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## 1918 Spanish flu bears eerie resemblance to COVID-19 Pandemic

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The COVID-19 pandemic has been described as a 'once in a lifetime' event for the United States. And that's probably true, unless you're over 100 years old and were alive in 1918.

America's most deadly pandemic, the H1N1 strain of influenza, known more commonly as the Spanish flu, claimed the lives of more than 675,000 Americans. The country's death total for October 1918 alone exceeded 200,000.

According to www.history.com, the

worldwide total of deaths from the Spanish flu exceeded 50 million, more than three times the total of people killed in World War I.

And Alabama and Franklin County were hardly immune from the deadly virus. A look back at 1918 news reports shows an eerie similarity to 2020 coverage of COVID-19.

According to www.alabamapublichealth.gov, Spain experienced the first major outbreak of the virus. As a result, it became informally known as the Spanish flu.

Similar to COVID-19, the Spanish flu seriously impacted adults in the 20-40 age range. Although their

See 'RESEMBLANCE,' page 8

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# HARBIN

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 1  
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## Thomas looking forward to retirement after 67 years at NW Alabama Livestock Auction

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

There may not be a cow, goat or sheep in Franklin County that hasn't seen Charles Thomas.

And after 67 years of service at the Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction, Thomas is also a fixture to cattlemen and farmers across Franklin County.

Thomas began working at the Russellville sale barn when it was located on Highway 43 North. As a 13-year-old, Thomas watched other employees and learned their various duties. He was a quick learner, and it

See 'THOMAS,' page 3



PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI  
Charles Thomas, right, with NW Alabama Livestock Auction Manager Rickie Behel on Thomas' last day of work after a 67-year career. front page bottom september 2.

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**- Jamie Harris  
City Council, District Five**

**Jamie  
Harris**

City Council, District Five

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**Jack Abernathy**, 69, of Russellville, passed away on Sunday, August 23rd. Interment at Fairview Cemetery.

**Florence Mae Adams**, 75, of Phil Campbell, passed away on Tuesday, August 25th. Akins Funeral Home assisted the family.

**Elise E. Amos**, 93, of Russellville, passed away on Monday, August 31st. Pinkard Funeral Home is assisting the family.

**Shirley Ann Hallman**, 72, of Phil Campbell, passed away on Friday, August 28th. Interment at Blue Springs Cemetery.

**Bruce G. McBrayer**, 85, of Tuscumbia, passed away on Sunday, August 30th. Interment at Phil Campbell Cemetery.

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Congratulations to last week's Mystery Photo Contest, Janice Cassell.

# 'THOMAS,' from page 1



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Correctly guess the location for a chance to win \$20 gift card to El Patron Mexican Restaurant! Enjoy \$1.50 off all Margaritas all day Thursday! 



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Email your guess to the location of this week's Mystery Photo to [ffpmysteryphoto@yahoo.com](mailto:ffpmysteryphoto@yahoo.com). We will draw one winner from all correct entries each Monday Morning at 9 a.m. Include your name and contact number with your guess



FRANKLINFREEPRESS.NET

didn't take long until the teen was teaching new employees how to do their jobs.

Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> marked Thomas' last day of work at the sale barn. At age 80, he's survived a stroke, heart problems and diabetes, but Thomas admits his mobility is now limited. And he can't stay on his feet for extended periods, something his job of penning livestock requires.

"You name it, I got a little bit of it," Thomas said of his health ailments. "I just can't stand for long periods of time anymore."

A former full-time employee who's worked at both the Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction and the Moulton Stockyard, Thomas reduced his workload to Mondays only a few years ago.

For as long as anyone can remember, when auctioneer Mark Lane sells 'em, Charles Thomas pens 'em. And it won't be easy to move on without him.

"It will take some getting used to, that's for sure," said Barn Manager Rickie Behel. "We've all heard him on that speaker for many years and it will definitely be strange working without him."

"You won't find a finer person than Charles. He still pens 150-175 head in an hour," Behel added.

A lifelong Russellville resident, Thomas doesn't recall a time when livestock wasn't part of his life. His final day of work was bittersweet, but Thomas said he'll definitely enjoy retirement.

"I'm going to do a lot of nothing. I'm looking forward to it. I'm not able to do a whole lot, but I'm going to enjoy it," Thomas said.

In 67 years of work, Thomas said the only days he missed were after his stroke. His secret for employment longevity?

"Just keep coming to work. That's how I made it 67 years," Thomas said.

Caleb Beason, who serves as President of the Franklin County Cattlemen's Association, said Thomas has been one of the faces of the sale barn throughout Beason's life.

"He's done a little bit of everything," Beason said. "The last 15 years or so he handles pen assignments. When an animal comes through the ring, he looks at the chart, sees who the buyer is, and hollers out what pen the animal goes in so it can be placed correctly."

"He's been a staple there so long. It's going to be strange not seeing him every week," Beason added.

