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09.25.19

Fundraiser for local girl blossoms into nationwide project

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When Rep. Jamie Kiel got a pie in the face last Monday, it wasn't from an angry constituent.

Kiel actually agreed to getting pied as the fulfillment of a promise to two brothers who have raised more than \$3,000 for a fundraiser inspired by the birth of their cousin.

Bronner Hellums, a fourth-grader at Russellville Elementary School, and his younger brother Brody started raising funds to bring awareness to limb differences and to purchase dolls for children through a project called "A Doll Like Me."

The boys' cousin, Sloan Hellums, was born last year with a limb difference, where one of her arms did not fully develop. The boys' parents, Brent and Carly Hellums, didn't tell their sons about Sloan's condition. Instead, they

See 'PROJECT,' Page 11



COURTESY PHOTO

Rep. Jamie Kiel with Brody and Bronner Hellums, moments before Kiel received a pie in the face to celebrate the brothers reaching \$3,000 on a fundraiser inspired by their cousin Sloan, who was born last year with a limb difference.



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City council approves \$9.4 million budget for 2019-20

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council approved a \$9.4 million city budget for fiscal year 2019-20 at the council's September 16 meeting.

The budget includes a 3.14 percent across-the-board raise for all city full-time civil service employees. Mayor David Grissom said this is the second consecutive year the budget included a raise for city employees.

The vast majority of the city's anticipated \$9,421,515 in revenue comes from local taxes and fees, with an estimated \$4.526 million in sales tax revenue. Alcohol revenues total \$205,900, with \$155,000 of that coming from state beer and wine taxes.

The largest expense in the budget is for the Russellville Police Department, with \$1,961,253 budgeted for the next fiscal year. That's followed by the Russellville Street Department, at \$1,744,108 and the Russellville Fire Department at \$1,624,899.

Park and Recreation Department expenses in the 2019-20 budget total \$937,492. That includes a \$775,000 allotment to Russellville City Schools for management and operation of the department, and an estimated \$125,000 in utilities.

The city's share of the four RPD school resource officers will be \$53,371 next year. The remainder of the officers' salary and benefits is paid by Russellville City Schools.

See 'COUNCIL,' Page 8

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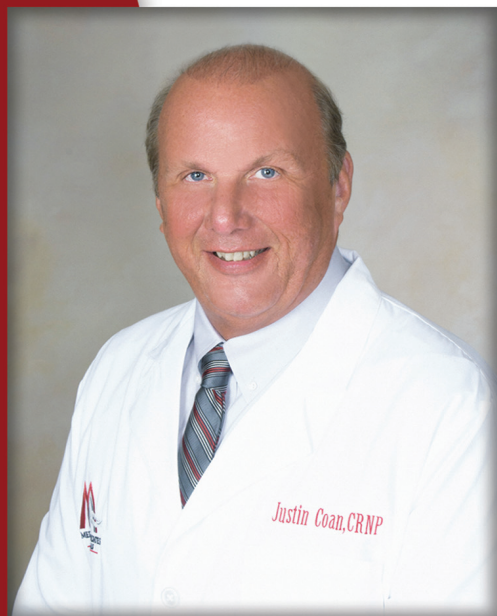


Justin Coan, CRNP

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Lois Winstead Taylor Burns, Russellville, age 91
 Died Sunday, September 15, 2019. Graveside service held at Belgreen Cemetery. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Sara Dawn Clark, Russellville, age 38
 Died Thursday, September 19, 2019. Graveside service held at Franklin Memory Gardens. Spry Memorial Chapel of Russellville assisted the family.

Ralph E. Grissom, Jr., Florence (formerly of Russellville), age 78
 Died Tuesday, September 17, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Terry Gene Malone, Russellville, age 67
 Died Sunday, September 15, 2019. Graveside memorial service held at Knights of Pythias Cemetery. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Wesley Mae Mayfield, Russellville, age 93
 Died Thursday, September 19, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

David O'Dell Scott, Russellville, age 65
 Died Sunday, September 15, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Vandiver Hollow Cemetery in Tuscumbia.



Letters
 to the
 Editor

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



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(L to R) - Shannon Smith, Wynoka Bostick, Brenda Rodriguez, Dr. Steve Hammack, Kelly Powers, and Lauren Sims.

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County school board approves new budget

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Board of Education approved a \$41.4 million budget at the board's September 10 meeting.

The budget, for fiscal year 2019-20, includes \$41,412,677.67 in total expenditures and \$38,703,841 in total revenues. The shortfall is made up for with other fund sources and other fund uses, leaving a projected general fund balance of \$3.4 million, in excess of the \$2.2 million one-month operating fund required by the state.

Franklin County Schools chief financial officer Carla Knight presented the budget report prior to board members voting on the budget.

"We've had very contrasting times at Franklin County Schools, having seen both the best of times and the worst of times," Knight said. "We expect financial stability now that we've never had in the past. In 2009, we had an ending general fund balance of negative \$3.4 million. Today, I'm pleased to tell you next year's ending budget will be around \$3.5 million. You're talking about a \$7 million improvement in ten years."

The system benefited significantly from a \$5 million settlement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency last year, which related to

tornado damage in 2011. While Knight said that was a major boost to the budget, there were other reasons for the improvement as well.

"It's due to the economy getting better, funding from the State of Alabama getting better and good management of funds," Knight said.

The total revenue of \$38.7 million represents a 1.5 percent increase from the current fiscal year, due in large part to a four percent raise for all employees and the subsequent increase in funding from the state to pay for the raise.

Enrollment for Franklin County Schools is 3,565, with 514 total employees including certified and support staff. Tharptown Elementary School has the county's largest enrollment, at 513 students.

"Enrollment numbers are steady and around the same as the last three years," Knight said. "We really grew from 2014-2016, with almost 500 new students. We've been able the last few years to remain steady and play catch-up, and that's helped us."

The system has 5.1 local teaching units, meaning Franklin County Schools are financially responsible for those positions. New programs, including aviation at Phil Campbell, agri-science at Vina and Belgreen's Child Development Teacher Academy, are the result of the system's financial stability, Knight explained.

"We are in a better place to offer more for our students," Knight said. "We're always concerned with the cost of funding local units, but we're using our money to educate our students."

The board also approved a five-year capital plan with a prioritized list of capital projects. Leading the way are two projects at Red Bay High School. The first is the construction of a new ag building, greenhouse and food science building. The second priority is the construction of a new high school at Red Bay.

Franklin County Schools superintendent Greg Hamilton said a pre-construction meeting is tentatively set for September 30 for the 1,100-square-foot two building project and greenhouse. Hamilton hopes to see contractors break ground on the project in early October.

Knight credited the 30-year extension of the additional one-cent sales tax (75 percent to schools/25 percent to the Franklin County Commission for road and bridge repairs), which passed overwhelmingly last year, for allowing the board to plan more capital projects by relying on that revenue stream the next 30 years.

"We appreciate our citizens here in Franklin County for the confidence in our board to spend our money responsibly for the benefit of our children," Knight said.

Schools ask parents to return meal forms ASAP

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

For the past four years, all Russellville City Schools and Franklin County Schools students have received breakfast and lunch at no cost through the Community Eligibility Provision of the Child Nutrition Program.

Beginning with the 2019-20 school year, the two systems were no longer eligible for this provision of the program, but they were given the green light to apply under another section called Provision 2.

This provision reduced application burdens and simplifies the meal counting and claiming procedures and, if approved, allows schools to serve all meals at no charge for a four-year period.

As part of the first-year application requirements, each system must make eligibility determinations and take meal counts by type. As part of the eligibility determinations, both systems must have a completed Free and Reduced Application *per household* listing all children and adults in the household and any income they receive.

The applications must be signed and returned to the schools.

Applications were mailed out to each household during the summer, and some applications have been sent home with children.

If you have not received an application, or received one but have not yet returned it, school officials ask that you mail it back or send it to school with your child as soon as possible.

The applications must be signed and returned to the schools. Applications were mailed out to each household during the summer, and some applications have been sent home with children.

If you have not received an application, or received one but have not yet returned it, school officials ask that you mail it back or send it to school with your child as soon as possible.

These applications will determine how both systems receive reimbursement from the United States Department of Agriculture for school meals.

Students at Russellville City Schools and Franklin County Schools will continue to receive breakfast and lunch at no charge during the 2019-20 school year pursuant to Provision 2.

The income eligibility is published on this page to give parents and guardians guidelines to go by.

If you have questions, please contact Elaine Vaughn, CNP director, Russellville City Schools, at 256-331-2011 or Robynn Bragwell, CNP director, Franklin County Schools, at 256-331-2136.

