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March 21st meeting to consider three precinct polling center

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission started the process of creating a polling center at Russellville First Baptist Church that would consolidate the Franklin County Courthouse Annex, College Avenue School and Electric Board Warehouse into one location.

At its February 21st meeting, the commission approved having a public hearing on the matter at 6 p.m., Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at Russellville FBC.

Voters in the College Avenue and Electric Board Warehouse currently share a polling location at the A.W. Todd Centre. If this new proposal is approved, those precincts would vote in the church Fellowship Building, which would be divided into three areas for voters to cast their ballots.

Franklin County Probate Judge Barry Moore said the public is encouraged to attend the March 21st meeting to provide input as to whether the three-precinct polling center proposal is something to move forward with, or not.

See 'COMMISSION,' Page 3

RHS' Morgan a finalist for Bryant-Jordan Scholar Athlete Award

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Sarah Morgan is used to winning. The Russellville High School senior has excelled academically and athletically throughout her time in Russellville City Schools.

And when she travels to Birmingham next month as a finalist for the Bryant-Jordan Foundation's annual awards banquet, Morgan's accomplishments give her an excellent chance to be named the overall 2023 Scholar Athlete.

Morgan, the daughter of Tom and Laura Morgan, was nominated by RHS Principal Jeremy Madden as the school's Scholar Athlete candidate, and senior Yamilson Velasquez

was selected as the school's nominee for the Achievement Award.

Last month, Morgan was named the Class 5A Region 8 Scholar Athlete. She was one of eight 5A region finalists and moved a step closer to earning additional scholarship monies on top of the \$3,000 she received for earning regional honors. Then the news came announcing Morgan had been selected as the 5A finalist.

Each of the seven Scholar Athlete Class winners will receive an additional \$3,500 scholarship and another \$4,000 scholarship will be presented to the overall winner who is named the Larry D. Striplin, Jr. Scholar Athlete of the Year.

The award is presented to the stu-

See 'MORGAN,' Page 7



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**Henrietta Borchers Pillers, 92, of
Russellville, AL passed away on
Tuesday, February 21, 2023. Spry
Memorial Chapel assisted the family.**

**Deborah Dianna Mitchell, 67, of
Tuscumbia (formerly of Russellville),
passed away on Wednesday, February
22, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted
the family.**

**Marion Susie Crowell, 74, of Phil
Campbell, passed away on Wednesday,
February 22, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel
assisted the family.**

**Rassey Sever Cooper, Jr., 74, of
Russellville, passed away on Thursday,
February 23, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel
assisted the family.**

**James Everett Sprague, 91, of
Russellville, passed away on
February 26, 2023. Pinkard Funeral
Home assisted the family.**

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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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Correction:

In our February 22, 2023 edition, a photo on page one of Phil Campbell High School student Nick Williams was incorrectly labeled Canida. We regret and apologize for the error.

'COMMISSION,' from Page 1

"This would not change any district lines for precincts," Moore said. "It would just be a change in polling location."

According to 2022 records, there are 892 registered voters in the College Avenue precinct, 905 in the Courthouse Annex and 1,107 in the Electric Warehouse precinct.

In other agenda items, the commission:

—tabled a request by Franklin County Coroner Charles Adcox for an increase in the salary for his office. Any increase in salary would require a local act be approved by the Alabama Legislature. Commissioners will consider the request at a later meeting after receiving more information about how the process must be done.

—approved Family Medical Leave Act leave for Mary Hillman-Glass for four to six weeks due to her recent surgery.

—approved payment of an invoice from Precision for repairs to the emergency sirens in East Franklin, Spruce Pine and Mountain Star, in the amount of \$1,115, and an estimate of \$1,246 for repairs to the Tharptown and Bethsaida sirens.

Live testing of the county's sirens has been suspended. The mayors of Franklin County's five municipalities may request tests for sirens in their cities.

—approved employment of Steve Pounders as a part-time employee in the Franklin County Highway Department, and Blake Delaney as a full-time employee.

