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Final meeting for outgoing council includes flurry of board appointments

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council filled 29 board appointments at its October 19th meeting, including appointments on the five boards that include compensation for their members.

The October 19th meeting was the final regular meeting for the current Russellville City Council. The new council, which includes newcomers Darren Woodruff (District 2) and Dexter Hamilton (District 4), will take office effective Monday, November 2, 2020.

There was an Oath of Office ceremony for the new council at Russellville City Hall on Sunday,

November 1, 2020, at 2 p.m.

Greg Trapp was reappointed to serve another term on the Russellville City Board of Education. Trapp's appointment will expire in May of 2025. Trapp was nominated by Councilman David Palmer.

Palmer also nominated Kim Clonts to replace Judy Pounders. Clonts' five-year term will end in May of 2024.

On the Russellville Electric Board, Bill Jackson was reappointed and his six-year term will end December 18, 2025. Jackson's term ended December 18, 2019. He was nominated by Palmer.

Councilman Jamie Harris nominat-
See 'APPOINTMENTS,' page 7

Junior League of the Shoals unveils 'Little Library' for Franklin County

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Members of the Junior League of the Shoals held a ribbon cutting Friday morning to formally dedicate a 'Little Library' at Russellville's City Lake Park.

The Junior League of the Shoals, which includes Lauderdale, Colbert and Franklin Counties, is a women's group whose focus is on improving their community through volunteerism.

With only four members from Franklin County, the club wanted to increase its impact here and the 'Little Library' is a first step in doing so.

The 'Little Library' operates on a
See 'LIBRARY,' page 6



COURTESY PHOTO

The 'Little Library' is located at Russellville's City Lake Park and allows for anyone to take or leave a book.

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James A. Arthur, 73, of Russellville, passed away on Monday, October 26th. Interment at Winston Memorial Cemetery.

Eula "Beatrice Harris Barnes", 94, of Phil Campbell, passed away on Sunday, November 1st. Interment at Oak Grove Cemetery.

Betty Ruth Griffus, 80, passed away on Saturday, October 31st. Interment at Franklin Memory Gardens.

Virginia Fuller Jones, 86, of Russellville, passed away on Tuesday, October 27th. Interment at Duncan Creek Cemetery.

Shellie Hester Sumerel, 82, of Spruce Pine, passed away on Thursday, October 29th. Interment at Franklin Memory Gardens.

Guyuna G. Taylor, 89, of Russellville, passed away on Thursday, October 29th. Interment at Franklin Memory Gardens.



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From Sergeant to Colonel: A life's journey

Submitted to the FFP

Having devoted more than half of my life assisting others impacted by drought, famine and civil war serving in numerous United Nations agencies and capacities, (UNICEF, World Food Program, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNJLC) and Non- Government Organizations (NGOs), CARE and Feed The Children, to mention a few, my personal philosophy is that service to others, and choosing, or, being directed to identify a unit of service in one's lifetime is the rent that we pay on this earth in order to gain entry into heaven when that time comes.

Humanitarian missions in 20 countries categorized as "complex emergencies" is generally a lonely and long distance runner pathway and marathon, where it is just you and the world driven by a single mission and focus - to do as much good as possible with no expectation of reward, recognition or even appreciation from, and by those that you serve whether it be an individual, organization or community.

The reward and sense of accomplishment comes from within; where at the end of the day you're comfortably able to lay your head on your pillow and go to sleep with a clear and clean conscience that you executed the "Golden Rule" - of doing unto others... the best way possible.

My humanitarian mission and emergency response worlds have been dominated by the homeless, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), refugees, and people impacted by drought, famine, insecurity, disease and hunger where eating edible grasses is the only recourse to survive; where access to health care or basic medicine is unthinkable, unavailable, unaffordable and basically non-existent in such global cross border operations settings.

How blessed and often taken for granted are we of what is available to us in America.

In my emergency response world, there are those that witnessed this morning's sunrise with no guarantee that they will see this evening's sunset much less tomorrow's next sunrise.

The 20 countries served have been environments and missions of dodging bombs and bullets driven by hope, faith and prayer that God would so order my steps to lead me to be in the right place, at the right time - to help someone - for the right reasons regardless of race, religion, color, creed, gender, political persuasion or ideology prompted by God's commandment that we first love HIM, our neighbor and ourselves in the attempt to render life-saving and life promotion assistance.

Sometimes those right times, places and reasons have been 'yes' and other times 'no' moments as one witnesses the victim's spirit laying on the ground before you depart the physical vessel because the needed food, medicine, clean water and urgent health care immediately needed arrived a day or hours too late.

To tell this story is a testament to the power, love and protection of a loving God that ordered my steps and moved me along life's great chessboard; escaping injury or worse, numerous times, because the obligation to God, country and service to others was then, as it is now, is not yet over.

And, while man, generally will not acknowledge the good that one does, the

See 'JOURNEY,' page 7



Sergeant Tom McKnight

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Letter to the editor...

Submitted to the FFP

On October 7, 2020 at Tharptown Elementary School, a group of first graders were heading up the ramp to their 21st CCLC Tracks Afterschool destination.

The teacher, Ms. Elisabeth, stopped them and told them something was burning. She had them turn around and led them away from the mobile unit. Then she called for her site coordinator.

Mrs. Smith was away from her phone so Ms. Elisabeth reached out to the senior teacher. Mrs. Nichols went in the mobile unit and found smoke. She called Mrs. Smith, the site coordinator. 911 was called and help was on the way.

When fire fighters arrived, the ceiling was hot therefore, they knew it was an active fire. Within minutes, there was a flame. That flame only burned for seconds until first responders and fire fighters had it out and under control.

