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Students return to Franklin County classrooms following virtual learning break

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When asked whether Franklin County Schools' recent 10-day remote learning period met his intended goals, Superintendent Greg Hamilton said that's not for him to decide.

When dealing with a global pandemic, Hamilton explained, you make decisions based on the facts you're presented with. And the facts show a reduction in the number of positive COVID-19 cases among students, faculty and school employees from 129 on August 27th to 32 last Friday, September 10th.

Hamilton announced last month that Franklin County Schools would take a 10-day break from classroom

instruction from August 28-September 6. That included five virtual learning days among the 10 calendar days.

School administrators were faced with a steady, daily increase of positive COVID-19 cases, including 129 on August 27th. The goal of the 10-day break from in-person instruction was to reverse that trend and get the system's COVID-19 numbers down to a manageable level.

"This is something we felt we had to do," Hamilton said. "We're dealing with facts and that decision was made based on the facts. I'm happy the numbers have gone down and there are less kids and employees sick."

"But whether the decision was just-

See 'STUDENTS,' page 3

Russellville BOE approves budget for 2021-22 fiscal year

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education approved a \$41.3 million budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year at its September 9th meeting.

The budget includes \$41.3 million of expenditures and anticipated revenue of \$36.6 million. The approximate \$5 million shortfall will be made up out of the system's beginning fund balance of \$10.87 million.

That projects to leave the ending fund balance on September 30, 2022, at \$5.96 million, well above the one-month fund balance required by the State of Alabama to be maintained.

Although the budget shows a \$4.9 million shortfall, revenue for the new fiscal year will actually exceed expenditures by \$182,000, according to RCS Superintendent of Education Heath Grimes.

Grimes explained that the system's \$10.5 million bond issue for the RHS capital improvement project is reflected in the beginning fund balance of \$10.87 million, and the expense is being spread over three fiscal years.

The majority of the revenue, \$20.1 million, comes from the State of Alabama, representing 55.1% of the total. Local revenue of \$8.08 million represents 22.1% and federal revenue

See 'BUDGET,' page 7

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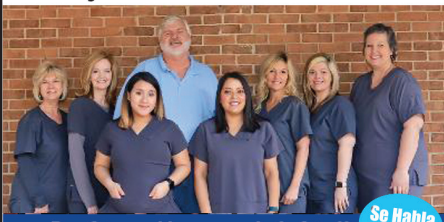
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Judson Hugh Clark III, 53, of Russellville, passed away on Friday, September 10th. A private service will be held at a later date.

Shirley Jean Fuller, 81, of Russellville, passed away on Friday, September 10th. Interment at Spruce Pine Cemetery.

Charlotte M. Smith, 62, of Russellville, passed away on Tuesday, September 7th. A celebration of life service was held with family.

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'STUDENTS,' from page 1

tified or not—I'll leave that for others to decide," he added.
Hamilton said feedback he received regarding the 10-day break was both positive and negative, which is consistent with feedback on COVID protocol since the pandemic began last March.

"I heard from both sides after making the decision to go to remote learning starting August 30th," Hamilton said. "All of our decisions are going to be made based on the safety and education of our students. That's what we are here for."

Although the numbers of positive cases have declined significantly, there are still problems for school officials to deal with.

Vina High School's varsity football team forfeited its scheduled game against Decatur Heritage on September 10 due to COVID-19 positives and injuries.

"Vina has a small roster and we felt fortunate to get through last season's schedule and play every game last year," Hamilton said. "With a roster of around 20-25 at best, and a few injuries and COVID-19 positives, it doesn't take long to get where it's not sustainable."

When Franklin County Schools began the new school year August 10th, there was no mask mandate in place. Russellville City Schools began the next day and that system's board of education amended the school dress code to require face masks be worn inside all buildings.

Franklin County Schools' policy includes a recommendation that all students and employees wear masks but not a requirement. If the facts change, though, Hamilton said he would be willing to recommend a mask policy to his board.

"These are decisions the superintendent has to make and I'll do it with a conscience of what's best for our students and teachers. If masks, like remote learning, are one of the things that can keep our students and teachers safe, I'll recommend a mask mandate to our board. It would need board approval, but at this time, I have not presented a mask policy to the board," Hamilton said.

