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Online registration now required for all Russellville City Schools students

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

A new online registration system for all Russellville City Schools students will streamline information and save time from the current process, RCS administrators told the FFP last week.

Beginning with the fall of 2023, all RCS students must be enrolled online through the new PowerSchool Student Enrollment System.

According to RCS Assistant Superintendent Jason Goodwin, the new system will replace the current

registration process, which involves filling out an application by hand and submitting it in person to school officials.

According to its website, www.powerschool.com the PowerSchool system allows systems to modernize the enrollment management and analytics process to save staff and families time and convenience, ensure accurate enrollment data and improve enrollment forecasting for proper resource allocation.

"With the new system we'll be better able to monitor it as opposed to everything being manual. Everything

See 'REGISTRATION,' Page 7

Blast off! Tharptown Rocketry Team heading to Nationals again

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

There's not a direct flight from Tharptown to Washington, D.C., but there could be, as often as the school sends its rocketry team to the national competition.

For the third consecutive year, Tharptown will be represented at the American Rocketry Challenge (ARC) National Finals. And it won't be a surprise to see the team win or finish in the top 10.

ARC's National Finals Fly Off is set for Saturday, May 20th at Great Meadow Polo Field in The Plains, Va.

Tharptown finished 10th last year out of the 100 teams who made it to nationals. In 2021, Tharptown

earned 9th place, so the school has carved out a reputation of soaring above its competition. And that's caught the eye of Franklin County Schools Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton.

"I want to congratulate the Tharptown Rocketry Team for being a national qualifier for the third year in a row," Hamilton said. "Their hard work and dedication is to be commended. Good luck to Mrs. Inmon and the students."

Tharptown Rocketry's faculty sponsors are Marsha Inmon and co-sponsor Areanna Orozco. Tharptown has two seven-student rocketry teams, and both will travel to the national competition. But only Team Two qualified for the national

See 'NATIONALS,' Page 8



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Barbara Ellen Owens, 79, of Russellville, AL, passed away Tuesday, May 09, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Jerry Glen Kimbrough, 67, of Russellville, passed away May, 13, 2023. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

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

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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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Send your guest columns, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com

Letter to the Editor: Thank You to Faith Mission Outreach

Dear Editor:

Just wanted to drop a line to put a great big spotlight on Faith Mission Outreach.

I've had some big setbacks and basically lost everything. Low income has put me in a position unfamiliar to me and navigating these waters alone is scary, not to mention hard for a senior citizen with health issues. Living on a day-to-day basis is a mental strain.

I came across Faith Mission Outreach as a source of getting food and clothing.

I can only speak on the food as I have clothes to spare. My food boxes I've gotten so far in the three months I have been going have sustained me month to month.

The variety is great and it covers all aspects of what I need. I really don't know what I would have done if I had not found out about this great group.

They work hard and are very professional in their interaction with the people who are coming there for assistance.

I just wanted to say a big 'thank you' for helping me personally with food.

I hope the community appreciates what they do for them and give of their time to help all of us.

Thank You,

Sheila Quinn



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Letter to the Editor: A dream coming true

Dear Editor:

First I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ without him I wouldn't be able to do this job I love so much. Secondly I would like to thank Mr. John Pilati and Mr. Mike Rice.

Thank you both for giving me the opportunity to live out a long dream of mine. I would also like to thank my Dad, my Mom and Noah Brady for your help in the booth. I couldn't do it without y'all. Finally to the Golden Tiger faithful. I know this season was not how we wanted it, but I had the time of my life doing this job.

Thank you to the players, coaches, and parents for your hospitality. You all truly made me feel like I was apart of this great ride. Thank you to everyone of our listeners. Your love and support will always be remembered.

I can not wait to be back calling games in the booth next year. Go Golden Tigers.

Sincerely,
Austin Balding

Miranda Decker, M.D.

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 **P**lease remove all flowers from the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on Highway 724 in Newburg before June 1, 2023, to prepare for mowing season. If you have relatives/ancestors buried in this cemetery, your donations are needed for cemetery maintenance. Please mail those donations to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery Fund, 941 Highway 87, Russellville, 35654.


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 **R**ussellville Masonic Lodge #371 is selling Boston Butts on Memorial Day weekend. Butts are \$35 each and may be ordered 256-810-1970. Pickup is Saturday, May 27th, between 8-10 a.m., at the Lodge on Coffee Avenue.

