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## No license for Russellville-based medical cannabis applicant

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

When the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission met Monday to finalize which of the more than 90 applications it received were approved for licenses, there was quiet anticipation in Russellville. That anticipation turned to disappointment, though, when a company looking to make more than a \$25 million investment in the city learned its application had been denied. Last year, the Russellville City Council approved an ordinance that

would allow the operation of medical cannabis dispensary sites within the city. This was a prerequisite for any city or county interested in licensing a dispensary inside its corporate limits. The council then approved a lease purchase agreement with Natural Relief Cultivation, LLC, that would allow the corporation to purchase approximately 28 acres on Highway 24 East from the city. That agreement was subject to Natural Relief Cultivation, LLC's integrated facility license application with the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission

See 'CANNABIS,' Page 7

## Council approves demolition bid for College Avenue School, 10 other structures

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council approved the acceptance of a \$268,000 bid for the demolition of 11 structures, including College Avenue Elementary School, at the council's June 5th meeting. The low bid for demolition and debris removal came from R. Baker, Inc. Russellville Mayor David Grissom did not offer a specific date for when demolition will begin, but said he expected it to start soon. "We're hoping to get that started very soon. We've finally gotten through the bid process and are ready to move forward," Grissom

said. The city applied for a Community Development Block Grant. After the grant was approved, a historical study of all the buildings set for demolition was required as a condition of the grant. That process took more than a year, primarily related to College Avenue Elementary, before it was finally completed. The College Avenue Elementary site will feature a marker highlighting the history of the former building. The school was constructed in 1936, with a lower level added approximately 20 years later. The properties included in the demolition bid were:  
 --501 Montgomery St. SE  
 --503 Montgomery St. SE

See 'DEMOLITION,' Page 9

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**Robert Earl Shook Sr., 65, of Russellville, passed away Tuesday, June 6, 2023. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.**

**Richard Freeman Smith, 81, of Russellville, passed away Tuesday, June 6, 2023. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.**

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us on the web at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)! Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoon panels, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).

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**A Servant's Heart... Cedars Church takes part in 'Serve Day'**

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." --Mark 10:45

When Cedars Church Pastors Tanner and Lindsay Hall and more than 30 members of their congregation volunteered their time Friday to work at the Hal Kirby, Jr. Ballpark, it was the second consecutive year for the young church to take part in what Hall called 'Serve Day.'

It was actually 'Serve Weekend,' though, as members worked Saturday to paint their church building, located at 109 West Lawrence Street in downtown Russellville.

Cedars volunteers pressure washed the sidewalks, building and bleachers at the ballpark along with a general cleanup in whatever capacity Russellville Parks and Recreation Director Donnie Flanagan needed.



COURTESY PHOTO

Overseeing Pastor Anthony Colon at Cedars Church's Serve Day.

"We greatly appreciate what they do. This is the second year Tanner and his church have helped us," Flanagan said. "They painted the Canteen for us last year. And one year later, it still looks perfect, like a professional painter did the job."

Hall said the annual 'Serve Day' is based on Mark 10:45 and what he describes as our 'duty' to serve.

"We always want to be a church that is serving and loving our community," Hall said. "Service is loving. We can all take the time out of our busy schedules and serve our community, not for a name on a wall or on a t-shirt, but because it's what we should do based on scripture."

"We just want to give back to our city, and that's what we are doing," Hall added.

When the Halls introduced Cedars Church last May, it was with the plan to be a service-oriented church.

Just over a year later, Cedars' membership continues to grow and the church has a permanent home after holding services last year at the Ralph C. Bishop Recreation Center.

A video on the church's website, www.cedarschurchal.com, describes Russellville, Alabama, as 'amazing' with 'the best yet to come.'

The same appears true for the church itself.



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# RHS alum Stidham among new teaching hires approved by RCS board

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education approved a number of personnel moves at its June 8th meeting, including the hiring of 2017 Russellville High School graduate Austin Stidham as a high school science teacher.

Stidham will also coach the offensive line for Coach John Ritter's varsity Golden Tigers football team.

Stidham, who completed a stellar collegiate career at Troy University last season, earned his Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Sciences in 2021 and his Master's in Education.

Other new hires included Courtney Sandlin and Charley Butler, teachers at West Elementary School.

