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Courthouse, county offices closed indefinitely due to COVID-19 virus

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission extended the public closing of the Franklin County Courthouse and all other county facilities "until further notice" at an emergency meeting held April 3rd.

Previously, the commission declared an emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and closed all county facilities through Friday, April 3rd. There was no specified date for the current closure to end, so commissioners won't have to hold another emergency meeting to extend the date, if necessary.

Franklin County Probate Judge Barry Moore said although county offices are closed to the public, that workers will continue to come to work and will transact as much public business by mail or telephone as is possible.

During the meeting, Moore and the four commissioners gave an update on public concerns they have received

regarding the current health situation.

"I want to thank our health care workers and our EMA Director (Mary Hallman Glass) for going above and beyond the call of duty during this health crisis," Moore said.

"We are all concerned about the safety of our citizens, and the safety of our county employees and their families. We want to encourage citizens to practice social distancing, wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water and keep gatherings to a minimum. And we want to encourage everyone's help with the two C's of 2020—stopping the spread of COVID-19 and completing the Census. Why not use some of this free time to fill out the Census for the benefit of Franklin County, Alabama and the United States? Teach your kids the importance of the Census. We will survive this and we're all in this together," Moore added.

District Two Commissioner Jason Miller encouraged

See 'CLOSED,' page 4

We have a winner! Cantrell finds Golden Egg

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

As one of Franklin County's School Resource Officers, Regina Cantrell is quite familiar with the layout of all county schools.

She knows her way around Russellville City Schools' campus, too, as Cantrell found the golden egg and won the *Franklin Free Press*' Hunt for the Golden Egg Contest Wednesday morning.

Cantrell and her husband, John, a Littleville police officer, found the egg in the bushes in front of the Russellville City Schools' Central Office Wednesday. While her husband was distracted by a dog approaching them, Regina continued her search and located the Golden Egg near the building's front door.

"I guess that makes me the winner," Cantrell said. "He was looking at this husky that was walking around when I found the egg."

Cantrell won \$500 and a gift basket full of Easter treats and goodies from the *Franklin Free Press*.

The daily 'virtual Easter egg' hunts will continue through next week, with daily clues given on the *FFP* Facebook page. Winners to date of daily baskets include Leah



PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI

Regina Cantrell, pictured on the right with *FFP* executive editor Brady Petree, won \$500 and a gift basket for finding the *Franklin Free Press*' Golden Egg.

See 'GOLDEN EGG,' page 9

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Donald Ray Sutton, 53, of Bear Creek died on Thursday, April 2nd. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Andrew Charles Suggs, 65, of Russellville died on Friday, April 3rd. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

Sharron Trapp Sherrill, 74, of Russellville died on Thursday, April 2nd. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

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Deadline for absentee ballot submission postponed to July

*John Pilati
Franklin Free Press*

With the postponement of Alabama's primary runoff election from March 31st to July 14th, voters have an extended period of time to cast absentee ballots, although you'll have to do it by mail for the immediate future.

With the Franklin County Courthouse closed to the public, walk-in absentee voting has been suspended. But there's still a way for citizens to vote absentee in advance of July 14th.

According to Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill, the lengthy absentee voting period allows voters concerned about the spread of Coronavirus an option to vote at home.

"Amid Coronavirus concerns, it's important to remember that Alabamians who are concerned about contracting or spreading an illness have the opportunity to avoid the polls on Election Day by casting an absentee ballot," Merrill said. "Alabamians can access the application online or by calling their Absentee Election Manager's office."

In Franklin County, Circuit Clerk Anita Scott is the Absentee Election Manager. Voters wanting an absentee application may call 256-332-8861 and have an application mailed to them.

The July 14th Republican runoff ballot in Franklin County will feature the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner race between Veronica Copeland Stancil and Stratt Byars, and the United States Senate runoff between Tommy Tuberville and Jeff Sessions.

There is no Democratic runoff in Franklin County.

