (pictured below, top left), which maintain the water level and make sure the temperature on the turbines are right.

Construction of Wilson Dam began in 1918 and was completed in 1924, which was the same year it began to operate and provide power. Once completed, the dam would stand at 137 feet high and span 4,541 feet across the Tennessee River, with

a total cost of around \$47 million.

Inside of the dam rests 21 generating units with a net dependable capacity of 663 megawatts, providing more than 350,000 homes with power across northwest Alabama.

Over the six years that Wilson Dam was being constructed, 59 people died while helping build the dam. Contrary to urban legend, however, no one was buried alive inside of the dam, according to the tour guides.

At the end of each tour, the participants were asked to take a survey about their experiences. If the general consensus is that the tours were a success, that will lead to the likelihood of more tours being added in upcoming years.

For updates regarding the possibility of future Wilson Dam tours, information regarding previous tours, or if you want to know more about the dam in general, visit [www.tva.gov](http://www.tva.gov).



# Reaching out to help

I saw something today. That seems rather nondescript, admittedly, but what I saw made my day and served as a reminder that, as a rule, people are good.

Several weeks ago, we ran an article about a local woman who was living in difficult conditions in a local apartment complex. She's tried for two years to get repairs done so her apartment could become livable, but up until recently, with no success.

The lady has an autistic son, and the two of them were relegated to the den and kitchen of their two-bedroom apartment because of an infestation of bedbugs and flooding.

The good news is apartment management finally came through on its promise to move her to a different apartment. That didn't solve every problem, but it was a big step.

Back to the point of this column...

Several readers of the *Franklin Free Press* were impacted by the lady's plight. I had some calls and many comments of support from folks wanting to help.

But sometimes good intentions remain just that—intentions.

I'd like to tell you about the actions of another lady in Russellville, one who will remain nameless because

that's the way she wants it.

After she read about the lady and her son and their problems, this reader reached out to Rep. Robert Aderholt's office to see if the congressman could look into the situation, as the apartment complex is federally funded.

Additionally, she wrote a heartfelt card of support letting the lady know there were many prayer warriors lifting her up along with her son.

She enclosed two crosses in her hand-written card that she delivered to my office last week after she asked if I would get the card to the lady.

And by the way, the card also contained \$500 to help the lady and her son through this difficult time.

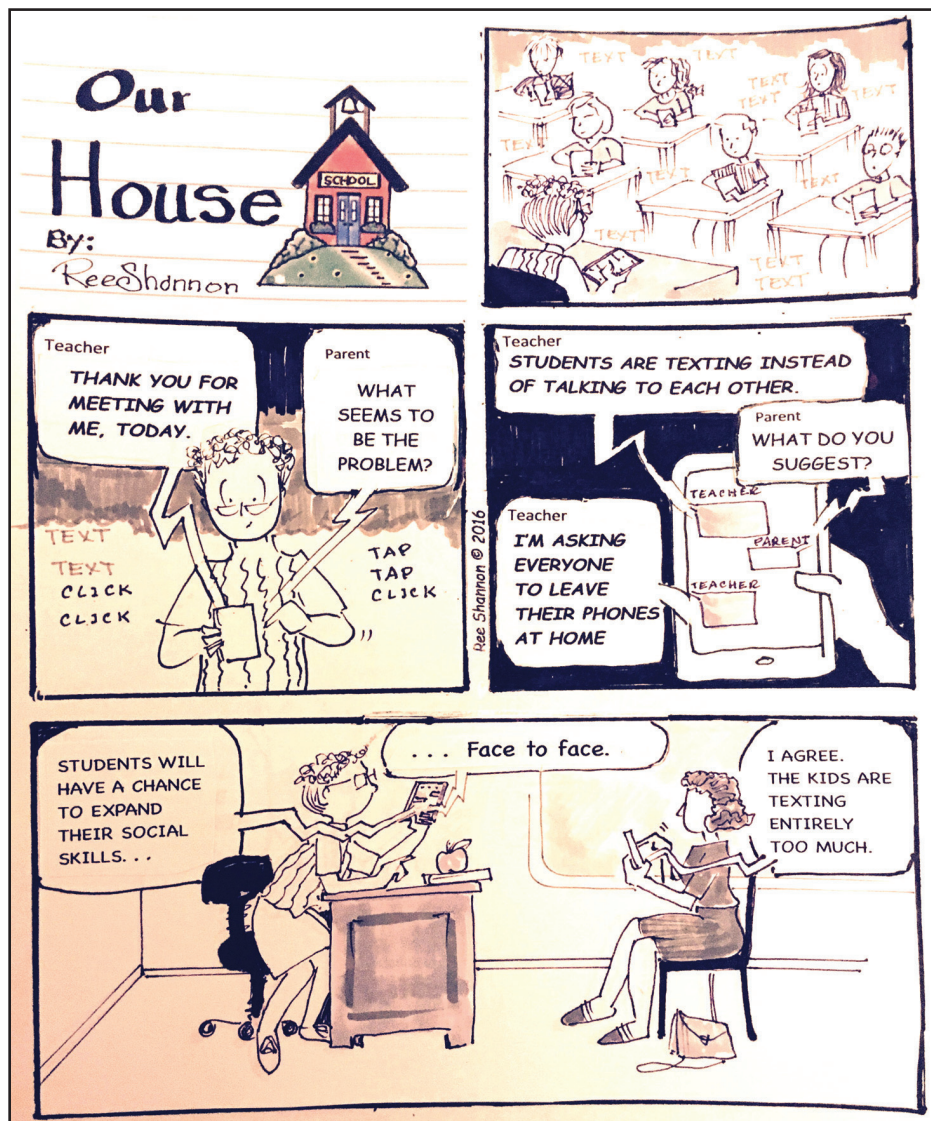
As the lady read the card, her eyes filled up with tears. Her voice cracked as she grasped the reality that someone (a complete stranger) cared so much about her family to reach out with words of support as well as monetary support.

"Please tell whoever she is, God



**John Pilati**  
Publisher

See 'HELP,' Page 9



## FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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### Letters to the editor

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

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# Who wants to be a millionaire?

So, you want to become a millionaire. You know your goal, but maybe it seems too far off in the distance, too improbable, too unattainable, for an everyday person like you to reach. You've seen the success stories on TV, but those people inherited their money, had high-paying jobs or hit it big with the lottery. Maybe you find yourself thinking: If only I were that lucky.

Well, I've got good news for you. You can become a millionaire—and it has nothing to do with your family's money or your education. It has everything to do with you.

If you follow these principles, you'll be on your way to becoming a millionaire. Are you ready?

#### •Steer Clear of Debt

From cars to clothes to houses to jewelry, you can get a loan for pretty much anything nowadays. There's this idea floating around our culture that you should get what you want the moment you want it. Get it now, pay for it later. And pay more later.

But hear me say this: Debt is quicksand to your financial dreams. Every time you buy something on credit, you're digging a deeper hole for yourself. That money you're sending to lenders is money you could be putting toward your future!

Take the average car loan, which has a monthly payment of \$523 and a term length of five years and nine months. If you were to invest \$500 a month for five years instead, you could have \$40,000. And look at this: If you invested that \$40,000 for another 20 years, you could have almost \$270,000! Now where's that car in 25 years? Most likely in a junkyard.

#### •Invest Early

In addition to steering clear of debt, investing early can help you become a millionaire.

If you start putting away \$300 a month beginning at age 25, you could reach millionaire status by age 60—and be sitting pretty on a \$2 million nest egg come retirement (age 67). That's just \$300 a month! If you waited until age 35 to start investing, you'd have to put away \$800 a month to hit the million-dollar mark by age 60.

Let's look at it a different way.

If you invested \$300 a month for 40 years (age 25 to age 65), you could have \$1.75 million. If you invested that \$300 a month for 30 years instead (age 35 to age 65), you'd only have \$651,400. You'd have to work an extra 10 years (to age 70) to hit \$1 million. And you'd have to work until age 75 to hit \$1.75 million.

#### •Get Serious About Your Savings

If you want to become a millionaire, the percentage you invest is just as important as the actual act of investing.