PUBLIC RELEASE

This is the public release which will be sent to the agencies listed below:

SENT TO: News Media: Franklin County Times, Franklin Free Press Date: July 1, 2019
 Unemployment Office: Shoals Career Center Date: July 1, 2019
 Major Employers: Pilgrim's Pride, Franklin Structures LLC, Clayton Russellville, IHP LLC Date: July 1, 2019

Public Release

Russellville City Schools today announced its policy for free and reduced-price meals for children served in schools under the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program. Local school officials have adopted the following household size and income criteria for determining eligibility:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Russellville City Schools offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast and lunch at no cost, due to our system going under Provision 2. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. We need each household to complete a Free and Reduced Application to determine the reimbursement that Russellville City Schools will receive from USDA. We have been under CEP (Community Eligibility Program) but our system no longer qualified for this, so that is why it is so important for every household to complete an application. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?

- All children in households receiving benefits from Alabama SNAP, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or Alabama TANF, are eligible for free meals.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children who are directly certified are eligible to receive free meals.
- When known to Russellville City Schools, households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free meals based on their participation (or a household member's participation) in the: o Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), if the State program meets Federal standards.
- When known to Russellville City Schools, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals based on the individual child's designation as Other Source Categorically Eligible, as defined by law. Children are determined Other Source Categorically Eligible if they are:
 Homeless,
 Migrant,
 Runaway,
 A foster child, or
 Enrolled in Head Start or an eligible pre-kindergarten program (see: SP 40-2013: Q&As Regarding the Participation of Head Start Programs in Child Nutrition Programs, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-regarding-participation-head-start-programs-child-nutrition-programs-0>).

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2019-2020									
HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ELIGIBILITY SCALE FOR FREE MEALS/MILK				HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ELIGIBILITY SCALE FOR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS/MILK			
	PER YEAR	PER MONTH	EVERY TWO WEEKS	PER WEEK		PER YEAR	PER MONTH	EVERY TWO WEEKS	PER WEEK
1	16,237	1,354	625	313	1	23,107	1,926	889	445
2	21,983	1,832	846	423	2	31,284	2,607	1,204	602
3	27,729	2,311	1,067	534	3	39,461	3,289	1,518	759
4	33,475	2,790	1,288	644	4	47,638	3,970	1,833	917
5	39,221	3,269	1,509	755	5	55,815	4,652	2,147	1,074
6	44,967	3,748	1,730	865	6	63,992	5,333	2,462	1,231
7	50,713	4,227	1,951	976	7	72,169	6,015	2,776	1,388
8	56,459	4,705	2,172	1,086	8	80,346	6,696	3,091	1,546
FOR EACH ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER					FOR EACH ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER				
ADD	+5,746	+479	+221	+111	ADD	+8,177	+682	+315	+158

Honey Do: Interior walls

Last week we looked at washing down walls as we get into fall cleaning and preparing for the holidays. As you undertake this project, you will undoubtedly run into tougher cleaning problems. Cleaning marks, stains and repairing blemishes on interior walls can be challenging.

Begin washing the walls by spot-cleaning stains, marks, etc. Blemishes made by crayon, pencil and marker, as well as scuffs, can be removed with baking soda and water. In a small cup, mix the water and baking soda together to make a paste. Rub the paste into the stain, using a cloth or an old toothbrush. Then wipe the area with a clean cloth. You also can try products such as Mr. Clean's Magic Eraser, which are designed for removing crayon marks and the like.

Now you're ready to start cleaning the entirety of each wall. You will need two buckets and two sponges. Dip a sponge in the bucket containing your cleaning solution and wring out excess water. After scrubbing the wall, use the second sponge and rinse with clean water from the other bucket. Start at the bottom of the wall. This will ensure that any water dripping down as you clean

won't adhere to dirt and debris on the wall and potentially leave stains. Rub the surface lightly in a circular motion, working small areas at a time.

Go over the area you just cleaned with the wet sponge to remove soap residue and any dirt. Dip the rinsing sponge again in the bucket of water and wring out excess water. Continue working in this manner until you have completely cleaned the entire wall. Change the water in the rinsing bucket when it becomes cloudy or too dirty to use for rinsing.

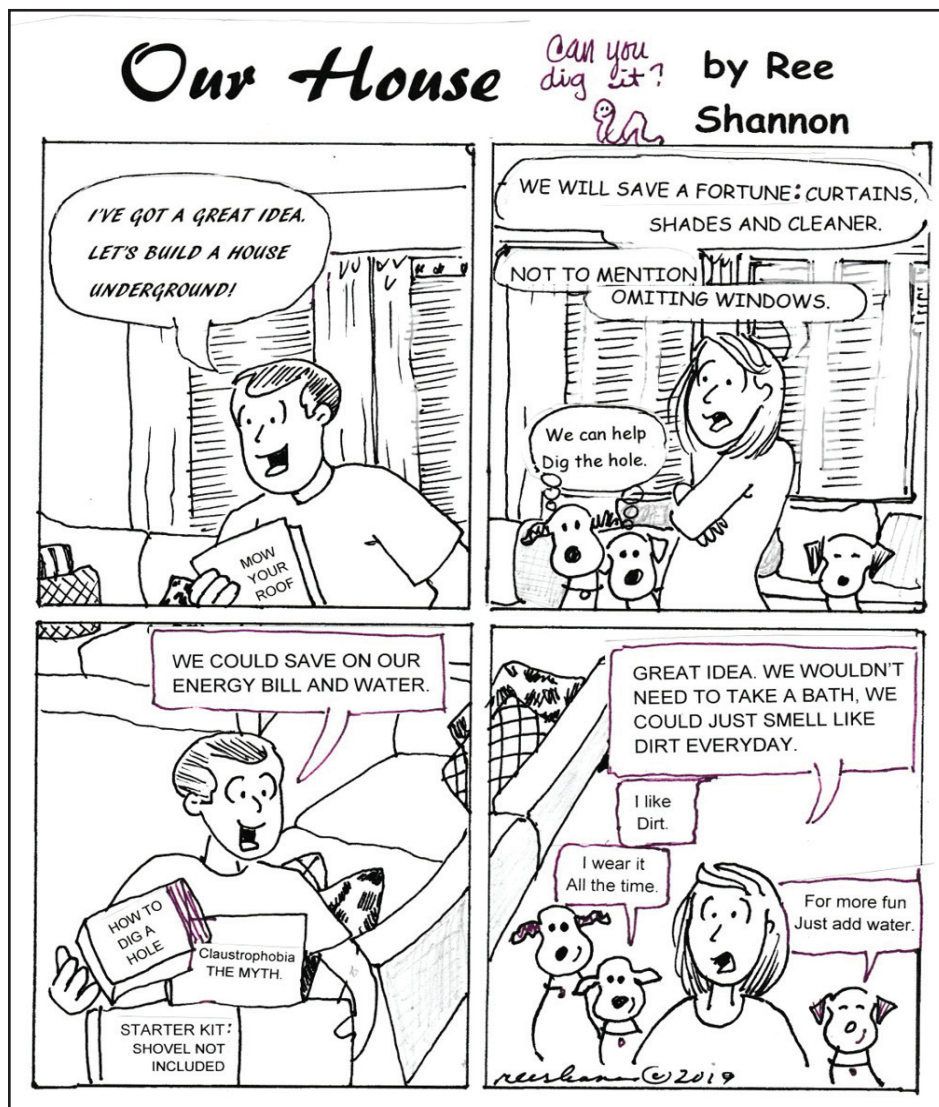
Use a sturdy ladder or step-stool for high spots, and follow safety guidelines. Don't stand too high on the ladder or lean out too far.

Avoid taking breaks until you've completely finished a wall, and then rest before you begin a new one. Otherwise, you may leave visible streaks or lines indicating where you stopped washing. When you've finished cleaning a wall, use a clean cloth or towel to wipe up any remaining drips and excess water.

Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



Doug Green



FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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256-332-0255

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Correction Policy

The Franklin Free Press strives for excellence and accuracy, and we will be pleased to correct any error in our newspaper. To request a correction or clarification, call or e-mail our office.

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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My take I heard it in a song, so on this... it has to be true, right?

As I was thinking about a subject for this week's article, my mind was drawn to love songs played on our own WGOL (100.7 FM/920 AM) country radio station.

I mean, all of us listen to WGOL, don't we? Just in case you have never listened, I'd say this is as good a time as any to start.

Speaking of songs, "Money Can't Buy Me Love" came to mind. There is a so-called 'love' that is solely motivated through financial gain. These people's goal in life consists of the finer things, beautiful homes, expensive cars, fine clothes and an image. Gotta have the image!

Love doesn't matter as much as moving up in the world fast, with little or no effort. The odds of such a union will most likely result in failure.

