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 113 Washington Ave. NW
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Local Vietnam vet among those honored by *In Memory* program

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

Eight Alabama men will soon be inducted into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's *In Memory* program, including deceased veteran Harold G. Hill of Russellville.

Hill, known to most folks as Glen, served in the United States Army. He joined Recon Team Illinois in August of 1971 and later held the Assistant Team Leader position, where he remained until February of 1972 when the team was deactivated.

Hill died June 7, 2011 from complications from Agent Orange.

The *In Memory* program honors Vietnam veterans whose lives were cut short as a result of their service after returning home from Vietnam.

According to Hill's family, he never spoke of his Black Ops missions until shortly before his death. Before he was assigned to Recon, he was a gunner in a helicopter that rescued American soldiers from fire fights. Hill was a Green Beret and actually trained as a radio operator, according to Hill's sister, Betty H. Sparks.

See 'MEMORY,' Page 11



COURTESY PHOTO
 Harold Glen Hill of Russellville, who died in June of 2011, was a Green Beret in the United States Army.

'No Truck' signs on Highway 22 cause brief stir prior to removal

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

Although it was just over 24 hours from being posted that they were taken down, two signs restricting trucks from Highway 22 caused quite a controversy several weeks ago.

After fielding complaints from a couple residents along 22, Franklin County commissioner Jason Miller contacted the Franklin County Highway Department and asked for a work order to have the signs installed on 22 from Highway 43 east through the Spruce Pine community.

Two signs, one facing east and one facing west, were installed, and almost immediately there were questions about why the signs were erected.

Sue Bowen, a Spruce Pine resident who lives on 22, said she received calls asking about the signs. By the

time Bowen drove down the road to investigate, the signs had been removed.

Miller said he was responsible for having the signs installed, but after he realized there were several businesses reliant on truck traffic located on 22, the signs were taken down.

"It was a mistake. They stayed up less than 24 hours," Miller said. "I'm not going to run from that, though. It was me who had them put up."

A large number of trucks, including many owned by Ralton Baker Trucking, travel 22 on a daily basis. Baker said he has many trucks hauling loads from the Grissom Pit in Frog Pond to Alliance Sand Pit on Hwy. 75 by way of 22.

See 'SIGNS,' Page 3

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David Guy Butler, Russellville, age 41
Died Wednesday, May 8, 2019. Memorial service held at West Highland Baptist Church. Remains buried in Ardmore Cemetery. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Hershel Ray Dutton, Town Creek, age 71
Died Saturday, May 18, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in King Cemetery in Town Creek.

Annie Marie Engelthaler, Russellville, age 81
Died Sunday, May 19, 2019. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Teresa Jane Frederick Hallman Hancock, Phil Campbell, age 51
Died Saturday, May 11, 2019. Memorial service held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville.

Frances Ann Madden, Russellville, age 62
Died Thursday, May 16, 2019. A memorial service was to be held at a later date. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Patricia Anne Pratt, Russellville, age 72
Died Tuesday, May 14, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Center United Methodist Cemetery in Brilliant.



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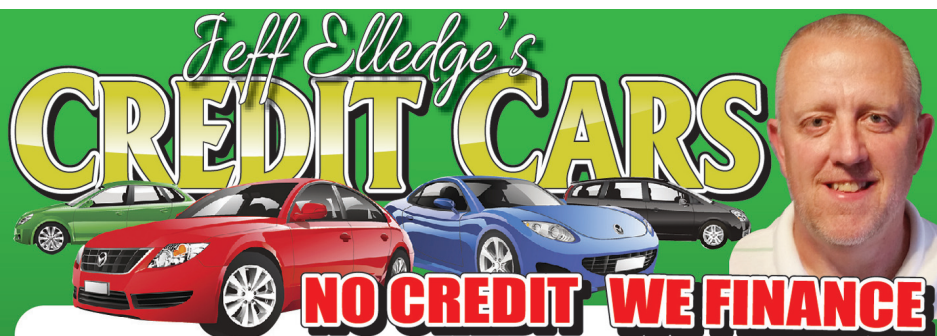


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Odom to retire as principal at Phil Campbell

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

After voting in March not to renew the contracts of the Tharptown High School and Phil Campbell High School principals, the Franklin County Board of Education voted to approve PCHS principal Gary Odom's retirement at the board's May 14 meeting.

The board previously voted at its March 19 meeting not to renew Odom's contract or the contract of Tharptown principal Barry Laster. Odom's retirement is effective June 30, 2019. There was no personnel action at Tuesday's meeting related to Laster.

Both principal jobs have been posted for applications and were to remain posted through May 20.

Other action, including additional personnel moves, approved by the board includes:

- Approving the retirement of Patricia Hudson, bus driver at Phil Campbell and Yolanda Odom, PCHS English teacher, effective June 1.

- Approving the resignation of Lindsey Norwood McCutcheon, cosmetology instructor Franklin County Career Tech and resignation in supplement of PCHS varsity boys basketball coach Brett Thomas.

- Approving the employment of Linda Castillo, bi-lingual registered school nurse, effective August 1 and Richie Hester as summer school teacher and Jacob Hamilton as a volunteer football coach at Phil Campbell.

- The hiring of Seamless Summer Child Nutrition Program temporary employees Teresa Simmons, Katrina Willingham, Sena Mixon, Lavelle Mays,

June Smith, Amy Strickland, Chrissy Lewey, Rhonda Wagnon, Robin Fugate, Myra Coats and Donna Garrett.

- Awarding the bid for electrical wiring of the Belgreen Home Economics and Ag Building to Clearwinds as the lowest responsible bidder at bid price of \$8,538.59. Awarding the bid for walk-in freezer for Red Bay High School to Hotel and Restaurant Supply as lowest responsible bidder at bid price of \$33,975.

- Approving the compensation agreement paying Nina Jackson, PCES yearbook sponsor, \$500 in compensation for yearbook supplement. PCES will reimburse the board \$500 plus applicable benefits.

- Approving summer school for 2019 to be held at Belgreen School and Vina School if necessary. Summer school dates will be May 30, 2019, through June 28, 2019. Fees will be \$225 per half credit for in system students and \$425 for full credit, and \$275 for half credit and \$475 for full credit for out of system students.

- Approving out-of-state trips including Tharptown Robotics Team to Washington, D.C., the Plains, Va., and Manassas, Va., May 16-20, and Franklin County Career Tech Center (two students) to San Antonio for SFLA National Leadership Conference June 28-July 3.

- The board also heard a report on the annual bus inspection from the State Department of Transportation. Dr. Johnny Cleveland told board members the system was recognized as having one of the top fleets in the state by inspectors.

The next regular meeting of the Franklin County Board of Education will be May 28 at 4:30 p.m.

REB receives Gold Risk Management Award

Submitted to the FFP

Russellville Electric Board was recently awarded a Gold Risk Management Award by the insurance divisions of the Alabama League of Municipalities.

Approximately 770 public entities participate in one or both of the Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM) sponsored insurance programs, which are the Municipal Workers Compensation Fund (MWCF) and the Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation (AMIC).

The Board of Directors of both insurance programs approved the establishment of a Risk Management Award system in 2002. The award system recognizes those members who have instituted risk management and loss control activities in an effort to reduce their loss ratio.

Risk management and loss control activities not only benefit the member's loss ratio but also the overall success of the League sponsored insur-

ance programs.

Through the efforts of Russellville Electric Board, employee, property and liability losses are being minimized, and—most importantly—employees and citizens are reaping the rewards of a safer workplace and community.

Through the efforts of Russellville Electric Board, employee, property and liability losses are being minimized, and—most importantly—employees and citizens are reaping the rewards of a safer workplace and community.

Recipients of the President's Risk Management Award, which include the top five percent of those members with minimal losses for a five-year period, received a specially designed memento.

Three additional levels of achievement—Gold, Silver and Bronze—were also recognized. Recipients in these categories receive a plaque for the first year they are acknowledged and then

a plate to be attached to the plaque for subsequent years.

The Gold, Silver and Bronze levels were for loss ratios of below five percent; five percent to 20 percent; and 20 percent to 40 percent, respectively.

The Alabama League of Municipalities was organized in 1935 and has served since that time as the recognized voice of the cities and towns in Alabama. Representing more than 450 member municipalities, the League works to secure enactment of legislation enabling all cities and towns to perform their functions more efficiently and effectively; offers specialized training for both municipal officials and employees; holds conferences and meetings where views and experiences of officials are exchanged; and conducts continuing studies of the legislative, administrative and operational needs, problems and functions of Alabama's municipal governments.

For more information, visit www.alalm.org.

'SIGNS' from page 1

Bowen, Baker and several of his employees attended the Franklin County Commission's May 13 work session to discuss truck usage on 22, as well as the condition of the road.

"I want to help Ralton. He employs approximately 80 people, including 35 in Franklin County, and we need his business," Bowen said. "I don't want you to think we don't want trucks up and down our road. We just want our road fixed.

"I'm here to find out what steps we can go through to get our road resurfaced, widened and made safer from Highway 43 to Spruce Pine."

There are two businesses, Woodard RV and ML Docks, either located on 22 or right off it in the Spruce Pine area. Both businesses have regular truck traffic on 22.

Miller said he was responsible for having the signs installed, but after he realized there were several businesses reliant on truck traffic located on 22, the signs were taken down.

"It was a mistake. They stayed up less than 24 hours," Miller said. "I'm not going to run from that,

though. It was me who had them put up."

Franklin County engineer David Palmer said the commission would have to vote before a road could be restricted to truck traffic. Additionally, Palmer said there would likely have to be testing of the road surface to determine whether it has the capacity to withstand the legal load limits as set by Alabama law.

As far as improvements on 22, Palmer said he would apply for grant funding.

"They have set aside a considerable amount of money for industrial access," Palmer said, "and I'll be more than happy to turn in a project on it. We might have a good shot at it."

As far as improvements on 22, Palmer said he would apply for grant funding out of funds set aside for industrial access improvements.

"They have set aside a considerable amount of money for industrial access," Palmer said, "and I'll be more than happy to turn in a project on it. We

might have a good shot at it."

Baker said he was satisfied now that the signs had been taken down, but he shared with commissioners the economic impact of one of his trucks to the county.

"The fuel tax for highway fuel is 43.4 cents per gallon. One truck used 25,657 gallons of fuel last year, costing \$11,135.14 in fuel tax," Baker said. "One truck/trailer unit will use 18 tires per year. A set of tires for this unit will cost \$9,065.36, of which \$1,073.78 is taxes and fees. Insurance for one truck per year is \$9,360. The tag for one truck is \$1,049.64, and we pay a heavy use tax per truck of \$550. For the sand plant, we use 200,000 gallons of fuel in Franklin County for a total tax of \$86,000. And we pay 10 cents per ton on a million tons of sand per year for \$100,000.

"So I feel like I own part of these roads, too, because we're paying for them."

None of the citizens who initially complained about truck usage on 22 attended Monday's commission work session.

Honey Do: Seal & stain

Last week we looked at getting ready for some summer fun by cleaning your deck. As we continue, we will apply sealer or stain to give your deck a great look and protect it for the coming months.

Before applying stain or sealer, use a deck brightener or cleaner. Deck brightener will restore wood to its natural appearance and prepare the surface by also removing mildew, rust and dark stains in the wood.

Make sure your deck is compatible with whatever cleaner you choose, especially if your deck is made of soft wood like redwood or cedar. Also check the manufacturer's instructions to see whether you should start with a dry or wet deck.

Try to clean on a calm day to keep wind from blowing the cleaning agent around the yard. Use a deck stain applicator to apply the cleaner to the entire deck, making sure the cleaner does not puddle.

Scrub tough areas with a stiff brush or a broom. Don't use wire brushes; wire bristles can break off into the wood and cause rust spots. Follow the product's instructions regarding how long to let the cleaner soak into the wood, usually about 10 to 15 minutes. After the cleaner

has been allowed to soak, rinse the deck thoroughly with a hose.

Choosing the right stain can make your deck staining project last longer.

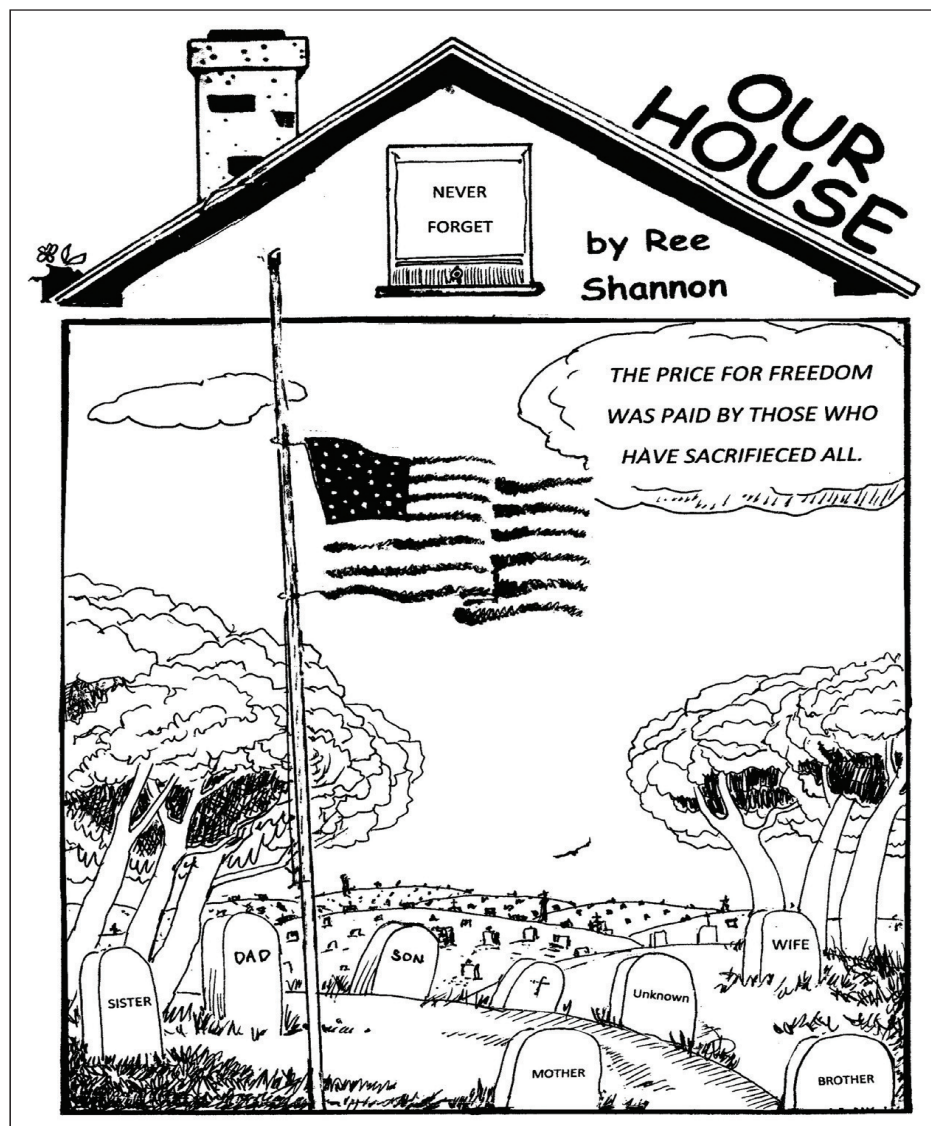
Inexpensive deck sealers, such as clear or tinted water-repellent sealants, provide only basic protection. These options generally don't last as long as semi-transparent or solid stains. Semi-transparent stains last about three to four years; solid stains can last five years or more, depending upon the weather. Also, solid stains come in a wide variety of decorative colors. Because they contain a significant amount of pigment, they are useful for covering up the damaged wood fibers of weathered wood.

