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A tale of true love: Russellville couple celebrates 70th wedding anniversary

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

As Bob Bedell, and his wife Alice neared their 70th wedding anniversary, he was asked to share his secrets to a happy marriage.

Turns out, Bedell's answer wasn't so secretive at all.

"You can't let money get in your way of a good marriage. And you can't argue all the time," Bedell said. "You've got to give in a little bit."

The Russellville couple celebrated 70 years of marriage April 7th. Bob and Alice had no plans for a big party to celebrate the milestone, but their

daughter Sharon (Mugno) had a few tricks up her sleeve, in the form of a surprise anniversary party last weekend.

If seven decades of marriage doesn't warrant a little celebration, what does?

The Bedells moved to Franklin County 10 years ago after Sharon and her husband, Scott Mugno, relocated permanently to their Cedar Lake residence.

Tracy lives in Jasper, so it's easy for the family to get together.

And moving has never been a problem for the Bedells. Since their 1951 marriage, they have lived in See 'ANNIVERSARY,' page 8

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Suddith to retire after 30 years as RFBC secretary

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

In 1991, First Baptist Church Russellville Pastor Jim Toole was working on his doctoral thesis.

While the secretary in the church office was an excellent typist, she wasn't familiar with word processors and how to format text for publication.

So church member Lynn Suddith agreed to work for a few weeks to lay out the pastor's thesis in the appropriate format. Her temporary job was to end when Toole submitted his dissertation.

Well, that didn't happen. "As they say, that was 30-some- See 'SUDDITH,' page 5



COURTESY PHOTO
Suddith, above, will celebrate her retirement with a reception in her honor on April 25th.

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RV Electric Board receives 2020 Gold Risk Management award

Submitted to the FFP

The Russellville Electric Board, REB, once again has received the Alabama League of Municipalities, (ALM), Gold Risk Management Award for 2020.

Along with the Gold, this year the REB also received the ALM President's Risk Management Award which includes them in the Top 5% of ALM members with minimal losses for a 5 year period.

Approximately 790 public entities participate in the ALM sponsored program. The award system recognizes those members who have instituted risk management and loss control activities in an effort to reduce their loss ratio. Through the efforts of the REB, employee, property and liability losses are being minimized; and - most importantly - employees and citizens are reaping the rewards of a safe workplace and community.

"We are honored to again receive the Gold Award and we are extremely honored to receive the ALM President's Award. All the credit for both awards belongs to our employees who work many countless hours performing their duties as efficiently and safely as possible," said REB Manager Charles Canada. "Credit also belongs to our Board Members who not only strive to keep electric rates as low as possible for our community, but who also make the necessary decisions that allow our employees to work in the safest environment possible," he added.

Russellville Electric Board members include James McDuffa - Chairman, Nick Willis - Vice-Chair, Arthur Elliott - Secretary, Bill Jackson - Board Member and Chad Wells - Board Member.

Russellville Electric Board Employees are, Craig Grissom - Superintendent, Jerry Sutton - Foreman, Willard Mitchell - Lead Lineman, Melvin Smith - Warehouseman/Tree Crew Supervisor, Chris Speck, TJ LeMay, Nate Montgomery, Chris Swinney, Chad Whitfield, Chad Oliver, Johnny Malone, Hunter Smith, Richard Graham, Willie Bolton, Brad Bentley - Lead Tree Trimmer, Gabe Wallace, Reilly Reeves, David Hamilton, Jimmy James - Part time Equipment Operator, Sherry Smith - Executive Assistant, PJ Winston - Office Clerk.



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Franklin County Archives set to reopen after year-long closure

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

After being closed more than a year due to COVID-19 concerns, the Franklin County Archives and Research Center will reopen next month to the public.

Franklin County Archives Director Chris Ozbirn announced plans to reopen the Archives on May 1, 2021.

Although masks will not be required, Ozbirn said that patrons will be asked to wear a mask inside the building.

Ozbirn, who was recently reappointed by the Franklin County Commission as Director of the Archives and County Archivist, said she will continue working between now and May 1.

Ozbirn is available to assist the public by phone at 256-332-8827 or email at archive@hiwaay.net.