—approved purchase of 18 new polling pads to be used in the 2024 election cycle at a cost of \$7,461.

—approved the resignation of Brittany Roccato as a Property Clerk in the Franklin County Revenue Commissioner's Office, and approved the advertisement for the vacancy.

—approved the employment of Janet Dalton Yancey as a Deputy Sheriff in the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Trenton Hovater as a Corrections Officer/Dispatcher and Lariza Delgado and Sarah Kimbrough as part-time Corrections Officers/Dispatchers.

—approved the retirement of Sheriff's Investigator Jason Holcomb.

—approved the conditional sale of up to 185 dumpsters located inside the City of Russellville to the City of Russellville in advance of the city beginning collection of commercial solid waste later this year. Cost will be \$500/dumpster.

—amended the county's Drug and Alcohol Policy to allow for employee discipline for a positive marijuana test even if the employee has a medical marijuana card if the employee works in a "safety sensitive position."

—heard an update from Moore about an informal meeting with Commissioner Chris Wallace, Engineer Jason Baggett and Animal Control Officer Joey Wingo to discuss preliminary layout of an animal control building in the county. Additionally, Commissioner Jason Miller will travel to Fayette County to tour that county's animal control facility.

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Notice is hereby given that on March 4, 2023, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., units will be sold by sealed bid.

Tenant may satisfy their indebtedness prior to the time of sale.

Will be able to inspect units and bid on this date.

All units have miscellaneous items, furniture and boxes.

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#8, #11 Cheryl Nix
#82 Jesse McCaffery
#86 Katie Franks
#101 Jennifer Melendez
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#6 Carvel Loyd
#31 Duran Robinson

(Franklin Free Press February 22, March 1, 2023)

M&N Wrecker owners complete electric vehicle towing certification

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

As the popularity of electric vehicles grows, so do the challenges for towing professionals in loading and hauling them.

That's why M&N Wrecker owners Jeff and Tina Murray recently completed a class to become certified in towing electric and hybrid vehicles.

Although the State of Alabama does not require specific certification for loading or hauling electric vehicles, Murray said there are specific protocols required to do so safely.

"On standard cars, you have hook up points to connect to," Murray

said. "For weight and efficiency, the electric vehicles have done away with that. The bottom of an electric car is completely solid.

"There are certain procedures you have to go through in towing an electric vehicle to disarm it so it won't electrocute anyone, or damage the

vehicle any further. There are special spots on these vehicles to disable/deenergize it so it can be towed without damage," he added.

The Murrays received Certificates of Completion of the Hybrid/Electric Vehicle Operations Level from the Energy Security Agency.

Murray explained that a strap is looped through the vehicle, behind the front seats, then under the front of the vehicle. He purchased special straps to be used with electric/hybrid vehicles.

In addition to safely loading electric/hybrid vehicles, the course also addressed cutting electric vehicles and, if responding to a crash, understanding the risks of electric shock or fire from damaged lithium batteries. There were also first responders in attendance, Murray said.

While electric vehicle infrastructure has a way to go in northwest Alabama, Murray wanted M&N staff to be prepared to safely answer emergency calls on electric/hybrid vehicles.

"Our instructor said while it's not here yet, (EV chargers) will be everywhere. That's going to happen eventually, so we wanted to be prepared," Murray said.



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Real Estate Tips

- By Willodean Davis

Buying a Home—Part 1

Willodean Davis
Contributor

To buy a home, here are some things you need to know up front. First, you need to choose a real estate agent/broker to represent you in the purchase of your home. There are different kinds of agents that can assist you.

A single agent will be a licensed agent that represents one party in the sale, either the buyer or the seller. There will be a seller's agent and a buyer's agent. The agent must be loyal and faithful to his/her client.

A sub-agent helps in the process of selling/buying a home. Each agent can only represent one person at a time. When there are two companies involved, one is the listing agent and the other is the buyer's agent.

A limited consensual dual agent is a licensee for both the buyer and seller. This can only be done with written consent from both parties. The agent cannot tell the buyer what to offer, nor the seller what to accept.