The marriage that includes God, honesty and sincerity, and that originates from the heart and seriously believes it will last until death do you part, is the kind of love that money can't buy.

Love that is "Tender and True" doesn't usually become "Crazy Love." It would be so much simpler if "Perfect Love" was nothing more than being in the right place at the right time. Of course, I'd still find a way to complicate it. I've been told I make mountains out of molehills.

Love that is "Tender and True" doesn't usually become "Crazy Love."

It would be so much simpler if "Perfect Love" was nothing more than being in the right place at the right time. Of course, I'd still find a way to complicate it. I've been told I make mountains out of molehills. I'd have to question myself as to

how I could possibly know if I really was in the right place at the right time. After all, I have been told many, many times that 'timing is everything.'

Once a person begins struggling with 'trust issues,' you will most likely find yourself alone in life and, sometimes, even lonely. I struggle with that myself, so I personally know the way it feels.

I often say, "Oh, I like my life the way it is," but a person can say anything, right? I don't sit and dwell on it, but it will surface at times. Not all feelings will stay dormant forever.

If you happen to be the couple who fell in love at first sight, then I'd like to say "Congratulations!"

Trust issues would go like this. I'd look and see that I think my glasses were dirty, since I thought this just might "be the one." Take 'em off, wipe 'em off, and by the time I'd get them back on, my true love will have disappeared. Of course, I'd laugh about it, because that's what I do best. I then would walk away singing, "I've Lost That Loving Feeling" or "It Don't Come Easy."

To each his own, I guess. That has just caused an old Doris Day song to come to mind. Well, it might not be her song, but she sang it on a movie I watched years ago. It is the thing that keeps me hoping, that beautiful song, "Whatever Will Be, Will Be."

Until then: "Love comes to those who wait!" Have a good day, my friends!



Gail Motes



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First things first

Dear Dave,
My husband and I are in our thirties. We have \$15,000 in debt spread across student loans, credit cards and a car payment. We make decent money, and we've each got around \$50,000 in our 401(k) plans. What steps can we take toward becoming good investors?

Heather

Dear Heather,
When you're building wealth, everything will fall apart unless you have a rock-solid foundation. If someone has an eye toward investing, I always recommend they first become debt-free. Another thing I advise ahead of investing is saving up an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses. This is money you never touch, except in the case of a *real* emergency.

Once these two elements are in place, you've constructed that solid financial foundation from which you can begin building wealth. Most people skip these two steps, and jump right into funding things like 401(k)s, mutual funds and Roth IRAs. These are all great investment tools, but when you do it this way it's like building a house by

starting the framing before you've laid the foundation. This kind of approach is likely to cause setbacks and all kinds of other problems down the road.

What I'm recommending makes up the beginning Baby Steps in my plan. The very first Baby Step is to get a starter emergency fund of \$1,000 in the bank. Baby Step 2 is paying off all debt, except for your home, using the debt snowball method. And Baby Step 3 is to finish growing your emergency fund until you have three to six months of expenses saved. Investing is Baby Step 4, and that means 15 percent of your household income going toward retirement.

In your situation, debt isn't really the problem. It's a symptom of you two buying things you couldn't afford. Start living on a written, monthly budget. Give every dollar a name before the month begins, and break that debt cycle by developing a permanent financial game plan. Once you do that, I'll bet both of you will end up feeling like you got a raise.

Even better, you'll have started down the path to freeing up your largest wealth-building tool—your income!

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.*



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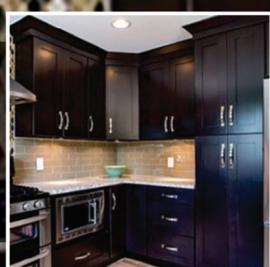
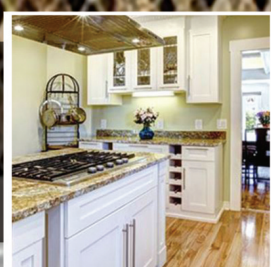


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What's Happening

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

Russellville Masonic Lodge #371 is selling Boston butts for \$30. Pre-order by calling 256-810-1970. Pick-up will be Saturday, October 26 from 8-10 a.m. at the Masonic Lodge on Coffee Street.

The Russellville Fire Department is selling T-shirts to raise money for breast cancer testing at Russellville Hospital for those who can't afford it and need it. Short-sleeve shirts are \$15. Long-sleeve are \$20. Pre-order forms can be picked up at either Russellville fire station. Thanks for your support!

Saint Paul C.M.E Church (406 Hamilton Street, Russellville, AL 35653) will host an Outreach Ministry event this Saturday, September 28 from 2-4 p.m. with free food, music, prizes, games and more! Everyone is welcome! For more information, please call Pam Lyle at 256-577-8354.

DivorceCare, a special help seminar and support group for people experiencing divorce and separation, will be held on Sunday evenings at 5 p.m. at First Baptist Church Colbert Heights. DivorceCare features nationally recognized experts on divorce and recovery topics. Seminar sessions include "Facing My Anger," "Facing My Loneliness," "New Relationships," "KidCare" and "Forgiveness." Meetings will be held at 6000 Woodmont Drive, Tuscumbia, AL. For more information, call First Baptist Church at 256-383-8016.

You are welcome to all services at Pleasant Ridge Missionary Baptist Church (Hwy. 48 in Russellville). Sunday service times: Sunday School at 10 a.m., worship service at 11 a.m., Sunday night service at 6 p.m. Wednesday night Bible Study is held at 6:30 p.m. Pastor is Bro. Roger Bond.

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 October 1. All members and friends are urged to attend.

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!

Tharptown Elementary will host its annual Fall Festival on Thursday, October 3 from 5:30-8 p.m. The event will feature food, friends, games and fun, with Cake Walk Bingo, Toy Walk, Silent Auction, Inflatables and Raffles. FREE admission. Great prizes! All tickets are \$1. Also, for two nights, there will be a Haunted Gym, October 3 from 5:30-10 p.m. and October 4 from 7-10 p.m.

Belgreen High School will host a Fall Festival on Thursday, October 3 from 6-8:30 p.m. Admission is free! There will be concessions available, along with Bingo, Haunted House, Toy Walk, Cake Walk, Hayrides, Costume Contest, Fun Games and Great Prizes! Don't miss it!

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 October 3. 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. Membership is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate Armed Forces.

The Reedtown Back To Basics Skill Center (old Reedtown High School) will have a white bean dinner on Friday, October 4 from 11 a.m. until sold out. Dinners are \$8.00 and consist of white beans with ham, coleslaw, cornbread and a drink. Beans can be purchased by the pint for \$3.00 and by the quart for \$5.00. For more information, call 256-324-0515.

American Legion Post 64 will meet Thursday, October 10 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville on Saturday, October 12 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 historic Roxy Theater.

Mark A. Johnson's "An Irresistible History of Alabama Barbeque" will be discussed at the October 16 10 a.m. meeting of the Readers of the Lost Ark Book Club. The club meets at Coldwater Books, 101 West Sixth Street, Tuscumbia. For more info, email nancy537481@yahoo.com.

The NACOLG SenioRx Medication Assistance Program supplies free and low-cost medications for anyone in Alabama with a disability or a chronic illness, regardless of age, that requires daily medication. Medicare recipients may also be eligible. For more information, contact NACOLG SenioRx today. There is no charge for this service. Call 1-800-AGELINE (1-800-243-5463) or 256-389-0529 and ask for Paula Pardue. This program is in partnership with the state of Alabama and Alabama Department of Senior Services.

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

A debt-free college degree? Why not!?

If you're a parent, here's something we're both passionate about: Making sure your kids have a great future. I want to help you and your kids get ready for life after high school so they can continue to college (and beyond) with a plan and a purpose! And a huge part of that is paying for school without student loans.

Yep, I said it. Your kids do not need to take out student loans for college. People might've told you that student loans are just a "normal" part of the college experience and that going to school debt-free isn't even possible. Forget normal! If having massive amounts of student loan debt is normal, then I want your kids to be weird!

The Biggest Problem Facing Today's Students

Why am I so passionate about helping your kids avoid student loans? Well, there's a major student loan crisis in our country right now, with the total debt coming in at over \$1.6 trillion. And the average amount of debt per student at the time of graduation is over \$35,000. Not cool!

When I was in high school, nobody warned me about the dangers of taking out loans—so I did. It got me in a lot of trouble, and I regretted it later. But now I have the opportunity to help the younger generation avoid making the mistakes I made—and here's how you can

help them too.

How Your Kids Can Prep for College Academically

Acing their academics now will only help them prepare for—and pay for—college. Here are the top three things they should do when it comes to their schoolwork:

1. Get great grades. Honestly, GPA is one of the top things colleges look at when it comes to awarding merit-based scholarships. Encourage them to view their grades as a way to make money for school—kind of like a job.

