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## Sunday afternoon storm featured 70-plus mph winds, inch-sized hail

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

A fast-moving, powerful thunderstorm ravaged its way through Franklin County Sunday afternoon, resulting in hundreds of down trees across the county and widespread power outages.

The first of several severe thunderstorm warnings for Franklin County came around 1:50 Sunday afternoon. The storm caused extensive damage in only a 30-minute period.

According to Franklin County Emergency Management Agency

Director Mary Glass, the storm included winds between 60-70 miles per hour, according to the National Weather Service, although Glass believes the wind speeds were even higher than that.

"The weather service described it as straight line winds, that included hail, rain and wind," Glass said. "There were no tornado watches or warnings issued for Franklin County Sunday afternoon. They said wind speeds were 60-70 miles per hour, but I think it's more than that. We'll just have to wait on the official report."

See STORM,' Page 9

## Waco resident's talents subject of feature on Simply Southern TV

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

Carol Glass' expertise as a seamstress have been well known for decades in Franklin County.

Now the rest of the world learned about her talents and her passion for sewing and smocking in a recently aired episode of Simply Southern TV, a 30-minute show that celebrates the farmers, gardeners, homemakers and other talented residents who make Alabama unique.

The show is presented by the Alabama Farmers Federation (ALFA) and airs weekly on Huntsville's WAFF-TV. The episode featuring Glass aired Sunday, August 5th at 9 a.m. The show will air on RFD-TV,


Wednesday, August 9th, at 3 p.m., Central time.

Glass and her husband Ronnie live in the Waco community. They have two daughters and one son, six grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a fourth on the way.

Glass, a member of ALFA's Women's Leadership Division Committee, was at seminar in April when she shared photos of Easter dresses she made for her triplet great-granddaughters. She had no idea that would lead to her being featured on a national cable network.





"We have eight-month-old triplet great-granddaughters and I made their Easter dresses," Glass said. "I showed them to some of the ladies and a week later I got a call from

See 'GLASS,' Page 7

  
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**Donald Edward Gandy, age 79, of Russellville, passed away on Wednesday, August 02, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.**

**Chanda Hope Grisham Logan, age 48, of Russellville, passed away on Thursday, August 03, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.**

**Vernon Louis Bonn, Jr., passed away on Thursday, August 03, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.**

**Damaris Ann Robinson, age 80, of Phil Campbell, passed away August 6, 2023. A graveside service will be held on Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at 10 AM at Union Hill Cemetery**



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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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# TVA inviting teachers to apply for \$1.5 million in STEM grants

Submitted

The Tennessee Valley Authority's STEM Classroom Grant Program for science, technology, engineering and math education is now open for applications through September 15, 2023.

The program funds STEM learning projects in classrooms and schools in TVA's seven-state service area and is sponsored by TVA in partnership with the TVA retiree organization Bicentennial Volunteers Inc.

"TVA is proud to support educators and students who pursue excellence in STEM subjects," said Jeannette Mills, TVA executive vice president and chief external relations officer. "As we work to build the clean energy system of the future, our region's future workforce must be prepared to deliver innovative solutions for the decades ahead."

The application process is opening earlier this year so teachers have time before students arrive to submit applications, and so that grant funding can be distributed before January. The new timeline this will give teachers in schools that receive grants the entire Spring semester to implement their projects.

Last year's program awarded \$1 million in grants to schools across the Tennessee Valley and this year's total will reach \$1.5 million. Teachers can apply for funding up to \$5,000 for STEM projects with preference given to applications that explore TVA's primary area of focus: environment, energy, economic and career development, and community problem-solving.

Eligible applicants are teachers or school administrators in public or private schools, grades K-12. Schools must be in the TVA service area and receive electricity from a local power distributor served by TVA.

Visit <https://www.tva.com/stem> to learn more about grant requirements, see examples of previously funded projects, and apply for funding.

The Tennessee Valley Authority is the nation's largest public power supplier, delivering energy to 10 million people across seven southeastern states. TVA was established 90 years ago to serve this region and the nation by developing innovative solutions to solve complex challenges. TVA's unique mission focuses on energy, environmental stewardship, and economic development. With one of the largest, most diverse, and cleanest energy systems – including nuclear, hydro, solar, gas, and advanced technologies – TVA is a leader in our nation's drive toward a clean energy future.

TVA is a corporate agency of the United States, receiving no taxpayer funding, deriving virtually all of its revenues from sales of electricity.