This mobile unit is used for the Gifted Class and snack during the day and for 21st CCLC Afterschool during the afternoon until 6:00.

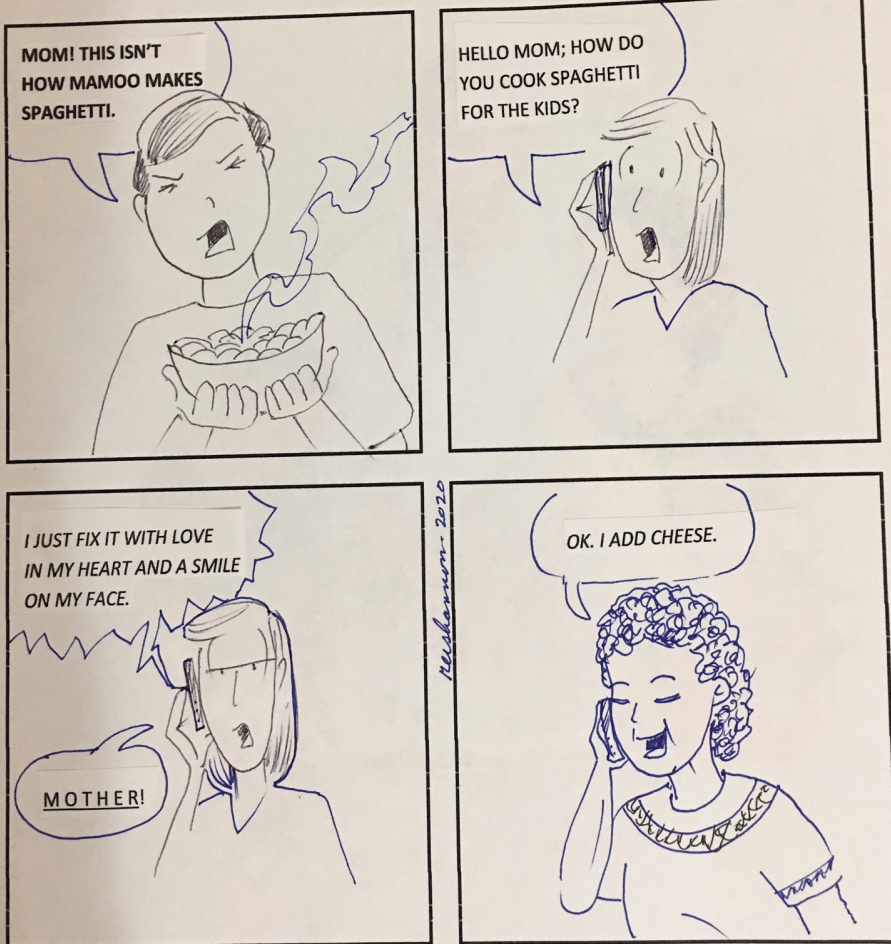
We are all so grateful and thankful to everyone who helped with this situation. Our students' safety is our first priority.

This had to be potential to be a bad situation however, with Russellville Fire Department and Tharptown Volunteer Department there were no injuries. Materials were destroyed but "stuff" can be replaced.

Sincerely,
Lisa Gann

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

OUR HOUSE BY Ree Shannon



My take on this... memories of my brother and I

I was thinking about a moment in my childhood where my brother had wrecked his bicycle and a kind man had brought him and his bicycle home.

Well, I'll back up a little where you'll understand this better.

First of all, I always pretended to be brave and tough because I wanted my daddy to be proud of me. For example, my brother was scared of those big spiders that would get in our bathtub or crawl on the floor so I'd be the one to kill the spider.

If the antenna had to be turned at night, I'd be the brave one to step out into the darkness and go around the back of the house with my heart beating 90-to-nothing because I was scared of death of being there.

Once I got back inside, I felt important and very brave because I'd just accomplished something my brother didn't want to do. Of course I never mentioned to my daddy or brother how terrified I'd been. Now, when my brother and I fed the cows, I would get scared when the cows would circle around me while I was putting out hay, but my brother would scare the cows back where I could get away. That was no big deal because daddy wasn't around. I didn't have to pretend to be brave then.

Another thing I would do when I'd get hurt is to hold back my tears if at all possible. That would make me look brave too!

I reckon acting so brave eventually helped me to



Gail Motes

become braver and tougher. Anytime I'd have wrecks on my bicycle and get back on and ride.

Upon saying all this, I'll go back to the beginning of my story and finish it. Telling all this will help you to understand it better.

Mother and I were outside when a car pulled up and a man got out, went to the passenger side and helped my brother out of the car. He was taking a milk bucket home to the neighbors and had hung it on the handle bar. For some reason, the bucket fell off and caused him to wreck. Of course, pavement is not a good place to wreck because it will always skin your legs or knees or elbows. I can't remember if he was skinned up, but I'm sure he was.

All I was thinking about was how funny it was that he had wrecked his bike and was brought home in a car. I began laughing and my mother scolded me. She didn't think it was funny, but deep down I was loving every minute of it. I knew that if it had been me, I'd just got up and rode home or pushed my bike home if that's what it would have taken.

Now, I wasn't a mean sister and we played together real good, "most of the time" that is. Of course I grew up being a "tomboy" because my brother would never play dolls with me so I'd play cowboys and indians with him.

You know, the funny thing was, I'd make fun of him sometimes but if anyone else did, I'd get in a "sister defense mode" immediately.

After all, he was my brother and I loved him! Well, until later...