2. Learn how to study. Good study habits are a huge plus in high school and college. Help them find their ideal study environment by asking them what helps them stay focused. Do they need total quiet? Does music or white noise help? Do they need food or coffee? Do they get more done alone instead of with friends?

3. Prep for the tests. ACT and SAT scores are two other important factors in getting college scholarships. Resources like test prep books or tutors can really make a big difference, too. But don't worry if that's not in your budget. You can help your kids by quizzing them, or working through math problems with them. Or you can even consider



Anthony O'Neal

See 'DEGREE,' Page 10

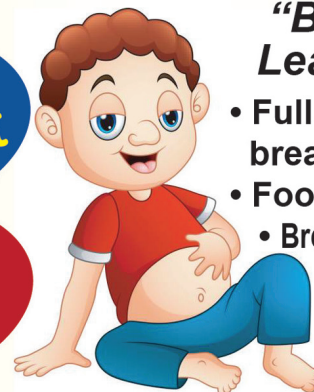


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Local school systems both moving in positive direction

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

As he described the state of his school system, Franklin County superintendent of education Greg Hamilton used words that haven't traditionally applied to Franklin County Schools—financial stability.

Hamilton delivered a "State of the Schools" program at a luncheon hosted by the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce on September 12.

Russellville City Schools superintendent Heath Grimes also delivered a PowerPoint program and spoke about the positive direction his system is moving in.

The Franklin County School System has ten schools on six campuses, after the board of education voted to split Red Bay School into an elementary and high school starting this year.

The school system has 514 employees and a total of 68 buses, 44 of which are propane-fuel-operated.

Enrollment is 3,697, compared to 3,193 in 2014. That represents an increase of 15.7 percent in the last six years, Hamilton said. The increase was primarily a result of RCS implementing an out-of-district tuition of \$600.

The budget recently approved by the Franklin County Board of Education is approximately \$38.7 million and calls for a year-ending balance of \$3.4 million, well in excess of the \$2.2 million one-month fund balance required by the state.

"To be financially stable is a good thing," Hamilton said. "It lets you to take anything extra and put it back in the budget for the benefit of the children in our system."

Hamilton said that his system's most pressing need is more building space.

"We are in dire need of some capital building projects, but obviously, that costs a lot of money," Hamilton said.

Recent capital improvements either underway or completed include a new baseball field at Belgreen High School, paving projects at Belgreen's Community Education Building, and the construction of a science lab/band hall building at no cost to the county at Vina High School.

Hamilton, with the assistance of Franklin County's Legislative team, was able to secure \$700,000 additional funds from the state for the Vina project after the old building was damaged beyond repair by an EF-0 tornado last year.

The cafeteria, storm shelter and classroom addition at Tharptown High School is nearing completion. A paving project is complete between Phil Campbell High School and Phil Campbell Elementary, and a pre-construction meeting is set for September 30 on the new agriculture/home

See 'SCHOOL,' page 9



Hamilton



Grimes

'COUNCIL,' from page 1

The school bond fund payment to Russellville City Schools increased to \$1.3 million next year from \$1 million in 2018-19.

An estimated \$327,747 is appropriated for debt service in next year's budget.

"I want to thank everyone for their work on the budget, including our department heads and Joe Hamilton," Grissom said. "This is our largest budget, at over \$9.4 million, due to increased sales tax revenue, increased ad valorem taxes and increased revenue from privilege licenses."

The budget anticipates \$675,000 in privilege license revenue next year.

In other action, the council:

- Passed a resolution authorizing Grissom to enter into an agreement with the Alabama Department of Transportation for maintenance of passive warning devices at the railroad crossing on Walnut Gate Road. The total cost of the project is \$370,680, 90 percent of which will be paid by federal funds. The remaining \$37,068 will split between the City of Russellville and the Franklin County Commission, Grissom said.
- Approved the purchase of a 2017 Ford F-250 at a cost of \$27,500, a 2015 Chevrolet 4x4 at a cost

of \$21,291 and a 2016 Ford F-250 at a cost of \$25,850 for the Russellville Fire Department, to be paid from the Local Gas Tax Fund and purchased from ALDOT Surplus Equipment Program.

- Approved quotes from Alabama Guardrail for repairs of guardrails in four different locations at a cost of \$12,987.

- Accepted a letter of resignation from Officer Drake Seal in the Russellville Police Department and declared a vacancy for patrol officer in the Russellville Police Department and asked the Civil Service Board to add an additional name to the list.

- Approved the hiring of Lane Gulley as an RPD dispatcher.

- Authorized advertisement to solicit job applications for a laborer position with the Russellville Street Department.

- Accepted a letter of resignation from Cheri McCain from the Russellville Library Board.

- Saw a sales presentation from Jeff Minatra with Gallagher Asphalt about possible repaving projects in the City of Russellville.

The next regular council meeting will be October 7 with work session at 6 p.m and meeting to follow.

Commission makes board appointments

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission approved several personnel moves and made several board appointments at its September 16 meeting.

The commission approved the following personnel actions:

- Retirement of Deniese Cheatham from the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner's Office.
- The hiring of Jenny Harris as a property clerk in the Revenue Commissioner's Office.
- The hiring of Dennis Riner as a Corrections Officer/Dispatcher in the Franklin County Sheriff's Office.
- The termination of Brendon Crenshaw as a temporary employee in the Franklin County Solid Waste Department.
- The hiring of Michael Craig Vice as a temporary employee in the Solid Waste Department.
- The resignation of Tanner Hall as a temporary employee in the Solid Waste Department and the hiring of another temporary employee to fill the vacancy.
- The resignation of Chase Holland from the Franklin County Highway Department.

Commissioners made the following board appointments:

- NACOLG Board: Lavon Duboise and Jerry Groce. A third appointment was tabled in order to find a suitable candidate.
- Industrial Development Board: District One appointments Matt Cooper and Timmy James. District Two appointment of Craig Madden. The appointment

of a District Four board member was tabled in order to find a suitable candidate.

- Northwest RC&D Council: Probate Judge Barry Moore will be the commission representative.
 - Department of Human Resources Board Appointment: Laura Pruet.
- In other agenda items, the commission:
- Authorized Franklin County Emergency Management Agency Director Mary Hallman-Glass to conduct a geological survey as a requirement for a grant application for funding to purchase a generator for the Franklin County Courthouse.
 - Approved a contract with Southern Health Partners for one year for inmate medical services at the Franklin County Jail.
 - Approved sheriff Shannon Oliver to enter into an agreement with Millenium Risk Management for outside medical costs for inmates in what Oliver described as a cost-saving measure.
 - Rejected bids for a generator for the Franklin County Courthouse until a survey is completed to see if the county qualifies for a grant.
 - Approved the 2020 holiday schedule in line with the holiday schedule for the State of Alabama.
 - Set the second Monday of each month at 5 p.m. for work sessions and the third Monday of each month at 8:30 a.m. for the business meeting.
 - Accepted the lowest responsible fuel bid from Tatum Oil Company for 10 cents above rack price per gallon for gas and 11 cents above rack price per gallon for diesel.
 - Approved a contract with the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$5,500.

Five local eateries earn satisfactory ratings

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Five of the seven Franklin County establishments that received health ratings during the week of September 9-13 had scores that fell 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.

Five of the seven Franklin County businesses listed in the most recent food and lodging establishment ratings scored 85 or above, within the satisfactory compliance range. Unsatisfactory scores were received by the following businesses:

- Phil Campbell Chevron, 3515 Broad St., Phil Campbell, 81. (Mold on fountain nozzles, hamburger steaks and chicken tenders being held at 110-124 degrees).
- Gasmart West, 23791 Hwy 24 West, Russellville, 84. (No available proof foodhandlers employee reporting agreement, no proof of approved course, 120 day notice previously given).

The high score was 98, received by Dollar General #785, 15043 Hwy. 43, Russellville.

Other inspection scores and violations of

Franklin County businesses included:

- N&F No. 2, Inc., 9224 Hwy. 243, Phil Campbell, 86. (No date on bag of cooked barbecue meat, ham and cheese, bologna and cheese biscuits being held at 116 degrees, banana pudding sitting out at 84 degrees).
- B&A Auction, 1385 County Road 77, Russellville, 95. (No approved grease receptacle/hauler).
- Monchi's, 121 N. Washington Ave., Russellville, 97.
- Dollar Tree #4179, 15485 Hwy. 43, Russellville, 98.

Of the 13 inspections done in Colbert County from September 9-13, all received scores falling in the range of satisfactory. The high score of 100 went to Muscle Shoals Living Center, 994 Gattman Park Drive, Muscle Shoals.

