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 113 Washington Ave. NW
 Russellville, AL 35663

Proposed amendment would protect church security team members from prosecution

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

If a statewide Constitutional amendment is approved by Alabama voters this November, Franklin and Lauderdale County residents will have legal protection from prosecution for church security team members in the event they are required to injure or kill someone in defense of the church.

Rep. Jamie Kiel (R-Russellville) introduced the local legislation for both counties last year. As is the normal course of procedure in the legislature, Kiel expected other legislators would vote to approve legislation that only affected his House district. Kiel also had the support of Rep. Proncey Robertson (R-Mount Hope), whose House district includes eastern Franklin County.

There was one objection in the House, from a Birmingham-area legislator, so the bill, after it passed through the Senate, will appear as a proposed Constitutional amendment on the November 3, 2020 general election ballot.

“We’ve seen from recent events the necessity of making sure church security teams are taken care of,” Kiel said. “Most security teams at churches are not professional law enforcement. They don’t have the same protection law enforcement officers have, so we want to make sure those team members have that added protection.”

The issue of church security was highlighted after last month’s fatal shooting of two church members in a Texas church. A member of the church security team, a 71-

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New signs highlight two historical roads

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

Two historical roads that helped Russellville shape its identity in northwest Alabama now have identifying markers to highlight their location and to increase public awareness of their paths.

Twelve signs were recently erected along Jackson Military Road and Gaines Trace Road, thanks to the efforts of Franklin County Archives director Chris Ozbirn, Franklin County engineer David Palmer, the Franklin County Highway Department, the City of Russellville, Russellville Street Department director Shannon Wilson and his department.

While many Russellville residents know there was a Jackson Military Road that came through their city, it’s not as well known that the path of the historical road didn’t follow Jackson Avenue, as many believe.

See ‘SIGNS,’ Page 3

Signs were recently erected along two important historical roads in Franklin County. Pictured, from left, are Russellville mayor David Grissom, Corey Bray, Shannon Wilson, Jamie Harris, Chris Ozbirn and Mark Swindle.

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Ruth Lucas Grissom, Russellville, age 78
Died Friday, January 3, 2020. Funeral held at First United Methodist Church. Interment in Knights of Pythias Cemetery. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

Addie Lee Hargett, Russellville, age 92
Died Saturday, December 28, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Billy Ray Johnson, Athens (formerly of Phil Campbell), age 78
Died Tuesday, December 31, 2019. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville. Interment in East Franklin Cemetery.

Bernice Martha McKinney, Russellville, age 89
Died Tuesday, December 31, 2019. Graveside service held at Knights of Pythias Cemetery. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Mitch Bryant Mitchell, Leighton (formerly of Phil Campbell), age 31
Died Friday, January 3, 2020. Funeral held at Leighton Baptist Church. Interment in Glendale Cemetery in Leighton. Spry Memorial Chapel of Russellville assisted the family.

Opal Faye Lynch Yawn Nix, Phil Campbell, age 80
Died Tuesday, December 31, 2019. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Gladys Olean Warhurst, Russellville, age 86
Died Saturday, January 4, 2020. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Joyce A. West, Hamilton, age 82
Died Saturday, January 4, 2020. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Pinkard Funeral Home of Russellville was assisting the family.



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Grant will provide new computers for RPD

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Police Department will soon have 18 new laptop computers for officers after receiving a grant from the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency. The Russellville City Council approved the solicitation of bids for the computers at the council's December 16 meeting.

The grant, in the amount of \$25,213.06, is expected to cover the cost.

In other action, the council:

- Approved a change order in the amount of \$3,400 for the recently complet-

ed TAP sidewalk project that included Madison Street.

- Approved a \$2,500 grant from the Franklin County Community Development Committee for the purchase of desktop computers in the Russellville Police Department.

- Approved contracts with school resource officers Kenny Hallmark and Sammie Washington.

- Approved a 12-month contract with RPD chaplain Bobby Brown.

- Approved the hiring of Nicholas McCormick as a patrol officer with RPD.

The next regular meeting of the Russellville City Council will be January 6, with work session at 6 p.m. and meeting to follow.

Local establishment earns satisfactory rating

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The lone Franklin County establishment that received a health rating during the week of December 16-20, 2019 had a score 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.

The lone Franklin County business listed in the most recent food and lodging establishment ratings scored 85 or above, within the satisfactory compliance range.

Inspection scores and violations of Franklin County businesses included:

- M&H Food Mart, Inc., 9224 Hwy. 243, Phil Campbell, 90. (Various toxic items stored with and above single service articles).

Of the 26 inspections done in Colbert County from December 16-20, 2019, all received scores falling in the range of satisfactory. The high score of 100 was received by Littleville Senior Center, 1400 Jackson Hwy., Littleville, and Glover-Payne Community Center, 1249 Second St., Cherokee.

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

'SECURITY' from page 1

year-old former reserve deputy sheriff, shot and killed the shooter moments after the shooter shot the two church members.

Alabama legislators approved a 'stand-your-ground' law in 2006 that removed the duty to retreat before a person uses deadly physical force in the event he reasonably believes another person is about to use deadly physical force.

But Kiel is concerned that law may not protect a member of a church security team who is faced with using deadly physical force to protect another member of his or her church congregation.

"If there is a member of the church security team in the parking lot and he gets a call that there's some type of danger inside the building (in the nursery, for example), he is not standing his

ground by going inside," Kiel said. "He is pursuing that danger to protect those inside the church. We want to make sure that security person does not face criminal prosecution for making that stop."

Rep. Lynn Greer (R-Rogersville) has introduced a statewide bill that would clarify that church security members may use deadly physical force in the event they reasonably believe someone is about to do serious physical harm on church property.

Greer's legislation has been approved by the House, but not the Senate. And his attempt to reintroduce the legislation last year failed without a vote even being taken in the House.

Kiel is concerned about the vulnerability of churches, particularly those in rural areas not served by municipal police departments.

"We've seen from recent events the necessity of making sure church security teams are taken care of," Kiel said. "Most security teams at churches are not professional law enforcement. They don't have the same protection law enforcement officers have, so we want to make sure those team members have that added protection when serving."

Kiel attended a church security seminar last year at Russellville FBC and was surprised at the number of local churches with a security team in place.

"It just solidified to me that we need that protection in the rural areas of our state," Kiel said.

The 2020 Legislative general session begins February 4. Kiel plans to introduce local legislation that would protect church security teams in Colbert County as well.

'SIGNS' from page 1

Jackson Military Road, completed in 1820, entered Franklin County through Ligon Springs and into Frankfort, continued past the old Robinson Cemetery and turned left onto Wilson Blvd. The road followed the path of today's Washington Avenue all the way through town before intersecting with Highway 43.

Jackson Military Road was a 516-mile route that connected Nashville with New Orleans. According to www.encyclopediaofalabama.org, the United States government hoped the road would increase immigration to help economic growth in the Tennessee Valley region, as well as providing an important path to deploy troops across the South.

For a detailed history of the Alabama portion of Jackson Military Road, look for Thomas Orrick's book, *The Jackson Military Road: Green Hill to Hackleburg, Alabama*. Ozbirn said a copy of the book is available at the Franklin County Archives.

Ozbirn had the vision for historical signs along the two roads for several years. After the recently

completed Alabama Bicentennial celebration, she met with Palmer, and the Highway Department made 12 signs to be placed along the roadways.

