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Census results show increase in Russellville, Franklin County population

Jason Collum and John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The United States Census Bureau released part of the 2020 Census results Thursday, and, as expected, the City of Russellville's population grew by more than 1,000 residents.

The 2020 Census shows Russellville with a population of 10,855. That's an increase of 1,025 people from the 2010 population of 9,830. That represents a 10.4% increase to the city's population.

The 2020 Census was marketed particularly heavily to Hispanics, who

are often underrepresented in Census data. Locally, Spanish language advertising and special events to encourage Hispanics to answer the Census were part of that strategy.

Census data shows that 37.2% of Russellville residents self-classify as Hispanic or Latino. This compares to 51.8 White and 9.4% Black inside the city.

Franklin County also saw its population grow, from the 2010 total of 31,704 to 2020's result, 32,113, an increase of 1.3%. Colbert and

See 'CENSUS,' page 3

Rushing announces retirement at conclusion of current term in 2023

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When next year's primary elections are held on May 24, 2022, Franklin County voters will decide who will be their next district attorney.

But three-term incumbent Joey Rushing won't be among their choices.

In an exclusive interview with the *Franklin Free Press*, Rushing announced he will be retiring in January 2023, when his current term expires.

Rushing was elected in 2004. He defeated interim District Attorney Lee Osborn, who was appointed by the governor earlier that year. Rushing went on to be reelected in 2010 and 2016, running unopposed each time.

His 27 years of experience working for the State of Alabama include 18 years as Franklin County District

See 'RUSHING,' page 8



COURTESY PHOTO

Rushing, above, has served as Franklin County District Attorney since he was elected in 2004.



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Sandra Louise Bevins, 73, of Vina, passed away on Friday, August 13th. Akins Funeral Home assisted the family.

Jamie Patrick Cooper, 40, of Russellville, passed away on Tuesday, August 10th. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

Roy Thomas Green Jr., 45, of Phil Campbell, passed away on Friday, August 13th. Interment at Cherry Hill Cemetery.

Peggy Ann Hester, 79, of Russellville, passed away on Sunday, August 15th. Interment at Dempsey Cemetery.

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'CENSUS,' from page 1

Lauderdale counties both had small increases, but neighboring counties Marion and Lawrence saw small declines in their populations over the past decade.

Of Franklin County's five municipalities, only Russellville and Red Bay saw their populations increase. Red Bay went from 3158 residents in 2010 to 3232 in last year's Census, for an increase of 74 people, or 2.3%.

Phil Campbell had the most significant decline in number of residents, from 1,148 in 2010 to 992 in 2020. That represents a population decrease of 13.6%.

Vina's population went from 358 (2010) to 325 (2020), for a decrease of 33 residents. And Hodges saw a similar decline, from 288 (2010) to 265 (2020), representing an 8% decrease.

Littleville gained 27 residents over the past decade, going from 1,011 to 1,038, for an increase of 2.7%.

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Franklin BOE approves first set of TEAMS contracts

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Board of Education approved the first Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) contracts at the board's August 3 meeting.

Tharptown High School teacher Trina Franklin and Belgreen High School teacher Tara Oliver each received a five-year advanced contract due to their status as National Board Certified Teachers, or NBCTs.

15 teachers received preliminary TEAMS contracts for a one-year period of August 2, 2021, through June 15, 2022.

According to Franklin County Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton, TEAMS legislation was passed by the Alabama Legislature as a way to financially reward certified math and science teachers in grades 6-12, who teach six periods of qualifying classes each day and obtain certification through STEM or become National Board Certified.

These educators, once qualified, are paid on a different salary matrix than other teachers, and earn an additional \$15,000 above the state salary matrix. An additional \$5,000 may be earned if they complete National Board Certification.

Teachers receiving preliminary one-year contracts are those who applied for the TEAMS program and who teach the required number of qualifying classes, but are still working toward their advanced credentials.

The program does come with some risk, though. Advanced contract teachers must give up their tenure and are subject to being terminated at the end of their contract. Such action would seem unlikely for a highly qualified STEM teacher, but it's a factor applicants must consider.

The preliminary contract teachers, at the end of their first year, may withdraw from the TEAMS program and return to their tenured positions.