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Foster Grandparent Program now accepting applications

Submitted to the FFP

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Photo contest to highlight unique identity of northwest Alabama

Submitted to the FFP

Attention Franklin County photographers! Put your talent to the test among other outstanding local folks in a photo contest highlighting what makes northwest Alabama unique.

The Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area has opened its annual photo contest, and, once again, it's a simple snap-and-post online process.

"Last year we wanted to make it easy for people to share their photos of northwest Alabama's landscape, so we just asked them to post pics on social media with a hashtag," said Carrie Crawford, MSNHA director. "It was a great success! We had more entries from more people than ever, so we're doing it the same way this year."

The purpose of the photo contest is to showcase what makes the MSNHA special, she added.

Photos must be taken within MSNHA's six counties—Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone and Morgan—and posted on entrants' social-media accounts with the hashtag #msnhaphotocontest21.

Photos should focus on what's unique in MSNHA's landscape: natural beauty, historic sites,

wildlife, outdoor recreation, downtowns, neighborhoods, significant architecture, etc. There are no categories to enter or restrictions on how many photos one person can submit. Photos should be high quality and of the highest resolution possible.

Contest deadline is 5 p.m., Monday, Nov. 15. After the contest ends, MSNHA staffers will choose their favorite photos. Winners will receive prizes from local vendors.

"We'll share the hash-tagged photos on our social media for everyone to enjoy," Crawford said.

"In addition, we may use some in our marketing campaigns and other print and online platforms. We're looking forward to seeing what people find in MSNHA's everyday landscape."

A partnership program of the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas recognize regions throughout the country that help tell America's story. The MSNHA is hosted by the University of North Alabama and focuses on the themes of music, Native Americans and the Tennessee River.

Email msnha@una.edu or visit msnha.una.edu for more information.

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A Foster Parent Training Course will be offered by the Franklin County Department of Human Resources starting Sunday, Sept. 12. The Sunday classes will be from 2-5 p.m., and will end on Sunday, November 14. Foster parent licensing requirements include being 19 years or older, passing a criminal background check for all household members 19 or older, clearance of state central registry on child abuse and neglect for all household members 14 or older, family stability, regular source of income, if married the marriage must be at least one year in duration. For more information, contact Leilani Johnson at DHR at 256-331-5940.

The Russellville Fire Department has started its annual Breast Cancer Awareness T-Shirt Sale fundraiser. Order forms can be picked up at either Russellville Fire Department locations. They are \$15 for short sleeve and \$20 for long sleeve, with an added \$2 for XXL and an added \$3 for XXXL t-shirts. First order will be sent out September 17. But there will be an additional order after that. All proceeds will go to Russellville Hospital fund for those who can't afford to have mammograms done.

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Approval of personnel moves primary focus at September 9 Russellville BOE meeting

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education approved a plethora of personnel moves at the board's September 9th meeting.

Most of those were temporary hires for the system's Afterschool Tutoring & Summer Learning Program and most were filled by teachers already employed by Russellville City Schools.

Leaves of absence were approved for Lauren Taylor, West Elementary teacher, from September 1-December 17, Jennah Harrison, WES teacher, from October 15-November 23, Taylor Royce, WES teacher, from August 30-November 19 and Casey Guynn, Russellville Middle School teacher, from November 8, 2021-February 18, 2022.

Temporary employment in position moves approved by the board included: Kasey Sparks, teacher for PreK Before and After Care, Anayeli Ruiz, Tonya Alonzo, Jennifer Willis and Maria Baltazar, Aides for PreK Before and After Care.

Teachers for the Afterschool Tutoring & Summer Learning Program hired include: Jennifer Pace, Lauren Flanagan, Sarah Goodman, Katie Wilson, Jessica Cantrell, Jessica Gipson, Lauren Hellums, Tessa Rushing, Caitlan Swinney, Jessica McSpadden, Katelyn Mitchell, Alissa Wallace, Hayley Fuller, Samantha Warhurst, Mandy Odom, Jamie Oliver, Kellie Sturdivant, Nancy Foster, Emily Woods, Leann Little, Amy Grimes, Tessa Benford, Lauren Hellums, Jessica Cummings and Amanda Ridge.

Aides hired for the Afterschool Tutoring & Summer Learning Program include: Maria Baltazar, Jennifer Willis, Lauren Sturdivant, Ponda Gordon, Kim McCulloch and Inocencia Guarcas Cua.