When choosing a stain, remember the finished color varies based upon the wood itself. If you are applying a new stain over an old one, choose a color that is similar to or darker than the original. Test the stain in an inconspicuous area to ensure you are satisfied with its color and appearance on the wood. Do not apply a liquid-resistant sealer prior



Doug Green

See 'SEAL,' Page 7



FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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Letters to the editor

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

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Who wants to be a millionaire?

Five simple habits the average millionaire practices everyday

I'm going to come right out and say it: Anyone can become a millionaire in America today. And when I say anyone, I mean anyone—that means you, too!

Did you know there are about 12 million Americans today with a net worth of at least \$1 million? And the good news is, it doesn't take a rocket scientist (or a professional athlete's salary) to reach millionaire status. No matter who you are or where you came from, you have the power to create the financial future you want for yourself and your family.

With National Be a Millionaire Day just around the corner, here's a list of five simple habits that average millionaires practice every single day—and you can, too!

1. They're avid readers.

President Harry Truman once said, "Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers." One of the reasons millionaires become millionaires is because of their constant desire to learn. To them, leadership books and biographies are much more important than the latest reality show or who got kicked off the island. When they have free time, they use it wisely—by reading.

Everyday millionaires spend most of their lives sacrificing temporary pleasures for long-term success. They have no problem buying an older, used car, living in a modest neighborhood and wearing inexpensive clothes. They don't care about keeping up with the Joneses.

2. They understand delayed gratification.

Everyday millionaires spend most of their lives sacrificing temporary pleasures for long-term suc-

cess. They have no problem buying an older, used car, living in a modest neighborhood and wearing inexpensive clothes. They don't care about keeping up with the Joneses.

These decisions allow them to do things like save for retirement and college, and build up a large down payment for their dream home. They realize that instant gratification is fun—but delayed gratification is so much better. Today's sacrifices set them up for tomorrow's success.

3. They stay away from debt.

One of the biggest myths out there is that average millionaires see debt as a tool. Not true! If they want something they can't afford, they save and pay cash for it later.

Car payments, student loans, same-as-cash financing plans—these just aren't part of their vocabulary. That's why they win with money. They don't owe anything to the bank, so every dollar they earn stays with them to spend, save and give!

Debt is the biggest obstacle to building wealth. I tell everyone: You need to avoid it like the plague. Your dreams are too important!

4. They live on a budget.

Your budget is your plan. And you can't build a million-dollar net worth without a plan. Success isn't an accident. You are in charge of your own wealth building.

Just like you build a house by starting with the foundation, you build wealth by starting with the



Chris Hogan

See 'MILLIONAIRE,' Page 7



Diversify advisors?

Dear Dave,
We're wondering if we should diversify our investments by hiring multiple advisors with different companies, so we won't have all our eggs in one basket. Your thoughts would be appreciated.

Marya

Dear Marya,
I would get *one* advisor, and I wouldn't invest all my *mutual funds* in one fund. Virtually all mutual fund advisors can sell pretty much any mutual fund, and you can buy an array of different mutual funds from different companies through one advisor. *That* gives you diversification. So, there's really no advantage in having multiple advisors, unless you don't trust someone's advice. And if you don't trust someone's advice, why are you working with them in the first place?

I personally have one financial advisor, and I trust that person. Still, I ask lots of questions and make sure I understand everything that's going on with my money and the investment before making a decision. Why are you recommending this? What is it about them you like? Show me the fund and how it compares to the S&P *and* other funds in the same category. If you approach it this way and, again, you have one advisor, it's a learning process, and *you* become a more educated investor. Plus, after a while you can create your own diversification.

Never put money into something you don't fully understand!

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 16 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.*

Lost and overwhelmed

Dear Dave,
My fiancé and I just started your class, but we're having trouble getting our beginner emergency fund together. We both work full-time, and I make \$59,000 a year while he has worked in retail for several years and makes \$22,000 to \$25,000.

I'm trying to manage a couple of side jobs, but we just can't seem to get our budget to work in a way that will allow us to save anything. Can you help us?

Adrienne

Dear Adrienne,
First of all, your finances should remain separate until you're married. There shouldn't be a "we" in terms of money at this point. You can always run a single budget that you both look at and prepare for *after* you're married, but right now he shouldn't be paying your bills and you shouldn't be paying his bills.

The biggest problem I see is that he's making no money. He needs to get a better job. He can't pay his bills, and in the process he's sucking *you* dry. I'm sure your fiancé is a good, hard-working man, but he needs to make a serious career shift soon—like now!

In the meantime, this guy needs to take on a part-time job or two until he gets that career shifted.

It's not really a budgeting problem you're looking at. It's an income issue.

Dave

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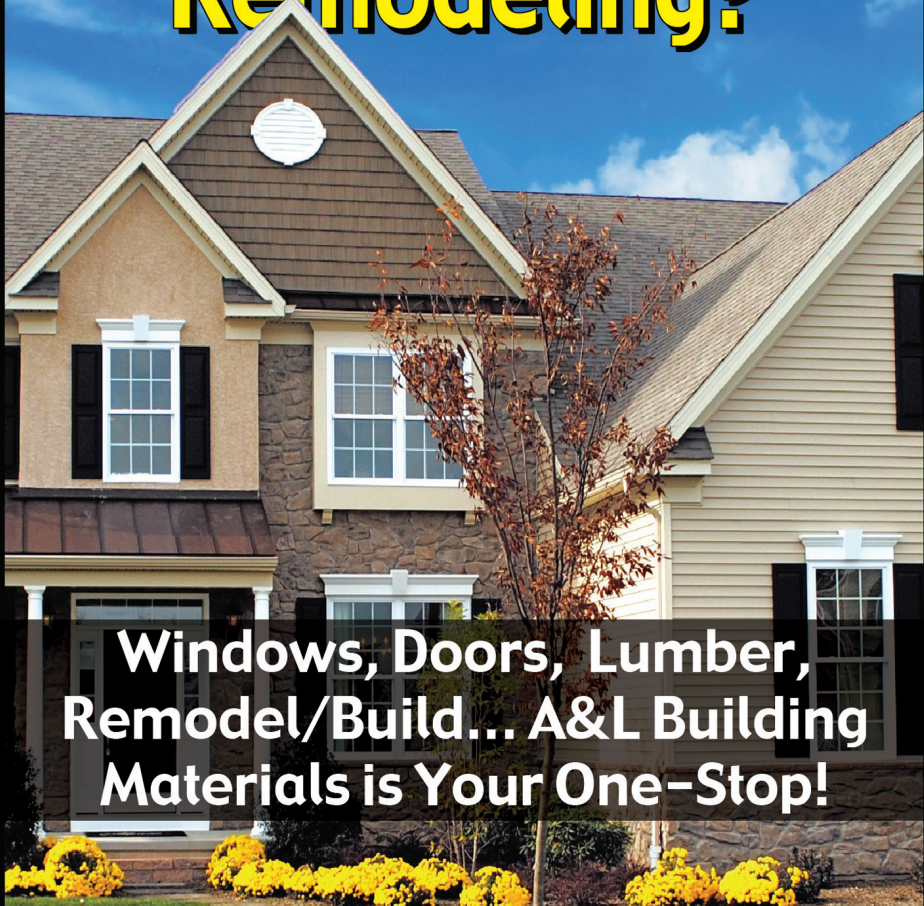
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EVENTS OF INTEREST • FAMILY REUNIONS • PLAYS • CHURCH GATHERINGS • EDUCATIONAL • CLUB MEETINGS

Russellville Masonic Lodge 371 is selling Boston butts for Memorial Day. Butts are \$30 and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pickup will be Saturday, May 25 from 8-10 a.m. at the Lodge on Coffee Street.

You are invited to a big gospel singing this Saturday, May 25 at Sloss Lake in Russellville. Singing starts at 12 p.m. There will be local talent from 12-12:30 p.m., Williams Family from 12:30-1:30 p.m., Jeff Sanford from 1:30-2:30 p.m., Marvin Morrow Vernell from 3-4 p.m. and the Freemans from 4-5 p.m. Everyone is welcome, and please bring lawn chairs!

C 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!

Liberty Chapel Free Will Baptist Church will have revival with evangelist Bro. Shane Williams June 2-5, with Sunday service at 5 p.m. and Monday-Wednesday services at 7 p.m. The church is located on Hwy. 81 in the Oak Grove/East Franklin community. Pastor Bro. Brian Fuller and congregation invite everyone to attend!

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 June 4. 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 June 6. Call 1-800-MYDIXIE or 256-324-2317. The Sons of Confederate Veterans 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. Join us for the celebration of our heritage! The minimum age for membership is 12.

On Saturday, June 8 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., the Russellville Bicentennial Committee will present the second in the Saturday history series called "The Way We Were: Historical Demonstrations, Exhibits, and Portrayals." Schedule: 10-11 a.m. Civil War Historians Jerry Smith and Tim Kent; 11-11:30 a.m. Civil War questions and answers and examination of Civil War artifacts; 11:45-12:45 Lisa Green, Alabama State president of the Order of the Confederate Rose; 1-2:30 p.m. Indian historian Butch Walker. There will be a living history camp outside and wagon rides for the children. Other Saturday events will be on July 13, August 10 and September 14. There will be different demonstrations, exhibits and portrayals each month. All events will be at the Russellville Canteen at 217 Washington Avenue. Call Doris Hutcheson at 256-332-4085 or Chris Ozbirn at 256-332-8827.

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert at the Roxy Theatre on Saturday, June 8 at 7 p.m. General admission seating. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Call 256-335-4356. The KGB will be the featured act at a show sponsored by the Franklin County Arts Council at the Roxy on the second Saturday of each month. Proceeds will benefit the renovation and restoration of the Roxy.

St. Paul C.M.E. Church will celebrate Rev. Zethelyn R. Johnson Second Appreciation at the Todd Centre in Russellville on Sunday, June 9 at 2 p.m. Guest speaker will be Dr. William Boyd. Come and join us in this celebration. We are looking forward to a blessed time in the Lord! Dinner will be served. For more information, call 256-332-6177.

American Legion Post 64 will meet Thursday, June 11 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

Attention all young ladies of Colbert, Franklin and Lauderdale counties entering 10th, 11th and 12th grades in the Fall of 2019!!! The Distinguished Young Women Scholarship Program will be held Saturday, August 3, 2019 at Norton Auditorium on the campus of The University of North Alabama. Young ladies entering the 12th grade will have the opportunity to compete for cash scholarships as well as many other scholarships to colleges and universities. Also, each county winner will have the opportunity to represent her county at the state program in Montgomery in January of 2020. Information and registration meetings will be held Wednesday, May 8, Wednesday, May 15 and Wednesday, June 5 from 4-5 p.m. at First Metro Bank, Muscle Shoals. Young ladies entering the 10th and 11th grades have the opportunity to be "DYW Little Sisters." For more information, please contact Susan Hargett at 256-710-9239 or Katernia Cole-Coffey at 256-332-8880, or check information on our Facebook page at Distinguished Young Women of Northwest Alabama, or email dshargett@aol.com. Other information and sign up is available at www.DistinguishedYW.org. Please contact us no later than Sunday, June 23.

'MILLIONAIRE,' from page 4

budgeting basics. And then you keep following them. When you're making a lot of money, you don't stop managing it, right?

Average millionaires have made a habit of budgeting every month. They know what's coming in and what's leaving their bank accounts. If you only remember one thing, it should be this: Budgeting is the key to winning with money. You have to tell each dollar where to go at the beginning of the month, so you don't wonder where it all went.

5. They give.

Sure, some rich people can be selfish jerks—just like anyone else. But the everyday millionaires who live down the street, the ones you don't even realize are wealthy, are some of the most giving people you'll ever meet. I know because I've met a lot of them. They work hard, save and respect the ability of others to do the same.

Whether it's tithing at church, donating to a charity or just giving to friends and family, these people have generous spirits. They realize the most important thing you can do with wealth is help others. That's actually why they continue building their wealth. They realize they can't take it with them when they die. Instead of spending it all on the latest toys, they choose to leave a legacy for the people who mean the most to them.

Ready to become an everyday millionaire?

Let's be clear: This idea that wealthy people always live in mega-mansions and wear \$500 jeans is a myth. Being successful with money is as simple as living a modest lifestyle that follows a few basic principles. The more of these habits you follow, the more successful you'll be with money. Just ask Warren Buffett.

I'm here to tell you: Building wealth has almost nothing to do with your income or background. In my new book, *Everyday Millionaires: How Ordinary People Built Extraordinary Wealth—And You Can Too*, my team and I studied 10,000 U.S. millionaires (the largest study on millionaires ever conducted) and found that most of them don't look the part. The majority live in normal, middle-class neighborhoods and drive modest cars.

So, if you're ready to get serious about wealth-building, talk with financial professionals. They'll help you build a clear wealth-building plan and keep you focused on your way to becoming an everyday millionaire!

Chris Hogan is a #1 national best-selling author, dynamic speaker, and financial expert at Ramsey Solutions. Hogan challenges and equips people to take control of their money and reach their financial goals through The Chris Hogan Show, his national TV appearances, and live events across the nation. You can follow Hogan on Twitter and Instagram at @ChrisHogan360 and online at chrishogan360.com or facebook.com/chrishogan360.

'SEAL,' from page 4

to deck staining or the staining solution will be unable to soak into the wood.