Resignations in position were approved from Alicia Velasquez and Joana Macias, WES aides.

Morgan Pate was hired as a teacher for the 21st CCLC Summer Program and Macey Vandiver was hired as an aide. Amanda Ridge, Kaitlyn Richardson, Kendra Howard, Gracie Kummer, Lauren Hellums and Amy McReynolds were hired as teachers for the Summer Learning Program.

Ella Burcham, Harley Smith and Mardoqueo Constantino Soto, Jr., were hired as lifeguards for the Russellville Parks and Recreation Department.

Magda Francisco-Lopez, Leslie De Leon Rivera, Janet Vargas and Elizabeth Alonxo were hired as EL Aides for the Summer Help at CO.

In other agenda items, the board:

--approved the following facility use requests: RHS Facilities on September 23, 2023, by the RHS Marching Hundred for the annual Northwest Alabama Marching Classic, RHS Fine Arts Building and Auditorium on January 12-13, 2024, for the RHS Marching Hundred to host the Northwest Alabama Honor Band, and RHS Fine Arts Building and Auditorium during February 9-10, 2024, by the RHS Marching Hundred to host the Alabama Bandmasters Association District 3 Honor Band.

--approved the following prices for breakfast and lunch for employees and visitors: Employee Breakfast at WES, RES, RMS and RHS no charge (breakfast in the classroom), Employee Breakfast RHS \$2.85, Employee Lunch all schools \$4.35, Visitor Breakfast all schools \$2.85 and Visitor Lunch all schools \$4.35.

--approved the contract for ice cream between the RCS Child Nutrition Program to roll over for the 2023-2024 school year with Murfreesboro Pure Milk (Purity Dairy).

--approved changing the board's regular meeting date to the third Tuesday of each month at 8 a.m.

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# Real Estate Tips

- By Willodean Davis

## Making the Move

Submitted

I am always being asked, "Why is everyone wanting to move to Russellville Alabama?" The better question is 'why not here?'

We have a beautiful state with all 4 seasons. In Spring we have pretty budding flowers and trees. In the Summer we have a lot of fun with swimming and vacationing in Gulf Shores. Traveling to Mobile to see the beaches there and seeing the large ships in the harbor. Fall is unbelievable with all of our pretty foliage. Our state is covered with beautiful orange, yellow, red, and green colors. Just come down Spruce Pine Mountain in October, what a colorful site you will see. You don't have to go to Gatlinburg, TN to admire the views. We have it all here in Russellville. In the Winter we enjoy our eventful snowfalls. We don't get it often so when we do it is a beautiful treat. It covers our land and homes in a white sparkling blanket of snow. The children play outside sledding and making snowmen while mom makes a cup of hot coco.

Why everyone wants to come to Alabama? "To see what a state we have, our state is beautiful, and it is Home. Our state appreciates the ones who fought for our freedoms that we enjoy today. Alabama doesn't tax its Veterans Retirement and the state strives to help our Veterans. Out of 50 states in the U.S.A, Alabama is ranked #9 meaning it has a lower cost of living and property tax. Top migration states are Florida, Texas, North Carolina,

South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Arizona, Idaho, Alabama, and Oklahoma making the top 10 states to live.

Why do people want to move to Russellville? We are a small city on the move. We have great schools, low cost of living, low taxes, low crime rates, and Veterans are welcome! Good employment possibilities with a lot of factories and work opportunities. You can drive 17 miles to great fishing, boating, swimming, and other outdoor activities at our local lakes. Russellville has so much to offer anyone and everyone. If you want quietness and the love of nature, this is the area for you. By 2034, we will have more people over the age of 65 than the under the age of 18. People are on the move.

Who is buying homes now? Families moving from other states can sell there and buy bigger homes here. Some families have adult children that are still at home. They are taking care of their aging parents and they need a larger home, or they just want to buy something to have money left over.

People leaving here are ones that have lost their spouse and want to move closer to family, or maybe their job has relocated them to a different area. We don't have a lot leaving because they love it here and want to stay.

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

 **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](mailto:robynnbragwell@franklin.k12.al.us)

 **T**he Senior Center at Phil Campbell is under new management. The Town of Phil Campbell would like to invite and encourage everyone in their area 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 a.m.-noon. A delicious lunch is served around 11 a.m. Come on out and join in on the games or just sit and have a cup of coffee and socialize!

