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Time table announced for return of NW-SCC athletics

John Pilati Franklin Free Press

Northwest-Shoals Community College Interim President Dr. Chris Cox announced Tuesday the return of baseball and softball to the school, with both sports to field teams next fall.

NOW

News of the return of athletics to NW-SCC was exclusively reported by the Franklin Free Press early in October.

Tuesday's press conference saw Cox updating the school's process of applying with the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

'The NCJAA voted last week to allow us to start athletics back here at Northwest-Shoals Community

College," Cox said. "We will begin with baseball and softball in the fall of 2022. That's a short time and there's a lot of work to do, but this team and this community is ready."

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The school terminated athletics in March of 2011. Former NW-SCC President Humphrey Lee promised a return of sports by 2016, but that year came and went. Lee retired in 2017.

Cox said basketball and volleyball will also return to the school, but he declined to give a time frame due to extensive work that must be done to the gymnasiums on the Shoals and Phil Campbell campuses.

School officials plan to hire an athletic director and head coaches for baseball and softball by the first of



Russellville BOE approves Early Learning Center renovation bid

John Pilati Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education approved a bid of \$123,000 for renovations to the West Elementary Early Learning Center at its October 28th meeting.

The bid, from Hovater Metal Works, was the only bid received for the parking area renovations at the Lawrence Street facility.

In other agenda items, the board: -approved an out-of-town trip request for Russellville High School varsity cheerleaders to attend regional competition in Huntsville on October 30, super regionals in

Huntsville on November 1, state finals competition in Birmingham on December 6 and Russellville Elementary School 5th grade students to travel to Washington, D.C., from May 5-8, 2022.

-approved facility use requests for RCS Board Room on November 9 by Alabama the Rural Water Association, RCS Auditorium on December 5 for a First Baptist Church Christmas musical and RCS gymnasiums on December 11, January 15, 22 and 29 and February 5 and 12 for the Tennessee Valley Basketball Association youth basketball games.

See 'BOE,' page 5



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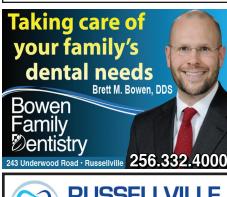
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Peggy Corbell McGuire, 85, of Russellville passed away on Thursday, October 28th. Interment at Tharptown Cemetery.

William Copeland "Buddy" McKinney, 78, of Russellville, passed away on Wednesday, October 27th. Interment at Franklin Memory Gardens.

Marguerite Lane Nicholson, 92, of Russellville, passed away on Sunday, October 31st. Interment at Franklin Memory Gardens.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the Alabama Abandoned Motor Vehicle Act. Alabama Code Sections 32-13-1 through 32-13-8, the following motor vehicle will be sold for cash at 10:30 a.m., on December 15, 2021, at M&N Wrecker & Service Center, 11833 Hwy. 43 South, Russellville, Al, 35653. Seller reserves the right to reject any bid and the right to bid.

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'ATHLETICS,' from page 1

the year. Cox said a budget has been developed that will include all purchases required to accommodate the programs. Bids for upgrades to the baseball and softball fields will be let after final approval for the reinstatement of athletics comes from the Alabama Community College System in December.

"There are lot of things to be purchased, like equipment. We don't even have a ball on campus yet, but we will do all it takes to create a successful athletic program," Cox said. "I'm glad to be able to say 'Go Patriots' on the Northwest-Shoals campus again.'

NW-SCC will award 24 scholarships for baseball and 24 for softball. All scholarships will cover books, tuition and fees, Cox said. Prospective student athletes interested in baseball or softball are encouraged to complete the athletics scholarship link that will be posted on the school's financial aid webpage on November 15, 2021.

Exhibition season will take place in the fall of 2022, with conference play starting in March of 2023. The two programs will be housed at the Shoals campus and all games will be played there, Cox said.

Two weeks ago, NW-SCC officials announced a \$30 million renovation to its two campuses. Cox said basketball and volleyball games will be played on both campuses as those programs begin once gym renovations are completed.

Former NW-SCC softball player Jill Green spoke at Tuesday's press conference. Green, who went on to play softball at the University of North Alabama where she earned her degree, is a teacher and varsity softball coach at Muscle Shoals High School.

"I went to Colbert Heights High School. Northwest-Shoals Community College gave me a chance to continue my education and continue playing softball," Green said. "I loved that my parents and friends could watch me play here. That opportunity led to me playing at UNA and later teaching and coaching at Muscle Shoals High School.

"I'm excited that kids in our area will now get the same opportunity I had," she added.