Only voters who cast ballots in the Republican Primary on March 3rd, or who did not vote at all, may vote in the Republican runoff. Voters who cast Democratic Primary ballots may NOT crossover and vote in the Republican runoff.

Absentee applications and ballots should be mailed to the Absentee Election Manager, P.O. Box 160, Russellville, Al, 35653.

Voters must send a copy of valid photo identification with their application or it will not be processed.

Merrill said with Alabama under a declared State of Emergency, voters concerned about being exposed to Coronavirus should check the box that reads: "I have a physical illness or infirmity which prevents my attendance at the polls."

The deadline to register to vote is Monday, June 29th, and the deadline to submit an absentee ballot application is Thursday, July 9th. The deadline to return an absentee ballot to the Absentee Election Manager is the close of business Monday, July 13th, and the last day to postmark an absentee ballot is Monday, July 13th.

"We have worked hard to provide safe, secure and free elections for the people of Alabama and we will continue to see that Alabamians have the opportunity to participate in the electoral process in a way that does not affect their health or well-being," Merrill said.

Kindred at Home ready to serve seniors with in-home healthcare during COVID-19 pandemic

Submitted to the FFP

Kindred at Home, the nation's largest provider of home health, community care and hospice care is uniquely positioned to provide high-quality, compassionate healthcare to patients in their homes during the Coronavirus pandemic.

See 'HEALTHCARE,' page 9

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



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'CLOSING,' from page 1

citizens to use a 'common sense approach' to get through the coming weeks.

"I have full confidence in President (Donald) Trump and Gov. (Kay) Ivey, as well as our local leaders that all that can be done is being done," Miller said. "Secondly, we need to use a common sense approach to this virus and treat it like any other flu or cold, by practicing good hygiene and staying away from people who are sick or coughing.

"From what I've learned being on several federal teleconference calls, the virus is transmitted mainly through respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing. The droplets can land in the mouth or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs, and transmitted between people who are in close contact with one another inside six feet.

"So let's use good old-fashioned common sense, stay calm and most of all, pray that God will guide the doctors and scientists to find a vaccine," Miller added.

District One Commissioner Chris Wallace encouraged citizens not to panic, and to avoid shopping during times stores are busy.

"My observation so far is that with our essential businesses, there are times they're really busy and times there aren't as many people there. If you pull up to Walmart, for example, and there's a line of people there, come back later," Wallace said. "Spread out your shopping for essential items and avoid contact.

"From talking with doctors, I've been told the only thing to fight this virus if you get it is hydroxychloroquine and Z-packs. If pharmacies can make arrangements to get more of those medications, it would be beneficial, because they definitely will help with symptoms," Wallace added.

For District Three Commissioner Rayburn Massey, the Coronavirus has hit home personally, as one of his former co-workers from Lauderdale County died from the virus.

"People cannot take this too lightly. It's a deadly disease and it's running rampant. My wife and I have basically self-quarantined. We're minimizing our being out because this virus is not forgiving," Massey said.

"We need to be much in prayer at this time and take self-discipline and self-quarantine seriously as much as possible and continue to pray daily."

District Four Commissioner David Hester said if residents can consolidate their errands into one trip it will reduce contact and help contain the virus.

"We're used to going to get something and 30 minutes later, going back out to get something else," Hester said. "Make a list of items needed and cut down on your trips. And shop early when very few people are present.

"Try to make your trip useful and make all necessary stops instead of getting out again and again. And take advantage of family time at home. I pray for everyone who has been unemployed for several weeks now. We will get through this, but it will help to cut down visits and trips out of the house," Hester added.

County health department begins COVID-19 tests

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Health Department began testing for COVID-19 on Tuesday, April 7th, according to a press release from the Alabama Department of Public Health.

There are conditions to be tested, including being symptomatic with fever, cough or shortness

of breath, plus one of the following conditions:

- Be age 65 or older.
- Be a healthcare worker.