Mary Grace Key was hired as an Aide for 21st CCLC Program, and Cassy Groce, Jessica Amick and Jodie Boyles hired as Nurses for Afterschool Tutoring & Summer Learning Program.

In other agenda items, the board:

—approved a contract with Riverbend Center for Mental Health for August 1, 2021-September 30, 2022.

—approved salary schedules for certified teachers 2021-2022, Afterschool Tutoring & Summer Learning Program and and Extended Contracts, Supplement and Other Pay for Fiscal Year 2022.

The next regular meeting of the Russellville City Board of Education will be October 28, 2021, at 8 a.m., in the board room. The work session will be October 25 at 3:30 p.m.

'BUDGET,' from page 1

venues of \$7.35 million 20.1%. 2.7% of the revenue is labeled as coming from 'other sources.'

The City of Russellville appropriated \$1 million to Russellville City Schools for FY 21-22. That is \$125,000 less than last year, but Grimes said there was a mutual agreement between the school system and the city to receive a reduced appropriation this year due to the city's bond issue.

The largest expenditure is for instructional services, which includes salaries and benefits for employees, and represents 42% of the budget. 15.4% of the budget is allocated for capital outlay, 10.4% for auxiliary services, 7.3% for other expenditures and 3.5% for debt services.

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Almost Elton John show set for September 25 at Roxy Theatre

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

As a business owner and a community leader and volunteer, Jerred Price wears several different hats.

But he may be best known for his glasses—a pair of sparkling, oversized, tinted shades he adorns when he takes the stage as *Almost Elton John*.

Price, whose second career as an Elton John tribute artist began in 2014, will bring his energetic show, complete with his five-piece *Rocketmen* band, to Russellville's Roxy Theatre on Saturday, September 25, at 7 p.m.

Reserved tickets range from \$20-\$35, and balcony seating is \$15. For tickets and more information, call 256-577-9932.

A self-taught pianist and singer, Price started headlining his own show at Memphis' Hard Rock Cafe on Beale Street. Initially, Price would incorporate a few Elton John hits into his set list, but after receiving a tremendous response to those songs, he began a monthly residency at Hard Rock as *Almost Elton John*.

Price now performs monthly at Memphis' Lafayette Music Room and he's on the road as *Almost Elton John* for several other shows each month.

An Alaska native, Price was raised in Arkansas. His move to Memphis came when he was a senior manager for Lowe's and that career landed him in the *Home of the Blues*.

Now the owner of a roofing company, Price is active in Memphis' Downtown Neighborhood Association, where he served as president. In 2018, he was appointed by Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland as commissioner for *Memphis City Beautiful*.

As Price prepares for his Russellville show, the nostalgia of playing at a restored downtown theatre like the Roxy isn't lost on him.

"The small town I lived in in Arkansas had a theater on Main Street. It was the centerpiece of entertainment, so it takes me back home to be in a theater like the Roxy in a small town," Price said.

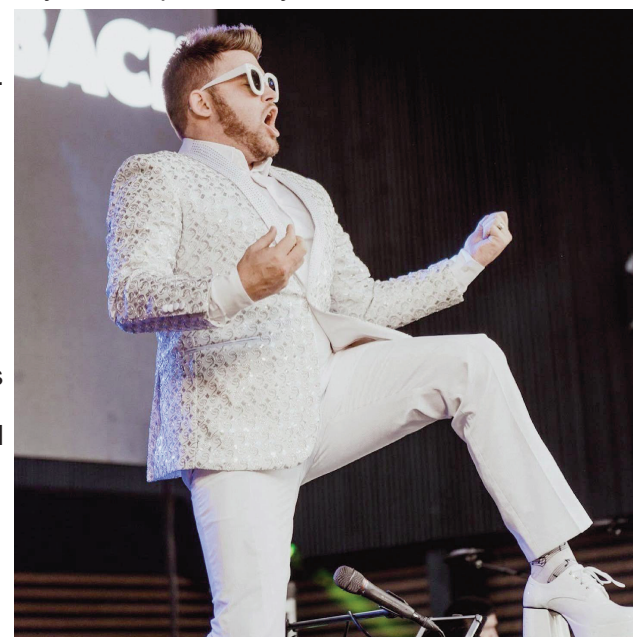
Price's typical show is two hours long, and he encourages those in the audience to get involved.

"The ultimate compliment is to see people singing and dancing because it means they're enjoying the show. I'm not an Elton John impersonator," Price said. "We are a tribute band bringing some of the music and magic that is Elton John to you. I share my personal stories of Elton John concerts and getting to know him the past seven years."