COURTESY PHOTO

Dr. Cox, above, announced that sports will be returning to NW-SCC. An exhibition season for baseball and softball will take place in the fall of 2022 with conference play beginning in 2023.

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FCCDC approves multiple grants for schools, non-profits

John Pilati Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Community Development Commission met October 29th and approved a number of grants to local schools and non-profit agencies.

The commission, which includes Brad Bolton, Jeremy Campbell, Chris Wallace and Charlene Fancher, meets quarterly to review grant applications. The next meeting of the commission will be January 28, 2022, at 8:30 a.m., at the Franklin County Courthouse Annex.

Any grant request for that meeting must be received by a member of the commission on or before January 21, 2022, at 12 p.m.

With the most recent grants, more than \$2.287 million has been returned to Franklin County since the inception of the funding. The funds come from in lieu of tax payments from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The Franklin County legislative delegation, Sen. Larry Stutts, Rep. Proncey Robertson and Rep. Jamie Kiel, each make an appointment to the commission to represent them.

Grant awards for the October 29th meeting included:

-\$2,112 to Shoals Sav-A-Life for capital improvements and installation of mini-split heating and A/C.

-\$5,000 transfer to the Franklin County Future Economic Development Fund.

-\$125 to Vina High School cross country for uniforms and equipment.

-\$500 to Belgreen High School Scholars Bowl Team for purchase of materials and competition devices.

-\$800 to Tharptown High School for purchase of interactive display camera.

-\$800 to Belgreen High School for special needs classroom Chromebooks and sensory tools purchase.

-\$800 to Franklin County Sheriff's Office for purchase of computer, equipment and training materials.

-\$800 to Belgreen School kindergarten classroom for purchase of printer, tablets and supplies.

-\$800 to Tharptown High School basketball for purchase of software and equipment.

-\$2,500 to Franklin County Schools Community Education for purchase of Infant Simulators.

-\$800 to Tharptown High School Library for purchase of books.

-\$250 to Vina High School FFA for travel expenses to National Convention.

-\$1,000 to Phil Campbell Elementary School for 2nd grade reading table and chairs.

-\$1,000 to Belgreen High School science classroom for purchase of chairs.

-\$1,000 to Phil Campbell High School basketball for purchase of equipment, graphics and weights.

-\$800 to Phil Campbell Elementary School for 1st grade classroom purchase of technology materials.

\$125 to Belgreen High School cross country for uniforms and equipment. -\$950.50 to Tharptown High School basketball for purchase of goal and cooler.

-\$2,000 to Red Bay High School football program for nutrition expenses. -\$800 to Phil Campbell Elementary School 1St grade purchase of class-

room technology materials.

-\$500 to Vina High School for trip to Dauphin Island Sea Lab Study Trip.

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FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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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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My take on this... What do you mean I'm a blonde?

Well hello friends!

I hope your week has been going great so far. For the ones who claim to never have a great day I'll just say that I hope things are going okay for you.

My life is similar to yours. The movie Clint Eastwood was in was

Gail Motes called, The Good, The Bad and the

Ugly, describes life pretty good. It's a mixture of all. Some of us might seem to have a little more of one than the other, but it's all going to happen at eventually.

I guess my life is very similar to the show, I Love Lucy. Lucille Ball and I carry many of the same traits. Many things go right over my head and I'm not talking airplanes, if you know what I mean.

Just the other day a friend made a comment to me by text. We all know talking is beginning to be a thing of the past. Anyway, I had no idea what he was talking about, so I did the most logical thing possible, I texted back, "What?" His reply wasn't

an answer. Oh no!

He texted me he hated when I acted like a "blonde" because I was smarter than that. I did like that he thought I was intelligent. I'm not sure about the blonde part since I color my hair. There is a chance I could be gray-headed. I'm not sure since I color my hair. I have no interest in knowing anyway. After all, who has ever heard of the expression, you are acting like a gray. That even sounds weird, doesn't it?

He eventually answered, but I could tell by the tone of his text he still thought I knew the answer. You know how you can tell the emotions of a text. Yeah, right?

I do have moments when I speak before my brain has processed the answer. I talk fast, but I am slower about thinking. I guess that is another way Lucy and I are similar.