—Have a condition that places the patient at higher risk, like chronic lung disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic renal disease, immunocompromised, neurologic/neurodevelopmental/intellectual disability, pregnancy or other chronic disease.

The COVID-19 testing will take place every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m., at the Franklin County Health Department on County Road 48.

Call 256-332-2700 for appointment and a referral from a physician is recommended.

Please remain in your car when you arrive. Testing is for ages 19 and older and there is no cost for the test.

Pinkard Funeral Homes adjusting policies in compliance with state

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The many changes in our lives as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have also had an impact on the funeral industry, as all funeral establishments must comply with the State of Alabama's COVID-19 State Health Order.

Tammy Sharp, with Pinkard Funeral Home of Russellville, said her facility is complying with the state order, and family members who lose a loved one are also required to adhere to the new regulations.

The health order limits the number of family members who may participate in arrangement conferences. Pinkard and other facilities are encouraging family members to take part by teleconference, rather than in-person.

All in-person arrangement conferences are subject to the social distancing requirements of six feet.

All in-person gatherings are limited to 10 people. Pinkard officials are working with families to plan small graveside, chapel, church and visitation

services that comply with this aspect of the health order.

Another option given by the State of Alabama is live streaming the service of their loved one.

All arrangements made by funeral establishment members with bereaved families must include the social distancing practice and family members with weakened immune systems or chronic health conditions will be encouraged to stay at home.

Additionally, any family member who has been exposed to COVID-19 or is showing signs of active illness, like fever or cough, will not be admitted to the funeral home in order to prevent the spread of illness to others.

"We really want to thank our families for their understanding during this dangerous pandemic. We will do everything allowable to comfort our bereaved families after the loss of their loved ones," Sharp said. "But we want to do so in the safest way possible while complying with the state health order."

For more information on Pinkard Funeral Home's regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit www.pinkardfh.com.

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



CENSUS 2020

Get Counted! April 1, 2020

What is the census?

The census is a self-portrait of the nation. The US Constitution requires the federal government to count all persons residing in the United States every 10 years. This includes people of all ages, races, and ethnic groups; citizens and non-citizens. All households must complete a census form (either online, by mail or phone) before April 1, 2020. It is our right and responsibility to participate.

Why is it important to participate in the census?

Census figures define the future of our community and our voice in Congress. For example:

- The 2020 census will determine how more than \$ 700 billion in federal funds will be distributed to states and localities each year over the next decade.
- Census information is used to determine where schools, roads, hospitals, child care centers, senior centers and other services will be built.

Let's count all kids in 2020!



How and when will the form be filled out?

- **In March 2020**, all households will receive a letter from the Census Bureau with instructions on how to fill out the form **online**. Each household will complete a **10-question form**.
- **All people living in that home must be included** in the form to be counted.
- The information they must provide includes: name, relationship with the person in charge of the household, gender, age, date of birth, Hispanic origin, race and if you are a homeowner or tenant.
- The form can be filled out in 10 minutes approx.
- If a household does not respond, the Census Bureau will send two reminders by mail and a census form with the fourth notification.
- For the first time, **online responses will be the main option**: The paper form will remain available.
- Other options to complete the form by phone or mail will be available. You can call 888-839-8632 for more information.
- If a household does not respond or submit an incomplete form, census interviewers will visit these homes to gather the information. Visits will begin at the end of April and end at the beginning of July 2020



Will my answers be kept confidential?

- **Yes**. The data obtained in the census forms are protected under the law and will be used only for statistical data. The Constitution guarantees that personal information will not be used against the participants.
- Personal census data **CANNOT** be shared for 72 years (this includes: name, address, and telephone number).
- Census Bureau staff with access to information, have sworn to keep it confidential, and will be fined \$ 250,000 and / or up to 5 years in prison if they share that information.

CENSO 2020

¡Hágase Contar! 1o. de Abril del 2020

¿Qué es el censo?