A non-tenured or newly-hired teacher who enters the TEAMS program will never receive tenure under the current guidelines of the program.

SEE 'TEAMS,' page 9

Alleged threat at THS called 'non-credible' after investigation

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

After allegations spread on social media spread Thursday that a Tharptown High School student made a threat about 'shooting up the school' Friday, more than one-third of the high school was absent Friday, even though a law enforcement investigation found the alleged threat non-credible.

Tharptown High School Principal Bart Moss said the 7-12 grade averaged around 365 students the first three days of school last week. That number dropped to just over 230 on Friday as more than 130 students were absent.

Moss posted a message on the school's Facebook page Thursday evening to help dispel some of the concern and rumors.

"We were made aware of rumors circulating on social media and in the community about an issue concerning students at school today. We were made aware of this situation at approximately 4 p.m.," Moss said. "This issue has been thoroughly investigated by school officials and law enforcement. After this investigation we feel like there has been no threat made to our school.

"It was a dangerous and irresponsible social media rumor. We believe it is safe to be at school. We will continue to monitor the situation. We will have law enforcement at school tomorrow and in the coming days. We take our students and staff security very seriously. If we felt like there was a threat to that safety and security we would notify our community immediately," he added.

Franklin County Schools Superintendent Greg Hamilton said that law enforcement and school officials both investigated the allegation and deemed it to be 'non-credible.'

Hamilton said he could not discuss the specifics of the threat, other than to say it was not how some presented it on social media.

Social media posts from multiple parents expressed concern about the allegation and some urged parents to keep their children at home Friday.

SEE 'THS,' page 5

My take on this... another day of the unexpected!

I hope all of you have had a good weekend. I usually have a day or two during the week that has an unexpected surprise and this week it started on the first day. I sure didn't expect it this soon.

It began on a Sunday after taking a friend home after church. I was admiring her impatiens. It's a beautiful, low-maintenance flower that loves the shade. I was telling her that I bought those every year.

She told me not to ever buy anymore because hers came back every year. I didn't even know that existed!

When she asked if I wanted some, I was ready to go dig. She didn't have to ask me twice!

As she went to get a garden shovel, I saw her beautiful black German Shepherd in a cage. She asked if I wanted her to let the dog out. I could wait to pet her. She was only put up while they were at church. I pet the dog and then I went off to get some impatiens.

I had just begun to dig when she asked if I had a cat because her dog was sniffing around the front of my car. I laughed and told her, "not in my car but I do at home." She was convinced her dog smelled a cat.

I knew I would need to look under the hood but I sure wasn't looking forward to seeing a dead cat or a live snake! As I slowly lifted the hood, I was prepared to jump back to keep from being snake bitten. Thank goodness it wasn't a snake. But there was a frightened gray kitten I had brought from home!

As I reached in to get my kitten, she ran and out



Gail Motes

of the car she fell. Within a matter of seconds, the kitten was running for her life while the dog was chasing with intent to kill.

It's a well known fact that a German Shepherd will kill a cat. They are just not fond of them for some reason.

I got a leash and walked the dog back to the enclosure and proceeded to get my kitten. I tried coaxing her out with food, talking to her and even tried petting her. But she wasn't having anything to do with me.

Now I don't blame her. If I had been in her place, I wouldn't have liked me at that moment either. She would hiss and spit when I'd reach for her but the only way to get her was to just do it. So that's what I did.

That sweet kitten became a wild tiger with so much aggression that she had left my hands bleeding from a bite and scratches. I don't think I've ever seen a kitten run so fast before.

I'd done my best, but I had just lost a kitten. I just hope she finds a good home.

I told my friend that I would come back later for the flowers. So I left without any flowers or my kitten.

After arriving home, I fed my kittens and cats and couldn't believe what I was seeing. I did a double-take and even counted twice. It couldn't be, but it was! All my kittens were in front of me! I had to laugh. Now, I know why that kitten treated me like a stranger. It's because I was a stranger!

I don't mind life's surprises. Life is a learning experience and I look forward to every day. It's just a part of living and I'm so excited for every day I am given.

Until later...

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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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1996 Dodge Ram 1500
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'THS,' from page 4

A law enforcement source said there was a verbal altercation in the hall between students but there was never a threat made related to a school shooting or any other act of violence.