In addition to operating and investing its revenues in its electric system, TVA provides flood control, navigation, and land management for the Tennessee River system, and assists local power companies and state and local governments with economic development and job creation.

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# RCS board approves 17 personnel moves

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education approved 18 personnel moves in a special meeting held August 1st.

With the new school year approaching, the board filled its remaining open positions in order to be fully staffed by August 8th, the first day of school.

New employment in position moves approved by the board included: Jesslyn McNutt, West Elementary School teacher, Emily Stewart, At-Risk teacher at Russellville Middle School, Tina Fisher, CNP worker at Russellville High School, Chris Jackson, Social Science teacher at RMS, Chelsea Tompkins, Social Science teacher at RHS, Arlene Patino, EL Aide at RHS and Jordan Shelton, Family and Consumer Science teacher at RHS.

Other personnel moves approved by the board included:

Resignation in Position: Alia McCollister, WES teacher, Emily Tucker Hodges, temporary employment to fill a leave of absence for Rachel Willis, Jason Walker, teacher and part-time administration at RMS, Fabiola Ruez, CNP worker, Magda Francisco-Lopez, EL Aide at RHS and Victoria Saint, CNP worker at RHS.

--Temporary Employment in Position: Lisa Thorn, Melissa Greenhill, 21st CCLC teachers, Arely Mojica, 21st CCLC Aide and Rhonda Pounders, part-time retired teacher at WES.

Please send your guest columns and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).

## RHS student Stella Hill to represent Franklin County at DYW State Competition

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Russellville High School student Stella Hill was recently named the Franklin County representative for the Distinguished Young Women State Program set for January 19-20, 2024, in Montgomery.

Hill was selected to represent Franklin County at the July 27th Northwest Alabama Distinguished Young Women Program held on the campus of the University of North Alabama.

Ten young women from Franklin, Colbert and Lauderdale Counties competed in events including scholastics, interview, fitness, talent and self-expression. One participant was selected to represent each county at the state competition.

Hill also won scholastics, talent and self-expression categories. RHS students Chloe Sheffield and Danica Graham were named first alternate and second alternate, respectively. Graham also won the fitness category.

Phil Campbell High School student Aaliyah Prince won the 'Be Your Best Self' Essay Contest.

Distinguished Young Women began in 1958. The national organization is a free program that offers college scholarships at the state level and nationally. Participants must be juniors in high school.

The program's mission is to empower young women by providing scholarships, connecting with a nationwide network of women, developing self-confidence and participation in life skills programs to prepare them for success after high school.

For more information on the Distinguished Young Women program in northwest Alabama, contact Susan Hargett at 256-710-9239 or Katernia Cole-Coffey at 256-332-8880.



COURTESY PHOTO

Franklin County DYW Top Three Finalists.



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# Real Estate Tips

- By Willodean Davis

## Real Estate Affordability

Willodean Davis  
Franklin Free Press

We live with challenges every day. Low inventory, rising prices, and more recently rising interest rates. Rising rates have dramatically cut into buyers' spending power.

Soaring rents and other factors make it difficult for many people to save or qualify for their first home. Material and labor shortage are suppressing the production of new homes. That's causing shortages in the availability of finding homes. Multiple offers are still happening on mid-priced homes, but we need 100% growth to reach an adequate supply.

Some states are putting in incentives to help buyers afford the purchase of a home. In the past we have had federal incentives to help build, giving us new inventory.

I remember selling houses when the interest rates were 20%. People had to have homes. So, in 1981 the government subsidized housing payments. The real estate market was in very bad condition. I went to the projects and sold five homes because the payments were lower than the rent.

My customers got a brick home with three bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms. They could live there 30 years or longer, but if they sold it they had to reimburse part of their subsidiary back to the government. "Hello Oak Hills

Subdivision."

In 2008, the home buying market was hit again. The market went down almost too fast. This time the government stepped up again with a subsidized program.

If you have never had a home, the government would give you \$8,000 for your down payment. I have always had my heart on helping people. There was a happy family with three children that needed a home.

I couldn't find one so I went to one of my competitor friends and he had a house that would work, but it would not pass inspection. I then got my friend to put on a new roof, new heating/air, paint inside and out, new flooring, and new plumbing. It passed inspection and we got to close on their new home. We had a happy family, seller, and two real estate brokers. You sometimes make things work in order to help others. I enjoy every day I get to work with my clients.

Market shifts are inevitable and dwelling on the past, when mortgage rates were next to nothing, won't change current circumstances.