 **T**he Harris/Trapp Family Reunion will be Saturday, July 8, from 10-2 at East Franklin Community Center. Everyone bring something as it's a Pot Luck Lunch. For more information, call Diane Halsey at 205-485-4616 or Cathy Harris at 205-486-4387. Friends of Lena Trapp Harris and Andrew Jackson Harris invite you to join them. They can't wait to see everyone!

 **E**ast Franklin Volunteer Fire Department will be serving William Earl Bishop's smoked chicken and pulled BBQ pork plates from 4-7 p.m., Friday, June 16th. Proceeds will be used to help pay for our new Engine 1 fire truck. EFVFD is located at 10443 Hwy. 81, Phil Campbell. Carryout or dine-in. Plates are \$10 each. Dessert donations appreciated.

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being approved.

And when the five integrated facility licenses from the 38 applicants were announced, the Russellville-based Natural Relief Cultivation was not among them. In fact, North Alabama was shut out entirely in this category, as South Alabama applicants gobbled up the five available licenses.

The five applications approved by the commission were: Flowerwood Medical Cannabis, LLC, based in Loxley; Southeast Cannabis Company, LLC, in Mobile; Verano Alabama, LLC, in Montgomery; TheraTrue Alabama, LLC, in Montgomery and Sustainable Alabama, LLC, in Dothan.

The commission considered six different types of applications. The integrated facility license could be described as the 'holy grail' of licenses in Alabama.

Integrated Facility Licensees are licensed to cultivate cannabis, process it into medical cannabis, including packaging and labeling the medical cannabis products, and to transport, dispense and sell medical cannabis to registered patients at up to five dispensary sites.

Alabama's Medical Cannabis Commission was formed by the Alabama Legislature in 2021 as part of the Wesley 'Ato' Hall Compassion Act. That act opened the door for legal use of medical cannabis in Alabama.

Franklin County's Legislative delegation of Sen. Larry Stutts (R-Tuscumbia) and Rep. Jamie Kiel (R-Russellville) both voted against the legalization of medical cannabis, but Natural Relief Cultivation's owner doesn't believe that was a factor in the commission's decision.

Natural Relief Cultivation includes a group of Arkansas businessmen who own medical cannabis businesses in Arkansas, along with some Alabama investors. Brian Faught with Natural Relief Cultivation is co-owner of Arkansas' largest cannabis dispensary, Natural Relief Dispensary. Arkansas' medical cannabis law is similar to Alabama's, so Faught's familiarity with licensing in Arkansas was an advantage for the company as it meandered through the Alabama application process.

Faught has led two successful medical cannabis applications, both in Arkansas and in Illinois, where he secured a craft cultivation license.

Faught said he reached out to Russellville officials because the commission said it wanted applicants from all corners of the state, not just from Montgomery or other large metropolitan areas.

"The commission wanted to see applications cover the state and cover Alabama's less populated areas. That was my thought process in partnering with the City of Russellville but the commission just didn't agree," Faught

said.

Since he entered the medical cannabis industry several years ago, Faught has met with more than 50 city officials from various states, working with them to educate them on medical cannabis and the laws governing it. Even though his application was denied, Faught lauded Russellville officials as the best he's worked with.

"No one, hands down, far and away, has been anywhere close to Russellville Mayor David Grissom, the council and city officials, as far as being accommodating, professional and prepared," Faught said.

The group entered into discussions with city officials in 2021 about possibly locating in Russellville if they become operational. The city council approved the lease purchase agreement by a 4-1 vote. Mayor David Grissom and councilmen Darren Woodruff, Dexter Hamilton and Jamie Harris voted in favor, councilman Gary Cummings voted against the agreement and councilman David Palmer, who stepped out of the meeting previously, did not vote.

Cummings said he was surprised to learn Natural Relief Cultivation's application was denied, but he called the news the 'right decision' for Russellville.

"I think we were opening Pandora's Box with this," Cummings said. "I will not ever be for legalized marijuana. I had a lot of people talk to me about this and ask why I didn't support it. I'm sure they had their reasons, but I don't believe the City of Russellville should ever be involved in the marijuana industry," he added.