Price's show this past June at the Memphis Botanical Gardens drew more than 1,200 fans who showed up in feather boas, big glasses and were ready to sing and dance. And *Almost Elton John* and *the Rocketmen* were recently selected as runner-up in the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* newspaper's annual Memphis Most awards.

The September 25 show will be Price's first in Alabama, as his talent spreads across the country. Earlier this year, he played his first Wyoming concert and he has Arkansas and Mississippi dates coming up. You can learn more about Price at his website, www.almostelton.com.

And yes, Price and his idol, Elton John, have met and become friends. Price was the featured artist at a luncheon that was part of John's 60th birthday celebration in New York City.



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Tickets for the *Almost Elton John* show are on sale now and range from \$15 for balcony seating to \$20-\$35 for reserved tickets at the Roxy Theatre.



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Council hires Ricketts as new court magistrate

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council approved the hiring of Andrea Ricketts as the city's new municipal court magistrate at its September 7th meeting.

Ricketts' hiring was approved by rare split vote of 3-2, with Mayor David Grissom and Councilmen Jamie Harris and Gary Cummings voting in favor and Councilmen Darren Woodruff and Dexter Hamilton voting no.

Ricketts was employed as a temporary employee in the city's municipal court department when she was hired Tuesday night.

Woodruff said his vote was not personal. He explained that another candidate for the position who lives in his council district was, in his opinion, more qualified.

"I had a resident of District Two who I believed was well-qualified for the job and I supported her for this position. That was based on her professional experience. But I respect the role of the Russellville Civil Service Board and they recommended another candidate for the job," Woodruff said.

The Civil Service Board listed Ricketts first in merit order among three finalists submitted to the council.

In other agenda items, the council:

—accepted an award letter from the Department of Homeland Security for an Assistance to Firefighters grant in the amount of \$48,571.43, with a five percent match requirement for the city in the amount of \$2,428.57 and a \$2,312.93 consulting fee to JMCM. The funds will be used to purchase a 6000 Psi breathing air compressor/cascade/fill station for filling the self-contained breathing apparatus requirement.

—entered into a professional services agreement with the Civil Group, LLC, for professional services relating to the McGee Street bridge project, in the amount of \$16,270.

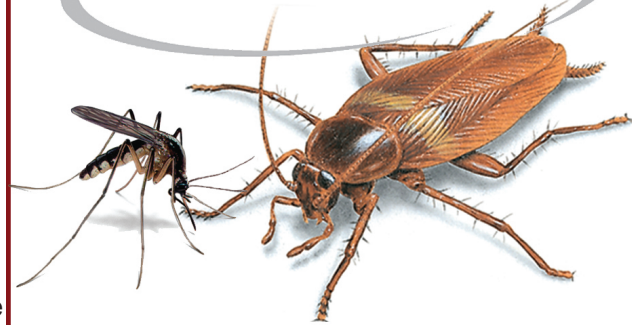
—hired three police officers, including John Paul Cantrell, Anthony Albert Watts and Dakota Riley.

—hired Alejandro Victor Wallace as a fire fighter in the Russellville Fire Department.

—hired Corey Bray as a heavy equipment driver/operator in the Russellville Street Department, Solid Waste Division.

The next regular meeting of the Russellville City Council will be September 20, 2021, with work session at 6 p.m., and meeting to follow.

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Yard sale, Saturday, September 18th. 417 Burgess St. Four family sale from 8 a.m. - until.

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Metal platform for use as Queen bed frame. Brand new. \$110. Call 256-398-0781.

Mainstay suede futon. Great condition. \$100. Call 256-398-0781.

Trailer and house on 3.75 acres of land. 905 Railsplitter Road in Phil Campbell. Call (574)-214-6074 for more information! (1)

Two Women's 26-inch Bicycles For Sale. \$50 each or both for \$75. Small Filing Cabinet For Sale. \$20. Stationary Exercise Bicycle. \$10. Call 256-324-2407.

I have two presidential dollar collections uncirculated. A few old wheat pennies. Call (256)-332-4037 for more information.

Rocks for sale. Creek rock, field rock, good for patios, housing and landscaping projects. Call (256)-332-4037.

Yorkie puppy for sale. Six months old male with papers and all shots and worming up to date. \$800 includes carrying case. Please call 256-332-1636 or 256-412-4951.

