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Freeman pens book about lessons from Nehemiah

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

In the Bible, the Book of Nehemiah chronicles the rebuilding of Jerusalem after it was destroyed 70 years earlier by the Babylonians.

Nehemiah, a cup bearer for King Artaxerxes I, asked the king for permission to travel to Jerusalem and lead rebuilding efforts for God's people.

Nehemiah is recognized as a dedicated servant of God who never lost focus on the importance of rebuilding Jerusalem, which the Jews under his

direction did in less than two months.

For Bishop Lonnie Freeman, the life and ministry of Nehemiah has been an inspiration for countless sermons through his 42 years of preaching. The Russellville resident is the pastor and founder of Emmanuel Christian Center Church in Leighton.

Freeman has authored a new book, Focus, Refocus, Maintaining Focus, about Nehemiah, a layman turned leader, and his resiliency of faith even in times of despair. The book was published by IngramSpark Publishing.

See 'FREEMAN,' Page 7

Cedars Church a manifestation of God's plan for local pastor and wife

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

What's in a name? A lot, in the case of 34-year-old Cedars Church Pastor Tanner Hall.

Hall recalls a night approximately seven years ago when God woke him up from a dream.

"I could see myself preaching on a platform. I couldn't see faces of the people there but I could see a name in the background—Cedars Church," Hall said. "I started investigating what that was and everywhere my wife (Lindsay) and I went, we'd check to see if there was a Cedars Church there, but we never saw one."

Hall then found inspiration from Psalm 92:12-15, which reads: The

righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in Him."

Considered one of the heartiest of trees, the Lebanon Cedar can grow to heights of 100-150 feet and live for more than 1,000 years.

Lebanon Cedars are native to the Middle East, but as Hall really started studying cedar trees in general, he realized they're all around Franklin County and Russellville, right here at home.

"I believe that dream was for a

See 'CEDARS,' Page 8

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Hoyt Wayne Berry, 79, of Russellville, passed away Wednesday, March 01, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Margaret Juanita Green, 72, of Russellville, passed away March 3, 2023. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

Calvin Harriman Graham, 67, of Russellville, passed away February 28, 2023. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

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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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Alabama utility rates 10th highest in nation

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Although the average monthly expenses for Alabama households are almost 56% lower than the national average, the state ranks in the top 10 states for most expensive utility bills, according to a new report from www.doxo.com.

Alabamians pay an average of \$387/month for utilities (electric, water/sewer, gas), \$36 more per month than the national average.

The study indicates Russellville residents pay an average of \$1,315/month for household bills, almost 38% of their incomes. But that's well below the national average of \$2,046 and 37% lower than the state average of \$1,772.

A 2022 energy study showed Russellville Electric Board customers pay the fifth-highest kilowatt hour for electricity among the Tennessee Valley Authority's 24 Alabama power suppliers.

Even with a top-five most expensive rate for electricity, the 2023 U.S. Bill Pay Market Size & Category Breakout Report finds Russellville to be

the 77th most expensive city in Alabama for household bills.

While Alabama made the top 10 of highest utility bill state averages, residents pay some of the lowest monthly rates for home mortgages (48th of 50 states), rent (43rd), auto insurance (49th) and health insurance (40th).

The study included data from 4,000 cities across the country about total amount spent on bills each month. That amount is broken down into 10 different categories.

According to the doxo.com report, monthly averages for Russellville residents for specific ongoing expenses include:

- Mortgage \$769.
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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.

 **T**he Sons of the American Revolution, Shoals Chapter, will meet Sunday, March 12, 2023 at 2:00pm. The Shoals Chapter meets the 2nd Sunday of each month(except June, July, and August) at Keller Library in Tusculumbia, AL. Everyone is welcome, you do not have to be a member to attend. For more info call 256-324-2317.

 **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. There is a \$30 fee due at the meeting.

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

'FREEMAN,' from Page 1

"The work of Nehemiah was to help God's people to get focused on God and maintain that focus throughout their lives," Freeman said. "Nehemiah's assignment is the same assignment for those of us in the body of Christ—to get focused on the things of God and then help other believers do the same."