Beason, himself a former sale barn employee, congratulated Thomas on behalf of the Franklin County Cattlemen's Association.

"We applaud Charles for his lifelong career in the livestock industry. As I worked at the Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction for five years, I was fortunate to see first-hand the many hours he devoted in helping the auction process run smoothly," Beason said.

"Seeing Charles working in the many positions he filled at the stockyard, he personally defines longevity and resiliency in the livestock industry," he added.

Thomas' final day included a reception in his honor, complete with a cake, congratulatory sign and a few gifts, including a gold pocket watch. And, as always, Thomas did his job efficiently and smoothly.

For Thomas, the friends and memories he's made at the stockyard are enough to fill a lifetime, and for that he feels blessed.

"I must have made a gillion friends through the years. Some I liked. Some I didn't," Thomas joked. "I've seen a lot of folks come and go and now it's my time to go."

Send your letters to the editor, guest columns, cartoon panels and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).



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# East Franklin closed for two weeks after ADPH recommendation

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

East Franklin Junior High School has become the first Franklin County school to close due to COVID-19 related concerns, Franklin County Schools Superintendent Greg Hamilton confirmed Tuesday.

A Facebook post from the school announced the closing but did not provide much additional information. The post read:

*Based on the recommendation from the Alabama Department of Public Health, East Franklin Jr High School will be closed starting tomorrow, August 25th through Tuesday, September 8th. School will resume on September 8th. Additional announcements will be made as needed.*

Hamilton said he could not discuss specific reasons for the two-week closing due to HIPAA privacy laws. He did say that ADPH's COVID-19 tool kit provides that school officials should notify the department if a student/teacher/employee tests positive for the virus, or if he or she demonstrates one of three 'major' symptoms or two of six 'minor' symptoms.

Hamilton declined to confirm whether there were positive tests at the school or whether individuals or an individual was symptomatic.

"Due to privacy rights for our students and teachers and support staff, I'm not going to get into numbers or specifics," Hamilton said. "The ADPH made a recommendation and we are following it."

During the two-week closing, Hamilton said the school will undergo a deep cleaning. Hamilton said ADPH policy does not require the school to close and that it was his decision to do so.

The *Franklin Free Press* was notified by a source employed by the school system that multiple East Franklin students tested positive for COVID-19, but school officials would neither confirm nor deny that information.

Notification to those who may have come in close contact with any infected or symptomatic person will be made by the ADPH, Hamilton said. Health Department officials may request seating charts or other information from schools in the event that information is necessary to investigate possible close contacts.

## FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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## The world needs more Terry Boltons

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup> didn't bring Terry Bolton the results he hoped for in the City of Russellville municipal election.

Bolton, a candidate for Russellville City Council District One, finished third in a three-man race that saw his opponents advance to an October 6<sup>th</sup> runoff. It wasn't Bolton's first time to appear on a Franklin County ballot, but if you listen to his wife Carol, it will be his last.

While Bolton's political aspirations may be done, we hope his support and activism for his community isn't, because the world needs more Terry Boltons.

Bolton has been active in city and county government since he retired. Whether it's the Franklin County Commission or the Russellville City Council, when they call a meeting Bolton is there.

So why does a retired iron worker attend every meeting of his local governmental bodies? Quite simply, because he cares.

Bolton doesn't attend just to be seen. In spite of his trademark yellow Crocs, Bolton is not someone who seeks the limelight. He's someone who genuinely loves his city and county and he's the rare citizen who actually wants to stay informed on what's happening with local government.

Bolton's interest in government hasn't gone unnoticed by local elected officials. Several years ago, he was asked to serve on the Franklin County Board of Equalization. This board hears citizen appeals related to increased valuation of real property.

Along with Rex Mayfield and Mike Madden, Bolton patiently listens to his fellow citizens, and they make a decision whether to adjust the property taxes.

As with everything else he does, Bolton takes this responsibility seriously, and he treats people respectfully. I've seen it first-hand.

Bolton is an active member of First Baptist Church Russellville. He's a Mason, a member of the Franklin County Shrine Club and the Franklin County Cattleman's Association.

A die-hard Alabama fan, Bolton's also a member of the Red Elephant Club.

Regardless of which organization he's a part of, Bolton is active.

When a volunteer is needed, he's at the front of the line. Whether it's helping a neighbor or family in need, transporting a child to a Shriners Hospital or volunteering at a steak sandwich sale, Bolton is there.

While he may never serve in elected office, make no mistake, Bolton will continue to serve his community.

For updates on news and sports, visit us online at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)!

# Two Russellville City Council races headed for October 6 runoff

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council will have at least one new member, and possibly two more, come November when the newly-elected council takes office. The August 25 municipal election saw political newcomer Dexter Hamilton win the seat for District Four, as Hamilton defeated Charles Dale 118 votes to 41.