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

'POSITIVE,' from page 8

economics building at Red Bay High School.

Hamilton outlined some new or returning courses offered at Franklin County Schools, including agriscience at Vina for the first time in two decades, home economics at Belgreen, an Early Childhood Teacher Academy and a full-time Spanish teacher for Franklin County Schools. Also, a new aviation program at Phil Campbell is at full capacity with 29 students enrolled. Welding and cabinet making are also now offered.

"There is a shortage of pilots, and that's a pressing need," Hamilton said. "We are very excited about our aviation program and look forward to expanding it next year."

When it was his time to speak, Grimes addressed the out-of-district tuition policy from a different perspective.

"We had 2,700 students in 2015. Without that out-of-district policy, we would have had to spend \$20 million in capital improvements immediately. That's how out of space we were," Grimes said.

Grimes outlined the plan for a new two-story addition at Russellville High School and a major expansion and renovation of the career technical center, projects he hopes to see break ground next year. The capital projects are contingent upon the City of Russellville obtaining acceptable interest rates in

the bond market to do a bond issue for the school system.

Grimes discussed some of his system's unique challenges with 20 percent of his 2,500 students classified as English Language learners, meaning they are not proficient in English. The demographics of Russellville City Schools' enrollment includes 53 percent Hispanic, 38 percent Caucasian, six percent Black, and one percent each Asian, Native American or "other."

More than 100 Russellville High School students now receive dual enrollment credit through Advanced Placement courses, and Grimes said AP enrollments have grown every year since the system began offering them.

Russellville City Schools offer students education in Robotics/Engineering, ROTC, Entrepreneurship, Park and Recreation Management for Field Management and district-wide Computer Science.

Russellville City Schools were ranked number 11 of 136 in the category of safest school districts in Alabama by Niche.com, as well as 18 of 136 for best teachers and 19 of 136 for best place to teach in Alabama. The system received an overall grade of A-minus.

Russellville ranked third of 75 schools in the category of standout high schools in Alabama, in large part for how the system is dealing positively with a diverse population in its enrollment.



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Yard Sale this Friday, Sept. 27 from 7am-until on Hwy. 24 past the Chevron. First road on the right. 901 Hwy. 144. Third house on the right. Clothes, furniture, lots of misc. items.

Yard Sale. Fri./Sat. Sept. 27/28. 7 a.m.-until. 1680 Elm Lane, Littleville. Two houses behind former Party Pack on right if going north on 43. Women's and men's clothing, plus size clothing, children's clothing, furniture, glassware and more!

Yard Sale. Fri./Sat. Sept. 27/28. 7 a.m.-until. 1680 Elm Lane, Littleville. Two houses behind former Party Pack on left if going north on 43. Women's and men's clothing, plus size clothing, children's clothing, furniture, glassware and more!

Big, beautiful garage sale this Friday and Saturday, Sept. 27-28, from 8am-2pm at 411 Park Blvd. in Russellville. Lots of clothes, brand new end tables, shelves, lots of odds and ends.

Big, beautiful garage sale this Friday and Saturday, Sept. 27-28, at 3890 Waterloo Road, 2 1/2 miles past high school. Great selection of goodies! Large desk, glass showchase, shelves, pie safe, cabinets, velvet Queen Ann chairs,

Yard Sale. Friday/Saturday, Sept. 27/28. 7 a.m.-until. 1323 North Washington Ave., Russellville. Furniture, clothing, misc. items, all in good condition.

Yard Sale this Saturday, Sept. 28 from 6am-until at 4125 Waterloo Road. Several families. Lots of name-brand clothes (men's and women's), lots of furniture, lots of misc. items.

Yard Sale. EVERY Saturday in September. 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. The Living Word Church, Hwy. 24 West, Russellville. Cancelled if Rain.

Estate Sale October 4-5. Friday from 8am-4pm, Saturday from 8am-2pm. 10465 Hwy. 75.

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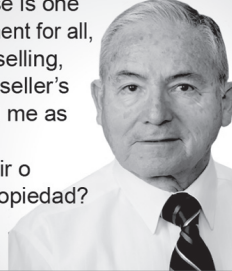
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'DEGREE,' from page 7

borrowing a prep book or splitting the cost of one with a friend.

How Your Kids Can Prep for College Financially Money is everyone's favorite part of the college process, right? Yeah, not so much. But remember, it's totally possible to pay for school without loans. Here are three ways your kids can do that:

1. Find scholarships and grants. This is free money that your kids won't have to pay back! I tell students to spend at least an hour every day applying for scholarships, because it will really pay off in the long run. They can also find scholarships and grants by filling out the FAFSA form

and by looking through the hundreds of other options online. There's a lot of free money out there. Your teen just has to find it!

2. Work. Having a part-time job throughout high school and college not only helps with time management and career skills but also really helps them save money for their future!
3. Budget. When your kids learn how to write down where every single dollar of their income is going, they'll be way less likely to overspend—and way more likely to put their extra money into a college fund.

Yes, your child can go to college without stu-

dent loans!

About Anthony O'Neal
Since 2003, Anthony has helped hundreds of thousands of students make smart decisions with their money, relationships, and education. He's a national best-selling author, and travels the country spreading his encouraging message to help teens and young adults start their lives off right. His latest book, Debt Free Degree, will be available October 7. You can follow Anthony on YouTube and Instagram @AnthonyONeal and online at anthonyoneal.com or facebook.com/aoneal.

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RUSSELLVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY (LAWN CARE BIDS)

The Russellville Housing Authority is now accepting bids for Lawncare Service for our 4 developments (Engle Drive, Washington Plaza, Eastside Plaza, and Westside Plaza). All companies considering this proposal are strongly encouraged to physically inspect the properties prior to submitting a bid. The successful bidder shall be required to provide proof of liability insurance and a State license. The Russellville Housing Authority reserves the right to reject any/or all bids if it deems this would be in the best interests of the Authority.

Bids in sealed envelopes clearly marked "Lawn Care Service Bids," should be mailed to the Russellville Housing Authority, P.O. Box 966, Russellville, Alabama 35653, or delivered to 73 Flippen Street, Russellville, Alabama 35653, in time to be opened and publicly read aloud at 10:00 a.m. on October 9, 2019. Bids received after this deadline will not be opened and shall not be considered. Any questions, comments, or requests to schedule a site inspection can contact Deborah Freeman at (256) 332-1561.

'PROJECT,' from page 1

chose to let the boys notice on their own.

"They had questions. And we told them that God had made Sloan special," said Carly Hellums, a special education teacher at West Elementary School. "They immediately went into a mode where they call themselves 'big brothers cousins' and said nobody would be mean to her and they would always help her and take care of her.

"Soon they saw she actually didn't need help. Sloan is very independent and loves to do everything on her own. They love her like none other, though."

Sloan is the daughter of Byron and Lauren Hellums of Russellville. She celebrated her first birthday September 22.

The boys sold bracelets for \$4 each, and each boy chose a phrase to print on them. Bronner chose *Be a Friend*, and Brody decided on *Kindness Matters*.

"Each one of them chose their favorite colors, red and blue, and we ordered the bracelets," Carly said. "We made a video of them talking about the fundraiser and hit our goal of \$300 within 12 hours. After one day, we had passed \$600. People were ordering them from across the country. We've sent bracelets to 17 different states so far and have reordered twice."

Carly researched online for resources for Sloan's parents to connect with. She found a non-profit organization called "A Doll Like Me," founded by Amy Jandrisevits of Wisconsin.

Jandrisevits, a former pediatric oncology social worker, was concerned about the lack of diversity in dolls for children with certain medical or congenital conditions. Jandrisevits custom makes dolls that look like the children who will receive them. She hand-makes each doll based on photographs of the child who will own the doll. So Carly ordered her niece a doll.

Bronner and Brody decided that in honor of Sloan's first birthday they wanted to do a fundraiser to raise \$300 to purchase three dolls for children whose families might not otherwise be able to afford them.

"The rest is history," Carly said.

What began as a small vision has turned into a nationwide project that has resulted in enough funds raised so far to purchase more than 30 dolls.

The boys decided to sell bracelets for \$4 each, and each boy chose one phrase to print on them. Bronner chose *Be a Friend*, and Brody decided on *Kindness Matters*.

"Each one of them chose their favorite colors, red and blue, and we ordered the bracelets," Carly said. "We made a video of them talking about the fundraiser and hit our goal of \$300 within 12 hours. After one day, we had passed \$600. People were ordering them from across the country. We've sent bracelets to 17 different states so far and have reordered twice."

The bracelets may be ordered through Carly Hellums' Facebook page, or by emailing her at carlyhellums@yahoo.com. They are available in red and blue and in adult and youth sizes.

