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Kiel tabbed for House Ways & Means Education Committee

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

With the 2019 Alabama Legislative session set to begin March 5, Rep. Jamie Kiel (R-Russellville) now knows his committee assignments for the next four years. Committee assignments are made by Alabama Speaker of the House Mac McCutcheon (R-Monrovia), and McCutcheon assigned Kiel to the State Government Committee, Insurance Committee and the powerful House Ways and Means Education Committee. The House Ways and Means Education Committee is responsible for Alabama's education budget. As a freshman legislator, Kiel finds himself in the unusual position of sitting on this committee, as it's a popular committee requested by many House members. "I've found out I'll be the first University of North Alabama graduate on the committee and the only member from northwest Alabama," Kiel said. "It's one of the

most prestigious committees in the House and very powerful, as our responsibility includes making sure the education budget is properly seen to."

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Both Kiel and his Democratic opponent Eddie Britton for House District 18 made their support of public education a central aspect of their campaigns in 2018.

The Ways and Means Education Committee will meet January 29 and 30 in Montgomery at the State House for budget hearings. Those hearings are open to the public, and Kiel encourages anyone interested to attend.

Franklin County Superintendent of Education Greg

See 'KIEL,' Page 11

We're All Ears!
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Story idea?
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Survey classifies state schools as 'unsafe' for LGBTQ students

Local officials disagree, claiming no issues with harrassment or bullying

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Although a new report classifies Alabama schools as 'unsafe' for LGBTQ students, officials with both school systems in Franklin County say they have not experienced any issues with harassment or bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) students. The report comes from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). A national sample of more than 23,000 LGBTQ students went into compiling the data, including 453 respondents in Alabama schools, with 92 percent of those attending public schools. The research was for calendar year 2017.

Of the Alabama students surveyed, 91 percent said they regularly experience hearing anti-LGBTQ remarks from other students; 37 percent indicated they had heard school staff make homophobic remarks; and 52 percent reported hearing staff make negative remarks about someone's gender while at school.

When it comes to discriminatory policies, 77 percent of Alabama's LGBTQ students have experienced at least one form of anti-LGBTQ discrimination at school in the last year.

Franklin County Schools Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton said his system has not experienced any incidences of bullying of LGBTQ students and that his system has safeguards in place against bullying and cyberbullying.

See 'SURVEY,' Page 8

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Mae Sue Frederick, Russellville, age 78

Died Monday, January 7, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Betty Ruth Glenn, Russellville, age 84

Died Friday, January 11, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

Helen Jane Mayfield, Russellville, age 78

Died Friday, January 4, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Shady Grove Cemetery in Phil Campbell.

Opal Lee Oliver, Spruce Pine, age 83

Died Thursday, January 10, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in Mount Hope Cemetery in Marion County, Alabama.

Olean Robinson Tompkins, Russellville, age 92

Died Tuesday, January 8, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Michael "Brian" Wade, Russellville, age 41

Died Wednesday, January 9, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in Walker Memorial Gardens in Jasper.

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Council transfers liquor license for Mike's Beverages

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council agreed to transfer the retail liquor license for Mike's Beverages at the council's January 7 meeting.

The application for transfer was filed by Kaushal, Inc., d/b/a Mike's Beverages, 13501 Highway 43, Russellville. A public hearing was held prior to the vote, but no one spoke for or against the application.

In other action, the council:

- Approved the resignation of Russellville Police Department lieutenant Chad Sheffield, declared a vacancy for the position and appointed Dustin Lovelady as lieutenant.
- Declared a vacancy for a sergeant position in the RPD and promoted

Antonio Melecio to the position.

- Approved the purchase of a new HVAC unit for the A.W. Todd Centre from Affordable Heating and Air at a cost of \$14,887.

- Approved a \$2,600 contract to provide referee services for the Russellville Parks and Recreation Department with Mike Johnson.

- Appointed Nick Willis to the Russellville Electric Board. Willis replaced District Two representative Darren Woodruff. Councilman William Nale made the motion to nominate Willis, and councilman David Palmer seconded the motion. Both men, along with mayor David Grissom, voted to appoint Willis, while councilmen Arthur Elliott and Gary Cummings abstained. Councilman Jamie Harris was absent from the meeting.

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Russellville City Council is Monday, January 22, with work session at 6 p.m. and meeting to follow.

Kiel announces scholarships for Space Camp program

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Students ages 12 to 14 may apply for Space Academy for Leading Students in Alabama, or SALSA, a Space Camp program funded by the Alabama legislature.

A male and female student living in House District 18 will receive a scholarship to attend SALSA, which promotes science, technology, engineering and mathematics education along with leadership skills.

To be eligible for SALSA, students must apply for the scholarship at the website below or through their school counselor.

To learn more, visit www.spacecamp.com/salsa. Brochure: <https://www.spacecamp.com/img/2019/Salsa2019Brochure.pdf>.

Representative Jamie Kiel has notified all school systems in District 18, and they have the information needed to apply.

The two students chosen will be notified in March of 2019. The dates of the camp are May 26-31, 2019. Each scholarship includes tuition, room and board for the Space Academy program. Travel to and from the U.S. Space & Rocket Center is not included.

"I am excited to announce that two middle-school students who live in my House District will receive scholarships to attend a special Space Camp program free of charge," Kiel said. "This includes students who live in Lauderdale, Colbert, and Franklin counties. Space Camp is special to me because, as a middle school student, I attended Space Camp.



Rep. Jamie Kiel

"It was a week of hands-on learning that opened my eyes to what was available to a student like me from a small school. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that can ignite a love for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). I also learned valuable leadership and social skills at Space Camp, and I believe that it is a worthwhile experience for any student who may be interested.

"I am very excited that two students will share the same experience that I did as a student," Kiel said. "My parents believed in Space Camp enough that they sacrificed for me to attend. These scholarships will allow students to attend who might not otherwise be able to.

"I would suggest that parents encourage students who are either interested in STEM now, or students who might become interested in STEM due to this camp, to apply immediately. This experience might open the eyes of a future scientist, astronaut, doctor or engineer."

My take on this... Hug somebody; it matters

I occasionally think about my childhood days and recall the simple blessings I had that so many children have never known.

I had to ride the bus to school every day. [Well, that wasn't one of the blessings I was talking about here, but I'll get to that in just a minute.] When I went to elementary school at Spruce Pine, the buses were so packed that standing up was a given. Students stood in the aisle from the back of the bus to the front. We would have to hold on to the seats for dear life, because those sudden stops and starts would be similar to a domino effect as far as one student falling into the one in front of the other with the exception of falling all the way down. There just wasn't enough space between us for that.

That was just part of our daily life. Even older students, including seniors, rode the bus to school in the 1960's. There were very few who had access to a car to drive. Back then, most families only had one car, and that one was driven to work by our dads because our mothers stayed at home.

The blessings I was talking about was knowing my mother would be at home after school and have an after-school snack ready for us. My brother and I would change from our school clothes into our play clothes and, after a snack, would go outside. We would pet our dogs, ride

our bicycles, and climb trees; we had fun playing and just being kids.

As soon as I'd hear my daddy's truck pull into the driveway, I'd run like an Olympian straight into his arms. His hugs were one of my many childhood memories I'll never forget. I never had any idea that Sunday night, March 2, 1970 would be the last hug I'd ever get from him. I still miss his hugs every day, but I wouldn't take anything for the ones I got.

I think children "now-a-days" are more in need of big hugs, afternoon snacks, a mother's smiling face and hearing her ask how your day was. I enjoyed coming home to all these wonderful things. With two parents working, it's so close now to a thing of the past.

As a small reminder, though, if you are a parent who doesn't work outside the home or you can be at home in the afternoon when your child gets in from school, please welcome them in every way you know how. If you can't think of any on your own, you are welcome to use the ones I've mentioned.

Sometimes a parent will forget that kids can have bad days at school. There are some teachers who will bring a bad attitude to school with them. I was around a few when my boys went to



Gail Notes

school. Along with that, now, are the school bullies who want to beat on, make fun of and tease others. It's no fun to be picked on.

So, when your child walks through the door after school, it's important to do everything you can to show how much you love and appreciate your child. Give them a peaceful and loving environment to come home to. Give them a hug full of love and compassion.

My mother and daddy were both home at night, most of the time. Daddy went to lodge meetings and union meetings and got home later at night a few times, but I'd get to see him before I went to bed. Two blessings were received every night at bedtime, which were hugs and "I love you's" from my parents, the perfect way to end each day. I always went to bed feeling safe and loved.

There are ways we can simplify a child's struggles. We must touch their hearts by touching our child. They need lots of hugs and time devoted totally to them. Remember the things that mean the most: The "I love you's," the "I'm sorry's," and the "I'm here for you's if you ever need to talk."

Nature was my playground, and the things in nature were my toys. My parents' love was my world. Please, give your children the world while you can.

Until later, be nice and hug often!

Honey Do: Costly drafts

With the cold weather and winds we've had recently, dollars may be flying out of your hands through cracks and drafts in doors and windows.

There are a couple of simple tests that you can do to see if your warm air (and hard-earned money) is slipping away. If you can see daylight around your door frame, there is outside air coming in. A good way to test this is to take a flashlight outside after dark and shine it on the door. If someone inside can see light, you have a draft.

Another test is to take a dollar bill and close the door with the bill placed between the door and the frame. If you can pull the dollar out with very little resistance, you have a draft. Perform this test at several places around the door frame.

Drafts around doors are most easily and economically fixed with self-adhesive foam tape, available in several widths and thicknesses. Pay attention to the width of the area you will be sticking it to and also the thickness of the drafty gap you want to fill. If the tape is too thick, the door will be hard to close.