A good example of this happened a few weeks ago. A friend had made a CD for me to practise learning a song. He explained he made two differ-SEE 'TAKE,' page 8

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Next to Phil Campbell High School

Owner/Pharmacist Wes Mayfield

'BOE,' from page 1

-approved a contract with LeAnn Strickland to contract with RHS Band Parent Program for stadium clean-up for the 2021-22 school year and with Chris Copeland as a School Resource Officer from November 15, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

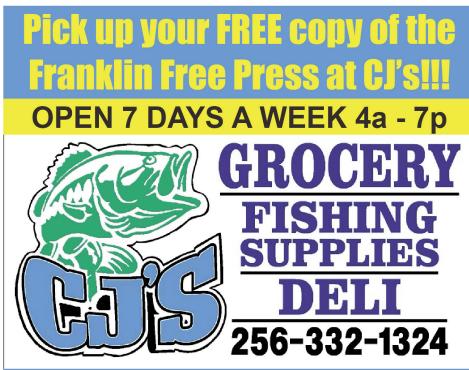
-selected board member Greg Trapp as the Alabama Association of School Boards delegate for the upcoming year and Bret Gist as alternate delegate.

-approved the Families First Coronavirus Response Act be extended through December 31, 2021, with emergency sick leave paid for a maximum of 10 days from August 6, 2020, through December 31, 2021. Employee must sign a FFCRA leave request form in order to use emergency sick leave. -approved personnel moves including:

Employment in Position: Reece Carson and Summer Butler, Park & Recreation Department, temporary part-time student workers, Yoni Andres Miguel, temporary part-time student worker at RHS, Marshall Bryant as custodian/groundskeeper at Park & Recreation Department with start date October 25, Jody Evans, RES teacher, effective November 15, Reyna Mendoza Kirchner, secretary/bookkeeper at RHS, effective November 1 and Ashlee Moon, Park & Recreation temporary part-time student worker.

Employment in Supplement: Madison Lamon, assistant RMS softball coach.

Resignation in Position: Shae Mansell, CNP worker at RES. Temporary Employment: Chelsey Puckett, temporary employment to fill Caitlin Witt's leave of absence from November 8-February 22.



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What's Happening

EVENTS OF INTEREST - FAMILY REUNIONS - PLAYS - CHURCH GATHERINGS - EDUCATIONAL - CLUB MEETINGS 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.

Russellville Masonic Lodge #371 is selling Smoked Hams for Thanksgiving. Hams are \$30 each and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pickup is Wednesday, November 24th, 8-10 a.m., at the Lodge on Coffee Avenue.

The Phil Campbell Arts & Historical Society will host the first annual Christmas Bazaar, Saturday, November 13th, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at the Phil Campbell Community Center, 132 Sherry Bryce Road in Phil Campbell. For booth information call 256-810-4572. There will be arts & crafts, homemade treasures, Scentsy, Christmas décor, unique gifts, and Peggy's Backwoods "On the Go."

The United Methodist Women will sponsor their annual rummage/bake sale from 7 A.M. - 5 P.M. on Friday, November 5th, and 7 A.M. - 11

A.M. on Saturday, November 6th in the ministry center directly behind the First United Methodist Church in downtown Russellville. This event is held to raise money for local and foreign missions. Items for sale include household goods, furniture, books, and white elephants. Cakes, pies and other homemade baked goods are available for purchase. We ask that you mask!

The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts in Red Bay, AL would like to announce its first production of the 2021-22 season, Seasonal Allergies by Katherine DiSavino and Kevin Mead and directed by Emily Edmonson. The performances will take place November 11-13, 2021 at 7:00 PM and Sunday November 14, 2021 at 2:00 PM at the Weatherford Centre in Red Bay, AL. Tickets will go on sale at the Centre starting November 1 between the hours of 2-4 PM weekdays with ticket price at 8.00 each. You may go by between those hours or call 256-356-9829, if no answer please leave a message. If you are interested in bringing a group to the theatre please contact Beth Hammock 256-356-9286. Do you have Seasonal Allergies? You might be experiencing the symptoms of them and not even know it. Seasonal Allergies tend to show themselves right around the holidays: do you feel a tickle in the back of your throat when you realize your vegetable dishes cooked faster than you thought and now they're ready a full hour before the turkey will be out of the oven? Do your eyes water uncontrollably after you've nearly broken your back climbing into the attic to find the Christmas lights and then discover that only half the strand lights up? Do you find yourself over heated when family members decide to extend their vacation and "hang out" for a few more days in your home? Then you, my friend, have got Seasonal Allergies. And you are not alone! 9 out of 10 people have Seasonal Allergies, but nobody has a case worse than Julia Shelby and her brother Peter. So, get ready to laugh away your throat tickle and clear your sinuses with a healthy dose of Holiday Fun. The cast includes Brandy Cook, Koley Kent, Caroline Vanasselberg, Clint Sikes, Molly Thorn, Theron Struzik and Avery Klose. This is the BTCPA's 25th Anniversary, producing over 75 productions with hundreds of actors, directors, and behind the scenes individuals. The BTCPA would like to thank all of those who have been involved over the years and the wonderful community who continues to support local theater.