Medical cannabis is a high-dollar industry with potential for some staggering financial returns for licensees and the City of Russellville was positioned Natural Relief Corporation would have paid the city an annual payment of one percent of its net profit each year or a minimum of \$50,000, whichever was larger.

The city would also have received its proportional sales tax revenue on medical cannabis sold at the dispensary, as well as an additional two percent sales tax once that was approved by the council.

After five years, if the benchmarks were not met, the company would have the option to pay the city \$500,000 as a purchase price for the land. Otherwise, the land would revert to the city.

Patients must have a medical cannabis card and be on the Alabama Medical Cannabis Patient Registry after submitting a certifying physician's authorization for the patient to use medical cannabis.

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Hall, Office of the Mayor, 304 North Jackson Avenue. Applications submitted to the Russellville Civil Service Board less than one year ago remain active. Those individuals need not reapply in

order to receive consideration for this appointment. Applications must be returned no later than June 23, 2023 by U.S. Mail to: The Russellville Civil Service Board P. O. Box 308 Russellville, AL

35653 The appointees will be required to successfully complete a physical examination including drug and alcohol screening prior to employment.

# ‘DEMOLITION,’ from Page 1

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- 502 College Ave. N
- 515 College Ave. N
- 726 Jackson Ave. S
- 807 Franklin St. NE
- 801 Franklin St. NE
- 108 Lauderdale St. NE
- 550 Fourth St.

In other agenda items, the council:

--approved a resolution recognizing the second Sunday in June as Race Amity Day, a day to celebrate interracial friendship and partnership and promote them with the goal of social change.

--declared a vacancy for Patrol Officer in the Russellville Police Department and agreed to authorize advertisement to solicit job applications.

--approved the hiring of Marty Corbell as a Labor in the Russellville Street Department.

--appointed Scott Adcock to the Zoning Board of Adjustments, and reappointed Tony Chard, George Coleman, Sr., and Bois Porter.

--approved the transfer application for an alcohol license for Retail Beer and Retail Table Wine from Venkateshwara, LLC, d/b/a Ideal Mart, 503 Waterloo Road. The business, known as Yogi's Citgo, was sold by former owner Mark Welborn earlier this year.

--certified the Russellville Senior Center as a non-profit organization as a prerequisite for Franklin Electric Cooperative and the Tennessee Valley Authority to donate \$1,000 each to the Senior Center as part of the Community Care Fund.

The next regular meeting of the Russellville City Council will be June 19, 2023, with work session at 6 p.m., and meeting to follow.

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**SPORTS**

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## Langston, Anthony, Robinson & Blackburn named All-State

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

When the 2023 Alabama Sports Writers Association All-State baseball and softball teams were named late last week, Northwest-Shoals Community College baseball coach David Langston was all smiles, and not just because his son was among the selections.

Each of the four baseball All-State senior honorees from Franklin County schools have signed to play for the Patriots starting next season. And that includes his son, Banks, who was named as a 5A All-State First Team outfielder after an outstanding season for the Russellville Golden Tigers.

Bankston's teammate, Logan White, was named as a 5A All-State Honorable Mention pitcher.

Phil Campbell High School graduates Robby Robinson (designated hitter) and Bryant Anthony (catcher) were both named to the 3A All-State First Team.

That's a lot of All-State talent ready to hit the field for NW-SCC next fall.

Langston's senior season saw him hit .389, along with 28 stolen bases in 29 attempts. Langston became a dominant hitter in a season where injuries prevented him from pitching. Langston was 5A Pitcher of the Year in 2022.

In 126 at bats, Langston had 49 hits, scored 33 runs and had 29 RBI.

White had a lofty record of 8-2 for the Golden Tigers this spring, with a 2.36 Earned Run Average and a 1.33 WHIP. In more than 65 innings of work, White had 57 strikeouts and

See, 'ALL-STAR,' page 12

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## Raper to end incredible 11-year run as Phil Campbell High School baseball coach

Michael Rice  
Franklin Free Press

"There are not enough good words to express the positive impact Coach Raper has made on Phil Campbell."

Those were the comments of Franklin County Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton after it was announced Jonathan Raper would be resigning as the Phil Campbell Bobcat head baseball coach after an incredibly successful run. Raper did not resign from his teaching position as a physical education teacher at PCHS.