Drafts at the bottom of doors can be stopped by replacing threshold inserts or installing door sweeps. If

the door isn't used a lot, a quick fix is to roll up a towel and place it firmly against the bottom of the door.

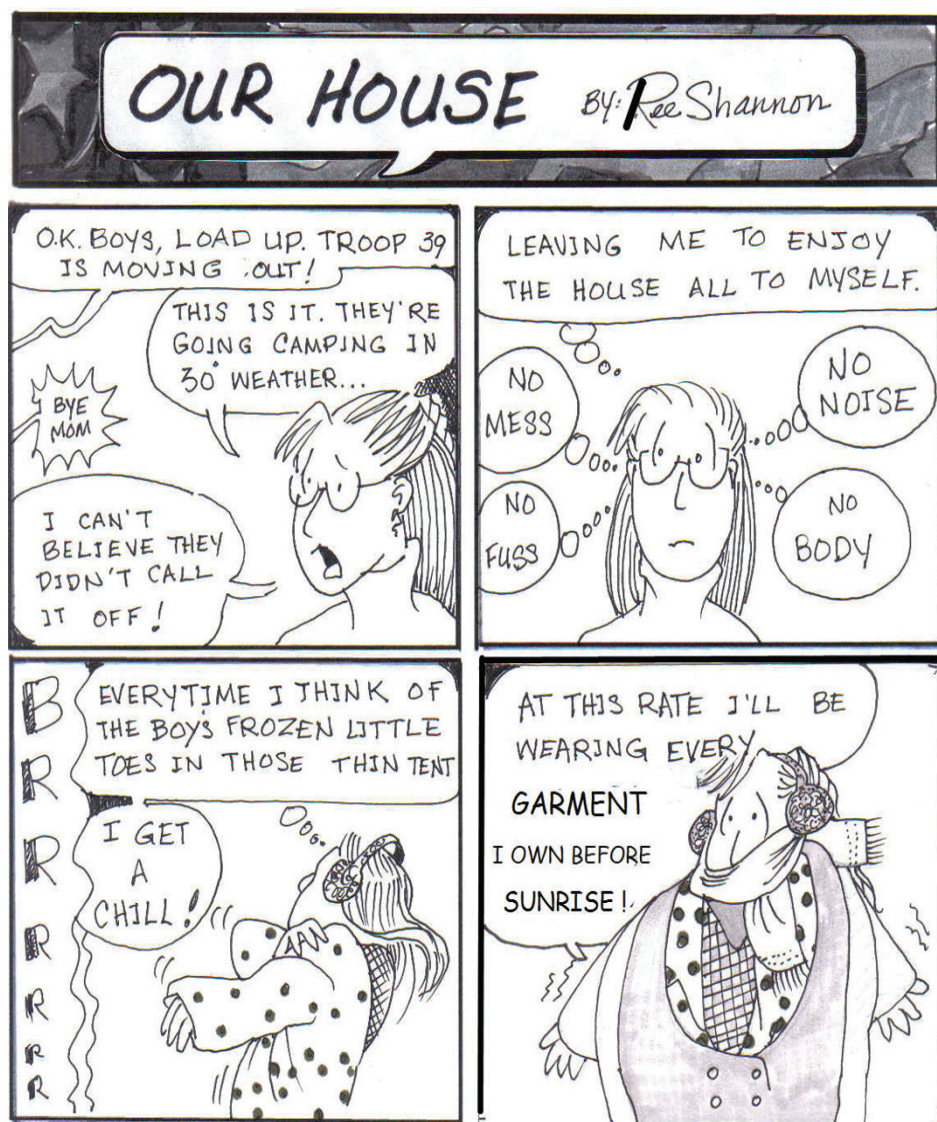
Windows that are single-pane (one sheet of glass) and do not have storm windows installed should be insulated with a plastic storm window kit. Some current styles have tape that sticks to the window frame, then sheets of plastic stick to it. After installation you can use a blow dryer to smooth out wrinkles. If panes are loose, replace the glazing or use weather-proof tape around the edges. Heavy curtains can also be purchased, rather inexpensively, to help insulate windows.

Close off any rooms you are not using with curtains or quilts to save on heating expenses, and use energy-efficient space heaters to keep living areas warmer, while turning down the central heat. Never block emergency escape routes.

Most of these fixes are very easy and inexpensive, and the payoff is great. Stay warm, be energy-efficient, save money and remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



Doug Green



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Letters to the editor

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How will tax reform impact you?

Taxes. Everyone's favorite subject.

There's been a lot of buzz about the new tax reform bill this year. Change is always hard, and taxes are harder. And with all the changes taking place this year, the thought of filing your taxes can feel overwhelming at best. While most of these changes should simplify the process, a lot of people are wondering how this reform will impact them and their bank accounts.

The good news is there are some nice things in store for most people with the tax reform. Let's walk through a few you should know before filing your taxes.

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•Updated Tax Brackets and Lower Income Tax Rates

The new tax brackets and income tax rates are one of the most talked about changes when it comes to the tax reform. The main thing you should know is that the seven tax brackets we already have in place will stay that way, but tax rates for each are going down through 2025. For example, if you're single making \$50,000 a year, your tax rate will drop from 25 percent to 22 percent. In 2026, these cuts will expire, unless there is another bill in the future that changes. For now, people are paying less in taxes.

•The New Standard Deduction

The standard deduction is the dollar amount that you're able to deduct from your taxable income. Under the new reform, the standard

deduction has nearly doubled!

Before the reform, the standard deduction for an individual was \$6,350. Now, it's \$12,000. For a married couple it used to be \$12,700, and that has gone up to \$24,000. So, if you're single and would normally do an itemized deduction, if it equals less than \$12,000 you would take the standard deduction instead.

•Changes for Married Couples

Married couples will rejoice this tax season. Before the tax reform, some married taxpayers were bumped into a higher tax bracket when they combined their incomes. The new tax brackets have doubled for people filing jointly, so no more marriage penalties this time!

•Updated Child Tax Credit

People with kiddos will be happy with at least one part of the new tax reform. Previously, parents who made less than \$110,000 jointly and \$75,000 individually received a \$1,000 tax credit for qualified children under age 17. Now, that credit has increased to \$2,000 and the income limits were raised to \$400,000 jointly and \$200,000 individually. If you have kids and fall below those income levels, that's \$2,000 back in your pocket!

•More Reason to Give

If there wasn't enough incentive for charitable giving before, there is now. Before these changes, taxpayers used to be able to deduct up to half of their income in qualified charitable donations. That limit has been increased to 60 percent of your income!



Rachel
Cruze



Don't play the game

Dear Dave,
How do you feel about timeshares, and the free trips and dinners they offer as part of their sales pitches? Is it possible to win with these things?

Dan

Dear Dan,
In my opinion, timeshares are a complete waste of time and money. Lots of folks go into this kind of thing believing they'll play the game and win. They think they'll get a vacation weekend and other free stuff, then just say "no" when the time comes.

The problem is, most people aren't as tough a sell as they think. Besides, do you really want to waste a weekend of your life letting some pushy salesperson twist your arm? That's not my idea of fun.

As a whole, timeshares have an incredibly high dissatisfaction rate. It's almost impossible to find anyone who's happy they bought into one, and there are good reasons for this.

Why would you pay thousands of your hard-earned dollars for a tiny place you may or may not get a chance to visit once a year? Add to this the fact that you have no equity in the place, and you're stuck paying ongoing maintenance fees.

My advice? Don't take a chance playing the game, Dan. There are much better uses for your time and

'TAX,' from page 4

These are just a few of the changes from the reform. If you still feel overwhelmed, don't worry. Even the IRS is scrambling to keep up with the changes this year. If there ever was a time to consider hiring a professional to do your taxes, this would be the time to do it. You don't want to guess on your taxes!

About Rachel Cruze

As a #1 New York Times best-selling author and host of The Rachel Cruze Show, Rachel helps people learn the proper ways to handle money and stay out of debt. She's authored three best-selling books, including *Love Your Life, Not Theirs* and *Smart Money Smart Kids*, which she co-wrote with her father, Dave Ramsey. You can follow Cruze on Twitter and Instagram at @RachelCruze and online at rachelcruze.com, youtube.com/rachelcruze or facebook.com/rachelramseycruze.



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For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to check us out online at franklinfreepress.net!

money!

Dave

Paid in full?

Dear Dave,
I've been late on a credit card bill several times, and it was turned over to a collection agency. They have offered a couple of different payment options.

If I agree to one of these, does that mean the original creditor gets paid, too?

Carter

Dear Carter,
A collection agency either owns the debt outright, or they're directly representing the credit card company in these kinds of situations. It's not unusual for things to be handled this way when someone has defaulted on a loan.

Unless you have the cash to make good on the debt outright, I'd go ahead and accept whichever deal makes the most sense for you and your current financial situation. You've already got a mark against you on your credit report for having this turned over to collections, so an indication of settlement on a credit card you defaulted on is really no big deal.

But here's my best piece of advice—stop using credit cards!

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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What's Happening

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

Russellville Masonic Lodge 371 will be selling Boston butts during Super Bowl weekend. Butts are \$30 and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pick-up will be Saturday, February 2 from 8-10 a.m. at the Masonic Lodge on Coffee Street.

A historical novel entitled *The Store*, by T. S. Stribling, will be discussed at the Wednesday, January 16, 10 a.m. meeting of "The Readers of the Lost Ark" Book Club. The club meets at Coldwater Books, 105 West Sixth Street, Tusculumbia. For more info, email nancy537481@yahoo.com.