A buyer's agent can advise the buyer in any manner they may need.

A transaction broker is where the agent does paperwork only and gives no advice.

After you have made your decision on who you want to represent you, call them for their help and advice. They will be able to help you with any property you are interested in. You can go to the bank to get prequalified for a loan. This will tell you what you qualify for as far as a mortgage. This will help you to know the interest rate, monthly payments, and the term of the loan.

Here is how you can start a homeowner's checklist:

Asset Documents: Bank statements, retirement accounts and gift letter.
Credit Documents: Contract for purchase, divorce decree, bankruptcy documents and current mortgage statement (refinance only).

Legal Documents: Photo copy of driver's license, copy of Social Security card.

Income Documents: Payment stubs, tax returns, W-2s, self employment, child support/alimony court order, rental agreement for properties you own, Social Security annual award letter, pension statement.

Things to keep in mind: DO NOT apply for new credit cards/accounts. Avoid putting large purchases on credit cards and if avoidable, do not change jobs.

Hope these tips help! Have a good day, and remember my motto: Help someone today.

Willodean Davis: Exit City Realty-Davis



We love to hear from you! Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoons, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to check us out online at franklinfreepress.net!

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 **T**he Senior Center at Phil Campbell is under new management. The Town of Phil Campbell would like to invite and encourage everyone in our area that is 60 years and older to come be a part of the group. This is for men and women. They meet at the Phil Campbell Community Center Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00. A delicious lunch is served around 11:00 a.m. Come on out and join in on the games or just sit and have a cup of coffee and socialize!! So if you, your parents, grandparents or your neighbor is 60 or older, pass the word and come out and enjoy a morning of fun.


 **T**he Cowboy Church of Franklin County will host a "I Promise" Ladies Conference, free for ladies of all ages, March 10, 2023, from 6-9 p.m., and March 11, 2023, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Come for a meal, music and a message! Church is located at 25100 Highway 24, Russellville.


 **T**he next meeting of the Franklin County Community Development Commission will be Friday, March 31, 2023, at 8:30 a.m., at the Franklin County Courthouse Annex. All grant requests must be submitted to a member of the commission by Friday, March 24, 2023, at 12 p.m. Commission members include Brad Bolton, Jeremy Campbell and David Grissom.

 **M**y Father's House Ministries will host a Revival from February 19-24 and February 26-March 2, 2023. Sunday services at 5 p.m., Monday-Friday at 6:30 p.m. Invite or bring your family and friends! Revival Ministers include Evangelist Mickey Wilson, Sis. Pam Patterson, Bro. Paul Colburn and many more! Praise and Worship from Sis. Kay Quade, MFH Music Minister along with Special Singing. Pastor Pearl Shelton and Pastor James Williams invite you and your family to attend. Call 256-460-1376 for more information or if you need a ride.

 **B**elgreen High School will hold Kindergarten registration on Friday, March 31, 2023, from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., in the Belgreen High School Library. Parents or guardians of children who are 5 years old on or before September 1, 2023, may register their child. Please bring child's birth certificate, Social Security card, proof of residency and updated immunization records. If you are unable to attend, please register your child through the online registration. It is preferable to register kindergarten students BEFORE the end of May to account for accurate numbers for the upcoming school year.

 **T**he Kingsmen Quartet will be in concert Sunday Night March 12, 2023 at 6:00 pm at North Russellville Baptist Church 1401 Waterloo Road Russellville. \$10.00 per person will be taken at the door. Children under 12 are free. Doors open at 5:00 pm. No love offering will be taken. For more information call Randy Pike at 256 436-3422.

 **T**he Franklin County, AL Emergency Food and Shelter Board HAS BEEN AWARDED FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)/FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY UNDER THE EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM. Franklin County has been chosen to receive a total of \$6,934 to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the county. The Local Board was charged to distribute funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of food and shelter programs in high-need areas around the country. A Local Board will determine how the funds awarded to Franklin County are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service agencies in the area. The Local Board is responsible for recommending agencies to receive these funds and any additional funds made available under this phase of the program. Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary non-profits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive Federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, have a voluntary board. Qualifying agencies are urged to apply. Public or private voluntary agencies interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds must contact Samantha Hartsell at rogue910@charter.net or 256-627-6799 for an application. The deadline for applications to be received is March 12, 2022.