 **T**he annual Woodruff Family Reunion is set for Saturday, June 17th, from 10-2 at Cedar Buff Farm, 3449 County Road 78.

 **L**iberty Chapel Freewill Baptist Church will hold its Revival June 4-7, 2023. June 4 at 5 p.m. June 5,6,7 at 7 p.m. Evangelist Bro. Bradley Long. Pastor Bro. Brian Galloway and congregation welcome everyone! The church is located at 10780 Highway 81, in the East Franklin community.

 **R**ussellville High School will host Awards Night on Monday, May 22nd, at 5:30 p.m., in the RHS Auditorium.

 **F**ranklin County Schools will provide a Seamless Summer meal program at the following Franklin County Schools: Belgreen, East Franklin, Phil Campbell, Red Bay, Tharptown and Vina Monday through Thursday, Breakfast - 7:30 - 9:30 a.m, Lunch - 10:00 - 12:00 p.m. June 5-8, 12-15, 20-22, 26-29; July 10-13, 17-20 All meals are FREE and served to children ages 0-18. Students do not have to attend a Franklin County school to participate. If you have questions, please contact Robynn Bragwell at 256-331-2136 or by email at robynnbragwell@franklin.k12.al.us



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'REGISTRATION,' from Page 1

will be online now," Goodwin said. "It puts the onus on those trying to enroll from out-of-district rather than on us."

In 2016, Russellville City Schools initiated an annual tuition of \$600 to enroll any student who lives outside the Russellville city limits, with limited exceptions.

RCS Superintendent Heath Grimes said he estimates there are 100-200 students attending Russellville City Schools fraudulently who live out-of-district and have not paid the enrollment fee.

"These families who live out-of-district aren't paying property taxes to the city and the city school system," Grimes said. "It's important to be fair to other families paying those city taxes and to make sure nobody is skirting around the rules."

Goodwin said emails with a unique snap code will be sent to all parents/guardians to allow them to enter and navigate the online process. Parents will log onto the link included in the email and enter the code to begin registration. For students whose families don't have an email address on file, a paper copy with the link and code will be sent home with those students.

Additionally, the district will offer parents the opportunity to come to the RCS Central Office for a limited period of time and use kiosks to complete the registration process. School officials will be on hand to assist parents if needed. Additionally, non-English speaking families will receive the instructions in Spanish on how to complete registration.

Franklin County Schools Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton said he was aware of Russellville City Schools' plan to use online registration and the possibility it could impact county schools' enrollment.

"I have heard about the new registration system and we are monitoring the situation," Hamilton said.

There has been speculation from some county employees that the online registration may lead to more out-of-city students enrolling in county schools.

Grimes said his system's out-of-city admission process is on an individual basis based on certain criteria. He added that the out-of-city students who aren't paying tuition is "increasing the financial burden on (our) system with

no corresponding revenue brought into the system for enrolling those students."

He added that Russellville City Schools' enrollment is at capacity and with between 100-200 students attending fraudulently, that requires employing additional teachers and creates a strain on already crowded facilities.

Criteria considered for enrolling an out-of-city student, according to Grimes, include a review of what contribution the student will make to the school, what the student is involved in, will the student contribute in a positive way to RCS, is the students current with academics or behind in grade level and whether the student brings any disciplinary issues with him or her.

While Grimes did not mention athletic classification through the Alabama High School Athletic Association as a reason for the new online registration, Russellville's 9th-11th grade average daily enrollment has climbed up the 5A rankings the past several reclassifications.

RHS was 15th of 64 5A schools in average daily enrollment in 2020, then 11th when reclassification was done again in 2022. The school is 37 students from the lowest 6A enrollment school.

"Classification is something we monitor and we are not at risk of going to 6A in the near future," Grimes said. "This is not directly related to classification."

Grimes was asked whether the online enrollment would have a disproportionate impact on the system's Hispanic students, many of whom come from homes where English is not the primary language. He said that was neither an intention or a likely result of the new system.

"When I began my teaching career, my mentor brought me a book by Jim Collins called Good to Great. It talks about being the best in the world in what you can be the best in the world at," Grimes said.

"When I moved to Russellville City Schools, we said we can be the best in the world in educating the group of students we have. We've seen more growth and have been a model for educating the students we have. We're not trying to run off Hispanic students. We want to make sure our process is fair, legal and that we're providing the resources needed for all students," he added.