The average personal savings rate in the U.S., including retirement savings and emergency funds, is 5.5 percent. If we apply that percentage to the median household income of approximately \$59,000, it works out to \$3,245 a year or around \$270 a month. Invested over 30 years, assuming a 10 percent rate of return, that money could turn into \$586,256. That number looks great, right?

It might, until you find out the average couple will need \$280,000 for medical expenses in retirement, and that doesn't include long-term care. If you subtract that amount from your investment total, you'd only have about \$306,000



**Chris Hogan**

See 'MILLIONAIRE,' Page 9



**Need life insurance with no dependents?**

Dear Dave,  
I'm 35, single, and I have no dependents. Do I need a life insurance policy?

Larry

Dear Larry,  
In your situation, if you have enough cash saved up to pay your final expenses—and you don't have any debt—there's no reason for you to carry a life insurance policy. No one will be harmed financially by your death, and no one would be deprived of the income that would be lost if something unexpected happened to you. Even if you have a mortgage on a home, the house will normally sell for enough to pay off the mortgage.

However, if you have debt, or if you don't have some money stashed away in savings, you might want to consider an inexpensive term life insurance policy. At your age, if you're healthy, you can get \$100,000 worth of coverage for just \$10 to \$15 a month.

Remember, you don't buy insurance to leave an inheritance. You buy life insurance to make sure there's enough money to take care of your family and final expenses. You wouldn't want your parents or someone else having to foot the bill!

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.*

**Paying off credit cards**

Dear Dave,  
How do you feel about taking money out of savings to pay off credit cards?

Peggy

Dear Peggy,  
I'm okay with this under two conditions. One is that you cut up the credit cards, close the accounts, and never use those things again. The second is that you don't wipe out your savings in the process. Leave something in there, so you're covered in the event of an emergency. Then, rebuild your savings as fast as possible once the debt is out of your way.

You have to understand, too, that credit cards aren't the problem. The credit card debt isn't the problem, either. They are just symptoms of buying things you don't need, with money you don't have, in order to impress people.

Take a long look in the mirror, Peggy, because the person who's looking back at you is the problem. Overspending, disorganization, not earning enough...whatever label you want to slap on this situation, you are the reason for the problem.

Once you understand and accept that, and you start living on a budget and staying away from debt, you'll have taken your first real steps toward financial peace!

Dave

Please send your letters to the editor, guest columns, cartoon panels and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

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What's Happening

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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 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!

At First Fridays in downtown Florence on September 7, there will be a Johnnie Taylor Tribute featuring T.J. Hooker Taylor (son of the legendary Johnnie Taylor) and entertainment from Kozmic Mama, Rue Davis and Judy Toney. Doors open at 7 p.m. Show starts at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Advance tickets may be purchased at Nu Way Records, Singing River, Ingas Lashes, Counts Brothers and Coldwater Books.

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guest Spooner Oldham at the Roxy Theatre in Russellville this 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.

Starting on September 9, Russellville FUMC will host a men's and women's Step Study on Sundays from 3-5 pm. A step study guides you through a process of discovery and recovery over your hurts, hang-ups and habits. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts in Red Bay announces its 2018-2019 season, starting with The Clock Struck Twelve by James Reach as the first production. The play will be presented November 8-11, 2018, and auditions will be held this Sunday, September 9 at 2 p.m. and Monday, September 10 at 7 p.m. at Community Spirit Bank's Weatherford Centre in Red Bay. Auditions will consist of cold readings from the book. The cast consists of four men and five women, with older teenagers able to play adult parts. The play will be directed by Georgia Jeffreys. The remaining productions for this upcoming season are The Seven Year Itch by George Axelrod (February 14-17, 2019), They'd Hang You in Nashville by William Gleason (April 25-28, 2019) and Finders Creepers by Donald Payton (June 20-23, 2019). The board of directors for the upcoming season includes: Chairman-Mark Richardson, Vice-Chairman-Stacy Stepp, Secretary-Mary-Elizabeth Moore, Treasurer-Tina Smith, Wally Hellums, Matt Hester, Amanda Young, Carol Murphree, Hannah Jackson, Rhett Jackson, Abbey Jones, Ethan Ray, Randy Mink, Sharon Page Strickland, Jerry Self and Joey Allen. You may contact Beth Hammock at 256-356-9286 for information on group sales.

For anyone with the courage to be honest about life's hurts, habits and hang-ups, First United Methodist Church of Russellville will host Celebrate Recovery! on Tuesday nights with supper at 6 p.m., large group at 6:30 and small groups at 7:30. Free childcare provided. Church is located at 311 North Jackson Avenue. Come and join us!

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.

The annual Red Bay Founder's Fest is set for Saturday, September 15, with contests, sidewalk sales and live music. The day-long event kicks off with the Queen's Train Ride at 8:30 a.m., featuring the winners from the beauty pageant that will be held on September 9 at Red Bay High School. Live music cranks up at 9 a.m. There will be a contest to see who has the best fried pie entries, with the best tasting, most unusual and best decorated taking home cash prizes. There are a variety of other contests for festival goers to participate in, including a buck dancing contest, quilt contest, coloring contest, photography contest, fiddling contest, corn hole tournament and a BBQ cook-off. Additional activities will include arts and crafts and an antique car-truck-motorcycle-tractor show. The Red Bay Museum will be open for tours, and many of the merchants will offer sidewalk sales, specials and door prizes throughout the day. A variety of delicious festival food will be available, and another crowd favorite are the giveaways. Prizes will be awarded to the largest family, longest distance traveled to the event, and youngest and oldest attendees. Bay Tree Park is located near 2nd Street in downtown Red Bay. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call Tracie Clark at 256-356-4473, ext. 3.

# What's Happening

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

**A**ttention 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.

**T**he 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 will be served.

**E**ast Franklin Volunteer Fire Department will be serving William Earl Bishop's smoked chicken and pulled BBQ pork plates from 4-7 p.m. on Friday, September 21. Proceeds will be used to purchase residential 911 address signs. The fire department is located at 10443 Hwy. 81, Phil Campbell, AL 35581. Plates cost \$10 each. Thank you for your support!

**T**he fifth annual "Run for Their Lives" 5K/1 Mile Run/Walk is set for Saturday, September 22 at McFarland Park, Shelter #1 in Florence. 5K starts at 9 a.m. One Mile start is 9:15 a.m., and 10:30 a.m. is the start time for the Pet Costume Contest. Well-behaved pets who are up-to-date on shots are encouraged to participate. Register online at [runfortheirives.itsyourrace.com](http://runfortheirives.itsyourrace.com). For more information, call 256-810-1965. The event benefits H.A.S.R.A., the Heart of Alabama Save Rescue Adopt.

**T**he Tharptown Volunteer Fire Department will host a gospel concert with Jeff and Sheri Easter on Saturday, November 10 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville High School Auditorium. Jeff Sanford from Decatur will be the opening performer. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 5-12 years old. Children under 5 will be admitted free. Please come out and join the Tharptown VFD for this special event.

**T**he 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.

**T**he 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.

**M**ountain 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.

**N**ew 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.

**T**OPs (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.

**V**illage 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!



**Russellville First United Methodist Church**

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6:30 Large Group  
7:30 Small Groups



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## 'SCHEDULE' from page 1

Russellville Electric Board prepared at the direction of the Tennessee Valley Authority. That plan included construction of a back-up substation that could service the entire city of Russellville in the event of a storm or some other emergency situation that might interrupt operations of the Tom Pace Substation on South Jackson Avenue.

"This new substation will be capable of supplying the whole town as well," Canida said. "The two substations will be tied together. We can split our system if we tell it to do that. It's likely we'll do that on larger customers to give them better reliability as well.

"CertainTeed [Saint Gobain], MS Industries II and G&G Steel can run off that new substation. We'll likely have part of our load on each substation; at least that's our plan right now."

Financing for the new substation was consolidated with the remaining \$2 million bond issue

already in place for renovations at the Tom Pace Substation.

"We took that money and financed it in with the new substation, and we obtained a lower interest rate," Canida said.

The land for the substation was deeded to REB from the Russellville Industrial Development Board after MS Industries II agreed to release the two square-acre tract.