Incumbent District Four councilman Arthur Elliott did not seek re-election. Two other council seats will require an additional six weeks to decide as there will be runoff elections in both District One and District Two, where voters saw the political oddity of a tie in a two-man race.

In District Two, incumbent William Nale and challenger Darren Woodruff each received 154 votes. Provisional ballots, if there were any cast in District Two, were to be counted on Wednesday, but in the event no new ballots are counted, the two men will face each other in an October 6 runoff.

District One's results were the more traditional path to a runoff. Incumbent David Palmer received 222 votes to challenger Aaron Harbin's 223 and Terry Bolton's 82.

Palmer and Harbin will appear on a runoff ballot again on Tuesday, October 6.

District Three councilman Gary Cummings won a fourth term Tuesday by garnering 140 votes to challenger Roy Cornelison's 52.

In District Five, councilman Jamie Harris won a third term by defeating Hillary Malone Hall 228-126.

Russellville Mayor David Grissom was unopposed in his bid for a third term, so Grissom did not appear on Tuesday's municipal ballots. Unlike general elections, municipal elections do not allow for write-in votes, so an unopposed candidate is automatically elected upon the issuing of a certificate of election by the city council.

**DISTRICT ONE:** For his first bid at elected office, Tuesday was a pretty good day for Aaron Harbin. Harbin's 223 votes were the top total in a three-man race that set up an October 6 runoff.

Harbin, as did Palmer and Bolton, was quick to congratulate his competition on how their campaigns were run.

"I appreciate everyone in District One coming out today and voting, and of course I appreciate Terry (Bolton) for running a good, clean race and for everything he's done for District One. He's a great citizen," Harbin said.

Harbin said one recurring concern for District One voters is the need for their city to be cleaned up and for existing compliance ordinances to be enforced.

"That's one of the main things I heard. And the enforcement aspect of that is important. By keeping our city clean there's an economic benefit to that and it makes our city more attractive for recruiting or expanding business here," Harbin said.

Harbin, a mechanical engineer at Franklin Manufacturing, believes another key to economic growth is a trained young work force with skills that can be immediately applied to local jobs.

His employer is a partner with Northwest-Shoals Community College's Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) program. The program allows students to earn an Associate of Applied Science degree while building two years of paid work experience.

"To grow our city, it comes down to having our youth stay here to raise their families," Harbin said. "By investing in our youth, we grow the population of a skilled work force and that brings in more jobs and creates a more attractive environment for industrial growth.

"We (Franklin Manufacturing) are also involved with Russellville High School working to include welding into the career tech program and help them with their engineering lab," he added.

After learning he would be in a runoff for the first time, Palmer also thanked his supporters and congratulated his opponents.

"I'm very appreciative to the people of District One for the support I received today," Palmer said. "I've really enjoyed serving District One the past eight years and I would love to continue serving them. I look forward during the next six weeks to continue listening to the citizens of District One and what their priorities are for our city.

"I'm proud of the race Terry, Aaron and I ran. It was very clean and respectable. We have a lot of respect for each other and the constituents in our district and I know the runoff will be run in the same manner. This is not

See 'RUNOFF,' Page 9

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THANK YOU!

I want to thank each and every District Two citizen who came out and voted on a rainy day. Your voice for change and better representation for District Two was heard, but our job is not complete! On Tuesday, October 6th, I ask you to return to the polling place and vote Darren Woodruff, City Council District Two. Together, we can give District Two the voice it deserves in city government. Remember, vote Darren Woodruff, because "District Two counts too!"

--Darren Woodruff

Darren  
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# What's Happening

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

 The McLemore and Kinder Family Reunion will be held Saturday, September 5th at the Spruce Pine Community Center, beginning at 10 a.m. Please bring a covered dish. If you need additional information, call (256)-324-5288.

 Red Bay Founders Day Festival will host its annual Car, Truck, Tractor and Motorcycle Show on Saturday, Sept. 19 in downtown Red Bay. Registration is from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Awards start at 1 p.m. Door prizes, trophies and cash prizes! Awards for best paint, best engine and more! \$20 entry fee. Second entry fee \$15 with same address. \$10 to show without entering. All proceeds go to the Red Bay Senior Center. For more information, call 256-324-0419. Entrance for the Car Show will be a West 2nd St. and 4th Ave. (Hwy. 24) by Heritage Park.