Nonetheless, more than 130 parents decided to keep their children home Friday.

Moss, an active social media user, said there are a lot of benefits from social media, but there are also some pitfalls, as evidenced Thursday.

"There is a lot of good that can come from social media as far as communication goes, but there is also bad," Moss said. "Mr. Hamilton, myself or any administrator is going to take any threat to school safety extremely seriously. However, if anyone feels like there is a threat, they should notify law enforcement and school officials and not go on social media and create a panic.

"And we do appreciate the countless texts and calls from people who notified us of the single Snapchat post that started the rumor so it could be thoroughly investigated," he added.

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 Russellville Masonic Lodge 371 will be selling Boston Butts during the Watermelon Festival weekend. Butts are \$30 each and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pickup will be Saturday, August 21, from 8-10 a.m., at the Masonic Lodge on Coffee Avenue.

 The Why Knot Diner in downtown Russellville will host a Car Show on Sunday, Sept. 12, from 12 p.m.-6 p.m. They have scheduled for Jackson Avenue between Lawrence and Montgomery Streets to be closed during the event. There is a \$10 entry fee for those who want their vehicle to be judged. (Best All Around Car, Truck/SUV, Bike will get trophies) and Race Car & RatRod will receive plaques. We will also have door prizes for those who enter their vehicles. But anyone who doesn't want to pay the entry fee can still bring their vehicles and show them off right along with the rest. Contact Dustin at 256-668-2585 for more info and follow @Why Knot Diner on FB to see posts and updates.

 McLomoe and Turner reunion will be on September 11th at 11 a.m. at Spruce Pine Community Center. Bring covered dishes. Call (256)-324-5288 for more information.

 Community Action of Northwest Alabama has COVID-19 funding available through its Utility Program. If you have missed work or lost income due to COVID-19, the program may be available for you. You can apply online at www.caanw.org, or in person at the Community Action office, located in the Russellville Wellness Shopping Center on Hwy. 43 South. The office is open Monday thru Friday from 8-4:30 p.m. Community Action also has a rental assistance program that may help you with rent if you meet the qualifications. Call 256-332-7534 for more information.

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RCS board mask mandate to remain in effect 'until further notice'

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

At an emergency meeting held Tuesday afternoon, the Russellville City Schools Board of Education amended its dress code to 'require masks to be worn at all times while indoors' for all students and employees.

The action was unanimously approved by board members 4-0 (Board member Kim Clonts was absent) and will apply to all students, employees and visitors inside RCS facilities. Russellville City Schools students began the fall semester Wednesday, August 11.

The action came on a day that saw the Muscle Shoals City Schools Board of Education approve its own mask mandate by a 4-1 vote. The Muscle Shoals mask mandate will expire September 14, 2021, unless extended by the board.

The Sheffield City Board of Education also enacted a mask mandate through September 3, with a split vote of 4-1.

There is no expiration date in the Russellville dress code addendum. Instead, it is to remain in effect 'until further notice.' The mask mandate is applicable to all students, employees and visitors on Russellville City Schools property with the exception of pre-kindergarten children.

RCS Superintendent of Education Heath Grimes said his system's policy is in accord with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Grimes said he was advised by an attorney with the Alabama Association of School Boards to present the mask policy to the board for a a vote, so that the policy may be enforced. Grimes said there will be no disciplinary action toward students or faculty who do not adhere to the policy. Instead, they will be sent home.

"There won't be any disciplinary measures taken if someone won't wear the mask. We just cannot allow them to stay at school if they don't follow the policy, so they will be sent home," Grimes said.

The mask policy will also allow RCS administrators to keep more students at school in cases of contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19.

"Last year we sent everyone home who had contact with someone positive and nobody got the virus. The masks allow us more leeway to keep students in school, unless they are within three feet of someone who is positive for a length of time," Grimes added.

Franklin County Schools opened their doors to students Tuesday with no mask mandate in place. Franklin County Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton said there are no immediate plans to require masks other than on buses, which is a mandate from the CDC.

"We will continue to monitor the situation and act accordingly. But at this time, there are no plans to change our reopening plan and require masks," Hamilton said.

