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DISTRICT JUDGE
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Cummings's
 COUNTY COMMISSIONER
DIST. 2
PO POL ADV BY DAVID CORY COMMISSIONER 1005 HWY 66 RUSSELLVILLE, AL 35663

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City issues letter of support for Norfolk Southern grant application

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council authorized Mayor David Grissom to write a consultation letter of support for a grant that would fund safety enhancements at two downtown railroad crossings.
 Last week, Grissom received a letter from Will Miller, Public Safety Director for Norfolk Southern Corporation. Norfolk Southern Railroad is applying for a \$50,000 grant to make safety enhancements at railroad crossings on Franklin

Street and Underwood Road.
 The council unanimously authorized Grissom to write the requested letter of support for the project.
 At the Franklin Street crossing, Norfolk Southern has proposed the installation of 100 feet of QWICK KURB median separator for both approaches from the east and west.
 At the Underwood Road crossing, 100 feet of QWICK KURB would be installed for the west approach and 50 feet for the east approach.
 QWICK KURB median separators are used to deter poor decisions of drivers going around lowered, or

See 'RAILROAD,' Page 4

FCCDC awards grants to Red Bay High School, Franklin County Sheriff's Office

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Community Development Commission met August 11, 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 \$2.545 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 August 11th meeting included:
 --\$500 to the Russellville High School cross country team for

See 'FCCDC,' Page 7

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Otis Leon Head, age 78, of Tuscumbia, passed away on Saturday, August 12, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Carmon "Tracy" Underwood. passed away on Friday, August 11, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

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Correction Policy

The Franklin Free Press strives for excellence and accuracy, and we will be pleased to correct any error in our newspaper. To request a correction or clarification, call or e-mail our office.

Letters to the editor

The Franklin Free Press is published by hometown people, for hometown people. We urge contributions of all kinds, including guest columns, picture submissions, cartoons or letters to the editor. Send any letters to our office via U.S. Postal Service or e-mail, and we will gladly publish them. Letters must be signed and contain the hometown and phone number of the author. The Franklin Free Press reserves the right to edit letters for style, length and content.

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GENERAL NOTICE

CITY OF RUSSELLVILLE

PATROL OFFICER – POLICE DEPARTMENT

DEFINITION OF JOB: Patrols a designated sector of the city of Russellville and responds to complaints. Serves warrants and subpoenas and testifies in court. Provides traffic control assistance. Performs dispatching duties. Performs other police related duties as required.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of: the city buildings and street system of Russellville; city, state and federal laws; court procedures; department rules, regulations and procedures; maintenance and use of weapons; radio codes, surveillance equipment and legal procedures involved with illegal drug cases.

Ability to: operate a motor vehicle; read; safely fire a weapon; communicate on telephone and radio; generate written documents such as reports and tickets; bend, crouch; stretch; stretch; walk; run; respond to emergency situations on short notice when off-duty; and do the essential functions of the job as directed in this description.

Willingness to: work overtime, irregular hours, weekends and holidays; travel and attend seminars and workshops.

QUALIFICATIONS and SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Possession of a high school diploma or GED
Minimum of 21 years of age

Must meet or exceed the minimum requirements established by the State of Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission

Possession of a valid Alabama Drivers License

Possess the ability to obtain an Alabama Police Academy diploma or its equivalent

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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."

Email us at franklin-freepress@yahoo.com.

'RAILROAD,' From Page 1

lowering crossing gates, Miller explained in his letter. These median separators would be like the ones installed at the Highway 43 intersection at Gandy Street. Those median separators were installed to prevent east-bound Gandy Street traffic from turning left onto 43.

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There would be a separate maintenance agreement between the city and ALDOT. Norfolk Southern would supply extra bollards up front to be used as needed for long-term maintenance. Bollards are the yellow impediments to access that prevent an illegal maneuver.



COURTESY PHOTO

Bollards like these would be used to prevent motorists from driving around railroad crossing arms.

Cummings announces candidacy for Franklin County Commission District 2

Cory Cummings Submitted

Hello, I am David "Cory" Cummings and I am seeking your vote for Franklin County Commissioner District Two in the March 5, 2024, Republican Primary.

I am 44 years old, a 1997 Russellville High School graduate, and a life-long resident of Franklin County. I am happily married to Jessica Clark Cummings, an educator at Russellville City Schools. We have been married for 20 years and we are proud of our two children, Katie Brooke and Brandt.