The gospel group "Purpose" will be in concert at My Father's House Church at 104 East Lawrence Street in Russellville this Sunday, January 20 at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited!

Heaven's Echoes from Arkansas will be ministering in song during the 11 a.m. service this Sunday, January 20 at First Free Will Baptist of Russellville. The church is located at 16140 Hwy. 43 North. Everyone is invited to attend! Come expecting a blessing!

Russellville FUMC will host a men's and a 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!

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!

A Book Swap hosted by the "Readers of the Lost Ark" Book Club will be held at Helen Keller Public Library on Wednesday, January 30 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Text questions to 256-412-2920.

Spruce Pine Historical Society meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Spruce Pine Community Center in Spruce Pine. Next meeting will be February 5. All members and friends are urged to attend.

If you are interested in the study of the Civil War and have an ancestor who was in the Confederate Army, join the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month (except January and July) at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center. Next meeting will be February 7. The SCV is the direct heir of the United Confederate Veterans and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, VA in 1896, the SCV continues to serve as a historical, patriotic and non-political organization dedicated to ensuring that a true history of the period from 1861-1865 is preserved. Membership in the SCV is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate Armed Forces. Membership can be obtained through either direct or collateral family lines, and kinship to a veteran must be documented genealogically. Call 1-800-MYDIXIE or 256-324-2317.

East Franklin Volunteer Fire Department will hold a chicken and beef stew fundraiser on Saturday, February 9 at the East Franklin Volunteer Fire Department, 10443 Hwy. 81 in Phil Campbell. Serving begins at 11 a.m. Bring your own containers please. Please come support the fire department!

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert at the Roxy Theatre in Russellville on Saturday, February 9 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, February 14 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner will be at 6:30 p.m.

Ronnie McDowell and his band will return to Russellville on Saturday, March 16 at 7 p.m. for another benefit for the historic Roxy Theater. Franklin County's own Joseph Baldwin will be the opening act. For ticket information, please call 256-415-3270 or 256-460-8988. Reservations are going fast! Floor tickets are \$20 to \$30, and general admission balcony tickets are \$15.

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. Call 1-800-AGELINE (1-800-243-5463) or 256-389-0530. This program is in partnership with the state of Alabama and Alabama Department of Senior Services.

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, behind Tompkins Feed.

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'SURVEY' from page 1

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey signed the Jamari Terrell Williams Student Harassment Act into law last year. That legislation, named after a 10-year-old Montgomery boy who committed suicide, expands the state's anti-bullying legislation to apply to harassment, violence, intimidation and threats off campus as well as at school.

Hamilton said the Franklin County Board of Education would consider this month amending its anti-bullying policy to include off-campus bullying.

"We have trained every employee in this system on student harassment and bullying," Hamilton said. "And that includes substitute teachers. If you sub in our system, you've got to go through that training. Anyone who walks on our campus as an employee has been trained, including bus drivers and substitute bus drivers.

"We do the very best we can to ensure students are in a safe learning environment, and that includes extracurricular activities."

Hamilton also said his system is compliant with Erin's Law, passed in 2015, which mandates that education of sexual abuse and personal body safety be provided in Alabama schools.

The GLSEN study indicated that more than three in four transgender students (77 percent) were not allowed to use the school restroom aligned with their gender. While Hamilton says his system has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to bullying, he disagrees with the idea that students should be able to use the restroom provided for the opposite sex, regardless of how the student aligns his or her gender.

"We have a boys and girls restroom for our students, and that's how it's going to remain," Hamilton said.

Franklin County Schools' current policy prohibits "violence, threats of violence, harassment and intimidation" against students based on one or more of the victim's characteristics, including: "The student's race, the student's sex, the student's religion, the student's national origin or the student's disability."

The current Franklin County Schools policy does not reference a student's sexual preference as a protected characteristic, although Hamilton said bullying incidents involving LGBTQ students would be handled pursuant to the policy.

The absence of a comprehensive anti-bullying policy that specifically references protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression appears to be the norm, rather than the exception, in Alabama schools. Ninety-seven percent of LGBTQ students in Alabama attend schools with no such protections in their school's policies.

Nearly one-third of Alabama LGBTQ students reported in the survey they were not allowed to bring a same-gender date to a school dance.

This issue came up in Franklin County ten years ago when a Tharptown

High School female student wanted to bring her girlfriend to the prom. Initially, the student was told she could not, but after the student's guardian contacted the American Civil Liberties Union and a civil rights attorney, school officials recanted their initial decision.

Russellville City Schools Assistant Superintendent Tim Guinn said the Tharptown student transferred to Russellville for her senior year, and he said there was not an issue with the student that year.

"We did not and don't have a rule against it," Guinn said. "Prom dates are looked at differently by kids than they used to be. We don't have any rules preventing a student from bringing a same-sex date to the prom."

Dating back to his days as principal, Guinn said he was unaware of any student reporting bullying or harassment within Russellville City Schools based on the student's sexual preference.

"There has been nothing reported to us. We do have some students who classify themselves as LGBTQ," Guinn said. "It's not a large number, but it's more now than it used to be.

"One thing about Russellville students: They seem very tolerant, and I'm glad they are. We've never had an issue since I was assistant principal or principal where a student was harassed because of being homosexual. Our kids don't even seem to give it a second glance."

While some students openly classify themselves as LGBTQ, Guinn said Russellville City Schools never requests or solicits that information from students.

"Their sexuality is totally their business," he said. "Some have come forward and identified as gay or lesbian or bisexual, and they let other students and teachers know that. But we don't track anyone and never ask anyone about that.

"Their sexuality is absolutely their own business."

As for restroom use, though, Guinn said Russellville City Schools align with Franklin County Schools on that issue.

"So far, restroom use hasn't been an issue. I'm not aware of any student who has tried to go into the other gender's restroom," Guinn said. "That would have to be taken on a case-by-case basis, but as of now, we have male and female restrooms for students and no issues with students going into the restroom that suits their biological gender."

Of the 453 Alabama secondary students surveyed in the GLSEN study, 75 percent were White, nine percent Multiracial, seven percent Hispanic/Latin, seven percent Black/African American and one percent Asian.

The school community makeup for those students was 49 percent rural/small town, 33 percent suburban and 18 percent urban.

For more information on the study, go online to the website www.glsen.org/research.

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The structure of our Republic has changed

Submitted to the FFP
By Rick Neighbors

Regardless how we feel or think about President Donald Trump and his administration, the character of Americanism and the structure of our Republic has changed.

There is no going back to the time where the power of the idea of America was always much greater than the individuals chosen as its temporary leaders. Through their dereliction, our senators and representatives have removed the constraints that previously held back the ravenous

savagery of greed.

The foundation of trust has been weakened. We, the citizens, with our shovels of illiteracy and ignorance, are the diggers that have undermined this institution.

We can not go back to our time of innocence, trusting that elected leaders will act with dignity, mindful of the gravity of their responsibility. We can go forward with the awareness that changes are needed to ensure just actions can be taken when they are needed.

I do not know the changes that should be made, but I know they need to be made. I sus-

pect it will involve some constitutional change involving the current system that gives sole discretionary power to the leaders of the House and Senate to decide what to take up.

We can choose not to extinguish the dream. Tomorrow can be better than today, and all people can live together helping one another, not fearing each other.

"What binds us together is not what we were yesterday, but what we are going to be tomorrow" (Jose Ortega).

Let us begin this journey toward forming a more perfect union.

Ask Ken Coleman: Start with humility and gratitude

Start with humility and gratitude

QUESTION: I've been with my employer for almost 10 years. Over the last four years I've received two promotions, but no increase in pay. It's getting to the point where I feel like the owner is taking me for granted. How can I approach him about a raise without jeopardizing my career?

ANSWER: Trust me, we've all been in situations where we've felt we deserved better — or more. And sometimes we're right. If you've shown your boss you're worth more, and he doesn't see it, that could be life showing you an exit. If you like your job and the industry you're in, however, asking for a raise is often more about posture than technique.

The best way to ask for a raise is to first research your industry, and more specifically, your job title. Go in with an attitude of humility and gratitude — combined with the research you've done, and your accomplishments with the company — and ask what you need to do in order to make more money. Don't issue an ultimatum, or ask for an answer immediately. Have a friendly, professional conversation, and politely ask your boss to give your request consideration.

Remember, you can't control how he will react. All you can do is approach the situation with the proper posture and attitude. In many cases, that makes all the difference.

Do what you have to do, so you can do what you want to do

QUESTION: I have a degree in nutrition science, but for the last 10 years I've worked as the food service manager in a hospital. I'm really burned out in this job, but I still want to help people. Ideally, I'd like to pursue an internship that would allow me to become a registered dietician, then open my own practice. However, the idea of having my own business terrifies me. My mom and dad run a small business, and they barely break even. Can you help me with these feelings?

There are two things you need to consider when thinking about your dream job. One is how much it will cost in terms of dollars and cents. The other is how much time it will take. Some thorough research in these two areas might go a long way in making you a little less fearful. Knowledge is power, and a detailed plan is essential for success.

ANSWER: It's normal to have a certain amount of trepidation about opening a small business. But don't let fear alone — whether it's the fear of failure, or the fear of being more successful than your parents — overwhelm you and dictate your decisions.

There are two things you need to consider when thinking about your dream job. One is how much it will cost in terms of dollars and cents. The other is how much time it will take. I would encourage you not to take on debt to make this happen, but some thorough research in these two areas might go a long way in making you a little less fearful. Knowledge is power, and a detailed plan is essential for success.

Think about this, too. I'm sure you have connections in your current job that would be very beneficial in your dream job. Talk to some of the doctors at the hospital. Tell them your dream. Some of them may be willing to refer patients or offer advice in other areas.