Alabama State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey has compared mask mandates to school uniforms, saying it's within the authority of a local school board to require them.

Russellville City Councilman Darren Woodruff attended Tuesday's emergency meeting to show his support to school administrators.

"I commend the superintendent and board for taking this necessary step and doing what they believe is best to maintain the safety of their students," Woodruff said.

The issue of mask mandates in Alabama's public schools is not without controversy, though.

Unmask Our Kids! Alabama is a self-described group of "grassroots activists fighting the Alabama mask mandates." The non-profit group was formed in Huntsville. Members of the group have appeared at school board

See 'MANDATE,' page 9

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'RUSHING,' from page 1

His 27 years of experience working for the State of Alabama include 18 years as Franklin County District Attorney, one year as a law clerk for Lauderdale County Circuit Court and eight years as an assistant district attorney in Russellville.

Rushing and his wife Tessa have two children. Tessa is a Will is a student at the University of North Alabama and Leah is a senior at Russellville High School.

Rushing said he's not sure what his plans will be professionally after he leaves office. But he expects to continue to practice law in some capacity.

"I'll obviously have to see what opportunities present themselves. I'd love to be in the federal system if something is available," Rushing said. "But I hope and plan to remain in the legal profession."

Rushing is part of a unique 'retirement' system for Alabama district attorneys called the supernumerary system, where former district attorneys continue to receive a substantial percentage of their income as a result of being on call and subject to being appointed to handle a special prosecution. It is not part of the Retirement Systems of Alabama.

That system has been eliminated for newly-elected district attorneys but applies to those elected prior to 2015.

Rushing has handled some high-profile cases during his tenure as a prosecutor, perhaps none more than the 2009 trial of Christie Scott, which ended with a capital murder conviction.

Even with the stresses that come with the job, Rushing knows he will miss the day-to-day business of being district attorney.

"I do know I'll miss it. I've enjoyed all my years working in the DA's office as an assistant and as the district attorney. I love the job, but I didn't think it made much financial sense to run for another term," Rushing said.

Several names have begun to circulate on the political rumor mill as to who will succeed Rushing. Among the possible candidates: Russellville attorneys Brian Hamilton and John Isaac Thomason and assistant district attorney Jeff Barksdale.

Rushing said he will not get involved in the campaign for his successor.

"It's the old political rule to never get involved in someone else's race. I've been blessed to represent the people of our county for three terms, and now it will be time for the voters to select their next district attorney," Rushing said.

Tickets on sale now for Roxy's Elton John tribute show

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When Jerred Price takes the stage Saturday, September 25 at the Roxy Theatre, it won't be Elton John, but it will 'almost' be.

Price, one of Memphis' hottest live acts, and his band, the Rocketmen, will rock the Roxy with their tribute to the 'Rocket Man' himself—Elton John.

Price, a/k/a 'Almost' Elton John, will excite fans with his tribute to his idol, hero and friend. Price is a self-taught pianist/singer who began at the age of three.

Seven years ago, he began headlining his own show at Hard Rock Cafe on Memphis' Beale Street. He's now an artist in residency at the legendary Lafayette's Music Room, which has seen stars including Billy Joel, KISS and Leon Russell.

There aren't many Elton John tribute shows, and among the few out there, Price is considered at the top of the list.

He was the featured performer at the Elton John AIDS Foundation's "Lunch Around the World" event in New York City.

Tickets are available now. Reserved floor seats are \$20-\$35 and general admission balcony seats \$15. Call 256-577-9932 to purchase your tickets today.

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COURTESY PHOTO

Tickets for the Elton John tribute show are on sale now with prices ranging from \$15-\$30.

'TEAMS,' from page 4

There are financial rewards, including up to \$20,000 additional salary per year. Each school system is allowed to hire one TEAMS teacher per 105 students. In the case of Franklin County Schools, that allows 19 teachers to be hired into the TEAMS program.

Preliminary contracts were approved for:

- Belgreen School: Jennifer Cooper and Austin Oldag.
- Phil Campbell School: Darby Allison, Trevor Allison, Devon Hester and LeeAnn Moore.
- Red Bay School: Hugh Johnston, Jamie Lawler and Leah Torisky.
- Tharptown School: Areanna Orozco, Lynsi Bragwell, Marla Counts and Marsha Inman.
- Vina School: Alisha Newton and Richie Hester.