 There will be a classic car cruise fundraiser in order to raise funds for treatment for Celia Grace Hamlet on Saturday, September 19th from 7 a.m. until 12 p.m. Hamlet was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder known as Metachromatic Leukodystrophy Disease and doctors have recommended a special treatment in Italy that will take up to four months to treat. Celia's father, Gary Hamlet, is a police officer in Winfield and her mother, Kassie Hamlet, works at Citizens Bank in Winfield. The cruise will be police-escorted through 77 miles of beautiful Northwest Alabama including drives through the Appalachian Mountains and cities such as Haleyville, Bear Creek, Hackleburg, Hamilton, Guin and Winfield. Registration begins onsite at 7 a.m. with the cruise leaving at 9 a.m. and returning at 11 a.m. The cruise will begin at Grey's Landing at 7005, Highway 129, Winfield, 35594. Breakfast and lunch will be available onsite. Open to all cars manufactured before 1989 and the price is \$25 per car which will include a t-shirt and entries for door prizes as well. All proceeds from the cruise will go to cover medical, travel and living expenses for Celia and her parents. For more information call Hilda Smith at (205)-275-4432.



We love to hear from you! Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoons, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to check us out online at [franklinfreepress.net](http://franklinfreepress.net)!

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# At its meeting held August 10, 2020, the Russellville Gas Board adopted the new Natural Gas Rate Schedule, effective August 26, 2020, as follows:

## SEPTEMBER 2020 NATURAL GAS RATE SCHEDULE (EFFECTIVE AUGUST 26, 2020)

### **Tier 1 - General Service - Residential Rate:**

Available to new/current residential customers using an annual average of less than 1,000 CCF per month.

New customers must meet the RGB Marketing Program requirements for Tier 1 – General Service (i.e. customer appliances must include a Natural Gas Water Heater or Primary Natural Gas Heating System). Note: prior customers who have discontinued their gas service for more than 12 months are considered new customers.

Availability charge per month	\$ 9.75
Volumetric charge per CCF *	\$ 1.339

### **Tier 1 – General Service - Small Commercial Rate:**

Available to new/current commercial customers using an average of less than 1,000 CCF per month. New customers must meet the RGB Marketing Program requirements for Tier 1 – General Service (i.e. customer appliances must include a Natural Gas Water Heater or Primary Natural Gas Heating System). Note: prior customers who have discontinued their gas service for more than 12 months are considered new customers.

Availability charge per month	\$ 9.75
Volumetric charge per CCF *	\$ 1.316

### **Tier 2 - General Service – Residential & Small Commercial Rate:**

Available to new residential & commercial customers using an average of less than 1,000 CCF per month, and meeting the RGB Marketing Program requirements for Tier 2 – General Service (i.e. customer appliances do not include a Natural Gas Water Heater or Primary Natural Gas Heating System)

Availability charge per month	\$ 25.00
Volumetric charge per CCF *	\$ 1.459

### **Large Commercial Rate:**

Available to commercial customers using an annual average of 1,000 CCF per month or more.

Availability charges per month	\$ 28.00
Volumetric charge per CCF *	\$ 1.007
Volumetric charge per MCF *	\$ 10.07

### **Special Poultry Rate:**

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### **Small Industrial Rate:**

Minimum Charge	\$ 55.00
Volumetric charge per CCF *	\$ 0.819
Volumetric charge per MCF *	\$ 8.190

### **Large Industrial Sales Rate:**

By contract with the Russellville Gas Board.

\*Note: Rates for CCF and MCF volumes are calculated based on an average BTU content of 1,050 BTUs per cubic foot.

\*\*Rates are based on a September 2020 gas cost of \$3.58 per MMBTU. All rates are subject to a purchased gas cost adjustment (PGA), on file at the Russellville Gas Board.

# 'RESEMBLANCE,' from page 1

fatality rates this year are low, a surprisingly large number of young adults have tested positive.

As with COVID-19, the Spanish flu hit hard in Alabama and Franklin County, although the actual death total will never be known because some of the deceased never had death certificates issued for them.

The first reported Spanish flu cases in Alabama came out of Huntsville. The ADPH's 1918 Alabama Influenza Timeline shows that Madison County Health Officer Dr. C. A. Grote advised the Alabama Board of Health that 11 cases were confirmed in his county on September 28, 2018.

Cases soon followed in Conecuh County, and soon thereafter, all over the state. By October 5, 2018, Huntsville had more than 1,100 reported cases, with seven deaths in one 24-hour period.

The State Board of Health warned residents against using common towels and drinking cups, and to be cautious using telephones, handkerchiefs and other items that might transmit "secretions of the nose and throat" from one person to another.

Alabama Gov. Charles Henderson closed all public places, including schools, churches, theaters and picture shows on October 7, 2018.

By October 13, Huntsville faced a shortage of doctors and pharmacists, as all pharmacists, physicians and prescription clerks, except one, had contracted the virus.

Two days later, businesses were ordered to curtail hours of operation. This included post offices and power companies. On October 22, 2018, health department officials mandated that all Montgomery businesses close by 6 p.m.

This timeline should sound familiar. Many of the same pandemic responses from 1918 are being utilized 102 years later.

In Franklin County, October 1918 saw the Spanish influenza hit residents fast and hard. A *Franklin County Times* article from October 24, 1918, reported 18 deaths, with many more likely.