"This is something I wanted to do for a long time. After the Bicentennial events, it was the perfect time to get these signs put up," Ozbirn said. "It's important to have historical signs along these two main roads in town. These roads are why Russellville is where it is today."

Franklin County sat at the crossroads of Jackson Military Road and Gaines Trace, which made the county an important location that was frequently visited by settlers.

"This is a very important part of the history of this town," Ozbirn said. "If you go downtown and ask ten people where Jackson Military Road is, most will tell you Jackson Avenue, but it's not."

Interestingly, when Andrew Jackson, who the road was named after, became president in 1829, he decided not to maintain or improve the road. Road conditions worsened, resulting in significantly less usage.

Gaines Trace Road was commissioned in 1807 and constructed from 1811-12, from the Tennessee River south to Cotton Gin Port on the Tombigbee River and all the way into south Alabama at Fort Stoddert.

"This road was surveyed by General Edmund Gaines, a major general in the U.S. Army," Ozbirn said. "It went through Courtland, Moulton, Russellville and on into Mississippi. It was an important road for traders and travelers. When this area opened up, people had to have a way to go."

Gaines Trace Road began in Nashville and went to Natchez, MS. Gaines oversaw the construction of the important project.

The signs, nine of which are inside the City of Russellville, were erected on black posts to keep them consistent with recent beautification improvements in the downtown area. Ozbirn said she appreciated the efforts of all those who helped make the project come to fruition.

"If not for them, we couldn't have done it. They all did a great job," Ozbirn said.

Honey-Do: 2020 vision

The first day of January is another day, just like any other on the calendar. But there are certain days that cause a person to take notice and reflect on time past, present or future.

Birthdays, anniversaries and, of course, New Year's Day are all great examples.

Many folks are touting 2020 as the year of clarity, seeing things better, a better vision or a new outlook. I think that's a wonderful attitude.

At the very least, this is a great time to think about the great opportunities that will present themselves in the coming year. These may be opportunities to do things better or more efficiently, improve our lives and/or the lives of others, be more dependable, be more loving...the list goes on and on.

The hard part is figuring out what

you need to change personally. Though you may have some very defined plans, realize that these things will change as circumstances change.

If you make a list of New Year's resolutions, or just a "honey-do list" for the coming year, include a variety of projects, small and large. If you want to lose weight, plan to lose 10 pounds. If you want to remodel the house, plan to start with a room. Small to medium victories will encourage you to pursue the large ones.

Here's to a positive outlook to a new year, the courage to change and the daring to grow. Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



Doug Green

Letters to the Editor

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

OUR HOUSE by Ree Shannon



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A New Year's resolution for Alabama

Many people like to make a New Year's resolution. As we start this new year and new decade, I think our state leadership needs to make a resolution: To improve our storm warning systems.

Alabama is no stranger to deadly storms. Twenty-three people died in the tornado that struck Lee County earlier this year. More recently, two people died in Town Creek, leaving behind their six-year-old son. And the tornado that struck Tuscaloosa and other parts of Alabama in 2011 killed 64 people.

In fact, Alabama leads the nation in tornado deaths, with an average of 14 people killed every year.

While no human being can control the weather, we can control how well and how quickly we warn people. And we can do a better job of explaining why and when you need to take cover or, preferably, get out of the path of the storm.

For example, many people don't realize that you are supposed to get out of the path of a storm when a meteorologist or weather reporter says that a tornado watch—not a tornado warning—has been issued.

But the biggest steps we can take are to improve our warning systems, and that means focusing on two areas.

First, we have to update and expand our warning sirens. After the tornado struck Town Creek recently, Lawrence County's emergency management director, Johnny Cantrell, said that the warning sirens failed to sound before the tornado hit. What's worse is that he also said it wouldn't have mattered if they had gone off because Town Creek is too far away from the sirens for the people who live there to hear them.

While we do need to have other systems besides just the sirens, not everyone has a

weather radio, and some people may not have their cell phone with them when the storm strikes. Or they may be in an area with poor cell phone reception or poor broadband access and therefore can't receive the warning any other way than by the sirens.

Updating and expanding our sirens should be a top priority for lawmakers when they write the budgets for the coming year!

That said, the second area where we need to focus our efforts is expanding cell phone towers and broadband Internet access so we can warn people about approaching storms.

As we start this new year and new decade, I think our state leadership needs to make a resolution: To improve our storm warning systems. While no human being can control the weather, we can control how well and how quickly we warn people. And we can do a better job of explaining why and when you need to take cover or, preferably, get out of the path of the storm.

Anyone who's spent much time driving along our back roads or rural highways knows we have far too many dead spots where cell phone reception is non-existent. Anyone caught in one of those areas when a storm hits would have no way of being warned.

And a recent article on al.com reported that one out of every four Alabamians lives in a home without Internet access. The article also said there are only three counties in the entire state where more than 82 percent of households have Internet access.



Craig Ford



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How to make goals and resolutions become reality

Dear Dave,
My wife and I have our budget ready for next month, and we'll be following your plan in 2020 to pay off debt and get our finances in order. Do you have any tips for setting and sticking to goals in general?

Rick

Dear Rick,
That's a fantastic goal. Living on a monthly budget and telling your money where to go instead of wondering where it went is an important step toward gaining control of your finances. Combine that with getting out of debt, and you'll be in charge of your most powerful wealth-building tool—your income.

If you're following my plan, you already have goals in front of you where your money is concerned. For most Americans, though, a new year means nothing more than new resolutions without real plans. Don't get me wrong. It's good to make resolutions and set goals, but you can't stop there. You have to formulate a plan that turns your dreams into bite-sized pieces of progress that will gradually create a big event in your life. If you want to achieve your goals, then keep these next things in mind.

When setting goals, be very *specific* in what you want to achieve. Include steps that will help you get

'RESOLUTION,' from page 4

That means that even in the most technologically advanced counties, about one in five residents still don't have access to the Internet and therefore can not receive a storm warning from any device that requires Internet access.

The problem of expanding broadband and cell phone access has plagued Alabama's leaders for years. The solution may require tax credits for private companies, spending tax dollars to build state-owned towers or some combination of the two.

The pros and cons of all these choices can be debated, but state leaders need to pick a path and pour themselves into it as soon as possible. Lives are literally hanging in the balance!

I know that 2020 will be a tough year for our state leaders. They have a lot of significant issues to address, particularly with our prison system and the future of education in Alabama. But we need to see a solid investment in our siren systems and at least some sort of agreement on a plan to improve cell phone and broadband access.

Improving our storm warning systems should be a top priority, and I call on our leaders—especially those representing rural areas—to make these systems a priority.

Craig Ford is the owner of Hodges-Ford Insurance and the Gadsden Messenger. He represented Gadsden and Etowah County in the Alabama House of Representatives for 18 years.

there, too. Being vague will only cause you to feel directionless and overwhelmed. Most people give up when these feelings arise.

Make your goals *measurable*. If you want to lose weight, don't simply write down "lose weight" as a goal. Exactly how much weight do you want to lose? What will it take in terms of exercise and dietary changes to make it happen?

Are your goals *your goals*? Only *you* can realistically set your own goals. If your spouse, co-worker or friend sets a goal for you, chances are you're not going to achieve it. Taking ownership will give you more opportunity to meet your goal.

