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Proposed quarry reopening subject of citizen petition

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

Excavation and blasting at a limestone quarry in the Halltown community that closed more than a decade ago is expected to resume after the first of the year, according to a presentation made to the Franklin County Commission at its December 11th work session.

Tommy Thurman, Rogers Group's Alabama General Manager for Aggregates, told the commission his company has entered into lease

agreements with the owners of approximately 300 acres located west of County Road 25 and south of Alabama 24 to excavate and haul crushed limestone.

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management previously issued air and water permits for land owned by Cashion Weatherford Properties LLC in 2011. That was a legal prerequisite required before the permit holder could begin mining operations at the quarry.

The planned 300-acre quarry

See 'PETITION,' Page 9

Franklin County Schools receive a solid 'B' on state report card

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

When Franklin County Schools Superintendent of Education Greg Hamilton received his system's scores on the latest Alabama State Department of Education's report card, Hamilton liked what he saw.

Franklin County Schools received an overall score of 86, good for a 'B' on the state's 2022-2023 report card. The system continues to improve and Hamilton attributes that to the people who comprise it.

"I'm extremely proud of the hard work put in by our administration, teachers and students. Franklin County continues to grow academi-

cally. The accomplishments made by this district and its 10 schools needs to be recognized," Hamilton said.

The state report card uses six indicators to determine a school system's overall score and a score for each of its schools. Just like grades in schools, 90-100 is an 'A,' 80-89 a 'B,' 70-79 a 'C,' 60-69 a 'D' and below 60 is a failing grade.

Those indicators include academic achievement, academic growth, graduation rates, college and career readiness, chronic absenteeism and progress in English language efficiency for schools. The English language efficiency indicator applies only to schools with at least 20 stu-

See 'REPORT,' Page 5

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March 5, 2024
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Olen Dwain Hester, 75, of Russellville, passed away Wednesday, December 13, 2023. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.



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Applications will be accepted in the Franklin County Commission office until 5:00 PM on Friday, December 29, 2023.

An application and job description may be picked up, faxed or emailed upon request from the Franklin County Commission Office, located at 405 N Jackson Avenue, Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, by calling (256) 332-8850 or applications are available at www.franklincountyal.org under the Careers tab.

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Letter to Editor: Reader's report card for Presidential candidates, elected officials shows some failing grades

Dear Editor:

I watched the Republican debate in Tuscaloosa last Wednesday and Ron Desantis gets an 'A+.'

Vivek Ramaswamy also gets an 'A+.'

Corrupt Nicky Haley gets an 'F.' (She would for sure be like Brandon and bow down to corporations, China and so on).

Crooked Chris Christie gets an 'F-'. (That corrupt Communist crook worked for the coward Bushes and Cheneys, nuff said).

To date Katie Britt gets an 'F-' (RINO). I have contacted her office three times and received no help at all (her staff and her lazy do nothing who do nothing for the Alabamians that don't pay them off, no response from her office at all).

Sen. Tuberville gets a 'C' after he bowed to Democrats and let innocent defenseless babies down.

Sincerely,

'Ramblin' Rodney McCarley, the common sense Godney' McCarley.

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Clark seeking Republican nomination for District Four commission seat

Submitted

Red Bay resident Tracie Clark has qualified to seek election to the Franklin County Commission District Four.

"I am proud and excited to announce my candidacy for the Republican nomination for Franklin County Commissioner District Four," Clark said.

"I am a resident of Red Bay and have been actively involved in Franklin County. I believe that my experience and dedication to the county make me an ideal candidate for this position," she added.

Clark is retired from the City of Red Bay, where she served as Revenue Officer for 34 years. Clark is a graduate of Red Bay High School and Northwest Junior College.

She received certification at the University of Alabama Continuing Education Program as a Certified Municipal Revenue Officer.

Clark is married to Jeff Clark, who is the Director of Manufacturing at Tiffin Motorhomes. She has two children, Trey Bolding (Olivia) and Britan Crow (David), and one grandchild, Chloe Crow, who is two years old.



CLARK

Clark serves on the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Franklin County Cattleman's Association, the Red Bay Tree Commission, Red Bay Civitan Secretary, Red Bay Garden Club Vice-President, Red Bay Christmas Parade Committee, Bay Tree Council of Performing Arts Patron and the Franklin County Seekers of the Past.