 **D**ixie Youth Baseball Umpires Clinic will be held on Wed. Night March 8th, 7pm at the Russellville Park an Rec. Building 201 Ash Ave. Russellville AL. Anyone who would like to be Certified to Umpire in the upcoming Baseball season needs to attend. For more information you can message questions to 256-577-0135. You must be Certified to Umpire in any District, State or World Series DYBB Games.

'MORGAN,' from Page 1

dent who most exemplifies the connection between academic success and athletic participation. The foundation promotes awareness of the power of athletics to motivate students for success.

Named after Paul 'Bear' Bryant and Ralph 'Shug' Jordan, the Bryant-Jordan Foundation showcases Alabama's best and brightest high school senior student athletes from 52 regions.

The criteria for the Scholar Athlete Award are scholastic standing, sport involvement, athletic honors, student leadership and civic/church leadership.

Morgan, who will attend Troy University in the fall on a full scholarship, has a weighted grade point average of 5.0 and scored a 32 on the ACT. Numbers like

that get students noticed by colleges and universities, so Morgan had several options. In the end, she decided on the same university her mother attended.

"I researched many colleges but realized where I wanted to go when I visited Troy," Morgan said. "I felt at home immediately and the campus size was perfect for me."

She plans to major in accounting and pursue a Master's Degree in finance. Morgan hopes to work for a non-profit organization and eventually start her own non-profit.

Sarah was 18 months old when the Morgans adopted her from China.

She could not walk or talk at that time, so she looks back and is so thankful for the blessing she received in joining her new family. She wants to help other families navigate the lengthy, and often costly, process of international adoption.

"I want to help families learn about adoption. In the United States, there are over a million couples wanting to adopt, but the high cost and legal process create roadblocks," Morgan said. "I want to help make that pathway easier to make other families whole."

Morgan has a head start on her college education thanks to her hard work in earning 35 credit hours through dual enrollment and Advanced Placement classes offered through a partnership between RHS and Northwest-Shoals Community College.

Stephanie Mayfield, who previously served as RHS' Cheer Coach, described Morgan as a student she will always remember.

"She has 35 credit course hours, and has balanced that with a full slate of cheering for her school," Mayfield said. "That includes practices, events and games along with taking AP calculus, AP biology, etc., and not everybody can do that."

On top of those commitments, Morgan works part-time at Morgan Chiropractic, her father's business.

Morgan said the benefit of dual enrollment courses goes beyond just the credit hours she's earned.

"I'm so thankful for the AP and dual enrollment courses I had the chance to take. Those classes prepared me for how to study, how to participate in class and how to build relationships with other students and teachers as well," Morgan said.

Morgan first made the cheer team in seventh grade at Russellville Middle School. She went on to cheer six consecutive years for the Golden Tigers and was varsity cheer captain and media specialist.

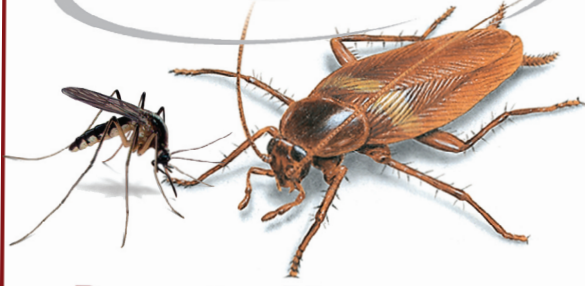
"I grew up dancing and cheering, so in middle school it was almost a given to try out for the cheer squad and from there, I absolutely loved it and kept doing it," Morgan said.

If Morgan is named the 2023 Striplin Scholar Athlete, she would be the second from Franklin County to receive the honor. In 2020, Ben Williams, a Phil Campbell High School senior, received the award.