Apply a thin, even coat of stain using a paint roller with an extension handle, covering three boards at a time. You might also consider using a spray applicator; this provides the most even application. Do not allow stain to puddle. Repeat the process until the entire deck is covered. Use a paintbrush to cover corners and other difficult areas such as steps, railings board ends and cracks.

Rinse your roller covers and brushes with water or paint thinner until the water or solvent runs clear. Store applicators in plastic bags or hang them on nails or hooks to dry. Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



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Northwest-Shoals pins new nursing graduates

Submitted to the FFP

Northwest-Shoals Community College's Nursing Program honored 86 nursing graduates at its annual pinning ceremony Thursday, May 9 at Woodmont Baptist Church in Florence.

NW-SCC director of nursing Brittney Humphres, faculty and students participated in the ceremony that included remarks by Dr. Glenda Colagross, president of NW-SCC; Kimberly Brooks, NW-SCC Practical Nursing (PN) class representative; Casey Springer, NW-SCC Associate Degree Nursing (AND) class representative; and special remarks by Sarah Wilkinson-Buchmann, DNP, RN Alabama State Nurses Association president. Remarks were followed by the presentation of the pins, the Nightingale Pledge and candle lighting.

The symbolic tradition of the ceremonial pinning originated in the 1860s at the Nightingale School of Nursing Hospital in London. The nursing pin received by graduates is a type of badge, awarded by the program's faculty as a symbolic welcome into the profession. Both PN students and ADN students participated in the ceremony.

The PN participants from the *Free Press* coverage area were:

- Hodges: Kristi O'Dell.
- Phil Campbell: Trevor Farley.
- Russellville: Candi Flanagan, Yesica Gonzalez Vargas, Megan Riley and Mariza Vela-Astrain.

The AND participants from the *Free Press* coverage area were:

- Hackleburg: Ashton Smith.
- Phil Campbell: Hannah Newell, Kaylee Saarinen and Cortney Sides.
- Red Bay: Kaitlin Gresham.
- Russellville: Ricardo Arango, Jennifer Groce, Sadie Wade, Callie Woods.
- Vina: Sydney Creekmore.

RC&D provides grant to Russellville High School

Submitted to the FFP

The Northwest Alabama Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council gave \$10,320.51 to Russellville High School in Franklin County.

Mr. Jason Goodwin, principal, stated in his final report submitted to RC&D that the money received from the agency was used to purchase 50 Chromebooks. He stated that the high school classrooms needed more technology to help students increase ACT scores and college- and career-readiness levels.

"Two of our core contents were having to share 30 Chromebooks between 750 students each week when utilizing our online ACT Prep Program," Goodwin said.

Joel Pounders, RC&D Franklin County Board member, recommended this project to be reviewed by Lauranne James, executive director of RC&D, for board approval. It was presented to the Board and was favorably approved.

Roger Hayes, chairman of RC&D Board, expressed his appreciation to Senator Larry Stutts and Representatives Jamie Kiel and Proncey Robertson for their support of RC&D in the state legislature.

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Keller Hospital first in region to use Mako System

Innovative Robotic Technology assists surgeons with joint replacement procedures

Submitted to the FFP

Helen Keller Hospital is the first hospital in north-west Alabama to offer robotic-arm assisted total knee, partial knee and total hip replacements with Stryker's Mako System.

This highly advanced robotic technology transforms the way joint replacement surgery is performed, enabling surgeons to have a more predictable surgical experience with better accuracy. The demand for joint replacements is expected to rise in the next decade. Total knee replacements in the United States are estimated to increase by 673 percent by 2030, while primary total hip replacements are estimated to increase by 174 percent. Yet studies have shown that approximately 30 percent of patients are dissatisfied after conventional surgery.

This is one of the reasons the surgeons from North Alabama Bone and Joint came to us with the idea of purchasing the Mako System.

"With Mako, we can provide each patient with a personalized surgical experience based on their

specific diagnosis and anatomy," said Paul Storey, president of Helen Keller Hospital. "Using a virtual 3D model, Mako allows surgeons to create each patient's surgical plan pre-operatively before entering the operating room. During surgery, we can validate that plan and make any necessary adjustments while guiding the robotic-arm to execute that plan.

"With Mako, we can provide each patient with a personalized surgical experience based on their specific diagnosis and anatomy," said Paul Storey, president of Helen Keller Hospital.

"It's exciting to be able to offer this transformative technology across the joint replacement service line to perform total knee, total hip and partial knee replacements."

The surgeons that will be using the Mako System are, Dr. Jeffery Goodman, Dr. Jeff Hovater, Dr. A.E. Joiner, Dr. John Mann, Dr. Johnathan Wright, and Dr. John Young. The first surgery will be performed this month.

The Mako Total Knee, partial knee and total hip

application are treatment options designed to relieve the pain caused by degenerative joint disease. Through CT-based 3D modeling of bone anatomy, surgeons can use the Mako System to create a personalized surgical plan and identify the implant size, orientation and alignment based on each patient's unique anatomy. The Mako System also enables surgeons to virtually modify the surgical plan intra-operatively and assists the surgeon in executing bone resections.

Stryker's Mako has been in the news recently throughout all of Alabama. The University of Alabama's head coach, Nick Saban, had hip replacement surgery that was assisted by the Mako system. Saban was up using a walker the day after the surgery and a cane two days after. He was back to work within the week.

"We are proud to be the first hospital in north-west Alabama to offer this highly advanced robotic technology in our area," Storey said. "The addition of Mako to our orthopedic service line further demonstrates our commitment to provide the community with outstanding healthcare."

FRANKLIN COUNTY CHILD NUTRITION SEAMLESS SUMMER 2019

Seamless Summer Feeding Programs will be at the following schools:

BELGREEN, EAST FRANKLIN, PHIL CAMPBELL, RED BAY, THARPTOWN, AND VINA


- Days of Operation will be Tuesday May 28 – July 19, 2019 (closed July 4th and 5th)
- Times of operation is Monday through Friday, 7:00 – 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.
- All meals are FREE and served to children 0-18 years of age. The child must be present to be served. Students do not have to attend a the school in which they are being served a meal. For example: if you attend Vina High School during the school year, you may eat at any of the other schools in the Summer.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ROBYNN BRAGWELL AT 256-331-2136 OR BY EMAIL, robynnbragwell@franklin.k12.al.us

FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

SEAMLESS SUMMER LUNCH MENU


2019

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Pizza Tossed salad w/ Tomatoes Ranch Dressing Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Jello Pudding Cup Choice of Milk	Ham n' Cheese Hoagie Lettuce and Tomato Baked Beans Choice of Chips Mini Rice Krispie Treat Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	Chicken Sandwich Lettuce, Tomato and Pickle Spear Choice of Chips Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Choice of Milk
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	 Milk Choices: 1% White Milk Fat Free Strawberry Milk Fat Free Chocolate Milk
Smuckers Peanut Butter & Jelly Uncrustable Sandwich Choice of Chips String Cheese Veggie Bag w/ Dressing Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Brownie Choice of Milk	Grilled Hotdog Kraut French Fries Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Fresh Baked Cookie Choice of Milk	

FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

SEAMLESS SUMMER BREAKFAST MENU

2019

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mini Pancakes Sausage Link Cereal Bowl Cereal Bar Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice, Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	Sausage Biscuit Cereal Bowl Cereal Bar Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice, Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	Breakfast Pizza Cereal Bowl Cereal Bar Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice or Dried Fruit Choice of Milk
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	 Milk Choices: 1% White Milk Fat Free Strawberry Milk Fat Free Chocolate Milk
Berry Pancake on a Stick Pancake on a Stick Cereal Bowl Cereal Bar Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice, Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	Chicken Patty Biscuit Cereal Bowl Cereal Bar Choice of Fresh Fruit, Canned Fruit, Fruit Juice, Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	

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Classifieds

256.332.0255

BUSINESS • LOST & FOUND • GARAGE SALES • PETS • APPLIANCES • HELP WANTED • SERVICES • APPLIANCES • CLOTHING • FURNITURE

YARD SALES

Moving sale at 921 Hwy. 80, Russellville. Friday, May 24 through Thursday, May 30. Furniture, appliances, lots more. 8 am-until.

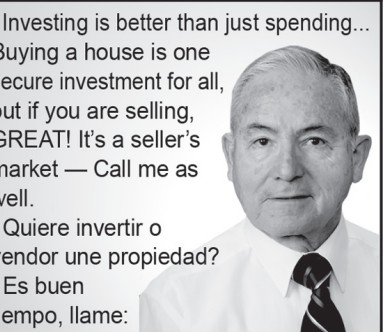
LOST AND FOUND

Lost Dogs. Lost from residence at 603

Franklin St. NE in Russellville. Male Sable German Shepherd. About 11 months old. Leather dog collar with rabies vaccination tag. Also, male blond lab mix. Long hair. App. 10 years old. No collar. Beloved family pets. Please call 256-332-1143 with any information on these dogs. (2)

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checkout kiosk. The machine gave out \$60 in change for my purchase, but I forgot to pick up the change and left the \$60 in the machine. When I returned to the Walmart, the money was no longer there. I am asking the person or persons who took the money to PLEASE return it to the service desk at Walmart. There will be NO questions asked. I am not in a financial position to be without this money. Thank You for your help and God bless! (2)

HOUSES/ APARTMENTS/ PROPERTY FOR RENT/SALE

7 Room Brick Ranch in Hester Heights For Sale. 3 BR, 2 Full Baths. Remodeled kitchen. Two-car attached and 2.5-car detached garage. Storm house. Large level lot. Reduced to \$139,000 OBO. Please call 256-263-8589. (1)

Small double-wide mobile home, fully

furnished, central heat & air. Must be moved. \$3,995. Call 256-324-2831. (2)

3 BR, 2 BA house for rent. Deposit required. Lawn service included. Call 256-436-4622. (4)

2 BR, 1 BA house for rent. Deposit required. Lawn service included. Call 256-436-4622. (5)

AUTO

1998 Ford Windstar Van for sale. 198,000 miles. Clear Title. \$550 firm. Available now, ready to go ASAP. Call Jamie at 256-460-1832.

GIVEAWAYS

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HELP WANTED

Owner/operator looking for a cdl driver to team with me. Must have hazmat, tanker and twic. Must have at least 2yrs experience. Pass drug screen. Good driving record. Out 3 to 4 weeks. Paid \$2000 a week, after 6 months \$2500 week. Need driver before July. Please contact John Brasuell @ 256-324-2856. (4)

MISC. FOR SALE

Playstation 3 gaming system for sale. Includes 25 games, four controllers, two microphones for Singing Star, guitar and guitar adapter. \$100. Call 256-324-2407. (4)

Franklin Free Press Classified Rates

Yard Sale Rates: **FREE, Deadline Monday at Noon; Real Estate-Homes, acreage, lots for sale or rent. \$25 for six consecutive weeks. Up to 40 words per ad; Vehicles, Boats, RVs,**

Motorcycles for sale. \$15 for six consecutive weeks. Up to 25 words per ad; Pets For Sale only \$10 for six consecutive weeks. Up to 25 words per ad; Free of Charge: Lost & Found, Giveaways, and Items Under \$100 (Private Parties Only). 15-word limit; Commercial Classified Rates: \$25 for Businesses, 15 words or less for six weeks. Ads exceeding word limit add \$10 per additional 15 words. The number in parentheses represents the number of times the ad has appeared. Call us at 256-332-0255 to place, cancel or renew your ad. Payment is required in advance of publication for ads.

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Applications for this position will be accepted for until Friday 5/31/2019 at 3 PM.

Three local establishments receive satisfactory ratings

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Each of the three Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of May 6-10 had scores that fall into the "satisfactory compliance" range.

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

Establishments with scores of 85 to 100 are considered to be in "satisfactory compliance" and are routinely inspected.

Establishments scoring between 70 and 84 will be inspected again in 60 days, and those scoring between 60 and 69 will have another follow-up within 48 hours. Any establishment scoring below 60 will be immediately closed.

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

es listed in the most recent food and lodging establishment ratings scored 85 or above, within the satisfactory compliance range.

The highest score was 99, received by Vina High School Cafeteria, 8250 County Road 23, Vina.

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

•Piggly Wiggly Deli #93, 518 4th Ave. SW, Red Bay, 95. (Dented cans).

•Parade Food Mart, 4141 Hwy. 24 East, Red Bay, 94.

Of the 22 inspections done in Colbert County from May 6-10, all but one received scores falling in the range of satisfactory.

The high score of 99 went to four locations, including Hatton Elementary School, 2130 Hatton School Road, Leighton.

Little Mart/Vedika, Inc., 1495 George Wallace Hwy., in Littleville, received an unsatisfactory score of 76. Violations included: Flies present in establishment, no paper towels at hand sink, mold in fountain heads and taco meat out of temperature.

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

FBLA competition



COURTESY PHOTO

The Russellville High School Future Business Leaders of America Chapter had ten students compete last month at the Alabama FBLA State Competition. The students and their events, along with their sponsors, are pictured above. Front row (L to R): Kaydee Don Holland – Healthcare Administration, Jessica Morrow – Business Calculations, Amanda Otzoy – Accounting, Rachel Riley – Business Communications. Back row: Dr. AnnaKay Holland – sponsor, Emma Claire Bragwell – Business Calculations, Lauren Mae Sturdivant – Word Processing, Addie Scruggs – Word Processing, Ellyse Strickland – Business Calculations, Hailey Brown – Business Communications, Tiffany Borden – Word Processing, Mrs. Deedra Moore – sponsor.

The Alabama FBLA State Leadership Program provides leadership training in order to develop competent, self-assured business leaders and provide a venue for business competitions. On April 11-12, more than 1,500 high school students attended this conference and competed in over 30 different business areas. Kaydee Don Holland, daughter of Mark and AnnaKay Holland, won second place in Healthcare Administration. Rachel Riley, daughter of Stan and Juliann Riley, won third place in the Business Communications. Both girls will represent Alabama and Russellville High School at the FBLA National Competition in San Antonio, TX in June.

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'MEMORY,' from page 1

The *In Memory* program honors Vietnam veterans whose lives were cut short as a result of their service after returning home from Vietnam.

On June 15, 2019, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund will host more than 2,000 attendees at the annual *In Memory* ceremony on the east knoll of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., where each 2019 honoree's name will be read aloud. This year, 534 service members will be honored.

"For many Vietnam veterans, coming home from Vietnam was just the beginning of a whole new fight," said Jim Knotts, president and CEO of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. "Many never fully recovered, either physically or emotionally, from their experiences.