HOSA program sparked Scott's interest in medicine

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When Heath Scott walked across the stage as part of the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine's Class of 2023, he reflected on how he decided to enter the medical field.

And those reflections carried Scott back to his days at Russellville High School, his involvement in Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA, now known as Future Health Professionals) and his biology teacher, Mrs. Nicole Watts.

Scott and his fellow graduates had their commencement exercises May 12th at the Dothan Civic Center. Without Watts' encouragement and Scott's HOSA experience, last Friday's graduation, along with his Doctor of Osteopath degree, would never have happened.

"When I was in Mrs. Watts' biology class, I asked her the week before I joined HOSA is science something people really go into? She encouraged me to get involved in HOSA, which was taught by Mrs. Lavonda Sparks," Scott said.

A 2011 graduate of Russellville High School, Scott is the son of Bryan and Melinda Scott and Beth Miller Scott of Russellville. He earned his Bachelor's of Science in Biology and his Master's Degree in Biology/Biological Science from Auburn University.

Scott's four semesters in HOSA afforded him the opportunity to intern at Russellville Hospital and with Russellville orthopedist Dr. Lloyd Dyas.

He will soon begin a residency at Louisiana State University Health-University Hospital in Lafayette, La.

Scott plans to practice either in internal medicine or enter into a fellowship in pulmonary critical care medicine. Scott has lived in Birmingham the past two years, doing his clerkship at St. Vincent's East Hospital, and he hopes to return to Birmingham after his residency.

Regardless of where Scott's medical career takes him, he'll always remember where it began—as a HOSA student in Russellville High School's Career Tech Program.

"I don't think I would have entered health care without HOSA. I probably would have gone into a scientific field. But Mrs. Sparks was fundamental in my career choice and I can't say enough about her," Scott said.



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'NATIONALS,' from Page 1

challenge.

That team consists of Angie Chavez, Kylee Beard, Shyla Martinez, Adrionna Ashley, Isabella Hall, Addison Mardis and Angel Garcia.

Team One includes Presley Laster, Danielle Cassel, Pascual Domingo, Adriana Banderas, Katelyn Mardis, Jessie Mitchell and Destin Martin.

Teams consist of middle school and high school students from either schools or non-profit organizations like the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts or 4-H. Qualifying for nationals went through April 3, 2023. To qualify, teams of three to 10 students must build a model rocket that carries one large hen egg to a height of 850 feet and the rocket must remain airborne for between 42-45 seconds and return to the ground safely.

Additionally, one section of the rocket must contain the egg and the altimeter (an instrument to measure the altitude attained) and the second section contains the motor. Both sections must separate after the rocket reaches its highest point and land with their own parachutes.

A team's score (0 is a perfect score) is calculated based on how close the rocket gets to the predetermined altitude and whether the fly off is completed within the allotted time range. The farther a launch is from those target numbers, the higher the score.

Sounds easy, right? Think again. Rocketry requires a working knowledge of physics, engineering, mathematics, meteorology, problem-solving skills and the ability to work together as a team, all under the pressure of a competition against top students from across the United States.

"Being on the rocketry team helps improve problem-solving," said team member Angie Chavez. "We have to adjust whether the rocket is falling too fast or not meeting the required time. Do we have to change parachutes, figure out why it's not going high enough, adjust the weight. All that involves math, science and we also deal with the weather. Certain humidities can also mess us up."

For Chavez, Tharptown's rocketry team is a family affair. She grew up tagging along with her older sister, Perla, who was on the rocketry team when she was in high school.

"It really interested me how they had to launch the rocket with a specific target and height and do it in a certain time," Chavez said. "You really have to think pretty quickly and it's very competitive, so I enjoy that challenge."

To qualify for nationals, a team's fly off must take place in the presence of a National Association of Rocketry observer and if the score from the sum of two flights is one of the 100 best, that team qualifies for nationals.

797 teams, consisting of almost 5,000 students, sent in scores hoping to

qualify for this year's national finals, including 38 teams from Alabama schools. The 100 competing teams will have two rounds of flights at nationals. After the first round, the top 50 will advance to the second round.

The national championship team will receive \$20,000 and an additional \$1,000 for their school.