The market is the market, whether it's up or down, shifting or stable. We don't dictate or control it. Knowledge is power. It is essential to stay informed. I hope this has been an uplifting article as it is from the heart.

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# Franklin BOE approves 36 personnel moves at August 1st meeting

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Personnel moves were the order of the day at the August 1st meeting of the Franklin County Board of Education, as the board approved 36 items.

Board members approved nine Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) contracts, including advanced (5-year) contracts for Jason Lindsey at Phil Campbell High School, and Jason Cooper and Sherry Isbell at Tharptown High School.

Advanced (3-year) contracts were approved for Kristen Headlee Davis and Ariel Lawhead at PCHS, Darrel Baker at Tharptown and Kellie Henson and Emily Taylor at Red Bay High School.

A preliminary (1-year) contract was approved for Amber Thorn, RBHS.

TEAMS contracts offer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) teachers up to \$20,000 more in salary per year to teach math or science in hard-to-staff areas of Alabama.

Other personnel moves approved by the board included:

--Resignation: Shonea Engelthaler, special education teacher THS, Ashley Young, elementary teacher, TES and Amy Moss, head volleyball coach, PCHS.

--Employment: Macy Bass, elementary teacher, RBES, Brandi (Nikki) Scott, special education aide, Belgreen High School, Jacob Hamilton, head varsity football coach, PCHS, Cody Renfrow, head varsity football coach, Vina High School, Courtney Baker Farley, elementary teacher, PCHS, Karley Ergle, elementary teacher, PCES, Julianna Taylor, head volleyball coach, PCHS, Brody Nix, custodian, East Franklin Junior High School, Braxton Craig, history teacher with coaching duties, THS, Erika Ables, English teacher, THS, John Johnson, head varsity football coach/certified teacher, THS (the board rescinded its earlier employment of Johnson as a history teacher), Jennifer Pace, special education teacher, THS, Teri Lynne Underwood, elementary teacher, TES and Amy Vanhorn, elementary teacher, TES.

--Transfers: Kendra Ward, from elementary teacher at TES to elementary teacher PCES, Christi Tyra, from physical education aide at PCES to Pre-K Auxiliary Teacher at PCES, Bailey Wilkinson, from elementary teacher at TES to TESOL teacher at TES, Jake Ward, from special education teacher at TES to special education teacher/Assistant Principal at Vina High School.

--Personal Leave of Absence: Caden Baker, special education aide at PCES, from August 1, 2023 thru September 29, 2023.

--FMLA Request: Tonya Emerson, bus driver, Red Bay High School, from August 4, 2023 thru October 27, 2023.

--2023 Seamless Summer Child Nutrition Program Staff: Christina Presley, Tharptown Cafeteria.

--New teacher substitutes: Elizabeth Hyde, Brittany Peoples, Linda Spurgeon, Rebecca Wilson, Memoree Cochran and Curtis Swinney.

--New Hires 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Shane Nichols, bus driver/aide, Red Bay, Charles Davis, bus driver/aide Vina, Ashley Eckert and Drenda Holland, teachers, Vina, and Valerie Copeland, bus driver/aide at Phil Campbell.

--Termination: Rodney Waddle, tenured teacher, Belgreen High School.

The next board meeting/budget hearing for FY 2023-2024 will be September 11, 2023, following the work session, which begins at 4:30 p.m.

## Alabamian Updating Citizenship Status

Under the Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act, a request was submitted to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security via U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services National Records Center, file number NR C202314936 on May 10, 2023, regarding the birth certificate of Charles E. Hosea, Jr., I-94, and citizenship status of Charles E. Hosea Jr., Hosea Jr., Charles E., Charles Hosea Jr. and all other derivatives. A completed search of Person-Centric Identity Services was conducted and there were no records responsive to the request.

Section 302 of Public Law 94-241: I Charles E. Hosea Jr., being duly sworn, hereby declare my intention to be a national but not a citizen of the United States. "Non citizen National."

# What's Happening

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EVENTS OF INTEREST • FAMILY REUNIONS • PLAYS • CHURCH GATHERINGS • EDUCATIONAL • CLUB MEETINGS

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**T**he Foster Grandparent Program is seeking volunteers ages 55 and older to help tutor and mentor children in day care, head start and schools. Volunteers will receive a tax-free stipend and travel reimbursement. We have openings for several schools for the coming school year. Please call 256-332-6800 for an application.