"As these veterans pass, it is our duty and solemn promise to welcome them home to the place that our nation has set aside to remember our Vietnam veterans."

The plaque that honors Hill and his fellow veterans was dedicated as part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site in 2004. It reads: "*In Memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.*"

Sparks said the program is doing amazing things to help families cope who suffered through the years along with the veterans.

"There are quite a few families in Russellville who would benefit from this program," Sparks said. "It lets us know we are not alone. Others have and are going through the same turmoil."

For more information on the organization, visit www.vvmf.org and click on the *In Memory* program icon.

Based on a true story....

A Tribute to the Kind Words We Say and the Power They Have...

Words Have Power

A few kind words was all she said
and now I sit silent alone on my bed;

Moments ago contemplating a sin,
of taking the life of the baby within.

She said, "I love you, you're not alone,
take care of your baby, you'll be a good mom.

Nine months later I'm holding my boy,
who could believe he'd bring such joy;

All because someone took time to pray,
didn't turn their head and look the other way;

But reached out with their heart,
and in kind words spoke,
life-giving words that spread love and hope.

Take time for others, you know you may
change someone's life,
with the kind words you say.

Anonymously Submitted

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Hole-in-one helps Murray finish third at state tournament

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

As Jaceton Murray made his way toward the 11th tee at the Robert Trent Jones Capitol Hill Legislator Course in Prattville last Tuesday, he wasn't exactly thinking big.

Coming off a bogey at the 10th that had dropped him to even par in round two of the Class 5A state golf tournament, Murray had a modest goal in mind. He just wanted to use the 152-yard par-three 11th to get back on track.

"It's the shortest par-three on the course," Murray said. "There's water short, a bunker long and left, and a bunker short. After the bogey on ten, I just wanted to hit the center of the green and two-putt. Just try to get par and get out."

Murray did far better than that. The Russellville senior, who had bogeyed the 11th in Monday's first round, hit an eight-iron into a slight wind and landed it about two feet behind the pin, where the ball spun back and dropped into the cup for a hole-in-one.

"I really didn't react," Murray said. "I held my hands up, but I really couldn't see for sure if it went in. I had to double-check with my range finder. I knew it was close."

See 'MURRAY,' Page 18



COURTESY PHOTO

FACE IN THE HOLE - Murray had quite a week, making his second hole-in-one of the spring, tying for third at the state tournament and signing with Calhoun.

Starting strong



PHOTO/KG
Linebackers Karson Hyde (30) and Gavin Slay (8) converge on a Shelby County runner in last Friday's spring game.

An early look at the 2019 Golden Tigers revealed a hard-hitting D and an offense still packing plenty of big-play potential

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

RUSSELLVILLE - Above all else, Russellville's offensive identity in 2018 could be summed up in two words.

Big plays.

On their way to putting up 40.2 points per game and finishing 9-2, the Golden Tigers averaged an eye-popping 8.2 yards per rushing attempt and routinely gashed opposing defenses with long gainers. Quarterback Lucas McNutt, tailback Zaye Boyd and receiver Devin Buckhalter combined for a staggering 26 touchdowns that covered at least 30 yards.

All three members of that explosive, game-breaking trio are moving on, but they won't be taking all of Russellville's big-play potential with them—not if last Friday's spring game against Shelby County was any indication.

The Golden Tigers busted loose for 11 plays of 20-plus yards, overcoming some early turnover issues to score touchdowns on their final five possessions in a 35-14 whipping of the Wildcats.

"Lots of good things," said second-year head coach John Ritter, whose team totaled 486 yards of offense on 44 plays—an impressive average of 11.0 yards per snap. "We made some typical spring-game mistakes, but what we did do was play extremely hard. Offensively we played fast, which is something that we wanted to do. Defensively we made some mistakes, but for the most part—after the first two drives—we stepped up and started making some plays."

"I'm very excited about our offense," Ritter said. "The thing we have to do...we still have big-play potential, but we have to limit the mistakes. We're not so explosive that we can turn the ball over three times and still score 50 like we did at times last year. We have to protect the football. But the guys we've got coming back, we're excited about them for a reason."

"I'm very proud of the effort and very proud of how we played overall. We have to correct the turnovers, obviously, but it's the spring game. We've practiced eight times."

See 'STRONG,' Page 16

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Belgreen run ends as rally falls short in loss to Brantley

Lady Bulldogs finish 2-2 in Montgomery

Staff reports

Belgreen's run in the Class 1A state tournament ended this past Saturday afternoon with a 9-5 loss to Brantley in an elimination game at Lagoon Park in Montgomery.

After holding off Kinston for an 8-6 win earlier on Saturday, the Lady Bulldogs (30-15) found themselves trailing defending state champion Brantley 5-1 in the fifth inning. Jaelyn Johnson doubled with one out in the bottom of the fifth, and Gracie Dempsey followed with an infield hit. With two outs, Kaycee Wilson and Camie Terrell came through with back-to-back RBI singles to cut the lead to 5-3.

Wilson raced home on a double-steal attempt, capping the inning and bringing Belgreen within a run at 5-4.

Brantley (40-11 and winner of four of the previous five 1A state titles) answered with a four-run sixth inning highlighted by a two-run double from Olivia Jones and an RBI single by Kayden Dunn.

Trailing 9-4, the Lady Bulldogs left the bases loaded in the bottom of the sixth. They mounted a final rally in the bottom of the seventh, getting a double from Katie Dempsey and a single from Kaycee Wilson, but settled for just one run on a sac fly by Terrell. Brantley's Lauren Hudson retired the next two batters to seal the win.

Belgreen broke in front in the bottom of the first when Katie Dempsey led off with a triple to right and scored on Kaycee Wilson's sac fly. Brantley took the lead with a three-run third inning highlighted by Dunn's solo home run. Brantley added two more runs in the top of the fifth on three singles and an error, opening up a 5-1 lead.

Emma Dempsey (20-12) took the loss for Belgreen, allowing eight earned runs on 13 hits in a complete game. She struck out seven and walked just one.

Hudson beat the Lady Bulldogs for the second time in the tournament, allowing five earned runs on 11 hits in seven innings. She struck out four and walked one.

Katie Dempsey was 2-for-4 with two runs scored, and Kaycee Wilson went 2-for-4 with two RBIs. Terrell was 2-for-3 with two RBIs, and Emma Dempsey also had two hits. Johnson doubled and scored a run, and Gracie Dempsey was 1-for-3 with a run. Kelsey Wilson also went 1-for-3.

Jones led Brantley at the plate, going 3-for-4 with two RBIs and three runs. Dunn was 3-for-4 with a homer and two RBIs.

In previous action:

Belgreen 8 Kinston 6

The Lady Bulldogs got a two-run single from Katie Dempsey and a two-run double from Kaycee Wilson in a five-run second inning and then held on to eliminate Kinston on Saturday morning.

Trailing 6-0, Kinston got on the board with two runs in the bottom of the second. Jaelyn Johnson's RBI single for Belgreen in the top of the fourth made it 7-2, but Kinston put together three hits, a walk and a sac fly to score twice in the bottom of the fifth.

Johnson singled and scored on an error in the top of the seventh to make it 8-4. Kinston mounted one last rally in the bottom half, scoring twice on two singles, a double and a groundout to cut the lead to 8-6. With the tying run at the plate, Belgreen's Emma Dempsey induced a game-ending groundout to seal the win.

Dempsey pitched a complete game, allowing five earned runs on 11 hits in seven innings. She struck out four and walked one. Johnson was 3-for-3 with two runs scored, and Gracie Dempsey and Sydney Borden each went 3-for-4.

Katie Dempsey was 2-for-4 with two RBIs and two runs scored, and Camie Terrell was 2-for-4 with an RBI. Kaycee Wilson was 1-for-5 with a double and two RBIs, and Kelsey Wilson also had one hit.

Belgreen 10 Verbena 0

Belgreen got a one-hit shutout from Emma Dempsey and three RBIs from Autumn Bragwell last Friday afternoon, staying alive at the Class 1A state tournament with a rout of Verbena in an elimination game.

See 'BELGREEN,' page 15



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'BELGREEN,' from page 14

Bragwell, Katie Dempsey, Kelsey Wilson and Gracie Dempsey each had two hits for the Lady Bulldogs.

Belgreen jumped on Verbena early, scoring twice in the bottom of the first on an error, a sac, a walk, a stolen base and a wild pitch. The Lady Bulldogs broke open the game with a five-run third inning highlighted by a run-scoring sac bunt from Kaycee Wilson and RBI singles from Emma Dempsey, Kelsey Wilson and Bragwell.

Belgreen ended the game with three more runs in the bottom of the fifth, getting a two-run double from Bragwell and an RBI single from Gracie Dempsey.

Emma Dempsey allowed a leadoff single in the top of the second inning before retiring the next nine batters and 12 of the next 13 to finish off her 22nd complete game and 10th shutout of the season. She struck out five and walked one, throwing 40 of her 59 pitches for strikes.

Bragwell finished 2-for-3 with three RBIs, and Katie Dempsey was 2-for-3 with two runs scored. Kelsey Wilson went 2-for-3 with an RBI, and Gracie Dempsey was 2-for-3 with two runs scored.

Sydney Borden drove in a run and scored two, and Bailey Wood was 1-for-3 with a run.

Emma Dempsey went 1-for-2 with an RBI and a

walk, and Camie Terrell was 1-for-3 with a double and a run. Noelle Willingham stole a base and scored twice.

Brantley 1 Belgreen 0

Brantley scored an unearned run in the bottom of the third inning last Friday morning and rode a complete-game effort from Lauren Hudson to a 1-0 win over Belgreen in the opening round of the Class 1A state tournament at Lagoon Park in Montgomery.

The Lady Bulldogs managed only three hits off Hudson and dropped into the loser's bracket.

Emma Dempsey took the loss for Belgreen despite not allowing an earned run in six innings. The sophomore struck out seven, walked one and gave up four hits in her 21st complete game of the season.

Hudson pitched around a one-out single by Kaycee Wilson in the top of the first, and Dempsey then worked a one-two-three bottom of the first. Hudson did the same in the top of the second, and Dempsey pitched around a two-out hit in the bottom half to keep it a scoreless game.

After Hudson struck out the side in the top of the third, Brantley broke through with the game's only run in the bottom half. Dempsey retired the first two batters before leadoff hitter Emory Bush singled, stole second and scored on an error to make

it 1-0.

That would prove to be enough for Hudson, who retired Belgreen in order in the top of the fourth and then worked around a one-out walk to Kelsey Wilson in the fifth. The Lady Bulldogs mounted their best threat in the top of the sixth, getting back-to-back singles from Katie Dempsey and Kaycee Wilson with one out, but they stranded both runners.

Hudson worked a one-two-three seventh to close out the win and finished with eight strikeouts and just one walk in a three-hit shutout.

Kaycee Wilson was 2-for-3, and Katie Dempsey went 1-for-3.



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'STRONG,' from page 13

Early in the process though it may be, the Golden Tigers showed enough on Friday night to support the notion that all those big plays from a year ago won't necessarily be a thing of the past. Senior quarterback Jacob Bishop, a transfer from Muscle Shoals, broke free for a 48-yard gain on the game's first play from scrimmage and later added touchdown runs of 31 and 46 yards, finishing the night with 131 rushing yards and two scores on four carries in just one half of action.

Tailback Austin Ashley, another senior entering his first season as a full-time starter, ripped off runs of 28 and 21 yards on back-to-back carries to start Russellville's second possession. Senior receiver J.D. Price opened the Golden Tigers' third drive of the game with a 28-yard gain on a speed sweep, and sophomore tailback Airreon "Boots" McCullough had a 27-yard run for the second-team offense early in the third quarter.

The big plays weren't limited to the ground game, either. Bishop's first two completions of the night went for 27 and 26 yards to 6'3, 205-pound sophomore H-back Nathan Brockway. Second-team quarterback Gabe Amick, another sophomore, hooked up with junior H-back Blake Pruitt for a 34-yard gain on the exact same route in the second half, and senior quarterback Jacob Davis connected on a deep-ball strike to senior David Baltazar for a gain of 29 on Russellville's final drive of the game.

"It's different big plays," said Ritter, whose team ran for 297 yards on 27 carries last Friday while throwing for 189 yards on 11-for-17 passing. "We had some scrambles, and we hit Brockway twice on what we call our Tennessee route, a ten-five out. It's a nasty route. He caught two, and Blake Pruitt caught one. They may cover the crap out of it this fall, but that's a route nobody covers. We threw that extremely well.

"We broke some long runs, and Jacob was able to elude some things when the pocket did break down."

With his team trailing 6-0 late in the first half, Bishop got the Golden Tigers' fourth possession rolling with a 26-yard toss to a wide-open Brockway down to the Shelby County 41. Junior receiver Rowe Gallagher made a contested catch on a glance route for a gain of 10, and then Bishop

bolted from the pocket on a designed pass play and sprinted 31 yards to the end zone to cap off a three-play scoring drive. Sophomore kicker Miguel Flores added the extra point to put Russellville on top 7-6.

After the Golden Tiger defense forced a quick three-and-out, Bishop hooked up with Gallagher again for a gain of 16 yards to the Wildcat 46. On the very next play, Bishop broke loose for another big run, taking advantage of some good blocking on the perimeter to race down the right sideline for his second touchdown in a three-play span. Flores added the extra point, and Russellville took a 14-6 lead into the locker room—despite having turned the ball over three times (once on downs, once on a fumble and once on an interception) inside the Shelby County 20.

"What I liked the most [about the offense] was, we ran a ton of RPO's [run-pass options] this spring, and we were pretty spot-on with every read," Ritter said. "Amick comes in and makes some really nice throws, and Jacob Bishop—and Jacob Davis, later in the game—made some really nice throws on RPO stuff. I'm extremely proud of the way those guys performed."

"We went into halftime 14-6, and we felt like we left 21 points on the field," Ritter said. "Against a good, quality team like a Jasper or a Center Point [the only two teams to beat the Golden Tigers last year], we can't leave those points out there. But that was typical spring-game stuff. We go down, we fumble; we get some pressure off the edge and throw a pick trying to throw the back-side post to Rowe; and then the fourth-down stop was kind of a bonehead mistake by us, just not knowing the situation that it was fourth-and-one. Other than that, we scored twice in two-and-a-half minutes. That was pretty nice to see.

"I'm very excited about our offense. The thing we have to do...we still have big-play potential, but we have to limit the mistakes. We're not so explosive that we can turn the ball over three times and still score 50 like we did at times last year. We have to protect the football. But the guys we've got coming back, we're excited about them for a reason."