Once you've crunched some numbers, and your dream has progressed to the point where you have a practical plan, start your business slowly on the side. Then, be patient while it grows to the point where you can make the jump to full-time!

Attitude is often a choice



Ken
Coleman

QUESTION: I'm a dentist, and I own a successful practice that is debt-free. I have a great office manager and staff, and I love what I do, but I can't stop thinking about losing team members to other practices and keeping the business successful. I feel stressed out all the time, and I'm starting to develop health issues as a result. Recently, I received an offer with another practice. It pays less than I make now, but it offers more benefits and much more time off. What do you think I should do?

ANSWER: I'm not a doctor, but it sounds like you're suffering from two things — comparison and worry. You just told me you have a great office manager and staff, you're doing work you love, and you have no debt on your business. Outside forces should not be dragging you down, man. Life is good!

I think it's your mindset, not your business or career, that needs a change. And this kind of thing starts with gratitude. Stop comparing yourself to everyone else. What does winning look like in your reality? What makes you feel happy and satisfied? What is your definition of success?

Perhaps you could sit down and talk to a close friend or even a professional counselor. Often, an unbiased opinion can make us realize things that had gotten lost in the hectic, day-to-day grind. Sometimes those opinions, especially coming from people we respect and care about, can open our eyes!

Realizing Your Dream

QUESTION: I'm in an unhappy place in my career. I don't enjoy my current job, but I don't know what I really want to do, either. How can I learn what I was made to do?

ANSWER: I believe it all starts with discovery. Once you realize who you really are on the inside, you can more easily begin to unpack and examine the things you're passionate about and where your true talents lie.

I'm not talking about some kind of pat-yourself-on-the-back exercise. I want you to sit down, and make a list of some serious stuff. Write out your talents, your weaknesses, what excites you, and the things that exhaust you. The answers to these four questions will help provide an early picture of what you should — and should not — be doing with your life. You might also consider running your answers by a close friend, someone who cares enough to want the very best for you, but is willing to be completely honest about your attributes.

There are four essential components of a human being: personality, passion, talent, and values. Once you discover what speaks to all of these, I think you'll begin to realize your purpose in life.

**Ken Coleman is host of The Ken Coleman Show and the top-rated EntreLeadership Podcast, and author of One Question: Life-Changing Answers from Today's Leading Voices. An acclaimed interviewer and broadcaster, Coleman equips, encourages and entertains listeners through thought-provoking interviews, helping them grow their businesses, pursue their passions, and move toward a fulfilled purpose. You can follow him on Twitter at @KenColeman, on Instagram at @KenColemanShow, and online at kencolemanshow.com or facebook.com/KenColemanShow.*



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JOB OPPORTUNITY
 The Franklin County Commission will accept applications for the following position: Accountant/Payable Clerk for the Franklin County Commission Office until 5:00 PM on Wednesday, January 23, 2019.
 This position requires the applicant to possess an accounting degree. An application and job description may be picked up at the Franklin County Commission Office, located at 405 N. Jackson Ave., Russellville, AL 35653, Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Franklin County is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in the employment or the provision of services.

JOB OPPORTUNITY
 The Franklin County Commission will accept applications for the following position: A Full-Time EMA Director for Franklin County until 12:00 PM on Thursday, January 17, 2019.
 An application and job description may be picked up at the Franklin County Commission Office, located at 405 N. Jackson Ave., Russellville, AL 35653, Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Franklin County is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in the employment or the provision of services.

Eight local eateries receive satisfactory ratings from ADPH

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

All eight of the Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of December 31-January 4 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 Marty's Meat Market, Inc., 85 Scotty Moore Drive, Russellville, and

MeMe's Cakery, 15480 Hwy. 43, Russellville.

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

- Yogi's Food Co., 501 Waterloo Road, Russellville, 85. (Spray bottle of Windex not labeled, no soap available in ladies restroom or handsink in rear kitchen).

- Snack Shack, 3066 Hwy. 43, Phil Campbell, 86. (Bottle of cleaner not labeled, water temp not reaching required 100 degrees, only reaching 80 degrees).

- J&L Convenience and Bait, LLC, 23791 Hwy. 24 West, Russellville, 89. (Dishes not being sanitized).

- Russellville Foodland #110, 14001 Hwy. 43, Suite 11, Russellville, 89. (Improper insecticide).

- El Quetzal Buena Vista, 118 East Franklin St., Russellville, 92. (No soap in ladies restroom, no paper towels at kitchen hand sink).

- Big Star of Russellville, Inc., 314 South Jackson Ave., Russellville, 97.

Of the 17 inspections done in Colbert County from December 31-January 4, all received scores falling in the range of satisfactory. The high score of 99 was received by Microtel Inn & Suites, 1852 Hwy. 72 E, Tuscumbia, Palace Soda Shop, 100 South Main St., Tuscumbia, and Too Fat Sisters Kitchen, LLC, 1606 Hwy. 72 E., Tuscumbia.

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

'KIEL,' from page 1

Hamilton said it was important to have a local legislator have a voice in the education budget process.

"I was pleased to see Representative Kiel named to this important committee. Obviously, making sure public education is adequately funded is a priority for the people of Franklin County, as evidenced by their continued support of the one-cent sales tax," Hamilton said. "We look forward to working with Rep. Kiel in the coming four years and working together to provide the best education for our children."

As a member of the House Insurance Committee, Kiel will be part of the group that handles all legislation relating to the state's insurance industry and the millions of Alabama residents who rely on it.

"There are some unique challenges there statewide. We have issues on the Gulf Coast with hurricane problems, and insurance is important in northwest Alabama because of the tornado issues we deal with each year," Kiel said. "So we are all affected by insurance and the decision we make."

Kiel joined other legislators for orientation last month in Montgomery. A second organizational session was held earlier this month, and that's where legislators certified the election results, organized the legislature and elected the Speaker of the House, Speaker Pro-Tempore and Clerk of the House.

Kiel was in Montgomery Monday to attend the inauguration of Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey. To contact Kiel, call him at 256-810-1247 or email him at jamie.kiel@alhouse.gov.

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Four teams (including Phil Campbell's ninth-grade girls, pictured at left) took home Franklin County Tournament titles on Saturday at Vina High School. See inside today's Sports Section for full coverage.

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Belgreen girls roll past Vina

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

VINA - Belgreen's girls got 19 points from Gracie Dempsey, four threes from Emma Willingham and double-doubles from Emma Dempsey and Ansley Tate last Thursday night, improving to 4-2 in Class 1A, Area 12 with an 80-49 rout of Vina.

Leading by just three at 14-11 less than six minutes into the game, the Lady Bulldogs (14-4 overall through Sunday and ranked No. 9 in Class 1A) closed the first quarter on an 11-0 run and never looked back. Gracie Dempsey sparked the run with a three and then capped it off with a steal and a layup to make it 25-11.

Dempsey, a junior guard, shot 6-for-8 from the field on the night and hit four threes, matching her season-high with those 19 points and also adding four rebounds and three assists.

Emma Dempsey, a 6'1 sophomore, scored

See 'BELGREEN,' Page 17



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Emma Dempsey (in white) and Belgreen have met Vina six times over the past two seasons. The Lady Bulldogs have won five of those games, including last Thursday, when Dempsey had 17 points, 10 rebounds and six steals in an 80-49 rout.

Red letter day



PHOTO BY BART MOSS

Red Bay's ninth-grade boys beat Tharptown 40-17 in Saturday's county final. Team members pictured above are: Front row (L to R) - David Lindsey, Carson Corum, Andrew Ray, Paden Allison, team manager Cooper Corum; Back row (L to R) - Head coach John Torisky, Coby Jackson, Charlie Huffman, Elijah Luster, Bryson Hacker, BP Blair, assistant coach David Corum.

Ninth-grade boys cap off big day for Red Bay with county tournament title

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

VINA - Through Sunday, Red Bay's varsity boys had ridden balanced scoring, deadly three-point shooting and suffocating defense to a 16-4 record this season and the No. 3 ranking in Class 2A.

On Saturday night at Vina High School, the ninth-grade Tigers provided a pretty solid imitation of their older counterparts and did something the varsity squad hopes to do later this week—win a county championship.

Red Bay knocked down six three-pointers, put nine different players in the scoring column and held Tharptown scoreless for nearly eight minutes during one mid-game stretch, rallying from an early deficit and then running away from the Wildcats for a 40-17 win in the finals of the Franklin County Junior High Tournament.

"Obviously, they're ninth-graders, but those are the things we work on in practice. They work with the older guys, so they see how it's done," said John Torisky, who coaches both teams. "When they wanna be good, they can be really good, because we have some pretty good athletes in that class who like to defend. With them, just like with any other kids, it's all about getting them to come out and play every day."

"But overall they're a good group. There's a lot of potential there."

The Tigers played two games on Saturday, dispatching Phil Campbell 47-34 in the semifinals around mid-day to earn a date with Tharptown in the final. The Wildcats came out hot, hitting six of their first eight shots from the floor and opening up a 12-6 lead early in the second quarter on a basket by Briley Kirby.

See 'DAY,' Page 17

PC girls hold off Tharptown to win county title

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

VINA - The county tournament typically signifies the end of the junior high basketball season, but Saturday's ninth-grade girls final meant a little something extra for Phil Campbell coach Tracy Pace and her team.

Pace is giving up her coaching duties with the Lady Bobcats so she can have more time to travel next season and watch her daughter, PCHS senior Abby Davis, play for UAH.