El censo es un autorretrato de la nación. La constitución de los EE.UU. requiere que el gobierno federal haga un conteo de todas las personas que residen en los Estados Unidos cada 10 años. Esto incluye personas de todas las edades, razas y grupos étnicos; ciudadanos y no ciudadanos. Todos los hogares deberán completar un formulario del censo (ya sea en línea, por correo o teléfono) antes del 1ro de abril del 2020. Es nuestro derecho y responsabilidad participar.

¿Por qué es importante participar en el censo?

Las cifras del censo definen el futuro de nuestra comunidad y nuestra voz en el Congreso. Por ejemplo:

- El censo 2020 determinará cómo se distribuirán más de \$700 mil millones en fondos federales a los estados y localidades cada año durante la próxima década.
- La información del censo se utiliza para determinar en dónde se construirán escuelas, carreteras, hospitales, centros de cuidado infantil, centros para personas de la tercera edad y otros servicios.

¡Hagamos contar a todos los Niños en 2020!



¿Cómo y cuándo se llenará el formulario?

- **En marzo de 2020**, todos los hogares recibirán una carta de la Oficina del Censo con instrucciones de cómo llenar el formulario **en línea**. Cada hogar completará **un formulario de 10 preguntas**.
- **Todas las personas que viven en ese hogar deben ser incluidas** en el formulario para ser contadas.
- La información que deben proporcionar incluye: nombre, relación con el encargado del hogar, género, edad, fecha de nacimiento, origen hispano, raza y si es propietario o inquilino de hogar.
- El formulario se puede llenar en 10 minutos aprox.
- Si un hogar no responde, la Oficina del Censo enviará dos recordatorios por correo y un formulario del censo con la cuarta notificación.
- Por primera vez, responder por **Internet será la opción principal**: el formulario de papel seguirá disponible.
- Otras opciones para completar el formulario por teléfono o correo estarán disponibles. Puede llamar al 888-839-8632 para obtener más información
- Si un hogar no responde o presenta un formulario incompleto, encuestadores del censo visitarán estos hogares para recopilar la información. Las visitas empezarán finales de abril y terminarán a principios de julio del 2020



¿Se mantendrán mis respuestas confidenciales?

- **Sí**. Los datos obtenidos en los formularios del censo son protegidos bajo la ley y se utilizarán solamente para datos estadísticos. La Constitución garantiza que la información personal no será usada en contra de los participantes.
- Datos personales del censo **NO** pueden ser compartidos por 72 años (esto incluye: nombre, domicilio, y número de teléfono).
- El personal de la Oficina del Censo con acceso a la información, ha jurado mantenerla confidencial, y será multado con \$ 250,000 y / o hasta 5 años en prisión si comparten dicha información.

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WELCOMING NEW PATIENTS!

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Russellville Hospital is excited to announce that nurse practitioner Haley Knight, CRNP, is welcoming new patients along with Dr. Jeffrey Chenyi at Russellville Hospital Medical Clinic. The clinic provides comprehensive medical care for children to adults.

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What's Happening

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

Ronnie McDowell returns to Russellville to celebrate his 70th birthday with a special show at the Roxy Theatre on Saturday, May 16 at 7 p.m. Joseph Baldwin and Johnathan Len will open the show. Tickets are on sale now. Reserved seats are \$20-\$35, and general admission balcony seats are \$15. For ticket information, call 256-415-3270. Proceeds will benefit the Roxy Restoration Fund.

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 0155 Russellville is now meeting at the Russellville Hospital Education Room at 4:30 p.m. every Monday. Everyone is welcome to drop in for a free meeting visit. Call 256-446-5962 or 256-412-2855 for more info.

The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts has announced that its next production, Cheating Cheaters, that was to be performed April 23-26, 2020, will be postponed until June. They apologize for any inconvenience, but hope everyone stays well and they look forward to seeing everyone in June.