**A**shaKiran serves victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking across Alabama. Their vision is to be a 'ray of hope' by bridging the gap between service providers and culturally diverse communities. Their 24-hour crisis line number is 1-800-793-3010. Learn more about AshaKiran by visiting [www.ashakiranonline.org](http://www.ashakiranonline.org). Consultations are free and confidential, and available in 45 different languages.

**T**he Senior Center of Phil Campbell is under new management. Everyone age 60 and over are invited to come join us and be part of the group. This is for men and women. We meet at the Phil Campbell Community Center Monday thru Friday from 8-noon. A delicious lunch is served at 11 a.m. Meals are \$1 donation. Some come and play Rook. We also do Bingo when we have enough people. There are several games to play or just sit and socialize with other seniors.

**T**he Annual Ladies Conference will be held Saturday, August 12, from 10a.m.-2 p.m., at Phil Campbell First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Featured speaker will be Alison Blackwood, former Missionary to China and Venezuela. Special music by the Branches Praise Team. Bring your favorite salad to share for lunch. Sponsored by Franklin Baptist Association WMU & Women's Ministry

**L**ifeSouth Community Blood Center will host a blood drive at Russellville Hospital on THURSDAY, AUGUST 10TH, 2023 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.. LifeSouth is the primary supplier of blood products to Russellville Hospital. Please contact Deborah Lindsey to schedule an appointment at 256-332-8676 or by email at [deborah.lindsey@russellvillehospital.org](mailto:deborah.lindsey@russellvillehospital.org). Please be sure to bring your photo ID when you donate. Everyone who signs up to donate will receive a free T-shirt, an appetizer card from Texas Roadhouse, a free cookie dough card from Papa Murphy's and a free meal ticket from Russellville Hospital. All donors will receive a free cholesterol screening. We will also be giving away DOOR PRIZES!

**P**astor Bro. Eric McKinney and the congregation of Crestview Missionary Baptist Church, 24131 Hwy. 24, Russellville, invite you to worship with them. Sunday morning Bible Study is from 10-Noon and Sunday morning worship from 11-Noon. All are welcome to our services! Call 256-324-0179 for more information.

**A** free Basic Computer Training #101 Course will be offered August 16 and 17 at the Chucky Mullins Center, 814 Hamilton St., in Russellville. The class is from 1:00-2:30 p.m., August 16 and 10a.m.-Noon on August 17. Registration is required to attend. To register or learn more about the program, call 256-320-8051 or email [oppia.burke@aamu.edu](mailto:oppia.burke@aamu.edu). The course is offered by Alabama A&M University Small Farms Research Center in collaboration with Fort Valley State University. Learn the basics of working a computer. Computers are available on site. Don't worry if you've never used a computer. We can help!

**J**onesboro Baptist Church will host its Homecoming on Sunday, August 13. Morning service begins at 11 a.m. Lunch served after service. At 1:30 p.m., there will be a special guest singing with the Ransomed Pilgrims. The church is located at 5061 Waterloo Road in Russellville. Pastor Kent Walker and congregation invite everyone to attend.

**R**ussellville First Methodist Church will host a Food Giveaway - Groceries will be given out while supplies last! The event will be Thursday, August 31, 2023, at 1:00 pm. Please stay in your vehicle, have an ID handy and allow our volunteers to serve you! Russellville First Methodist Church is located at the corner of Madison and Washington.

**T**he Long Term Care Ombudsman's job is to protect the rights of Residents of long term care facilities, including Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, and Specialty Care Assisted Living Facilities. The Ombudsman works to ensure that the Residents receive fair treatment and quality care. Anyone can contact the Ombudsman to report long term care problems or to request information about long term care facilities in Franklin, Colbert, Lauderdale, Marion and Winston Counties. For more information please contact Tina Pitt, local Ombudsman, at 256-389-0533.

**R**ussellville Masonic Lodge #371 is selling Boston Butts during the Franklin County Watermelon Festival weekend. Butts are \$35 each and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pickup is Saturday, August 19, between 8-10 a.m., at the Lodge on Coffee Avenue.

**C**ome meet the 2023-2024 Tharptown Wildcats football, cross country and volleyball teams, the band and the cheerleaders at Meet the Wildcats! The event is Thursday, August 10th at 6 p.m., at Tharptown High School, 255 County Road 80, Russellville. Bring family and friends to enjoy an evening of fun. There will be door prizes and King's party inflatables. Food trucks will be there from Taqueria Los Primos, JeradsEats, Montgomery's Sweets and Shreddin' Ice. Football scrimmage begins at 6:30 p.m. Admission includes at least one supply per person. Examples include Lysol spray, Case of Gatorade, Clorox Wipes, White Bathroom Towels, Water, Individual bags of chips and individual wrapped peanut butter/cheese crackers, cleaning supplies. Monetary donations also accepted.