"It's her turn. I want to be able to support her there," Pace said "My [two] boys will still be playing at Phil Campbell, so I'll be able to go back and forth. I want to be able to support her at UAH and support the boys, too, and I can't devote the time I would need to devote to keep coaching. It wouldn't be fair to the kids who play."

Pace's team endured a few tense moments in Saturday's championship game against Tharptown, but the Lady Bobcats ultimately gave their head coach a proper send-off.

Eighth-grader Madison Branch hit four big free throws in the fourth quarter to fend off a Tharptown rally and finished with a game-high 21 points, leading Phil Campbell to a 37-31 win.

"This was my last game, so it's very sad. But going out with a county championship...it couldn't be any better," said Pace, whose team won 11 straight games against ninth-grade competition after opening the season with a loss to Vina. "That's awesome. My girls...I couldn't ask for any better. They're a great group of girls. I have to watch myself, though, because some of them I can yell at and some I can't—but that's every year. Some of them I have to pat on the back. But they're a great group of girls."

Pace spent ten tear-filled minutes after the game posing for pictures with each of her players and the championship plaque. That piece of hardware nearly slipped away from the Lady Bobcats, who built an early 10-point lead on Saturday and were still up by nine in the final seconds of the third quarter before Tharptown mounted a late rally.

Emily Campos got things going, beating the third-quarter buzzer with a three to pull the Lady Wildcats within six at 27-21. A putback by Taylor Cameron and a runner in the lane by Autumn Montgomery cut the lead to two at 27-25 with 4:15 left in the game.

"This was my last game, so it's very sad. But going out with a county championship...it couldn't be any better," said Pace, whose team won 11 straight games against ninth-grade competition after opening the season with a loss to Vina. "That's awesome. My girls...I couldn't ask for any better. They're a great group of girls."

Phil Campbell's Faith Cook made a free throw to push the lead back to three, but another putback by Cameron made it a one-point game at 28-27 with 3:30 to go. Branch hit two free throws to make it 30-27, but Montgomery's layup cut the lead right back to one with 2:00 remaining.

Branch got fouled again and calmly sank two more big free throws, pushing the lead back to three at 32-29.

"Clutch," Pace said of Branch, who finished the night 11-for-15 from the line. "Ice in the veins, baby. Madison finally started taking it to the basket. She's just an all-around good kid—good attitude, good work ethic, and she's generous with the basketball. She's not thinking, 'I've gotta do everything



PHOTO BY BART MOSS

Phil Campbell's ninth-grade girls capped off an 11-1 season with a 37-31 win over Tharptown in the county final. Team members pictured above are (L to R) - Allie Herring, Madison Branch, Kenner Scott, Faith Cook, Gracelyn Habada, Jade Roberson and coach Tracy Pace.

myself.' She'll work the ball around."

A layup by Jade Roberson extended Phil Campbell's lead to five at 34-29, but the Lady Wildcats wouldn't go away. Campos answered with a layup of her own to make it 34-31 with 1:04 remaining.

The Lady Bobcats missed the front end of two one-and-one situations, but Tharptown was unable to capitalize. Branch scored in transition with 20 seconds left, and then Allie Herring made 1-of-2 at the line with 7.2 seconds remaining to provide the final margin in a game that was much closer than Phil Campbell's previous two wins over the Lady Wildcats this season.

"We struggled a little bit on our offensive side," said Pace, whose team endured a scoreless stretch of more than four minutes late in the first half and finished the night shooting just 35 percent (12-for-34) from the field. "We weren't seeing what was open. It just wasn't clicking, but that's part of basketball. We made some mental errors. It's the little things we weren't doing."

"I just told them, 'Calm down. Let's go. Let's run right here and get it back up.' Girls are different. Sometimes, the more you holler and scream, the more they get down on themselves."

The Lady Bobcats were able to weather the storm on Saturday in large part, Pace believes, because of the tough games they played this season against junior varsity competition.

"We played some jayvee games, which is tough to do with two eighth-graders and four ninth-graders, but that's how you get better," Pace said.

See 'HOLD,' page 15

Wieting leads Lady 'Cats to one-point win at Vina

Staff reports

Shaylee Wieting scored 19 of her 28 points in the second half last Friday night, helping Tharptown's girls hold off Vina for a 63-62 win.

Tharptown led 31-18 at the break, but the Lady Red Devils (12-6 through Sunday) rolled up 44 points in the second half. They out-scored the Lady Wildcats 22-15 in the third quarter (despite 12 points from Wieting), cutting the lead to 46-40.

Rayleigh Guin scored 14 fourth-quarter points for Vina, but Tharptown got seven points from Wieting, five from Gracie Montgomery and four from Adriana Borden to hold on for the win.

Wieting hit two threes on the night and shot 10-for-15 from the foul line. Borden finished with 10 points, and Montgomery, Catie Dawson and Brooke Daily added eight apiece.

Guin shot a perfect 12-for-12 from the line and

led Vina with 26 points. She also had six assists and three rebounds. Kaitlyn King knocked down three threes and finished with 15 points, four rebounds and three assists. Sara Scott had eight points and six boards, and Emma Humphres added eight points, seven rebounds and three assists. Sarah Johnson chipped in with four points and five boards.

Varsity boys Tharptown 71 Vina 55

Winston Nolen scored 22 points to lead four Tharptown players in double-figures last Friday night as the Wildcats pulled away late to beat county rival Vina.

The Wildcats (5-13 through Sunday) led 22-10 at the end of one quarter, but the Red Devils rallied with a big second quarter and trailed by just two at the half, 35-33.

Tharptown's lead was still just four before the

Wildcats out-scored Vina 22-10 in the fourth quarter to seal the deal.

Nolen, a sophomore guard, shot 10-for-25 from the field on his way to topping the 20-point mark for the sixth time this season. He also had six rebounds and three steals. Colton Simmons scored a season-high 19 points on 8-for-13 shooting from the floor and also pulled down five rebounds.

Les Montgomery hit two threes and shot 5-for-8 from the floor overall, finishing with 13 points, eight rebounds and four steals. Hayden Moss also hit two threes and scored 10 points while handing out a team-high four assists. Edward Lopez had 12 rebounds and three steals to go along with his four points. Ruben Alfaro added three points.

Jackson Landers led Vina with 13 points, and Timmy Newell had 12. Braden Moomaw and Haze Weatherford scored seven apiece.

Bulldogs survive late rally by Phil Campbell

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

PHIL CAMPBELL - Mason Bragwell scored 23 points, grabbed nine rebounds and blocked seven shots for Belgreen last Tuesday, helping the Bulldogs overcome a rough shooting night and a late rally by Phil Campbell to beat the Bobcats 52-46.

When they met at Belgreen on December 14, the two teams combined for 17 made threes and had a total of eight players score in double-figures in a 78-71 overtime win by the Bulldogs. Points and made baskets—particularly from the perimeter—were much harder to come by in last week's rematch.

"They played pretty good defense against us, and we didn't shoot it well at all," said Belgreen coach Clint Isbell, whose team finished the night at just 31 percent (18-for-58) from the floor. "We were really, really cold [from outside], but we just kept shooting it. We're a decent shooting team, but you can't rely on that. We've got to be a more diverse team. You can't be one-dimensional. You can't just shoot outside. You've gotta attack and work your way inside-out. You own the inside first, and then the outside shots will come.

"I didn't feel like we got in the flow of the game or any kind of rhythm. We just jumped out and started shooting threes, and that's not who we are."

The Bulldogs (11-7 through Sunday) shot just 5-for-18 in the first quarter but still led 14-12 at the end of one thanks to eight points from Mason Bragwell and a pair of threes from sophomore guard Scout Bragwell. Phil Campbell (7-10 through Sunday) got six points from Luke Garrison in the second quarter and surged to a 25-22 lead on a three by Austen Baker, but Belgreen closed out the half with back-to-back threes by Kostner Bryant and Brant Bragwell (at the buzzer) to take a 28-25 lead into the locker room.

The Bulldogs quickly cooled off again in the third quarter, missing 12 of 15 shots from the floor, and back-to-back buckets by Garrison tied the game 36-36 heading to the fourth.

Through three quarters, Belgreen was shooting just 29 percent (14-for-49) from the field. Isbell felt as though his team too often settled for perimeter shots against the zone defense employed by the smaller Bobcats.

"It was a two-three zone, but the middle guy lifted up occasionally, so it looked different than a two-three zone," Isbell said. "They did a good job in it, and they threw some different looks at us. They forced us to shoot outside when we weren't shooting it well, so credit to them. But we've got to find a way to attack the rim.

"A lot of that can come off our defense and getting out in transition. We have to get in the mindset of pushing the floor and attacking. When you do that, then it starts to come in your offensive sets. But we've gotta get to that mindset and not just rely on threes and settle."

The Bulldogs struggled from beyond the arc most of the night, but Scout Bragwell and Brant Bragwell opened the fourth quarter with back-to-back threes to give them a 42-36 lead. Isac Willingham made a free throw, and a layup by Mason Bragwell made it 45-38 at the 4:00 mark. The 6'6 senior then converted a three-point play to push the lead to 10 with 3:39 remaining.

The Bobcats rallied, however, getting three-pointers from Isaac Riddle and Garrison in an 8-0 run that cut the lead to 48-46 with 1:20 remaining. Phil Campbell then fouled Scout Bragwell, who made two free throws to push the lead back to four at 50-46 with 46.7 seconds left.

Scout Bragwell then partially blocked a three-point attempt by Garrison on the other end, the first of three straight misses by the Bobcats to close out the game. [They also turned the ball over twice in the final 30 seconds.] Mason Bragwell hit two free throws with 5.1 seconds remaining to push the lead to six and provide the final margin.