Before the national finals, a coin flip will determine if the team has a target altitude of 825 or 875 feet. Their selection of rocket will be based on that number. The challenge of adapting the rocket to the target altitude and time has been one of the most challenging aspects for team members.

"Last year we didn't get that much experience with building the rocket," said team member Kylee Beard. "This year, we learned how to build it, how to get it to a certain altitude, how much mass and solving any problems we encounter. It's been fun to learn along with my other teammates."

And, by the way, the Tharptown Rocketry Team has no seniors and no juniors this year. So these teams will have several more years to work toward that coveted national championship.

Win or lose, Inmon has planned the trip of a lifetime for her students. It's not every day a group of students from Franklin County arrive in our nation's capital.

"I remember the first time I went to Washington, D.C., and how amazing it was," Inmon said. "I hope these kids have the same type of experience I did. We'll go to Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian, the National Cathedral and the United States Botanical Gardens.

"We want to make sure they get to see our nation's capital because that's a once in a life opportunity for a lot of people," she added.



Tharptown's national qualifying Rocketry Team: Front, Angel Garcia. Middle, L to R: Shyla Martinez, Kylee Beard. Back, L to R: Adrionna Ashley, Isabella Hall, Angie Chavez. Not pictured: Addison Mardis.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA REPUBLIC COMMUNITY OUTREACH, NFP is proud to announce the following TRUST additions of: Jonica Lassiter Bey on born, 09/07/2001; Jhanna L Lassiter Bey born 03/01/2007; Davon A Lassiter Bey born 03/26/2008; Diamond A Lassiter Bey born 11/25/2010; Xiziver A Lassiter Bey born 08/19/2012; Benjamin Perry Lassiter Bey born 11/22/2016; Kehlani Genova Pipkins Lassiter Bey born 09/22/2017; Reiko Pipkins Lassiter Bey born 10/14/2018; Mikayla Roberson Lassiter Bey born 12/01/2021; Khaliya Lorraine Pipkins Lassiter Bey born 01/03/2022

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SPORTS

5.17.23

Gordo sweeps Phil Campbell in Bobcats' fourth straight Final Four

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Phil Campbell Bobcats' season ended on a rainy Friday night in Gordo as the host team Green Wave swept Phil Campbell, 10-4 and 11-1. The Bobcats reached their fourth consecutive Final Four appearance in the Class 3A playoffs, which includes a state championship in 2021.

For the Bobcats' senior class, their final time to wear the black and gold didn't go as planned, but they have a lot to be proud of looking back at their four years in the baseball program. During this senior class' tenure at PCHS, the team compiled a 99-23 record, a state championship, three area championships and three Final Four appearances. Those numbers are all the more impressive considering the 2020 season was canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. This year's team finished 29-9. Game one had a promising start for the Bobcats, as Kyle Pace's two-run single in the first inning put his team ahead 2-0. After Gordo tied the game in the second inning, Phil Campbell came right back in the top of the third and regained the lead on Pace's two-run homer. That gave the Bobcats a 4-2 lead. Gordo's offense came alive in the bottom of the third, and the Green Wave chased starting pitcher Cole Pace in the six-run inning. After a lengthy rain delay, the Green Wave outscored the Bobcats 2-0 over the final three innings to earn the 10-4 win. Gordo pitcher Aaron Baines threw a complete game, five-inning gem in game two, as he scattered three hits and one walk around six strikeouts. The Bobcats' lone run came on a Sage Raper single that drove in Bryant Anthony in the fourth inning.

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Romans to continue career at Calhoun

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

Russellville High School senior Shayden Romans is continuing a lifelong dream of his to compete at a higher level in baseball. That dream is starting to come true after last Wednesday's signing ceremony held at the Russellville High School Fieldhouse. Romans has signed a letter of intent to play baseball for Calhoun Community College in Tanner. Romans, who played catcher for Coach Jess Smith's Golden Tigers varsity baseball team, is an exceptional athlete and has been a standout player for years.

This season he had a .988 fielding percentage with only three errors in 253 total chances and Romans threw out 24 of 42 of runners stealing bases. Those types of defensive numbers made Russellville's opponents rethink their running games.

"His defensive numbers were off the charts," Smith said. "He shut down teams' running games and that's a big part of winning baseball."

Romans worked hard to get to where he is today and is excited to continue his baseball career at the next level.