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Bobcats avenge last year's loss, beat Clements in crucial region matchup

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

PHIL CAMPBELL - Phil Campbell head coach Kevin Barnwell is currently in his fourth season at the helm of the Bobcat football program, which is typically around the time that coaches and fans alike start to fully see a bit of a culture change within the program.

Take one look at the previous three seasons that Barnwell has been the head coach for the Bobcats of and compare the teams from those seasons to today's team, and you'll notice a much different atmosphere around the program.

And of course that's not saying anything negative about those teams in previous years. After all, the Bobcats made the playoffs last season for the first time since 2015.

But now that Barnwell and his staff have had a chance to coach through players from their freshman year onward, the fruits of the hard work in trying to establish a certain type of culture within the program are starting to really show.

That culture and willingness to play hard through four quarters was on full display last Friday night in the Bobcats 37-14 win over Clements.

"Our guys are playing with passion. They're enjoying the game and they're flying around and having fun while competing. And that's been a process for us to build and our guys are finally understanding what we're trying to do," Barnwell said. "We've still got some things to work on schematically but the biggest overall takeaway for me was that our guys were competing."

And just by taking a quick glance at the basic overall numbers from year-to-year also suggests that the Bobcats are on the right track as well.

In 2018, Barnwell's first year as head coach, the Bobcats went 2-8 while scoring under 20 points per game (19.9). The following year, Phil Campbell managed to double their win total going 4-6 while increasing their scoring efforts at 24.7 points per game. Then of course in 2020, the Bobcats managed to go 6-5 on the season while securing a playoff berth.

Bobcat fans might have had a quick case of deja vu if they happened to just catch a glimpse of the final score last Friday night as the Bobcats lost in 2020 to Clements by a final of 38-18 while winning this year's matchup 37-14.

Flipping the script in just one year's time is a huge step in the right direction for the Bobcats. And Barnwell attributes a lot of the success on Friday night to the offensive line and coaching staff for setting the tone early.

"Last year playing against Clements, they outplayed us. But the roles were reversed last Friday night," Barnwell said. "So I was proud of our guys going out there and playing with passion and play-

See 'BOBCATS,' page 14

Shutting out and moving on

With a 52-0 win over Brewer in their pocket to go along with a 4-0 record, the Golden Tigers will look to build on their early season success as they take on a notable region rival this Friday night.

Brady Petree
 Franklin Free Press

Shutting out a team in football is one of the most difficult things to do across team sports.

Not only do you have typical second and sometimes third-string defenses and offenses on the field towards the end of most blowouts, which could ultimately lead to a score or two, but you also have the quirkiness of sports which can sometimes show itself to a random fumble or some other means of scoring.

And while the Golden Tigers certainly had region-rival Brewer's number in 2020 (winning the game 59-0), shutting out the same opponent in back-to-back years is almost unheard of, especially at the 5A level.

But that's just what the Russellville Golden Tigers did last Friday night when they routed Brewer for their second straight shutout of the Patriots by a final of 52-0.

While there was a bit of a slower start for the Golden Tigers coming off of another blowout win just one week prior, it didn't take too awfully long for things to get back to full speed for head coach John Ritter's squad.

"I thought we came out and played better as a whole. We came in a little flat and not as sharp as we wanted to be but after a few series our guys settled down and locked back in," Ritter said. "There were some big hits passed and I thought we played very physical. And once we got things going, I thought we played a really physical game."

Jumping out to a 10-0 lead early in the first quarter, the Golden Tigers were relentless on both sides of the football and quickly added on to their lead.

Malachi Duncan returned an interception for a touchdown followed soon thereafter by Arrieon "Boots" McCulloch breaking off a long touchdown run of his own to make it 24-0 into the second quarter.

But Russellville wasn't done yet.

Conner Warhurst tallied a touchdown run of his own while T.J. King returned a punt for his second special teams touchdown of the first half.

What makes the 37-0 rout at halftime even more impressive, is the fact that the Golden Tigers ran less than 12 plays on offense the *entire* first half.

"We ran 11 plays through the first quarter and a half. So offensively it was sort of difficult to get into a flow because we didn't get the ball very much," Ritter said. "But over the course of the game we did some things offensively that we wanted to do, which was establish the run."