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Publisher

John Pilati

Executive Editor

Brady Petree

E-mail: franklinfreepress@yahoo.com

Sales Representatives

John Pilati

Content Contributors

John Pilati, Brady Petree, Christian Medina, Ree Shannon,
Doug Green, Rebecca Thomason, Sheryl Hamilton,
Ashley Cummins, Gail Motes

Graphic Design

Jason Hill

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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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In accordance with the Alabama Abandoned Motor Vehicle Act, Alabama Code Sections 32-13-1 through 32-13-8, the following motor vehicle will be sold for cash at 10:30 a.m., on November 17th, 2020, at M&N Wrecker & Service Center, 11833 Hwy. 43 South, Russellville, Al, 35653. Seller reserves

Repairs underway for West Elementary after insurance claim resolved

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Almost one year after a fire destroyed the computer lab and damaged the large cafeteria at West Elementary School, repairs began Wednesday afternoon after Russellville City Schools officials reached a settlement with the Alabama Division of Risk Management on damages.

RCS Superintendent of Education Heath Grimes met with West Elementary School faculty Wednesday to update them on the resolution and a timetable for when the repairs were expected to be finished.

RCS officials were at an impasse with Risk Management, a state agency which serves as the insurance carrier for the system, about the valuation of the damages that resulted from the November 11, 2019 fire.

There was a significant difference in what Risk Management was willing to pay versus what the costs of repairs were estimated to be. Grimes said the system is also bound to comply with repairs/renovations required by the Alabama Building Commission.

"I am pleased to say we are no longer at an impasse. The problem was the insurance said they were going to pay for this, and the building commission said we have to replace that," Grimes said. "There were two state agencies with conflicting requirements."

Grimes said Risk Management is going to pay for everything school officials asked for in the way of repairs, as well as what is required by the Building Commission. That includes a 40-ton HVAC unit to be installed for use in the school cafeteria.

Other damages to be repaired include replacement of insulation, ceiling tiles as well as the computer lab and cafeteria.

In addition to the dispute with Risk Management, Grimes said the system has seen difficulty in getting the contractors back on the job after a long delay.

"When contractors pause their work because of an impasse (with Risk Management), it's not easy to get back on their list," Grimes said. "But we hope to have everything rectified in the next three to four weeks. That's the timeline I've been given. We are aware this has been an issue that needed to be resolved."

Work will include sealing the envelope above the attic. The thermal envelope is the area where heat rises to and is trapped. Sealing the envelope can lead to big savings in the cost of operating the HVAC unit.

Grimes said he wanted to update West faculty about what was happening and when they could expect repairs to begin and conclude.

"We let them know where we are and explained why it was taking so long to get this resolved," Grimes said.

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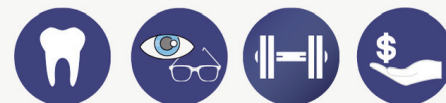
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Happy Birthday, Loni!





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 Southeastern Pro Wrestling presents the Thanksgiving Throwdown, November 7, 2020, at the Russellville Recreation Center, 201 Ash Avenue. Doors open 6:30 p.m., with bell time at 7:30 p.m. Main event features "Cowboy" Dusty MacWilliams vs. the "Suicidal Beast" Bryant Woods. Tickets \$10, with kids 5 and under free.

 The United Methodist Women will sponsor their annual Rummage/Bake Sale from 7am until 5pm Friday, November 6th, and 7am until 11am Saturday, November 7th, in the Ministry Center directly behind the First United Methodist Church in downtown Russellville. This event is held to raise money for local and foreign missions. Items for sale include household goods, furniture, books, and white elephants. Cakes, pies, and other homemade baked goods are available for purchase. Due to the statewide mask mandate, the wearing of masks and practicing social distancing is required. "We will wear masks to protect you and we ask that you mask to protect us!"

 Russellville Masonic Lodge is selling hams for Thanksgiving for \$30 each. Curbside pickup will be Wednesday, November 25th between 8-10 a.m. The Lodge is located on Coffee Avenue in downtown Russellville.

 The Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion announced that the annual Veterans Day Parade and the Veterans reception held immediately after the parade at the A.W. Todd Centre have been canceled this year to COVID-19 concerns. The VFW and American Legion announce this with deep regret but with the amount of preparation required for these events, it was not feasible this year. They invite everyone to attend the parade and reception in 2021.

 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.

 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.

'LIBRARY,' from page 1

'take a book, leave a book' concept. The wooden box is located next to the playground at City Lake Park and anyone may take a book or bring a book to share with others through the free program.

Literacy is a major focus of the Junior League of the Shoals. Members take part in a Read Across the Shoals program, and members constructed the wooden boxes used in the 'Little Libraries.'

Junior League members filled the library with books Friday morning, including several Spanish language books.

"We thought City Lake Park would be the ideal setting for people to come and take a book or contribute their own books to the Little Library," said Tiff Butler, President of the Junior League of the Shoals. "Literacy is one of our main causes and we have installed these libraries across the counties we serve."

For more information on the Junior League of the Shoals, including its many community-service activities, visit www.jltheshoals.org.

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'JOURNEY,' from page 3

comfort and joy, at the end of the day, or over the course of a lifetime comes from heaven.

Occasionally, however, a jolt of encouragement and appreciation will come from the least expected sources. That boost of appreciation and recognition recently came from The Daughters of The American Revolution in Tuscumbia.

Over the course of years since my taking residence in Tuscumbia in search of my family tree and ancestral roots my international work became gradually known; thus, additional unit of service opportunities on this side of the great pond, at the community level became a target of focus by way of service with Tuscumbia's American Legion Post 31 Color/Honor Guard among other community organizations in the area.