"It's a great opportunity, and I've always wanted to continue playing baseball after high school," Romans said.

Calhoun Community College is known for its strong baseball program, and Romans is excited to be a part of it.

Romans knows that playing at the college level will be a challenge, but he is ready to take on that challenge and work hard to succeed.

"I'm extremely excited to further my academic and athletic career at Calhoun Community College. I'd like to thank God, my family, coaches, teammates and everyone who helped me on this journey," Romans said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Shayden Romans, who signed with Calhoun Community College last week, will play catcher for the Warhawks.

RHS' senior baseball class a mix of unique talent and leadership skills

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When the Sardis Lions got the final out to eliminate Russellville from the 5A playoffs two weeks ago, it marked the end of their high school baseball careers for Coach Jess Smith's seven seniors.

For the last time, Seth Burns, EJ Jones, Banks Langston, River Richardson, Shayden Romans, Brayden Spurgeon and Logan White walked off a baseball diamond as Golden Tigers.

During their four years at Russellville High School, the varsity baseball team went 99-35, an impressive record particularly since the 2020 season was wiped away by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Russellville won two state championships (2021, 2022) and advanced to the third round this season.

Although not all seven of the Class of 2023 were part of the baseball program throughout their high

school careers, each senior contributed in a unique way as they continued Russellville's tradition as a baseball powerhouse.

First-year varsity coach Jess Smith will be forever appreciative of his first class of seniors, seven young men who each made a lasting impression on their coach in a variety of ways.

The Franklin Free Press spoke with Smith last week about his seniors, including their on-field talents, their leadership and their character:

Seth Burns (Pitcher): "Seth's season was cut short when he broke his foot against Arab in March. It was a freak accident and he broke a major bone that required surgery. Before that, he was our closer out of the pen and a big piece of our rotation. He did an outstanding job for us."

Seth did not play baseball his junior year, partly because he didn't feel he was contributing. We begged him to come back out. He worked his tail off all fall and put himself in position to earn our

See, 'RHS,' page 12



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‘RHS,’ from Page 11

closing role and it was heartbreaking to see it taken away from him by injury. He stayed with us after his injury and was a great teammate.

I'm forever thankful he came back out and he gave us all he had.”

EJ Jones (Outfielder, Courtesy Runner): “I have nothing but great things to say about EJ as far as the caliber of person he is. As coaches, you want to play every kid and you know every kid wants to play. Sometimes, the tendency is you find kids not getting playing time they want having bad attitudes. But EJ was our sparkplug this year. He's an energy giver. He showed up every day at practice, was an energetic leader, great teammate in the dugout and the first to pick guys up and get out on the field to pick his teammates up.

He's a selfless, energetic and passionate teammate. He was a great baseball player, but an even better young man. EJ will be successful in whatever he chooses to do in life.”

Banks Langston (Pitcher, Outfielder/Signed with NW-SCC): When I talk about Banks Langston, it will be something I use as a coach for the rest of my career. He was the (2022) 5A Pitcher of the Year with two state championships, but he really served in a limited role in previous seasons on offense and defense.

So he turns that around this year. Due to an injury he wasn't able to pitch but he then leads us in almost every single offensive category—average, doubles, triples, stolen bases and he tied for the most home runs. There's a guy who's a true and elite competitor.

Hitting is the hardest thing to do in sports. But to not hit for the most part of two seasons as a varsity starting pitcher and then to lead your team offensively your senior year shows true leadership. He'll move on to play at Northwest-Shoals and he's earned the opportunity through his offense this year at being a two-way player at NW-SCC in the fall to see if he can hit at the next level.”

River Richardson (Catcher, Courtesy Runner): Before this season, River hadn't played baseball for years, maybe since middle school. He approached us about the opportunity of being on the team. We looked and saw some potential there as a hitter and defender, so we agreed. We used him as a courtesy runner, too. For a catcher and a (football) defensive lineman, he could really move on the bases. But what we gained more than anything was one of the finest young men I've ever met in my life. The dude was an outstanding teammate.

He held everyone accountable but he also encouraged his teammates and he was consistent every day being the same person. I never saw River have a 'bad day.' If he did, nobody knew it. That says a lot about a kid's investment in the core values of a program he hadn't been a part of prior to this season. I think the world of River Richardson. He's got two opportunities to play football at the next level, but I think he's still undecided what to do.