Focus, Refocus, Maintaining Focus is a compilation of message Freeman preached in the 1990s. Freeman recalls how interesting he found the Book of Nehemiah and inspirations for messages from Nehemiah continued to come.

"I would preach one message and I kept reading until another thought for another message came," Freeman said. I continued through the book starting in 1997 and one day I wrote on my sermon notes, 'this will be

sure from his adversaries not to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem.

"They told him he needed to come down off the wall he was building because it wouldn't stand," Freeman said. "I did a sermon called 'Stay on the Wall' about continuing to do what God calls you to do no matter the opposition.

"Once I preached that, I began to see the message I believe arrived out of that book. I would read that message again until a thought developed for my next sermon," he added.

Just as Nehemiah remained focused on God, Freeman was tested to remain focused on writing the book. When he wrote the first three or four chapters, he lost interest initially and didn't save his work. A few years later, he got serious about writing once again and finished nine chapters when his computer crashed.

"I still felt it was always something I needed to do, so at the start of 2022, I asked the Lord what my direction should be for the year," Freeman said. "One thought kept pressing me—finish this book. I had parishioners who have since died saying 'I thought you were writing a book.'

So I took the time, went back, found my old notes, redid them and put them in a form where it would make easy reading. Almost every verse in the Book of Nehemiah is accounted for in this book. I tried to make it easy to read with commentary. I finished it in October," he added.

Nehemiah's lifetime of remaining focused on faith teaches a lesson we all can live by, Freeman explained.

"He was a layman turned leader. Nehemiah made a great sacrifice. He was a cup bearer for the king and sacrificed a lucrative position to go back and help his people who were reproached," Freeman said. "The message if you're not focused anymore, you need to regain that focus and get back to what's important. That lesson speaks through the whole 13 chapters of my book.

"All of us can relate to him. He wasn't a pastor, a bishop or a priest, just a layman who turned into a leader. And whether we have a position of power or not, we can fit into that scenario. If we are willing to sacrifice and do what God expects of us, we can do the same," he added.

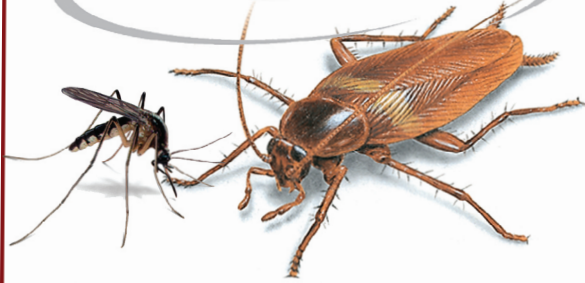
Once he finished his manuscript, Freeman contacted an author he was referred to by a friend, and she walked him through the preliminaries of getting published. After some editing, reediting and reformatting, IngramSpark publishers approved the book for publication.

Even as a self-publishing company, IngramSpark has extensive resources available to promote its authors. Focus, Refocus, Maintaining Focus is available on a myriad of sites, including www.barnesandnoble.com (paperback and ebook).

A Russellville native, Freeman and his wife Pam have two sons, Jermey and Aron and one daughter, Lori. Freeman retired in 2004 after 25 years with the Franklin County Department of Human Resources Adult Protective Services division. Freeman has worked as a counselor and teacher since leaving DHR.

Freeman plans to have book signings this spring both in Russellville and the Shoals. He also has copies of the book available for \$20. Call Freeman at 256-412-1110 or contact via email at bishoplonnieemmanuel@gmail.com.

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my first book."

When Freeman was studying material to preach on, he was particularly inspired by Nehemiah's sixth chapter, where Nehemiah tells about pres-

Back to School: Father shares graduation stage with both sons

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

After a 25-year career in Adult Protective Services with the Franklin County Department of Human Resources, Lonnie Freeman retired in 2004.

But the Russellville native never stopped learning. And the results of his continued hard work were two Master's Degrees and two graduations he got to share with each of his sons.