COURTESY PHOTO
RHS Senior Sarah Morgan is a Bryant-Jordan Scholar Athlete finalist.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Franklin County Commission is accepting applications for the following position(s):

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Applications will be accepted in the Franklin County Commission office until 5:00 PM on Friday, March 3, 2023.

Assistant County Engineer, Highway Department

Applications will be accepted in the Franklin County Commission office until the position has been filled.

An application and job description 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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41st *Annual* Miss **RHS** *Pageant*



Front Row, from left: Peyton Parrish, Hailey Rogers, Kaitlin Hope Speck, Drew Reed, Emmy Green, Annie Willis, Ellie Willis. Second Row, from left: Ashlee Moon, Madeleine Gutierrez, Melanie Trejo, Silvie Miller, Abigail Jimenez, Sarah Morgan, Yadmil Perez Gabriel. Back Row, from left: Caylin Pinkard, Lily Cate Pace, Isabella Colagross, Aidyn Kate Marshall, Lakin Derrick, Stella Hill, Halle Grimes, Destiny Elkins.

Friday, March 3, 7p.m., RHS Auditorium

Good Luck and Congratulations to All Contestants!

~ Russellville City Board of Education



City receiving bids for permanent stage at Sloss Lake

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The City of Russellville's Fourth of July Jam on Sloss Lake has grown in popularity each year since it began in 2008.

With a giant fireworks show following stage performances from artists including John Anderson, Darryl Worley and 2022's headliner, American Idol Top 24 finalist Cadence Baker, the free event attracts massive crowds each year.

And the City of Russellville may soon have a permanent stage at Sloss Lake after the Russellville City Council approved soliciting



COURTESY PHOTO

The city is paying almost \$10,000 each year for stage rental at Sloss Lake.

sealed bids for the project at its February 20th meeting.

Bids will be submitted through March 6, 2023, at 12 p.m., when the sealed bids will be opened.

Bid specifications call for a foundation of 34'8" length X 40'6" width X 42" high, with a roof area of 36' x 50'. The stage will feature high output LED lights and be fully wired for sound.

The lowest responsible bidder will have 90 days to complete all work after receiving written notice of acceptance of its bid. Work not completed within 90 days shall result in the city retaining \$500 per day for each day beyond the specified time.

The stage will be constructed on the west side of Sloss Lake, near the sports complex and splash pad.

Russellville Mayor David Grissom said the idea of a permanent stage has been a dream of the Jam on Sloss Lake organizer, City Councilman Gary Cummings.

"I wish we'd have done this some time ago," Grissom said. "We looked at the numbers and we're paying almost \$10,000 to rent a stage, so this is something for the future. The Fourth of July event will be here for years to come, thanks to the hard work of Councilman Cummings.

"And I can see other groups benefiting by using the stage for other events. It will make the park much more usable," Grissom added.

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

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RMS baseball sweeps doubleheader at Winfield

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

Russellville Middle School baseball coach Skyler Kirchner is in his third season, and his Golden Tigers are off to a 4-2 record over their first six games.

The Golden Tigers beat Winfield in a road doubleheader on Friday, February 17th, with a game one score of 10-1, and game two score of 13-0.

The Golden Tigers collected their next two wins at their home field against Florence Middle School on Saturday, February 18th. Both games were close, with game one 6-5 and game two 2-1.

On Tuesday, February 23rd, the Golden Tigers hosted Mars Hill. The Panthers swept the doubleheader, with game one ending 3-2 and game two 5-2.

Of the 20 players that are on the RMS roster, 17 are in Kirchner's pitching rotation.

"Most of the guys are doing pitching lessons and putting work in outside of our program. It's a great thing to see that work ethic," Kirchner said.

On the mound, Kirchner said Tripp Cleveland is throwing the hardest and also contributes to the Russellville High School junior varsity team. Cleveland threw four innings in the Golden Tigers' 6-5 win over Florence, allowing three hits and two runs while striking out eight Falcons.