The Franklin County Archives is located at 300 Limestone St. NE, in Russellville.

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us on the web at www.franklinfreepress.net!

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

Letter to the editor...

Dear Editor:

"Reliable Affordable Last Mile Fiber Optic Broadband" for Franklin County Reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband service is a critical utility long needed for rural Franklin County, our children's education, e-health services, work-from-home, e-commerce and our county's economic growth and development.

The COVID-19 pandemic only reinforced the overdue need. Timely funding is an investment in our county's future, equal to our current county utilities and infrastructure. Regrettably, large nation-wide internet providers have not served, or have underserved, rural Franklin County.

Over the years, despite numerous meetings and efforts by our officials and dedicated task force members, nation-wide providers have misled our county. Over the recent year, the Franklin County Water Service Authority (FCWSA) has focused on its statutory responsibility to obtain reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband service for our rural county.

Along with Franklin Electric Cooperative (FEC), FCWSA entered into an arrangement with a neighboring county electric cooperative/ internet provider. This provider has a proven successful track record of providing reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband service to rural county residents in their service areas.

The arrangement, agreed to last August, would have provided every FEC member reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband service in two (2) to three (3) years. The last step required to initiate this effort was federal funding from a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reverse auction held last fall.

Shocking to rural communities around the country, large nation-wide providers "low-balled" their bids for the federal funding. The tactic forced smaller providers, such as the one FCWSA and FEC secured, out of the auction and unable to secure timely required funding.

More shocking, the "winning" bidders secured insufficient funding to actually provide reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband to Franklin County and other rural communities they bid for.

See 'LETTER,' page 8

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Correction Policy

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

Letters to the editor

The *Franklin Free Press* is published by hometown people, for hometown people. We urge contributions of all kinds, including guest columns, picture submissions, cartoons or letters to the editor. Send any letters to our office via U.S. Postal Service or e-mail, and we will gladly publish them. Letters must be signed and contain the hometown and phone number of the author. The *Franklin Free Press* reserves the right to edit letters for style, length and content.

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Colbert County Tourism Bureau invites visitors to tour historic Sheffield and Tuscumbia

Submitted to the FFP

The Colbert County Tourism and Convention Bureau is pleased to invite visitors and residents to take a stroll through the histories of Sheffield and Tuscumbia during a series of walking tours on Saturdays in April.

The free tours begin April 3 and continue on April 10, 17 and 24. Each of the tours will start at 10 a.m. The Tuscumbia tours begin outside Cold Water Bookstore, 101 W. Sixth St. The Sheffield tours begin at the Municipal Building, 600 N. Montgomery Ave. The tours will be led by local historians Jimmy Austin in Sheffield and John McWilliams in Tuscumbia.

Susann Hamlin, president and CEO of Colbert Tourism, said the tours provide an excellent opportunity to learn the histories about some of the oldest buildings and stories about the earliest residents of the towns. In addition, Saturday mornings in the spring are a wonderful time to explore Alabama. "April is one of the most beautiful times of the year to be outdoors as the early spring flowers are blooming and the weather is typically perfect for a morning walk."

Both cities have hosted these annual Walking Tours for over a decade. They are a hit with the locals and visitors alike. The Colbert County

Tourism Office has been sponsoring these tours since their inception when the Alabama Tourism Department initiated these state-wide tours.

Hamlin said Tuscumbia's history predates Alabama becoming a state. Native Americans were living around what is now Spring Park when the first white family, the Dicksons, arrived around 1817. Alabama became a state in 1819.

Sheffield was founded in the 1880s. However, a town known as York Bluff was located at what is now Sheffield before 1820. Among the property owners of York Bluff was Andrew Jackson, who would later become President of the United States, Hamlin said.

Jimmy Austin, who coordinates the Sheffield tours, said the April 3 and 17 walks will concentrate on the historic homes along Montgomery Avenue north of City Hall. The April 10 and 24 tours will focus on businesses along Montgomery Avenue south of City Hall.

The April walking tours are a part of an Alabama Tourism Department initiative and will take place throughout the state.

Hamlin said walking tour participants should wear comfortable shoes and dress appropriately for the weather that day. For more information on the walking tours, please contact the Colbert County Tourism Office at (256) 383-0783.