TEAMS teachers are employed on a 189-day contract, two more days than the length of other teachers.

In other agenda items at the August 3 meeting, the board:

- awarded a bid for double stack convection ovens for East Franklin Junior High School to the lowest responsible bidder, Hotel & Restaurant Supply, at bid price of \$8,300.
- approved occupational therapy services contract with Susan Allen for the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, at the rate of \$100 per evaluation and \$70 per hour of direct therapy services. Travel expenses will be compensated at the rate of the school system.
- approved the following personnel moves:

RESIGNATION: Sara Rhudy, Elizabeth Wilson and Cassie Reed, Tharptown Elementary teachers, Tressa Bragwell, Belgreen School bookkeeper.

EMPLOYMENT: Heather King, special education aide BHS, Olivia Hardy, temporary elementary teacher BHS, Megan Skidmore, special education aide, BHS, Michelle Washington, special education aide, BHS, Teiah Roberts, custodian, BHS, Derek Fikes, social science teacher, PCHS, Dana Hargett, special education aide, TES, Lillian Torres, special education aide, RBES, Rosanne Hogan, computer lab aide, PCES, Susan Ezzell, teacher, TES, Molly Mayfield, teacher, TES, Mandy Colley, technology teacher, TES, Cody Renfrow, intervention aide, VHS, Lindsey Higgins, full-time Child Nutrition Program Assistant, THS, Jennifer Long, teacher, TES, Ashley Easterling, teacher, Vina, Judd Franks, intervention aide, THS, Tracie Sutton, assistant principal, BHS, Andrea Harrison, special education aide, EFJHS, Rosalyn Smith, special education aide, PCES and Virginia Jagers, school bookkeeper, BHS.

TRANSFER: Cathy Vinson, from elementary teacher at EFJHS to reading specialist at EFJHS, Susie Stockton, from reading coach at TES to elementary teacher at EFJHS, Monica Elliot, from intervention teacher at TES to reading specialist at TES, Kim Whitten, from special education aide at PCES to special education aide at PCHS, Autumn Hester, from special education aide at TES to special education aide at THS.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Shayna Alonso, TES teacher, Family Medical Leave from October 22, 2021, through January 10, 2022.

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTS: Channing Wright, Probationary Principal two-year contract PCES, Leigh Burks, 12-month contract RBES, Paul Humphres, 12-month contract RBHS, Megean Berryman, 12-month contract BHS and LeeAnn Trapp, Probational Principal one-year contract EFJHS.

NEW TEACHER SUBSTITUTES: Kathy Britton, Joanna Childers, Tina McQuary, Chelsey Puckett, Rosalyn Smith, Mary Camp, Justin Herring, Kristain Oliver, Haley Roland, Ciara Whitten (certified).

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM SUBSTITUTES: Rosalyn Smith, Byron Gann, Tina McQuary, Sarah Fretwell.

'MANDATE,' from page 7

meetings in Huntsville and other cities to voice their opposition to the requirement that students wear masks at school.

The group has the support of Rep. Andrew Sorrell (R-Muscle Shoals), who has pledged to introduce legislation during Alabama's 2021 special session that would ban school mask mandates. If Gov. Kay Ivey places the bill on the special session call, it would need a simple majority to pass. If it's not on the special session call, Sorrell could still introduce it, but it would require a two-thirds majority to pass.

Franklin County Rep. Jamie Kiel (R-Russellville) said he is conflicted about school mask mandates. As a general rule, Kiel prefers policy making be left to local school districts, but he also believes medical decisions for children should ultimately rest with parents.