"The idea for the substation resulted from discussions among our board after the storm damage from the tornado that devastated Hackleburg and Phil Campbell," Canida said. "The storm was so close to Russellville that if it had tracked just a few miles further north Russellville could have been severely impacted.

"If something happened to the existing Tom Pace Substation, it could possibly be weeks or months before electricity could be restored to Russellville."

## 'NICKELS' from page 1

Insurance. Nickels was born in Columbus, Mississippi and lived for 10 years in Horn Lake, Mississippi, in a county of about 180,000 people. Transitioning from a county with a population nearly five times that of Franklin County has been a major adjustment for Nickels and his family.

"It's definitely a different atmosphere than where I'm from," Nickels said. "The toughest thing, I think, for us in terms of making adjustments has been the social aspect of things. The shopping, dining, and things like that."

Nickels graduated from New Hope high school in Mississippi in 1998 and went on to receive his bachelor's degree from Mississippi State University in 2003. He and his wife of 12 years, Mary, have four children named Callie, Harrison, Sadie and Jacob, with another little one on the way.

Nickels worked for a few different companies, including New York Life Insurance as an associate, before making the switch to working for State Farm. After working for State Farm for a few years, Nickels knew that this was the company in which he wanted to attempt to move up.

"I have always been on the business-minded side of things, and I tried to look for the place that would be the best investment for my family and me," Nickels said. "After working with State Farm for a few years, I decided that this is where I want to work, and I knew they would treat me right."

From October of 2011 to February of 2017, Nickels served as an agent team member before going into training to become a Sales Agent himself. According to Nickels, there are three ways that a State Farm agent gets their start: They can either take over once an agent passes away, once an agent retires, or if the company decides on a new location for a new agent to open up. Once he completed his training, Nickels was assigned to Russellville to take over once longtime State Farm agent Gus Garrard decided to retire.

Before he was assigned to open up his own office in Russellville, Nickels said that while he

had not heard of the town before that moment, he was excited to move forward to a new chapter in his and his family's life.

"I was an approved State Farm candidate for about a year-and-a-half, and once you become approved by State Farm you get access to a website that details where exactly there are openings," Nickels said. "I had honestly never heard of Russellville before I saw the opening here. You can't just go where you want to go; you have to go where there's an opening. But at the same time, my wife and I wanted to keep it relatively close to our family in Mississippi, and Russellville seemed like the perfect spot for us.

"So far that's been right."

**"When you have to put everything behind you and move to a new place to start up your business, it can make you nervous," Nickels said. "But everyone here in Russellville has been extremely kind to not only me but also my family and my staff as well, and we are just so appreciative of everyone that has allowed us to help them over the past year. We look forward to many more years here in Russellville."**

On August 1, Nickels received confirmation that he was now under a permanent contract to remain with State Farm after he and his staff posted fantastic numbers over the past year. According to Nickels, State Farm takes a couple of things into consideration when they look into extending permanent contracts to agents. Some of the things they take a look at are performance reviews, overall numbers for the year and determining if the agent has learned to overcome objections as well.

Nickels said that if it had not been for the great work by his staff, achieving the important milestone would not have been possible.

"My team has done tremendous work this past year in getting us to where we needed to be in order for us to get that contract," Nickels said. "Marilyn Hutto is my office manager, and

Jesse McLain and Lucy Berryman are my account managers. They have done an awesome job for our office this past year."

One thing that a lot of people tend not to know about Nickels and his staff is that while they do offer your basic insurance packages like home, auto and life insurance, they offer other services as well. Some of the other packages they offer are home mortgages, auto loans and Medicare supplements. According to Nickels, he is also in the process of getting approved to help people with their investment planning. Nickels encourages anyone looking for help in starting their 401K or other investment plans to go by and see him to get started.

The reception that Nickels has received since coming to Russellville has been an outpouring of support that, according to him, has been a tremendous boost to him and his family.

"It's been a tough journey getting to this point where I am at now, and when you have to put everything behind you and move to a new place to start up your business, it can make you nervous," Nickels said. "But everyone here in Russellville has been extremely kind to not only me but also my family and my staff as well, and we are just so appreciative of everyone that has allowed us to help them over the past year. We look forward to many more years here in Russellville."

While his family, staff and the people of Russellville have been very supportive of him, Nickels says that without God none of this would have been possible.

"I just want to give thanks to God, because without the Lord in my life I would be nothing. The power of Jesus Christ is amazing and what compels me to move forward in life," Nickels said. "The most important thing to me is to run a Christian business the way the Lord wants us to and just do our best to serve him. To me that is the most important thing, showing the love and kindness that our Lord and Savior would want us to show. Without him, none of this would be possible."



# Bevill State president named in lawsuit

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The battle over the reasons for a proposed downsizing of workforce development programs at Bevill State Community College has spilled over into Marion County Circuit Court, with the filing of a complaint by the newly formed Legislative Advisory Task Force for Education.

Although Bevill State President Dr. Kim Ennis's plan to eliminate the four federal/state grant-funded workforce development programs was scrapped after it was met with public outrage and objection from Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow (D-Red Bay), questions remain over why Ennis originally decided to eliminate the program and what information she based the decision on.

The civil complaint was filed August 29, 2018, in Marion County Circuit Court, against Ennis and Jimmy H. Baker, in his capacity as the Alabama Community College Systems Chancellor. The plaintiffs are seeking information pursuant to the Alabama Open Records Act contained in a report Ennis said was conducted that showed eliminating the programs to be in the college's best interests.

Morrow, through multiple correspondences with Ennis, requested a copy of the report, as did the task force. To date, none of the requested information has been tendered to either Morrow or the task force.

The courses that were set to be eliminated

included machine tool technology, drafting design engineering and vehicle technology and repair. According to a press release from Bevill State spokesperson Tana Collins, the decision was "strategic and data-driven based on quantitative data over several years."

The programs were set to be discontinued at the Hamilton campus, based on their no longer being effective in training students with industry standards to get jobs in those fields, even though the same programs would still have been offered at the Sumiton campus.

Morrow asked specifically for a copy of the "study" that was done, which formed the basis of Ennis's action.

"Through my investigation, I was told not one school board official or industrial leader in our area was contacted as part of your study," Morrow said in a May 21, 2018 letter to Ennis.

"This was nothing but an effort to build the Sumiton campus up at the expense of Hamilton," Morrow said. "And I'm not going to stand for that. Bevill State at Hamilton is too important to this area to allow this to happen."

After a May 22 statement that saw Bevill State officials reverse their decision, Sen. Larry Stutts (R-Tuscumbia) released a statement about his efforts to ensure the workforce programs at Bevill remained intact. Stutts said he worked with officials, including Scott Hunt and Jeff Lynn, to overcome financial issues related to the college.

In their complaint, members of the Legislative Advisory Task Force allege they contacted Stutts on May 10, 2018, and requested his involvement in verifying such "study/report" existed and to investigate and help prevent closure of the courses. Plaintiffs allege they received no response or help from Stutts, and the same was true with their requests for assistance from Gov. Kay Ivey, Sen. Greg Reed (R-Jasper) and Alabama State Board of Education District Seven representative Jeff Newman.

Another issue raised by both Morrow and the task force is whether Ennis had legal authority to eliminate courses that were federally funded through grants. After more than 90 days with no response, the task force members moved forward with the civil complaint.

Specifically, the relief sought by the task force is that the court order the defendants to make the requested records available and award them their costs and attorney's fees incurred in the matter.

"I am glad to see that the Task Force is taking this initiative," Morrow said. "After no response from my inquiries, and theirs as well, I look forward to whatever is discovered in the process. In my opinion this clearly falls under the Open Records Act, and I hope that the court will see it the same way." The lawsuit was filed by Hamilton attorney Tony Glenn, who represents the task force.

No response or answer has been filed by the defendants as of the publication of this article.

## 'HELP,' from page 4

bless her, and she'll never know how much she means to my son and me," the lady told me.

People do nice things every day. But in this case, as Paul Harvey used to say, what's important is the rest of the story.

The lady who sent the card has some serious health problems of her own. She is confined to a wheelchair and requires oxygen to breathe. She doesn't leave home much these days, and she's

resigned to the fact that her health likely won't improve.

This lady didn't want any notoriety for her kind action. She asked only that we deliver the card for her.