The Russellville Fire Department is now accepting applications for the 2021 Helping Santa Toy Program. Applications may be picked up at the Russellville Police Department or the Russellville Fire Department. They must be filled out completely and turned in by the November 19, 2021, deadline for consideration. All forms must be filled out completely to be eligible for assistance.

A merican Legion Post 64 in Russellville invites you to the annual Veteran's Day Parade on Sunday, November 7th at 2 p.m. in downtown Russellville. Veterans will gather down at the A.W. Todd Centre. Will have old cars and military trucks for veterans to ride in. Will assemble there and pull down to Big Star then make the way through town. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend the parade!

Have an event we can help publicize? Call us at 256-332-0255.

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Taking the weight off your shoulders: Holistic Harmony offering weight loss, stress-reduction therapy packages

John Pilati Franklin Free Press

As we near the start of 2022, a majority of Americans will make New Year's resolutions, with the most common ones including losing weight, eating more healthily and exercising more.

According to https://today.yougov.com, more than 50 percent of resolutions include increasing exercise. 37 percent resolve to lose weight and 43 percent resolve to improve their diet.

Anna Carol Porter, owner of Holistic Harmony in Russellville, has several

therapy options designed to help your weight loss journey, reduce stress and help with pain management, all through hypnotherapy.

Holistic Harmony is offering several discounted combos involving multiple therapies that will give you a head start on those New Year's resolutions.

These therapy combos start at only \$55 with addons allowed. They include hypnosis and weight loss, with 50 minutes of hypnotherapy, 10 minutes of fascial stretch therapy and a Lifewave SP6 weight loss patch.

If reducing stress is your goal, consider the hypnotherapy for stress and general life improvement. It includes 50 minutes of hypnotherapy, 10 minutes of fascial stretch therapy and a Lifewave X39 stem cell activation patch.

The SP6 patch uses phototherapy to help reduce appetite and cravings by placement of the patch on specific areas of the body. The X39 patch uses similar

COURTESY PHOTO

Porter, above, offers a variety of therapy packages including weight loss, stressreduction and pain management.

technology to help reduce stress and promote relaxation.

The patches do not contain drugs or chemicals. The X39 patch is designed to elevate a peptide known to enhance the body's stem cell activity, providing more energy and improved quality of sleep.

Fascial stretch therapy is designed to eliminate pain, restore function and allow the person to move and feel better. Fascial tissue holds our muscles together and is connected to the tendons, ligaments and nerve endings in our bodies.

SEE 'THERAPY,' page 8

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PAGE 8 NOVEMBER 3, 2021

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'THERAPY,' from page 7

Porter said the therapy is designed to promote whole body healing. "Fascial stretch therapy helps to regulate sleep, provide better posture and an optimum range of motion," Porter said. "It's one of the quickest, most effective and pleasant methods to eliminate pain, restore function and move

and feel better in life's activities." If your goal is to kick the habit of smoking, Holistic Harmony offers a combo hypnosis and smoking cessation that also includes a Lifewave Aeon stress reducing patch.

Porter, a certified hypnotherapist and Fascia Stretch Practitioner, uses compassionate, positive therapy to help clients reach their unique goals. Her specialties include diseases, anxiety, weight loss, depression, pain management, loss and grieving and sleep disorders.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences degree from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, where she graduated with honors.

You can schedule a session at Holistic Harmony by calling 256-668-2830. For more information, visit Holistic Harmony on Facebook or log onto the website http://annacarolporterholisticharmony.com.

'TAKE,' from page 4

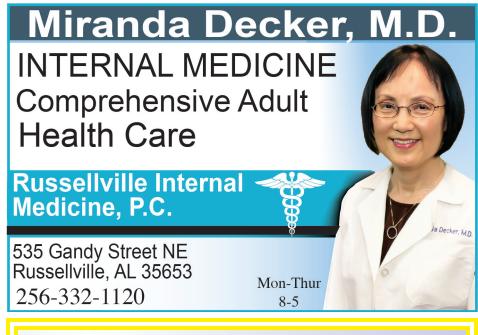
ent ones. One had the words and one just the music. Without hesitation, I asked which side had the words. He looked perplexed and asked, "Really?" I told him I was serious. Again, I repeated the question.

By that time, my brain had processed the answer. We just had to laugh. Here it was; another Lucy moment. My friends would probably say, "Lucy has nothing on me!"