See, RMS, page 12

Signups underway for Mullins Camp

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Six past or present National Football League players will take part in the third annual Chucky Mullins Memorial Football Camp, set for Saturday, March 25, at the Russellville High School stadium.

The annual camp, held in conjunction with the second annual Special Olympics/Pro Bowl, is organized by the RHS Class of 1988's Chucky Mullins Scholarship Committee.

The Chucky Mullins Memorial Golf Tournament will take place Friday, March 24, at Twin Pines Country Club.



A bust of Chucky Mullins remains a permanent fixture on the Vaught-Hemingway field.

The Saturday football events will feature former Auburn players Daniel Thomas, a current Jacksonville Jaguar, and Sammie Coates, a four-year NFL veteran. University of Alabama alums Terrence Cody, a former member of the Super Bowl XLVII champion Baltimore Ravens, and Christian Jones, a two-time national champion with the Crimson Tide.

Former Ole Miss players Dexter McCluster, who played for the Tennessee Titans, and Terrence Metcalf, an offensive lineman with the Chicago Bears for seven seasons, will also take part in the March 25 events.

Registration for the golf tournament, football camp and Special Olympics/Pro Bowl is now open. Log onto www.cms1988.com to register and for more information.

Saturday night at 6:30 p.m., the public is invited to RHS Stadium for a

See, CHUCKY, page 12

Patriots win home baseball opener over Cards

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

After playing an exhibition schedule last fall, Coach David Langston's Northwest-Shoals Community College (NW-SCC) Patriots baseball team opened its spring slate February 4, 2023, in Cullman against Lincoln Trail Community College (LTCC). In the doubleheader, the Patriots won game one 10-8, and lost game two 5-3.

On Saturday, February 18, the Patriots' first game on their new baseball field was a memorable one, as Zach Hill threw a complete game shutout, leading the Patriots to a 1-0 victory over the Mineral Area College Cardinals. Hill allowed three hits and no runs over seven innings, striking out four. The Patriots did not commit a single error the entire game.

Drew McBurnett and Eli Gipson each managed one hit as the Patriots made the most of only two hits in the game.

In the nightcap, the Patriots got on the board in the first inning when Alex Wilson hit a solo home run. The Patriots were tied 2-2 going into the sixth inning when MAC scored five runs en route to a 7-2 win.

Bryce Sanders was on the hill for the Patriots. Sanders went five innings, allowing five runs on six hits and striking out four. Alex Wilson led the Patriots with two hits in two at bats.

NW-SCC hosted Freed-Hardeman University JV on February 21 and came away with a 10-4 win.

A three-run fifth was highlighted by Garrett Day and Taylor Bush, who each drove in runs

See, NW SCC, page 13

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'CHUCKY' from Page 11

special Community Night honoring Mullins and his legacy at the University of Mississippi. Mullins' college friend Trey Sutherland will speak, along with Gaines, who visits Mullins' grave in Russellville each year.

The Community Night will be a free event but donations will be accepted. After the speakers, a movie about Mullins' life and legacy will be shown on the stadium Jumbotron.

There will be a silent auction to raise funds for the scholarship fund. Several sports memorabilia items are already posted on the Chucky Mullins Scholarship Committee Facebook page, as well as the website.

Mullins, a 1988 RHS graduate, earned a football scholarship from Ole Miss. On October 28, 1989, during the Rebels' Homecoming game against Vanderbilt, Mullins made a head-first tackle into Commodore full-back Brad Gaines. The impact shattered four vertebrae in Mullins' cervical spine and he was immediately paralyzed.

Mullins returned to campus the following year to complete his undergraduate studies, but less than a year later, he died from a pulmonary embolism which resulted from blood clots formed due to his paralysis and poor circulation.

Mullins was an inspiration to the Ole Miss community as well as his hometown. His classmates formed the scholarship in Mullins' name and present multiple \$2,000 scholarships each year to RHS seniors. The scholarship funds are distributed in \$500 increments over four semesters as a way to ensure recipients are using the money for college. In 2022, the committee awarded three \$2,000 scholarships.

For more information on any of these events, contact Skye Hamilton at 256-398-0186 or Deedra Moore at 256-412-5659.