Also, set *time limits* for your goals. Putting a time frame in place will help you set realistic goals. If you want to save a certain amount of money for a particular event, break it down and determine how much cash you need to put into your savings account each month leading up to that event.

And finally, put your goals and resolutions *in writing*. Putting them in writing will make you more likely to achieve them. Write down your goals, and review them often. This will give you motivation to make them reality.

I believe this is the process for success, Rick. Successful people reassess their lives regularly and start living intentionally, in writing and on purpose.

Happy New Year!

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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 American Legion Post 64 will meet this Thursday, January 9 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.


 The Shoals Chapter of the Order of St. Luke will meet in the Media Room at Park Place (500 N. Montgomery Avenue, Sheffield) this Thursday, January 9 at 2:30 p.m. Rev. Tommy Heaps will lead the study "The Word of Knowledge" from the book *Anointed to Heal* by Larry and Audrey Eddings. We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. Prayer for healing will be offered. All are welcome.


 The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guests the RHS Acapella Ensemble at the Roxy Theatre this Saturday, January 11 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 historic Roxy Theater.


 Saint Paul CME Church (40 Hamilton Street SW, Russellville, AL 35653) cordially invites you to worship with them on Friends and Family Day on Sunday, January 19 at 3 p.m. Guest evangelist will be Rev. Benjamin Massey and congregation from New Enoch Missionary Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa. Dinner will be served. For more information, call 256-332-6177.


 Spruce Pine Historical Society meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Next meeting is February 4. All members and friends are urged to attend.


 The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Lt. Col. John W. Harris Jr., Camp #1833 will meet Thursday, February 7 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Recreation Center on Ash Avenue. For more info, call 256-324-2317. Camp #1833 meets the first Thursday of each month EXCEPT January and July. 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 minimum age for membership is 12. Everyone welcome!


 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.


 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 Colbert Heights at 256-383-8016.

 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.

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

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

 The Newburg Masonic Lodge #388 meets the first Thursday of every month. The Russellville Masonic Lodge #371 meets the first and third Tuesday of every month. The Franklin County Shrine Club meets the second Tuesday of each month. The Order of the Eastern Star Chapter 256 meets every second and fourth Tuesday of each month at the Russellville Masonic Lodge. Spruce Pine Masonic Lodge #608 meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Phil Campbell Masonic Lodge #880 meets the first and third Thursday of each month. Burleson Lodge #143 meets the second and fourth Monday of each month. Belgreen Lodge #428 meets the first and third Monday of each month. All meetings start at 7 p.m.

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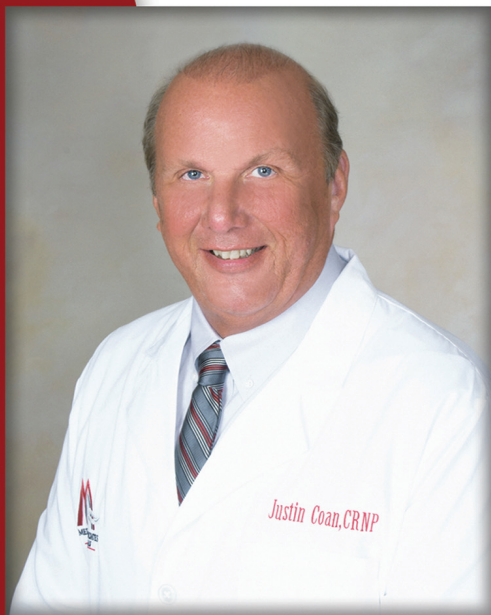


Justin Coan, CRNP

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Talents on display



COURTESY PHOTO

The Russellville High School and Russellville Middle School Art Departments recently made and painted ornaments used to decorate the Christmas tree at Russellville City Hall. Pictured with mayor David Grissom are RHS Art Club officers, from left: Brandon Hampton, Felicia Mitchell, Kate Grissom, Mikayla Hester and Rosa Maravilla.

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Success with money starts with a budget

The ball drops. The lights flash. The fireworks explode. "Auld Lang Syne" plays. When all those things happen at once, it can only mean one thing: A new year!

We all love a good New Year's celebration, but with it comes the reminder of goals, responsibilities and resolutions for the upcoming year. And if you're like most people, somewhere in the middle of all your resolutions is money—as in, the desire to manage it better.

If any of your resolutions for 2020 involve money, then your success will start with a budget. I know, the dreaded "B" word. Sure, creating a budget doesn't really sound like much fun. But doesn't it sound better than feeling stressed because you're living paycheck to paycheck?

How much better would it be to know that all your bills are paid and you're working toward becoming debt-free or saving to pay cash for your summer vacation? That's what you can do when you make a plan for your money!

You'll give up on your resolution much more quickly without a plan. How do you start? First, figure out how much money you have to work with for the upcoming month—before the beginning of each month. This includes your income, your spouse's income and any extra income you may have.

A budget doesn't limit your freedom, it gives you freedom to spend. It's about knowing where your cash is going instead of wondering where it went. Just imagine how great it would feel to be in charge of your finances in 2020.

Give every dollar a name. Spend every dollar on purpose, on paper, before the month begins. This is called a zero-based budget, and it works. Basically, when you're planning for the month ahead, you should be able to subtract your expenses (outgo) from your income to equal zero. When you're done writing the budget, you shouldn't have anything left over.

My favorite way to manage my budget is the free app EveryDollar. It helps my husband and me stay on track.

A good plan lives and changes as your life changes. You'll need to review your budget each month throughout the year to make adjustments. If you find you've budgeted too little or too much in an area, then adjust.

If you've been living without a budget, it will probably take a few months to get the hang of it, and that's okay. But soon you should have a budget you can rely on.

A budget doesn't limit your freedom, it gives you freedom to spend. It's about knowing where your cash is going instead of wondering where it went. Just imagine how great it would feel to be in charge of your finances in 2020. Sounds like a happy new year to me!

About Rachel Cruze

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



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Miller seeks reelection to commission

Submitted to the FFP

Russellville resident Jason Miller, the current Franklin County Commissioner for District 2, is announcing his intention to seek re-election in the March 3 primary election.

Miller, who is currently serving out his first term as a commissioner, said it has been an eye-opening experience to represent the citizens of District 2, and it's a job he hasn't taken lightly.

"This was my first time stepping into politics, and as I near the end of this term, I can say that I have truly enjoyed being part of the county commission and working for the good of all Franklin County citizens, especially those in my district," Miller said. "The decisions we make and the situations we face aren't always easy or black and white, but I can honestly say that with any issue or vote that has come up, I've done my best to vote in a way that would be the most beneficial to our citizens."

"As a lifelong resident, Franklin County is home for me and for my family, and I really do care about what happens here. For me, being a commissioner is so much more than just politics. It's a way for me to have an active role in making this a better place to live and work."

"With three children who are growing up here, the betterment of our community is something I'm personally invested in."

Miller said he has been particularly proud of the county's unemployment rate this past term, since that was something he was interested in seeing improve during his last campaign.

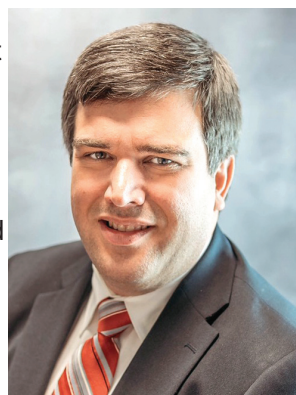
"Franklin County has the lowest unemployment rate in northwest Alabama at 2.3 percent," he said. "That is something we can all be proud of. The commission has worked hard to form good relationships with our existing businesses and industries and to also bring other businesses and jobs to the area. For Franklin County to flourish, we've got to have good jobs for our citizens. That's something I plan to continue working on if re-elected."