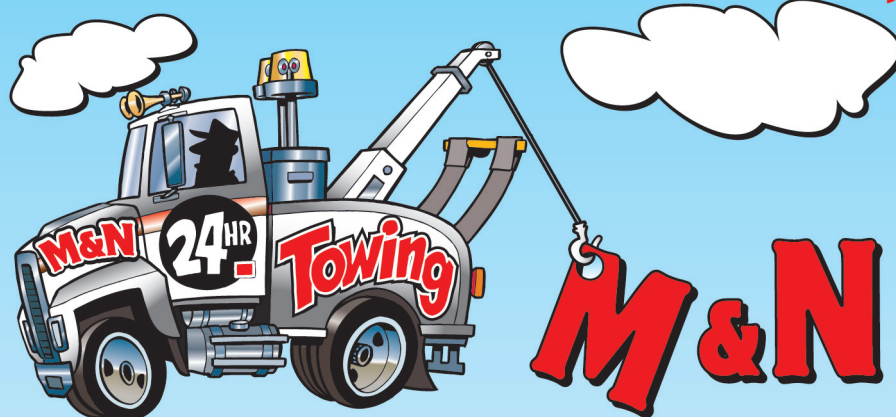
"I think it's best left up to parents to make medical decisions for their children. Ultimately, most decisions are best left to local government and out of the hands of state and federal government," Kiel said. "However, if local government oversteps its boundaries that's when the state steps in."

Grimes began the meeting by sharing his personal aversion to masks. "Anyone who knows me knows I hate wearing masks as much as anybody," Grimes said. "I know our students don't like it either. But the (COVID-19) numbers continue to grow. Franklin County has the highest number of new COVID cases per 100,000 people than any Shoals area county.

"We just can't have school if we're not wearing masks. Children from K-fifth grade have no protection because they can't get the vaccine. And students from sixth to 12th grade can be vaccinated if they choose, but the number receiving the vaccination is small. It's a difficult decision and I thank our board for making a difficult decision at a difficult time," he added.

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Must-watch games in Franklin County this season

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

Before the first kickoff and the first touchdown of a season, there are always a few games on a school's schedule that catches fans' eyes. Whether it be a region battle or a longtime rivalry, there are more than a few games that you can circle on your school's respective schedule.

Whether you're an avid high school football fan or just someone needing something to do on a random Friday night, we've got a few high school football matchups here in Franklin County this season that you *won't* want to miss.

Russellville vs. Deshler, Friday, August 27, Golden Tiger Stadium

You knew we were going to start here, didn't you?

One of the longest-standing rivalries in Franklin County and northwest Alabama alike, the Golden Tigers and Tigers will square off yet again, continuing a string of matchups that have taken place every year since 1944, with a brief two-year hiatus in 1986 and 1987.

And of course, the action on the field will always be worth the price of admission between the two long-time rivals. But it's what's at stake in terms of the all-time series that holds a key factor for this being one of our "must-watch" matchups of the year.

Russellville has won 16 of the last 21 games over Deshler, and with their win last year in a forfeit due to COVID-19, the all-time series is knotted up at 45-45-4.

So the winner of this year's contest will take the all-time series advantage... at least for one season.

See 'WATCH,' page 13

Opening week preview

Four out of the five football programs in Franklin County are slated to kickoff the 2021 season this week and the FFP is going to give you all the information you need on each matchup.



PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

Both Phil Campbell, left, and Russellville, right will be two of four schools kicking off their 2021 season this week while Vina will begin their season the following week on August 27.

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

School is officially back in session and teams have multiple weeks of official practices under their belts and all that's left to do is kickoff the 2021 season.

And while there have been a handful of jamborees already played, the first official games of the season won't start until later this week, beginning in Franklin County with Russellville squaring off against Decatur on Thursday to open up their season.

So to get you ready for the much-anticipated start to the high school football season, we'll give you every week one matchup in Franklin County along with some information regarding the matchup so that you can be the most informed fan in the stands when the Friday night lights cut on for the first time.

Russellville Golden Tigers vs. Decatur Red Raiders, Thursday, August 19, 7 p.m. at Golden Tiger Stadium

Last year saw the return of the matchup between the Golden Tigers and Red Raiders for the first time since 2007 in which the Red Raiders prevailed in overtime.

In 2020 however, the Golden Tigers started their season off on a high note, holding Decatur scoreless en route to a 28-0 victory to begin a string of four scoreless outings from the defense to kick off the year.

Overall, the Golden Tigers own the advantage in the series with a record of 7-4 while outsourcing the Red Raiders 190-179. The longest win streak in the series belongs to the Golden Tigers who, from 1964-1966 and 1990, won four straight meetings by an average margin of victory of almost 15 points.