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# 'GLASS,' From Page 1

Simply Southern TV saying producers were looking for someone with the talent of smocking and they were given my name.

"They asked if they could come to the house and do a feature. They came in June and did their filming," Glass said.

Glass displayed around 35 dresses she made for her granddaughters to the show's hosts, and the portraits of all her grandchildren in the hall of her home. She has 'tubs and tubs' ODF of dresses and other garments she's done for each of her granddaughters.

Smocking, which Glass describes as a 'lost art,' is an embroidery technique used to gather fabric so it can stretch. According to <https://craftatlas.co>, smocking was used before elastic in cuffs, bodices and necklines, parts of garments where buttons were not desirable.

"Carol is a lifelong Franklin Countian who discovered a passion for sewing when she was still in elementary school and entered into a 4-H sewing contest," said Simply Southern TV's co-host Mary Wilson. "She especially loves smocking, which is a popular children's clothing style in the South.



COURTESY PHOTO

Carol Glass' triplet great-granddaughters in dresses she made for them.

She smocked for her daughters and granddaughters, and now she gets to smock for her great-granddaughters, a set of triplets!"

Glass said her grandmother taught her to sew when she was in the fifth grade. Her talent graduated into a passion in the mid 1960s when she was a Home Economics student at Russellville High School.

"The talent came from God, but my love for this was encouraged by Mrs. Dot Murphy and Mrs. Nell Arnold, my high school Home Economics teachers," Glass said.

Glass sewed clothes for her daughters when they came along, but it wasn't until they were grown that she decided to learn how to smock.

"I bought a book. I'm not much at self-taught skills, but I learned to smock and made them some things," Glass said.

"A few years later in the early 90s our first granddaughter was born. Two other granddaughters followed and they're now 24, 25 and 29. The 29-year-old has the triplets. I also smocked for my grandsons when they were smaller," she added.

Glass made dresses and bonnets for the triplets to wear when they came home from the hospital. She also made their watermelon-themed dresses they wore in the Franklin County Watermelon Festival Pageant last month.

And the judges must have liked them, as the triplets finished first, second and third in the 0-6 month age division. Maylee Kate was named Queen. Clara Reese first alternate and Silvie Anne second alternate. Each wore a dress hand made with love by their talented great-grandmother.

"Smocking really is the most relaxing thing I've done in my life. I've done lots of crafts, but there's nothing as rewarding and stress-relieving as being able to smock," Glass said. "I do it all. I plan the garment, buy what I need, put it together and smock it and do the finished product with bloomers and hair bows to go with it."

Glass said none of her daughters or granddaughters ever showed much interest in smocking. Remember, she described it as a 'lost art.'

"My granddaughter who's the mother of the triplets does enjoy embroidery and applique, but as far as sewing things together, it's over for our family when I'm gone," Glass said.

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# Jason Miller

*for*

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- 3. I will never get involved in any  
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# 'STORM,' From Page 1

While there are reports of trees down across the county, Glass said the majority of damage to homes came in Russellville.

"It hit Russellville hard with houses and trees, and it hit the county hard with trees. They're down all over the county," Glass said Sunday evening.

Glass was doing a report on trees on top of two trailers at Payne Creek Estates on Highway 43, one of hundreds of reports she'll likely have to make over the coming days and weeks.

Phil Campbell Fire and Rescue responded to Leisure Creations' Phil Campbell location where lightning reportedly struck a generator.

On North Jackson Avenue, several large trees fell onto homes. The tremendous weight of the trees also caused several power poles to snap.

Utility departments were already responding to power outages and damage to gas lines. On College Avenue in Russellville, a massive tree fell and a gas line was exposed as a result.

Russellville Gas Board employees were quickly on scene to assess the damage. Ironically, the tree was in front of a property set for demolition as part of a City of Russellville grant that will see 11 structures razed, including College Avenue School.

Russellville City Councilman Darren Woodruff received a call about a large tree on the ground that was blocking the entrance to a home where a resident is reliant on a wheelchair.

Large branches from the tree were blocking the handicapped accessible front door. Thanks to his efforts, along with those of Russellville Gas Board

employee Ryan Smith and a few other volunteers, the branches impeding access to the front door were cut and removed to allow the resident to enter and exit the home.

The first severe thunderstorm warning for Franklin County went until 2:15 p.m., but a second warning extended until 3 p.m., with warnings for those in its path to move indoors.