Don't forget to visit us online at www.franklinfreepress.net!

'SUDDITH,' from page 1

thing years ago and I'm still here," Suddith said. "Being a church secretary isn't usually on a young person's list of life goals, but I am thankful for the life calling God planned for me."

February 11, 2021, marked Suddith's 30th anniversary as First Baptist Church Secretary. April 28, 2021, will mark her final day in that job. This time, she means it.

Her church family will host a reception in her honor the afternoon of Sunday, April 25. The exact time will be announced. The public is invited to the special event.

Suddith and her husband Rick have been members of FBC since they came to Russellville in 1977. Rick, a Franklin County native, was coming home, while Lynn was starting a new chapter of life in a new community.

Suddith will remain an active church member, but said it's time for her to retire and turn over her office duties to Theresa Burns and Angie Tidwell, her new co-workers.

During her three decades at FBC, there have been five different pastors and, when you add up all the associate pastors, children's directors and church staff, it totals more than 20 different folks.

Even Bert Fowler, FBC Associate Pastor of Worship and Senior Adults and the church's longest-tenured pastor, trails Suddith by two years. He describes his friend and co-worker as a 'true ministry assistant.'

"Lynn has a servant's heart. She told us if we have any questions after she leaves to just call her," Fowler said. "She has always considered this a calling, not just a job, and she will not quit what she was called to do just because she won't be here every day."

"I don't think we will realize everything she does until she's gone," he added.

Rick will retire from his teaching position at the Franklin County Career Tech Center in May, so there will be two retirees in the Suddith household.

"I plan to organize my house and travel," Lynn said. "A big trip out West is definitely on our list."

Since she announced her retirement, Suddith has worked with Burns and Tidwell gradually turning over duties to them.

"The first time I handed over the flash drive containing the weekly church bulletin, that was hard. That's something I've done for a long time," Suddith

said. "But I feel a lot better about leaving at this point over any time in the past. They can handle things from here, so I'm comfortable leaving the office in their hands."

Among her many contributions to FBC, Suddith's pulse of what was happening with church members stands out to Fowler.

"She keeps the staff informed and in line, and keeps us out of trouble. Lynn knows what's going on with our church family," Fowler said. "She calls people, checks on Facebook and stays really in tune with members of the church and, in turn, keeps the staff informed very well."

It may take time to get used to it, but Suddith said she's okay with her retirement.

"With Rick retiring at the end of the school year, it was just the right time to do this. We're not going anywhere, though. We'll still be active at the church. You're not going to get rid of me," Suddith said.



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What's Happening

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

American Legion Post 64 will have a meeting on April 8th at 6 p.m. Will meet at the fellowship hall of North Highland Church of Christ. Meal will be provided.

Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church will host its Spring Revival April 18-21, 2021. Sunday night services begin at 5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday services begin at 7 p.m. The church is located at 305 Bethlehem Road in Russellville. Pastor Bro. Jeff Fleming and congregation invite everyone to Revival. Evangelist will be Bro. Terry Pace from Scottsboro.

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

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.

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

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Wilson Park, 223 E, Tuscaloosa St.
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Wednesday, April 14th, 2021
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.



'ANNIVERSARY,' from page 1

Connecticut, New York, Florida and Tennessee before coming to Alabama in 2011.

In addition to celebrating their platinum (70th) anniversary, Bob and Alice each turn 91 this month. So there's plenty of reason to celebrate in April.

Growing up in Norwalk, Conn., Bob and Alice knew each other but never dated during high school.

Before Bob left to serve in the United States Navy, one gentlemanly act opened the door to a lifetime of happiness.

"(Alice) was waiting with her sister for the bus to go home. They were waiting under a bridge," he recalls. "I drove by and said I would take them home. I took her home, took her sister home and the next day I called and asked for a date."

Not wanting to risk losing Alice to another suitor, Bob called her while on active duty and proposed over the phone. And, of course, she said yes.

Their marriage is truly a partnership. Bob and Alice not only live together and travel together, they worked together at various businesses they've owned, including a mobile home park, furniture stripping business and a household garbage collection business (although Bob was solo when it came to riding in the garbage truck).