Raper spent the past 11 years leading the Bobcats to repeated postseason success, including a 2021 Class 3A State Championship and four straight 3A Final Four appearances.

Raper's team built a state wide reputation, but bragging rights for the county were also in his team's favor. Under Raper, the Bobcats won eight Franklin County Championships.

Raper cared about his players while producing a winning baseball program.

Raper coached 11 players who received scholarships to further their ability to the next level. Among the many Bobcats to move on to collegiate careers was Raper's son Sage, a 2023 graduate who will play for the University of Tennessee Southern starting in the fall.

Raper and his wife Deedra's older son Ridge continued his baseball career at Wallace State-Hanceville Community College. After two years at Wallace, Ridge will also enroll at UT Southern and both brothers will be part of the FireHawks' program.

See, 'RAPER,' Page 14

## Like father, like son: Jeffreys hired as head FB coach at Colbert Heights

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

As the son of a successful high school football coach, it seemed a given Tyler Jeffreys would play the sport that defined his father's career.

Play he did, and Jeffreys, a two-way starter at Colbert County High School, had an outstanding career that included the Indians reaching the state semifinals in 2015 and Honorable Mention Class 3A All-State recognition for Tyler.

Jeffreys moved on to play two years at the University of North Alabama, where he earned his degree in Physical Education in 2020.

Jeffreys' playing career ended after two years at UNA, and now he's followed his father Dale into coaching. Last month, Tyler was named the new varsity football coach at Colbert Heights High School, his first head coaching job after four years as an assistant.

Dale Jeffreys retired from coaching after 20 years. He compiled a career record at Red Bay



Sage Raper, along with Jonathan and Deedra Raper at his signing ceremony last month.

COURTESY PHOTO

and Colbert County High Schools of 160-78, including a run of 14 consecutive playoff appearances.

Tyler hopes to start his coaching career 1-0 when the Wildcats play Lexington on August 25th.

When Jeffreys started at UNA, he planned to become a physical therapist. But when he began volunteer coaching at Colbert County, it didn't take long for him to pivot career plans.

"Football has always been a way of life for me because it's all I ever knew in our family," Jeffreys said. "When I finished at UNA and started volunteering in Leighton, it was about day two that I knew this is what I wanted to do."

"I ended up coaching a kid I actually played with as a senior when he was a freshman. I enjoyed it and it's been addictive to me ever since," he added.

Tyler, the son of Dale and Tammy Jeffreys, has seen a lot of life changes since he signed with UNA seven years ago. He earned his

See, 'Jeffreys,' page 13



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**'ALL-STAR,' from Page 11**

only 14 walks.

In addition to Langston, Robinson and Anthony, Belgreen pitcher Lily Blackburn earned 1A All-State First Team status as a pitcher.

Anthony's season average for the Bobcats was .442, with an on base percentage of .597 and slugging percentage of .752. Anthony smacked nine home runs and had 32 RBI and 16 stolen bases.

Anthony was recognized for his defense behind the plate as well. In more than 238 innings, he threw out 13 of 26 runners on stolen base attempts.

Robinson's senior year was also memorable at the plate. His average was .445 with a slugging percentage of .805. He amassed 57 hits, including 10 home runs, and had 57 RBI and 10 stolen bases.

Blackburn had a spectacular year for Coach Sander Tverberg's Bulldogs. She appeared in 46 games and threw 181 innings, while

See 'ALL-STAR,' Page 15

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# 'JEFFREYS,' From Page 11

degree, got his first teaching job at Hatton Elementary School in Colbert County, started coaching at CCHS, married the love of his life Anna and now he'll walk the sideline as the head man at Colbert

Heights, where he served as defensive coordinator last season.

Jeffreys believes the infrastructure is in place for Colbert Heights' football to succeed and much of the credit goes to former Wildcat coach Taylor Leathers.

"Coach Leathers and I have a strong relationship and he's been really good to me. He was very encouraging about me applying for the job and that meant a lot to me," Jeffreys said. "The people in this community want to help. They want us to succeed and are willing to help these young men do the best they can to be in a position to do that.

"Administration wise, it's the same way. We've got a really good principal who's very good to the athletic program and very supportive. That helps a lot, too. But what made me want to

apply the most was the kids here. They work really hard and are going to do what they're told to be put in a situation to succeed. That's what it's all about—the kids," he added.