Ashley rushed for 47 yards on six carries in the

first half, and McCullough added 46 yards on five second-half attempts. Junior Caleb Matthews bounced back from an early fumble to run for 25 yards on four carries—including a tackle-breaking nine-yard touchdown run in the second half.

All told, Ashley, McCullough and Matthews (who are tasked with replacing a 2,000-yard rusher in Boyd) combined to rush for 118 yards on 15 attempts last Friday.

"They all have a different skill set," Ritter said. "Austin ran the counter extremely well, which we knew he could do. Boots runs the inside zone and the stretch extremely well. Matthews struggled some tonight with holding onto the football, but he also showed flashes of being able to run the football well. Really, it's just about finding a groove with those guys and getting in a rhythm, more than anything.

"What I liked the most [about the offense] was, we ran a ton of RPO's [run-pass options] this spring, and we were pretty spot-on with every read. Amick comes in and makes some really nice throws, and Jacob Bishop—and Jacob Davis, later in the game—made some really nice throws on RPO stuff. I'm extremely proud of the way those guys performed."

In addition to his big night on the ground, Bishop also bounced back from an early interception to throw for 79 yards on 4-for-6 passing. Amick led a pair of second-half scoring drives and finished 6-for-9 for 81 yards and a touchdown. His scoring toss was a 12-yarder to freshman receiver Bryant Hyde, who finished with three catches for 41 yards. Sophomore receivers Danny Juan-Francisco and Trey Glass also caught one ball apiece. All told, seven different players had a catch on Friday for the Golden Tigers.

"[Bishop] can throw it really well, and we've got guys out there that can catch it really well," Ritter said. "We played six receivers in the first half. I'm not sure we played six receivers at any point last year. Rowe and J.D. Price and Cole [Barnett] were our starters in the spring, and they all had a phenomenal spring and a great spring game. Then we rolled out Bryant Hyde, Trey Glass, Danny and T.J. King, so that's really seven [receivers] we played early on. They all did really good things, and they all bring different elements to what we're trying to accomplish.

"When you've got a guy like Jacob (and Gabe threw the ball extremely well, too), it adds a lot of pressure on the defense when you can throw the football and run the triple [option] like we want to do."

After Russellville's second-string defense forced a quick three-and-out to start the second half, McCullough carried four straight times for a total of 41 yards down to the Shelby County 25. Five plays later, Amick connected with Hyde, who made one man miss and then out-sprinted the defense to the left pylon for a 12-yard touchdown. Julian Ambrosio's extra point made it 21-6.

The Wildcats answered with a nine-play scoring drive and successfully converted the try for two, trimming the lead to 21-14. Amick got it going on Russellville's next possession, hooking up with Hyde for a gain of 13, Pruitt for 32 and then Hyde again for 16 yards down to the Shelby County nine-yard line. Two plays later, Matthews scored from nine yards out, and Ambrosio booted the PAT to make it 28-14.

The Wildcats fumbled on their next drive, and freshman defensive lineman Hank Cartee recovered the ball for Russellville near midfield. After a pair of seven-yard runs by Baltazar and Taylor



PHOTO/KG

After hauling in a 29-yard pass, David Baltazar (43) scored the Golden Tigers' final touchdown on this four-yard run.

'STRONG', from pg. 16

Crumpton, Davis found Baltazar down the middle of the field for a gain of 29. Three plays later, Baltazar scored from four yards out, and Ambrosio capped the scoring with his third extra point to make it 35-14.

Russellville's defense, which allowed the Wildcats to score a touchdown on their opening possession and then convert three fourth downs on their second (a drive that lasted 19 plays but produced no points), settled in after a rocky start and surrendered only one touchdown the rest of the night.

"The Wing-T is hard to prepare for in the fall," Ritter said, "much less in two-and-a-half days in the spring, when we're kind of going best on best (two's versus two's and three's versus three's) to create a lot of competition. After the first drive-and-a-half, really, defensively we settled down. We did a lot of good things later in the first quarter and in the second quarter to get some stops. There are a couple of things on fourth down we have to clean up. We have to get off the field on fourth down.

"I'm very proud of our defense," Ritter said. "One thing I do like is that when we got there [to the football], we were striking. You could tell the offseason is gonna pay off for us. We've still gotta have a phenomenal summer, because we've got to create the mentality and culture we want to have, but you could tell we are bigger, faster and stronger on the defensive side by the way we ran around and were striking people now."

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Russellville returns eight players with starting experience on defense, and a handful of younger and/or less experienced players look ready to make an impact—particularly at linebacker, where hard-hitting sophomore Gavin Slay made several plays last Friday and juniors Brody and Cody Logan also saw a lot of snaps.

"Gavin had a phenomenal spring. He's been lighting people up," Ritter said. "Brody and Cody have come a long way and had great springs as well. Throw [junior safety] Grayson Eady back out there with Marcus Crumpton, who's had a year in the system, and J.D. Bishop...Conner Warhurst, who's just an eighth-grader, played a ton in the first half with the older guys and then played all the jayvee stuff. We've got some guys we definitely feel really good about.

"Early on, the defense is gonna have to carry us, because we are so inexperienced at our skill spots on offense. We have some guys there who have played, but they haven't necessarily had to make a ton of plays."

Russellville is scheduled to open the 2019 season with a preseason game at East Limestone on Friday, August 23. The Golden Tigers will travel to face Deshler in the regular season opener on August 30 before hosting Corner on September 6.

"I'm very excited about where we are," Ritter said in his office after last Friday's spring game. "The key for us is, what are we gonna do June 4 through July 27? If we come in and continue to try and change the culture and change the mindset to one that is a dominating, championship culture, then we have a chance to be very successful. I'm excited to see what this summer brings."



PHOTOS BY KYLE GLASGOW
Gabe Amick (above, 11) threw for 81 yards on 6-for-9 passing, including a 32-yard hook-up with Blake Pruitt (below, 34) that set up a second-half touchdown.



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Jaceton Murray Senior golfer, Russellville

Murray made his second hole-in-one of the spring at last week's Class 5A state tournament in Prattville, acing the 152-yard par-three 11th in Tuesday's second round. He shot 77 on the day and 156 for the 36-hole tournament, tying for third place.

Murray, Russellville's No. 2 golfer this spring as a senior, made multiple all-tournament teams at places such as Deer Run in Moulton and Turtle Point in Killen. He has signed an offer to continue his career at Calhoun Community College.



'MURRAY', from page 13

Standing between the 10th green and the 11th tee, Golden Tiger coach Patrick Odom came over to give his player a high five and a hug. Murray's somewhat subdued reaction was understandable in at least one regard: He'd been there and done that. This wasn't the first ace of his career; it wasn't even his first ace this year.

Earlier this spring, playing a practice round with former Russellville golfer Brian Brown at Twin Pines, Murray aced the par-three 15th, landing his shot a foot in front of the hole and bouncing it in—much to the delight of Brown and Will Bragwell, another former Golden Tiger golfer who witnessed the hole-in-one from his vantage point on the eighth green.

"I had come close before," Murray said, "but I didn't really react on that one either. I just held up my hands, and everybody was screaming and hollering."

In the span of just a few months, Murray now has two aces—which is two more than 99 percent of people who have ever picked up a club.

"It kind of feels good," Murray said on Monday. "I was shocked at the one at state. I was shocked at both of them, really."

In the span of just a few months, Murray now has two aces—which is two more than 99 percent of people who have ever picked up a club.

"It kind of feels good," Murray said on Monday. "I was shocked at the one at state. I was shocked at both of them, really."

Murray got to keep his official scorecard from last Tuesday's round at the Legislator, and, of course, he immediately removed the hole-in-one ball from circulation. It's now keeping the hole-in-one ball from Twin Pines company in a drawer in Murray's bedroom at home, awaiting proper display.

Alas, golf wouldn't be golf if it weren't exceedingly difficult. Success is rare and often fleeting. Murray followed up his eagle at 11 with a triple-bogey at 12, ultimately finishing the round at five-over 77.

"The next hole, number twelve, is one of the hardest on the course, to me," Murray said. "I made a seven on that hole, and then I just couldn't ever get it back. I kept making bogeys, just doing things I shouldn't have been doing."

"The front nine wasn't really that hard, but the back was pretty tough. It had some of the harder holes."

Murray may not have finished his second round the way he wanted, but, coupled with his opening-round 79 from Monday, his 77 on Tuesday was good enough to land him in a third-place tie in Class 5A with a 36-hole score of 12-over 156. In making the top three, Murray exceeded his best finish in three previous state tournaments (a tie for sixth in 2018) and also his own expectations.

"I was hoping to come in the Top 10," he said, "to shoot good scores in the 70s. That's about it."

Murray finished nine strokes behind low medalist JP Cave (147) of UMS-Wright and three shots back of second-place finisher Nathaniel King (153) of Citronelle. Russellville's Brayden Bendall (78-81) and Eric Boutwell (84-76) finished 10th and 11th, respectively, in Class 5A. As a team, the Golden Tigers (competing in their seventh state tournament in the past eight years) shot 660 (336-324) and came in fourth behind UMS-Wright's 628 (309-319), Guntersville's 644 (327-317) and Sylacauga's 651 (323-328).

Murray capped off his big week by signing a scholarship offer to continue his golfing career at Calhoun Community College in Decatur, where he'll play with (and also room with) Bendall.

"I had been trying to find a place to play, sending out my stats and all that," said Murray, who made multiple all-tournament teams this season at places like Deer Run in Moulton (where he shot 69) and Turtle Point in Killen (73). "I met the coach from Calhoun [Richard Morgan] at Brayden's signing, and it just kind of went from there. I'm excited to go play college golf."

Murray, a lefty who says the strength of his game is his chipping and wedge play, first got serious about golf when he gave up football in the summer before his ninth grade year.

His decision to focus all of his attention and effort on golf certainly paid off; he played four years of varsity golf for the Golden Tigers, ascending all the way to the No. 2 spot on the team this season, and he shot a career-best 63 in a tournament at Twin Pines in 2018.

Nothing, however, surpasses the thrill of making a hole-in-one on the big stage of the state tournament—even if it wasn't his first-ever ace.

"That takes the top spot right there," Murray said.

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Thursday, May 23

- Phil Campbell High School - 6:00 PM
- Tharptown High School - 6:00 PM
- Belgreen High School - 7:00 PM

Friday, May 24

- Colbert Heights High School - 7:30 PM
- Russellville High School - 7:30 PM



Russellville

***Congratulations, Class of 2019!
We are proud of you!***

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

If we may be of service, please call 256.332.6060

Class of 2019 poised for real-world success

To our community:

It is hard to believe another school year is coming to a close and another class of seniors will soon be leaving our halls and setting out to pursue the futures they have been preparing for over the past 12-plus years.

As educators, we always hope we have done our best to prepare our students for life after high school. There is nothing better than knowing you have helped a child be poised for success in the real world outside the shelter of school. And, thankfully, I feel very confident—thanks to the amazing teachers and staff and the drive of our students—we have done just that here at Russellville City Schools.

This year, like many others before it, has been packed full of achievements and successes. Growth and gains on standardized testing; accolades for our teachers from professional organizations; accomplishments on and off the field by our extracurricular groups, fine arts department and athletic teams; accomplishments within our career technical department; and so many daily, personal victories inside every classroom have played a huge role in the tremendous year we've had here at RCS, and I am extremely proud of each of these successes.

But some of the most amazing things I've wit-

nessed this year weren't necessarily tied to academics or athletics or specific talents. Some of the proudest moments I've had as a superintendent this year have been seeing our students grasp the character lessons they are being taught daily and putting those lessons into action.

This past school year, our students have gone above and beyond to not only make themselves better students academically, athletically and musically, but they have strived to be better people as a whole. We have students from pre-K all the way through our senior class who have been involved in service projects and other activities designed to help other people, show kindness and be there for each other. Our students have organized fundraisers for people in need, raised awareness for key issues, donated time and efforts to help people less fortunate than them and have practiced showing kindness in their daily life at school.

And at our high school, after experiencing the tragic passing of one of our gifted and talented students, the student body came together in a way that was nothing short of profound. They were there for one another, they reached out to those who were hurting and they began a very important dialogue about supporting, helping and caring for others. This amazing display of bravery and resilience in the face of sadness is something we

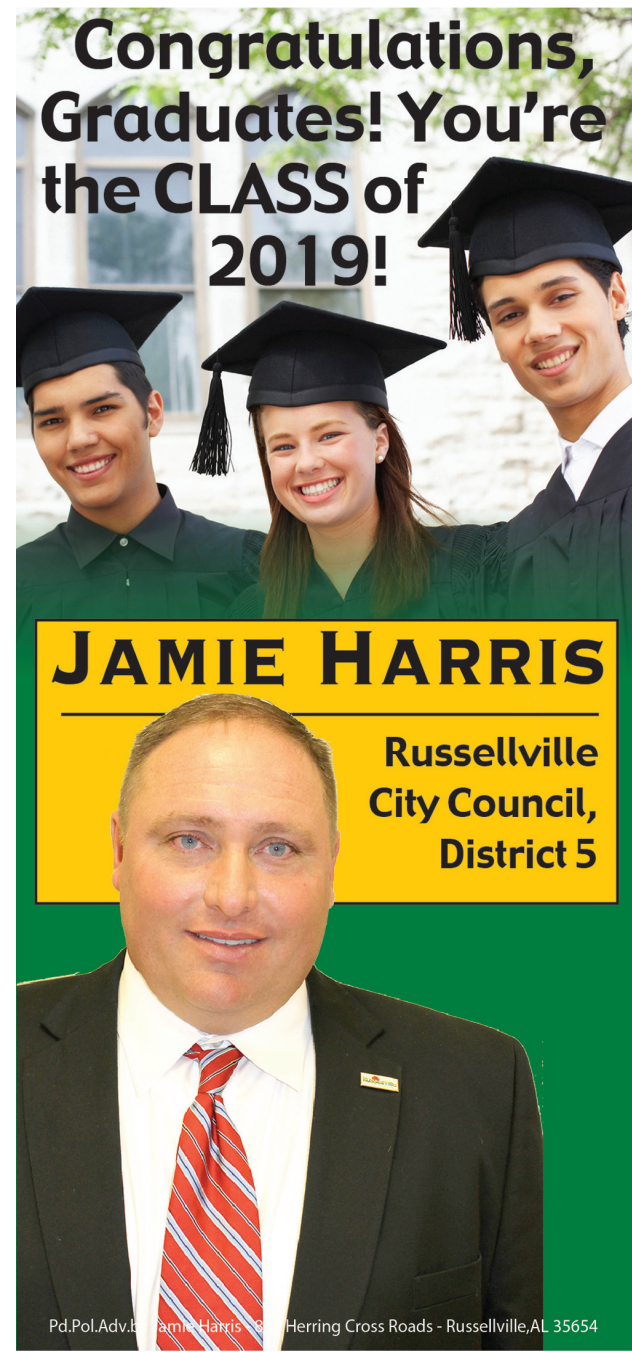
could all learn from.