She served as chairman of the Red Bay Founders Fest and is a past member for the North Alabama Mountain Lakes Association. She also served as Treasurer of the Red Bay Tip Off Club and past secretary of the Red Bay Lions Club and was a member of the Franklin County Bicentennial Board.

"If I am elected as your District Four Franklin County Commissioner, I will work hard to ensure that the county's needs are met and that our voices are heard," Clark said. "I will be accessible to all members of this great county and will work hard for you."

"Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to serve Franklin County. I humbly ask for your vote and support on March 5, 2024," Clark added.

A Very MERRY CHRISTMAS



Russellville City School Board of Education. Front Row, from left: Radford Hester, Kim Clonts, Greg Trapp. Back Row, from left: Howard Hillman Jr., Heath Grimes, Ike Rogers.

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'REPORT,' From Page 1

students learning the English language in tested grades. Franklin County Schools scored well in academic growth, with a 99.05 out of a possible 100. The graduation score of 93.23 earned the system another 'A' score. College and Career Readiness score was 86.09. The system received a failing grade in English Language Proficiency with a 43.84, although most Alabama public schools received an 'F' in that indicator.

Belgreen High School earned the top score among Franklin County Schools with an 88. That included a perfect 100 in academic growth, a 92.16 in graduation and an 'A' in college and career readiness with a 92.

East Franklin Junior High School earned an 85 overall, with a perfect 100 in academic growth. Its English language proficiency score of 11.11 was particularly low though.

Phil Campbell Elementary School received an 82, with a 95.36 score in academic growth topping its indicator scores.

Phil Campbell High School's score of 78 earned it a 'C.' It received A's in academic growth and graduation rate, but scored only a 46.10 in academic achievement and a 'D' score of 69.86 in college and career readiness.

Red Bay Elementary School scored an 84. Its academic growth score of 97.97 was the top grade but its English language proficiency score was only a 50.

Red Bay High School earned the system's second-highest score of 87, with a 93.70 in academic growth, and an outstanding 98 in graduation.

Tharptown Elementary School's 81 included a high indicator score of 99.48 on academic growth and a low of 52.46 on English language proficiency.

Tharptown High School received an 85, including a perfect 100 on academic growth and a 93.33 on graduation rate. The low score came in English language proficiency with a 42.86.

Vina High School received an 82, good for a 'B.' Vina earned 'A' scores in academic growth (93.53), graduation rate (93.75) and college and career readiness (90.63).

All public and charter schools are scored comparatively and Hamilton knows it's difficult to keep up with municipal school systems, particularly those in affluent areas.

"County systems are woefully underfunded and have limited revenue sources. It just makes this year's report card really incredible," Hamilton said.

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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. 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.


 **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.


 **T**ennessee River Bass Club is seeking members for our 23/24 season. Club fishes monthly on Tennessee river and Bear Creek lakes. We welcome boaters or non-boaters 16 or older of all experience levels to join. Club is based in Sheffield. For more information, contact Tommy 256-627-5662.

 **T**he Frog Pond Volunteer Fire Department is holding a fund raiser Gun Raffle with proceeds going to benefit the Frog Pond VFD. Tickets are \$10 or \$25 for 3 and may be purchased through Cash App or PayPal. Call 256-263-0825 for more information. One AR-15 and one Glock 19 Gen 5 will be given away. 16" AR-15 5.56/223 with 15" MHR. And Glock 19 Gen 5 9mm. Drawing will be held at the Fire Department on February 23, 2024, at 6 p.m.

 **M**Y FATHER'S HOUSE MINISTRIES, RUSSELLVILLE, AL, 104 E. Lawrence St., Pastor Pearl Shelton, would like to invite you to our weekly Prayer Meeting every Monday evening at 5:30 p.m. Come join us as we pray together in unity and power! Anyone needing prayer please be sure to join us! Everyone is welcome!

 **N**ew Ground will be in concert at North Russellville Baptist Church on Sunday, January 21, 2024, at 4 p.m. Everyone is invited. A love offering will be taken up. Church is located at 1401 Waterloo Road.

 **R**ussellville Masonic Lodge #371 is selling Hams for Christmas. Hams are \$35 Reach and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pickup is Saturday, December 23rd from 8-10 a.m., at the Lodge on Coffee Avenue.