When approached by one of the officers of the Daughters of the American Revolution after a Color Guard presentation event last year asking me if I "would mind being nominated to become a Kentucky Colonel," though surprised at such a request, I was inwardly pleased and honored to be considered for such a prestigious award and title. Naturally I replied in the affirmative and thereafter thought no more about it.

Months had passed since the initial request and a few weeks ago, when I collected mail from my post office box one envelope caught my immediate attention addressed to "Colonel Thomas McKnight."

I was unprepared for the contents, a letter of congratulations including a certificate and other literature citing the following:

"The Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky has identified you as a person of noteworthy accomplishments. You have been chosen to receive a

commission as a Kentucky Colonel in recognition of your service to others. This is the highest title of honor bestowed by the Governor, and we are grateful to have a person of your caliber among our ranks."

As Covid19 and social distancing had altered events to the extent that meetings had to be postponed indefinitely, one of the officers of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. Verna Brennan, notified me of receipt of my certificate and mailed it to my post office address received yesterday as there was no positive indication of when the organization was likely to meet given current Covid19 restrictions.

Having opened the package, humbled and appreciative of this prestigious award and recognition of deeds accomplished by my peers on this earth, I have always believed that the most important pieces of information on a person's headstone is the dash between one's birth and their death. Thus, it is comforting to know that my dash will be marked by a great sense of accomplishment and service to others and am proud of the earthly recognition by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Lastly, it is spiritually and symbolically ironic to bear this new title and rank as I have been addressed as "Colonel" and "General" as a nick name by many over the years. At least now - it's "Official."

Thus, "FROM SERGEANT TO COLONEL: A LIFE'S JOURNEY BATTLEFIELD PROMOTION" illustrates a life's highway journey from United States Air Force Sergeant to Kentucky Colonel of which I am humbly appreciative and blessed.

Thank you Daughters of the American Revolution and all the officers responsible for bringing this award to fruition.

'APPOINTMENTS,' from page 1

ed Chad Wells to the Electric Board, to fill the spot previously held by Joan Pace. That term will also end December 18, 2025. Harris said Pace had moved out of district and sold her home, so she was not reappointed.

Harris also nominated outgoing Councilman Arthur Elliott to replace Dexter Hamilton on the Electric Board. That appointment will be effective November 2, 2020, once Elliott is no longer on the city council. Elliott's term will expire December 18, 2021.

On the Water and Sewer Board, Tim Smith replaces Wanda Myrick, whose term expired August 1, 2020. Harris made the motion to nominate Smith. Harris also nominated Joe Graham to be reappointed to the Water and Sewer Board. Graham's term will end August 1, 2025.

Councilman William Nale nominated David Kennedy to replace Buddy Perdue on the Russellville Gas Board. Kennedy's six-year term will end August 4, 2026.

Harris nominated Ron McCulloch to be reappointed to the Gas Board. His six-year term will end August 4, 2026.

On the Russellville Civil Service Board, Harris nominated Jeremy Seal to be reappointed to a six-year term. Seal's term will end January 18, 2026.

Palmer nominated Brandon James to be reappointed to another six-year term on the Civil Service Board. James' term will end January 18, 2026.

The Russellville City Board of Education, Gas Board, Water Board, Electric Board and Civil Service Board members are compensated.

Board members on the Planning and Zoning Board, Zoning Adjustment Board, Industrial Development Board, Housing Authority Board, Library Board, Riverbend Board of Directors, Compatibility Review Committee and Scope 310 Authority Board all serve on a volunteer basis.

Appointments made for these boards at the October 19th council meeting included:

—Planning and Zoning Board (Board members appointed by Mayor): Mayor David Grissom, Jamie Harris, Milford "Mousey" Brown, Terry Bolton, Justin Green, Joe Hamilton and Bois Porter.

—Zoning Adjustment Board: Bois Porter, George E. Coleman, Tony Chard and Anthony Mayberry.

—Industrial Development Board: Craig Cooper, Arthur Elliott, Alan Rhudy, Sharon Hester, Greg Trapp and Kevin Touchstone.

—Library Board: Lea Touchstone.



Letters to the Editor

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Hallo-Win

Pet Costume Contest

WINNERS

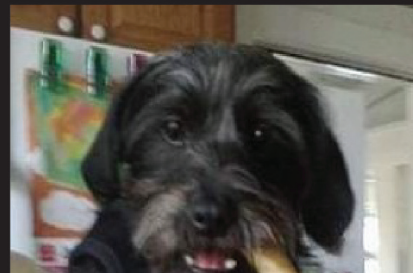
Thanks for the many entries we had in our Hallo-Win Pet Costume Contest. We had to select the top 12, though, and here they are. We want to congratulate our grand prize winner, Carletta Smith who wins a \$50 gift certificate at Paws n Purrs, and a gift basket. Our other 11 finalists will each receive gift baskets.



Pilati
Owner: Carletta Smith



Fiona
Owner: Jennifer Allred



Pepper: Owners:
Joe & Sandra Bragwell



Dixie
Owner: Lisa Cochran



Lacy
Owner: Tracy Elgin



Gigi
Owners: Cecil & Tresa Holt



Molly
Owners: Rocky & Cindy Hudson



Tucker
Owner: Amy McLemore



Grizzly
Owner: Mary Evelyn Mansell



Roscoe
Owner: Pam Prince



Gracie Hope
Owner: Faye Pritchett



Yolandi
Owner: Glenda Smith

Naturally Alabama: How waterway weeds are altering our ponds

Submitted to the FFP

As we plod our way through the heat of summer; I think about taking a dip in a cool body of water. Being raised up north in Michigan I was never far from a swimming hole. Michigan calls themselves 'the Great Lakes State'. I grew up on the water. Swimming, fishing, and boating (the rowing kind) were always a part of my life. As an adult, I shared my love of water with my daughters, and now as G-daddy, I encourage the 'grands' to take a plunge every chance I get.