Due to the efforts on special teams for the Golden Tigers, which has shown just how remarkable they can be in just about every game this season so far, there wasn't much of a need to stress on the offensive side of the football.

Having that element of their game be so efficient, while altering the momentum of games, is some-



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA
 McCulloch, above, and the Golden Tigers will look to get a crucial region win this Friday night against Lawrence County.

thing that Ritter and his staff take pride in and is something that they hope they can continue over the course of the season.

"We put a huge emphasis on special teams and we take pride in being able to block punts, return kicks and we've blocked a kick in every game," Ritter said. "We've given up two long kickoff returns but if you take those out, our punt team has been really good so we're winning the field position battle in the kicking game. It's (special teams) is a third of the game and it can swing momentum and it's done that in our last three games."

Duncan would add another touchdown to his total after finding the endzone on the ground in the third quarter to put the Golden Tigers up 43-0. Then, after a botched snap by Brewer which in turn was called a safety to put the Golden Tigers up 45-0, Zae Eggleston found the endzone to get in on the scoring action for Russellville to seal the 52-0 victory.

The win over Brewer moved the Golden Tigers one step closer to their goal of winning another region title. And they'll have to take another big step in that direction by beating rival Lawrence County this Friday night at Golden Tiger Stadium.

And while the Golden Tigers figure to be the heavy favorites this Friday night, if there's one thing the previous two matchups between Russellville and Lawrence County has taught us, it's to throw expectations of this matchup out the window.

And no one knows that better than Ritter.

See 'MOVING,' page 15

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Week five high school football preview in Franklin County

Brady Petree
Franklin Free Press

The 2021 season has gotten off to a hot start in Franklin County with two teams sitting atop their respective region standings in Russellville and Phil Campbell. While other teams are still trying to find their footing as region play kicks into full swing.

With a key rivalry matchup and an inter-county game as well on the docket for games in Franklin County this Friday night, we'll take a quick look at the matchups you can find across the county this week.

Russellville vs. Lawrence County

This game has been one of the must-watch region games on Russellville's schedule for the past few seasons. And on paper, the Golden Tigers *should* win this game pretty handedly.

However, one look at previous years matchups and you'll see that this one figures to be an exciting one just like in years past.

In 2019 and 2020, respectively, both matchups between the Golden Tigers and Red Devils by nine points and eight points despite neither team eclipsing the 30-point threshold.

After dropping the matchup in 2017, the Golden Tigers have won three straight matchups and lead the all-time series by a wide margin at 23-5 while averaging 25 points per game with Lawrence County averaging 13 points per game.

In 2021, Russellville came into the matchup with Lawrence County sitting at 4-0 (2-0 in region play) and have outscored their opponents by an astounding 168-62 tally.

Lawrence County, on the other hand, sits at 0-3 (0-1 in region play) while being outscored 81-16 on the season.

Red Bay vs. Tharptown

We're four weeks into the high school football season in 2021 and the Tigers have played twice through those four weeks due to having three bye weeks in the first six weeks of the season.

The Wildcats will square off in their third-straight region matchup after dropping the previous two to Colbert County and Lexington.

Fresh off one of those byes, the Tigers dropped their previous game in week three against Lexington 34-6 as they currently sit at 0-2 (0-1 in region play) while being outscored by their opponents at 74-30.

Tharptown sits at .500 on the season at 2-2 (0-2 in region play) while being outscored 136-30 on the season.

The Tigers and Wildcats have squared off every season since 2014 with the Tigers taking home each matchup and outpacing the Wildcats in scoring 57 points per contest.

Vina vs. Waterloo

The Red Devils' matchup last week against Decatur Heritage was forfeited by Vina, moving them to 0-3 on the season (0-2 in region play).

This week, the Red Devils will square off against Waterloo as both teams will be in search of their first win of the 2021 season.

The Cougars have dropped all four contests this season and have been outscored 136-26.

Overall, the all-time series between Vina and Waterloo has been almost evenly-matched, with Vina taking 26 victories and Waterloo claiming 18.

In those 26 wins, the Red Devils have averaged 35.8 points per game while the Cougars have averaged 37.5.

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'BOBCATS,' from page 11

ing to win. Coach Allison with the offensive line and Coach Winstead with the tight ends and our wings did a phenomenal job. Our guys on the offensive line were flying off the ball and that's been a priority for us after the Lamar County game and so I thought our offensive line was outstanding in helping us establish our gameplan."