My goal is to be a hands-on county commissioner who will be readily available to the citizens of Franklin County. If you have a question about my campaign, or if you would like a yard sign, you can always reach me at 256-810-9313.

I currently serve as a craft trainer for new employees and safety committee member at Norfolk Southern, where I have worked for 24 years. Additionally, I have been a union member for 24 years and currently a member at the BLET.

In my spare time, I enjoy quality family time, farming, gardening, hunting, sports and the great outdoors. I love Franklin County and everything it has to offer.

Like most Franklin County residents, I have enjoyed hunting, fishing, swimming, and skiing in the natural resources Franklin County has to offer. It is imperative to me that we keep those natural resources clean for our future generations to enjoy.

I will be dedicated to doing my part while working with other commissioners and the Franklin County Highway Department to ensure county roads are improved and maintained as well as our current infrastructure and economic development.

I am asking for your vote and support in the March 5, 2024, Republican Primary. Please vote Cory Cummings for Franklin County Commission District Two. Thank you.

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20 visitors given rare opportunity to tour Wilson Dam

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

For the 20 folks who toured Wilson Dam last Friday morning, it must have felt like they hit the lottery. And, in actuality, they did.

To celebrate its 90th anniversary, the Tennessee Valley Authority opened four dams for public tours, something that stopped after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

More than six thousand people signed up for the chance to earn one of these coveted tour slots at Wilson Dam, Pickwick Dam, Chickamauga Dam and Norris Dam. Winners were selected randomly.

When Elkmont residents Leslie Romine and Harvey Davis found out they had been selected to tour Wilson Dam, they looked at it as a learning experience—a chance to see the internal workings of a 100-year-old dam still operating much as it did when it was completed in 1924.

“I’m interested to see how engineers were able to hold that much water weight and generate electricity at the same time,” Davis said. “It’s a great way to expand your knowledge. You can always learn and I think it’s fascinating how water moves to create the electricity we use.”

Wilson Dam was the one dam that will host two tours of 20 people each. The second tour is set for August 18th. A limited number of media were invited to attend, including the Franklin Free Press.

TVA manages a connected system of 48 dams on the Tennessee River and its tributaries. 29 hydro-power dams are included in that number. Other dams were constructed to help manage lake levels and river flows but don’t produce electricity.

Romine was excited to have the chance to see some century old engineering and innovation in a world where technology changes almost daily.



“With our generation as tech-dependent as we are, it’s amazing to see how this dam was constructed so long ago, yet is still in operation today,” Romine said.

Wilson Dam was constructed before TVA came into existence. When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the Tennessee Valley Authority Act in 1933, it created a federal corporation to “improve the quality of life for residents in the region.”

The tour began with a short video about the history of Wilson Dam, as well as some words from Wilson Dam Plant Manager Tabatha Lolley.

Lolley said Wilson Dam was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1966, due to it being the first dam to come under TVA’s administration.

The 1916 National Defense Act authorized Wilson Dam to be constructed as it had the most potential for water-generated power east of the Rocky Mountains.

The TVA Act created a system of locks and dams to be used as a resource management system to provide flood control, navigation and clean, low cost electricity to the public. TVA assumed ownership of Wilson Dam in 1933.

George Norris, a United States Senator from Nebraska, crafted the proposal called the Muscle Shoals Bill, which would allow the government to use Wilson Dam to produce and sell electricity. In 1931, President Herbert Hoover vetoed the bill based on his belief that electricity should be produced through private enterprise and not the government.

When Roosevelt signed the TVA Act into law, Wilson Dam became TVA’s first hydroelectric facility.

TVA serves 153 local power companies. The sale of electricity to these LPCs allows TVA to remain self-funded. There have been no federal appropriations to TVA since 1999.

Wilson Dam has 21 generating units that extend approximately a quarter mile on what is called the powerhouse floor. The dam’s net dependable capacity is 653 megawatts of electricity.

The main lock at Wilson Dam is 110’ by 600’. With its maximum lift of 100 feet, the lock is the largest single-lift lock east of the Rockies. An auxiliary lock has two 60’ x 300’ chambers that operate together. Wilson’s locks see average of 3,700 vessels pass through them each year.

To learn more about Wilson Dam and the Tennessee Valley Authority, visit www.tva.com.