*It is impossible for the Times to get a full list of the dead, but the following is a list of those who have died since October 17<sup>th</sup> with pneumonia, following the disease...*

Mass cancellations of events were reported. The Red Cross Chapters in the entire Gulf Division canceled their annual October meetings "in order to give full cooperation in the efforts of the public authorities to check the spread of influenza." (FCT, October 24, 1918).

A news report from Spruce Pine indicated the virus hit the community, but there was a silver lining.

*Our little town is being heavily invaded by the Spanish flu but by the skillful hustle of our esteemed physician, Dr. A.J. Underwood, no direct cases have proven fatal.* (FCT, October 24, 1918).

The residents of Franklin County faced at least one health hazard in 1918 that's no longer relevant in 2020. A FCT editorial told the story:

*The way people spit on the sidewalks of the business section of Russellville is a fright. Prominent men living within the city limits will go in stores and spit on the merchants floor or take their seats in the door and flood the sidewalk.*

*Just as long as the people continue to do this Russellville and the whole county will continue to have Influenza and other diseases. Spitting spreads disease and, besides, it is one of the most filthy habits a man can have. If you must spit on the floor then go home and spit on your own floor.* (FCT, October 24, 1918).

And just as 2020 candidates were largely unable to campaign door-to-door due to COVID-19 concerns, the Spanish flu changed traditional campaigning in 1918, as this letter from Franklin County Sheriff candidate L.T. Todd explained:

*It has been my desire to meet every voter in Franklin County and present to him personally my candidacy for Sheriff, but on account of the epidemic of influenza I fear that I may not be able to do so, and I take this method of appealing to you for your support and influence in the coming election to be held Tuesday, November 5, 1918.* (FCT, October 31, 1918).

Four weeks ago, in the *Franklin Free Press*, Russellville City Councilman Jamie Harris told voters the following:

*With a national health pandemic, I have made the decision not to use traditional door-to-door campaigning. This decision was made out of respect to your health and the health of your family, which must be our primary concern these days.* (FFP, July 29, 2020).

Although our world in 2020 is vastly different than 1918 in many ways, when it comes to pandemics, there's also truth in the old adage: *The more things change, the more they stay the same.*

(The *Franklin Free Press* expresses its thanks to Franklin County Archives Director Chris Ozbirn for her assistance with this article).



## To Prevent Influenza!

- Do not take any person's breath.
- Keep the mouth and teeth clean.
- Avoid those that cough and sneeze.
- Don't visit poorly ventilated places.
- Keep warm, get fresh air and sunshine.
- Don't use common drinking cups, towels, etc.
- Cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze.
- Avoid Worry, Fear and Fatigue.
- Stay at home if you have a cold.
- Walk to your work or office.
- In sick rooms wear a gauze mask like in illustration.

COURTESY PHOTO

Health guidelines for the 1918 Spanish flu are similar to those issued today as part of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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# 'RUNOFF,' from page 5

about the candidates. It's about the City of Russellville and our future and the people of District One will decide who will lead them the next four years," he added.

Palmer's 38 years of combined experience as a city councilman and as Franklin County Engineer are something that has helped Russellville grow, he explained.

"In terms of accomplishments, one that will always stand out is our Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (ATRIP). I led the city and county and worked with both to form a partnership along with the other cities in Franklin County," Palmer said. "We were able to leverage almost \$16 million for the entire county and a large portion of that was in the City of Russellville."

After making it a goal of his when first elected, Palmer saw the realization of a road and bridge management system for the City of Russellville that was recently presented to the city council.

"This will be a phenomenal tool for the city. This is something I talked about eight years ago wanting to accomplish and I have led the charge in accomplishing this and it's something to be proud of," Palmer said. "In the last eight years, our city has seen the creation of 1,200 new jobs, school funding of almost \$9 million and as far as infrastructure, the total programs in the City of Russellville the last eight years is around \$9 million."

Palmer also believes the professional contacts he's made in three decades are an asset to the city.

"I am blessed to have wonderful friendships at every level of government. My brother is a United States representative. I have a good relationship with these people and that gives me a unique skill set I believe has been very beneficial to the City of Russellville and District One," Palmer said.

**DISTRICT TWO:** Minutes after results were posted in District Two, election officials were in contact with the city attorney to determine what would happen next, after what may be the first tie in Russellville municipal elections.

Woodruff, who was making his first run at elected office, said he appreciated those who voted Tuesday but he will work on increasing voter turnout on October 6.

"I'm excited and very energetic about the next six weeks and can't wait to continue campaigning and meeting the people of District Two while continuing to run a positive campaign, regardless of what others may choose to do," Woodruff said.

Nale, a retired law enforcement officer, is seeking his fourth term on the Russellville City Council. He outgained Woodruff 145-134 in Tuesday's voting, but Woodruff's 20-9 edge in absentee votes left each candidate at 154.