 **R**ONNY HINSON WILL BE IN CONCERT THIS SUNDAY at RED BAY HARVEST FELLOWSHIP CHURCH RED BAY, ALABAMA TIME 10:00 AM ADDRESS: 607 10TH AVE NW, RED BAY, ALABAMA.

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'PETITION,' From Page 1

includes the Cashion Weatherford property and approximately 200 additional acres owned by Yeilding Land Company, LLC.

In 2011, the permit holder was Limestone Redbay, a Mississippi company owned by Thomas 'Bubba' Comer, Jr. Limestone Redbay operated the Red Bay Quarry for a short time before financial issues resulted in the permanent closing of the business.

Rogers Group now holds the lease for mineral rights on the 300 acres and a contingent of its employees attended the commission's work session to "make known what our intentions are in the county regarding the Red Bay Quarry," Thurman said.

The Franklin County Commission has no role in the permitting process of a quarry. That's done through the State of Alabama and ADEM. But Thurman said they met with commissioners and Probate Judge Barry Moore to advise them of their plans for the Red Bay Quarry so they could answer questions they might receive from residents.

In 2011, more than 150 residents in and around the Halltown community attended a meeting to share their questions and concerns about possible damage to their homes and/or water and land from quarry operations.

Concerns dealt with air quality impact from blasting as well as water discharge from the quarry into a waterway connected with Bear Creek.

Some residents whose water supply comes from wells or springs also shared concerns about impacts to their water quality.

Several residents submitted their concerns to ADEM but the quarry was permitted later that year.

A new petition opposing the quarry's reopening has been sent to Senators Tommy Tuberville and Katie Britt, Rep. Robert Aderholt, state legislators Sen. Larry Stutts and Rep. Jamie Kiel and to the Franklin County Commission, the Alabama Historical Commission and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

The petition was created by Cheryl Humphres, who maintains the proposed quarry 'was used by Indians as a campsite, burial site and hunting grounds.'

The petition also asserts that the quarry site has 'flooded numerous times and the City of Red Bay has two wells very close to Bear Creek.'

Humphres believes that run-off water from the quarry would 'contaminate the water and could possibly ruin Red Bay's wells,' the petition reads.

Humphres and her husband own pasture land that is separated from the proposed quarry site only by a fence. The 75-year-old Humphres is of Native American descent and she is concerned about damage to what she says is a protected Native American burial grounds.

"The basic concern is about them digging in an Indian hunting and burial site," Humphres said. "The Historical Commission needs to come in and do another study because they are going to find more than they think they might find, in my opinion."

Humphres said Native American artifacts have been found on the land that has historical ties to the Creek Indians and their Chief, William 'Red Eagle' Weatherford.

Additionally, the petition addresses concerns about property near or adjoining a proposed blasting area.

"We just wanted the (county) commission and Judge Moore to be aware of our concerns on this. This quarry will devalue our property, could damage our foundations and we just don't want this in our community. And everyone who signed the petition believes the same thing," Humphres said.

Humphres' petition contains 115 signatures of citizens she and her husband met with in and around the quarry's location.

Humphres said she first heard about the proposed expansion and reopening of the quarry from the landowner, Ed Yeilding.

Rogers Group officials said they are in the process of meeting with residents whose property is adjacent to or near the quarry to notify them prior to any blasting commences and to do pre-blasting surveys, which document the existing condition of structures (houses, barns, outbuildings, etc.).

Letters will be sent via certified mail to those residents that will explain how to get on the blasting notification log, via telephone, text or email.

Thurman said Rogers Group will build a road on the west end of the property that will provide access for trucks to enter and exit the quarry from Alabama 24.

Company officials said the time frame to complete the road should be the summer of 2024. Until then, trucks hauling heavy equipment into the quarry and dump trucks leaving with crushed limestone will use County Road 25, Thurman said.

Plans are for Rogers Group to begin moving in equipment by early January, commissioners were told.

Commissioners viewed a power point presentation that showed other quarries in operation adjacent to heavily populated residential areas. This was to demonstrate that homes adjacent to or near the quarry will not diminish in value once it becomes operational, which was another major concern from residents in 2011.