So many people in today's world are quick to complain and bemoan their plight in life while they remain oblivious to how blessed they truly are. This makes the lady's actions all the more

special. Instead of feeling sorry for her situation, she reached out to help another, asking nothing in return.

I saw something today. And it reminded me not to be too cynical. It reminded me there are really people out there who put the needs of others ahead of their own.

To her I say thank you, and may God bless you as you have blessed others.

## 'MILLIONAIRE,' from page 4

left. Can you live off that for two decades? It ends up being only \$15,300 a year.

Let me give you a much better scenario. If you invested 15 percent of that \$59,000 income, you would be putting away \$8,850 a year or around \$737 a month. Over 30 years, that could grow to \$1.6 million, assuming a 10-percent return. And if you waited just five more years, you'd be sitting on over \$2.3 million. That beats \$15,300 a year!

### •Increase Your Income to Reach Your Goal Faster

When I talk about how to become a millionaire, people often say, "But Chris, I don't make that much money. I can't save enough." Let's get something straight here: You don't need a six-figure salary to become a millionaire. However, if you're crunching the numbers and realize you still can't put away the recommended 15 percent, you do need to increase your income so you can.

How do you do that? You can get a job that pays more. You can take on a second job temporarily. Or you can get training to increase your skills, demand and earning potential.

For example, let's look at the field of nursing. You can become a Nursing Assistant (CNA), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN) or an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN). Each of those jobs requires a dif-

ferent level of training and testing, and their salaries all vary. An LPN makes around \$45,000 a year, while an RN makes around \$70,000.

When you increase your skills and expertise, you can increase your salary.

### •Cut Unnecessary Expenses

As you work toward becoming a millionaire, you also want to make sure your money is being spent with intention. So, sit down and evaluate your expenses regularly. Look at your budgets from previous months to see where money may be leaking or where you could cut expenses. That's money you could be investing and putting toward your 15 percent.

Remember, you control your expenses. You may not dictate how much you're charged per watt of electricity, but you control the thermostat!

### •Keep Your Millionaire Goal Front and Center

The steps to becoming a millionaire run counter to most people's behavior, which means you'll see friends and family going places, doing things and buying stuff. And if you focus on what they're doing, you could be in trouble financially. Just this year, a study showed that 57 percent of Millennials said they spent money they hadn't planned to because of what they saw on social media. And 88 percent of them, along with 71

percent of Gen Xers and 54 percent of Baby Boomers, believe social media creates a comparison problem.

We live in a comparison culture. We buy stuff we don't need to impress people we don't even know. Who are you trying to impress? Seriously. It's a good question to ask yourself when you're tempted to buy something you don't need. The people I know who have become millionaires didn't get there by playing the comparison game. They stayed focused on their own goals and didn't worry about what other people were thinking or doing.

Here's my challenge to you: Instead of obsessing over what you don't have, focus on the valuable but intangible gifts in your life—family and friends; your church; work that matters; the legacy you'll leave your children. Those will bring you much greater and longer lasting joy than a new car or a destination vacation. And know that it's okay to still enjoy stuff. Just make sure it doesn't derail your larger plan to become a millionaire!

Chris Hogan is a #1 national best-selling author, dynamic speaker and host of *The Chris Hogan Show*. You can follow Chris Hogan on Twitter and Instagram at @ChrisHogan360 and online at [chrishogan360.com](http://chrishogan360.com) or [facebook.com/chrishogan360](http://facebook.com/chrishogan360).



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Garage/Moving Sale this Friday & Saturday, September 7-8 from 7 am-4 pm at 360 Cedar Ridge Estates (off CR 49 - Belgreen), 1997 Pontiac Firebird, book cases, display cabinets, pictures, antique metal bed frame, Halloween, DOD, Christmas, GWTW music box, couch and chair, lots of misc.

Attention!! Big community yard sale

this Friday & Saturday, Sept. 7-8 on Hwy. 49 in Belgreen. Turn right at Hwy. 187 in Belgreen & watch for signs. Lots of families going all the way to the lake. You don't want to miss this one!

HUGE Five Family Yard Sale. Saturday, Sept. 8 6 a.m.-until. 605 Witt Store Road, Russellville. Take Hwy. 48 10 miles from Hwy. 43. Look for signs. Hundreds of name-brand clothing, name-brand shoes, purses, rugs, comforters, home décor. Bradley smoker, men's stuff and MORE!

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Record Collection for sale. 150 albums, all still in covers. Will take \$3/apiece for them. Also have more than 100 45

rpm records. Will take 50 cents apiece for them. Call 256-398-8158. (3)

Camper for sale. 2006 KZ Jazz. 26 feet, Sleek 6. Needs some TLC. \$5,000 OBO. Call 256-291-7151. (3)

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## Five local establishments earn satisfactory ratings

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Each of the five Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of August 20-24 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.

The five 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 Big Star Supermarket #345, 406 4th St. NW, Red Bay.

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

- Vina Convenience, Inc., 7454 Hwy. 19, Vina, 88. (spray bottle of degreaser not labeled).
- Parade Food Mart, 4141 Hwy. 24 East, Red Bay, 91. (No backflow preventer on outside hose).
- Piggly Wiggly Market #93, 518 4th Ave. SW, Red Bay, 93. (Leak in freezer dripping on food).
- Weatherford Centre, 303 4th Ave. SE, Red Bay, 97.

Of the 31 inspections done in Colbert County from July 30-August 3, no restaurant scored below the satisfactory range.

The high score for the week in Colbert County was 99, scored by several locations including Malones General Store #2, 350 New Bethel Road, Tuscumbia, and Colbert Heights Elementary School, 1551 Sunset Dr., Tuscumbia.

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

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## Week 2 in the SEC

Last week's record: 3-1  
Year to date: 3-1

**Saturday, September 8**  
**Miss. State at Kansas State**

Did Nick Fitzgerald just get Wally Pipp-ed? It's doubtful, but he best hurry back. With Fitzgerald suspended for the Bulldogs' opener against Stephen F. Austin, backup QB Keytaon Thompson stepped in and threw for 364 yards, ran for 109 and accounted for seven TDs in a 63-6 rout. If nothing else, Thompson makes for a good insurance policy if Fitzgerald suffers any lingering effects from last year's ankle injury or gets hurt again.



**Mike Self**  
Sports Editor

Kansas State's 27-24 win over South Dakota did not inspire much confidence. I like Mississippi State, regardless of who's playing quarterback. Furthermore, you heard it here first: The Bulldogs and Auburn will both be 5-0 when they meet in Starkville on October 6.

**The Pick: Miss. State 34 Kansas State 21**  
**Georgia at South Carolina**

I've been on this one as an upset pick for weeks. Apparently, the folks in Vegas are unwilling to climb out on the limb with me, seeing as how they installed the Bulldogs as nearly double-digit favorites to begin the week. But I'm not backing down now.

Deebo Samuel was productive in his return to the field for South Carolina on Saturday, and Jake Bentley looked sharp as a tack. But the most encouraging development for the Gamecocks was the 263 rushing yards they racked up at a 6.9 per-carry clip. Of course, that was against Coastal Carolina, and Georgia is not Coastal Carolina.

Still, if you're going to get the Bulldogs, get 'em now before a retooled defense has a chance to gel. Plus, South Carolina seems to always play Georgia tough—particularly in the Rooster's Nest. I've got Georgia going 11-1 and winning the East, but the Gamecocks will rule the roost for at least one day.

**The Pick: South Carolina 27 Georgia 24**  
**Clemson at Texas A&M**

Might we see two major upsets by SEC teams on Saturday? No, we mightn't. But A&M did look good last Thursday under Jimbo Fisher. The offense has plenty of skill talent, but the challenge for the Aggies will be blocking Clemson's loaded defensive line.

The Tigers look dynamic on offense as well. The guess here is that hot-shot freshman Trevor Lawrence overtakes Kelly Bryant as the starting quarterback at Clemson before hot-shot freshman Justin Fields does the same to Jake Fromm at Georgia.

**The Pick: Clemson 31 Texas A&M 20**  
**Kentucky at Florida**

Now that Dan Mullen has taken over in Gainesville, the Wildcats may have missed their window of opportunity to beat Florida—something they haven't done since 1986.