Hail sizes of one inch were reported. As of Sunday evening at 6:30 p.m., the storm system had moved into north-east Alabama, with severe thunderstorm warnings for Jackson and DeKalb Counties. On Monday afternoon, a new round of thunderstorms hit the county around 1:30 p.m.

Franklin County remained under a severe thunderstorm watch through 7 p.m.

Monday's storm system included winds of 50 mph, but came nowhere near the severity and damage caused by Sunday's weather event.



COURTESY PHOTO

A large tree fell partially on a Cotaco Street home Sunday afternoon in Russellville.

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**Greenhill, Tompkins join RHS baseball coaching staff**

*Michael Rice  
 Franklin Free Press*

The Russellville Golden Tigers' baseball team is adding two Russellville alumni to their baseball staff in advance of spring 2024.

At the July 18th Russellville City Schools Board of Education meeting, the board voted to approve the hire of Omar Tompkins and Cody Greenhill. Greenhill is a 2017 graduate of Russellville High School and a graduate of Auburn University. While at Russellville, Greenhill was a three-time state champion. Greenhill was All-American his freshman year at Auburn and a member of the 2019 College World Series team. He also played two years in the minors for the Washington Nationals' organization.

"I thought what Cody did as a player was great, but what he did as a leader in this program was even more special. I've always referenced Cody when I talk to the team about how to do things the right way. Cody was relentless in his work ethic and that led to the person he's become," RHS head baseball coach Jess Smith said.

Greenhill was hired as an assistant coach and will receive a coaching supplement.

Tompkins is a 2018 graduate of RHS and he attended Crown College in Minnesota and Lane College in Tennessee. Tompkins played baseball at both schools and was a three-time SIAC All-Conference Team Member at Lane. Tompkins was a member of the 2017 state championship Golden Tiger baseball team and the 2018 state runner-up squad.

Tompkins was hired as a Physical Education teacher at Russellville Middle School along with his assistant varsity baseball coaching duties.

"Omar and Cody both will each bring a higher standard of baseball to our program," head baseball coach Jess Smith said.

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**'Football 101' in session for Wildcat moms**

*Michael Rice  
 Franklin Free Press*

Last week, the Tharptown Wildcats' football moms received a 'Football 101' class before the 2023 season.

New varsity football head coach John Johnson organized the event to build community support for Tharptown's football team.

The event afforded team mothers the chance to learn the ins and outs of football.

"The women around football feel left out a lot of the time. We men have to pick a time to let our players' mothers feel a part of the program. They send their babies out here and I spend more time with them during football season than they do. So this is a program to make them feel welcome," Johnson said.

The Football 101 class for moms will become an annual event at Tharptown High School.

Also before the season, THS will host Meet the Wildcats is this Thursday, August 10th, at 6 p.m. There will be food trucks on site and inflatables for kids. The event is free, but each guest



COURTESY PHOTO

Tharptown football coach John Johnson explains the X's and O's to team moms.

**New PC coach Taylor hopes to bring 7A level of volleyball to Bobcat program**

*Michael Rice  
 Franklin Free Press*

Juliana Taylor was recently named the varsity volleyball coach at Phil Campbell High School.

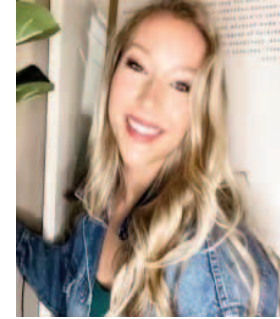
The hire comes after the previous coach, Amy Moss, stepped down to coach the junior varsity team and help with softball coaching duties.

"Coach Taylor is exactly what we were looking for for our girls' athletic program. Volleyball is the fastest growing girls sport in the state and county and she will be a great asset for our program. She comes from a great family that has Phil Campbell roots. I am confident Coach Taylor will be a great role model for our girls," PCHS principal Bart Moss said.

Taylor is a graduate of Phillips High School and played volleyball at the collegiate level.

Taylor attended Northwest Shoals Community College for one year and transferred to Blue Mountain College in Mississippi

where she was a member of the school's volleyball team.



Taylor comes to PCHS after coaching Austin (Decatur) High School's middle school team.

"I want to bring the 7A level of playing to Phil Campbell. They have college scouts at every game and that kind of opportunity is what I want to bring to Phil Campbell," Taylor said.

She's also experienced in coaching travel volleyball in the Huntsville/Decatur area.