**DISTRICT THREE:** Gary Cummings easily won a fourth term representing District Three with a 140-52 victory over challenger Roy Cornelison. Cummings said his excitement in winning a fourth term was just as strong as

when he was first elected in 2008.

"Actually, I may be even more excited because the odds change every time you run and to win by the amount I did is something I'm really thankful for and it pumps me up to continue working for our great city," Cummings said.

Cummings' political approach is simple, and it continues to be effective.

"I try to take care of the people of my district. If there's anything out there they need, I try to get it for them," Cummings said. "I believe I'm an accommodating person and if there's a problem, I try to fix it. I'm blessed to have a really good district with many friends," he added.

**DISTRICT FOUR:** Political newcomer Dexter Hamilton was successful in his bid to succeed councilman Arthur Elliott in District Four.

Hamilton defeated Charles Dale by a 118-41 margin in a light turnout.

**DISTRICT FIVE:** Councilman Jamie Harris was understandably ecstatic Tuesday night as the District Five results came in. Harris won a third term by defeating Hillary Malone Hall 228-126.

"I want to thank the citizens of District Five for supporting me and trusting me to represent them another four years," Harris said.

"This is truly a blessing. I am thankful for the people of this district and for the team who worked so tirelessly to help me get elected. I could not have done it without each of them."



**COURTESY PHOTO**

Russellville Councilman Jamie Harris and his wife Mindy enjoy a relaxing moment after the August 25th municipal election. Harris won a third term representing District Five.

**Send your guest columns, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com). For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)!**

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Third row from left to right: Rep. Louise Alexander (HD 56), Rep. Barbara Drummond (HD 103)  
Not pictured: Sen. Priscilla Dunn (SD 19), Sen. Malika Sanders-Fortier (SD 23), Rep. Merika Coleman (HD 57), Rep. Rolanda Hollis (HD 58), Rep. Tashina Morris (HD 77), Rep. Connie Rowe (HD 13)



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## Solid defense, dynamic offense propel Bobcats to first win of season

Brady Petree  
 Franklin Free Press

PHIL CAMPBELL - Each program has a certain set of principles or rules that they go by. How those programs go about executing on those rules and principles will often determine the outcome of a game or even a season.

As for Phil Campbell head coach Kevin Barnwell and the Bobcats, they have two things they try to live by each and every day.

"Play hard and have fun. Those are the two things on offense and defense that we tell our guys to try and live by. If you can't do those two things, then you're probably in the wrong sport to begin with," Barnwell said. "Because that's what this sport is all about because for most guys you only get this one opportunity to play this game. It's not like other sports where you can join a rec league but you really can't play football after this unless you're fortunate enough to play at the next level. And that's why we try and make sure our guys understand that they just need to play hard and have fun because that's why you're here."

Needless to say the Bobcats played hard and had a lot of fun last Thursday night.

The Bobcats rode an all-around impressive performance from senior quarterback Luke Barnwell who went 4-5 passing for 145 yards and a touchdown through the air combined with 14 carries for 128 yards and a rushing touchdown. Combine Barnwell's performance and a solid outing from the defense, and it's no wonder how the Bobcats thumped Lamar County last Thursday night by a final of 33-6.

Barnwell says that the offense had been trending upwards the entire week so to see the performances that his offensive squad put up didn't come as a surprise.

See 'BOBCATS,' page 13

# A historic start

It's been seven years since Tharptown began a season 2-0. Thanks to a gritty defense, a solid run game and a revamped mentality within the program, the Wildcats are off to a nice start as they enter region play this Friday night.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Lacey (center, in blue), and the Wildcats are allowing only ten points per game across two games this season and are sitting at 2-0 for the first time since 2013.

Brady Petree  
 Franklin Free Press

THARPTOWN - The last time the Tharptown football program was 2-0 to start the season, you'd have to go back seven years to 2013 when the Bill Smith-led Wildcats would finish the season at 5-5 and just one win out of a playoff spot.

Fast-forward to last Thursday night and Kevin Lacey has the Wildcats off to their best start since that aforementioned 2013 season as the Wildcats knocked off Phillips 12-6 to earn their second win to start the season.

"I was super proud of our guys. There was a lot of chances in that game that it could have gotten away from us and just the resilience that they showed in order to not let it get away from them is what I was most proud of," Lacey said. "They understood the significance of the win. Phillips is a good team with some great athletes and the resiliency that our guys showed in order to pull through and put that game away was huge for us."

Coming off of a week in which Colton Simmons

threatened an AHSAA rushing touchdown record by rushing for six total touchdowns against Shoals Christian, one might think that Simmons would bear most, if not all of the rushing load the following week.

Think again.

Lacey knew the certain level of expectations that would come from other teams surrounding his senior feature back and opted to go with a different approach in the run game for the Wildcats.