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TRACT 4: 85' x 210' Lot Only, 1660 George Wallace Hwy, Littleville

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TRACT 6: 2.5+/- Acre Lot on Lakeview Drive, Hyde Lake, Russellville

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AshaKiran 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. Consultations are free and confidential, and available in 45 different languages.

The 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.

Pastor 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. 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!

Russellville 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.

The 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.

Russellville 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.

The Clarion Hotel, in collaboration with Knox Media Group and Pilgrim's Pride, is thrilled to present an exhilarating and electrifying event - Free Mix Mingle Money and Music Job Fair. Mark your calendars for Friday, September 1, 2023, from 4-7pm as this evening promises to be an absolute blast. With over 20 exceptional businesses participating, this job fair is not to be missed. The atmosphere will be filled with the infectious beats of good music, creating an energetic ambiance that will surely uplift your spirits. So, come on out, grab something to eat, and get ready to network, groove to the music, and explore new job opportunities in this area. Don't let this exciting event pass you by!

The Cowboy Church of Franklin County will host a Bazaar Roundup on Saturday, August 26th, starting at 6 a.m. Don't miss this HUGE sale. Yard Sale will be inside and proceeds benefit the church mission fund. Outside there will be a variety of vendors with new, used, handmade crafts and drinks and desserts, etc. 25100 Hwy. 24 West in Russellville.

Have an event we can help publicize?

Call us at 256-332-0255.

For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us online at www.franklinfreepress.net. Send your letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

Classifieds

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'FCCDC,' From Page 1

lowering crossing gates, Miller explained in his letter. These median separators would be like the ones installed at the Highway 43 intersection at Gandy Street. Those median separators were installed to prevent eastbound Gandy Street traffic from turning left onto 43.

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Crestview Missionary Baptist Church

24131 Hwy 24 • Russellville



Sunday Morning Bible Study: 10a.m. - Noon
Sunday Morning Worship: 11 a.m. - Noon
Pastor: Bro. Eric McKinney 256.324.0179

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Bulldogs' debut on field
Thursday at Shoals Christian

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

In a year of firsts for the Belgreen High School football program, the team will play its first-ever game Thursday, as the Bulldogs travel to Shoals Christian High School for a jamboree with the Flame. Belgreen coach Jonathan Raper said his junior varsity players will play the first half and the second half will feature both schools' junior high squads. Belgreen will play primarily a junior high schedule this year, although the junior varsity will play in at least two of those games. Raper said he's got just over 30 players, with approximately half of them comprising the JV (sophomores/juniors) with the balance playing on the Bulldogs' junior high team. The Bulldogs will play all road games this season, although their home field is progressing nicely. Raper said a final inspection was done last week and last Friday was the first day the team practiced on the field. A turf inspection is scheduled later this week. Are the Bulldogs ready to line up against another team? Yes and no, Raper explained. "We have hit, we have tackled, but not in a game setting yet," Raper said. "Finally, for the first time, we'll play full speed and see how we react. We need to play. We need to see somebody else so our kids understand what the game is about, get some experience when it's live and real.

"I wish we could have another month of practice, but we're ready to let them see what it's all about," he added. Landon Cox will line up at quarterback for the Bulldog JV squad, and Rush Berryman is expected to start at QB for the junior high.

"Landon's been doing a good job at practice, and Rush has looked good running quarterback in the junior high group. Brayden Messer is also in the rotation too," Raper said. The Bulldogs' coaching staff includes Nathan Vincent, Collier Cantrell, Colby Cox, Dustin King, Ryan Champion and two volunteers.

The team will travel to Cherokee for the regular season opener on August 29th.

Golden Tigers get jamboree tune up
Friday at Itawamba Agricultural

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Golden Tigers football team has had a busy season preparing for the 2023 season.

The Golden Tigers have had several events over the summer including a 7 on 7 camp hosted by Russellville High School. The event saw 14 teams take part in 7 on 7 games and offensive-defensive line competitions.

"We've done about four big things this summer starting with 7 on 7," varsity coach John Ritter said. "I don't really put a lot of stock in it since its not real football, but there is a lot that you can gain from it. You can learn how to get open and how to cover people. We've now transitioned to fall camp."

Ritter has been joined by a new assistant coach this summer, Ritter's 5-year old son, Lincoln. "Its been really neat. That's the way I grew up (around his father Ronnie, who coached at



COURTESY PHOTO

Coach John Ritter and his 'assistant' Lincoln.