**The Pick: Florida 38 Kentucky 17**

# Starting fresh



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW  
**ZAYE HELLO** - Boyd announced his return to Russellville with 227 yards from scrimmage and five touchdowns, including this 34-yarder on the game's opening play.

## A collection of new (yet familiar) playmakers delivered Russellville a thrilling win over rival Deshler in new head coach John Ritter's debut

*Mike Self*  
*Franklin Free Press*

**RUSSELLVILLE** - Since taking over as Russellville's new football coach this past spring, John Ritter has gone out of his way time and again to express how humbled and grateful he is to be part of a program as rich in tradition and community support as the Golden Tigers. When Ritter says Friday nights in Russellville are special, he's not just waxing poetic. He means it.

Ritter's passion for not only preserving but also perpetuating Golden Tiger lore was plain to see in the immediate aftermath of his first game at RHS, a thrilling 40-34 double-overtime win over rival Deshler on what turned out to be one of the more special Friday nights Russellville has seen in quite some time. With his team's seventh straight home win over Deshler secured and last year's 35-3 loss to the Tigers in Tusculumbia thoroughly avenged, Ritter could contain himself no longer.

After the two teams met at midfield for handshakes and a post-game prayer, Ritter dashed toward the home stands and bounded up the steps two at a time, not stopping until he reached

the section of seating where band director Jeremy Willis was preparing to lead the RHS Marching Hundred in the playing of the school's alma mater. Ritter gripped Willis's shoulders from behind and spoke to him briefly before stepping back, proverbial torch raised, to soak in the moment as the band began to play.

**"It's good. I think he gets everybody going," McNutt said of Ritter and his enthusiasm. "I feed off it, personally. It makes me go harder."**

Later on Friday night, Willis said he was surprised but also pleased by Ritter's impromptu appearance.

"It was totally fine with me," Willis said with a smile. "I've never had that happen before."

Senior quarterback Lucas McNutt, who threw for 124 yards and a touchdown in the win over Deshler while also making a handful of critical plays with his legs, talked afterward about the infectious nature of Ritter's enthusiasm.

"It's good. I think he gets everybody going," said McNutt, who hooked up with senior receiver Devin Buckhalter on a 16-yard scoring strike in the first

## 'FRESH' from page 13

OT. "I feed off it, personally. It makes me go harder."

According to Ritter, his post-game dash was all about inclusion and appreciation.

"Our goal is expanding on the tradition here and taking football to another level," said Ritter, whose two previous head coaching stops included a two-year stint at Red Bay and a three-year run at West Morgan. "We want the culture of our program to stay positive, and we want to make sure everybody's pushing in the same direction—including all the other people who make Friday night what it is. The band and cheerleaders do a phenomenal job for us, and a lot of times they don't get as much appreciation or praise as they should get. They're very influential in the atmosphere we want to create."

It's much easier, of course, to create such an environment if the team is holding up its end of the bargain on the field, and the Golden Tigers (1-0) certainly did that against Deshler. Despite trailing by a touchdown on three separate occasions, Russellville rallied to tie the game early in the fourth quarter on a 61-yard burst by senior tailback Zaye Boyd and then walked off with the win when Boyd scored his fifth touchdown of the night from two yards out in the second overtime.

Ritter was asked on Sunday what he was most proud of following Friday's win.

"Our effort," he said. "We played so hard from start to finish, from the opening play [a 34-yard touchdown run by Boyd] to the last play three hours later. Our effort was that of a bunch of guys who are very hungry, very passionate and just relentless in the way we play. There were a couple of times we could have folded up. There were multiple opportunities where something went wrong and our kids could have not kept fighting. We had some bad breaks go against us, but the kids never hung their heads."

"I was proud of the way we followed through and made plays in overtime when we had to have them. It was refreshing to see that, to see our guys overcoming adversity."

To their credit, the visiting Tigers (0-2) overcame some challenges of their own, the most significant of which occurred when senior quarterback

Channing Marmann (who had already thrown for 106 yards and a touchdown while rushing for 79 yards on eight carries) sustained a leg injury while being tackled at the end of a 32-yard run late in the first half. Marmann, a preseason All-Area selection by the *TimesDaily* and the triggerman for Deshler's potent spread offense, was carried off the field by two teammates and was later seen making his way to the visiting locker room on crutches. He would not return to the game.

**"We played so hard from start to finish," Ritter said, "from the opening play to the last play three hours later. Our effort was that of a bunch of guys who are very hungry, very passionate and just relentless in the way we play."**

With Marmann out, the Tigers picked up just one first down on their first two possessions of the second half and punted twice. Trailing 21-14 midway through the third quarter, Russellville took possession at the Deshler 44 and put together a game-tying drive—one made possible in large part by a pair of clutch plays from McNutt, who came back out for the team this season after not playing football since his freshman year.

Facing a fourth-and-two from the 36, the fleet-footed QB kept the ball himself on a zone-read play and charged ahead for three yards to move the sticks. Half a dozen plays later, the Golden Tigers found themselves facing a critical fourth-and-eight from the Deshler 10.

"It was supposed to be a screen play," McNutt said on Sunday, "but they clogged it up in the middle. I was actually trying to sprint out and throw, but I didn't see anything there. So I just took off."

If McNutt's athleticism is his greatest tool, his toughness is a close second. With a sea of Deshler defenders between him and the line to gain, McNutt made his way to the five and then spun off a would-be tackler before falling forward to the one for a gain of 10 and a must-have first down. The scramble was reminiscent of a two-point conversion from earlier in the night, another play on which McNutt improvised and out-raced multiple defenders to the left pylon for a game-tying score.

"Lucas McNutt, that joker....he's a winner," Ritter

said on Sunday. "He's a gutsy, gutsy player. He's fifty percent passing [officially 10-for-19] in the first game he's ever played in as a varsity player, in that atmosphere, in an environment like that, and he makes those two runs. On the two-point play, [Deshler] played it perfectly. The play broke down, and Lucas just used his legs to make something happen. On the fourth-and-eight, they had a guy slide off a block and close the window, and Lucas scrambled to his right, which is what we teach him to do. Then instinct just took over after that."

"Having a quarterback who's an athlete and can run like he can puts that much more pressure on a defense."

Said McNutt of his fourth-and-eight conversion, "You've gotta want it more than the other team. I felt like I wanted it more in that situation."

On first-and-goal from the one, Boyd scored his third touchdown of the night, and Kenner Perez added the extra point to tie the game 21-21 with 1:21 left in the third. For the third time on the night, however, the visiting Tigers answered a Russellville touchdown with one of their own, driving 69 yards in seven plays and going back in front 28-21 on an eight-yard run by senior back Kam Pritchard with 10:43 left in the game.

The lead didn't last long.

On Russellville's very next play from scrimmage, McNutt handed the ball to Boyd, who broke multiple tackles and then jetted down the left sideline before carrying a defender the final ten yards or so into the end zone for an electrifying 61-yard touchdown run. Perez drilled another PAT, and the game was tied 28-28 with 10:20 remaining.

"He's a man," McNutt said of Boyd, who finished the night with 23 carries for 185 yards and five touchdowns while adding two receptions for 42 yards. "When he gets going, he's hard to stop. We need him to perform like that every week."

Boyd essentially did just that back in 2016, when he rushed for 1,401 yards and scored 25 touchdowns as a Golden Tiger sophomore. He played last season at Lawrence County before returning to Russellville late this summer. In his first game back in the Black and Gold, he totaled 227 yards from scrimmage on 25 touches (including TD runs of 34, 6, 1, 61 and 2 yards), but Ritter was more impressed by what he saw from Boyd when he wasn't toting the rock.

"I like what I saw when he didn't have the ball, when he was pass-protecting and blocking," Ritter said. "We ran the jet a couple of times and a reverse with Devin, and Zaye is a key blocker on those plays. He and K.J. Hamilton, our fullback, did a phenomenal job in pass protection on our sprint-outs."

"Zaye is a good football player, and he did a lot of great things with the ball in his hands. But what he did when he didn't have the ball in his hands tells you the type of teammate he is."