"When you have a game like Colton had, opposing teams are going to zero in him after that. I told him that he's still going to get his touches but we wanted to mix things up offensively," Lacey said. "We decided to run some misdirection plays and give off the impression we were going to Colton and in reality we were getting other guys involved and it ended up working out well for us."

Simmons would absolutely get his touches in as he would eclipse 100 yards for the second week in a row and would finish with 111 rushing yards on the night. However, it was fellow back Nathan

See 'START,' page 12

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# 'START,' from page 11

Lucas who shouldered the scoring load for the Wildcats on Thursday night. Lucas would score the only two touchdowns on the night for Tharptown and would also finish the night with 44 rushing yards.

While the run game has been eye-opening for Wildcat fans and opposing teams alike, it's the defense that has Lacey feeling optimistic about the Wildcats chances as they enter region play this week.

"The thing I'm most proud of in these two games has been our defense. These guys are gritty, hard-nosed and great tacklers," Lacey said. "We could have given up those big plays and there were times that I would see somebody in space and think to myself 'oh no', and then one of our guys would come out of nowhere and make a play and catch them in the backfield or limit them to a one-yard gain. I couldn't be more proud of this group and how they've played and how much they continue to get better."

Josh Riley led the Wildcats defense against Phillips, coming away with two interceptions against the Bears on the night.

One of the biggest strides for this year's defense for the Wildcats has been the ability to bounce back after turnovers. Granted weather conditions were not the best on Thursday night (following an onslaught of rain just an hour before game time), both the Wildcats and Bears would struggle with ball security throughout the night.

Interceptions, botched snaps, muffed punts and fumbles all made appearances last Thursday night so needless to say it was going to come down to whichever team could manage said turnovers the best and also who was able to have a short memory and not dwell on those mistakes.

See 'START,' page 14



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Lucas (pictured), shared a majority of the rushing load with fellow back Colton Simmons in the Wildcats 12-6 victory over Phillips last Thursday night. Lucas would finish the night with Tharptown's only two scores for the game.

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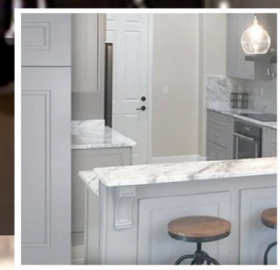
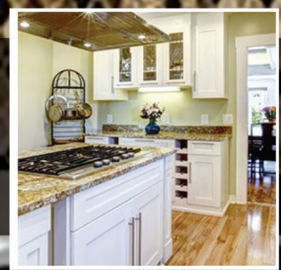
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## 'BOBCATS,' from page 11

"One of the big things I was really pleased with was our ability to establish the line of scrimmage and get the run game going. Our offensive line stepped up and were able to seal some key blocks for us," Barnwell said. "And anytime your quarterback rushes for over 100 yards and passes for over 100 yards, that usually means good things are happening offensively and we were clicking on all fronts of the offense the other night."

What makes the offensive output even more impressive for Barnwell and the Bobcats is the fact that one of their most vital members returning from last year's squad wasn't a part of the offensive attack.

For most high school squads, losing a high-caliber player to a season-ending injury would oftentimes be enough to dig a hole too deep to climb out of. But not for the Bobcats.

When the news came out that star running back Trey Leindecker would miss the rest of the season with a knee injury, most people outside of the program might have assumed that it would take a few weeks for the Bobcats to adjust to an offense without Leindecker.

Well, about one week was all it took. While the loss of Leindecker certainly is something that Phil Campbell would love to have never happened, Kevin Barnwell says that watching his team adjust and power forward is something he's come to expect.

"I was very proud of how our guys overcame something like that but at the same time I'm not surprised. Our guys here have been very resilient and have been through a lot of things," Barnwell said. "Our kids just keep fighting and sports are a microcosm of life, they teach you that sometimes the only thing you can do is just keep fighting and that's what our kids do."

Flashback to 2017 (one year before Barnwell arrived at Phil Campbell to take over the program), and the Bobcats were staring at a 54-12 loss to Lamar County.

This year the Bobcats were able to flip the script and hand a heavy-handed loss to Lamar County instead.

One of the primary reasons for this success? Barnwell credits his defensive coaching staff for having the Bobcats on the right track after allowing only six points on Thursday night.

"We've got a great defensive coaching staff. Those coaches come in and work very hard everyday and they'll even come in on Sundays and watch film

See 'BOBCATS,' page 14

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# 'START,' from page 12

"In the past when those things happened, we got our heads down and expected things not to go our way. But with this group, when bad things happen they just look at it as a challenge and they want to get back out there on defense and try and get the ball back," Lacey said. "That kind of mindset just speaks to the character of this group and how resilient they are in those tough situations."

The only blemish on the part of the Wildcat defense came at the end of the first half as a Wildcat fumble would be returned for a touchdown as time expired.