See, 'TIGERS,' Page 10

Bobcats to face Tharptown Friday in jamboree game

Michael Rice
Franklin Free Press

The Phil Campbell Bobcats are two weeks away from their first regular season game with a new coach on their sideline, Jacob Hamilton.

Hamilton knows the Bobcats are a fresh, young team with little playing experience, but both Hamilton and his team expect to compete in their region, Class 3A, Region 8.

"It's been great so far and the kids have really bought in to what we're doing. I already knew a good bit of the kids so it made it an easy transition. They've just really bought in and we've had great practices. These kids just really need experience on the field. You can't coach experience," Hamilton said.

The Bobcats are going to heavily rely on three players that are returning this year including Gage Baker, Noah Raper and Jackson Clark.

Baker is a senior and the starting running

back for the Bobcats.

"He's a big kid. He's a leader for us and he'll be good for us carrying the football," Hamilton said.

Raper has experienced two ACL tears the past two season and he's ready to show out this fall.

"Noah is coming back strong and hitting the weights. Noah can play about anything for us. We'll have him run the ball and we might put him at receiver some. He'll also play safety for us," Hamilton said.

Jackson Clark is a senior offensive lineman and the Bobcats' long snapper.

The Bobcats have scheduled a jamboree game with Tharptown High School to get their kids game experience prior to the regular season

The jamboree is this Friday at Tharptown, beginning at 7 p.m.

Hamilton, who left the same position at

See, 'BOBCATS,' page 9

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'BOBCATS,' From Page 8

Tharptown this summer, will be familiar with players on both sides. "It'll be bittersweet. I'll be good to see my kids from Tharptown. I hope they do very well. It'll be a good practice game for us," Hamilton said. The Bobcats' season opener will be at home against the Hackleburg Panthers on August 25th. Last year the Bobcats defeated the Panthers 36-8. "It's a big rivalry and Hackleburg is always competitive. We expect them to really come out and compete and play hard," Hamilton said. The Bobcats' first area game will be September 8th against Elkmont. Last year Phil Campbell defeated Elkmont 58-20. This year the game is at Elkmont and a much younger Bobcats' team will face the Red Devils. "Mentality wise, those guys learn very well and we fully expect to compete and win this season. Our kids know they have a tough schedule ahead, but our kids know they can handle it," Hamilton said.

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'TIGERS,' From Page 8

Lauderdale County High School from 1991-2006) so having Lincoln there has been really cool. He comes about once a week. It's a special thing to have your family involved," Ritter said.

While Lincoln has been prepping the team, the Golden Tigers have scheduled a jamboree game this Friday, August 18th, against Itawamba Agricultural High School in Fulton, Ms. It won't be the first time Ritter and Itawamba varsity coach Clint Hoots meet on the field.

"Clint Hoots and I met about five years ago in a play date here in July and kept in touch since. We get an opportunity to go over there and compete against their team that went 12-1 last season. I think it's a good opportunity for our kids to see some speed and a good opportunity to work out some kinks before Week Zero against Grissom," Ritter said.

Itawamba Agricultural reached the third round of the Class 4A play-offs after winning the District One championship last season. The team's 2023 roster includes 57 players.

Golden Tiger fans will get a first look this Friday at the team's new receiving corps after star receiver Randell Johnson graduated

and is now playing at a junior college in Georgia.

Ritter has an experienced quarterback, Harrison Burch, returning for his senior season and he said Burch has adjusted well to his new receivers.

"Harrison has had a great summer on the field and off the field especially. He and the new receivers have put in the work this summer, including Bralynn Vincent. We feel great about our offense," Ritter said.

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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New mobile detailing trailer brings Seay to customers

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Since he started Aviator's Detailing in 2020, Brandon Seay has constantly looked for ways to better serve his customers.

As an effective small business owner should do, Seay listens to his customers and what he kept hearing was they wanted a way for their cars to be detailed without having to take time to drop them off or pick them up.



PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI

Seay already offered free local pick up and delivery, but he took customer service to the next step recently when he custom designed a new mobile detailing trailer that allows Seay to perform detail work anywhere, making the process more convenient for his customers.

If customers can't bring their business to you, bring your business to your customers.

"We have a new mobile detailing trailer. It's awesome now that when a customer calls wanting a detail they don't have to worry about making time to drop off vehicles or go long without their vehicles because now we can go to them," Seay said.

The new trailer has water and power onboard. Seay describes it as a one-of-a-kind unit with state of the art detailing tools that "allow us to blast right through muck and grime inside and out of your car."