So how did a fundraiser in honor of their cousin turn into a pie in the face of a state representative?

In their Facebook video, the boys said if they raised \$300, they would take a pie in the face. Ultimately, only Bronner went through with it, and he was joined by a couple of his cousins who also got pied.

As an incentive to get to \$600, Carly and Brent said they would take a pie in the face once that amount was raised. Two pies later, they were there.

"Then their Uncle Byron and Aunt Lauren said the boys could pie them at \$1,000, and Jacob Wallace and Coach Ben Phillips said they would get pied at \$1,500, so we did that in front of Brody's kindergarten class," Carly said.

Coaches Larry Gilmer and Corey Flanagan also agreed to take pies in the face to bring more attention to the fundraising campaign.

Kiel's pie celebrated the \$3,000 threshold of the fundraiser, but the highlight of the morning came before Kiel actually got a pie in his face.

As he addressed a room full of Russellville Elementary students, Kiel took off one of his shoes and showed the kids a large scar on his foot.

"I was born with club feet, and that required wearing special shoes and wearing different braces and casts in my childhood," Kiel said. "I finally had surgery after third grade and started fourth grade with casts on my feet.

"Even after surgery, I was left with a big scar on my foot. So I showed them the scar that makes me a little different to try and relate to the kids that everyone is a little big different. When someone is different, it's nothing to laugh about or bully someone because of that. And just because someone is different doesn't mean they won't be successful or fulfill their goals in life."

Carly said Kiel's words were powerful and touched everyone in the room.

"There were very few dry eyes in the house with the adults. We all realized what profound statements he was making. It was really incredible," Hellums said. "We knew he was coming to be a good sport and take a pie in the face, but we never expected him to take his sock and shoe off and take about how he struggled with a difference he had but it didn't hold him back.

"You can still achieve your dreams."

Recently, a woman from Australia and her two daughters, one of whom has a limb difference, sent Bronner and Brody a video thanking them for what they are doing and for spreading kindness. As she saw her sons watching that video, Carly realized how much this project has impacted them, particularly nine-year-old Bronner.

"When he watched the video," Carly said, "tears ran down his face, and he asked me if they said they were from Sydney, Australia? Bronner said he couldn't believe someone in another country heard about our message, and he said, 'That's big. I can't believe it. I'm just a little kid.'

"They have seen that even though they're young, they can still make a difference."

And the campaign continues. Each additional \$100 translates to a doll that resembles a child somewhere in the world. When will the campaign end? Hellums doesn't know.

"I think we'll see where it goes. We're working on our next pie in the face for our next goal of \$3,500. This has really changed my life," Carly said. "I never dreamed two boys selling bracelets would take me on such an incredible journey. God really blessed us. We are so thankful for Sloan, too, and the blessing she is."

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Week 5 in the SEC

Last week's record: 3-1
Year-to-date record: 13-3

This week's games:
Texas A&M (-23) vs. Arkansas –
11:00 on ESPN

Both teams are 2-2, but could two teams with the same record be any further apart? The Aggies lost to top-ranked Clemson and No. 8 Auburn, while the Hogs are coming off a 31-24 loss at home to three-touchdown underdog San Jose State. Over the past two seasons, Arkansas has now been beaten by Colorado State, North Texas and San Jose State—with the latter two defeats coming at home. Yikes.

Texas A&M has struggled offensively in its two losses, but Clemson and Auburn are two of the very best defensive teams in the country. Arkansas is...not. The Aggies haven't lost to Arkansas since joining the SEC in 2012, and they're not about to start now.

The Pick: Texas A&M 34 Arkansas 14
Ole Miss at Alabama (-35) – 2:30 on CBS
If this guaranteed rout is the conference's showcase game of the week...well, then this is not a great week.

Here's your fun stat of the day: Tua Tagovailoa has a career touchdown-to-interception ratio of 71 to 8. With five scoring tosses in back-to-back games and 17 already on the year, Tua is well on his way to a 50-touchdown season. The Rebels don't figure to offer much resistance this week.

The Pick: Alabama 52 Ole Miss 10
Mississippi State at Auburn (-11) – 6:00 on ESPN

Auburn's neutral-site win over Oregon and road win at College Station probably represent the most impressive pairing of victories by any team in the country thus far.

Gus Malzahn called a great game against A&M, finding some creative ways to get the run game going and using Joey Gatewood very effectively in relief of Bo Nix. That, coupled with a flat-out dominant effort by the defense, is why Auburn was able to build a 21-3 lead through three quarters.

Mississippi State bounced back nicely against Kentucky last week, but—unlike last year in Starkville, when the Bulldogs beat the Tigers 23-9—Auburn has the better defense and home-field advantage this time around.

The Pick: Auburn 27 Mississippi State 17
Kentucky at South Carolina (-3.5) – 6:30 on SECN

These two teams have a lot in common. Both lost their starting quarterbacks to season-ending injuries early in the year. Both went on the road last week and got thumped after losing at home the week before. Both are likely going to struggle to reach bowl eligibility—which makes this game all the more important.

Provided a banged up Ryan Hilinski is able to play, the Gamecocks should snap a puzzling five-year losing streak to Kentucky.

The Pick: South Carolina 24 Kentucky 20



Mike Self
Sports Editor

Business handled



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Hubbard (left, making tackle), Gaspar (45) and Moreno (51) led a dominant defensive effort last Friday night. The Golden Tigers held West Point to 10 total yards and one first down in the first half and finished the night with 14 tackles for loss in a 51-6 rout.

Russellville has some big games down the road against quality opponents, but head coach John Ritter is only worried about one team—his own.

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

RUSSELLVILLE - Above all others, there is one team that occupies the attention of Russellville head coach John Ritter on a daily basis.

Surely that team is Jasper, the top-ranked team in Class 5A and the reigning Region 7 champions? The Vikings routed Russellville 42-13 last October, spoiling the Golden Tigers' bid for an undefeated regular season, and they've started this season with four straight wins while out-scoring their last three opponents by a combined margin of 166-0.

With an October 18 showdown at Golden Tiger Stadium already looming large, surely Jasper is foremost in Ritter's mind...?

Then again, one week before hosting the Vikings, Russellville will pay a visit to Hamilton High School, where the Aggies are also off to a 4-0 start and currently own a share of first place in the Region 7 standings. Looking past Hamilton wouldn't be wise, so devising a plan to beat the Aggies is probably item number one on Ritter's to-

do list, right?
Nope.

"We talk about handling our own business," Ritter said. "We don't talk about West Point. We don't talk about Hamilton or Jasper or Dora or whoever. We talk about Russellville and what are we gonna do on Monday to improve Russellville, what are we gonna do on Tuesday to improve Russellville? I think that because we do approach things that way, we have gotten better each week, because we're not worried about the opponent. We're worried about ourselves."

Ah, of course, who could forget about Lawrence County? The Red Devils whacked Dora 37-14 last week to improve to 2-1 in region play; more to the point, they've become Russellville's most bitter rival in recent years, and that trip to Moulton on October 4 is bound to be an adventure (one way or another). Ritter must be focused on Lawrence County, then?

Guess again.

Tunes and Tees



COURTESY PHOTOS

Pictured above is the first-place team in the morning flight of this year's sixth annual "Tunes and Tees" Golf Tournament at Twin Pines Country Club. Team members (L to R) are Ross Napier, Braden Bendall, Joshua Seal and Aaron Jackson. Pictured below is the winning team from the afternoon flight, with team members (L to R) Ronnie Lovett, Eric Boutwell, Chase Bullington and Rick Bostick.

Familiar faces fare well in annual benefit tournament

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The sixth annual "Tunes and Tees" Golf Tournament saw some familiar faces in the winner's circle after a morning and afternoon flight of golf on Friday, September 13.

The annual tournament benefits the FAME Girls Ranch, a non-profit charity that houses girls ages 6-18 who have been orphaned or have been removed from their families due to abuse, abandonment or neglect.

The ranch's operating budget is primarily raised through corporate and private-sector donations, and the "Tunes and Tees" Golf Tournament is the main fundraiser each year, according to tournament coordinator Buzzy McKinney.

This year's tournament included a morning and afternoon flight, with cash

See 'FACES,' page 15



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Wildcats bounce back to earn key region win

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

With the first half of the season already in the books, Colbert Heights head coach Taylor Leathers must feel a little bit like the dad who's just spent a long afternoon with his kids at an amusement park.

It's been something of a wild ride so far.

"I agree," Leathers said last Friday night, a short while after his team improved to 3-2 overall (and 2-1 in Class 3A, Region 8) with a 28-14 win at East Lawrence. "It has been a roller coaster."

After opening their season with a 36-0 loss to Red Bay, the Wildcats bounced back quicker and higher than anyone could have expected for such a young team, whipping Wilson 28-12 and then stunning reigning region champion Westminster Christian 27-20.