On a night when they struggled to make shots, the Bulldogs at least managed to hold Phil Campbell to just 35 percent (19-for-54) from the field with only four three-pointers. Both teams took care of the ball [Belgreen had just



Isaac Riddle

Senior Forward, Phil Campbell

Riddle had a big week for the Bobcats, who split a pair of games with Belgreen and East Lawrence. Last Tuesday, against the Bulldogs, Riddle posted a double-double with 16 points and 15 rebounds in a 52-46 loss. On Friday, in a critical area game against the Eagles, Riddle scored 10 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter and overtime to lead Phil Campbell to a 59-52 win. The 6'1 senior finished the game 6-for-6 from the foul line.

Through Sunday, Riddle was averaging 11.9 points per game, second-best on the team.



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six turnovers, Phil Campbell 11], and the battle of the boards ended up even at 36 rebounds apiece.

"I feel like we defended okay," Isbell said, "but I still don't think we rebounded well, again. We've gotta find a way to get our guys attacking the glass and being physical. We're working on that. We did a better job with it, but it still wasn't up to our expectations or where we want it to be. That's what we'll work on tomorrow."

Riddle, a 6'1 senior forward, pulled down 15 rebounds for the Bobcats to go along with his 16 points on 7-for-13 shooting from the floor. Garrison led Phil Campbell with 17 points, but offensive production from other sources was scarce.

Nate Owens finished with four points, and Baker had three. Brett Saint and Ridge Raper (each of whom scored 16 points in the game at Belgreen in mid-December) had just two apiece last Tuesday. Ben Williams also scored two.

Mason Bragwell shot 8-for-17 from the field and 7-for-10 from the foul line, topping the 20-point mark for the second time against Phil Campbell and the sixth time overall this season. Scout Bragwell had 11 points and seven rebounds, and Brant Bragwell added eight points and seven boards. Bryant scored seven points, and David Plott had two. Willingham had seven rebounds and two steals to go along with his one point.

These two teams will meet for a third time this Friday night in the semifinals of the Franklin County Tournament at PCHS. The Bulldogs, seeded second, will be seeking their third consecutive county championship, but they'll have to get by the Bobcats first and then find a way to beat top seed and tournament favorite Red Bay (16-4 through Sunday) in the final.

"It'll be tough," Isbell said. "[Phil Campbell] will be ready, and they'll know some of the schemes we do. But we're also gonna work on some of our

See 'RALLY,' Page 16

'HOLD', from page 14

"You play better competition. There were times when I had to tell our girls, 'Yeah, we're struggling, but don't get discouraged. It'll make us better.' And it did. Those jayvee games put a lot more pressure on us. But it was all worth it in the end."

Branch scored 10 points in Saturday's first quarter and then opened the second with a layup off a steal to push Phil Campbell's early lead to 18-8. The Lady Bobcats did not make another field goal

for the remainder of the half, however, and took a 19-12 lead into the break.

The second quarter was a rough one offensively for both teams, who combined for more turnovers (eight) than points scored (seven) while shooting 3-for-20 from the field.

Branch finished with seven rebounds to go along with her 21 points. Roberson had eight points and two steals, and Kenner Scott finished with four

points, seven rebounds, two assists and three steals. Cook added three points, three boards, and two steals.

Campos hit two threes and led Tharptown with 12 points. Montgomery added eight points, and Jaiden Gaston had 11 rebounds and seven blocked shots to go along with her five points.

Cameron had four points and four boards, and Kaitlyn Simmons scored two.

Tigers capture fifth straight B-Junior crown

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

VINA - Red Bay's boys were aiming for a fifth consecutive Franklin County Tournament championship in the seventh-and-eighth-grade division on Saturday afternoon at Vina High School.

Whether they knew it or not.

"I didn't tell them beforehand that we were going for five in a row as a program," long-time head coach Kevin Morrow said. "They had no clue. They were in the third grade when that [streak] started. They know who the older kids are, because we share a dressing room and that kind of stuff, but as far as knowing what's gone on before, they probably didn't have a clue."

It wasn't until after the Tigers had put the finishing touches on a 53-29 rout of Phil Campbell in Saturday's final that Morrow informed his players of the streak. Given that 11 of his 13 players are seventh-graders, he had another message for them as well.

"I told them, 'Next year, we're gonna try for six.' The goal doesn't ever change for us," said Morrow, who now has 10 county championships at the seventh-and-eighth-grade level in 17 seasons as head coach.

This year's championship was a little harder to come by than the nine that preceded it. Through 16 games, Red Bay's record sat at 5-11, and the Tigers were seeded fifth (out of six teams) for the county tournament—which meant they would have to win three games to bring home the crown.

Morrow said on Saturday that neither he nor his players were deterred by the slow start to the season.

"I knew we had some good young players," he said. "I started five seventh-graders, and we took some lumps. Hamilton was really good. Winfield was really good. But playing bigger schools like that helps us."

Red Bay continued to improve and eventually turned things around. Saturday's spanking of Phil Campbell was the seventh win in a row for the Tigers, allowing them to finish the season with a winning record at 12-11.

"We started cranking it up more on defense," Morrow said of the seven-game streak to end the year. "We gained a little more understanding of what we were trying to do. We try to guard one-and-a-half. We guard the man with the ball, and if we're away from the ball we wanna be in a gap, guarding our man and a half."

"During Christmas time, when we weren't playing as much, we worked on that. The latter part of the year, the light turned on and our guys figured it out. That, and they grew up and stopped making silly turnovers."

After routing Vina and then avenging two previous losses to Belgreen with a 47-29 semifinal win over the top-seeded Bulldogs on the tournament's



PHOTO BY BART MOSS

Red Bay's seventh-and-eighth-grade boys beat Phil Campbell 53-29 on Saturday to wrap up the county championship. Team members pictured above are: Front row (L to R) - Manager Noah Hester, Buck McRight, Brady Bolton, Holden Inmon, Cody Carnes, Ethan McCoy, Eli Farris; Back row (L to R) - Manger Kennedy Wilemon, head coach Kevin Morrow, Carston Hollander, Will West, Gage Edgmon, Caden Keeton, Lawson Glover, Canaan Hollander, Jack West and assistant coach Tra Elliott.

opening Saturday, the Tigers were once again outstanding defensively in the final against Phil Campbell. They held the Bobcats to just 32 percent shooting (12-for-38) from the floor and forced 23 turnovers—17 of which came in the second half.

"We got some turnovers out of our press," Morrow said. "Cody Carnes hit a couple of threes there in the second half to get us away from them a little bit more. I've been blessed this year. We've got some really good young players coming."

"Last Saturday, I had one [Brady Bolton] come off the bench and hit four threes in the first half against Vina. We're really deep, and that's what allows us to play that style of pressure defense."

In Saturday's final, Red Bay shot 6-for-7 from the foul line in the first quarter and also got a pair of threes from Ethan McCoy to open up a 14-7 lead after one. The Tigers were up 24-13 at the half before starting the third quarter with an 11-2 run to take control.

Lawson Glover got things going with a three-point play, and then Carnes had a layup to make it 29-15. McCoy hit two free throws, and then Carnes went 1-for-2 at the line and knocked down the first of his three second-half threes to push the lead to 20 at 35-15.

Phil Campbell fought back to within 13 at 35-22 on a bucket by J.J. Quillen early in the fourth quarter, but then Carnes canned two more threes to

quell any thoughts of a comeback.

Carnes scored 16 second-half points on 5-for-7 shooting from the floor and finished with a game-high 19. Glover added nine points and four rebounds, and McCoy scored eight points. Holden Inmon and Carston Hollander each finished with four points, and Bolton hit a three—his sixth of the tournament. Eli Farris, Caden Keeton and Gage Edgmon had two points apiece.

The Tigers hit six threes as a team and shot 13-for-17 from the foul line.

Malachi Gholston led Phil Campbell with eight points and seven rebounds. Jacob Barnwell scored seven points, and Quillen added six points and five boards. Brennon Misner finished with four points, and Clayton Demartin had seven rebounds to go along with his two points. Braxton Goodson also scored two.

Morrow's 10 county titles with the seventh-and-eighth-grade boys are impressive, but he's still got a long way to go to catch Hall of Famer Donnie Roberts, who led Red Bay's varsity girls to 27 county championships in his 34 years at the helm.

"I don't know that I'll stay that long," Morrow said with a laugh on Saturday. "I keep telling John [Torisky, Red Bay's varsity boys head coach] 'one more year,' but my wife says I can't retire yet. As long as I still enjoy coaching, I'll keep doing it. I enjoy being around the kids, and I really had a good group to work with this year."

'RALLY,' from page 15

We're just gonna get after it in practice, work on some things we need to work on, and try and be the best Belgreen team we can be."

In other action last week:

Belgreen 79 Vina 43

Brant Bragwell scored a season-high 27 points for Belgreen last Thursday, and Scout Bragwell added 20 on 9-for-10 shooting from the floor as the Bulldogs rolled past Vina to improve to 6-0 in Class 1A, Area 12.

Brant Bragwell shot 11-for-19 from the field and 4-for-6 from the foul line on his way to topping the 20-point mark for the fifth time this season. The senior guard also had four rebounds, five assists and six steals. Isac Willingham shot a perfect 4-for-4 from the field and finished with eight points, five rebounds, two assists and two steals. Kostner Bryant scored seven, and Koby Collins had five.

Timmy Newell led the Red Devils with 17 points and 15 rebounds.

things between now and then. I'm just gonna preach to my guys to worry about ourselves and to get ourselves better. If we come in and take care of ourselves, I'm confident.

"If you've got that title or that trophy, if it's in your possession, you always want to hang onto it for as long as you can. These guys, especially these seniors who have won it the past two years, they'd like to go out on a high note and finish their senior year off by winning the county tournament again.