Shayden Romans (Catcher/Signed with Calhoun Community College): Before we started this season, I said Shayden Romans was the best defensive catcher in the state, for sure in 5A. Statistically, I put him up against anyone. (Richardson had a .988 fielding percentage with only 3 errors in 253 total chances. He threw out 24 of 42 runners attempting to steal.)

He's one of the best receiving, blocking and throwing catchers I've had the pleasure to coach. I tell him all the time, as a former catcher myself, Shayden is much better than I was. He shut down people's running game, and that's a big weapon. The reality is if Shayden keeps working at baseball, the sky's the limit for him. I'm talking past junior college and the collegiate level. It's really up to Shayden, his work ethic and what he want to do with his game.”

Brayden Spurgeon (Pitcher, Outfielder, Infielder/Signed with Northwest-Shoals Community College): Brayden did everything for us this year. When we needed him to play third base, he played third base. When we needed him to play shortstop, he played shortstop. When we needed him at first base, he played first base. Later in the season, with how our lineup was looking, we threw him in the outfield, something he hadn't done before. He never questioned anything. He'd say 'yes sir' and work hard in practice and on his own.

He's one of those guys when I'm up here late nights doing work, I hear the cages rattling and he's up here by himself putting in extra work. I'd say our program was better because we had Brayden Spurgeon in it, and now it's left better because Brayden Spurgeon was in it. He leads by example and is one of the greatest servant leaders I've ever been around. If there's a job that needed to be done this season, Spurgeon was either doing it himself or leading a group of others to get it done. He's an outstanding young man who scored a 30 on the ACT and has a 4.0 G.P.A., or better. He's a winner.”

Logan White (Pitcher, Outfielder/Committed to Northwest-Shoals Community College): “Logan is another elite competitor. He pitches and plays with an edge. There may be people he goes up against who have shinier assets, are taller, have better stuff than him, I'd take Logan over those guys every day. He'd go out on the mound and all of a sudden it's the sixth inning and the other team has only one or two hits off the kid. He just keeps getting you out, pitches with passion, comes off the field and does it again.

What he lacks in stature or weight, he makes up for 1000% in heart, competitiveness. He stepped up and became a true Number One pitcher for us. And he just announced this week his commitment to Northwest-Shoals.”

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FCCDC awards grants to Belgreen football, Franklin County EMA

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Community Development Commission met May 12, 2023, and approved a number of grants to local schools and non-profit agencies.

The commission, which includes Brad Bolton, Jeremy Campbell and Russellville Mayor David Grissom, meets quarterly to review grant applications. The commission is comprised of two appointees from Franklin County's legislative delegation and a rotating seat between the mayors of Russellville and Red Bay. Sen. Larry Stutts reappointed Bolton and Rep. Jamie Kiel reappointed Campbell to another four-year term.

With the most recent grants, more than \$2.513 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.

Grant awards for the May 12th meeting included:
--\$800 to Phil Campbell Elementary School First Grade Reading Library.

--\$2,500 to Belgreen High School for football program equipment and supplies.

--\$250 to Vina High School for track team facilities and equipment.

--\$500 to Phil Campbell High School for girls' track equipment and work on long jump pit.

--\$500 to Phil Campbell High School girls' volleyball equipment purchase.

--\$2,500 to Franklin County Chamber of Commerce for Watermelon Festival Sponsorship.

--\$2,500 to City of Russellville Police Department for updating and replacing service weapons.

--\$2,500 to Red Bay Tip-Off Club for block wall construction and installation of roll up door.

--\$3,954 to Town of Vina for replacement of three sets of gear/suits for Vina Volunteer Fire Department.

--\$1,500 to Red Bay Quarterback Club for signage and installation at Football Press Box.

--\$1,500 to Blue Springs Volunteer Fire Department for purchase of reader board sign.

--\$1,869.90 to Franklin County Emergency Management Agency for purchase of five battery-operated chainsaws.

--\$800 to Phil Campbell Elementary School for second grade Chromebooks purchase.

--\$800 to Phil Campbell Elementary School for second grade purchase of reading literacy materials and manipulatives.

--\$2,500 to Bear Creek Development Authority for purchase of life vests, drone and first aid kits.

--\$250 to Red Bay High School for volleyball uniform purchase.
--\$6,000 transfer to Franklin County Economic Development Fund.