Their lifetime together has been filled with happiness, and the love they expressed in 1951 still remains as strong as ever.

Alice's face lights up as she describes the year she and Bob spent traveling in a recreational vehicle across the western United States. Alice kept a journal of where they went and what they did each day. And 26 years later, that journal remains one of her most cherished possessions.

Alaska tops the list of destinations Bob would like to visit. And he laughingly recalls how close he was to seeing America's largest, and coldest, state.

"We were in Washington during our year out west. I wanted to drive north to Alaska, but she said it was 'too far,' even though we lived in Florida at the time and we were already in Washington state," he said.

Their 70 years together have brought Bob and Alice a lifetime of good times, mixed in with one or two hardships. The passing of their 15-year-old son Tommy, who died from complications from a tumor on his brain stem, was particularly difficult.

"I felt if I let myself cry and hurt I would not be able to stop," Alice said. "You just get through life's difficult times and I had to hold it in because I thought I'd lose it if I didn't."

Bob took Alice to Washington, D.C., for their honeymoon in 1951, in his old two-door Mercury. It would be their first visit to the nation's capital, and Bob was a little lead-footed on the way.

"I picked up speed more than I should have and a cop stopped me. He got out and asked what we were doing," Bob said. "I told him we were on our honeymoon, and he told me to slow down. 'You're on your honeymoon. You don't want to kill her right off the bat,'" he added.

The Bedells don't travel much these days, but it's not because they can't. Bob still drives and he says their health remains good. It's something else that keeps them from traveling across the country.

"Times have changed so much. It's so different now with people doing crazy things," he said. "The whole country has changed with its moral outlook. It's entirely different from 1950 when we were young."

Sharon knows the blessing she has with her parents, now in their 90s, living near her in good health with sound minds.

"I think their secret is remaining active. These two never stop. They just keep going," Sharon said. "My dad has a workshop and he still builds things with his hands. He still mows the lawn (with some help).

"I really think their not sitting still along with their healthy eating has been so beneficial to them.

"I'm thankful they are close by, especially now. In all my married life, I've never lived close to my family. So it's nice to be able to help them and make sure everything is okay," she added.

70 years together. Their marriage has spanned the administrations of 14 U.S. Presidents, from Harry S. Truman to Joe Biden. Since saying 'I do,' Bob and Alice have seen the advent of Barbie dolls, audio cassettes, handheld calculators, the Sony Walkman, cell phones, DVDs and Beanie Babies.

So what's the greatest event in his lifetime? Bob's answer is the same as it was 71 years ago.

"I always say she was the best thing to ever happen to me and I still say it to this day. She remains that to me always," he said.



PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI

Bob and Alice Bedell celebrate 70 years of marriage April 7.

'LETTER,' from page 4

Meanwhile, under current rules, rules the nation-wide carriers helped the FCC write, "winning" bidders can prevent additional federal funding from being secured for these rural communities for as long as 10 (ten) years.


In coming days and weeks, through a series of paid advertisements, public service announcements or other letters to the editors, we will detail the history, issues and solutions for this critically needed utility.

We will ask for your help in this effort. Among other details, the upcoming information will make it clear why every element of the phrase "reliable affordable last-mile fiber optic broadband" is critical.

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Sturdivant named one of eight Alabama high school seniors to receive SSA scholarship

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Russellville High School senior Lauren Mae Sturdivant was announced this week as one of eight graduating seniors who are recipients of School Superintendents of Alabama (SSA) Administrator Scholarships for 2021.

The eight seniors were selected by the superintendents who were chosen as district finalists for the SSA/Schneider Electric Superintendent of the Year Award. Russellville City Schools Superintendent Dr. Heath Grimes was one of the nine finalists for that award. Chresal Threadgill, Mobile County Schools Superintendent, was named as the 2021 Superintendent of the Year.

Sturdivant plans to pursue a degree in Elementary Education to pave the way for a career as an educator. She will attend Northwest-Shoals Community College to complete her basics, then transfer to the University of North Alabama.

A co-captain of the Russellville High School Varsity Cheerleaders, Sturdivant is recognized as a leader both in the classroom and by her teammates.