'DAY,' from page 13

Red Bay responded with three makes from beyond the arc (one each by Paden Allison, Carson Corum and Andrew Ray) to close the half on a 9-0 run and take a 15-12 lead into the locker room.

After holding Tharptown scoreless for the final four minutes of the first half, the Tigers tightened the screws even further on defense in the second. Ray converted a steal into a layup, then stole the inbounds pass and laid it in again to make it 19-12. A basket by Coby Jackson and two free throws by Elijah Luster capped off a 17-0 run and stretched the lead to 23-12.

The Wildcats finally snapped their scoreless streak on a free throw by Tyler Amos with 2:14 left in the third quarter, but their field goal drought continued and ultimately reached 12 minutes before Luis Valdez turned a steal into a transition layup with 3:55 remaining in the game. By that time, Red Bay had gotten fourth-quarter buckets from Allison and David Lindsey, plus a three from BP Blair, to push the lead all the way out to 36-13.

Tharptown missed all nine of its shot attempts in the third quarter (getting out-scored 14-1) and finished the night shooting just 32 percent (8-for-25) from the floor with 11 turnovers.

Torisky said that containing Kirby, Tharptown's primary ball-handler and top perimeter scorer, was a priority heading into Saturday's game. [Kirby scored four points before leaving the game with a knee injury early in the fourth quarter.]

"Defensively, we picked it up. Andrew Ray did a good job on the Kirby boy," Torisky said. "The first time we played them, we beat them pretty easily, but he had twenty-something points and got to the basket all the time. Today we challenged [Ray] to

slow him down, and he really did. [Kirby] wasn't the main factor that he was last time, and Andrew's defense was the key there.

"He also forced a couple of turnovers and made some big layups that sparked us. Those back-to-back layups where he stole the inbounds pass, that was a very big stretch. I wouldn't say it was the turning point, because we were already starting to pull away, but it definitely pushed us over the top where we got rid of any chance of a comeback by them. Andrew's a spark plug."

"I like the numbers, first of all," Torisky said. "We've got a lot of kids who can play. It's not just ten kids in a class; we've got eight or nine who can play in that class. It's encouraging that kids want to play, and it's even more encouraging that they can play. We should be pretty deep for the next five or six years, based on what I've got coming from the seventh grade up."

Ray finished with a game-high 13 points on 5-for-6 shooting from the floor. Corum hit two threes and scored six points, and Allison added five points. Bryson Hacker finished with four, and Blair and Charlie Huffman each hit a three. Lindsey, Luster and Jackson scored two points apiece.

The ninth-grade championship was the second of the day for Red Bay's boys, who also won their fifth straight title in the seventh-and-eighth-grade division. The Tigers (provided that 6'3 senior Gath Weatherford returns fully healthy from a recent knee sprain, as expected) will also be the prohibitive favorites to take home the trophy at the varsity county tournament this week at Phil Campbell.

"It was a good day for Red Bay," Torisky said. "We won three, because we got one for the [sev-

enth-and-eighth-grade] girls, too. The county tournament always means something to these kids, because they grew up playing against these guys. For the ninth-graders, there really is no other tournament. You can go find tournaments to play in, but the Franklin County Tournament is it for them. So we try to make it important and tell them, 'Hey, this is your one tournament. We wanna win it.'

"It's a big deal for them. They've won it since they were seventh-graders, and you hate to lose it. Hopefully they'll keep winning it going forward. You hate to give up something that's yours."

When Torisky, who led Red Bay's varsity boys to their first regional appearance last season in 23 years, surveys his program from the bottom level up, he can't help but be excited about what the future holds.

"I like the numbers, first of all," he said. "We've got a lot of kids who can play. It's not just ten kids in a class; we've got eight or nine who can play in that class. Our [seventh-and-eighth-grade] team is basically all seventh-graders, except for two kids. That seventh-grade class is really strong, and the two eighth-graders can play, too. The numbers are good. There's a lot of quality there."

"It's encouraging that kids want to play, and it's even more encouraging that they can play. We should be pretty deep for the next five or six years, based on what I've got coming from the seventh grade up."

Red Bay's ninth-grade team has lost only two games—both to Russellville—this season. The Tigers have one game remaining, against Deshler.

Valdez led Tharptown on Saturday with six points and six rebounds. Grayson Studdard also scored six points, and Amos had one.

'BELGREEN,' from page 13

nine of her 17 points in the first quarter and also finished with 10 rebounds and six steals, helping Belgreen force 27 Vina turnovers. Willingham, a senior guard, buried back-to-back threes right before halftime to send the Lady Bulldogs into the locker room with a 46-21 lead. She finished with a season-high 16 points and also had three rebounds and three steals.

Tate, a junior post player, also posted her season-high, scoring 14 points and pulling down a game-high 16 rebounds to help Belgreen build a 48-43 advantage on the boards.

Last Thursday marked the third time this season that the Lady Bulldogs have had at least four players score in double-figures in the same game.

"I thought we did well inside and out," said head coach Chad Green, whose team took a big step toward nailing down the No. 2 seed for the Area 12 tournament. "Emma [Dempsey] did a good job inside. We crashed the boards and got some offensive rebounds. My girls are unselfish. They kick the ball out to whoever's open and try to find the hot hand. Just like when Gabbie [Moore] comes in off the bench late in the first half; she knows Emma Willingham was hot right before the half, so she drives in and kicks it to her for a couple of outside shots."

Moore, a senior guard, returned to action last Thursday after missing the previous game with an injury and handed out a team-high four assists. Junior forward Katie Dempsey chipped in with eight points and five rebounds, and junior guard Autumn Bragwell added six points, five boards and three assists.

Belgreen shot just 35 percent from the floor, but the up-and-down pace of the game (along with their work on the offensive glass and their full-court pressure) helped the Lady Bulldogs generate a whopping 83 shot attempts—25 more than Vina (12-6 through Sunday, 3-3 in area play).

"I think game to game it's different for us," Green said. "We like to play at a fast pace. There are some teams we can't play a fast pace with, but tonight the game plan was definitely to pressure the basketball and push the ball up the floor."

The result was a pair of 25-point quarters—the first and the fourth—for the Lady Bulldogs, who matched their season-high with 80 points by night's end. They also did solid work on the defensive end for the most part, holding Vina to just 29 percent (17-for-58) from the field.

Freshman guard Rayleigh Guin led the Lady Red Devils with 15 points on 5-for-10 shooting, but no other Vina player managed to shoot at least 50 percent from the floor.

"I feel like Rayleigh is an outstanding point guard. I really do," Green said. "She's just a ninth-grader, but she's improved so much. Her ball-handling ability is good. She's a big-time player."

"I feel like we have a size advantage on them overall. We've got the shooters, but they do, too. They've got shooters, and we definitely have to stay out on them."

Vina made just three threes—one each by Guin, Emma Humphres and Kaitlyn King—on Thursday, compared to eight by the Lady Bulldogs. Belgreen was also better at the foul line, shooting 14-for-20 compared to just 12-for-28 by the Lady Red Devils.

"I felt like we defended them okay," Green said. "In the first half, we gave up some back-side layups on that press where we didn't rotate as well as I want us to on the back side. At times we did an outstanding job rebounding, but at other times we gave up too many offensive boards."

Freshman post player Sara Scott led the Lady Devils with 13 rebounds and also scored nine points. Humphres, a senior, had 11 points and seven rebounds, and Sarah Johnson added eight points and seven boards. King finished with five points, six rebounds and three assists, and Abbie Petree scored one point.

The two teams will meet again this Friday in the semifinals of the county tournament at Phil Campbell, where Belgreen will be seeded second and Vina third. The same scenario could very well play out at the area tournament next month in Bear Creek.

"We've got Hackleburg and Brilliant left [in area play]," Green said. "It looks like Bear Creek [Phillips] has got the one-seed wrapped up, and this gives us the inside track to be the two-seed."

At 14-4 through Sunday, the Lady Bulldogs are in a good position to reach the 20-win mark for the second straight season. Of their four losses, two have come to Phillips (ranked No. 4 in Class 1A) and two have come to county rival Phil Campbell (ranked No. 5 in Class 3A).

"Phil Campbell is an outstanding team in 3A," Green said. "A lot of people feel like they're the best team in northwest Alabama in 3A. Bear Creek is also an outstanding ball team. So our four losses are nothing shabby, but I feel like we can play better against both opponents."

"The biggest area where we can improve is mentally. We've gotta get over that mental hump of believing we can win and not being down fifteen or so points when we go in there."



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Red Bay girls win county title, finish 15-5

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

VINA - Heading into the Franklin County Junior High tournament with a 13-5 record, Red Bay's seventh-and-eighth-grade girls had already exceeded head coach Shauna Humphries' expectations this year.

But the season wouldn't have been complete without a county championship.

"It's a big deal. It's kind of like their state championship," Humphries said. "The county tournament is kind of what you push all year and put in their heads, 'This is what you're working for. This is what we want. This needs to be the best you've played, and you have to go out there and give it your all.'"

The Lady Tigers did exactly that at Vina High School on Saturday, getting by Phil Campbell in the tournament semifinals and then overcoming a rough shooting game in the final with solid defense and a monster effort on the glass to beat Tharptown 30-19 and capture the county crown.

"This is amazing. I'm so proud of our girls," said Humphries, whose team took control with an 11-0 run to close the third quarter and out-rebounded the Lady Wildcats 36-15 on the night. "They've

worked extremely hard. I told them, 'All this running, everything you've put into this—this is what you're playing for.' I couldn't be more proud of them.