Freeman, the founder/pastor of Emmanuel Christian Center Church in Leighton, earned his Bachelor's degrees in 1997 from the University of North Alabama (UNA) in Sociology and Psychology.

Although he enjoyed his tenure with DHR, Freeman had a recurring thought that still burned bright, even after his retirement.

"I always wanted to see if I could do Master's level work," Freeman said. "So I went back to college for my first Master's in Community Counseling."

When Freeman walked across the UNA stage to receive his advanced degree in 2010, he shared the night with his son, Aron, who received his Bachelor's degrees in Music and Education at the same time. Aron is now a music teacher in Russellville City Schools.

Freeman's oldest son Jermey attended Northwest-Shoals Community College, but never finished his post-secondary education. So he enrolled at Athens State University to pursue an Education degree. Lonnie noticed that Athens State offered a Master's of Arts in Religion, so he enrolled and father and son rode to campus together working toward their degrees.

Their efforts resulted in a second father-son graduation in 2020. Jermey teaches geography and history at Lanier High School in Huntsville and is working on a Master's degree.

So far, dad isn't pursuing a third Master's degree, but you can never say never....



Lonnie & Pam Freeman with their three children.



COURTESY PHOTO

Pastor Lonnie Freeman's new book is now available for purchase.

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

'CEDARS,' from Page 1

Cedars Church in this community. You see cedars all over Russellville and Franklin County. These trees have been there for years and have withstood storms, tornadoes and they're still standing strong," Hall said.

With Tanner and Lindsay as co-pastors, Cedars Church is located at 109 West Lawrence Street in Russellville, where the former Miller Hardware was located. But that's not where the story of Cedars Church begins or ends.

In 2021, the Halls were part of the ministry team at Pastor Shawn Reathford's Redemption Outreach Church in Russellville. While the church was in revival, Hall repeatedly had the feeling something was missing and the Lord was leading him and Lindsay to do something else in service to Him.

"I believed we were being led to another calling and we prayed and asked God to lead us," Hall said. "We believed if God was truly leading us to something else, we would see his confirmation in three ways: Confirmation to both of us separately, confirmation in word and confirmation from someone we don't know speaking over us."

That revival began what Hall describes as entering a 'season of transition.'

Tanner and Lindsay received interest from several churches out-of-state looking to hire them.

"We went to each one to see where we fit into the culture of the church. There was absolutely nothing wrong with any of them but we kept being pushed back here, as if God was telling us we were not supposed to leave this area," Hall said.

Then the confirmations came.

"Lindsay got it first. She was at a conference and the message preached was the 'Promise of Restoration.' She sent it to me and I read it," Hall said. "Amos 9:13-15 talks about God planting His people on their own land.

So we thought why would He call us out of our city if He says He'll firmly plant us here?"

Soon thereafter, during an altar call at Revival, a pastor from North Carolina the Halls didn't know said he believed God was doing something in their lives and telling them there's something He's planned but they haven't done yet. Just like the Lord said in Amos 9:13-15, He was planting the Halls on their own land.

Following their faith, the Halls left Redemption Church and began open-

ing their home each Monday evening starting in January of 2022 for a live worship on Facebook. Before the worship service, the Halls shared their vision about Cedars Church.

"We shared what God called us to do and asked people to pray about it. We didn't push for an answer. We wanted each family to pray and make their own decision," Hall said.

Some familiar faces returned the next week, and the Monday night worship grew to 30-40 people coming to the Hall's home each week.

Motivated by that growth, the Halls announced in May 2022, via a Facebook video, introducing Cedars Church and its temporary location at the Russellville Recreation Center.

The first four Sundays in August saw the Halls leading training and worship at the center. The first service came on September 4 with more than 160 in attendance, and Cedars Church was born.

Hall was at the gym one October day, working out on a treadmill next to Franklin County Commissioner Jason Miller, when Miller asked about Hall's new church and whether he was interested in a building.

"I told him if God presented an opportunity to us for a building I would look at it," Hall said. "I'll wait in the hallway as long as needed for God to open a door. I'll never kick the door in."