Miller said he was also proud of the work completed in the Oak Hills subdivision that he pushed for, since it's part of his district.

"There were several things that needed to be addressed in this area, including the roads and flooding issues," he said. "We were able to get the roads resurfaced and rectify the flooding issues residents were experiencing during periods of heavy rain. It was great to get those problems fixed, among others that were handled during this past term."

"I know there's lots more work to be done in District 2, and I am more than ready to tackle those issues if re-elected."

Despite being a business owner and having a family, Miller said he has tried to make himself



Jason Miller

available to his constituents and take any concerns he received seriously.

"Obviously, as a commissioner, we can't address every single problem or issue that we hear about, but I've done my best to represent my district's needs and to truly listen to anyone with a concern," Miller said. "Every voice matters, and I certainly believe that. Every decision I've made, I've had our citizens in mind."

Miller is also currently representing the Franklin County Commission on the Franklin County Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census.

"The work this committee is doing and will be doing is so important, because getting an accurate count of our population is crucial to the funding we receive from the state as well as our federal government," Miller said. "These numbers and the funding these numbers amount to will affect our citizens for the next decade. I take that very seriously, and I'm working hard to help ensure our population count here in Franklin County is as accurate as possible so we get the funding we need."

Jason has been married to his wife, Belinda, for seven years, and they have three children: Hunter, Jaxon and Elizabeth. They attend Friendship Missionary Baptist Church and are involved in other activities in the community.

"I am excited about what the future holds for Franklin County, and I want to continue to work for our citizens as the Commissioner for District 2," he said. "I would very much appreciate your vote and support in the upcoming primary election."

My take on this....Not everything goes as planned

Not everything goes as planned

Oh, the holiday season! The time for putting up the Christmas tree. Well, in my case, I can say I got real close to putting up my Christmas tree.

I bought a four-foot flocked tree with lights that was so pretty. I put that beauty in the back seat of my car and drove home full of excitement and good intentions. Upon arriving home, my "good intentions" were slightly delayed with "the story of my life." All of us have a story where another person becomes the one who tells you what will be taking place in your own life, unbeknownst to you. When that happened, the tree remained in the backseat for now...but just for now. I'd get back to it tomorrow.

The sweet part about my purchase was I'd even made it a few days before Thanksgiving. For those who know me, I'm never early. I'm always late for everything. Always!

After a couple of weeks, I brought the tree into the house. I was so ready to put it up, but I noticed a small dilemma. There was no spot for it to go. I would need to move something, but I was not sure what or even where to. I'd just wait until the next day and do it. Besides, I did have my tree in the house now. Still in the box, but in the

house just the same.

In the meantime, I had a best friend who had an Achilles heel surgery. The doctor told her to avoid putting any weight on the foot whatsoever because it was going to be a very hard place to heal and was going to take some time.

Two days following her surgery, her sister was admitted to the ICU. Thus began the walking on the foot. She was staying at the hospital day and night with her sister. After her foot had swelled up to more than half the size of her foot up to her knee, I stepped in and bossed her like a good friend does until she went home and rested.

She is one of these people you can't "offer," because she won't let you. Not because she doesn't need help, but because she doesn't want to inconvenience others. You know that kind. Too good for her own good!

Then the Christmas dinners began. Busy, busy, busy! I'd asked my granddaughter if she would put up the tree. After all, Christmas was only a few days away. Then I remembered, I'd not even made a place for it. Realizing it was only four feet



Gail Notes

tall, I decided I'd set it on a small table. Maybe I'd have time tomorrow.

The next day I debated taking it back to the store. Yes, I decided I would! So I went to Russellville, but as I was getting out of my car and reaching in the backseat for the tree, I discovered an odd thing: The tree wasn't there!

It was still sitting in my floor at the house. So much for that, right? I returned home and took my two-foot tree from my sitting area and put it up on the table for our Christmas get-together. So on Christmas Eve night, I finally had a tree up. Now it's after Christmas, and I have my beautiful four-foot tree still in the box on my floor, waiting to be put away for 2020.

It is exciting to know everything worked out. I had a tree for Christmas. Christmas is behind me. The new year, 2020, is ahead of me. There are more plans that will go wrong. Lots of laughter ahead, and I'm always happy when I have another day.

Always look up! That's where God is! Always stay humble, and pray often. I'm looking forward to another year with you. Thank you for all your support.

Until later...

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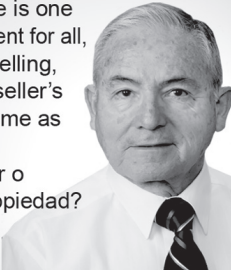
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Little red wagon



COURTESY PHOTO

Shriners Terry Bolton, left, and John Payne traveled to Shriners Hospitals in Greenville, SC, and Cincinnati, Ohio, to deliver little red wagons adorned with "Future Sheriff" donated by sheriff Shannon Oliver and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. Bolton and Payne, both Russellville residents, regularly transport children in need of medical care to Shriners Hospitals across the country.

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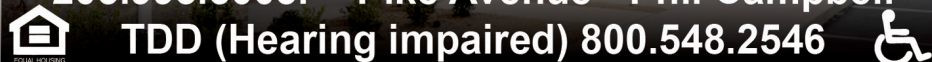
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RHS trio, Red Bay's McKinney earn All-State football honors

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

Three football players from Russellville and one from Red Bay received All-State recognition from the ASWA last month.

For the Golden Tigers, linebacker Brooks Scott and defensive lineman Angel Moreno both earned second-team honors in Class 5A, while offensive lineman Edgar Amaya got honorable mention.

Red Bay linebacker Cam McKinney was a first-team selection in Class 2A.

Scott, a 6'0, 205-pound junior, led the Golden Tigers in 2019 with a career-high 143 tackles (including 11 for a loss) from his inside linebacker spot. He also had four sacks. Moreno, a 5'11, 250-pound junior, was a disruptive force at the point of attack, leading the team with 19 tackles for loss (among his 108 total stops) and eight sacks.

Amaya, a 6'4, 290-pound junior, played both guard and tackle for Russellville, grading out at 96

See 'FOOTBALL,' Page 17



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Moreno, a second-team selection in Class 5A by the ASWA, led the Golden Tigers with 19 tackles for loss and eight sacks.

Foul play



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

(From left, in black) Gist, Scott, Dyas and Hubbard combined to score 63 points for Russellville last Friday night, but the Golden Tigers couldn't overcome a huge disparity at the foul line and fell to the Warriors 77-75.

Forty-eight free throw attempts helped West Point edge Russellville in an area showdown

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

WEST POINT - Russellville coach Patrick Odom knows the whistle went against his team last Friday night at West Point, where the home-standing Warriors attempted a whopping 48 free throws compared to just 15 by the Golden Tigers.

But Odom also knows his team should have won the game anyway.