"Our guys responded tonight, coming off a very tough loss last week at Lauderdale County," Leathers said. "You know, with a young team, sometimes they get too high or get too low. It felt like with the Westminster win we got a little too high, and then we got humbled at Lauderdale County. So we really worked all week and focused on how we were gonna respond to last week's loss. We really issued a challenge to our guys, and I couldn't be more proud of how they responded tonight at East Lawrence. It was a big region game, and we needed to come away with a win."

Briefly on top of the world, Colbert Heights topped the proverbial rise and sped downhill, falling 34-7 the following week at Lauderdale County. Last Friday's win, in which the Wildcats rushed for 315 yards and held East Lawrence scoreless until early in the fourth quarter, represented another upswing in momentum.

Once again, it appears that Colbert Heights is climbing the track. What Leathers would like to see now from his inexperienced group is a little more consistency. His stomach has endured enough somersaults to last him the rest of the year.

"I've talked to our guys about not getting too high and not getting too low," said Leathers, whose roster features only four seniors and six juniors. "When you've got a sophomore-led team, they can easily get discouraged and can easily get too confident. We've got to find that equilibrium and start being a little more consistent in what we do. That's our biggest word moving forward—*consistency*. We've got to be more consistent in our practices, in our day-to-day routine, in how we watch film and in how we play on Friday nights."

After falling into an early hole at Lauderdale County the previous week and never digging out, the Wildcats overcame three first-half turnovers in Caddo last Friday and led East Lawrence wire-to-wire. Fullback Blaine Holt had a pair of touchdown runs in the first half, helping Colbert Heights take a 14-0 lead into the locker room. Sophomore quarterback Andrew Tedford scored on a 14-yard run in the final minute of the third quarter to cap off a 96-yard drive and make it 20-0. The Wildcats survived a pair of late touchdowns by the Eagles (1-3, 0-2) to earn a key region win and take another small step toward

See 'WILDCATS,' page 18

'FACES,' from page 14

prizes for the three top four-man teams in each flight. Twin Pines Country Club in Russellville hosted the event.

The morning flight winners included several former Russellville Golden Tiger golfers. The winning team was Joshua Seal, Braden Bendall, Aaron Jackson and Ross Napier. Of their \$800 first-place prize, the team donated half back to the FAME Girls Ranch.

Second-place honors included a \$600 prize. That team was Larry Forsythe, Dale Nesbitt, Steve Bevis and Ray Smith. Third place (\$400) went to Chad Hendon, James Porter, Zack Peck and Jordan Smith.

The afternoon flight was won by the team of Chase Bullington, Ronnie Lovett, Eric Boutwell and Rick Bostick. Cash prizes were the same as the morning flight.

Second place went to Jon McGee, Lance Cabiness, Mark Goins and Dusty West. Third-place winners were Mark Murray, Terry Pounders, Jaceton Murray and Randy Benford.

Golfers enjoyed lunch and a chance to win door prizes donated by area businesses.

McKinney expressed his appreciation to all of the golfers as well as the businesses that sponsored this year's tournament.

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Baker scored four touchdowns last Friday at Vina, helping the Bobcats roll to a 48-0 rout of the Red Devils. After scoring on a nine-yard run midway through the first quarter, Baker caught touchdown passes of 14 and 15 yards in the second quarter to help Phil Campbell take a 35-0 lead into the break. He added another touchdown catch, a 42-yarder, in the third quarter and finished the night with 100 yards on four catches and 30 yards on two rushes.

For the season, Baker has caught a team-best 15 passes for 185 yards and three scores.



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'BUSINESS,' from page 13

Right, right, we forgot that time-honored adage, as old as the coaching profession itself: *The most important game is the next one.* The Golden Tigers will host Haleyville on Friday night, which puts the Lions squarely in the crosshairs of Ritter's tunnel vision.

Not hardly.

"We talk about handling our own business," said Ritter, a former ASWA Coach of the Year at both Red Bay and West Morgan who is now in his second season at RHS. "We don't talk about West Point. We don't talk about Hamilton or Jasper or Dora or whoever. We talk about Russellville and what are we gonna do on Monday to improve Russellville, what are we gonna do

on Tuesday to improve Russellville? That's not to say we don't do a great job of scouting the other team. But we don't talk about Jasper. We don't talk about anybody but ourselves and what we need to do to get better that week.

"I think that because we do approach things that way, we have gotten better each week, because we're not worried about the opponent. We're worried about ourselves."

Ritter's point is well taken. Nowhere has the Golden Tigers' commitment to self-evaluation and improvement been more evident than on the defensive side of the ball, where a unit that gave up 30-plus points five times last year has transformed into a lean, mean, hard-hitting machine that is currently yielding only 13.5 points and a scan 151.0 total yards per game.

That defense dominated West Point last Friday night, holding the Warriors to just 10 total yards and one first down in the first half and finishing the night with 14 tackles for loss in a 51-6 rout that improved Russellville's record to 4-0 overall and 3-0 in Region 7.

"Very, very proud of this group," said Ritter, whose team surrendered just one touchdown to a West Point squad that put up 42 points in a win over Lawrence County the previous week. "I thought we executed extremely well on defense to hold them to six points, because they can really throw it. We accomplished all the goals we wanted to on defense except for one—the shutout.

"Coach [Chris] Balentine does a phenomenal job. He's the defensive coordinator here for a reason. He's the best in the business. They put a great plan together, and our kids executed the game plan almost flawlessly with the exception of just one or two drives. That's what we wanted to do. If you're gonna throw it, we're gonna come after you, and we're gonna make you beat us deep more than once."

West Point quarterback Will Cochran had put together an impressive early-season run, throwing for 300 yards and three scores in a 49-35 loss to Arab on August 30 and then accounting for four total touchdowns in the 42-14 rout of the Red Devils. He managed just 13 yards on 16 pass attempts in the first half against a Russellville defense that dominated the line of scrimmage from start to finish.

"That's something we've talked about since April of last year," said Ritter, whose team held the Warriors (2-3, 1-2) to minus-one rushing yard on 26 carries. "We have to establish controlling the line of scrimmage. I thought we did that with [starting defensive linemen] Angel Martinez, Angel Moreno and Jose Gaspar, and then Will Calhoun rotated in there early. Those guys are playing extremely well. They're not making a ton of tackles, but that's not their job. Their job is to eat up blockers, and that's what they're doing. They're changing the line of scrimmage."

That active defensive front serves to free up a stellar group of linebackers led by seniors Jamal Hubbard and Albaro Francisco and junior Brooks Scott, each of whom made more than 100 tackles last season. Those veterans set the tone for a physical, old-school approach to tackling—and to the game of football in general—that permeates the entire program from top to bottom.

"I think the difference is, we're tackling. We're being a lot more physical," Ritter said. "There were a lot of times last year where we were in position to make plays and we just didn't. You don't learn to tackle in a spring. You don't learn to tackle in one year. It's kind of a lost art. But I think if you'll watch anybody in our program play, seven through twelve, we're getting better every day at tackling, because it's a point of emphasis for us.

"That middle school bunch has given up about 30 points in five games, because they will *hit* you. There's a lot to be said for that in today's football."

The Golden Tigers can bring the lumber, but they can also cover on the back end, where junior corners Ashaad Williams and Caden Watts—who

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'BUSINESS', from page 16

combined for 154 tackles and eight interceptions last year as sophomores—lead a secondary that includes first-year starters J.D. Bishop and Grayson Eady at safety.

The defense rose to the occasion early in last Friday's game after West Point pounced on a Russellville fumble at the Golden Tiger 20-yard line. Cochran converted a fourth-and-10 with an 11-yard completion to Levi Farley, and a three-yard run on the next play left the Warriors facing a second-and-goal from the six. The next two plays netted a loss of five yards, setting up a fourth-and-goal from the 11.

With a chance to grab the early lead, West Point elected to go after Williams, who was singled up on top receiver Kobe Bowers on the outside. Cochran lofted a fade route toward the back left pylon, but—with Williams blanketing Bowers like an extra layer of clothing—the pass fell harmlessly incomplete.

After the game, Ritter was asked if the Golden Tigers were comfortable with West Point's play selection in that spot—namely the decision to attack Williams in coverage.

"Without a doubt," Ritter said with a grin. "I'll take that cat over anybody we play. He may get beat once or twice, but for the most part he's gonna make the play. The same thing goes for Caden, too. We have no reservations about playing man down inside the twenty. We have a lot of faith in those corners to lock you down and play man coverage. We feel like those two guys and our safeties can make plays."