Only three of Boyd's 23 carries on the night resulted in negative yardage, but one of those came on the first play of overtime. After an incompleteness and a false start, the Golden Tigers were facing a third-and-goal from the 16-yard line. As they had done virtually all night, the Tigers left senior corner Andre Poe—their top cover man—singled up on Buckhalter, Russellville's most dynamic receiver.

"I don't know why they single-covered him," McNutt said, "especially in the red zone."

McNutt and Buckhalter had failed to connect on a fade route on the previous play, but the Golden Tigers went right back to the well—with a little more room to work with following the false-start



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

**SPECIAL DELIVERY** - Wylie Boyd's 42-yard punt return set up a second-quarter touchdown and was one of a handful of big special teams plays by the Golden Tigers.

## 'FRESH,' from page 14

penalty. McNutt's third-down toss was on the money, and Buckhalter out-fought Poe for the football in the right corner of the end zone, hauling in a 16-yard score that made it 34-28.

"I just threw it up," McNutt said. "We've got players who can make plays, and Devin is one of them. I think he just made a better play on the ball."

Deshler blocked the extra point, however, leaving the Golden Tigers hanging on to a precarious six-point lead. Russellville's defense was one play away from a game-winning stop when backup quarterback Nick Whitten (a sophomore lefty who played the entire second half in place of the injured Marmann) somehow squeezed in a throw to a well-covered Hayden Stutts for a nine-yard touchdown.

Suddenly, the Tigers were an extra point away from leaving Golden Tiger Stadium victorious for the first time since 2004. But junior kicker Jose Rocha, perfect on four PATs to that point, missed on number five, and the game continued to a second overtime.

As it did throughout much of the night from the second quarter on, Russellville's defense held and forced Deshler to attempt a 24-yard field goal. The Golden Tigers blocked the kick, coming up with their fourth key special teams play of the night. [They also got a 39-yard return from sophomore Rowe Gallagher on the game's opening kickoff to set up a touchdown, a 42-yard punt return by senior Wylie Boyd in the second quarter to set up another score, and a blocked punt in the third quarter by sophomore Ashaad Williams.]

"We put a lot of emphasis on special teams," Ritter said. "We had some huge returns tonight by Rowe and Wylie, and Ashaad blocked a punt. That's a phase of the game we put a big emphasis on. You can win a game in a hurry on special teams, and you can lose a game in a hurry on special teams. Hopefully that'll be something going forward we can use to our advantage."

In position to end the game with a score on their second OT possession, there was little doubt as to what the Golden Tigers were going to do.

"We feel good about our offensive line," Ritter said of a group that includes sophomore left tackle Edgar Amaya, senior left guard Will Rushing, junior center Jonathon Vargas, senior right guard Herson Rodriguez and junior right tackle Noah Pounders. "From the ten-yard line, we were gonna run it four straight times."

Only two attempts were necessary. Boyd ripped off an eight-yard gain on first down, and then Ritter sent in Russellville's heavy package to seal the deal. The heavy package, called "12-gauge," features 290-pound nose guard Andres Tomas at wing back, physical senior Gage Cook (whom Ritter refers to as "the roughest son of a gun on this team") at fullback and an extra lineman along the offensive front.

"When we brought in our 12-gauge package, I knew it was gonna be Power Right," McNutt said. "I don't see anybody stopping that when we're on the two-yard line."

Deshler didn't. Boyd plowed into the end zone for his fifth touchdown of the night, giving the Golden Tigers a huge season-opening win.

"I think a lot of people were doubting us," McNutt said. "Deshler is one of the toughest teams on our schedule, so to beat them really helps us. It felt good. It was a little bit of a release, a lot of excitement."

"They hadn't beaten us at home in fourteen years, so I wasn't gonna let that happen my senior year."

Buckhalter finished with seven catches for 73 yards and a touchdown in his first game since 2016 [he missed all of last season with a broken foot]. As a team, the Golden Tigers rushed 35 times for 217 yards, totaling 341 yards of offense.

Pritchard ran for 130 yards and two touchdowns on 28 carries for Deshler, and Stutts caught five passes for 98 yards and two scores. The Tigers threw for 164 yards and rushed for 222 on 41 carries, totaling 386 yards of offense.

The Golden Tigers now turn their attention to this Friday's Class 5A, Region 7 opener on the road against Corner, the first meeting ever between the two teams. The Yellow Jackets (1-1) have split their first two games of the regular season, losing 26-25 to Northside and then routing Oak Grove 56-13 last week.

"Corner is very big. They've got a good-looking bunch," Ritter said. "They have a new coach [John Clements] and a bunch of kids out. They're very similar to us. They two-platoon. They're very multiple on offense. They go from two tight ends and two receivers to five wide, and they do a lot of motioning and shifting. It'll be a test for us defensively on Friday night, getting lined up, getting the call and then executing it."

"Offensively, we're gonna have to keep executing and doing what we do. The game plan doesn't change. We're gonna try to run the football and take advantage of what they give us in the passing game. We've gotta improve each week."

"Beating Deshler was huge, but Monday morning at 9:15 when we start practice, we're 0-0. We can't experience a hangover from the Deshler game and have it cost us an opportunity to be 1-0 this week."



### Zaye Boyd Senior RB, Russellville

Boyd returned to Russellville with a bang, rushing for five touchdowns last Friday in a 40-34 double-overtime win over Deshler.

Back at RHS after spending his junior year at Lawrence County High School, Boyd ran for 185 yards on 23 carries (including TD runs of 34, 6, 1, 61 and 2 yards). He scored from 34 yards out on the Golden Tigers' first play from scrimmage, and his two-yard TD run in the second OT ended the game. Boyd also caught two passes for 42 yards, giving him 227 yards from scrimmage on the night.



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PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

**COOL HAND LUKE** - In his first career varsity start, McNutt (19) threw for 124 yards and a touchdown while also converting a pair of key fourth downs (and a two-point conversion) with his legs.

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# 2-0 Red Bay headed to Hatton for region opener

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

Watching film of Hatton over the weekend, Red Bay coach Michael Jackson couldn't help but marvel at the sheer size of the Hornets' offensive line.

"They're very big up front," said Jackson, whose team will travel to Hatton for its Class 2A, Region 7 opener on Friday. "They average 290 [pounds] across the front, and three of them are over 300."

According to a couple of different rosters online, Jackson isn't too far off in his appraisal. The Hornets are huge up front, led by linemen like senior Eddie Smith (5'11, 320), junior Gage Saint (6'5, 270), junior Mason McMillan (6'1, 286), junior Michael Arthur (6'2, 295) and senior Landon Parker (6'0, 250), among others. Asked if he had ever seen a Class 2A team with a line that big, Jackson just chuckled.

"No," he said. "I've never seen a 5A team with a line that big."

Hatton (1-0) is putting all that size to good use, too. Operating out of the



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

**STEPPING UP** - After rushing for 85 yards and two scores in the opener against Colbert Heights (above), Bragwell (4) took to the air last week and threw for 147 yards and two touchdowns in a rout of Phil Campbell. Vinson (opposite page, 10) is Red Bay's leading receiver thus far with five catches for 119 yards.

Wing-T under new offensive coordinator Jarrod Helms, the Hornets piled up 366 yards rushing last week in their season opener and whipped West Morgan 36-14—despite having no fewer than four starters miss the game due to injury.

"They're a very big and physical team," Jackson said, "and they're doing some things to take advantage of that. They're running the Wing-T now, and it fits them good. They beat West Morgan bad last week, and they went up and down the field on Lawrence County in a jamboree game the week before. I bet they had 250 yards rushing against them."

"They're strong, extremely strong. You can tell they've done a good job in the weight room."

Last week in the win over West Morgan, sophomore back Jaxson Mitchell led Hatton with 137 rushing yards on 19 carries. Senior Bryce Fretwell added 121 yards on 11 attempts, and Brandon Reed rushed 10 times for 85 yards (including a 44-yard touchdown).

"Their backs are very quick," Jackson said. "They've got one running back returning from last year who's really talented with a lot of speed, and two of their sophomores—those little scat-backs in the Wing-T—are pretty skilled, too."

At a sturdy 6'3 and 230 pounds, Fretwell is one of several non-linemen for the Hornets who are physically imposing in their own right, along with senior tight end Zachary Logston (6'3, 219) and junior linebacker Kaiden Taylor (6'0, 245).