Although Aviator's Detailing got its start detailing planes at local airports, Seay has expanded the business to offer services from maintenance washes to protective ceramic coatings for vehicles.

"All of our services can be provided with the trailer, with some regulations," Seay said. "And we're seeing a rise in our maintenance wash customers with the addition of the trailer with the ease and efficiency of getting them done."

Aviator's maintenance wash program includes biweekly full details at a reduced cost of \$50 each, compared to \$125 for a full one-time detail.

"That's \$100 per month all while you can have a spiffed-up vehicle to drive," Seay said.

The full detail includes a wash, scrub, wipe blow & hand dry, door jams, debug, engine detail, windows inside and out, wheels and tires, dress exterior plastics and tires, seal plant, vacuum, dust, blow out cracks and crevices, condition plastics and leather and clean trunk or bed.

When Seay opened his business at the Russellville Airport, it was all about location and the convenience for airplane owners to have their planes detailed on-site. With the new mobile trailer, Seay can offer detailing services anywhere.

"Our location is now literally anywhere our customers need us," Seay said. "We're always working to enhance our customers' experience and the trailer has been a major hit and game changer."

To learn more about Aviator's Detailing and to learn about specials, giveaways and new services offered, follow the company on Facebook, visit www.aviatorsdetailing.com or call 256-436-0465.

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Watermelon Festival Guide

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7:00 p.m. Tremayne

8:30 p.m. Velcro Pygmies

Saturday

11:00 p.m. Watermelon in the
Park – Cutting & Contests

6:00 p.m. Rewind

7:00 p.m. Austin Bohannon

8:30 p.m. Colt Ford

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Watermelon Pageant Winners

0-6 Months



Q: Maylee Kate Champion, 1st Alt: Clara Reese Champion, 2nd Alt: Silvie Anne Champion



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

Watermelon Pageant Winners

7-9 Months



Q: Madilyn Mae Evans, 1st Alt: Cozette Ellen Reed, 2nd Alt: Layla Brooke Williams



Watermelon Pageant Winners

10-11 Months



Q: Zayvi Mardis, 1st Alt: Eleanor McShane Mills, 2nd Alt. Saylor Grace Hill



Watermelon Pageant Winners

12-17 Months



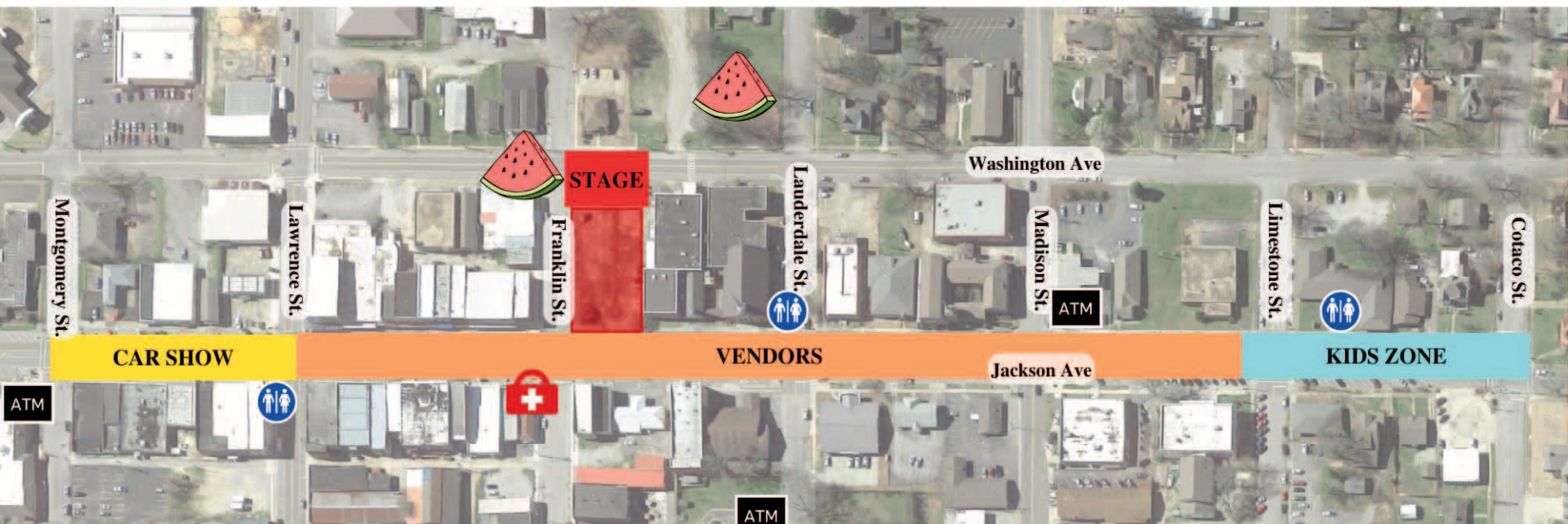
Q: Eleanor Lou Wilkinson, 1st Alt: Jaelynn Michelle Tice, 2nd Alt. Jasie Brooke Johnson