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Letters to the Editor

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For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to check us out online at franklinfreepress.net!

'RMS,' from Page 11

"Sam Hamilton is the best strike thrower we have and that's what it takes to be successful in middle school ball," Kirchner said.

In the team's opener against Winfield, Hamilton pitched three innings of one hit, no run baseball with six strikeouts.

Jackson Smith and Gavin Willis also contribute to the pitching rotation.

Brayden Entrekin is a 7th grade lefty with good movement on the ball, Kirchner said. Entrekin threw a no-hitter in the Golden Tigers' 2-1 defeat of Florence. He struck out 11 Falcon batters in five innings.

Kirchner said working to see player development is one primary reason he enjoys coaching at the middle school level.

"I love coaching middle school because the kids are moldable as clay. We decided to keep all 20 kids because we know we can develop them," Kirchner said.

Gavin Willis is swinging the bat well right now with a .500 average. Willis has an on base percentage of .455.

Willis isn't a power hitter but he's a consistent hitter, Kirchner said.

Keifer Hallmark is batting .455 with an on base percentage of .538.

Russellville will travel to Hamilton March 3 for a doubleheader starting at 4:30 p.m.

DATE OF BID OPENING: March 6, 2023
TIME: 12:00 P.M.

Sealed bids will be received for the construction a stage at Sloss Lake located at 27965 Highway 24 by the City of Russellville, Alabama at the office of the Mayor located in the Russellville City Hall, 304 North Jackson Avenue, Russellville, Alabama until the above time and date, and publicly opened. **All bidders must use our complete bid form and indicate on the outside of the envelope the date and time of the bid opening:**

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6' - 2/0 Copper or equivalent wiring in conduit from main to 200 A disconnect

COMPLETION DATE

Time is of the essence. Contractors shall fully complete all work within 90 days after receiving written notice of acceptance of bid. Work not completed within specified time shall result in City retaining the sum of \$500 per day for each day beyond the specified completion date.

If you are unable to furnish the item(s) specified and desire to offer a substitute, give a complete description of the proposed substitution. **Any deviation from the specifications as listed must be clearly noted.** No errors will be corrected after bids are opened. No prices shall include any Federal, State or Local taxes. **The Bid Amount must include all fees and charges. No additional charges shall be added after the award.** Tax exemption certificates furnished upon request.

THE CITY OF RUSSELLVILLE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ALL BIDS OR ANY PORTION THEREOF

NOTICE TO OUT OF STATE BIDDERS

Alabama Code Section 39-3-5 requires municipalities to give preference to resident bidders in the same manner and to the same extent as provided by the laws of the state of domicile of the nonresident bidder. Non-resident bidders must accompany any written bid documents with a written opinion of an attorney-at-law licensed to practice law in such non-resident bidders state of domicile, as to the preferences, if any or none, granted by the law of that state to its own business entities whose principal places of business are in that state in the letting of any or all public contracts.

during the inning.
Cason Henry threw two innings, yielding one run with two strikeouts. Ethan Muncher, Cade Prestegard and Jacob Little each worked in relief to preserve the win. Alex Wilson homered for NW-SCC in the fourth inning.



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The Patriots traveled to Gulf Shores for a Friday, February 24th game against Coastal Alabama South Community College. Coastal took game one 6-5.

The Patriots had a 5-4 lead in the eighth inning before Coastal scored twice in the bottom of the inning.

Bush homered for NW-SCC in the second. Caleb Davis went 2-4, Eli Gipson 2-5 to pace the Patriots' offense.

On Saturday, the Patriots took the second game of the two-game series, 11-5.