Defensively is where the Bobcats were hurt most in 2020, as they surrendered 30 or more points five times in 2020. Shoring up the defense has been one of the primary areas of focus for Barnwell and his staff and the results so far are there. Through four games in 2021, the Bobcats have allowed only 29 points *total*, good for allowing just 7.3 points per game.

And the refinement of the defense hasn't happened overnight. Following last season, Barnwell and his staff went to work trying to defuse problems that plagued the Bobcats defense in 2020 and began coming up with ways to limit damage on the defensive side of the ball.

"We've been working on these types of schemes for a while now and at the end of the season last year, I went back and analyzed what our opponents were trying to do to us and how they were beating us and so we've come up with some schemes to counter that," Barnwell said. "Our defensive staff has done an unbelievable job in stopping what teams are trying to do against us."

One key factor that has elevated the Bobcats early in the 2021 season, has been the play of junior running back Bryant Hyde.

Against Clements, Hyde carried the ball 22 times for a staggering 233 yards (10.3 yards per carry) and *five* touchdowns to his credit to go along with 45 yards returning kickoffs.

Hyde, who started the year at quarterback, has now transitioned to running back and as a result, Phil Campbell is seeing it pay dividends in a massive way.

And Barnwell has had a front-row seat to Hyde's development over the years.

"Bryant is an unbelievable talent. He's got a lot of god-given ability and so what we're doing as a coaching staff is to get him in a position to use that ability. At first we started out with him at quarterback. But we feel like he's a downhill runner and we felt like we needed to move him around to get him the ball and we know if we can get him into space, he can make things happen," Barnwell said.

As to be expected, the Bobcats aren't content with just one signature win on their schedule. They want more. And if things hold true the way they have been so far in the 2021 season, fans could see more wins similar to the Clements victory down the line for the Bobcats and perhaps contention for a region title.

But the key, according to Barnwell, is to focus on what is in front of them at the moment while not getting hung up on what happened last Friday night.

"It's one step. And for us to achieve our goals, we've got to win the next day. I'm excited about the fact that we won, but that's just one step. So we've got to take that next step by showing up Monday at practice and then showing up next Friday against Haleyville and then by showing up the following week against Colbert Heights," Barnwell said.

Noah Raper (66 yards) and Kyle Pace (36 yards) both carried the ball nine times each.



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Back at it again last week, Hyde showed why he is one of the players to watch every week for the Bobcats. Against Clements in a critical region game for Phil Campbell, the junior running back rushed 22 times for 233 yards and five total touchdowns on the night to go along with 45 yards returned on kickoffs as well.



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'MOVING,' from page 11

"If you follow Russellville and Lawrence County over the past three years, on paper we feel like we were head and shoulders better than them. And all three years, they played us close," Ritter said. "That just goes to show that what the matchups look like on a white piece of paper aren't necessarily the way it's going to play out on a Friday night."

The Red Devils come into this week sitting at 0-3 on the season while failing to eclipse more than seven points in any game this season.

However, in both matchups in 2019 and 2020, the games between the Golden Tigers and Red Devils have been decided by nine points and eight points, respectively.

So keeping his squad focused on the matchup at hand while making sure emotions are in check for the high-energy game is something that is going to be a top priority according to Ritter.

"But we have to be extremely focused and get better each day this week so we can go out and play a complete football game," Ritter said. "Then you start thinking about the emotions in a rivalry game and the emotional aspects take over and you have to make sure that you play within yourself and not let the fact that we're playing Lawrence County get to you and just stick to the game plan."

Warhurst rushed five times for 60 yards while McCulloch rushed once for 65 yards and each added a touchdown to their credit. Malachi Duncan and Eggleston both added a touchdown as well.

While T.J. King's presence in the scoring game is typically felt on the offensive side of things, it was special teams where he made his mark this week, scoring a punt return touchdown and a kick return touchdown as well.

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Franklin Free Press Football Picks Contest

| Week 2: September 18th | Bailey's Pick | Your Pick |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
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| Penn St. vs. Auburn | Auburn | _____ |
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| North Carolina vs. Virginia | North Carolina | _____ |
| Memphis vs. Mississippi St. | Mississippi St. | _____ |
| Washington St. vs. USC | USC | _____ |
| Notre Dame vs. Purdue | Notre Dame | _____ |
| Colorado vs. Minnesota | Minnesota | _____ |
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