"We understand the concern about impact to your homes. Rogers Group holds itself more accountable than state and federal regulations do," Thurman said.

A representative from Vibra-Tech, a company that does monitoring and analysis for mining, construction and energy industries, told commissioners the blasting process has changed significantly from 2011, as dynamite and blasting caps are no longer used.

Chips are now used and there are regulations that govern frequency and amplitude to make sure safe levels are maintained, and that Rogers Group 'tries to stay within 25 percent of those limits.'

Plans for mining the quarry will not presently include the original mining site, but will move east and south of the existing quarry.

The crushed limestone is used to make concrete, asphalt, rip rap and crusher run, according to Rogers Group officials, and some of those products will be available for sale on-site.

Company officials have at least a 30-year life expectation for all Rogers Group locations. Once a mine is closed, a reclamation is done with the goal of leaving the property in a clean and usable condition.

"We want to be a good neighbor and that's what this meeting and this conversation is all about," Thurman said.

For those who live near the Red Bay Quarry, or for members of the public wanting more information on Rogers Group's plans for the 300-acre site, they may contact Allison Boshears, Rogers Group Media Communications, at 615-780-5649.



Heath Ayers
Franklin County Commissioner District 2
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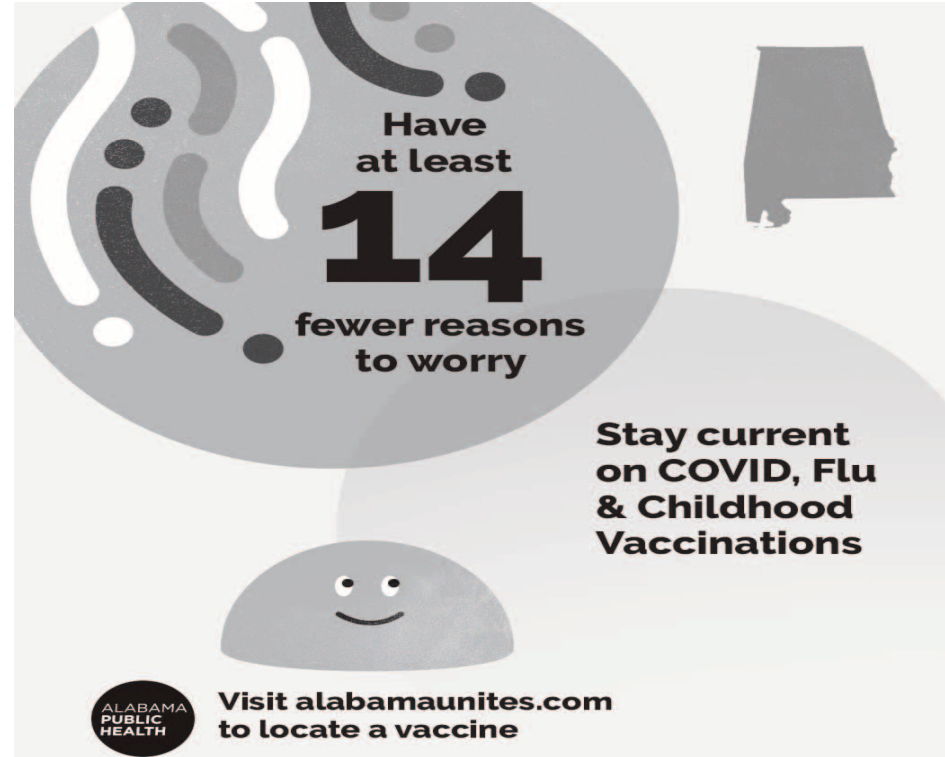
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Franklin County Commissioner District 4

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Russellville City Schools earns 'A' on state report card as all four schools improve scores

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

For the second consecutive year, Russellville City Schools earned an 'A' on the Alabama Public and Charter Schools State Report Card.

2022-2023 scores were released late last week. Scores are calculated for all Alabama public school systems and each individual school. RCS' score of 90 was the same as last year, the first time the system received an 'A' score.

Only 28 of Alabama's 149 school districts received an 'A,' representing a score of 90 or above.

There are several criteria used to calculate overall grades. Those include: academic achievement, academic growth, college and career readiness, graduation rate, chronic absenteeism and progress in English language proficiency. The English proficiency indicator represents five percent of a system's overall score if at least 20 of its students fall below English proficiency standards.