Hill went five innings for NW-SCC, giving up nine hits and five runs. Muncher threw the final two innings to preserve

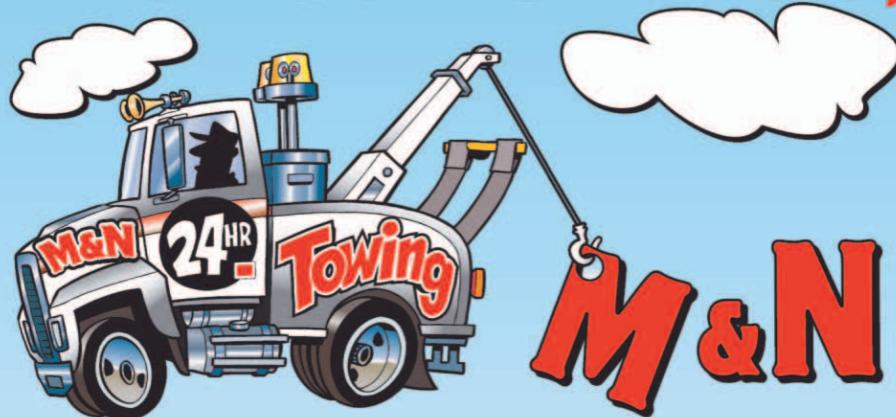
the win. Bush went 2-4 with a home run to pace the NW-SCC offense.

Before returning to the Shoals, the Patriots traveled to Marianna, Fla., for one game with Chipola College.

The Patriots led 3-0 after four innings, but a 10-run Chipola fifth innings was decisive. Chipola scored 15 runs on 13 hits, while the Patriots scored three times with only one hit, off the bat of Strachan.

Northwest-Shoals will host Frontier Community College on March 2, with game time of 1 p.m.

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\$17,095 spent in 2022 by REB for past, present board members' cash value accruing life insurance policies

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Electric Board paid more than \$17,000 last year for nine \$20,000 cash value life insurance policies for past and present board members, the Franklin Free Press has learned.

Through an Open Records Request filed by the FFP, records show the Russellville Electric Board spent \$17,095 in 2022 on \$20,000 life insurance policies for its five current board members, James McDuffa, Leamon Mosley, Nick Willis, Bill Jackson and Chad Wells. Four policy premiums were paid last year for former board members Dexter Hamilton, Darren Woodruff, Joan Pace and Arthur Elliott.

The policies were issued by Great Western Life Insurance, a corporation headquartered in Utah. According to its website, the company was created in 1983 and specializes in writing guaranteed issue life insurance policies.

Each policy has a face value of \$20,000 and annual premiums, according to REB records, range from \$1,155 (Willis) to as much as \$3,435 (McDuffa).

A review of the 1099-NEC forms provided to each board member indicates that the premium payments were not declared as compensation and were not noted on 2022 tax records.

Members of the Russellville Electric Board are considered independent contractors and payment to them is reported to the Internal Revenue Service through Form 1099-NEC, for nonemployee compensation.

The IRA defines nonemployee compensation as fees, commissions, or any other compensation paid by a business to an individual who is not an employee.

The policies, which build cash value over time, were brought to public attention last October when Woodruff, whose position on the REB ended in January 2019, was contacted by a representative from Great Western who asked if Woodruff wanted to renew his policy.

Woodruff said he recalled there being life insurance policies for board members when he served on the REB, but he believed the policy was terminated once he no longer served on the board.

"I didn't know anything about this policy, until the (Great Western agent) reminded me it was issued through the Russellville Electric Board," Woodruff said.

According to REB records, ratepayers of the Russellville Electric Board continued to pay annual premiums for three years after Woodruff's term on the board ended. Records show premiums were paid in 2022 for Elliott, Hamilton and Pace, each of whom's tenure on the board ended prior to 2022.

When Woodruff told the agent he did not want to renew a policy he didn't know existed, she informed him the policy had built a cash value of \$2,058.

Woodruff provided the FFP a copy of a letter from Great Western he received last year that included a check for \$2,058. Woodruff said he did not cash the check and does not intend to do so.

He originally planned to use the money to pay delinquent electric bills for customers facing disconnect during December when temperatures were in the single digits.

While Woodruff did pay delinquent bills for approximately 10 ratepayers, he used his own money to do so after deciding not to cash the Great Western check.


REB Manager Charles Canida did not return the FFP's request for comment.

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