The Golden Tigers finished last season with a record of 10-3 while winning 5A region 8 and advancing to the 5A quarterfinals.

The Red Raiders went 2-8 in 2020 while finishing sixth in 6A region 8 and missing the postseason.

Red Bay Tigers at Hamilton Aggies, Friday, August 20, 7 p.m. at Joe Sargent Stadium

Red Bay's series against the Aggies hasn't exactly been kind to the Tigers. Across 18 meetings (a majority of which came from 1961-1983), the Aggies own the series with a record of 17-1 against Red Bay, outscoring the Tigers 430-116 in

See 'PREVIEW,' page 14

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'WATCH,' from page 11

Red Bay vs. Colbert County, Friday, October 22, Tiger Stadium

Despite losing a plethora of senior talent at the conclusion of last season and bringing in a new head coach, the Red Bay Tigers still figure to contend for a playoff spot in 2021.

The only question is, where will they finish in their highly-competitive region?

And while it might feel like a cop-out to pick the Tigers final region game of the season as a "must-watch" when it comes to determining their playoff seeding, it very well could come down to their matchup with the Indians.

With Mars Hill as the reigning 2A champions in the same region as the Tigers, it might feel as though the rest of the teams in the region will be scrambling to sort out the seeding the rest of the way. However, the Panthers did lose an overwhelming amount of talent as well, so it could be that whichever team catches fire down the stretch will take home the region crown.

But assuming that things shake out the way it's anticipated to, that should leave Red Bay and Colbert County battling it out on October 22 for the two-seed in 2A region 8 and more importantly, home-field advantage in round one of the playoffs.

That would be a nice way to start off the Heath Childers era in Red Bay.

Phil Campbell vs. Colbert Heights, Friday, October 1, Amos Mitchell Stadium (CHHS)

Much like the Russellville/Deshler rivalry (in much fewer matchups), the Phil Campbell and Colbert Heights saga has been fairly evenly played over the course of their history.

However, dating back to 2005, it's been mostly the Wildcats taking home the victories most seasons.

But with Phil Campbell taking last season's matchup, the all-time series now rests at 14-13 in the Bobcats favor.

And since the Bobcats were bumped up to 3A in 2018, the rivalry has become all the more intense now with playoff implications on the line with each passing matchup.

As we mentioned above, the Bobcats knocked off the Wildcats last season en route to their first playoff appearance since 2015 while the Wildcats narrowly snuck into the postseason.

This season, each school will look to play spoiler in order to do their part in preventing their rivals from making a push for the postseason, making this game a "must-watch".



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CITY OF RUSSELLVILLE

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REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of: the city buildings and street system of Russellville; city, state and federal laws; court procedures; department rules, regulations and procedures; maintenance and use of weapons; radio codes, surveillance equipment and legal procedures involved with illegal drug cases.

Ability to: operate a motor vehicle; read; safely fire a weapon; communicate on telephone and radio; generate written documents such as reports and tickets; bend, crouch; stretch; stretch; walk; run; respond to emergency situations on short notice when off-duty; and do the essential functions of the job as directed in this description.

Verbal skills to communicate factual information to co-workers, supervisors, general public and court personnel. **Reading skills to read and understand** rules, regulations policies and procedures, writing skills to clearly, accurately, and neatly complete routine reports and other paperwork. **Math skills to perform** basic calculations. **Listening skills to receive** radio call, take complaints, and interview witness.

Ability to use a computer as needed for data entry, word processing reports and investigative strategies.

Willingness to: work overtime, irregular hours, weekends and holidays; travel and attend seminars and workshops.

Ability to do the essential functions of the job as directed in this description.

QUALIFICATIONS and SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Possession of a high school diploma or GED
Minimum of 21 years of age

Must meet or exceed the minimum requirements established by the State of Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission

Possession of a valid Alabama Drivers License

Possess the ability to obtain an Alabama Police Academy diploma or its equivalent

Ability to wear appropriate uniforms and safety equipment.

Ability to work nonstandard hours and emergency call-backs.

Ability to travel as required.

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'PREVIEW,' from page 11

the process. The Tigers lone win in the series came last year, albeit by a forfeit by the Aggies due to COVID-19 protocols.