"That's what I just told our guys," Odom said in the moments immediately following a 77-75 loss that dropped Russellville to 0-3 in area play. "Everybody wearing black and gold is gonna leave here and pat you on the back and say the officiating was bad. And I'll go on record: It was. But we're not gonna win many games giving up 77 points and getting out-rebounded either. We had some lapses where we didn't take care of the ball, too, so there was enough there for us to have won the game. At the end of the day, we didn't come up with enough defensive stops.

"That's what I just told our guys," Odom said in the moments immediately following a 77-75 loss that dropped Russellville to 0-3 in area play.

"Everybody wearing black and gold is gonna leave here and pat you on the back and say the officiating was bad. And I'll go on record: It was. But we're not gonna win many games giving up 77 points and getting out-rebounded either."

"Now, outside the locker room, I'm gonna tell you, it was hard to play defense, because every time we tried to dial up and play the way we've been playing for two-and-a-half months, it was a whistle. It was really difficult, because every time we tried to do something, it turned into free throws. It changed the whole pace of the game and the nature of the game. But that's basketball. I've certainly been enough places, and I've been through it before."

West Point (9-11 through Sunday, 1-2 in Class 5A, Area 14) shot 23 free throws in the first half but

See 'FOUL,' Page 18

Lindley's late free throw lifts Lady Tigers

Phil Campbell girls also move on to county final with rout of Vina

Staff reports

Kaylie Lindley made a tie-breaking free throw in the final seconds on Saturday, lifting Red Bay's ninth-grade girls past top-seeded Tharptown 29-28 in the semifinals of the junior high Franklin County Tournament at Belgreen.

Jaycee Vinson led fifth-seeded Red Bay with 12 points, going 4-for-6 at the foul line. Lindley added 10 points. Gretchen Davis knocked down a three, and Shelby Nichols and Brianna Markham scored two points apiece.

Sarah Mansell hit two threes and scored eight points to lead the Lady Wildcats, who had won the only previous meeting between the two teams in overtime. Autumn Montgomery and Kyndall Morgan each added seven points for Tharptown on Saturday. Kaitlyn Simmons scored four points, and Morgan Vandiver had two.

Red Bay will face Phil Campbell this Saturday in the county finals at 5:30 p.m.

In other ninth-grade girls action at the county tournament on Saturday:

Red Bay 39 East Franklin 24

The Lady Tigers jumped out to a big early lead in their first game on Saturday and never looked back, cruising past fourth-seeded East Franklin.

Red Bay got five points in the first quarter from Kaylie Lindley and four from Jaycee Vinson. Gretchen Davis added a three-pointer, helping the Lady Tigers build a 17-4 lead by the end of one. They out-scored East Franklin 8-4 in the second quarter to take a 25-8 lead into the half.

Lindley hit two threes and finished the game with 10 points. Vinson shot 4-for-6 from the line and also scored 10 points.

Amber Mason added eight points for Red Bay, and Shelby Nichols finished with five. Davis had

three, Ashlyn Deaton added two and Brianna Markham had one.

Mayson Mills led East Franklin with 10 points, and Macy Hardy added seven. Abigail Bell finished with five points, and Siddalee Rogers had two.

Phil Campbell 37 Vina 15

Second-seeded Phil Campbell led 11-0 at the end of one quarter and 21-1 at the half, cruising into the county finals with a rout of third-seeded Vina.

Allie Herring led the Lady Bobcats with 13 points, going 5-for-8 from the foul line. A.J. Jeane scored six points in the first quarter and finished with 12. Raegan Norton scored six points, Chesney Hamby had four and Maddie Raper added two.

LaDava Davis led Vina with nine points.

Phil Campbell will face Red Bay in the county finals this Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Valdez leads Tharptown boys past Bulldogs

Top-seeded Wildcats will play Red Bay for county championship

Staff reports

Dylan Valdez scored 20 points for Tharptown's seventh-and-eighth-grade boys on Saturday, leading the top-seeded Wildcats past Belgreen 39-25 in the semifinals of the junior high Franklin County Tournament at Belgreen.

The fourth-seeded Bulldogs, playing their second game of the day, got six points from Malachi Minor in the first quarter, building a 10-6 lead by the end of one. Valdez answered with six points in the second quarter, helping Tharptown out-score Belgreen 12-0 to take an 18-10 lead into the break.

Valdez added eight more points in the third quarter, and Hunter Motes shot 4-for-6 from the foul line as the Wildcats out-scored Belgreen 16-4 to open up a 34-14 lead and put the game out of reach.

Edwin Vela finished with eight points for Tharptown, and Dawson Higgins had five. Motes scored four points, and Jackson Clement added two. The Wildcats advanced to face Red Bay in the county finals this Saturday at 4:15 p.m.

Minor led Belgreen with 12 points. Alex Guidry added four, and Jakeem Fagan had three. Hunter Woodruff, Will King and Zac Campbell added two points apiece.

In other seventh-and-eighth-grade boys action on Saturday:

Red Bay 46 East Franklin 5

The second-seeded Tigers got 11 points from Gage Edgmon and 10 from Kennedy Wilemon, cruising past East Franklin in Saturday's other semifinal.

Red Bay led 14-2 after one quarter and 27-2 at the half. Wilemon had eight points in the third quarter, helping the Tigers out-score the Rebels 19-3 to open up a 46-5 lead. Neither team scored in the fourth.

Lawson Glover and Will West each scored six points for Red Bay, which will face top-seeded Tharptown in the county finals this Saturday at 4:15 p.m. Ethan McCoy and Canaan Hollander each finished with four points, and Brady Bolton knocked down a three. Holden Inmon added two points.

The Rebels got a three-pointer from Benji Nava and two points from Chipper Pinto.

Belgreen 43 Phil Campbell 37

A big first half from Zac Campbell helped the Bulldogs build an early lead, and a big second half from Malachi Minor helped them hold off fifth-seeded Phil Campbell in Saturday's four-five game.

Campbell hit two threes and scored all nine of his points in the first half as Belgreen built an 18-11 lead by the break. Minor then scored all 11 of his points in the second half, helping the Bulldogs hold on and advance.

Will King added eight points for Belgreen, all in the second half. He shot 4-for-6 from the foul line. Brent Sykes scored seven points, and Chris Naylor added four. Jackson Castillo and Emmett Tiffin each had two.

Braxten Goodson led Phil Campbell with 11 points. Jacob Barnwell added eight, and Isac Hill scored seven.

Hayden Wingo had six points, Tyler McLemore hit a three and Noah Raper added two points.

Blackburn, Belgreen advance to face PC girls

Staff reports

Belgreen's seventh-and-eighth-grade girls rode a big first quarter to a 43-35 win over Red Bay on Saturday, earning a date with Phil Campbell in finals of the junior high Franklin County Tournament at Belgreen.

The Lady Bulldogs got 10 points in the first quarter from Lily Blackburn, building a 16-2 lead by the end of one. Second-seeded Red Bay battled back in the second quarter, getting six points from Abby Hicks and five from Zoe Henley to out-score Belgreen 13-7 and cut the lead to eight by half-time.

Henley scored seven more points in the third quarter, and Hicks added five as the Lady Tigers out-scored Belgreen 14-10 to climb even closer at 33-29 going to the fourth.

Dacota Green and Hannah Borden each had four points in the final period, helping the Lady Bulldogs punch their ticket to the championship game.

Blackburn led Belgreen with 15 points, going 5-for-6 at the foul line. Green added 10 points, eight of which came in the second half. Allie Reaves scored eight points, and Borden added six. Caitlyn Oliver and Aleksis Archer each had two points.