"It's amazing to me," Jackson said. "They have 28 players [in grades] nine through twelve, and of those 28 I bet 17 of them weigh over 200 pounds."

The Tigers, of course, have some size of their own. Senior Elijah Ingle (5'11, 250) anchors the line on both sides of the ball; defensively, he plays on the interior next to 6'2, 350-pound senior tackle Devin Nichols. Sophomore ends Logan Scott (6'1, 225) and Alex Kennedy (6'1, 215) are young but strong, and the same can certainly be said for sophomore inside linebacker Cam McKinney (6'1, 241). Offensive linemen Dylan Hester (5'11, 240), Caleb Seeley (5'10, 240) and Noah Gaines (6'3, 240) all have good size, and even quarterback/safety Kolby Bragwell checks in at 6'1, 215.

Jackson said Red Bay (2-0) will have to be ready to handle the Hornets' offensive attack—both physically and mentally.

"The key for us is being able to get off blocks at the point of attack," he said. "The Wing-T is an offense where you play your keys—you don't play the ball. If you try to play the ball, you'll get lost in it. You have to play what you see and what you read. It's gonna be key for our guys to be disciplined enough to do that, and to hold them up at the point of attack."

"I feel pretty good about the matchups. They're basically playing most of their guys on both sides right now because of some injuries they've had. But we're still kind of young. We'll start eight underclassmen on both sides of the ball this Friday night. Of our front six that will have to stand up to that Wing-T, only one of them [Ingle] is a senior, and the other five are sophomores. They have been playing for a while, though."

The Hornets may have changed offensive systems during the off-season, but Jackson hasn't forgotten how well they threw the ball last year in a 32-30 loss to the Tigers at Fred Bostick Memorial Stadium.

"The Wing-T is a tough offense to defend, because you can stop them nine plays in a row and then have a breakdown on the next play and give up a big one," Jackson said. "But we also know they're pretty proficient in the spread. They threw the ball really well on us last year, so we have to prepare for that, too. They're in a situation where their personnel and the hiring of a new coach [Helms] on offense dictates what they run, but their kids also played in



## 'RED BAY', from page 16

seven-on-seven all summer. So that's a lot more work for us to do in our preparation."

Coordinator Jamie Purser's defense has been stingy thus far, allowing a total of just three touchdowns by opposing offenses in wins over Colbert Heights (34-18) and Phil Campbell (36-8) to start the season. The Red Bay offense, meanwhile, rushed for 323 yards in the opener before having more success through the air last week against the rival Bobcats. Bragwell threw for 147 yards on 6-for-11 passing, connecting on a pair of 29-yard touchdown tosses in the first half (one to sophomore receiver Jalen Vinson and the other to McKinney, who plays H-back on offense).

"We were able to use the pass last week to get [Phil Campbell] off the run game, and we hit them with some big plays," said Jackson, whose team has already topped the 30-point mark in as many games this season (two) as it did all of last season. "We're gonna have to do that some more this week. We're developing some young receivers. That'll definitely be a factor, if we can throw the ball a little bit, but we've gotta be able to run the ball, too, to control the tempo of the game."

Junior tailback Colbie King has topped the 100-yard mark twice already, rushing for a total of 217 yards on 33 carries. Bragwell ran for 85 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries against Colbert Heights, and Colyn Humphres has rushed for 117 yards and two scores on 23 attempts thus far.

Jackson also expects that the Tigers will have to withstand the best punch Hatton can muster Friday. The Hornets haven't beaten Red Bay since 1987, a streak of 22 consecutive losses. The two teams have been region opponents every year since 2000, and the Tigers have won all 18 of those meetings.

"Hatton plays us really well, no matter what," Jackson said. "The last two times we've been over to Hatton [a 30-7 win in 2016 and a 28-21 win in 2014, Jackson's first year at Red Bay], we've probably had the better football team both times, but it's always been a war down to the very end. I'm expecting the same thing on Friday, just because of how well they play at home and their dislike for Red Bay."

"It looks like we're gonna have to have a good mixture on offense," Jackson said. "Our offensive line is doing a really good job up front of getting on people. I feel good about us being able to run the ball. It's gonna be a physical game, and we've gotta be able to hold up to that."

Jackson also expects that the Tigers will have to withstand the best punch Hatton can muster on Friday night. The Hornets haven't beaten Red Bay since 1987, a streak of 22 consecutive losses. The two teams have been region opponents every year since 2000, and the Tigers have won all 18 of those meetings. The streak nearly ended last season, but Red Bay stopped a two-point conversion attempt by the Hornets in the final minute and then recovered an onside kick to escape with a 32-30 win.

"Hatton plays us really well, no matter what," Jackson said. "The last two times we've been over to Hatton [a 30-7 win in 2016 and a 28-21 win in 2014, Jackson's first year at Red Bay], we've probably had the better football team both times, but it's always been a war down to the very end. I'm expecting the same thing on Friday, just because of how well they play at home and their dislike for Red Bay."

The Tigers are opening region play with two straight challenging road



trips—this week to face a hungry Hatton team, and next week to Addison, where the Bulldogs had won 16 home games in a row prior to last week's 32-20 loss to Class 3A powerhouse Piedmont.

"We've got two big weeks back-to-back where we have to go to places that are hard to play at," Jackson said. "Those are two teams that are potentially playoff teams in our region, so we've got to be playing well. I felt good about how we played last week, but we've got to keep improving and keep building more depth. We found a couple more guys last week who can contribute on Friday nights, and that's a good thing."

"We've got two games behind us, but now we're starting region play. I was telling our coaches today, it might have been better being in 3A. We'd be 2-0 in the 3A region. Now we've gotta get in this region race, and it's gonna be a challenge."

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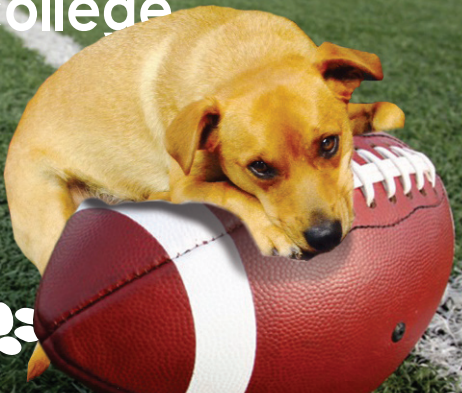


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<b>Kentucky at Florida</b>	<b>Florida</b>	_____
<b>Arkansas at Colorado St.</b>	<b>Arkansas</b>	_____
<b>UCLA at Oklahoma</b>	<b>Oklahoma</b>	_____
<b>Penn State at Pittsburgh</b>	<b>Penn State</b>	_____
<b>USC at Stanford</b>	<b>Stanford</b>	_____
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<b>Tiebreaker Score:</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>So. Carolina</b>
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# Rally falls short, but 'Cats forming an identity

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

This year's Colbert Heights team has already lost more games in the regular season than last year's team did, but head coach Taylor Leathers firmly believes that his reloading Wildcats are on the right track.

"I told our guys after the game the other night that we're not going 9-1," said Leathers, whose team dropped to 0-2 last Friday with a 41-27 loss on the road at Class 4A Wilson. "One thing we won't do is go 9-1, but we still control our own des-

tiny and we still control our own bid into the post-season. That starts with this region grind we're fixing to face. I love this group of guys we've got. They're very resilient, and they're growing by leaps and bounds each week. The team we took to Wilson was better than the team we took to Red Bay [in Week Zero], and that's what I'm looking for as a coach—does this team improve week in and week out?"

"Just from looking at them in fall camp and thinking about the inexperience and youth we have on the field, these guys are taking giant steps each week. They're pouring themselves out on the field

and competing their tails off, and we couldn't ask for anything more out of them."

Each of the Wildcats' first two games have followed a similar script. At Red Bay, they cut an early 16-0 deficit down to 16-12 to start the third quarter before the Tigers pulled away for a 34-18 win. Last week at Wilson, the Warriors jumped out to a quick 14-0 lead, but Colbert Heights again battled back. The 'Cats got a kickoff return for a touchdown from senior Braden McCaig for the second straight game and then pulled even at 21-21 when sophomore quarterback Carson Shaw scrambled for a touchdown on the final play of the first half.