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Friday, August 18

5:45 p.m. Opening Ceremony

National Anthem by Tara Greenhill

7:00 p.m. Tremayne

8:30 p.m. Velcro Pygmies

Saturday, August 19

6:00 p.m. Rewind

7:00 p.m. Austin Bohannon

8:30 p.m. Colt Ford



Watermelon Pageant Winners

18-23 Months



Q: McKenna Jayne Busby, 1st Alt: Clara Castell, 2nd Alt. Laynie Kole Bryant



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

Watermelon Pageant Winners

2 Years



Q: Braylee K. Prince, 1st Alt: Ella Mae Parker, 2nd Alt. Elizabeth Grace Carroll



Watermelon Pageant Winners

3 Years



Q: Kensleigh Schmittou, 1st Alt: Madelyn E. Bahena, 2nd Alt. Arya Beth Mansell



Watermelon Pageant Winners

4 Years



Q: Elizabeth Miller, 1st Alt: Willa Marie Hood, 2nd Alt. Mattie L. Wimberly



Country singer/songwriter Colt Ford headlines great slate of talent

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When country star Colt Ford takes the stage August 19th as the musical headliner for the 42nd Franklin County Watermelon Festival, fans will soon learn Ford is a talented songwriter as well as a rising star vocalist in the industry.

The Georgia native has sold more than three million albums and the list of artists he's collaborated with reads like a 'Who's Who' of country stars. That list includes Toby Keith, Brad Paisley, Keith Urban, Lady Antebellum and more.

And two songs Ford wrote have reached Number One on the Billboard Country Charts, including Jason Aldean's Dirt Road Anthem and Brantley Gilbert's hit Country Must Be Country Wide.

Ford's latest album release, Must Be The Country, dropped on May 19th. Ford's current 34-city tour will include a stop at the Franklin County Watermelon Festival, as he'll take the stage at 8:30 Saturday night. Saturday's musical lineup begins with Rewind at 6 p.m., followed by Austin Bohannon at 7 p.m., leading up to Ford.

As always, there's no admission to the festival or the Friday/Saturday night music. But don't forget to bring your lawn chairs, as bleacher seating is limited. What began decades ago as the idea of Russellville merchant Bobby Bolton has turned into a showcase in the Southeast among festival goers.

On Friday night, August 18th, Tremayne takes the stage at 7 p.m., followed by the Velcro Pygmies at 8:30 p.m.

The festival comes together each year through the hard work of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Director Cassie Medley, her staff and the Chamber's Board of Directors.

The two-day event includes much more than just great music. There's the annual Watermelon Pageant, with Silvie Kaye Miller named the 2023 Franklin County Watermelon Queen, a car and truck show, tractor show and a kids' area with rides and games.

And there's always free watermelon!

You can watch the judging of several watermelon contests on Saturday morning. That includes the Largest Watermelon Contest and the Largest Franklin County Watermelon Contest. Those entering the largest melon contest must register at 10 a.m. Weighing and judging begins at 11 and winners will be announced at 12 p.m.

Other contests include Most Unusual, Best Tasting, Best Dressed Watermelon and a seed spitting contest.

For more information on this year's event, visit www.franklincounty-chamber.org, and don't forget to wear your Watermelon Festival t-shirts and caps!