Working for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System gives me a number of opportunities to get close and personal with water. I get to visit farm ponds, forested creeks, streams, and rivers, as well as clean-up/streamside restoration projects. According to the Alabama Water Watch program at Auburn University, ten percent of all the freshwater flowing in the US either flows through or originates in Alabama. Alabama is #1 in species of freshwater crawfish, fish, mussels, snails, and turtles. Alabama has 132,000 miles of rivers and streams; which is enough to circle the Earth five times. Truly Alabama has some mighty nice water!

With all this water, we also have the accompanying aquatic plants which complement the water. Some of these plants are helpful (by retaining soil and filtering impurities from the water) and some of these plants are harmful (by clogging waterways). Here in Alabama we have about 120 different plants growing in our ponds. In this article, I want to address these and help you learn how to clean them out of your pond.

For years we have been told that fish need plants. If plants were required for fish to survive, then all of the fish in the open oceans would die. The vast majority of the fish and mammals in the oceans swim out in the open. It's only around the shorelines, and in water shallow enough for the sun to penetrate where we find plants. In the open oceans one plant feeds the multitudes of higher forms of life. This plant is called phytoplankton. Phytoplankton is microscopic algae.

Along with the phytoplankton swims zooplankton; microscopic animals. This is the beginning of the food chain and the oxygen cycle on the Earth. The lungs of the Earth are its massive oceans. Remember, water covers about 75% of the Earth's surface. Every time phytoplankton makes its food through photosynthesis; it makes oxygen. Phytoplankton is the one plant necessary for life in every body of water. Collect rain water and let it sit outside for a few days. Green stuff starts growing; that's phytoplankton. Now let us go back and look at our ponds.

When the pond was built, it was merely a dirt hole on the back forty. There was no water in the pond, and no aquatic plants either. Rainwater slowly filled the pond, and soon thereafter green stuff, phytoplankton, started collecting on sticks and rocks underwater. I like to say, algae is our only 'naturally occurring' pond plant; all other plants have to be brought to the

pond by ground animals, birds, or humans. Those other plants are too many to name, but we can categorize them into three categories; emerged, floating, and submerged. Emerged weeds are rooted in the muddy bottom and 'emerge or stand up' out of the water. Floating weeds do exactly that; they float on the water surface. The submerged weeds are rooted to the bottom, and normally stay underwater. They come to the surface when they become overcrowded on the bottom, or when they break off from the parent plant. They will float for a while then sink and root to the bottom in a new place. Did you notice how I changed from calling them plants to calling them weeds?

Unwanted plants are called weeds. In fish pond settings most plants are weeds.

We manage plant growth a number of ways. Pond construction, fertilization, water levels, mechanical, biological, and chemical control all help to manage unwanted weeds. By digging steep deep sides to a pond, and keeping the phytoplankton healthy through fertilization the sun cannot penetrate deep into the water. Without the sun plants cannot grow. Other ways to manage weeds are to rake them, or have grass eating fish, grass carp, eating them out. Finally we come to herbicides. Herbicides are so widely used because they work so well. I can look at the plants you want to keep, see the weeds you want out, and there is normally a herbicide that will do what you want. If you have weeds in your pond holler to your Extension office. We can help you. Blessings. — Andy

"Naturally Alabama" is written by Certified Forester Andrew J. Baril of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Everyone is welcome. Email questions to Andy at ajb0012@auburn.edu, or call (205) 221-3392. Learn more about what is happening with Extension by visiting the ACES website & social media: www.aces.edu, <https://twitter.com/acesedu>, www.facebook.com/alabamacooperativeextensionsystem.



COURTESY PHOTO

Waterway lettuce is one of many waterway weeds that can alter the biological structure of ponds.

Commission approves hiring of Todd as property appraiser

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission approved the hiring of Jake Todd as the county's new property appraiser at the commission's October 19th meeting. Todd replaces Dennis Holland, who retired from the full-time position earlier this fall, but will remain working part-time.

Monday marked the final meeting for Franklin County District Three Commissioner Rayburn Massey, whose term expires at month's end. Joseph Baldwin will represent District Three starting in November.

Although Massey was dealing with a slight temperature, he expressed by telephone his appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the commission three terms, including the past eight years.

"I want to tell the employees and department heads how much I appreciate them and the job they do," Massey said.

"The commission hasn't always been able financially to do what we'd love to do, but the employees and department heads took it in stride and you are to be commended.

"It's been the utmost pleasure to serve the residents of Franklin County. I served three terms and people have really been nice and I hope I've been of

some help to some of the residents. As we go through the journey of life, take Joseph (Baldwin) under your wing and guide him in the right direction," Massey added.

In other agenda items, the commission:

—approved advertising for a vacant Corrections Officer/Dispatcher position with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, and approved the department being added to the waiting list for a donated Brinks armored vehicle, which would be received at no cost to the county.

—authorized Franklin County Engineer David Palmer to apply for the 2021 Rebuild Alabama Act grant program.

—accepted the resignation of Highway Department temporary employee Austin Balding, effective August 17, 2020, and authorized advertising for two full-time employees in the Highway Department.

—appointed District One Commissioner Chris Wallace as Chairman Pro Tem to act in the absence of Chairman Barry Moore.