As of Wednesday, March 18 the Tennessee Valley Museum of Art will be closed to the public due to concerns related to COVID-19. We will remain closed until further notice. Our offices are still open and able to receive your call. We will continue to respond to developments as they arise. Please check for updates on our Facebook pages. Thank you for your understanding.

Village Square Apartments in Russellville host George's Country Boys each Monday from 6-8 p.m. for some Gospel and Country singing!

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 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.

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. Burselon 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.

The American Legion Post 64 in Russellville will postpone its April and May meetings. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Atkins.

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.

Divorced? Separated? We can help. Divorce Care is a weekly seminar/support group that will help you heal from the hurt. It's a warm, caring environment led by people who understand what you are going through. Learn practical information and gain hope for your future. Come join us at First Baptist Church, Colbert Heights, every Wednesday night from March 15 through June 7 from 6-8 p.m. Church is located at 6000 Woodmont Drive, Tuscumbia, AL 35674. For more information, call 256-383-8016 or go online to www.firstcolbertheights.com.

AARP Tax-Aide is offering FREE income tax preparation at the Department of Human Resources in Russellville on Thursdays from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. beginning February 6 and ending April 9. You do NOT have to be a member of AARP, a certain age or retired to use this service. Call Ben at 256-332-0252 for an appointment.

Everyone is welcome to worship services at Duncan Creek Baptist Church, 3925 Duncan Creek Road, Russellville. Service times are Sunday School at 10 a.m., Worship Service at 11 a.m. and Bible Study at 5 p.m. Pastor is Bro. Joe Thorn.

Have an event we can help publicize? Call us at 256-332-0255.

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us online at www.franklinfreepress.net. Send your letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

County, city garbage pickup undergoing temporary changes

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

With safety concerns about the COVID-19 virus resulting in changes across local, state and federal government, the Franklin County Solid Waste Department announced Tuesday that all garbage routes will be picked up with the new one-armed trucks, starting Monday, April 6th.

The two one-armed trucks, one of which is used to pick up garbage in the City of Russellville, will result in earlier than normal run times for City of Russellville residents and later than normal run times for county residents.

The change to the one-armed trucks, which will eventually become a permanent change, is being made out of safety concerns for the employees who ride on the back of the traditional garbage trucks, according to Franklin County Solid Waste Manager Gene Ward.

"This could be several hours different than what our customers are used to," Ward said.

"It is suggested for all customers to have their garbage cans out in the issued can the night before their pickup day. We want to stress all routes will remain on their regular scheduled day."

Additionally, customers are reminded to make payments by mail or by dropping them off in the night deposit box at the Franklin County Courthouse Annex, 405 North Jackson Avenue in downtown Russellville.

With all county residents now being served by the one-armed trucks, Ward reminded residents of the guidelines for garbage pickup with the new garbage cans:

—Leave space around your can and other

objects.

—All garbage should be in plastic bags in the issued county can.

—Do not overload the can or place items on top of the can. The lid should be closed, not overflowing.

—No extra bags, boxes or excess garbage that is placed on or around cans will be picked up.

—Can must be no further than three to five feet from roadside.

—Can wheels should face away from roadside, with lid opening toward the street.

—Do not block cans or curbside access with parked cars.

—Do not obstruct lid openings with ties, cords, chains, etc.

Should you need an additional can, contact the Franklin County Solid Waste Department has them available for \$11.75 per month.

Call 256-332-8412 for more information.

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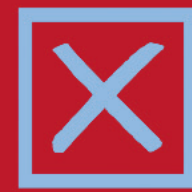
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'HEALTHCARE,' from page 3

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Derek Nordman, Chief Clinical Operations Officer stated, "in the midst of the pandemic, the healthcare needs of our country's seniors don't pause, and we are equipped and ready to serve these patients in their homes, where they will be at less risk. We have implemented heightened infection control policies, daily clinician health screenings and are in constant contact with state health departments, the CDC and the Department of Health and Human Services, so that we remain ready to care for our patients."