The Lady Bulldogs will face Phil Campbell in the county finals this Saturday at 3 p.m.

Henley led Red Bay with 16 points, knocking down three threes. Hicks hit a pair of threes and finished with 12 points. Shaily Warren scored three points, and Gracie Weatherford and Kenzlee Bohannon each added two.

The Lady Tigers made six threes as a team but struggled at the foul line, shooting just 7-for-22.

In other seventh-and-eighth grade girls action on Saturday

Phil Campbell 22 Tharptown 16

Hannah Welborn led the Lady Bobcats with 11 points, helping them earn a date with Belgreen in the county finals.

Trailing by one at the end of the first quarter, top-seeded Phil Campbell out-scored Tharptown 5-2 in the second quarter and 8-4 in the third to open up an 18-12 lead.

Tasha Trapp scored seven points for the Lady Bobcats. Jetta Reeves and Madalynn Mann added two apiece.

Braisly Barboza led Tharptown with six points, and Harlee Fisher added four. Aalivia Wilson and Sarah Kiel each had two.

Phil Campbell and Belgreen will play in the county championship game this Saturday at 3 p.m.



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Tharptown girls open 2020 with back-to-back blowouts

Staff reports

Tharptown's girls posted their second straight blowout win to open the New Year, cruising to a 47-10 rout of Sheffield last Friday night.

Coming off a 57-16 shellacking of Brilliant on Thursday, the Lady Wildcats (9-7 overall through Sunday, 4-2 in Class 2A, Area 16) got four points apiece from Brooke Daily and Adriana Borden in Friday's first quarter, building a 13-2 lead by the end of one. Tharptown then hit three threes—two by senior guard Shaylee Wieting and one by sophomore guard Gracie Montgomery—in the second quarter, out-scoring Sheffield 14-0 to take a 27-2 lead into the break.

Daily scored seven third-quarter points, and Kaitlyn Simmons added five as the Lady Wildcats out-scored Sheffield 18-6 to open up a 45-8 lead.

Daily finished with 12 points, and Wieting added nine. Montgomery and Borden each had eight, and Simmons finished with five. Kyndall Morgan scored three points, and Aly Vandiver added two.

Tharptown was scheduled to return to action on Monday night with another area game at home against Colbert County.

In other action last week:

Tharptown 57 Brilliant 16

Tharptown's girls got 21 points from Gracie Montgomery and a double-double from Brooke Daily last Thursday afternoon, snapping a two-game skid with a rout of Brilliant.

Montgomery, a sophomore guard, scored the

Lady Wildcats' first 10 points of the game and topped the 20-point mark for the third time this season despite sitting out the entire fourth quarter.

Daily, a senior post player, finished with 14 points and 15 rebounds, helping Tharptown hold a commanding 42-20 edge on the boards. The Lady Wildcats also shared the ball well, finishing with 16 assists on their 20 made field goals.

Montgomery knocked down a pair of early threes, helping Tharptown build a 13-2 lead by the end of one quarter. The Lady Wildcats then got six points from Aly Vandiver, five from Montgomery and four from Adriana Borden in the second quarter, out-scoring Brilliant 19-5 to open up a 32-7 halftime lead.

Senior guard Shaylee Wieting got going with nine third-quarter points, helping Tharptown extend the lead to 50-11 by the end of three.

Montgomery shot 8-for-17 from the floor with three threes, adding seven rebounds, four assists and two steals to go with her 21 points. Daily shot 6-for-10 from the field and had two steals and two blocks to go with her double-double. Wieting finished with 11 points, five boards and two steals.

Vandiver scored seven points and also had four assists, three rebounds and two steals. Borden finished with four points, five boards, three assists and two blocks.

Jaiden Gaston chipped in with seven rebounds, three assists and three blocks.

Brilliant shot just 6-for-37 from the floor and turned the ball over 21 times.

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Wildcats avenge loss to Brilliant

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

THARPTOWN - When Tharptown's boys didn't turn the ball over last Thursday against Brilliant, they more often than not put it in the basket.

The Wildcats overcame some early carelessness with the ball, shooting 59 percent (35-for-59) from the floor and setting a new season-high for points scored in a 77-47 rout of the visiting Tigers.

"We played better," said head coach Shannon Benford, whose team lost 66-58 at Brilliant back in November. "We knew they hadn't played since December 20, so we thought we could come out and run with them. That's what our plan was. We had some crazy turnovers early in the game, but we did a good job of penetrating and taking the ball to the goal. If we didn't have it, we kicked it out. I thought we shot the ball well today."

Tharptown shot at least 50 percent from the field in all four quarters and topped the 70-point mark for the first time all season despite attempting only five three throws. The Wildcats out-rebounded Brilliant 33-21 and also came up with 13 steals, including six by senior post player Edward Lopez.

"I didn't think we played real well on defense," Benford said. "I know we only gave up 47, but we've gotta get better on that end of the floor. We put in another zone today. We played a lot of 1-3-1. We hadn't worked on it a lot, but we wanted to try it, because we played them a two-three at their place and they shot the lights out."

Junior wing Kade Bryant scored 29 points for the Tigers in their eight-point win over Tharptown back on November 18. Foul trouble slowed him down after a fast start last Thursday, and he finished with 21 points on 9-for-23 shooting from the floor.

"Him getting his third foul in the first half was big," Benford said of Bryant, who had nine points in the first quarter but went scoreless in the second as the Wildcats took control. "He's a good player. He's probably one of the best players in Marion County."

Tharptown got seven points in the first quarter from Edwin Garcia, six from Lopez and five from Winston Nolen, building an 18-14 lead by the end of one despite Bryant's hot start. Leading by just three at 20-17 early in the second quarter, the Wildcats closed the first half on a 17-2 run to take a 37-19 lead into the locker room.

Nolen sparked the big run with a three, and Luis Valdez scored seven points off the bench to help lead the second-quarter charge.

"We did a good job of getting out in transition and pushing the ball up the court," said Benford, whose team turned the ball over 10 times in the first half but still led by 18 at the break thanks to their own hot shooting (16-for-27 from the floor in the half) and a rough second quarter (2-for-14 from the floor) by Brilliant.

Down big at the break, the Tigers came out with full-court pressure in the third quarter, and Tharptown took full advantage. The Wildcats got nine points from Colton Simmons and six apiece from Nolen and Lopez, pushing the pace and shooting a scorching 67 percent (12-for-18) from the floor to out-score Brilliant 25-19 and open up a 62-38 lead.

Tharptown opened the fourth quarter with a put-back by Nolen and a three from Valdez, and the lead swelled to 30 at 75-45 on back-to-back buckets by Ruben Alfaro around the 4:00 mark.

Nolen, a junior guard, posted his sixth game of the season with 20-plus points, scoring 20 on 9-for-17 shooting. He also had eight rebounds and



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Lopez was nearly perfect from the field, shooting 7-for-8 and scoring 15 points to help Tharptown roll to a 75-45 rout.

two assists. Lopez shot 7-for-8 from the floor and finished with 15 points, six boards, six steals and three blocks. Garcia added 13 points and six rebounds, and Valdez scored 12 points on 5-for-8 shooting with a pair of threes.

Simmons finished with nine points on 4-for-4 shooting from the floor, and Alfaro had six points.