—heard an update from Revenue Commissioner Veronica Stancil that October tag renewal notices would not be mailed to Franklin County residents as a result of the system's computer crash in August. Residents with last names starting with U,V,W,X,Y and Z must renew their tags during October or face a penalty.

Please send your guest columns, cartoon panels, letters to the editor, recipes and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com. For updates on news and sports all week long, visit us online at www.franklinfreepress.net.



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Let's break it down: Examining Red Bay's first round matchup

Before the Tigers square off against Winston County in their first round matchup on Friday night, we take a look at how the Tigers got here and how they matchup against the Yellow Jackets.

*Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press*

RED BAY - After playing spoiler to Fayette County's shot at their 700th win in school history with a victory by a final of 36-20, Red Bay will turn their attention to a not so unfamiliar foe this Friday night in round one of the AHSAA playoffs.

Red Bay will square off against Winston County who the Tigers faced all the way back in... 2018. That matchup ended in a 16-14 overtime playoff victory for Red Bay and the Tigers own the all-time series against the Yellow Jackets at 10-4-1 while outscoring Winston County 369-297 in those fifteen meetings.

As for this season, Red Bay overwhelmingly has the upper hand going into Friday night with the Tigers only loss coming against the number one team in class 2A, Mars Hill. The Tigers not only boast the best record between themselves and Winston County, but they also have allowed just 127 points this season compared to the 169 that the Yellow Jackets have given up in 2020.

While Winston County did outpace the Tigers in

See 'RED BAY,' page 13

PLAYOFF PREVIEW

With the playoffs coming up this Friday night, we break down the numbers for Russellville's matchup against Fairfield and we take a look at what has led the Golden Tigers to this first round matchup.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Caden Watts (above) and the elite Golden Tiger defense will look to make a statement in round one of the playoffs against a Fairfield offense that's averaging just 16.9 points per game.

*Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press*

RUSSELLVILLE - Before last Friday night's matchup Russellville and Madison Academy was cancelled due to COVID-19, the Golden Tigers viewed the game as a prime opportunity for a tuneup. Set against a powerhouse 4A opponent in the Mustangs who went undefeated this season in region seven.

Now head coach John Ritter and his staff will have to turn their teams focus towards their round one opponent, Fairfield.

The Golden Tigers have matched up with Fairfield once before in 2003, which was also in the first round of the playoffs, a matchup in which Russellville came away with the victory by a final of 38-12. That 2003 season saw the Golden Tigers make it all the way to the 5A state title game which they then lost to Briarwood Christian.

The Golden Tigers will be hoping for a similar lengthy run through the playoffs this year but they have to get through the Tigers on Friday night first.

Fairfield snuck into the playoffs in their region's fourth spot with a 3-4 record. The region that

Fairfield found themselves in this year was less than stellar with five out of the seven teams with in the region finishing at or below .500 for the season. The two exceptions for 5A region five were Pleasant Grove (7-2) and Ramsay (10-0) both of which the Golden Tigers could see down the road if things fall into place.

Looking at Friday night's matchup, one area in particular bodes extremely well for the Golden Tigers. With Fairfield only managing to average 16.9 points per game this season, Russellville is allowing an average that is almost exactly half of the 16.9 points per game that Fairfield is averaging. The Golden Tigers have allowed just 8.5 points per game this season, which is good enough for the third best scoring defense in 5A behind Pike Road and Guntersville.

The bread and butter for Russellville this season, much like last year, is their defense. And outside of the one loss to 6A Hartselle, that defense has been as good as advertised, if not better, over the course of this season.

The Golden Tigers have been relentless, forcing a staggering 18 turnovers and totaling 17 sacks. In addition to those eye-popping stats, the Golden Tigers are allowing just over 63 yards per game on

See 'PREVIEW,' page 13



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Vinson (above) and the Tigers offense will look to start off on the right foot in what they hope will be the first of many playoff games this season.

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Bobcats secure first winning season since 2001, advance to postseason for first time since 2015

Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press

PHIL CAMPBELL - Three weeks ago, it looked as though the 2020 season for the Phil Campbell Bobcats might fall just short of the programs first winning season since 2001 and also miss out on their first playoff berth since 2015.

Then the dominoes started to fall.

For the Bobcats to make the playoffs, they needed a three-way tie to at least have a chance to secure a playoff berth and they needed a little extra help too.

Well, Phil Campbell got the help they needed. Stay with us for a moment, this might get a little confusing.

This is the path that led to the Bobcats securing a playoff berth: Phil Campbell lost to Clements, Clements then lost to Colbert Heights and Colbert Heights lost to Phil Campbell, therefore setting up a three-way tie for the final two playoff spots in 3A Region 8. But the Bobcats still needed some help. Once there is a tie, the tiebreaker goes to non-region games. Colbert Heights defeated Decatur Heritage and Wilson, and Clements had zero non-region games. Phil Campbell had the upper hand as the Bobcats secured wins over three of their non-region opponents (Phillips, Lamar County and Hackleburg) By absorbing the wins of the teams they beat in their non-region schedule, Phil Campbell won the tiebreaker and secured the third place spot in their region.

Simple enough, right?

Bobcat head coach Kevin Barnwell is in his third season at Phil Campbell and has improved on the win total for the program every year he has been with the school.

To overcoming bouts with COVID-19 which cost the Bobcats a crucial game against East Lawrence in October, to dealing with injuries to two of the elite players in their offense in Trey Leindecker and Austen Baker, Barnwell is ecstatic with the persistence of his squad and their ability to not quit.