One of my brothers told me years ago that people who laughed for no reason was stupid. Since he wasn't a psychic, I knew he had no idea that I always had a reason for laughing.

I hope most of you will find a reason to laugh this week. I know I will. Have a good one my friends.

As always, until later...



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Shoals Primary Care

welcomes

Dr. Zaman Shah

to the practice in Sheffield



Board certified in Internal Medicine, Dr. Shah is an exceptional physician and a close family member of Dr. Syed.

He will be continuing Dr. Syed's legacy of excellent and compassionate patient care with Shoals Primary Care.

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Russellville Foster Grandparent Program accepting applications

John Pilati Franklin Free Press

The City of Russellville Foster Grandparent Program is now accepting applications for senior citizens interested in working in Russellville City Schools and Franklin County Schools.

We are looking for senior citizens who live in these cities and communities. Russellville City Schools and Belgreen School are in particular need of Foster Grandparents. You will be working 15-40 hours a week with special needs children in the school systems, head starts and day cares.

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You will be tutoring and mentoring children with their school work and

helping them to learn. If you are 55 years or

older and live on a fixed income, then this is the program for you. You will receive a small non-taxed stipend two times a month, mileage reimbursement and lunch for each day of service.

This stipend does not count as income according to Public Law 93-113 under the Older

Americans Act. It will not affect any other federal or state assistance you are already receiving. You will also be covered with accidental and personal liability insurance while working in the program.

We are desperately needing senior citizens

for Russellville City, Belgreen and all Franklin County Schools. This program is great for making ends meet, a sense of well-being, having a purpose in life, and a sense of self-esteem.

You will leave the work station each day feeling and knowing that you have made a positive difference in a child's life.

If you are interested, please contact our office at 256-332-6800 or by fax at 256-332-6846.



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YARD SALES There will be a Community Yard Sale on Friday, Nov. 5 and Saturday, Nov. 6, from 8-4 each day, at Southwood Gardens Apartments, 100 Southwood Gardens, Russellville. Lots of

items so come see us!

Buying a home is a common way to invest your money. But is it the only one?

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Name brand clothes, this Friday November 5th name brand shoes & purses. Rugs, com-Saturday, November 6th forters, home decor, etc. Everything is priced to sell!

from 8 - until, from

from 8 - 12 at 1207

College Ave. in

Russellville. Christmas

items, clothing, etc.

Huge community yard

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November 6th from 7 -

until. 605 Witt Store Rd.

4

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Contractor looking for workers for Diana's Workforce. \$11/hour manual labor and packing posts. Must be able to lift 65-85 pounds and work weekends. Please call (256)-324-0222 for more information.

FOR SALE

Trailer and house on 3 75 acres of land 905 Railsplitter Road in Phil Campbell. Call (574)-214-6074 for more information!