Kindred at Home has served the Russellville area and surrounding cities for more than 35 years, delivering compassionate, high quality in-home care to patients with services that included skilled nursing, physical, occupational and speech therapies, social work, disease management education, help with daily living activities as well as other therapies and services.

For more information, contact Mollie Henson, Branch Director of Kindred at Home Russellville at 256-332-3375.

You can also visit the agency's website at www.kindredhealthcare.com.

'GOLDEN EGG,' from page 1

McAlister, Crystal Swager, Amanda Velasquez, Talia Speck, Allison Standridge, Whitney McDonald, Wes Richardson, Anne Tyler Zills and Tammy Harris.

Congratulations to Regina and John!

contests will be announced later this year, so make sure to follow the FFP on Facebook and Twitter and check our website, www.franklinfreepress.net.

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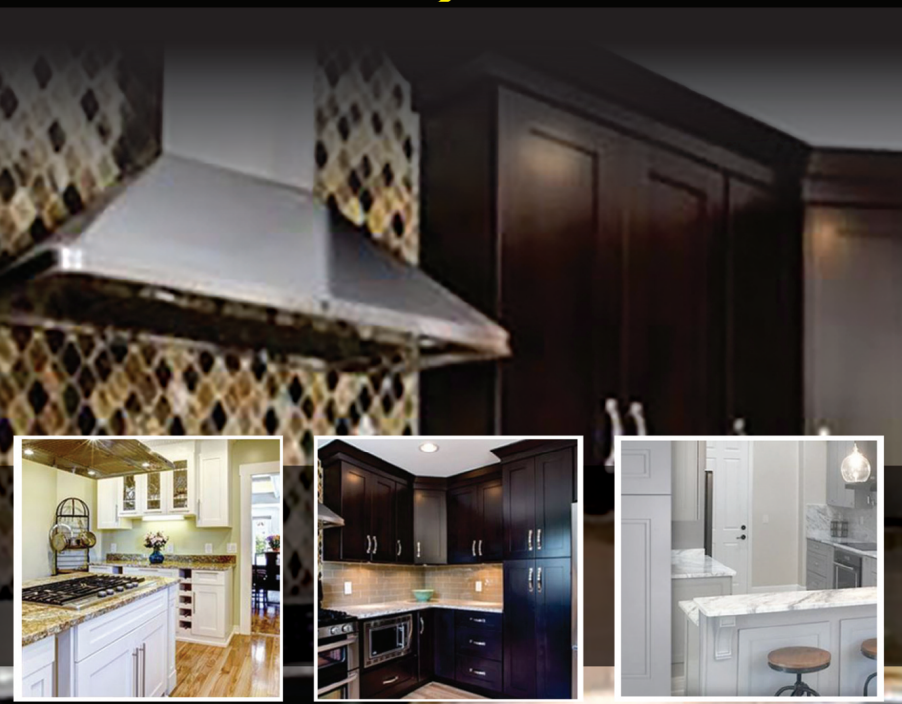
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Williams credits determination for leading to Bryant-Jordan Scholarship

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

Every student who that receives a scholarship is generally surprised when they get word that they are the recipient of that scholarship. Most of the reason for such surprise is due to the fact that there is often a ton of applicants to go along with the fact that there simply aren't enough scholarships to go around.

However, one reason you don't often hear from someone who is surprised to receive a scholarship is that they had simply forgotten that they had applied for the scholarship altogether.

Well that is precisely what happened to Phil Campbell senior Ben Williams as he learned that he was named one of the recipients of the Jordan-Bryant scholarship for this year.

"I had kind of forgotten about even applying for it to be quite honest," Williams said. "I had applied a few weeks ago and didn't think much of it anymore. Then I got an email out of the blue and I was just like "wow", so yeah it was a nice surprise

See 'WILLIAMS,' Page 13



COURTESY PHOTO

Williams combined a 35 ACT score along with his athletic ability to capture one of the Bryant-Jordan scholarships.