"It says a lot about our players and their resiliency. We felt like our season was going to be a lot better than it was (6-4) because we had two legitimate all-state players out with torn ACL's. And so without those two injuries we felt like, and we still do, that we would be near the top of teams in North Alabama in terms of talent," Barnwell said. "We had some guys that really stepped up and took some leadership roles. They could have tanked the season but they stepped up and became great players. It was either sink or swim and our guys decided to swim. It just speaks to the resiliency of every player on this team."

While some on the outside of the program might have thought that the intensity was renewed after things worked out the way they did in the Bobcats favor, Barnwell says that the intensity for his squad never left.

"I think they have a fire in them from the get-go. Our guys aren't the "fired up" kind of guys. They're blue collar guys who get up and go get after it every day. They just show up and go to work," Barnwell said. "They love this team and they love this program and they come to work every single day to get better and be the best that they can be."

As the Bobcats turn their focus to Walter Wellborn who finished second in 3A region five, the Bobcats will have to face a team that was highly suc-

See 'BOBCATS,' page 15

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'PREVIEW,' from page 11

the ground as well as only allowing seven rushing touchdowns for the year in a region that relied predominantly on the rushing game.

On the offensive side for the Golden Tigers, things have progressed quite nicely over the course of the season, especially in the run department.

The three-headed rushing attack of Arrieon "Boots" McCulloh, Caleb Matthews and quarterback-turned-tailback Conner Warhurst has been problematic for opposing defenses to the tune of over 1,800 rushing yards and 31 touchdowns.

Gabe Amick figures to take a majority of the snaps under center with Warhurst now tallying most of his time at tailback. Amick has thrown for 628 yards this season to go along with six touchdowns and two interceptions.

If the Golden Tigers wish to replicate that aforementioned 2003 season, they'll have to continue the string of rushing dominance and outstanding defense that propelled them to their first region title since 2015.

'RED BAY,' from page 11

terms of scoring on the season (303-277), the difference in region competition must be noted.

In region eight, where the Tigers reside, four of the seven teams within the region finished at or above .500 for the season including the Hatton Hornets, whom Winston County lost by a final of 14-12 while the Tigers throttled the Hornets by a final of 47-8.

The rushing attack figures to be a strong point for the Tigers entering the playoffs as head coach Michael Jackson and his staff have a plethora of talent to depend on and have used that deep pool of talent to overwhelm teams throughout the course of this year.

With the running back tandem of Hunter King (478 yards on the season) and Aiden Quinn (722 yards on the season), combined with the rushing prowess of quarterback Jalen Vinson (500 yards on the season), the Tigers boast one of the best rushing attacks across the 2A landscape.

Pair that rushing attack with a Tiger defense that has allowed a measly 13.7 points per game this season in what is considered one of the toughest football regions in North Alabama, and coach Jackson and his staff have to feel pretty optimistic about where they stand heading into Friday night.

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Dyas signs letter of intent with Millsaps College

Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press

RUSSELLVILLE - Chandler Dyas has quite the list of moments built up during his illustrious basketball career at Russellville High School. All of the shots, buzzer-beaters and defensive stops have all been accumulating for one particular moment. Dyas got that moment last week as he put pen to paper and signed his letter of intent to continue his athletic and academic career at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi.

For Dyas, the decision to choose Millsaps was quite an easy one for the senior forward who finished out his junior campaign last season with a career-high 17.3 points per game.

Millsaps not only aligned with what Dyas was seeking on the court, but also in the classroom.

"It's a bit of a smaller campus so you're able to get more of a closer connection with your professors," Dyas said. "I also like the play style that the coaches have at Millsaps so I definitely think it's a great fit for my play style and what I want to do."

For Russellville boys head coach Patrick Odom, being able to have a front row seat to watching Dyas' development over the years has been nothing short of a thrill as a coach.

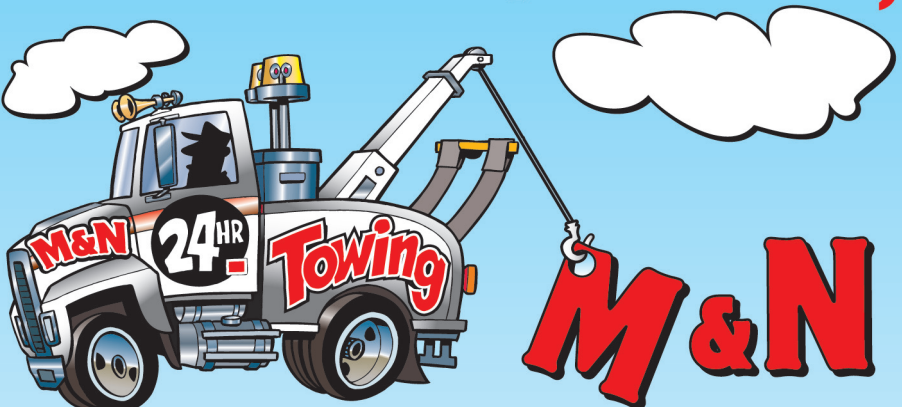
"It's been fun. When you've got a good player and he's able to progress the way he has it makes it really fun to watch the progression. As a ninth-grader in the starting lineup he was more of a spot-up shooter and young and inexperienced so to go from that guy to the all-around player that he is now has been fun to watch," Odom said. "He's committed and he's worked his tail off to be where he is today and that's awesome when you've got a kid that mentally committed and is such a great teammate. It's a blessing as a coach to be able to coach them and watch them reach their goals and their dreams."

As Dyas preps for his senior season, he will have more eyes on him this season than before. And with expectations rising outside of the program, Dyas understandably has high expectations for himself heading into this year.