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

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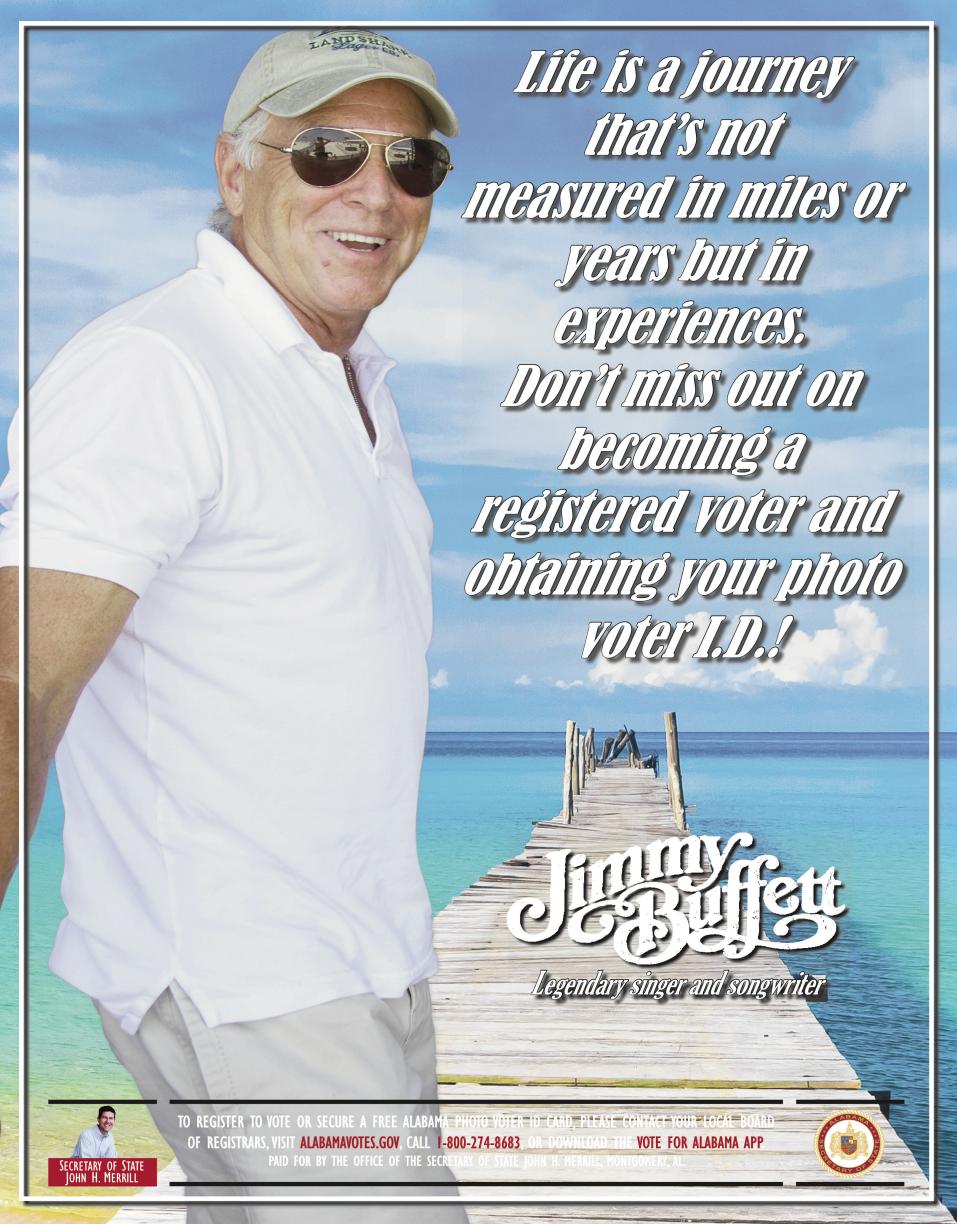
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Bobcats prepping for first home playoff game since 2002

Brady Petree Franklin Free Press

This Friday night, Phil Campbell High School will get the opportunity to do something that hasn't been done in almost two decades: host a playoff game.

And as the Bobcats prepare for their playoff matchup against J.B. Pennington, the excitement is certainly there for a school that has been desperate for its first home playoff game since 2002. For head coach Kevin Barnwell, while he might not be able to hear the excitement raining down from the crowd on Friday night, he understands the importance of the energy that the crowd can bring and is hopeful that the energy will find its way down onto the field.

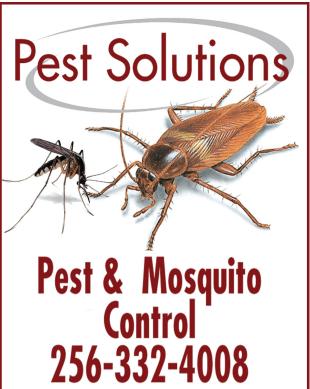
"The excitement is certainly there. We hope that our community comes out and supports us. Of course us coaches can't hear everything while we've got the headsets on, but our kids will. And so we're hoping the kids will hear that and sense the support and it'll make it even more exciting for them and bring some more energy."

The Bobcats have been able to get an early jump on the scouting process for their first postseason game of the year as they found out their matchup weeks ago.

Finishing third in 3A region 6, J.B. Pennington finished the year at 6-4 while finishing behind undefeated Winfield and 8-2 Oakman.

For the Tigers, the last three games of the season proved challenging as they averaged just 11





Taking it one week at a time The Golden Tigers cap off their 8-2 regular season and now turn their focus towards the first round of the 5A AHSAA playoffs in what they hope will be the first of many postseason matchups this season.



Taking on Lincoln this Friday night, the Golden Tigers are hoping to advance to the second round in back-to-back seasons for the first time since 2015-2016.

Brady Petree Franklin Free Press

For the third time in four seasons, Golden Tiger Stadium will be the site of the start of what fans hope will be a long playoff run for the 5A region 8 champs.

Taking on Lincoln High School on Friday night, the Golden Tigers will look to kickoff a postseason filled with high expectations and optimism. But before they could fully turn their attention towards Lincoln, the Golden Tigers had to first attempt to wrangle their final regular season opponent.

In order to win region titles, clinch playoff spots and make deep runs into the playoffs, teams have to have a short memory in some regards.