Following the stop on fourth-and-goal, Russellville's offense shook off a slow start and got rolling behind senior tailback Austin Ashley, who ripped off runs of 21, 14, 5 and 31 yards on consecutive plays. Senior quarterback Jacob Bishop scored on a 17-yard run a few plays later to cap off an 89-yard touchdown drive that staked the Golden Tigers to a 7-0 lead.

"I think the difference is, we're tackling. We're being a lot more physical," Ritter said of the strides Russellville has made on defense since last season. "There were a lot of times last year where we were in position to make plays and we just didn't. You don't learn to tackle in a spring. You don't learn to tackle in one year. It's kind of a lost art. But I think if you'll watch anybody in our program play, seven through twelve, we're getting better everyday at tackling, because it's a point of emphasis for us. That middle school bunch has given up about 30 points in five games, because they will hit you. There's a lot to be said for that in today's football."

Russellville's defense forced a quick three-and-out, and a bad punt snap gave the Golden Tigers possession at the West Point two-yard line. Sophomore tailback Airreon "Boots" McCulloch scored on the next play to make it 14-0, and the rout was on. Bishop added touchdown runs of five and nine yards, and Ashley scored on an eight-yard run just before the half to send Russellville into the locker room with a 35-0 lead.

West Point scored its only touchdown on a 30-yard pass by Cochran early in the third quarter, but Bishop responded a couple of drives later with his fourth touchdown run of the night, a 53-yard scamper that made it 42-6. Junior linebacker Brody Logan blocked a Warrior punt that rolled out of the end zone for a safety, and senior quarterback Jacob Davis provided the final points of the night with a two-yard touchdown run midway through the fourth quarter.

Bishop, who had run just 12 times for 56 yards

through the first three games, rushed for 114 yards and four scores on eight carries last Friday—part of a 342-yard effort on the ground by the Golden Tigers.

"We ran him more tonight than we have been," Ritter said of Bishop, who also threw for 62 yards on 6-for-13 passing. "Two of his runs were plays where they covered us and he just ran it. He did a good job of going through his progressions, and when it wasn't there he just tucked it and ran and made a play with his feet. We ran him more tonight than we have, because, one, we haven't shown it, and, two, we wanted to give these next three region opponents something to work on."

Ashley finished with 91 yards on 12 carries against West Point and is the team's leading rusher on the season with 360 yards and four touchdowns on 61 attempts. McCulloch ran 11 times for 56 yards last Friday and now has 258 yards and five scores on 35 carries. Junior back Caleb Matthews is third on the team with 32 carries for 186 yards and two touchdowns.

Bishop has thrown for 613 yards this season on 34-for-62 passing, with six touchdowns and two interceptions. Juniors Rowe Gallagher (11 catches for 193 yards and four touchdowns) and Cole Barnett (nine catches for 126 yards and one score) are the team's leading receivers. Sophomore H-back Nathan Brockway has added 119 yards and a touchdown on five receptions.

As a team, Russellville heads into Friday's game against Haleyville averaging 422.2 yards per game and 7.5 yards per play on the season.



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Bishop only threw for 62 yards last Friday, but he rushed for 114 and four touchdowns on eight carries.



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Congrats to Week 4 winner **JORDAN MCCARLEY**, who correctly picked 9 out of 10 games and also picked Auburn to beat Texas A&M 31-20!

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Franklin Free Press Football Picks Contest

Week 5: September 28 **Bailey's Pick** **Your Pick**

Texas A&M vs. Arkansas	Texas A&M	_____
Ole Miss at Alabama	Alabama	_____
Mississippi St. at Auburn	Auburn	_____
Kentucky at South Carolina	South Carolina	_____
N.C. State at Florida State	Florida State	_____
Kansas St. at Oklahoma St.	Oklahoma St.	_____
Arizona State at California	California	_____
USC at Washington	Washington	_____
Virginia at Notre Dame	Notre Dame	_____
Washington St. at Utah	Utah	_____

Tiebreaker Score: Miss. State _____ Auburn _____

Your Name: _____

Phone number: _____

‘WILDCATS,’ from page 15

clinching a playoff berth for the third straight year. “Our guys responded tonight, coming off a very tough loss last week at Lauderdale County,” Leathers said after the game. “You know, with a young team, sometimes they get too high or get too low. It felt like with the Westminster win we got a little too high, and then we got humbled at Lauderdale County. So we really worked all week and focused on how we were gonna respond to last week’s loss.

“We really issued a challenge to our guys, and I couldn’t be more proud of how they responded tonight at East Lawrence. It was a big region game, and we needed to come away with a win. East Lawrence is very talented, and they give great effort. Coach [James] Moore has got them going. I’ve seen East Lawrence on film for a long time, and this group really gets after it. I knew it was gonna be a challenge, but our guys came out and got the job done.”

After struggling on both sides of the ball in the loss at Lauderdale County, Colbert Heights leaned on its ground game to get back on track. Junior wing-backs Gage Pugh (16 carries for 123 yards) and Carson Shaw (10 carries for 101 yards and a touchdown) combined to rush for 224 yards on 26 attempts, and Tedford chipped in with 68 yards and a score on 15 carries. He also completed both of his pass attempts on the night for 44 yards, including a 34-yard hook-up with senior tight end Skyler Gault.

All things considered, Leathers saw a completely different team than the one he took to Rogersville a week prior.

“Our effort was better,” he said. “We never punted the football, and we never got in a fourth-down situation that I remember. We had one drive of 96

yards in the third quarter, and our defense played lights-out. We didn’t give up any points until late in the game. East Lawrence two-platooned, with eleven guys on offense and eleven other guys on defense, so that got to us a little bit late in the game, but we had a goose egg on the board for three quarters.

“The defense played lights-out, and we were able to move the football on offense. We did have three turnovers. We fumbled the ball three times, but the defense responded every time and got it right back for us. That’s something we’ve really gotta clean up. We’re very blessed and fortunate to win a game having turned it over three times.”

At the season’s midway point, the Wildcats are tied with Westminster for second place in Region 8, one game behind Lauderdale County (4-1, 3-0). Colbert Heights has region games remaining against Lexington, Clements and Phil Campbell next month, following non-region matchups with rival Cherokee and Decatur Heritage.

“We’ve put ourselves in great position in the region, being 2-1,” Leathers said. “That’s what we’re gonna focus on as we move into non-region play the next two weeks. We just have to take it one week at a time and continue to grow and mature.”

Part of that maturing process means avoiding a let-down against a struggling Cherokee team that has opened the season 0-4 while allowing an averaging of 54.5 points per game.

Colbert Heights has won 13 straight meetings in the series since the Indians won 60-50 in 2003.

“I think we’ve got to make sure we preach to our players that Cherokee is gonna give us their best effort,” said Leathers, now in his fourth season with the Wildcats. “This is a huge rivalry game,

and the records are out the window in this one. All the things you look at numbers-wise are out the window. It’s a county rivalry, right down the road, and it’s gonna be a good football game. We’ll have to be prepared to go over there and compete.”

Shaw leads the Wildcats on the season with 511 rushing yards and five touchdowns on 68 carries. Pugh, a Cherokee transfer in his first season with Colbert Heights, has rushed for 456 yards and a score on 73 attempts. Tedford has also been a major factor in the ground game, running for 198 yards and three touchdowns on 65 carries.

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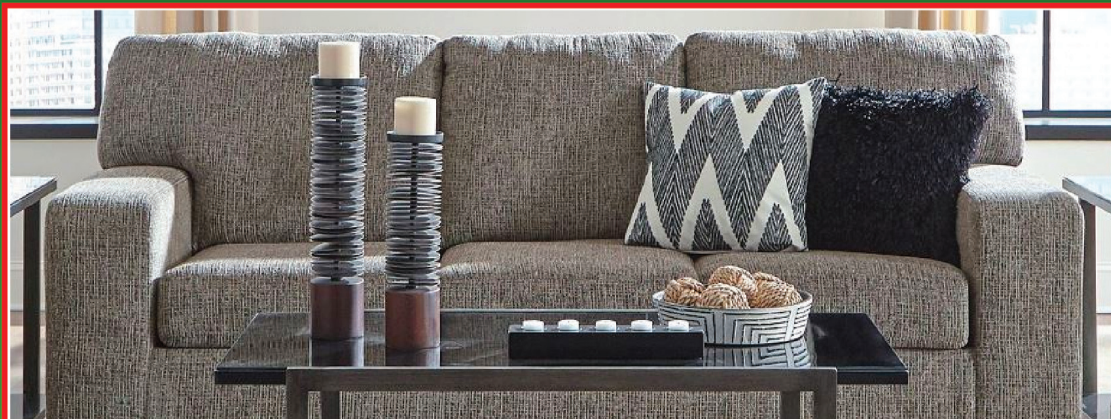
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