One month later, Hall had the keys to a building owned by Miller in downtown Russellville.

"The first thing we did was pray over the whole building to anoint the frames, stage, every part of the building," Hall said.

The church building is a work in process, and Cedars' congregation has jumped right in to help. Painting, flooring, electrical work, plumbing. All were needed and work remains to be done.

The church hosted its Christmas service on December 18, and a virtual Christmas service on Christmas Day.

Cedars Church is growing at a pace rivaling that of, well, a Lebanon Cedar tree. There's a Monday evening men's group. A ladies' group meets Tuesdays and Hall conducts a group worship Wednesday evenings called 'Speak Up.' A Sunday afternoon event, 'What's Your Question?,' led by Rita Risley and Sharon McGee, answers biblical questions from the congregation.

Lindsey hosts a Friday evening study group called 'The Chosen.'

The church has an active Facebook page that lets the community know what's happening, and a website, www.cedarschurchal.com.

Hall said Sunday morning services are averaging 60-70 people, and the church doors are open to anyone. The service begins at 10:30 a.m.

In addition to Tanner and Lindsay, the church staff includes Thomas and Megan Thornton, the children's pastors, and Alexa Agosto, administrative assistant.

"The vision of our church is simple—we want people to know God and take them on that journey to find freedom, discover their purpose and make a difference in our world," Hall said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Tanner and Lindsay Hall with their sons Tate and Judd.

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API urges fiscal responsibility in Alabama government

Submitted

The Alabama Policy Institute believes that limited government and fiscal responsibility should be a cornerstone of Alabama's state government. API asserts that the primary duty of the Alabama Legislature is to responsibly steward taxpayer funding.

Alabama's combined General Fund and Education Trust Fund budgets have grown by more than 35% over the past four years, faster than many blue states and even faster than California and New York. That growth level is unsustainable and does not represent the conservative principles held by most Alabamians. Moving forward, Alabama lawmakers should seek policy solutions to slow the overall spending growth while ensuring that state government focuses on only providing essential services to citizens that the private sector cannot or is unwilling to provide.

Increased spending has been directly fueled by record revenues. In 2022, our state government amassed a \$3 billion revenue surplus. That is money that was taken directly from taxpayers in Alabama. In the upcoming legislative session, lawmakers must find ways to provide permanent tax relief to all citizens. Government should only collect enough revenue to provide essential services, anything additional should be returned to Alabama taxpayers.

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Russellville varsity baseball team riding three game win streak

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Golden Tigers varsity baseball team started the season in a hole with their new head baseball coach, Jess Smith. Last week, the Golden Tigers improved their 0-5 start to 3-5 with a perfect week.

The Golden Tigers began their season on February 18th against the Florence Falcons at Florence. Despite outhitting the Falcons 8 to 6, the Golden Tigers suffered a 5-4 loss.

The Golden Tigers traveled to Sparkman on the 20th and suffered a 9-1 loss. On the 24th, the Golden Tigers lost at Faith Academy, 8-4.

Then on the 25th, the Golden Tigers faced Saraland in a doubleheader and lost game one 8-7 and game two 6-5.

The Golden Tigers, winning streak started on their next road challenge against Decatur on the 28th.

The Golden Tigers defeated Decatur 4-3. The Golden Tigers' four run lead was enough to hold off Decatur after they scored three in the fourth inning.

Brayden Spurgeon pitched five innings for the Golden Tigers allowing five hits, three runs, three strikeouts and three walks. Brandt Cummings pitched two innings, allowing no hits or runs and striking out four.

Brodie Vandiver went 1-2 scoring twice with

See, 'RHS,' page 12

NW-SCC softball splits three doubleheaders

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

MUSCLE SHOALS & PHIL CAMPBELL, ALA. -- The Northwest-Shoals Community College (NW-SCC) softball program began its conference schedule with six games February 23-26. Coach Angel Brown's Northwest-Shoals Patriot softball team split three doubleheaders.

On February 23, the Patriots traveled to Bay Minette, Ala., to open play in the Alabama Community College Conference (ACCC) with two games against Coastal Alabama-South.