Watermelon Pageant Winners

5 Years



Q: Braelyn Grace Wilson, 1st Alt: KinLeigh Raigen Prestage, 2nd Alt. Tinley M. Parker



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Watermelon Pageant Winners

6 Years



Q: Aubrey Kay Warhurst, 1st Alt: Jacie-May Myrick, 2nd Alt: Campbell H. Wright



Watermelon Pageant Winners

7-8 Years



Q: Laken A. Mitchell, 1st Alt: Remi Jo Thompson, 2nd Alt: Lakely Blair Mason



Welcome to the **2023** Watermelon Festival!

from the

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Katernia Cole-Coffey, County Extension Coordinator

Shirley Jimenez, EFNPEP Agent

Kristina Rossin, Admin. Assoc. II

Austin Blankenship, 4H Foundation Regional Ext. Agent

Ida Robinson, Fill-In Secretary

Watermelon Pageant Winners

9 Years



Q: Izabella Grayce James, 1st Alt: Audrey D. Watts, 2nd Alt: Lexie Grace Herring



Watermelon Pageant Winners

10-11 Years



Q: Raegan Leann Myrick, 1st Alt: Kaygan Mae Parker, 2nd Alt: Hollie Ann Sharp



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

Welcome to the 42nd Annual Franklin County Watermelon Festival



Jamie
KIEL
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Watermelon Pageant Winners

12-13 Years



Q: Emma Elizabeth Lawrence, 1st Alt: Aspen Adelaide Misner, 2nd Alt: Rylee Dru Childers



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Watermelon Pageant Winners

14-17 Years



Q: Annie Clair Willis, 1st Alt: Raegen L Misner, 2nd Alt. Gracie Anne Key



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Welcome to the 42nd Annual Franklin County Watermelon Festival

★★ JAMIE ★★

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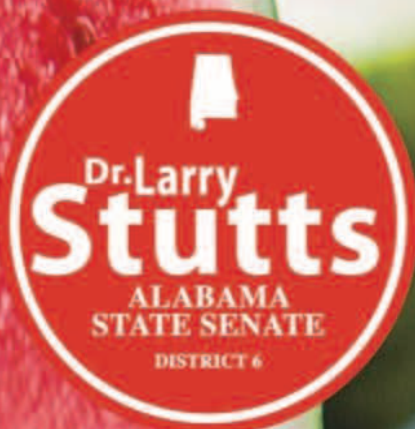
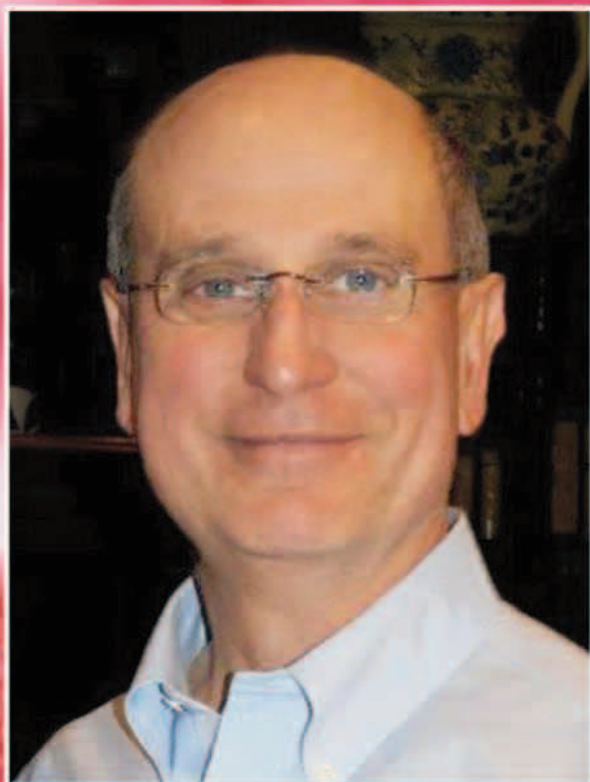
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WELCOME TO THE 42nd ANNUAL *Franklin County* WATERMELON FESTIVAL

See you there!



Watermelon Pageant Winners

18-21 Years



Q: Silvie Kaye Miller, 1st Alt: Keslie Allen, 2nd Alt. Kaydee Don Holland



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



Jason Miller



Jason & Belinda Miller, and Watermelon Pageant 4 year old Queen, Elizabeth Miller

**"Welcome to the
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Congratulations to the 2023 Franklin County Watermelon Festival Queen Silvie Kaye Miller

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Russellville

From Left: David Palmer, Darren Woodruff,
Gary Cummings, Dexter Hamilton, Jamie Harris,
Mayor David Grissom.



The City of Russellville welcomes you to The 2023 Franklin County Watermelon Festival! We are proud to be a part of The Watermelon Capital of Alabama!



**If we may assist you during your stay in Russellville, please call:
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