Jeffreys will have 45-50 kids ready to wear the blue and white this fall. "We've got a good group of seniors. I looked at our depth chart the other day and while it's not set in stone, we have nine starters on both sides of the ball coming back who are seniors," Jeffreys said.

Perhaps Jeffreys' biggest fan is his grandfather, Tommy "Hutty" Hutcheson. While outspoken to most, Hutty has supported his grandsons in everything they've done in life, and Tyler expects his grandfather will be at every Wildcat game.

"He really doesn't heckle me that much," Jeffreys said. "He's always been real supportive and just wants the best for us. He'll tell me what he learned in the past through his life, and he reminds me not to get too big of a hurry in life. He reminds me to take time to enjoy it



COURTESY PHOTO

Jeffreys on the Colbert Heights' sideline last season.



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## 'RAPER,' from Page 11

On Saturday, Bobcat graduates Bryant Anthony and Robby Robinson were named to the Class 3A First Team All-State squad. Rising senior Eli Taylor was named Class 3A Honorable Mention All-State.

For Raper, the decision came down to two choices—his family or his program.

"Ridge has been at Wallace two years and I got to see him pitch three times his first year and three times last season," Raper said. "He's now going to UT Southern and I don't want to look back three or four years from now and realize I won't get to see my sons play anymore. I want to enjoy that the next few years and not have any regrets I didn't take the time to do that."

Prior to coming to Phil Campbell, Raper taught and coached for more than a decade at Phillips High School. He was hired to lead the Bobcats' baseball program in 2012.

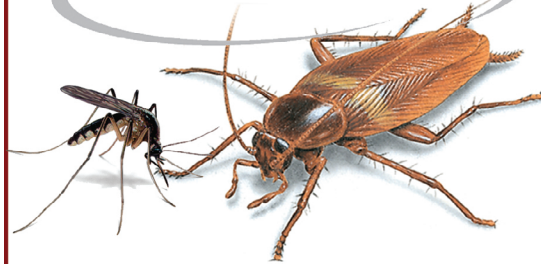
Raper is resigning from his baseball coaching position, but that doesn't mean his success will be forgotten anytime soon.

"Coach Raper is a winner. He's a Hall of Famer and I'm proud to call him my friend," Hamilton said.

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Even though he'll focus on family the next few years Raper said he's not ready to give up coaching permanently.

"I told Mr. (Bart) Moss I'll help with whatever sport he wants me to. I've coached football and basketball and I'm willing to do whatever I need to do to help Phil Campbell High School," Raper said. Although the Bobcats had a large senior class on this year's baseball team, Raper believes the program will be well situated for its next coach to succeed.

"Our JV team had a good record and they're a good group of kids. We have some big parts of our team coming back as well. Those young men work hard and when it's all said and done, they'll make a lot of noise next year," Raper said.

"The program is in good shape. There's never a perfect time to leave, and I wish I could still lead those kids, but it's time for someone else to take over so I can enjoy watching my boys play," he added.

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# 'ALL-STAR,' from Page 12

posting a record of 22-12 with a 1.86 ERA and a 1.028 WHIP. Included in her 22 wins were 13 shutouts and one no-hitter. Blackburn struck out 173 of the 717 batters she faced.

Phil Campbell rising senior Eli Taylor was named to the 3A All-State Second Team as a pitcher. Taylor posted a 9-2 record with 61.1 innings pitched and an eye-popping ERA of 1.255, WHIP of 1.060 while holding opponents' batting averages against him to .184.

Taylor also had three shutouts for Coach Jonathan Raper's team.

Russellville eighth-grader Addison Holcomb was named to the 5A All-State Second Team as a designated hitter. Holcomb was outstanding at the plate all season, including the 5A Area 16 Tournament, where she had three hits, including two home runs and five RBI against Lawrence County.

Other All-State honorees near the Franklin Free Press coverage area included: Colbert Heights freshman infielder Taryn Wagnon, 3A All-State Honorable Mention, Hackleburg sophomore outfielder Saylor Cooper, 1A Softball All-State First Team, Hackleburg sophomore pitcher Blaise Vickery, 1A Baseball First Team and Hackleburg sophomore outfielder JaQuan Reeder, 1A Baseball All-State Honorable Mention.

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us online at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net).



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