Putting in work

Hard work on the field and in the classroom pays off for RHS senior A.J. Taylor in the form of a scholarship

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

A good resume can go a long way towards earning a life changing scholarship and for most students finding the time to stay on top of schoolwork while doing other extracurricular activities is nearly impossible.

Add to that volunteering, playing sports, and having a social life, being a high school student can be stressful when trying to balance it all.

For Russellville High School senior A.J. Taylor, doing all of these things was just an average week.

Taylor had no difficulty filling out her resume as she began applying for scholarships during her senior year.

One of the scholarships Taylor was up for was the Jordan-Bryant scholarship awarded through the AHSAA, something to her knowledge no other Golden Tiger has been nominated for. So needless to say it came as a pleasant surprise when Taylor got the confirmation that she had been awarded the scholarship.

"I found out from Principal Goodwin that I was nominated for it and I wasn't too sure what the scholarship was about when he initially told me but I was still excited," Taylor said. "When he told me I just couldn't believe it because it just didn't seem real."

The Jordan-Bryant scholarships are given to students in Alabama who are leaders on the field and in the classroom.

Taylor is one of 52 students across the state (and one of two in Franklin County) that was awarded the scholarship and will receive \$3,500 for the scholarship amount. 14 of those 52 students selected will receive additional grants as class winners and the overall Larry Striplin Jr. Scholar-Athlete of the Year and Ken & Betty Joy Blankenship Achievement Award state winner will receive even more scholarship funds to be announced at a later date.

While of course being awarded any type of scholarship is not a given, Taylor felt very strongly about her chances to be one of the 52 recipients across the state.

"I've done a lot here at Russellville and I feel like I represent my community very well and so I felt like I had somewhat earned this scholarship but he told me it would be very hard to win so I wasn't too sure," Taylor said. "So once I finally got that confirmation that I was honored with it, I was very relieved and happy to have been chosen."

On the athletic side of things, Taylor is very well-represented as she has been a mainstay in the



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Taylor was one of only two Franklin County seniors honored with the Bryant-Jordan scholarship.

RHS sports scene for the past four years. Taylor has played both basketball and softball since her freshman year of high school and also took up cross-country in her senior year as well. Taylor will be advancing her athletic and academic career at Shelton State Community College as she has signed a softball scholarship with the Buccaneers.

At Shelton State, Taylor will pursue a degree in kinesiology for two years where she then hopes to transfer to West Alabama University to continue her studies in hopes of becoming a physical therapist once she receives her bachelor's degree.

Off the field, Taylor's list of accomplishments is just as impressive. Taylor is a member of the ACT 28-plus club, national honor society, and Mu Alpha Theta to add to her 4.8 weighted GPA. Outside of school, Taylor also works part-time with the Russellville Parks and Recreation Department and also volunteers at Encore Rehabilitation.

See 'WORK' Page 12

'WORK,' from page 11

alone as she has had numerous people come into her life to help her get to where she is today. Some of those key people for her are her parents. "The person I would say has helped me out the most is definitely my parents. They have definitely pushed me to be my best whether it's in sports or in school," Taylor said.

"Ever since I was younger I have always told them I wanted to go to college to play softball. I just knew that's what I wanted to do and they were a huge part of my journey. I also want to thank God because he is ultimately the one who gave me the ability to do what I have been able to do and receive the honors I have been able to get. Without him it would not have been possible."

Of course being a part of multiple clubs, being a star athlete, working part-time, and volunteering requires one to have a ton of hard work.

And for Taylor, those are the first words she speaks when asked about what got her to this point from herself.

"I am very hard working. Whenever I set my mind to something I'm going to be able to get it no matter what happens," Taylor said. "I think another thing that has helped me in athletics and in school is the fact that I'm very determined. I don't give up really easily either so once I set my sights on something I want, I will find a way to work hard and get it."

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'WILLIAMS,' from page 11

for sure."

According to the AHSAA website, the Bryant-Jordan scholarships are given to students who display excellence on the field and inside the classroom. Williams is one of 52 students across the state who were awarded the scholarship and will receive \$3,500 for his achievements.