It is my sincere hope that our community knows how awesome our students, faculty, staff and administrators are. The school system is the backbone of the community, and Russellville certainly has much to be proud of in RCS. We are so thankful for the caring community we are a part of and the support our community has offered once again this school year. From businesses and the city as a whole to individuals, there is no doubt the Golden Tiger Pride runs deep in this area.

As we approach graduation for the Class of 2019, I hope that each of our seniors will take that same Golden Tiger Pride with them wherever they go. I hope they will take the lessons they learned, the memories they made and the wisdom they gained and use it as they start new chapters of their lives. It has been a privilege to be part of their educational career here at RCS, and I wish them nothing but the best as they move forward.

It is an honor to serve another year in a system that values excellence and takes pride in preparing our students for bright futures, and I already look forward to what all we will accomplish next year. As always, it's GREAT to be a Golden Tiger!

Sincerely,
Heath Grimes
Superintendent



RUSSELLVILLE Class of 2019

Adriana Aracely Acosta
 Christian Allen Aguirre
 Rudy Ajualip-Huarcas
 Felipe Jender Alfaro
 Tracy Andres Alonzo
 Georgia Grace Amick
 Linda Berenice Apolinar Jimenez
 John Anthony Argueta Molina
 Kaitleen Suheidi Arzola
 Summer Nashea Baker
 Christopher Brayden Bendall
 Lindsey Brooke Bolton
 Patrick Austin Bonner
 Madison Grace Borden
 Tiffany Mae Anne Borden
 Audrey Grace Boyd
 Wylie Drake Boyd
 Xavier Tyrese Boyd
 Emma Claire Bragwell
 Hunter Christopher Briles
 Hailey Brianna Brown
 Mattie Ann Bryant
 Devin Allen Buckhalter
 Allison Grace Burks
 Brianna Lee Chaney
 Lazaro Heriberto Chavez-Flores
 Jason Cienfuegos Jimenez
 Scott Oved Contreras
 Gage Takota Cook
 McKinley Steele Copeland

Mariana Cortez
 Brooklynn Hope Crittenden
 Patrick Allen Crummie
 Kaitlyn Elizabeth Darracott
 Damaris Getzemani De La Rosa
 Angelina Juan Diego
 Joe Domingo Lopez
 Esthela Escobar-Martinez
 Ashley Espinoza-Urdiera
 Veronica Shomara Esteban Perez
 Amanda Jennifer Felipe
 Fernando Lisandro Fernandez Miguel
 Hannah Nicole Fisher
 Aranza Angel Flores-Zavaleta
 Logan Grafton Forsythe
 Elias Francisco Francisco
 Teresa Francisco Martin
 James Riley Francisco
 Yani Francisco-Pascual
 Carley Madison Franks
 Hunter Bryan Fuller
 Adrian Josue Garcia
 Stephanie Adriana Garcia
 Maria Gaspar Pedro
 Odalys Gerardo-Rendon
 Briley Lynn Gillespie
 Hector Gonzalez Ventura
 Jessica Gonzalez
 Lisette Gonzalez
 Nathan Scott Green

Karlie Marie Greenhill
 Alex Guarcas-Cua
 Summer Haylee Hall
 Isaac Lamar Hamilton
 Jasmin Gail Hamilton
 Kaleb James Hamilton
 Lauren Victoria Hammond
 Jamie Nicole Hill
 Lamirah Faith Hollingsworth
 Mariah Lanique Hollingsworth
 Matevious Jaquin Hollingsworth
 Xavier Dequin Hollingsworth
 Sydney Ashlin Holt
 Arlye Blythe James
 Tanner Chase James
 Felix Jimenez Jimenez
 Francisco Jose Matias
 Leticia Juan Diego
 Alfredo Pedro Juan
 Juana Juarez Figueroa
 Brayden Montgomery Keen
 Britney Michelle Klein
 Courtney Nicole Lacey
 Juan Ignacio Lara-Trejo
 Elijah Cole Lawler
 Elisabeth Grace Lerch
 Tyrica Sharee Lewis
 William Joseph Lewter
 Daniel Lugo-Barrera
 Joshua Alexander Macias-Garcia
 Heather Luree Mann
 Eulogio Basillo Manuel Gaspar
 Eduardo Manuel
 Fani Michel Manzo Santos
 Abraham Martinez
 Patricia Martin-Juan
 Jacinta Martin-Pascual
 Esvin Francisco Mateo
 Erica Graciela Mateo-Lopez
 Carley Grace McCalpin
 Kiley Reece McCleskey

Lucas Andrew McNutt
 Oscar Ignacio Medina
 Anna Beth Mitchell
 Alidia Lashay Montealegre
 Rudy Leonel Montejo
 Jennifer Monteon
 Kelsey Layne Montgomery
 Kyleigh Ann Montgomery
 Morgan Lee Moon
 Ali Moore Jr.
 Karlie Brooke Moore
 Mareli Morales
 Jessica Ann Morrow
 Jaceton Mark Murray
 Jeffrey Carson Nash
 Felipe Juan Nieto
 Kailey Rae Nix
 Lakyn Brianna Oliver
 Austin Matthew Orrick
 Amanda Gisell Otzoy
 Caden Lee Parker
 Alexis Briann Partrich
 Luke Anthony Patrick
 Hannah Nicole Patton
 Kener Osbely Perez Sales
 America Perez Simon
 Jennifer Perez
 Roberto Carlos Perez
 Yaslin Vanessa Perez
 Emily Raven Peters
 Elizabeth Ann Pierce
 Francisco Jose Pineda
 Theran Patrick Ponders
 Vivian Faith Price
 Autumn Faith Prince
 Erin Nichole Putman
 Katelynn Marie Putman
 Donald Eric Ramson
 Don'Kyiah Bricia Ramson
 Carson Ryan Reeves
 Peyton Mackenzie Reynolds

Evan Craig Richeson
 Rachel Olivia Riley
 Herson Jose Rodriguez
 Lauren Grace Rogers
 Emanuel Romero Barrientos
 Brenda Janette Ruiz
 William Joseph Rushing IV
 Josue Sanchez
 Addie Elizabeth Scruggs
 Morgan Leann Seay
 Yovany Sebastian Felipe
 Melissa Sebastian Tomas
 Trenton Keith Shackelford
 Victoria Rose Shook
 Katie Beth Skidmore
 Alexis Brianna Smith
 Kaylee Ann Smith
 Kieran Macy Smith
 Pedro Roberto Sop-Otzoy
 Andrea De Jesus Soto Palencia
 Emma Noelle Soto
 Brenden Ethan Stancil
 Ethan Tyler Stokes
 Elijah Preston Street
 Kalynn Nicole Suggs
 Kayla Shae Thomas
 Logan Tyler Thompson
 Andres Tomas
 Elia Torres Solano
 Esmeralda Tristan
 Jorge Valladares Jr.
 Patricia Rose Valladares
 Elaisa Vicente Vicente
 Sebastian Alexander Villareal
 Megan Belle Warhurst
 Brooklyn Mariae Wells
 Isaac Drake West
 Hailey Paige White
 Josie Kathryn Willis
 Scarlett DeAnn Winstead
 Alejandra Zaragoza Sanchez

David Reed
Grissom
 MAYOR

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RHS valedictorian excels as 'first-generation' student

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When you're introduced to Melissa Sebastian Tomas, the 2019 valedictorian of Russellville High School, you quickly realize she's someone you root for in life.

And there are plenty of reasons to expect Sebastian Tomas to be successful, both professionally and personally.

A Russellville native who started in kindergarten at Russellville City Schools, Sebastian Tomas describes herself as a 'first-generation' student. Her parents, Julio and Petrona Sebastian, immigrated from Guatemala to raise their family in the United States. They did not have educational opportunities in their native country, but they quickly realized the importance of a quality education for their children.

"My parents always stressed academics. They would tell us that in the long run all the hard work would be worth it to try and do the best we can," Sebastian Tomas said. "And they always understood when we were not able to do that."

"Like most families, they came here for a better life for their children. They recognized the childhood they grew up with and the opportunities they weren't able to have due to economic circumstances wasn't what they wanted for their children."

"They wanted us to have an education to further set up our lives to be successful where we will be content with what we have in life."

Describing herself as someone "who was blessed with the ability to be a good student," Sebastian Tomas didn't start high school thinking about being valedictorian.

"At first, I just wanted to do my best," she said. "Then they started putting our rankings on our transcript, and I realized I was number one in my class. I then became determined to hold it there so I could go on to get the best education possible. I used that as a motivation, along with the fact that my parents weren't able to go to school."

Sebastian Tomas will begin pre-matriculation courses at Vassar College in July, where she will go on to attend full-time in the fall.

Vassar is a distinguished, highly selective residential liberal arts college in Poughkeepsie, New York. Student enrollment is only 2,400 students,



Melissa Sebastian Tomas

and more than 75 percent of applications are denied.

Sebastian Tomas will receive a scholarship that will almost cover her expenses at a college that can top \$25,000 in tuition and costs each year.

Sebastian Tomas learned about Vassar through her involvement with the QuestBridge National College Match, a program that helps outstanding low-income high school seniors gain admission and four-year scholarships to the nation's most selective colleges.

QuestBridge is available to academically outstanding high school seniors from families earning less than \$65,000 per year.

She will take one semester of summer courses at Northwest-Shoals Community College before leaving for Vassar in July.

Sebastian Tomas also visited Colgate University, Amherst College and Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN. For a young woman who's lived her whole life in Russellville, New York will be a whole new world, but one for which she's ready.

"The diversity at Vassar was something that attracted me," she said. "Plus, I really enjoyed the campus and its research opportunities. There is a lot of medical-based research, and that's what I plan to go into. The distance from home was a consideration, but in the end it will be okay."

See 'RHS,' page 34



Congratulations GRADUATES

Georgia Amick
Lindsey Bolton
Wylie Boyd
Sydney Holt

Anna Beth Mitchell
Karlie Moore
Emily Peters

First Baptist Church of Russellville

Good Luck Graduates!

from the Franklin County Democratic Executive Committee!

"Working for Alabama Families"



Congratulations to the Russellville High School Class of 2019!



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

Russellville City Schools 2019 Calendar

Aug 8 - First Day for Students

Sept 2 - Labor Day

Sept 20 - Homecoming - Half Day

Oct 14-15 - Fall Break

Nov 11 - Veteran's Day

Nov 27-29 - Thanksgiving

Dec 20 - Student Half Day

Dec 23-Jan 7 - Student Holidays
- Christmas Break

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'By-the-book' approach pays off for Warhurst

Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press

Being a perfectionist is something that Belgreen High School valedictorian Tanner Warhurst is very up front and open about.

However, being a perfectionist is often difficult at such a young age when so many things are out of your control. That is not the case for Warhurst, as he used that trait to his advantage and ultimately became the valedictorian of his senior class.

"I've always worked hard, and I'm kind of a perfectionist, especially when it comes to my school-work," Warhurst said. "Everything has to be done the way it's supposed to be done, regardless of what it is. I'm just someone who goes by the book to make things work."

Warhurst, the son of Donna and Brady Warhurst, attended Russellville City Schools through the fifth grade and then made the transition to Belgreen in sixth grade.

One year later, as Warhurst was entering the seventh grade, he really began hitting the books and prioritizing his academics.

According to Warhurst, he pushed himself to stay on top of his studies and make sure that everything was done to the best of his ability.

"It was definitely self-motivation for me. At our first academic banquet in junior high, I had won

several awards, and I wanted to keep it that way," Warhurst said. "I wanted to make sure that I kept receiving the awards and I kept getting good grades. I knew that I could do it if I just applied myself."

Having kept track of his grades every year on his own, as well as winning the highest GPA award in his class year-to-year, Warhurst knew that he was on the right track to becoming number one in his senior class one day. As the years and curriculum would change for the senior class at Belgreen, one thing would remain constant with Warhurst: His work ethic.

"I actually probably started trying a lot harder after my ninth-grade year," he said. "Everyone always says that's when your grades really start to count towards class rankings, and I took that information seriously and made sure that I stayed on top of things."

In December of this past year, Warhurst had a conversation with the school counselor, Georgia Jeffreys, about scholarship deadlines, and he wanted to know if the class would be notified before February about their class rankings. Warhurst said that he was notified in late January that he was the valedictorian of his class.

The reaction Warhurst had to being named valedictorian was not one of surprise, but more of validation above all else.

"I was excited, of course," he said. "I had been working for this for years and years, and it was great to kind of get that sense of accomplishment with being named the valedictorian. It was just fulfilling to be able to set a goal that high and be able to achieve it. Even after they announced it, I still kept working hard, but it was a lot easier to not have to worry as much."

While it was widely thought that Warhurst would be named the valedictorian, he did have some competition from some of his classmates along the way. From early in high school, Warhurst said the competition for the top spot was primarily between himself and classmate Amber Franks. To show just how close the two were in terms of the top spot, Warhurst said he and Franks finished within four-tenths of a point of one another in their pre-calculus class.

Being a part of the Upward Bound program,

See 'WARHURST,' page 27



Tanner Warhurst

Friends, Family, Joy,
Laughter, Success!

May your graduation day
and your future be filled
with many wonderful blessings.

Congratulations and
Best Wishes Class of 2019.

Family Pharmacy of Russellville
Hometown Pharmacy
Family Pharmacy of Littleville

FAMILY
PHARMACY
GROUP

Congratulations,
Gaven Anderson Taylor
and the Class of 2019!

Love, Mom, Dad,
Melodie and family
and your grandparents!

'WARHURST,' from page 26

Warhurst already has a jump on his college classes. Since the 10th grade he has averaged around three college credits per year, with his total estimate so far being around 18 credit hours before he even graduates from high school. On his ACT, Warhurst scored a 28.

Once he finally walks across the stage to accept his high school diploma, Warhurst plans to attend the University of North Alabama and pursue a degree in chemistry and pre-pharmacy. After he finishes his studies at UNA, Warhurst hopes to attend Auburn University to complete his degree in pharmaceuticals and become a pharmacist.