"I like that the program is starting from the bottom. Amy Moss has done a great job building the foundation and I'm excited for the opportunity to build it more," Taylor said.

Taylor will teach physical education and also assist with the softball team.

See, 'TAYLOR,' page 12



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## 'TAYLOR,' From Page 11

Moss said he's appreciative of the job Coach Moss did building the program and he believes Taylor will effectively continue that building process.

"We can't thank Amy Moss enough for her willingness to step up three years ago and start our volleyball program from scratch. That is never easy," Moss said.

"Volleyball is the fastest growing girls sport in the state of Alabama and Phil Campbell was behind. Phil Campbell has three teams and the girls have shown exponential progress each year," he added.

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## 'WILDCAT,' From Page 11

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# Czajka pleased to learn Russellville water supply no longer contains fluoride additives

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Stacie Czajka did her homework. Before the Russellville resident met with Russellville Water & Sewer Department Manager Eric Hill, Czajka researched the use of fluoride additives in drinking water and found a number of articles and medical studies that enumerated the risks of excessive intake of fluoride.

So she was prepared to state her case as to why the Water & Sewer Department in Russellville should stop adding fluoride to its water.

What she didn't know yet was Hill didn't need any convincing, as the Russellville Water & Sewer Department stopped the feeding of hydrofluorosilicic acid into its water supply two years ago on May 1, 2021.

"I was very pleased to hear the Russellville Water Board was aware of the concerns about fluoride and took proactive steps to remove it," Czajka said.

After seeing the Russellville Water & Sewer Department's annual Consumer Confidence Report in a recent edition of the Franklin Free Press, Czajka noticed the level of fluoride in Russellville drinking water was 'at the

highest range,' and that concerned her enough to call the department and ask for a meeting with Hill.

The Consumer Confidence Reports are published for public review for the previous year, so that explains why there were higher than natural levels of fluoride in the water tested for that report, Hill explained.

Czajka was prepared to share a study from Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, Poland, which discussed fluorine neurotoxicity contributing to central nervous system disturbances. Another report, from the National Toxicology Program, linked prenatal and childhood fluoride exposure to reduced IQ in children.

After the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initially blocked the report from being released, the NTP got a court order authorizing its release.

To be fair, Americans have been drinking water with added fluoride for more than 75 years and, according to the CDC, "enjoying the benefits of better dental health."

In particular, the CDC and many health providers support the addition of fluoride in the water supply for areas where levels of dental decay are of concern.

Alabama Code Sec. 22-23-21 requires any public water system proposing to "initiate any permanent change in the fluoridation status of its water supply, including discontinuing the fluoridation of the water supply or reducing the level of fluoride...shall provide written notice to the State Health Officer no fewer than 90 days before initiating the change." And the Russellville Water and Sewer Board did just that in 2021.

"We sent a certified letter to the State of Alabama informing them of our intention to stop feeding fluoride into our water," Hill said. "When I met with Ms. Czajka, I told her we were in agreement and wanted to take it out years ago. In the state of Alabama, if you put it in your water supply on your own, you can take it out on your own. That comes from an Alabama Supreme Court ruling in a case from Arab," Hill said.

As of May 1, 2021, Russellville residents no longer had fluoride additives in their water. The only fluoride comes from the natural levels contained in the water at its source.

This wasn't the first time the Russellville Water & Sewer Board attempted to remove fluoride from the city's water.

In 2008, Russellville Water & Sewer Board Manager Doug Clement said the board would stop adding fluoride. But concerns from some local dentists and other health officials led to the board tabling the issue.

See, 'WATER,' Page 15

## ANNOUNCEMENT From the Family of Hosea!

All of God's grace in one little face. Happy to announce the birth of a little baby boy. He arrived on May 12, 2023, at 1:07 p.m., Central Standard Time, in Madison, Alabama, to the parents of Charles Jr. Bey and O'Rissa. He weighed seven (7) pounds exactly, length nineteen and a half inches (19.5").



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# Alabama GOP Trump Dinner sets fund-raising record

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

A day after he was arraigned on four felony charges related to an alleged conspiracy to overturn the 2020 Presidential election results, former President Donald Trump's Friday took a dramatic upturn, as he addressed more than 2,700 Republican supporters as the keynote speaker at the Alabama Republican Party's annual Summer Meeting.

Trump also picked up endorsements from Alabama's six Republican Congressmen, as well as a host of state elected officials, including Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth.