Tharptown had dropped two straight (to Brooks and Lexington at the Brooks Invitational after Christmas) prior to last Thursday's big win.

"I think it helped us," Benford said of playing in the tournament at Brooks, where his team went 1-2. "We stayed in shape, for one thing. Another reason we scheduled it is the good competition you see over there. We went 1-2, and we were satisfied with that. I wish we could have played Lexington a little better."

"We've gotta play teams that are gonna prepare us for our area. Our area is tough."

Brilliant finished Thursday's game shooting 38 percent (21-for-55) from the floor with 18 turnovers.

In other action last week: Sheffield 73 Tharptown 43

The Wildcats were within three points late in the first half on Friday before a pair of dunks by Sheffield sophomore Devin Doss helped the Bulldogs take a 12-point lead into the break on their way to pulling away for a big area win.

Rodney Goodman led Sheffield (12-4, 4-1 in Class 2A, Area 16) with 23 points, hitting four threes and going 7-for-7 at the foul line. Goodman scored 17 points in the first half and then knocked down two threes in the third quarter, helping the Bulldogs out-score Tharptown 17-9 to take a 56-36 lead into the fourth.

Doss and Trey Williams each added 12 points for Sheffield, and Khori Bowling had 11. The Bulldogs made eight threes and shot 9-for-13 from the line.

Luis Valdez hit five threes for the Wildcats (6-12 through Sunday, 1-5) and led them with 17 points. Winston Nolen hit two threes and finished with 10 points, reaching double-figures for the 18th time in 18 games. Edwin Garcia added five points, and Colton Simmons had four. Edward Lopez scored three points, and Tyler Amos and Yovani Gomez added two apiece.

Tharptown matched Sheffield with eight threes but shot just 1-for-3 at the foul line.

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Belgreen boys remain unbeaten in area play

Staff reports

Belgreen's boys dominated Phillips in the first half last Friday night, opening up a 32-point lead on their way to remaining unbeaten in area play with a 75-37 win in Bear Creek.

The Bulldogs (16-5 through Sunday, 5-0 in Class 1A, Area 12) got eight points in the first quarter from Will Bonner and six from Collin Bonner, building a 21-4 lead by the end of one. Scout Bragwell hit two threes and had eight points in the second quarter, helping Belgreen out-score the Bears 24-9 to take a 45-13 lead into the locker room.

Will Bonner finished with 16 points to lead the Bulldogs. Bragwell hit three threes—giving him 62 on the season, tops in Franklin County—and scored 14 points. The junior guard also made his lone free throw attempt on Friday and is now shooting 88 percent (23-for-26) from the line on the season.

Collin Bonner finished with 10 points on Friday night, and Brodie Vandiver hit two threes and scored eight points. Isac Willingham shot 5-for-6 from the line and finished with seven points, and Bryant Hubbert scored all six of his points in the second quarter.

Will Donahoe added four points, and Cole King and David Plott each knocked down a three. Jackson Galliano and Hadden Taylor had two points apiece.

Alex Copeland scored 21 points to lead Phillips (3-5, 3-2).

The Bulldogs made seven threes as a team and shot 10-for-14 from the foul line.

Varsity girls

Phillips 57 Belgreen 45

Alli Temple scored 22 points last Friday night, helping Phillips avenge an early-season loss to Belgreen and take control of the Class 1A, Area 12 race.

Phillips (5-9, 4-1 in area play) got nine first-quarter points from Ally McCollum, jumping out to a 15-7 lead at the end of one. The lead grew to ten by halftime, and Temple scored 11 points in the third quarter to help Phillips out-score the Lady Bulldogs 15-12 and open up a 39-26 advantage.

McCollum finished with 15 points, going 7-for-7 at the foul line. Gracie Hallman added 14 points. Phillips hit just one three—by Temple—on the night but shot 16-for-25 from the line.

Emma Dempsey and Ansley Tate each finished with 14 points to lead Belgreen (13-5 through Sunday, 3-2). Tate shot 6-for-6 from the foul line on the night and scored 10 of her points in the fourth quarter. Katie Dempsey finished with eight points, and Gracie Dempsey hit two threes and scored seven points. Kaley Chandler added two points.

The Lady Bulldogs made three threes and went 10-for-15 at the line.

Belgreen had beaten Phillips by the exact same score (57-45) at home on December 3.

Vina 37 Brilliant 17

Vina's girls survived an injury to their leading scorer last Friday night at Brilliant, extending their win streak to five with an area victory.

Vina (14-3 overall through Sunday, 3-1 in Class 1A, Area 12) led 9-2 at the end of one quarter and 18-4 at the half. Sophomore guard Rayleigh Guin, averaging a career-high 17.4 points per game on the season, left the game with an injury in the third quarter and did not return.

The Lady Red Devils led by 16 at the end of three and out-scored Brilliant 12-8 in the fourth quarter to win going away.

Sara Scott scored seven points and also pulled down 10 rebounds to lead Vina. Kaitlyn King shot 4-for-4 from the line and had seven points and five boards. Guin finished with five points, five rebounds, five steals and two assists. Hailey Cantrell also scored five points and grabbed eight boards.

Sarah Johnson had 10 rebounds to go along with her four points, and Maddie Mills also scored four. Sara Harper chipped in with three points, and Kassidie Gesler added two. The Lady Devils hit two threes as a team and shot 11-for-21 from the line.

'FOOTBALL,' from page 13

percent on the season and recording a team-best 95 pancake blocks. He helped pave the way for a rushing attack that averaged 216.1 yards per game.

In his third season as a starting linebacker for Red Bay, the 6'0, 240-pound McKinney set a new career-high with 115 tackles (including 69 solo stops). He had seven games with double-digit tackles, including 17 in the season opener against Colbert Heights and 16 in a first-round playoff win over Cedar Bluff. He also had a pick-six in an early-season win over Phil Campbell.



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Brooks Scott

Junior Post Player, Russellville

Scott continued his recent scoring binge last week, putting up 21 points on Friday in a 77-75 loss at West Point and 25 points on Saturday in a 63-53 win over Central. Through Sunday, the 6'0, 205-pound junior had topped the 20-point mark in each of his last four games, averaging 23.5 points during that stretch while shooting 71 percent (27-for-38) from the foul line.

For the season, Scott ranked as Russellville's second-leading scorer coming into this week, averaging a career-high 13.7 points per game for the 9-6 Golden Tigers.



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'FOUL,' from page 13

made only 11, and Russellville (9-6, 0-3) took a 36-30 lead into the locker room behind 14 first-half points from Brooks Scott and 10 from Chandler Dyas.

The Warriors turned the tide in the third quarter, pounding the offensive glass for second- and third-shot opportunities and out-scoring the Golden Tigers 29-19 to turn that six-point deficit into a 59-55 lead.

The third quarter ended in controversy when Dyas appeared to be knocked to the floor while attempting a three from the left corner right before the buzzer. No whistle came, and Odom was hit with a technical foul for vehemently protesting the non-call. By rule, the 21-year coaching veteran was confined to his seat on the bench for the duration of the fourth quarter.

"You've seen a lot of the games I've coached. I don't get many technicals," Odom said afterwards. "But I was lucky to stay in this game tonight. We were all pretty frustrated. There was a lot of adversity to overcome. But we still had enough things in our hands that we should have won the basketball game."