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Senior linebacker Riley Fuller (32) and the Colbert Heights defense will try and slow down a Westminster Christian offense averaging 47 points per game through two weeks.

"It was a heckuva ball game," Leathers said on Sunday. "The final score was not indicative of the type of game it was. The resilience of this group has been very impressive. To get down early 14-0 against a quality opponent and a bigger school, that was really an opportunity for us to form our identity as a team. Are we gonna be a team that lays down when we get behind, or are we gonna continue to be fighters?"

"We were fighters at Red Bay, and we were fighters again last week at Wilson. It didn't go our way in the end, but we had several opportunities."

A critical call by the officiating crew went against the Wildcats early in the third quarter. With the score still tied 21-21, the Warriors muffed a punt deep on their own end, and Colbert Heights eventually recovered the football at the Wilson 3-yard line. Leathers sent his offense onto the field with the go-ahead score in their sights, but the officials ruled that there had been an inadvertent whistle on the punt-return play and awarded possession

## 'IDENTITY' from page 18

to the home team.

"That was a game-changing play," Leathers said. "People make mistakes, and the officials are only human—I understand that. But there were several other instances in the game where there were questionable no-calls. Twelve men on the field became a re-do as opposed to a penalty. A squabble with a couple of linemen turned into offsetting unsportsmanlike fouls. And the [inadvertent whistle] on the punt was the big one.

"I was disappointed in the officiating of the game."

That being said, Leathers acknowledged that his team failed to make the most of its opportunities to put one in the win column. Most glaringly, the Wildcats turned the ball over on downs twice inside the red zone in the second half, allowing Wilson to open up a 35-21 lead that proved too much to overcome.

"I told our players when we went in the locker room, I'm never gonna put the blame for the outcome of a game on the officiating crew," Leathers said. "Officials are human beings, and sometimes they don't always get it right. There were a lot of things we felt like were incorrect. But what we've gotta do as a team is understand how to respond to adversity in a game like this. Bad calls are gonna happen, and when they go against us we have to continue to play our opponent and overcome adversity with that.

"We had opportunities to win the game. When we have the ball down inside the ten and again in the red zone and turn it over on downs twice, it's on me as the head coach and as the play-caller for us not being able to score and take the lead."

**"We're forming an identity. We're learning who we are and what we're about,"** Leathers said. **"These guys are gonna fight. They're gonna continue to fight and not hang their heads, regardless of the score of the game. They're gonna give themselves a chance to win. It's been very encouraging to see how these guys have handled adversity and played with resiliency. We didn't catch a break last week, but they played their guts out."**

Colbert Heights did ultimately cut the lead to 35-27 in the fourth quarter when McCaig found the end zone on a long hook-and-lateral play, but an ensuing inside kick attempt failed. Wilson (1-1) tacked on a late touchdown and held on for its first win of the season.

The Wildcats, meanwhile, dropped to 0-2 heading into Friday's Class 3A, Region 8 opener on the road against Westminster Christian.

"We're sitting here at 0-2, getting ready to start region play with one of the best teams in the region, I believe, but for the second week in a row I keep talking about how positive it was," said Leathers, whose team came into the year looking to replace 18 seniors from the squad that won a school-record 11 games in 2017 and made the state quarterfinals for the first time in program history. "I'm proud of the way our guys fought throughout the entire game and gave themselves an opportunity to win. They continued fighting to the final seconds of the game, and that says so much about this team.

"We're forming an identity. We're learning who we are and what we're about. These guys are gonna fight. They're gonna continue to fight and not hang their heads, regardless of the score of the game. They're gonna give themselves a chance to win. It's been very encouraging to see how these guys have handled adversity and played with resiliency. We didn't catch a break last week, but they played their guts out."

The Wildcats will need a similar effort this week as they open region play against Westminster, which dropped down from Class 4A when the AHSAA reclassified late last year. Westminster is off to a 2-0 start, with high-scoring wins over DAR (58-33) and Madison County (36-20).

"I saw them on film for the first time this weekend," Leathers said. "One thing that jumps out to me is how few guys they have playing both ways. They really only have two guys going both ways. They're spot-playing four or five guys, but for the most part they're a two-platoon team. They've got a big sideline. You can tell they've been in 4A. There's a lot of participation over there.

"They're really impressive with the way they throw the football. Their quarterback is very talented as a passer, and they have good route-runners. They're disciplined, and they don't make a lot of mistakes. Usually, when they go up for a football, they come down with it. There are not a lot of drops in the passing game. There are a lot of completed balls, and the running game is efficient. They're a well-oiled machine."

A Wildcat defense that has yielded 75 points in two games will have to be sharp on Friday night, particularly on the back end.

"I think our secondary is gonna be pivotal in this game," Leathers said. "Our safeties and corners are gonna have to have a big night defending the pass. On top of that, we're gonna have to get pressure on the quarterback. With the style of defense we play, we'll modify some things this week to allow us to do both of those things better. We'll have to have a better pass rush and be able to be more solid in our coverage."



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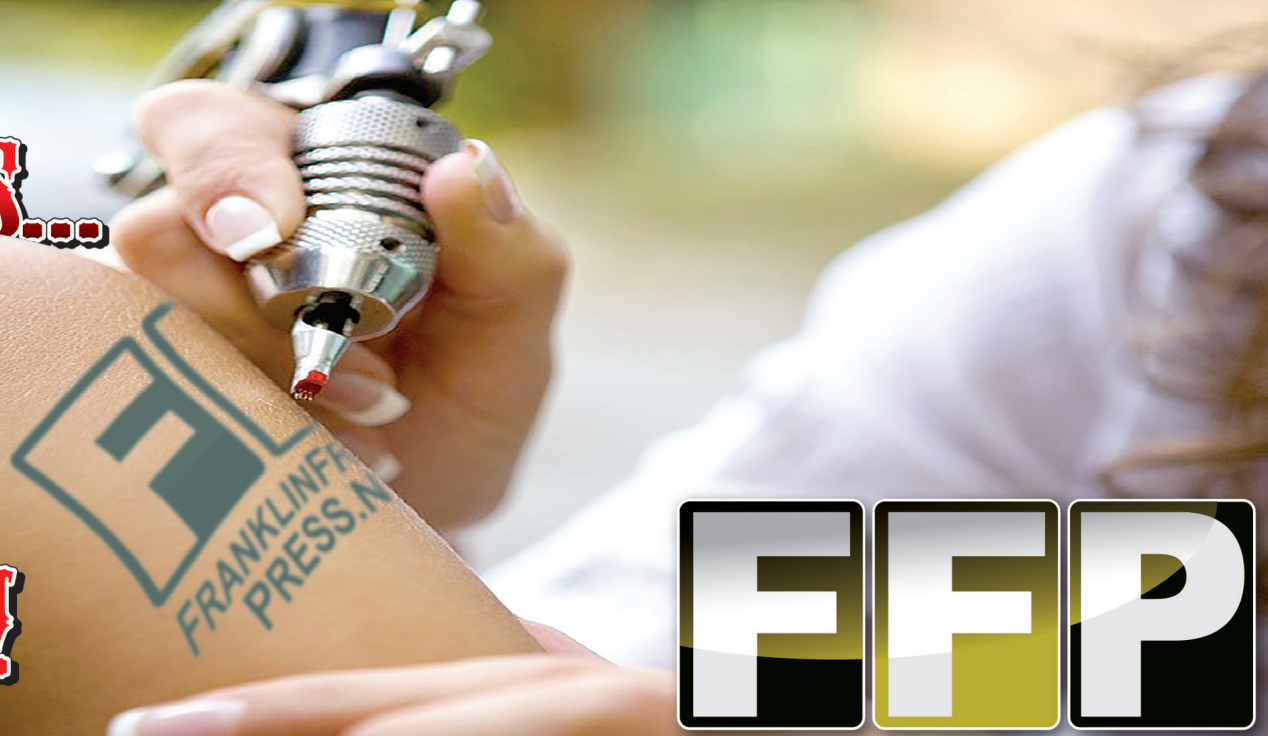
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