Letting the week before go and focusing on the upcoming week at hand is something that is key for teams and programs with dreams of making deep playoff pushes. While Russellville would have liked to have capped off their stellar season with a victory over the top-ranked Madison Academy Mustangs, the Tigers feel as though the quality of football they played was on par, if not better than they had hoped for a majority of the game.

"We felt like it was going to be a great segway into the playoffs. They're the number one team in 4A and they're very talented on both sides of the ball. Coach Godsey does a really good job," Ritter said. "And we really felt like if we went over there and played mistake-free football and got after it, that we would have a chance to win and really we did for about three and a half quarters."

Despite the 34-20 loss to the Mustangs, the Golden Tigers still feel confident in how they finished the season.

Through the last four games of the season, the Golden Tigers went 3-1 including two shutouts on

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WEEK,' from page 13

the season, both of which came against region opponents.

With only two losses on the season coming to extremely high-quality opponents from the 4A and 6A levels, the Golden Tigers feel as though the regular season has them battle-tested for what they hope will be a deep playoff push.

"We had a great year. To go 8-2 with our two losses coming to the number one team in 4A and the number two team in 6A, those teams are not chopped liver that's for sure. Those are some really good, high-quality teams," Ritter said. "We feel like we are in a good place where we are defensively, offensively and with special teams too. The key is to take all that momentum that we established in the previous four weeks and keep it rolling."

This Friday night will be the first matchup between the Golden Tigers and Golden Bears in their respective histories.

Coming from an extremely difficult region to play in, Lincoln boasts a 6-4 record on the year while finishing fourth in 5A region 6.

And while there might not be too much familiarity between the two programs, Ritter and his staff know a little bit about the region itself from which Lincoln comes from.

"That region is really good. You've got Alexandria there undefeated at the one seed, Leeds at 9-1 at the two seed, Center Point at 7-3 at the three seed and then Lincoln with the four seed in that region. And so to make the play-offs in that stacked of a region is quite a feat," Ritter said. "Lincoln is a really good team and their record is a bit deceiving. But I go back to four years ago when Center Point came over here to play us where they were sitting at 5-5. But those five losses were quality losses and same this year with Lincoln."

When it comes down to what will get the Golden Tigers over the hump and give them their first second round appearance in back-to-back seasons since 2015-2016, Ritter says that it all boils down to sticking with the things that got the Golden Tigers to this point.

And with those things that got the Golden Tigers here, taking it week-byweek is something that they are no stranger to.

"Our deal this year is the same as it always is. We have got to take care of the football, tackle well in space and not give up big plays on either side of the football," Ritter said. "The key is for us to be the best team that we can be every Friday night. Because after that it doesn't really matter. We just have to be 1-0 after each week and this week's opponent is Lincoln and our

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'BOBCATS,' from page 13

points per game in their final games compared to 32.8 points per game in the seven games prior.

But despite the late season troubles for the Tigers, Barnwell and his staff are very aware that anything can happen in the postseason.

And of course, anytime the playoffs roll around, high quality football is to be expected. And no one knows that better than the Bobcats head coach.

'They're a good team. They've got some playmakers over there. But we've got some good film on them so we've got a pretty good idea as to what they've got and what they're going to try and do against us," Barnwell said. "But at this point in the season, every team you face is going to be good. It's November and anytime you play in November, it's time to lace them up and get after it."

Before the Bobcats were able to turn their attention towards J.B. Pennington, they first had to take care of an old rival to wrap up the regular season.

And in the final tuneup before the playoffs, things were clicking on all cylinders for the Bobcats as they cruised to a 31-8 victory over longtime foe Hackleburg to finish the regular season at 7-3.

"Anytime you step on the field, you're playing to win and so that was our number one goal. The big thing here is getting our guys to understand how to compete. Regardless of the circumstances, we need to be able to compete," Barnwell said. "We wanted to continue to compete regardless of the circumstances and continue to do what we do and get better at it."

With a second place region finish in hand and the playoffs in sight, it would have been easy for the Bobcats to lay down and let a game that they should have won slip by as they finish off the season.

And in recent years that exact scenario just might have happened.

But as the years go by and Barnwell and his staff bring in group after group, the culture within the Bobcat program is slowly but surely starting to change. And that is something that has been on the forefront of Barnwell's coach-

ing agenda since he took over the program in 2018.

'This is the next step that we're trying to build here where it doesn't really matter what the circumstances are. Whether it's positive or negative, you've got to be ready to play the next play," Barnwell said. "When we got here, things were not going well. They were 1-9 the year before and so we had to teach these guys that it doesn't matter what the circumstances are, you've just got to play the next play and focus on getting better. And so now they've had some success and once you start having that success, it doesn't matter what those circumstances are, you just play the next play.