"I want to keep growing and playing. I like to think I played pretty well last year so I want to improve on what I did last year and get better," Dyas said. "The ultimate goal is to do better than last year and get better to help my

See 'DYAS,' page 15

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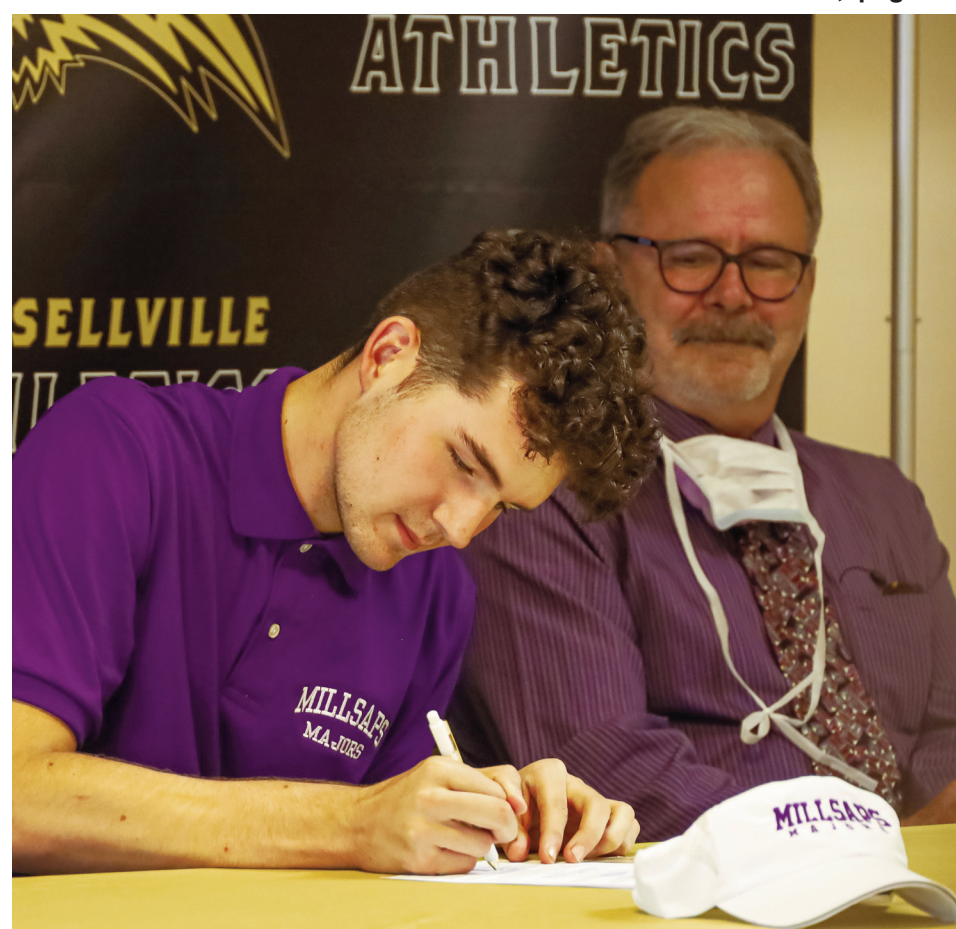


PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Dyas signed his letter of intent to continue his athletic and academic career at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi once his upcoming senior season is in the books.

'DYAS,' from page 15

teammates and win games.”
 Odom says that while Millsaps is getting a phenomenal player and student next year, the idea that Dyas could be much better at the end of his collegiate career than he is now is something to keep an eye on.
 “Millsaps is getting a great student, they’re getting a great teammate and they’re getting a great player. He’s going to get better everyday and if the lord works it out to where he stays all four years, he’ll be a much better player than he is now which is crazy to think about because he’s already an outstanding player,” Odom said.

'BOBCATS,' from page 12

Successful in one of the premier regions in all of 3A. Walter Wellborn was ranked number one in 3A earlier this year and is in the region with Piedmont (2019 3A state champion) and Ochatsee who finished their season at 9-1.
 Leading up to Friday’s matchup, Barnwell says that the Bobcats will take a simple approach this week at practice, something

“We’re going to control what we can control. We’re not going to let anyone outwork us so it’s going to be a long week of practice. We’ll practice under the lights and the kids love that and get ourselves ready to go to battle and come away with a win,” Barnwell said.

Congrats to Week 8 winner TERRY BOLTON, who correctly picked 9 out of the 10 games that were played and also won the tiebreaker!



Bailey finished all of her picks and still had time to take a nap. Don't sleep on your chance to BEAT BAILEY!!

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Hunter King Senior, Red Bay Running Back

It’s not often we have back-to-back players of the week but King’s recent performances have been tough to beat. After rushing for 138 yards the week prior in a win against Colbert County, King followed up his stellar performance by rushing for 120 yards on 23 carries and one touchdown in Red Bay’s 36-20 win over Fayette County.




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Franklin Free Press Football Picks Contest

Week 9: November 7th	Bailey's Pick	Your Pick
Michigan vs. Indiana	Indiana	_____
Liberty vs. Virginia Tech	Liberty	_____
Florida vs. Georgia	Georgia	_____
Clemson vs. Notre Dame	Clemson	_____
Vanderbilt vs. Mississippi St.	Mississippi St.	_____
Tennessee vs. Arkansas	Arkansas	_____
Texas A&M vs. South Carolina	Texas A&M	_____
West Virginia vs. Texas	Texas	_____
Stanford vs. Oregon	Oregon	_____
Arizona State vs. USC	USC	_____
Tiebreaker Score:	Texas Tech _____	TCU _____
Your Name:	_____	
Phone number:	_____	

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