"Lauren Mae was elected as Co-Captain by her teammates this year. She was outstanding in this leadership role," said Stephanie Mayfield, RHS varsity cheerleader coach. "She always encouraged others in cheerleading throughout the season.

"She provided great mentoring for our younger members and our JV squad. Lauren Mae also modeled her scholastic drive to our underclass cheerleaders with encouragement about taking the ACT and AP classes. She was always willing to share information and encouragement with a smile. She will be greatly missed here at RHS," Mayfield added.

Last month, Sturdivant spoke with the *FFP* about her unique senior year and the many changes that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've done so many things no other senior class has done or experienced, so I definitely feel like it was a complete experience," Sturdivant said.

"We've seen support from our community as people realize we've not had a chance to have a senior year like other classes. I'm thankful we even got to be in school and do the things we did," she added.

SSA Executive Director Ryan Hollingsworth said the scholarships are designed to aid in the process of rebuilding Alabama's workforce by assisting qualified students and educational leaders across the state.

"These recipients have demonstrated a commitment to quality in our schools, and we are proud to be able to assist them as they pursue their degrees," Hollingsworth said.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Sturdivant was selected by Russellville City Schools Superintendent Heath Grimes for the SSA scholarship and was one of only eight students in the state to receive the scholarship.



Classifieds

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Bobcats turn in winning week at Gulf Shores Classic

Coasting to victory

Going 6-0 with wins over schools including Enterprise, Decatur and 7A Smiths Station in the annual Gulf Coast Classic, the Russellville Golden Tigers were able to add an in-season title to their resume for the season. With an area title on the line this week, they'll look to add on to that resume for a second straight week.

Staff reports

GULF SHORES - Every Phil Campbell starter had at least one hit last Wednesday afternoon, and Mason Swinney struck out 11 batters in 6.1 innings as the Bobcats beat Enterprise 10-4 for their third straight win at the Gulf Coast Classic.

Swinney and Levi Crittenden each had a two-run double in the bottom of the fifth as Phil Campbell (19-2) scored seven runs to put the game out of reach. Swinney (5-0) fell two outs shy of a complete game but still posted double-digit K's for the second straight start. He allowed three earned runs on seven hits and two walks, throwing 72 of his 113 pitches for strikes.

Enterprise put two men on with just one out in the top of the first, but catcher Bryant Anthony threw out a runner trying to steal third and Swinney recorded a strikeout to avoid any damage. The Bobcats jumped out to an early lead in the bottom of the inning when Swinney walked and later scored on an RBI single by Ridge Raper.

Swinney struck out two batters in the top of the second, and Phil Campbell put together two walks, a fly-out and a passed ball to add a run in the bottom half. Enterprise stranded two runners in the top of the third but broke up the shutout with a run in the top of the fourth. Payton Easterling led off with a double, and courtesy runner Dylan Gilbert eventually scored on Charles Cavanaugh's squeeze bunt to make it 2-1.

Swinney got that run back with an RBI single in the bottom of the fourth and then struck out two batters in a scoreless top of the fifth. The Bobcats broke the game wide open with seven runs in the bottom half. John Miller Lawson led off with a double and scored on a base hit by Bryant Hyde to

See 'BOBCATS,' page 15



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

The Golden Tigers will continue area play against West Point this week with a 24-4 record which includes a 6-0 showing in the Gulf Coast Classic tournament.

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

GULF SHORES - If you haven't heard by now, the pitching staff for the Russellville Golden Tigers baseball team has been nothing short of spectacular so far this season. That fact was most apparent last week as the Golden Tigers went a perfect 6-0 in the Gulf Shores Classic to take home the tournament championship.

Russellville (24-4) got dominant performances from its pitching staff to the tune of a 1.22 ERA across 40 innings pitched in the tournament with wins against Enterprise, Cottage Hill, Gordonsville, Decatur and Smiths Station.

Five different pitchers made starts for the Golden Tigers in the tournament with three others making an appearance in relief.

For Russellville, the pitching success has been constant for the Golden Tigers all season long as

they currently hold the top spot in the 5A ASWA baseball rankings.

And to hear head coach Chris Heaps put it, while the Golden Tigers have yet to face the toughest part of their schedule, the developments on the mound that he has seen has been encouraging nonetheless.