14 of those 52 students will receive additional grants as class winners and the overall Larry Striplin Jr. Scholar-Athlete of the Year and Ken & Betty Joy Blankenship Achievement Award state winner will receive even more scholarship funds.

Williams had no shortage of reasons to be selected for the scholarship, especially on the academic side of things.

Not only does Williams boast a 4.0 GPA to go along with being the valedictorian of his class, but he also performed extremely well on his standardized tests as well. Williams scored a 35 out of 36 possible points on his ACT. For comparison, the national average hovers around a score of 21 out of 36. Needless to say what Williams has done on the academic side of things is nothing short of astounding.

Combine Williams' academic success with the fact that he has played multiple sports throughout his high school career while participating in clubs and other groups makes his academics look all more impressive.

From the time he was in 7th grade through his senior year Williams was a part of the Bobcat football and basketball programs and also joined the golf team his freshman year. In addition to this, Williams was also the president of the National Honor Society, Student Council, SADD, and the Junior Civitan clubs.

Sports and academics can be very similar in the sense that as one gets older, the more competitive they can get. So, naturally, for people who are competitive when it comes to sports this often translates to the same mentality in the classroom and Williams is no different.

"I've always been competitive. It runs in the family. Whether it's sports, or grades, or anything else, I want to win and I want to be the best and being that competitive has been a big motivator to get me here," Williams said.

Williams chalked his success from a personal perspective up to being someone to count on and making sure not to overlook things.

"I always try to be dependable. If I think I can help a situation whether it be my own or someone else's, I always try to help and I think that has always been my mindset when it comes to school too," Williams said. "Whether it's getting a rebound, making that tackle, or preparing for a test, I always try to do my part and pay attention to the little details to make sure things are right and that's really played a big part as to who I am today."

Having been accepted to the University of Alabama, Williams is planning on majoring in engineering with a focus on electrical engineering while in Tuscaloosa.

Looking back on how he got to this point, Williams says he has multiple people to thank for helping him out along the way.

"I don't think I can really narrow it down to only one person. There have been a lot of people that have helped me. All the teachers have helped and the coaches too like Coach Thomas, Coach Clay, and Coach Barnwell have all been a big help," Williams said. "My parents have been right there with me the whole way and they have stayed on me making sure I kept my grades up and they are a big reason why I have gotten to this point."

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AHSAA releases statement regarding cancelled seasons

Staff Reports

The executive director of the Alabama High School Athletic Association, Steve Savarese addressed the abrupt cancellation of spring athletics in a statement released last week.

"Like thousands of others, I am deeply saddened and disappointed that our schools have closed, and spring sports will not have an opportunity to finish their seasons," Savarese said. "Even more so, I am disheartened for all student-athletes, contest officials, their coaches, families, student bodies, fans, communities and especially our seniors. We are facing an unprecedented health crisis, but I am prayerful that the steps we are taking now within our schools and across our nation will enable all those affected to return to a sense of normalcy sooner than later."

Savarese went on to thank medical professionals for their efforts in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic along with some words of encouragement.

"I'm grateful to all those within our medical communities who are serving those in need. In particular, now more than ever, I am thankful for the leadership of the AHSAA medical advisory board and Central Board of Control," Savarese said. "My prayer is that we will all take seriously the Alabama Department of Public Health guidelines so our families can once again return to work, visit loved ones in the hospital and nursing homes, celebrate birthdays, weddings, and births of children, visit and hold our grandchildren, shop, travel and just enjoy the simple things of everyday life we often take for granted."

Schools across Alabama were temporarily suspended beginning on March 13th and were later closed for the rest of the school year by an order from Governor Kay Ivey on March 26th. With the cancellation of school came the cancellation of all spring sports for the 2019-2020 school year as well.

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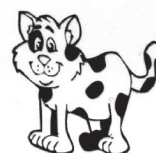
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