When you do something in a program that hasn't been done in almost two decades (when the kids currently in the program hadn't even been born yet), some might be content with what the Bobcats have accomplished so far.

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PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN MEDINA

The Bobcats will play a playoff game in front of a home crowd for the first time since 2002 when they take the field against J.B. Pennington on Friday night.

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ultimate goal is to be 1-0."

Much like their county counterpart Phil Campbell, the Golden Tigers have known who they were going to match up with in the first round of the playoffs for a couple of weeks now.

Getting a jumpstart on scouting out your playoff opponent is a prime benefit of performing so well in region play.

Now with a few weeks of film and scouting performed by him and his coaching staff, Ritter and his staff hope to have a good idea of what to expect from a Lincoln squad that is averaging 23.3 points per game on the season.

Even though the looks that the Golden Tigers may see on Friday night prove to be of an unconventional set.

ventional set. 'They're a shotgun, wing-t-esque type of team with a lot of zone read type of things. But then again they'll get under center and run the triple option. So it's kind of a unique deal because you don't really see those kinds of things run together all that often," Ritter said. "They'll get under center and run the I-formation and if you stop it, they'll get back out in the shotgun. They just want to see if you're option-responsibly sound."



Allowing just 18.6 points per game on defense, the

Golden Bears have one shutout to their credit while allowing under seven points three times this season.

While those numbers are certainly something to keep an eye on, the Golden Bears will have their hands full with a potent Russellville offense that boasts a cupboard full of offensive weapons to attack the opposition with.

"Defensively they are going to be in a 3-4 with five defensive linemen with their hands on the ground. The key for us offensively is going to be the same for us defensively which is for us to recognize what they're in and then execute," Ritter said. "Whether it's our run game, passing game or whatever it is, we just have to be ready for whatever they throw at us and recognize it."

With the playoffs looming and preparations underway all throughout the week, one might assume that it would be prime time to change things up or maybe take a different approach.

But why fix what isn't broken?

According to Ritter, taking this week to prepare will consist of one key component: treating this week's practice as if it is a typical week for the Golden Tigers.

"It will be a big mental week for us. We have to be mentally locked in and prepared for a really good opponent coming in. But this week it's going to be the same as it's been all year for us. Our Monday practice this week will be the same as the previous 11 Monday's. And our Tuesday will be the same as the past 11 Tuesday's. If we're able to play further, our next X amount of Monday's will be the same," Ritter said. "So if we're playing that last Friday in November or the first week of December, Monday and Tuesday will be the exact same. We're not going to deviate from what we do because what we do works and is effective. So for us this is just another Monday."

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After all, 2021 saw the first seven-win season since 2001 for the Bobcats as they also put together a successful season on both sides of the football while allowing just 13.3 points per game which is the lowest total for a season since that aforementioned 2001 season.

But the Bobcats aren't content with just "being here".

Barnwell hopes that the Bobcats can both make a deep run in the playoffs while using this experience as sort of a launching pad for the program.

"We're excited and we're glad to be here, but our goal is to take it to another level. You can really divide the season into three parts. You've got the first half, the second half and then the playoffs. And we had a winning record in the first half and a winning record in the second half," Barnwell said. "So we're going to take this third part and enjoy it and live in the moment."

One thing that Barnwell and his staff have attempted to instill within the program over the course of his coaching tenure at Phil Campbell, has been the ability to continue to get better despite adversity; something that the Bobcats had struggled with before.

And this season is the perfect indication of just how far the program has come in the short time that Barnwell has been there.

But make no mistake about it, the work isn't done yet according to the fourth-year head coach.

"As a program we still have to learn how to sometimes not be burdened by the process of getting better. Some days I might not feel great. But I still have to use every opportunity that I have to get better," Barnwell said. "We have to continue to get better every day and every play. And then on Friday night, let things fall as they may. But at least we've put it all out there and achieved our capabilities by working every day and every play to get better."

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Week 10: November 6th	Bailey's Pick	Your Pick
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Auburn at Texas A&M	Auburn	
LSU at Alabama	Alabama	
Penn St. at Maryland	Penn St.	
Tennessee at Kentucky	Kentucky	
Liberty at Ole Miss	Ole Miss	
Mississippi St. at Arkansas	Arkansas	
Florida at South Carolina	Florida	
Wake Forest at North Carolina	Wake Forest	
Michigan St. at Purdue	Michigan St.	
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