So far, Warhurst says that his scholarship amount has totaled around \$17,000, including a leadership scholarship to UNA and the Valedictorian scholarship to UNA, as well as housing and honors college scholarships. Taking part in multiple clubs, staying on top of his academics and participating in athletics while in high school has without a doubt helped Warhurst achieve this large amount of scholarships.

At Belgreen, Warhurst was a part of several clubs, including Beta, Math, history, science, Spanish, psychology, robotics, envirothon, SADD, HOSA, FBLA and FCA. In addition, Warhurst has also participated in a few leadership conferences like HOBY and Boys State, as well as the Franklin County Junior Leadership Program. Basketball and track and field were also a part of Warhurst's high school career.

Warhurst said he has had a lot of teachers help him along the way, but there is one teacher in particular that he says has had the biggest impact.

"There are a lot of teachers at Belgreen that have helped me along the way to get to where I am today," Warhurst said. "But Mrs. [Susan] Thompson has always taught us to be more responsible and hasn't made it easy for us and always gave us a challenge to be the best students we could be."

When asked about the legacy and message that he hopes to leave behind to the younger students at Belgreen, Warhurst had some words of inspiration and encouragement for those seeking to challenge and push themselves.

BELGREEN Class of 2019

Dillon Loyd Borden
Brant Dalen Bragwell
Mason Ray Bragwell
Kostner Blake Bryant
Cheyenne Lee Cheatham
Nathaniel Wayne Cox
Autumn Mairee Cothren
Mikayla Suzann Davis
Maria Sofia Estrada
Roberto Romero Fortin
Kristina Amber Franks
Chad William Gentry Jr.
Johnathan Gonzalez Sanchez
Desinee Marie Hawkins
Luke Watson Henson
Landon Chandler Hill
Madison Nicole Kimbrough
Emily Luna

Jasmin Luna
Trey Austin Mann
Alexis Danyelle Mims
Gabriella Jewel Moore
Hannah Nicole Seal
Megan Grace Smith
Katelyn Michelle Streetman
Tucker James Streetman
Gaven Anderson Taylor
Camie Rose Terrell
Trevor Andrew Thompson
Tanner Lee Warhurst
Kayla Brooke Williams
Emma Grace Willingham
Trey McKade Willingham
Kaycee Leanne Wilson
Dylan Michael Winstead

"Always do your best, because you never get another chance to redo something once everything is finished and over with," Warhurst said. "If you want to be great in school or life or whatever, you've got to push and challenge yourself, or someone else will take it from you. It all comes back to you and what you do."

**Congratulations,
Jonathan Gonzalez
and the Class of
2019!**

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Bulldogs!**



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direction of your dreams.
Live the life you
have imagined"***

~ Henry David Thoreau

**Congratulations
to the Class of
2019**



**Barry Moore
& Family**

Roden riding perfect ACT score to Tuscaloosa

Taylor Thornton
Franklin Free Press

While graduation is often something that rushes up on students without much warning, Colbert Heights senior Thomas Roden has been getting prepared for this day for quite some time.

Scoring a perfect 36 on his ACT this year, Roden has endless possibilities for the future ahead of him. As he prepares to graduate from Colbert Heights on Friday night, Roden has already completed 26 college credit hours.

With this sort of dedication, it is no surprise that he is Colbert Heights's 2019 Valedictorian.

Roden has more than academic achievements to be proud of. He is involved in many extracurricular organizations and activities, including FGA, FOCUS, Scholars Bowl, National Honor Society and Eagle Scouts.

He said these organizations have helped him develop into a more well rounded individual as he has gone through high school.

Though Roden's success and involvement does showcase his own sense of self-discipline, he does have a few people from Colbert Heights High School to thank for supporting him along the way. Mr. Matthew Crosswhite, coach Scott Hunter, Mrs. Laura James and coach Jacob Walker are just a few of the staff members that Roden thanked for guiding him down the correct path toward academic achievement.



Thomas Roden

"I met a lot of great people at this school," Roden said when asked about the support system he had found at Colbert Heights.

The one downfall to being so smart? Roden said that he had to teach himself a lot of the college information he has acquired in the last year. Taking dual enrollment classes through local universities, Roden was learning material beyond his high school's curriculum.

He hopes that, for the benefit of future students, Colbert Heights develops a more intensive advanced diploma track. Despite this, Roden still believes Colbert Heights was the best place for him to attend high school.

However, he didn't just have positive influences at school. His parents, William and Cheryl Roden, are also part of the reason he has had so much academic success during high school.

William and Cheryl both attended Colbert Heights High School, so they are happy to see their son graduating from their own alma mater. Both of Roden's parents are pushing him to pursue his dreams without looking back.

What might those dreams be? After graduating this month, Roden plans to move to Tuscaloosa and begin taking summer courses at the University of Alabama. He aspires to get a Bachelor's degree in Physics, later earning both

See 'RODEN,' page 34

Congratulations to the Class of 2019 from

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Best of Luck Graduates

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Graduation is not the end; it's the beginning

By Jamie Kiel
State Representative, House District 18

Graduation is an exciting time for many reasons. For some students, it is a time for celebrating the good times had during their school years. For others, it is a reset, a new beginning.

Parents and grandparents often celebrate for the same reasons. Regardless, graduation should be seen as a starting point, not the end.

Graduates, I would like to encourage you as you move beyond high school to think past today. Although it is easy to get lost in the moment, and you should enjoy this season of life, today is not the end; today is the beginning.

The decisions you make this weekend, next week and next month will affect the rest of your life. Be careful not to do something now that can not be undone later.

Twenty-six years ago, when I graduated high school, I had no idea what I would do professionally, where I would live, who I would marry or what life would bring. Most high school seniors don't know the answers to all those questions either. I had no idea that I would live in the town where I graduated high school and own a business here. I had no idea that I would be able to marry a wonderful Christian woman and raise three beautiful children here. To have the honor to serve my district in the Alabama State House of Representatives was only a dream.

Although I couldn't see the future, thankfully God allowed me to make some good decisions that got me to where I am today.

In addition to thinking beyond today, I would like to encourage you to think beyond yourself. What I mean by that is, when you make decisions, don't think they only affect you. The decisions you make now, both good and bad, will affect those around you and even those people that you may know later on. Your future spouse, job, children and reputation may be changed by what you do today. Thinking about what you do today in light of those around you will help you to make better decisions.

To parents and grandparents of graduates: Please don't check out of your graduates' lives because they are now "adults." They do need room to make mistakes and learn important life lessons, but they also need parameters and guidance. You can still have a positive influence on their future. I know my parents were invaluable to me after high school, giving advice and direction.

As a high school graduate, you have now entered adulthood. Hopefully, a long productive life awaits you.

As you celebrate your accomplishments over the next few days, think about the future and think about others.

Your future awaits, and what you do, now and later, matters.

COLBERT HEIGHTS Class of 2019

Isabella Anne Archer
Scott Anthony Archer
Paisley Hope Armstrong
Joshua Cayne Balta
Delania Renee Bates
Madison Hope Battles
Caden Bradford Benson
Carson Steven Benson
Savannah Rose Berryman
Anna Kay Bond
Zachary Brooks Brown
Nicholas Rivers Carmack
Caroline McKenzie Clark
Kara Dawne Crim
Cameron Spencer Davis
Denette Ann Davis
Rebekah Leann Fleming
Myra Katherine Foster
Israel Frias Arellano

Riley Will Fuller
Layla Annamaria George
Timothy Wayne Gipson
Evelyn Sabra Grimes
Destiny Paige Hairrell
Katelyn Brooke Hand
Halli Morgan Hunter
Ashlee Tatum Inman
Terah Alyce Jackson
Emma Katelyn James
Katlyn Paige Johnson
Jaelynne Anndon Jones
Hazley Laurel Kennedy
Mollie Danielle Kirk
Sarah Victoria Singleton Lash
Ethan Blake Lawler
Jaxson Troy Lawler
Jayson Christopher Letson
Katelynn Rahla Lovelace



Alex Burroughs
Red Bay High School



Gath Weatherford
Red Bay High School



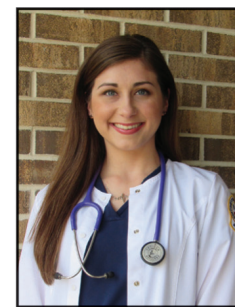
Rachel Canup
Itawamba Agricultural
High School



Makayla Higginbotham
The University
of Mississippi
Bachelor of Business
Administration
in Managerial Finance



Brooke Gleason
University of Alabama
at Birmingham
Masters of Science
in Nutrition Sciences



Katie Gresham
Northwest Shoals
Community College
Associate Degree
in Nursing



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Evan Brentley Norton
Victoria Rebecca Kay Postlewait
Lexxis R. Powell
Hanna Nicole Priest
Andrew Price Richardson
Cody Ryan Richardson

Kylie Lane Robinson
Joel Rocha
Valerie Veronica Rocha
Thomas Anthony Roden
Timothy Ryan Sanderson
Caleb Nathaniel Sibley
Ashley Nicole Sims
Sandra South
Jamie Lee Stanfield II
Baljinder Rohit Sunda
Sydney Elise Taylor
Tyler Ray Taylor
Spencer McKinney Thornton
Tyler Anthony Tubbs
Taylor Lee Ann Walker

Hall reflects on fond memories at Phil Campbell

Taylor Thornton
Franklin Free Press

As graduation season quickly approaches, high school seniors are contemplating all of the fond memories they will take with them as they embark on their individual life journeys. This is especially true for Ethan Hall, Phil Campbell High School's 2019 Valedictorian.

Having gone to Phil Campbell from elementary school through high school, Hall is having to come face-to-face with the knowledge that he may finally be leaving his small hometown.

Being faced with this reality, Hall has accepted that he has experienced a lot of "lasts" this year, and he is not taking any of them for granted.

From Friday night football games to school dances, Hall has been taking in every final bitter-sweet memory that he can. Though it is difficult to accept, Hall seems to be thankful for the growth he has made in his senior year at Phil Campbell.

"Homecoming week was extremely memorable," Hall said when asked about his favorite aspect of senior year.

Of course, his family will draw him back to his roots often. Hall has a younger brother who still attends Phil Campbell, and his mother and father do not live far from the campus itself. Hall's mother, Lisa McDougle Hall, is a Phil Campbell alumna herself, while his father, Brad Hall, graduated

from the not-so-distant Hamilton High School.

When asked about how the staff of Phil Campbell High School has aided him in his academic journey, Hall was sure to mention the support system he had in his corner for the last four years. He specifically thanked Mrs. Amy Gunderman, the home economics teacher who has taught him valuable lessons that will follow him through life.

Mrs. Susan Holt is to thank for Hall's appreciation of the dramatic arts, as he has been heavily involved in two of her productions this year. Lastly, Hall also recognized coach Brett Thomas for pushing him toward excellence in the sport of golf.

Hall's motivation is not only found within the four walls of Phil Campbell High School. He also owes many thanks to his church family at Shady Grove Free Will Baptist.

"They're the ones who keep me humble," Hall said when he began looking back on the support he received from his church during his high school years.

Hall is a well rounded student both academically and socially. He is involved in several extracurricular activities, including the Yearbook Staff, History Club, FFA, Student Council and the National Honor Society. During the time he gets away from this busy schedule, he volunteers through Civitan International, a community service organization.

After graduating from high school, Hall plans to work over the summer while also jumping into college courses at Northwest-Shoals Community College. In the fall, Hall plans to finish his Associate's Degree at Northwest Shoals before transferring to the University of Alabama to get his Bachelor's Degree in civil engineering, which he plans to use to focus on building roadways.

Academically, Hall has been preparing himself for college by taking advanced courses in high school and applying for college applications.

He is adamant about the importance and value of planning ahead when looking at his future after high school.

So far, he has received a Northwest-Shoals Valedictorian scholarship.

As he looks into his future and the many opportunities that await him, Hall offers one simple piece of advice for the students that are to follow in his footsteps:

"Enjoy it while it lasts."



Ethan Hall



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Karlle Greenhill, Russellville High School
Lauren Rogers, Russellville High School
Will Rushing, Russellville High School
Joseph Reynolds, Phil Campbell High School
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Life's greatest reward is making a difference in those all around you

By Greg Hamilton
Superintendent, Franklin County Schools

To the Class of 2019:
Congratulations on your significant accomplishments as you prepare to move on to the next phases of your lives.

It is my hope, and that of the dedicated educators in the Franklin County School system, that we have helped prepare you for life after high school, regardless of where that path takes you. While I am excited to see what life has in store for each of you, there's also a touch of sadness knowing this will be the time that we say goodbye.

Each of you is special, and you have your own strengths, skills and personality traits that have positively impacted our school system, as they will also impact people whose lives you have not yet touched.

As it is for me, I'm sure this is an emotional time for you, seeing your days in Franklin County Schools come to an end. As you move forward with your futures, please take time to reflect on your days in the halls of Belgreen, Phil Campbell, Red Bay, Tharptown or Vina high schools.

You are part of the heartbeat of these communities. We hope the day will come when you tear up with pride watching your son or daughter enter school on that first day of kindergarten. And I sincerely hope you remain a part of Franklin County as you start your own families.