The Warriors got a couple of timely threes from junior guard Kobe Bowers in the fourth quarter as the lead swelled into double-digits. West Point had an opportunity to put the game away at the foul line but failed to do so, missing 12 of 21 free throws in the fourth. Russellville took advantage and rallied behind Dyas, who scored 10 of his game-high 25 points in the final period, and senior reserve Jamal Hubbard, who was pressed into duty due to foul trouble and answered the bell with five big points and several key rebounds down the stretch.

The Warriors missed five straight free throws at one point, allowing the Golden Tigers to trim the lead to three in the final 20 seconds. Russellville had possession with a chance to tie but never got off a shot, turning the ball over on an inbounds pass out of a timeout. West Point got the ball to senior guard Tyler White, who capped off his 21-point night by making 1-of-2 at the line with seven seconds remaining to push the lead to four and seal the deal.

West Point won despite missing 28 free throws—or nearly twice as many as Russellville attempted. [The Warriors shot 20-for-48 from the line, while the Golden Tigers finished 10-for-15.] Starters Levi Gist and Jeb Bishop were each whistled for two early fouls and played limited minutes all night. Gist and Hubbard both ultimately fouled out.

"It hurt our mentality on defense," Odom said of the tight—and inconsistent—whistle. "The frustrating part was, they're playing the same way we are. They've got two bigs, and they're throwing the ball into their bigs just like we're throwing the ball into our bigs. The game's being played the same way on both ends, but the whistle is not being blown the same way on both ends. The lack of consistency—that was our frustration tonight. We shot [fifteen] free throws, and we're attacking the paint religiously out there."

"We had guys get in foul trouble, and then when you try to get guys back in the game, they're afraid to foul. I thought it hurt our aggressiveness. I understand that. As a player, I've been there. It impacted us in a lot of ways. But I kept telling our guys, 'When we leave here, they're gonna have a score and we're gonna have a score. And that's all that's gonna matter.'"

Bowers, held without a field goal in the first quarter, finished with 22 points to lead West Point, knocking down four threes and going 4-for-6 from the



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Russellville's most productive offensive night of the year included a season-high eight points from Trussell (with ball).

line. White hit two threes and shot 7-for-8 from the line on his way to scoring 21 points. Junior big man Aubrey Cleghorn added 16 points and helped control the glass along with 6'3 junior Will Cochran, who scored 15 points despite shooting just 5-for-18 from the foul line.

Dyas hit three threes on the night and topped the 20-point mark for the ninth time in 14 games, raising his scoring average to 20.2 points per game on the season. Scott shot 7-for-9 from the line and topped the 20-point mark for the third straight game, finishing with 21. Hubbard had nine points, and Gist and Nathaniel Trussell each added eight. Bishop and Boots McCulloch had two apiece.

"There were some positives tonight," Odom said. "We probably played more free and had a great flow on offense. The thing we need to have in order to win is more guys contributing, and we had a lot of guys contribute tonight. But we're not gonna win shootouts. That's the reality. Us giving up 77 points is not gonna win an area tournament game. That's not gonna get it done—regardless of the circumstances. At the same time, if we score in the 70s, we should win."

"We're still learning what we have to do each night to win games. But I'd rather lose tonight than in February."

The Golden Tigers will play their final three area games of the regular season in the span of a week starting this Friday with a trip to Lawrence County. Russellville will then host Hamilton on January 14 before getting their shot at revenge against West Point on the 17th.

"We've gone through stretches like this all year," said Odom, whose team lost for the fourth time in five games on the heels of a five-game win streak. "Hopefully at some point during this January stretch we start finding ourselves. We're playing quality people every night, and we've got to bring quality basketball to the floor every night."

"I'll say this. We'll look forward to seeing these guys at our place. Because this one will leave a sour taste."

In other action last week:

Russellville 63 Central-Florence 53

Brooks Scott topped the 20-point mark for the fourth straight game on Saturday night, scoring 25 to help Russellville bounce back and pick up its first win of the New Year at Central-Florence.

Jeb Bishop added a career-high 17 points for Russellville, eight of which came in the fourth quarter. The Golden Tigers (9-6 through Sunday) also got 15 points from Chandler Dyas and closed the game on an 11-3 run to seal their third win of the season over the Wildcats (3-13).

Scott, averaging 23.0 points over his previous three games coming in, scored six in Saturday's first quarter, but Central still led 13-12 at the end of one after a last-second three by Payton Palmer. Dyas, held scoreless in the first quarter, got going in the second with eight points, and Scott added five more as Russellville out-scored the Wildcats 17-10 to take a 29-23 lead into the break.

Scott, a 6'0 junior post player, dominated the third quarter, scoring five buckets in the paint and even stepping out to knock down his second three-pointer of the season. He had 13 points in the quarter, but junior guard Lane McCay countered with 11 for Central to keep the Wildcats close. The Golden Tigers led 48-40 at the end of three.

McCay stayed hot in the fourth quarter, knocking down a pair of quick threes as Central trimmed the lead all the way down to two at 52-50. Russellville responded as Dyas went 2-for-2 at the line and then set up Bishop for a layup to push the lead back to six at 56-50. Dyas and senior guard Levi Gist each added a bucket down the stretch, and Bishop went 3-for-4 at the line to help seal the deal.

The Golden Tigers clamped down defensively late in the fourth quarter, holding the Wildcats to just one field goal—a three by Palmer—over the final few minutes.

"This was our best defensive performance since before Christmas," said head coach Patrick Odom, whose team had dropped four of its last five coming in. "We played with the toughness and the physicality we have to play with. I thought our effort was tremendous, and we took good shots. When we called a play on offense, our guys did a good job of executing and getting us the looks we wanted."

Scott, who had never topped the 20-point mark in his varsity career prior to December 27, did so for the fourth time in nine days—including twice against Central. He averaged 21.7 points in three wins over the Wildcats this season, and he was averaging 23.5 points over his last four games through Sunday.

Bishop shot 5-for-7 from the line on Saturday, and Dyas knocked down a pair of threes on his way to reaching double-figures for the 15th time in 15 games. Gist finished with four points, and Nathaniel Trussell added two. Russellville hit three threes as a team and shot 12-for-21 from the line.

McCay led Central with 19 points, 17 of which came in the second half. Palmer added 12 points on four threes, and Jake Hall scored 10 points. The Wildcats hit eight threes and shot 5-for-7 at the line.



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Congratulations to our Beat Bailey Bowl Contest winner, **Cindy Porter**, who correctly picked nine out of ten games and also picked Alabama to beat Michigan 28-16! Cindy wins \$50 cash! Thanks to all the contestants who took part in both the Bowl Picks Contest and the Beat Bailey Contest throughout the regular season. We'll be back for the 2020 season, when you can try once again to Beat Bailey!

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Franklin Free Press Football Picks Contest

Bowl Season	Bailey's Pick	Winner
Oklahoma St. vs. Texas A&M	Texas A&M	Texas A&M
Memphis vs. Penn State	Penn State	Penn State
Clemson vs. Ohio State	Clemson	Clemson
Oklahoma vs. LSU	LSU	LSU
Florida vs. Virginia	Florida	Florida
Michigan vs. Alabama	Alabama	Alabama
Minnesota vs. Auburn	Minnesota	Minnesota
Oregon vs. Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Oregon
Georgia vs. Baylor	Baylor	Georgia
Indiana vs. Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee
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Phone number:	_____	



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