"I think we were a little underestimated at the beginning of the year. There was a little doubt there—not from the team, but just in general. A lot of people felt like this would be a rebuilding year, but the girls have worked so hard. They've been very diligent with being at every practice. They really, really wanted to do this. This is one of the hardest-working groups I've had the privilege to work with, and it showed. They ended up having an awesome record and winning the county championship. The girls did an awesome job, and I'm proud of them."

Red Bay had beaten Tharptown twice already this season, but Humphries knew better than to expect a cakewalk on Saturday.

"It's always hard to beat somebody a third time," she said. "I knew this one was gonna be tough. We didn't want the girls to be overconfident and feel like they could just come in here and take it. We knew it was gonna be tough, and it was. [Tharptown] played an awesome game. Their post girls did a great job. Our girls made some great post moves, but they defended us very well."

Defense was undoubtedly the order of the day. Tharptown post player Sarah Mansell blocked nine shots, and Red Bay finished the game shooting just 22 percent (12-for-54) from the floor. The Lady Tigers made up for it by dominating the boards, getting 12 rebounds from Jaycee Vinson, nine rebounds from Brianna Markham and eight rebounds from Amber Mason.

Red Bay was excellent defensively as well, holding the Lady Wildcats to just 18 percent shooting (6-for-33) and forcing them into 16 turnovers.

Humphries wasn't the least bit surprised to have to grind out two wins on Saturday.

"It's been nip-and-tuck all year with everybody in the county," she said. "You had to really come out and play your best and really want it. I know everybody wants it, but we knew coming in that it was just gonna be nip-and-tuck with the girls teams."

Red Bay led 12-10 at the half, but Tharptown's Harleigh Borden scored six straight points to open the third quarter and put the Lady Wildcats in front 16-12. Zoe Henley banked in a shot to get the Lady Tigers back within two and spark an 11-0 run.

Mason scored in the post to tie the game, and a layup by Kaylie Lindley gave Red Bay an 18-16 lead. Gretchen Davis then knocked down back-to-back big shots, first a two-point jumper and then a three with 14 seconds left in the quarter to cap the run and make it 23-16 heading to the fourth.

"That three-pointer Gretchen Davis hit was a big turning point," Humphries said. "She did that in the first game [on Saturday] against Phil Campbell, and then she did it again [against Tharptown]. It had kind of a rolling effect on our girls. After she made that, it really boosted their confidence, and they were like, 'Okay, we can do this.' It was a big turning point."

Mansell nailed a jumper from the foul line to open the fourth quarter and get Tharptown back within five, but Davis scored on a putback to push the lead back to seven. Lindley buried a three from the left corner to make it a 10-point game at 28-18 with 3:30 remaining, essentially sealing the deal.

Lindley finished with 14 points to lead the Lady Tigers and also had three steals. Davis scored nine of her 11 points in the second half. Mason had three points, and Henley added two. Vinson had two steals and two blocks to go along with her 12 rebounds.

Borden led Tharptown with 10 points. Mansell had four points and six rebounds to go with her nine blocks. Kyndall Morgan had three points and six boards, and Morgan Vandiver scored two points.



PHOTO BY BART MOSS

Red Bay's seventh-and-eighth-grade girls beat Phil Campbell and Tharptown on Saturday to win the county championship. Team members (listed in numerical order) are Abby Hicks (1), Zoe Henley (5), Anna Norwood (10), Amber Mason (11), Brianna Markham (12), Ashlyn Deaton (14), Shelby Nichols (20), Gretchen Davis (21), Shaily Warren (22), Jaycee Vinson (32) and Kaylie Lindley (35). The team is coached by Shauna Humphries (left) and Holly Kuykendall (right).

Davis, Allen lead Lady Bobcats past Belgreen

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

PHIL CAMPBELL - Abby Davis and Kallie Allen combined to score 40 points on 17-for-23 shooting from the floor last Tuesday night, leading Phil Campbell's girls to a 56-34 win over a short-handed Belgreen team.

Davis, a senior forward who has signed with UAH, made a layup off the opening tip, knocked down three threes in the first quarter and scored all 23 of her points in a monster first half, shooting 9-for-13 from the floor. Allen, a junior guard who recently joined Davis as a member of the career 1,000-point club, finished with 17 last Tuesday on 8-for-10 shooting, beating the Lady Bulldogs down the floor and slicing through their defense for easy layups.

"Kallie is playing aggressive right now—the way she needs to play," head coach Craig Thomas said of Allen, who had averaged 18.2 points in five games since Christmas Day to bump her season mark up to 12.9 per game. "She's getting to the rim and finishing. I don't think she missed a layup tonight. She's a very, very hard matchup for anybody. When she gets anybody one-on-one, I like it."

Davis, meanwhile, matched her season-high with those three made threes and also finished with seven rebounds, three steals and two blocked shots despite playing only a handful of minutes in the second half.

"Abby played real well," Thomas said of Davis, who topped the 20-point mark for the fifth time this season and was averaging 15.8 points per game through Sunday. "She had a good night shooting the ball. I think she was three-for-three on threes."

The Lady Bobcats (14-3 through Sunday) shot 52 percent (15-for-29) from the floor in the first half and took a 38-12 lead into the locker room. Playing without injured seniors Gabbie Moore (the team's primary ball-handler and second-leading scorer at 11.3 points per game) and Camie Terrell, Belgreen struggled to get anything going offensively.

The Lady Bulldogs shot just 1-for-9 from the floor in the first quarter with eight turnovers and finished the night shooting 24 percent (12-for-49).

"With Gabbie being out, I think it disrupted their offense a little bit," Thomas said. "She gets everything started for them. It puts more pressure on us when she's in there. Overall I thought we defended them real well. There were one or two times where we got caught looking and they threw it over the top of us, but other than that we did a good job."

Thomas and the Lady Bobcats had two primary goals defensively last Tuesday: Contain 6'1 sophomore Emma Dempsey, who came in leading Belgreen in scoring at 13.2 points per game; and limit open looks from the perimeter for junior guards Gracie Dempsey and Autumn Bragwell, who had made 41 threes between them on the season.

The 5'11 Davis did a nice job on Emma Dempsey, holding her to just four points, and the Lady Bulldogs did not make their first three-pointer until midway through the third quarter. [They finished with just three threes on the night.]

"We sort of fronted [Emma] Dempsey and tried to help on the back side with her," Thomas said. "I thought we did a good job defensively and pretty well shut her down. Abby can match up with her, because she's as long as [Dempsey] is. With their guards, we tried to run them off the three-point line and not give up the three a whole lot."

Trailing 6-4 in the early going after a pair of free throws by Gracie Dempsey, Belgreen endured a scoreless stretch of nearly seven minutes during which the Lady Bobcats ran off 15 unanswered points—including seven by Allen and six by Davis. Emma Dempsey broke the drought with a bank shot at the 6:35 mark of the second quarter, but Davis answered with a three-point play to make it 24-6.

Sophomore guard Caitlynn Mills knocked down a three for Phil Campbell, and then another three-point play by Davis made it 30-10 with 3:20 left in the first half. Davis put in three more buckets before the half was done, helping the Lady Bobcats take a 26-point lead into the locker room.

Allen scored eight points on 4-for-5 shooting in the third quarter and finished the night with three assists and two steals go along with her 17 points. Mills had eight points and four rebounds, and Makayla Baker added five points. Faith Cook chipped in with two points and five rebounds off the bench, and Kenner Scott had one point, two assists and three boards. Katie Thomas pulled down a game-high nine rebounds.

Gracie Dempsey shot 6-for-7 from the foul line and led Belgreen with 14 points. She also had seven rebounds and three assists. Bragwell hit two threes and scored seven points. Emma Dempsey and Ansley Tate each finished with four points, and Katie Dempsey had three points and eight rebounds. Megan Smith added two points.

The two teams could very well meet again on the same floor this Saturday night, January 19, in the finals of the Franklin County Tournament. [Phil Campbell is the top seed, and Belgreen is seeded second.] If that matchup

materializes, Thomas expects a much different type of game—particularly if the Lady Bulldogs have all their pieces back by then.

"There would be a much bigger crowd here, with a lot more on the line," he said. "They'll play with a lot more intensity. They were sort of flat tonight. They didn't get back on defense very well. They had a hard time with their transition defense, and Gabbie takes care of a lot of that."

In other action last week:

Phil Campbell 70 East Lawrence 28

Kallie Allen scored a season-high 24 points for Phil Campbell last Friday, and Caitlynn Mills matched her season-high with 19 as the Lady Bobcats crushed East Lawrence 70-28 to improve to 3-0 in Class 3A, Area 14.

Phil Campbell (14-3 overall through Sunday and ranked No. 5 by the ASWA) got 10 points from Mills, eight from Allen and four from Abby Davis in the first quarter, racing out to a 24-6 lead. Allen scored eight more points in the second quarter, and three-pointers from Katie Thomas and Kaci Harris helped the Lady Bobcats take a 40-15 lead into the locker room.

Allen put up eight more points in the third quarter, and Mills added seven as Phil Campbell out-scored the Lady Eagles 21-8 to open up a 61-23 cushion.

Allen finished the night 7-for-9 from the foul line, and Mills knocked down three of the team's six threes. Davis finished with eight points, and Thomas and Harris added five apiece. Makayla Baker scored four, Jade Roberson had three and Faith Cook added two.

The Lady Bobcats shot 14-for-19 from the foul line as a team. They were in position to clinch the top seed and home-court advantage for the area tournament with a win at Colbert Heights on Monday.

Phil Campbell's girls will open play as the top seed at the Franklin County Tournament with a game against either Red Bay or Tharptown on Thursday.

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