See 'REWARD,' page 33

PHIL CAMPBELL Class of 2019

Braxton Cade Baker
Seth Austin Baker
Hannah Kaitlyn Barnett
Kara Bryn Barton
Anna Vonne Benford
Justin Blake Branch
Skyler Lee Crochet
Jenny Lisette Cuevas
Abby Brianna Davis
Dakota Timber Elliott
Macey Angela Farley
Christopher Steven Ford
Maggie Grace Fowler
Christopher Brent Gonzalez
Johnathan Trent Gonzalez
Sean Austin Graham
Anna Elizabeth Gunderman
Danny Jerek Hall
Ethan Riley Hall
Shaun Cade Hall
Tyler Joseph Harris
Blake Michael Hill
Logan Nicholas Hill
Michael Jerret Hill

Susan Ann Horn
Josiah Dameon Jetton
Francisco Jimenez-Cruz
Nicolas Cage Dewayne Johnson
Camron Wyatt Jones
Ty Andrew Leindecker
Dakota Shane Mansell
Jason Lee Mansell
Issac Valentino Marroquin
Jacob Darron McCarley
Angelia Marie Mims
Steven Sandoval Molina
Christopher Cole Motes
Dustin Lane Orrick
Nathan Michael Owens
Ivy M. Ozbirn
Jami Brianna Palmer
Chaisly Juliet Perea

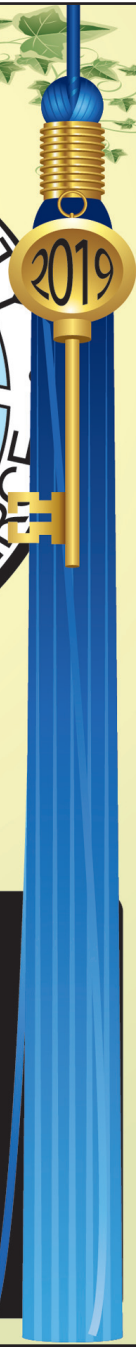


Benjamin Isaac Pierce
Shawn Alexander Potts
Colby Blake Pounders
Kobe Hunter Reeves
Joseph Warren Reynolds
Carly Hope Rice
Madalyn Claire Riddle
Justin Neal Rippee
Hailey Alexandria Rogers
Millicent Paige Rollins
Maritza Torres Sandoval
Bethany Anne Scott
Jenna Leann Sharp
Braedon Kyle Smith
Kevin Andrew Spear
Austin Ryan Stanford
Breeja Lashae Stanford
Milton Scott Stevens
Breanna Thompson
Briana Grace Tompkins
Britney Lashay Tompkins
Deven Lee Tompkins
Arturo Alexander Tunchez
Madison Elaine Weeks
Karley Beth Welborn
Kyleigh Alexiz Winstead

Congratulations to the Class of 2019!
from David Palmer



- June 14-15: Phil Campbell Hoedown
- July 4: Jam on Sloss Lake
- July 27: Vina Fest
- Aug 16-17: 39th Annual Franklin County Watermelon Festival
- Sept 14: Red Bay Founders Fest
- Oct 12: Spirit of Hodges
- Oct 19: Spruce Pine Day



Bear Creek Lakes • Red Bay Museum
Cypress Cove Farm Bird Trail • Dismals
Rock Bridge Canyon Equestrian Park
Roxy Theatre • King Drive-In
Bay Tree Council of Performing Arts

Competitive spirit drives Gray in classroom, life

Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press

For most valedictorians, the idea of being at the top of their class when their high school careers are finished seems inevitable from the time they enter the seventh grade. For Tharptown senior Erica Gray, on the other hand, the thought of being valedictorian of her class is something that only entered her mind in recent years.

Having kept up with her grades as best as she could, Gray knew that her grades were potentially good enough to land her the title of valedictorian of her class, but she wasn't completely positive.

However, when teachers began noticing her work and grades, they informed her that if she kept her grades up and continued on the right path, she might be standing at the podium come graduation night.

"Before some of the teachers told me that my work was great and I had a real shot to be at the top of the class, I had no clue. I was completely in the dark about all of it," Gray said. "I figured I would get top five for sure, because I know I had put in the work to at least get that much, but after I was told that, I said to myself, 'Oh, okay. I need to buckle down and push for it.'

"And that's when I had a good idea that the valedictorian could be me if I worked hard and did what I was supposed to do."

According to Gray, she wasn't the only potential candidate for becoming the valedictorian, and seeing her classmates compete alongside her gave her extra motivation to work hard.

While her studies had long been a top priority, attempting to balance her school work, athletics, work and other extracurricular activities made it seem as though achieving her goal of being number one in her class might be rather difficult.

"I honestly try to take part in everything that we have here at the school. Between sports, clubs and work, it's difficult to make everything work and come together," Gray said. "It makes it a lot easier when you've got people around you telling you that you can do it, and luckily all this hard work paid off for me."

While sporting the highest GPA in the senior class at Tharptown High School, Gray has managed to maintain that high GPA while also participating in numerous activities both in and out of the school. In addition to finishing high school and



Erica Gray

planning for college, Gray is currently working at Bojangles in Russellville and is training to be a part of the management team once she goes full-time.

Not only has Gray been attempting to work her way up to management at her workplace, but she has also been participating as a member at multiple clubs and playing volleyball, basketball and softball over the years at Tharptown High School as well. These clubs include FBLA, FCA, Math Team, PI Club, Rocketry Team, Spanish Club, National Honor Society and History Honors Society.

Gray is the daughter of Dawn Gray and the late Tony Gray and has three brothers who each also graduated from Tharptown as well. Gray is a first-generation college student in her family also.

Over the course of her academic career, Gray has had numerous influences that have helped her along the way, including teachers, fellow students and coaches. However, the one person who has had the largest impact on her over the years has been her mother. Gray said that even from a young age her mother was making sure that she stayed on top of her schoolwork and got everything done that she was supposed to do.

"Ever since I was a kid, my mom has constantly been like, 'Okay, you've got to get those grades up,' and she's really been the one who has kind of

See 'GRAY,' page 33



CONGRATULATIONS!
To the Graduates of 2019, I wish you the best of luck in the next chapter of your life.

R PRONCEY ROBERTSON
 STATE REPRESENTATIVE
 DISTRICT 7

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Congratulations, Graduates!




'REWARD,' from page 31

Every door in life is open for you. Whether your path takes you to college, a technical school, the workforce or the armed forces, I challenge you to make a difference in the lives of others.

What are your life goals? To be wealthy? Famous? Powerful? While there's nothing wrong with healthy ambition, I can tell you from experience that the greatest rewards come as a result of making positive differences in the lives of others.

Whether it's in the lives of your family, your employees, your community, your church or the lives of complete strangers, be that beacon of light that makes a difference to others regardless of where it shines.

I want to thank the members of the Franklin County Board of Education for their dedication in positively impacting the lives of Franklin County students, faculty and staff. Each of these men and women genuinely care about the success of this system and each student.

You will always remain a Bulldog,

Bobcat, Tiger, Wildcat or Red Devil. This was and forever will be your school. I encourage you to stay involved with your school or, if life takes you elsewhere, to be active in the school in your new community. By doing that, you're helping to build the foundation for the future of your community.

Soon we will begin preparations for another school year and a new class of seniors across Franklin County. But that doesn't mean the accomplishments of the Class of 2019 will be forgotten. To the contrary, your inspiration to learn, grow and develop as tomorrow's leaders will have a lasting effect on Franklin County Schools. And for that, we will remain forever grateful.

I wish you the very best success in your lives, and I'm excited to see what the future holds.

I'll close with a timeless quote from Benjamin Franklin: *An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.*

Congratulations to you and your families!

'GRAY,' from page 32

pushed me to be where I am today," Gray said. "She would always tell me when I was younger that if I didn't get my schoolwork finished that there wouldn't be any ballgames, practices or anything else, and I think that's really where I got the mindset of making sure my schoolwork came first. I have her to thank for that."

After she graduates from Tharptown, Gray plans on attending Northwest-Shoals Community College for two years to take her basic classes. Once she finishes at NW-SCC, she hopes to transfer to the University of South Alabama to pursue a degree in physical therapy to finish out her college career.

When asked about her decision to attend South Alabama and pursue a career in the field of physical therapy, Gray said that the choice was an easy one.

"When I visited South Alabama this past summer, I just fell in love with the campus. The academics there are great, the campus is beautiful, and it just really felt like it was the place for me," Gray said. "Choosing Northwest-Shoals to start out just made the most sense in terms of money, and it will also allow me to stay home and prepare for moving down to Mobile in a few years."

There were also a few teachers that helped play a role in getting Gray to where she is today.

"All of my teachers have really helped me in one way or another, but there are four that have really helped me out in more ways than one," Gray said. "Mr. Miller, Mrs. Lozada, Mrs. Inmon and Mrs. Fretwell really helped academically and always pushed me even though they knew

the other stuff I had going on. They really helped me stay on course and figure things out along the way."

Gray has received multiple scholarships along the way to becoming valedictorian, including the Bryant-Jordan Scholarship (which awarded her \$3,000) as well as the valedictorian scholarship given out by Northwest-Shoals. Growing up playing sports with three brothers from time to time and also playing multiple sports in school, Gray credits her competitive spirit in the classroom to these factors.

"I for sure try to bring that competitive attitude into the classroom and apply that to my work and things like that," Gray said. "When you're playing sports, you don't go into a game where you're wanting to lose or okay with losing. You want to win and be the best, and that's the kind of mindset I have tried to keep."

To the younger students at Tharptown, Gray hopes that she will be an inspiration to the next generation of students coming up to push themselves and strive to be the top of their classes as well.

"Really, it's just more of the fact that even if you think you can't do the work, or you can't manage everything, you can. You can do it if you set your mind to whatever it is that you want to do and are willing to work hard and push yourself," Gray said. "You only go as far as you take and push yourself. It's all up to you to make sure that things get done and they get done right, and even if your circumstances are bad, you can still make it out of it and still make something of your situation regardless of how bad it may seem."

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THARPTOWN Class of 2019

Emily Ayers
John Riley Bailey
Christian Balbuena
Ryan Bates
Jorge Bernal
Tristian Brasuell
Tommy Buchanan
Caleb Carruth
Lesly Castillo
Christina Chavez
Tyler Chaney
Hope Creamer
Catie Dawson
Jayce Fischer
Alex Flores
Elisa Francisco
Evan Franks
Anibal Garcia
Austin Giesler
Erica Gray
Jesus Guzman
Jamie Hallman
Marco Hatton

Makensy Hester
Jose Lozano
Patience Lucas
Lisbeth Macedo
Luis Macias
Colton Malone
Alex Matias
Kasey McCormack
Deana Mears
Ian Miller
Ana Montes
Les Montgomery
Benji Pascual
Carson Petree
Gillian Pineda
Madison Pruitt
Frankie Register
A. J. Sanchez
Savannah Sandusky
Jesse Steinfeld
Julissa Vela
Warren Vess
Jazmin Vidal

'RODEN,' from page 28

his masters and doctorate in the same field. Roden has received an academic scholarship from the University of Alabama to assist him in achieving his goals.

Recently, Roden was honored by the Alabama State House of Representatives with a Joint Resolution recognizing his outstanding academic accomplishment. Rep. Jamie Kiel presented the resolution to Roden at a special ceremony at the

school.

"Scoring 36 on the ACT test is exceptional, but to find a student who excels both in and out of the classroom like Thomas has is very rare," Kiel said. "He has attained the status of Eagle Scout while becoming valedictorian of his class, and I am glad to honor him."

As he embarks on his journey of life, Roden said he will always have fond memories of his time at

Colbert Heights High School. The small-town lifestyle taught him many things about respect and humility, but he is excited to move to a larger city and experience a more culturally diverse lifestyle.

When asked about what he hopes his fellow classmates accomplish, Roden said, "I'm always happy to see other students succeed. I wish them the best."

With that sort of mindset, Roden will go far in life.

'RHS,' from page 24

Though not etched in stone, Sebastian Tomas's plans are to go into pathology and do medical research on diseases. She attributes much of her interest in medicine to her involvement in HOSA, an academic club for students interested in careers in health care. Tomas earned pharmacy technician certification through Russellville's health care curriculum, and she said Dr. Stephanie Oliver was one of the teachers she'll always appreciate.

"She was very helpful and helped me realize I may have a career in medicine. HOSA opened up doors to me to realize I can do something rewarding that I would like," Sebastian Tomas added.

Oliver said one of the most rewarding parts of her job is when a student develops a career goal by learning about a profession through the health care curriculum.

"You couldn't ask for a better student than Melissa," Oliver said. "She's always there. She's always smiling and is very motivated and self-

determined. She's just an exceptional student who I know will be successful."

In addition to serving as secretary of HOSA, Sebastian Tomas is president of the National Honor Society, project chairman for Future Business Leaders of America and vice-president of the RHS Chemistry Club. She and her family are active in their church, Iglesia Adventista del Septimo Dia Alpha Spanish in Trinity.

With Russellville's Hispanic population at an all-time high (54 percent of this year's West Elementary School kindergarten are classified as Hispanic), Sebastian Tomas said she's faced some prejudice, but didn't notice it until she got older.

"As a young child, I didn't think about that at all. As I got into elementary and middle school and my mind matured, I began to see things I'd not seen before," Sebastian Tomas said. "Sometimes, it makes me feel bad when I'd face some prejudice in school. It was kind of a setback at the time, but

that also helped motivate me.

"I continued to move forward and show we can be successful, too. There are a lot of talented Hispanic students at Russellville High School making their families proud. I'm proud to be a Hispanic student who's done everything I could to succeed with the help of the teachers and staff and most of my peers."

Sebastian Tomas also expressed her appreciation to RHS teachers Sandra Copeland and Nicole Watts for their positive motivation and encouragement.

Sebastian Tomas' advice for young students in Russellville City Schools is simple—regardless of who you are, there's no reason you can't succeed if you fully apply yourself.

"Be proud of who you are, whether Hispanic, African-American, white or any other ethnicity, and do the best you can within your boundaries. Never be ashamed of who you are. Instead, be proud of who you are and what you represent."

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Congratulations Class of 2019!

Franklin County Board of Education

Congratulations to the Class of 2019!



Greg Hamilton
Superintendent



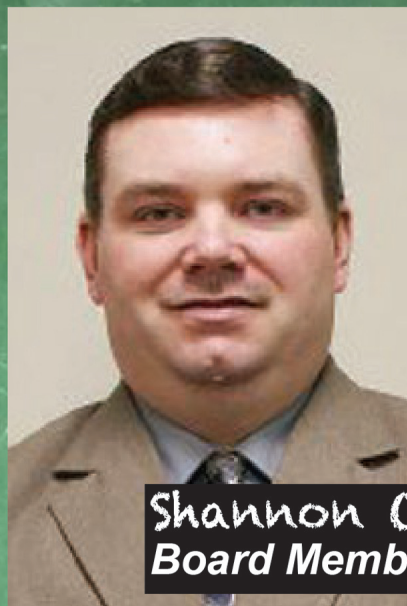
Terry Welborn
Chairperson



Ralton Baker
Vice-Chairperson



**Kacey Hester
Johnston**
Board Member



Shannon Oliver
Board Member



Pat Cochran
Board Member

2018-19 Important Dates

Aug. 6: First Day of
School for Students
Sept. 2: Labor Day
Oct. 16: School 1/2 Day
Oct. 17&18: Fall Break

Nov. 11: Veterans Day
Nov. 25-29: Thanksgiving
Holidays
Dec. 20: School 1/2 Day
Dec. 20-Jan. 7 Christmas
Holiday

Jan. 6&7: Teacher
In-Service Workdays
Jan. 8: Students Return
Jan. 20: Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day



*Congratulations,
Graduates!
We are Proud of You!*



**From left, Commissioners David Hester,
Rayburn Massey, Probate Judge Barry Moore,
Jason Miller and Chris Wallace. ~ The Franklin County Commission**