"Tougher teams and games are coming so we will get to see if they can continue doing what they're doing. But up to this point they've been really really good and I've been extremely proud of how they've developed and matured," Heaps said. "The biggest thing to me is the maturity as strike-throwers. The best pitch in baseball is strike one and Emmitt, Gordon and Rowe and the guys coming in behind them have all done a great job of establishing themselves early in the counts."

And while that 1.22 ERA in the Gulf Coast Classic is nothing to sneeze at (especially once

See 'VICTORY,' page 13

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'VICTORY,' from page 11

one factors in the Golden Tigers' 51 strikeouts and only 12 walks across six games), there was another aspect in particular that caught Heaps' eye: defense.

The Golden Tigers defense was nothing short of spectacular in Gulf Shores, committing only two errors the entire tournament.

"We pitched the ball extremely well but our defense was just flat out great the entire week. Our pitchers painted the zone and our guys behind our pitchers did a great job backing those guys on the mound up," Heaps said. "Nick Smith played an incredible third base for us and Eli Gipson made play after play for us at shortstop. Then on the right side of our infield, Cole Barnett had a really great week on both offense and defense and we turned some really nice double plays with Jackson Lindsey on the other end. Jackson is probably the best first baseman I've ever had. When you combine the defensive and offensive aspects that he's capable of, there's no better guy around."

Loaded with a stable of talented arms to go to at any given moment and an offense that continues to see meaningful developments from players like Canyon Pace (.294 AVG, 1 HR, 23 RBI), Gipson (.409 AVG, 13 RBI) Grayson Thorpe (.380 AVG, 22 RBI) and the aforementioned Barnett (.294 AVG, 2 HR, 24 runs), and it's no wonder why the Golden Tigers sit atop the 5A class in the state.

As the Golden Tigers prep for area play this week against West Point to determine who will carry the area crown for the season, some of the top offensive guys for the Golden Tigers are getting hot at the right time in Lindsey, Smith, Reed Hill and others.

And while it's no secret that the heart of the Golden Tiger lineup can wreak havoc on any given night, it's the mindset that his entire team approaches the game night-in and night-out that Heaps prides his squad on.

"Jackson and Nick are probably our top offensive producers but we've got so many solid guys and really good players that can produce at any time. Chemistry is the secret because no one really cares about who gets the credit as long as things get done," Heaps said. "And that's why I love this team so much. We've got some guys who have major roles and some have minor roles but everyone has accepted their roles to this point and are committed to what we're doing here and if we can do that, we can do a lot of great things."

Depth will undoubtedly be a key part of the Golden Tigers plans moving forward as the season inches along towards a playoff push yet again for Russellville.

Having a tremendous amount of depth both on the mound and at the plate is what will undoubtedly give the Golden Tigers an edge moving forward.

"Canyon Pace is leading us in RBI's, we moved Eli up to the leadoff spot and Jackson has really started to light up here recently so the right guys are getting hot at the right time for us. We still have some guys that we need to get hot. Banks Langston, Casen Heaps and JD Bishop play very large roles for us and they bat seventh, eighth and ninth for us in our lineup and those guys have produced very well for us this year as well," Heaps said. "We had a couple of games where our big guys weren't producing and those seven, eight, nine guys had to carry the lineup. We've just got some really solid depth in our roster and we've got a lot of guys that can do just about anything we need done."



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REOPENING OF RUSSELLVILLE UTILITIES OFFICE LOBBY



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The lobby has been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We ask that you continue to practice social distancing guidelines upon entry to pay your utility bill and/or to apply for new service.

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RHS alum Bohannon named to Chi Alpha Sigma

*John Pilati
Franklin Free Press*

Although his 2.84 Earned Run Average is the best among University of Alabama Birmingham starting pitchers, Austin Bohannon's most significant accomplishments are coming in the classroom.

Bohannon, a 2016 Russellville High School graduate, was one of nine UAB students recently inducted into Chi Alpha Sigma, a national scholar-athlete honor society that recognizes student athletes who excel in both the classroom and in athletics.