NW-SCC lost a pitcher's duel in game one, 1-0. Taylor Cameron pitched six strong innings, giving up no earned runs, and three hits with three strikeouts.

From the plate, Chloe Handley went 1-3, Ava Brumley went 1-2 and Kailey Armstrong reached base twice on walks.

In the Patriots' game two win, Mycala Mitchell pitched seven strong innings, yielding three earned runs on five hits, one walk and six strikeouts.

The offensive stars for NW-SCC included Madalyn Scott, who went 3-4 with a grand slam, four runs batted in (RBI) and two runs scored. Brooklyn Owens also had a good game going 1-3 with three RBI and two runs scored.

The Patriots' south Alabama tour continued February 24 in Mobile with a doubleheader against conference foe Bishop State Community College.



COURTESY PHOTO

Scott nominated as Player of the Week in ACCC.

Bishop State took game one 5-2. Cameron pitched six innings for the Patriots, allowing five runs on eight hits, four walks with four strikeouts.

Scott went 2-4 with an RBI. Emily Ahonen was 2-3 with a double and run scored and Carley Hunter was 2-3 with a double and run scored.

Game two went the Patriots' way, 5-3.

Mitchell hurled seven innings to get the win. She gave up 10 hits, but only three runs.

Armstrong went 2-4 with an RBI and

See, 'NWSCC,' Page 13

Belgreen girls take two of three in tournament

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Coach Sander Tverberg's Belgreen High School varsity softball team is off and running with a 6-2 record after winning two of three Saturday in the Bulldog Bash.

After an opening 8-0 win over Sheffield Saturday morning, Belgreen defeated Deshler, 4-0. Later that afternoon, Wilson defeated the Bulldogs 4-1.

Lily Blackburn hurled a perfect game against Sheffield, retiring all nine batters she faced in the tournament-shortened three inning game.

Hannah Borden's steal of home plated Belgreen's first run in the second inning. The Bulldogs would score three in the third and four in the fourth for the 8-0 victory.

Makinly Vandiver went 2-3 with three RBI. Blackburn, Noelle Willingham, Hannah Borden and Bryn Scott each had one RBI for Belgreen.

In the win over Deshler, Borden allowed three hits and no runs over three innings, with two strikeouts and no walks, to earn the win.

Blackburn's first inning double scored Willingham to give the Bulldogs a 1-0 lead. Borden followed with an RBI single for the second run, and Caitlyn Oliver's two-out single scored Bryn Scott as Belgreen took a 3-0 lead into the second inning.

In the second, Blackburn drove in her second run with a two-out single that scored Willingham.

In the loss to Wilson, a three-run homer by the Warriors' Karley Hill broke open a game that had been a 1-1 tie.

Blackburn pitched 3.1 innings for the

See, 'BELGREEN,' page 12

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'RHS,' from Page 11

one RBI.
In the Golden Tigers' first home game of the season, they defeated St. Clair County 3-1 on March 4th.

Logan White pitched six innings for the Golden Tigers, allowing three hits, one run, no walks and five strikeouts.

Banks Langston went 2-3 and scored once. Vandiver went 1-2 with one RBI. Spurgeon went 1-3 and scored one run.

The Golden Tigers also faced Guntersville on March 4th and won 9-6.

Cayden Johns pitched four innings, allowing seven hits, four runs, one walk with six strikeouts. Seth Burns pitched 2.2 innings allowing no hits, two runs, two walks and two strikeouts. Cummings earned the win for the Golden Tigers pitching 2.1 innings, allowing two hits, and striking out three.

The Golden Tigers host Decatur on Thursday, March 9, with first pitch at 4:30 p.m. Russellville will host Southside High School Saturday, March 11th at 11:30 a.m., and will face Hazel Green at 4:30 p.m.

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'BELGREEN,' from Page 11

Bulldogs, yielding four runs on four hits with one strikeout and one walk.

Morgan Vandiver, Willingham and Scott accounted for the team's three hits in the four inning game.