The Economic Development Fund now has a balance of \$104,225 after the May 12th grant.

The next meeting of the FCCDC will be August 11, 2023, at 8:30 a.m., at the Franklin County Courthouse Annex. Grant requests for the August 11, 2023, meeting must be received by a commission member before 12 p.m., August 4, 2023.



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'Patriot Plaza' to highlight anticipated \$30 million NW-SCC renovation of Phil Campbell campus

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

Since a doubleheader sweep of Beville State Community College on April 8th, the Northwest-Shoals Community College baseball team has been hotter than a two-dollar pistol, as Coach David Langston's team is 16-3 in its last 19 games to improve its overall record to 30-24.

The Patriots swept a doubleheader with Marion Military Institute on May 5th, with wins of 5-0 and 3-2.

In the 5-0 win, Samuel Pace and Andrew Jones combined for seven innings of work. Jones relieved Pace in the sixth and got the final four outs without allowing a baserunner.

Nick Smith and Taylor Bush had home runs for the Patriots.

After losing the opener of an April 29th doubleheader with Shelton State Community College, the Patriots took game two 10-2. Cason Henry hurled five innings of no-hit baseball, with five strikeouts and four walks. He was charged with one run.

Andrew Jones gave up one run on three hits in his inning of work and Cade Prestegard got the game's final out in the top of the fifth.

NW-SCC scored five runs in the first and fourth innings.

In the first, Alex Wilson led off with a walk, followed by a single from Caleb Davis. Taylor Bush's sacrifice fly made it 1-0. Then with one out, Eli Gibson singled. Nick Smith's ground out drove in Davis for the Patriots' second run.

Grayson Thorpe drove in the third run with a single, and Cole Strachan followed with a two-run homer, as the Patriots led 5-0 after one.

In their April 26th doubleheader with Shelton State, the Patriots scored a combined 16 runs in the two games.

NW-SCC had 13 hits in game one, including a Herlan Duran single on the first pitch of the game. Alex Wilson drove in two runs, as did Brodie Holcomb. Bush, Duran, Gipson, Smith and Drew McBurnett had one RBI apiece.

Prestegard came on in relief of starting pitcher Samuel Pace and in 1.1 innings, Prestegard allowed one hit, no walks and no runs scored.

Holcomb homered for the Patriots.

In game two, Andrew Jones pitched three spotless innings in relief of winning pitcher Ethan Muncher. Jones scattered five hits and a walk over three innings as he held Shelton without a run.

With the teams tied 3-3 in the fifth, Bush blasted a home run over the left field fence to give NW-SCC a 5-3 lead. Shelton answered with one run in the bottom of the inning before Jones shut the rally down.

The Patriots split four games against Alabama Community College Conference foe Lawson State Community College on April 20th and 22nd.

In Saturday's opening game, the Patriots' five run fourth inning erased what was a 2-1 Lawson lead. The inning featured a run-scoring double by Strachan.

Michael Pfeiffer went the distance for Northwest-Shoals, throwing seven innings of four-hit baseball with four walks, four strikeouts, while giving up

three earned runs.

The Patriots stepped out of ACCC play for an April 18th game at Tennessee's Columbia State Community College. NW-SCC returned home with an 11-8, nine-inning victory that saw the Patriots slam 19 hits.

Jacob Little earned the win for NW-SCC, cruising through 6.2 innings of two-hit, one run baseball.

Caleb Davis homered for the Patriots and enjoyed a 3-7 day

with two RBI. Duran went 3-6 with two RBI and Strachan 3-7 with four runs batted in. Parker White also had a two RBI game.

On April 13th and 15th, the Patriots swept four games from conference rival Central Alabama Community College, by scores of 8-2, 8-7, 3-0 and 6-1.

Northwest-Shoals defeated Birmingham Southern College junior varsity team 7-6 in a nine inning game on April 11th.

The Patriots received outstanding relief pitching from Prestegard, Jones and Jacob Little, who earned the win with two innings of one-hit, no run baseball with four strikeouts.

Wilson had three RBI to lead the Patriot offense.

Northwest-Shoals was scheduled to conclude its 2023 season May 6th with a doubleheader at Marion Military Institute in Marion. Although they are not eligible for the ACCC tournament, the Patriots notched 20 wins against conference opponents in the team's inaugural season.



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