Last season the Tigers only lost once during the regular season (to the eventual state champion Mars Hill Panthers) and advanced to the second round of the 2A playoffs while finishing as the runner-up in 2A region 8.

2020 was a sort of mixed bag for the Aggies. Despite posting a .500 record on the season, the Aggies managed to sneak into the playoffs as the fourth seed in 4A region 5 where they would fall in the first round.

Phil Campbell Bobcats at Phillips Bear Creek Bears, Friday, August 20, 7 p.m. at James E. Glass Stadium

Outside of the Deshler/Russellville rivalry, there haven't been too many non-region matchups that have stayed consistent over the past decade. Phil Campbell and Phillips however, has been a Friday night staple since 2010.

Over the past 11 seasons, Phillips has had the upper hand in this matchup, winning seven out of the 11 matchups with Phil Campbell taking four matchups. And while the overall numbers favor Phillips, it's the Bobcats who have been trending in the right direction as of recent.

With a forfeited win last season due to COVID-19, the Bobcats also came away victorious in 2019, cruising to a 29-0 victory.

With the Bobcats sneaking into the playoffs last year for the first time since 2015, they'll look to get their season off on the right foot as they seek back-to-back playoff appearances for the first time since 2014-2015.

Phillips on the other hand, missed out on the playoffs last season after finishing the year at 3-7. However, all three of the Bears wins came against region opponents.

Tharptown Wildcats at Shoals Christian Flames, Friday August 20, 7 p.m. at Flame Field

2020 saw the best season for the Wildcats since 2013 when they went 5-5 and narrowly missed out on the playoffs for the first time.

Last season, the Wildcats got off to their best start in their young program's history by winning their first two games of the season. They did so by aver-

See 'PREVIEW,' page 15

Kevin G. Kelly, M.D.

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REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of City and Department rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
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Knowledge of Alabama rules of Criminal Procedure, Criminal Code and Alabama Motor Vehicle Laws, Court's filing system and requirements and applicable local, state and federal laws. Knowledge of specialized court package computer software, State of Alabama archival procedures and requirements, municipal court processes and procedures, municipal court-related fees and management of financial matters. Modern offices practices and procedures. Reading skills to comprehend laws, legal documents, manuals, directives, court proceedings and instructions. Verbal skills to communicate effectively with colleagues, court personnel, defendants, complainants, attorneys, Police Department personnel, and the general public. Writing skills to clearly and neatly complete routine forms and records: compile documents compose letters and court orders, Math skills to perform basic calculations.
Ability to do the essential functions of the job as directed in this description

QUALIFICATIONS and SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Possession of a high school diploma or GED; an associate's degree from an accredited college in business management, legal assisting, or paralegal is preferred.
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The appointees will be required to successfully complete a physical examination including drug and alcohol screening prior to employment.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Heavy Equipment Operator in the Solid Waste Department

in the Franklin County Commission Office until 5:00 PM on Friday, September 3, 2021.

An application and job description(s) may be picked up, faxed or emailed upon request from the Franklin County Commission Office, located at 405 N. Jackson Avenue, Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM or applications are available at www.franklincountyal.org under the Careers tab.

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aging 15 points in their margin of victory. And while they missed out on the playoffs after finishing at 4-6 on the year, the Wildcats will hope to replicate their success from last season as they kick off against a Shoals Christian team that has fallen on tough times in recent years.

The Flames own the all-time series against the Wildcats with a record of 8-4. Although the Wildcats have taken the reins over the past couple of years. In their previous four meetings dating back to 2017, the Wildcats have won four straight.

The Flames went 3-7 last year while missing out on the playoffs and finishing sixth in 1A region 8, right behind the aforementioned Phillips Bears.

Vina Red Devils vs. Marion County Red Raiders, Friday, August 27, 7 p.m. at Franklin-Hester Stadium

The Red Devils won't actually begin their 2021 season until the following week due to a bye week in week one.

But once the season gets underway for the Red Devils, they figure to be put to the test right away as they take on a Marion County squad at home.

All-time, Marion County leads the series with a record of 3-12 with the Red Devils last victory coming all the way back in 1977.

In 2020, the Red Devils came away with one victory over Cherokee, which was a region win.

A typically strong Marion County program missed out on the postseason in 2020 despite going 5-5 on the season.

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