Membership in Chi Alpha Sigma is limited to varsity intercollegiate athletes who are at least juniors and carry a 3.4 or higher grade point average.

Bohannon is a senior at UAB majoring in chemistry. He is the son of Joel and Ginger Bohannon.

Chi Alpha Sigma is the only academic fraternity that specifically recognizes four-year collegiate student athletes for both their athletic and academic successes.

Membership in the fraternity allows for post-graduate scholarship opportunities and Scholar Athlete of the Year awards.

Bohannon is a starting pitcher for the Blazers. As of April 3, 2021, his ERA was 2.84, with six appearances and five games started. Bohannon has pitched 25 innings this season and has 13 strikeouts.

The former RHS standout helped the Golden Tigers to 5A state titles his junior and senior years. He was named State Finals MVP in 2016 after he threw a complete game with no earned runs allowed, one walk, and three strikeouts against Faith Academy.

Bohannon also earned All-Area honors in football as a junior and senior.

His collegiate career began at Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa, where Bohannon made 12 starts as a freshman, with 38 strikeouts and a 3.00 ERA over 57 innings of work.

Chi Alpha Sigma has six chapters in Alabama, including Auburn and Troy Universities. For more information on Chi Alpha Sigma, visit www.chialphasigma.com.

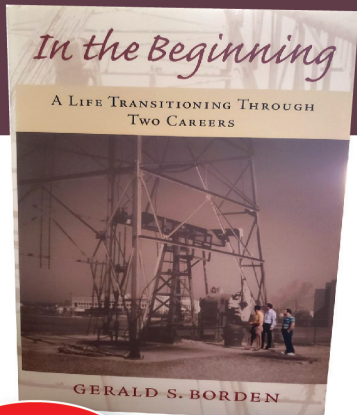


COURTESY PHOTO/UAB

Bohannon sports a 2.84 ERA with the Blazers and carries a GPA north of 3.4 which earned him a selection to the Chi Alpha Sigma honor society.

In the Beginning: A Life Transitioning Through Two Careers

Russellville native Gerald Borden tells his story of a life of achievements mixed with its share of tragedy. With a foreword from Russellville attorney Danny McDowell



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'BOBCATS,' from page 11

make it 4-1. Following a single by Trey Leindecker, Crittenden delivered a two-run double to stretch the lead to 6-1.

Anthony drove in a run with a base hit, and Luke Barnwell singled. Swinney capped off the big inning with a two-run double and scored on a passed ball to make it 10-1.

Easterling led off the sixth with a home run for Enterprise, but Swinney quickly recovered to strike out three of the next four batters. A single and an error chased him from the game with one out in the seventh, but Austen Baker survived a pair of hits and a pair of walks to record the final two outs and finish off the win.

Swinney now has 25 strikeouts over his last two outings and a team-high 59 K's in 38 innings on the season. He is now 8-1 in his varsity career with a 1.34 ERA.

Swinney went 2-for-2 at the plate with two walks, three RBIs and two runs scored. Crittenden was 1-for-4 with two RBIs and two runs scored, and Leindecker went 1-for-2 with two walks and two runs. Barnwell and Lawson both went 1-for-3 with a run, and Raper was 1-for-4 with an RBI. Hyde went 1-for-4 with an RBI and a run, and Anthony was 1-for-2 with an RBI. Baker also had one hit.

Phil Campbell went 3-2 at the Gulf Coast Classic last week including other wins against Scottsboro and Lindsey Lane while falling to Decatur and 7A Smiths Station. During the tournament, the Bobcats out-scored their opponents by a total of 37-14.



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While the Golden Tiger pitching staff was lights out during the Gulf Coast Classic, Lindsey was busy continuing his hot streak, going 9-17 in the tournament, good for a .529 average. Lindsey also managed to knock in six runs with two doubles and two triples in the classic as well. Then as the Golden Tigers returned home, Lindsey picked up right where he left off in wins against Arab and Alcorn Central going 3-4 with four RBIs on the day. Lindsey is now batting .365 on the season with four home runs and 26 RBIs.



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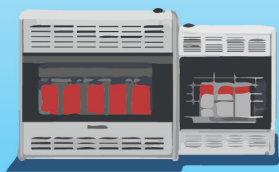
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