And it was a banner day for the state GOP, which raised more than \$1.2 million, the largest fund-raising event ever for the state party, surpassing the 2021 Trump rally held in Cullman. And the 2,700 attendees was the largest event ever hosted by the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel Convention Center, according to Alabama GOP Chairman John Wahl.

"Tonight we broke three records. It's the largest attendance in the history of the Alabama Republican Party and the largest event this convention center has ever hosted," Wahl said. "And thanks to our keynote speaker tonight, we raised \$1.2 million dollars, making this the all-time largest fund raiser in the history of the Alabama Republican Party."

Among those in attendance was Jason Miller, Franklin County member on the Alabama GOP Executive Committee.

"It's important to me that Alabama get the attention it deserves on a national stage. Also, it will give the people of Alabama the opportunity to hear directly from the leading candidate for President," Miller said.

Friday's event was a complete turnabout from the state GOP's Winter Meeting, which featured Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis as keynote speaker. In January, a poll of Alabama Republican Primary voters chose

DeSantis over Trump, with 50% saying they would either definitely or probably vote for DeSantis, compared to 31% saying the same for Trump.

Entering and exiting the stage to a standing ovation, Trump's 60-minute speech included sharp criticism of all pending charges against him as the result of politically-motivated "Marxist and communist" prosecutors in the Justice Department and two state district attorneys in New York and Georgia.



COURTESY PHOTO

Former President Donald Trump's appearance at Alabama's GOP dinner helped raise \$1.2 million for the state party.

If there was any question whether Trump would rein in his words regarding his pending charges, it was quickly answered.

"The poll numbers are the highest we've ever had," Trump said. "We're going to have a tremendous election. People are upset about what's happening in our country because our country is going straight to hell."

"We always put America first, and in response, our enemies unleashed an army of corrupt Marxist, communist prosecutors and deranged government dictators."

A recent Interactive poll shows Trump leading among Republican candidates with 57%, compared to DeSantis's 13%. No other candidate polled at more than four percent.

"Every time they file an indictment, we go way up in the polls. We need one more indictment to close out this election," Trump said.

Trump may soon get his wish, as a Georgia prosecutor is expected to seek a grand jury indictment this week against Trump for allegations of trying to overturn the Presidential race in that state.

Trump, who carried Alabama in 2020 with more than 70 percent of the vote, pledged to award funding for a long-awaited Alabama superhighway on his first day in office in January 2025.

"I will approve a six-lane I-65 from Huntsville to Mobile. It's one of the first things I will do. I asked what can I do for this state, and all the Congressmen said make I-65 six lanes. I'll get that done on the first day," Trump said.

See, 'TRUMP,' Page 15

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# 'TRUMP,' From Page 14

Trump also said he will reinstate his decision to move the U.S. Space Command to Huntsville and rescind Biden's order to keep it in Colorado.

Other noteworthy takeaways from Trump's August 4th speech, most of which Alabama voters support, included:

**Education:** I will close the Department of Education and move education back to the states where it belongs...We spend more on education per pupil than any other country by far, but we're way down the list. I'll move this back to the states because in Alabama you run a great system and if you don't, those people (in charge) won't be around very long.

**Transgender:** I will keep men out of women's sports. You see some of the records being broken? Weightlifting records are being shattered. It's a disgrace and a bad thing that's very demeaning to women.

**Military Service:** I will restore the Trump ban on transgender in the military. We had a ban and it was lifted 24 hours after this incompetent fool (President Joe Biden) got elected. And as I did for four years, I will fully uphold the Second Amendment. Your guns will be protected.

**COVID-19:** I will hold the Chinese government accountable for unleashing the China virus upon the world. Millions of people across the world were affected. Think about the damage they did and it came from the Wuhan lab.

**Border Security:** I'll immediately terminate every open border policy of the Biden administration. What's happening on our borders is unthinkable. We had the safest border in the history of the country and now we have a border no third world country would even have. They're emptying insane asylums, mental institutions and prisons out all over the world and dumping them in America.

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# 'WATER,' From Page 13

"With all of the controversy, we're going to leave it alone," said then-RWSB Chairman Joe Graham in 2008.

Hill said the hydrofluorosilicic acid was very corrosive and his employees were exposed to it every day.

"It rusted all the metal inside the plant where we added it. And those tanks, if they're leaking, that's a safety issue for our operators to have to deal with every day," Hill said.

For Czajka, removal of fluoride additives results in immediate health benefits as well as long-term.

"We are supposed to be the guardians for this generation. We need to protect the next generation of our youth. And if they have no voice, we have an obligation to speak up," Czajka said.

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