As Tharptown celebrates their best start in years, the Wildcats will have to quickly turn their focus towards their region as they take on Colbert County this Friday night.

Going into this week at practice, Lacey has a good idea of a few things the Wildcats will need to focus on if they want to continue this early

win streak into region play. "We've got to take care of the ball. Conditions haven't been great the past two weeks and it's looking like they might not be great this week. Dominic Baker is a senior leader for us but he's still a young quarterback since it's his first year playing the position. So we've got to get better at taking care of the football," Lacey said. "We're a hard-nosed offense with some hard-nosed runners. Taking care of the ball and shortening the game are some of the things we're going to look at working on in the coming weeks."

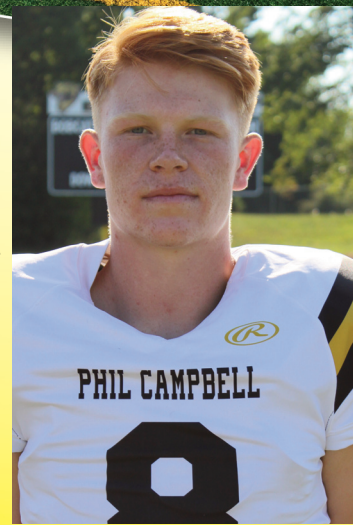
Baker would finish the night with 40 yards passing on the night while Riley would lead the receiving core for the Wildcats with 25 yards. Hunter White finished the night with 15 receiving yards of his own.

Blake Daily would get in on the rushing attack with five yards for Tharptown.



## Luke Barnwell Senior quarterback, Phil Campbell

Talk about doing it all. Barnwell led the Bobcats both on the ground and through the air during their win over Lamar County last Thursday night 33-6. Although he only attempted five passes (four completions) Barnwell was still able to rack up 145 yards and a touchdown in the passing game. The Bobcat senior also thrived on the ground, accumulating 128 yards on 14 carries for an average of 9.1 yards per carry to go along with a rushing touchdown.



# 'BOBCATS,' from page 13

and try to work to put our guys in the best position to win," Barnwell said. "I wasn't surprised with the level the defense played at. I love the way that our guys ran to the ball and gave maximum effort every single play. I tell our guys that if I have to preach on effort, we're in trouble and I didn't have to do that Thursday night so it was an all-around great night for our guys."

Bryant Hyde had 12 carries for 81 yards while Austen Baker (10 carries for 38 yards) and Ridge Raper (3 carries for 28 yards) all had solid nights in the run game for the Bobcats. Raper would also lead Phil Campbell in receiving with 3 receptions for 103 yards and Blain Goodson had one catch for 42 yards and a touchdown.

The Bobcats take on Elkmont at home this Friday night to open up region play.

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Clemson at Wake Forest	Clemson	_____
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Louisiana at Iowa State	Iowa St.	_____
Arkansas St. at Kansas St.	Kansas St.	_____
Tiebreaker Score:	Georgia Tech _____	Florida St. _____
Your Name:	_____	
Phone number:	_____	

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY



Advertise with us! Call 256.668.2708 or 256.332.0255

franklinfreepress.net

## MOWING

**Salvador's LAWN SERVICE**  
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 Free Estimates Licensed

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**Angel Harris**  
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 "The Insect Predator"  
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**UNITS NOW AVAILABLE**

"The standard for fixed-income living in Russellville."

**Russellville Housing Authority Incorporated**

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**Come Worship with Us!**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
 Sunday: 11:00 - 12:00  
 Adult Sunday School: 10:00 - 11:00  
 Everyone is invited to join us for this special time of worship.

201 N. Green Street, Russellville

## DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**JOEY RUSHING**  
 Franklin County District Attorney  
 256.332.8870 • 256.710.4713  
 (daytime) (after hours)

## PERSONAL TRAINER

**Personal Touch Fitness**  
 Personal Training & Rehab

Weight Training - Abdominal Routine  
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**Rickey Smith**  
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## PUBLIC SERVICE

**BUCKLE UP! It Could Save Your Life!**

franklinsheriff.org  
 (256) 332-8811

Compliments of **Shannon Oliver**  
 SHERIFF

**THERE ARE OTHER WAYS...**

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 Behind Pizza Hut

256-398-8112

## SWAP SHOP

Call 24/7 to post items you have for sale, trade, or want to buy. Also, you may listen to items that have been called in. There is NO CHARGE for advertising your noncommercial items. Dial-A-Deal comes on at 12:00 noon Monday thru Friday on WFMH 95.5 FM. "The Dial-A-Deal phone number is really nifty; just remember 256-331-51 50."

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**Households Who Choose  
Not To Fill Out the 2020 Census  
Means..... Less Dollars Sent  
to Franklin County for  
FREE School Breakfast and  
Lunch Programs at  
Russellville City Schools and  
Franklin County Schools**

***BE  
COUNTED!***