Belgreen will play in the Cherokee Tournament on March 11, and will travel to Phil Campbell on the 13th, host Hackleburg on the 14th and return to Cherokee on the 16th to face the Indians.

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'NWSCC,' from Page 11

stolen base. Other multi-hit Patriots included Handley (2-4), Scott (2-4), Alyssa Brown (2-2), Katie Dawson (2-4) and Jade Roberson (2-4). The Patriots returned home for a February 26 doubleheader with Olney Central Community College.

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Game one saw Cameron (2-6) throw seven strong innings of four hit, one earned run softball with nine strikeouts, to lead the Patriots to a 4-2 win. Armstrong went 2-3 with two RBI and Evans had a 2-2 day with an RBI and a walk. The nightcap went to Olney Central, 3-2. Mitchell (2-3) was the hard-luck losing pitcher, with an impressive seven inning, four hit performance giving up only two earned runs. Armstrong homered for the Patriots and had two RBI.

Brown's nominations for ACCC Pitcher of the Week was Mycala Mitchell, who was 2-1 on the mound with a 2.66 ERA, 12 strikeouts and only three walks. Her 21 innings pitched came out to only a .229 opponents' batting average.

Brown's ACCC Player of the Week nominee was Madalyn Scott, who batted .500, scoring three runs, a grand slam and five RBI.

NW-SCC will travel to Marion, Ala., to play Marion Military Monday for a doubleheader, with the first pitch of game one set for 2 p.m.

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Students perform EKG at Russellville City Schools Board meeting

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education saw a first-hand demonstration of how its Career Technical Education (CTE) students are learning skills that translate immediately into the workplace.

At their February 24th meeting, board members watched CTE Health Science students Kara Moore and Brayden Malone demonstrate how to do an electrocardiogram (EKG) with the school's new EKG machine. Students will have testing next month to become credentialed in doing EKGs.

Health Sciences is one of ten CTE courses that offer credential and certification opportunities for students they can use to find employment right out of high school. Health Science students can earn credentials for Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified EKG Technician, Certified Patient Care Technician, Certified Pharma Tech and Lifeguard certification.

Both Moore and Malone have been accepted into the Honors College at the University of North Alabama, which comes with an automatic seat into UNA's Nursing Program.

Board member Jerry Groce said preparing students to enter the work force through Career Tech program has been and will remain a priority for the RCS Board.

"We are seeing today how and why this program works and how important it is for our students in Russellville City Schools," Groce said. "Seeing these demonstrations at our meetings lets us see what's happening with the different programs throughout our school system."

In other agenda items, the board:
--approved trip requests including May 4-8 for Russellville Elementary School 5th grade students to travel to Washington, D.C.

--approved facility use requests including RHS Auditorium on July 14-15 for the Franklin County Watermelon Pageant, the RCS board room on September 7, 16 for State Department of Human Resources Regional ILP Meeting and Training, RHS Fine Arts Building on March 1 for RHS Band's "Let's Make Music Together" event and RMS

Gymnasium/Stadium on March 25 for the Chucky Mullins Foundation's scholarship event.

--accepted the low bid of \$51,678 for a new digital school sign from Reliable Sign Service, and \$31,521.13 for Russellville Elementary School handicapped playground equipment from Game Time c/o Struthers Recreation, LLC.

--approved personnel moves including:

Resignation in Position: Andrew Vang, RMS teacher.

Temporary Employment: Alia McCollister, Madison Hargett, Lauren Ritter, teachers and Ginger McGinnis, Aide, for 21st CCLC Program, and Madison Hargett, Giovana Ambrosio, teachers for Afterschool Tutoring and Summer Learning Program, Andrew Vang, RMS physical education teacher and Risa Byrd, SLP Teacher to fill Olivia Barksdale's leave of absence.

--Employment in Position: Larry Ballard, Custodian/Groundskeeper with Park and Recreation Department and Matthew Reed, bus driver substitute.



COURTESY PHOTO

RHS Health Sciences students Brayden Malone and Kara Moore demonstrate an EKG at a RCS Board meeting.



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