Russellville City Schools scored well in academic growth, graduation rate, college and career readiness. The system received a failing grade on English proficiency, but that was the case for most of Alabama's public schools. RCS dropped to 46.67 on English proficiency, down from last year's score of 57.70, but still ahead of the state average of 43.96.

The system has one of the state's highest Hispanic/Latino enrollments and has received state acclaim for its innovation in helping students attain English proficiency.

All four Russellville City Schools improved their scores from 2021-2022, with Russellville High School's 87 representing a five-point increase from last year. Russellville Middle Schools went from 79 to 83. Russellville Elementary School and West Elementary School each went from scores of 86 to 87.

RHS excelled in academic growth (100) and graduation rate (96.10), but received failing scores in academic achievement (49.93) and English language proficiency (33.33).


Russellville Middle School scored a perfect 100 in academic growth and an outstanding score in chronic absenteeism (7.51), the one category where lower scores are more desirable.

Russellville Elementary Schools' score of 87 was boosted by a 98.05 score in academic growth. Its 63.78 score in English language proficiency was among the state's best.


West Elementary School also excelled in academic growth (98.05) and English language proficiency (63.78).

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County schools well represented on All-Region football teams

Michael Rice
 Franklin Free Press

Franklin County had a host of football players this year to be featured as All-Region selections.

For the Red Bay Tigers, tight end Kyler Watson clocked in 85 pancake blocks on the season. Will West played inside linebacker for the Tigers and had 86 tackles. Holden Inmon played wide receiver and had 36 catches for 585 yards with six touchdowns. All Red Bay Tigers featured on the Class 2A Region 8 All-Region team were named first team.

Also in 2A Region 8, the Tharptown Wildcats had two players to earn All-Region honors, including Jackson Clement and Jeremy Vasquez. Clement was the starting quarterback who threw for 719 yards with six touchdowns. Vasquez rushed for 708 yards on 102 carries with eight touchdowns at running back.

In 3A Region 8, the Phil Campbell Bobcats were featured multiple times. Hayden Wingo was a first team member who had 526 yards rushing on 62 carries with six touchdowns. Johan Vasquez was featured on defense along with Mason Weeks and Jackson Clark. Hayston Scott was 25 of 58 passing attempts with four touchdown passes.

Bobcat players Logan Cooper, Logan Wright, Isaac Hill and Braxton Mayfield were all named All-Region Honorable Mention.

RMS girls basketball team finishes with 14-4 record

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

Coach Angela Woods' Russellville Middle School girls' basketball team finished its season with a 45-32 road loss at Belgreen December 15th. But that loss doesn't overshadow what was a very successful season that saw the Lady Golden Tigers post a 14-4 record.

In the past two seasons, RMS girls teams have combined for a 30-6 record. For Woods, who just completed her first season as RMS girls head coach, the 2022-23 team deserves some of the credit for this year's success.

"Last year, the team set the standard and this year's team followed. To win 30 games in two seasons says a lot about these girls and their dedication and hard work," Woods said.



Courtesy Photo of Rayfield Ragland's Facebook

See, 'BASKETBALL,' page 14

AHSAA reclassification announced for football, volleyball 2024, 2025 seasons

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

The Alabama High School Athletic Association Central Board of Control approved the current seven-classification system for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 athletic seasons and several area teams will be impacted by reclassification.

Football and volleyball classifications for the next two years were released Monday. Basketball and baseball reclassification won't be released until after those seasons finish, as they will be dictated by how private schools perform in the playoffs.

Classification is based on each school's Average Daily Membership, or ADM. This includes for public schools grades 9 through 11 plus 8th grade hold-back students. Private schools' enrollment is multiplied by 1.35 to determine their enrollment figure. Additionally, a competitive balance factor is applied to private school athletic teams which affects approximately 10% of private schools according to the AHSAA.

Although there was speculation that

Russellville High School might move up to Class 6A, RHS remains in 5A as the 11th largest enrollment among the 59 football playing schools.

The Golden Tigers will compete in 5A Region 7, with only seven teams comprising the region. Russellville, Ardmore, East Limestone, Lawrence County and West Point High Schools remain together from the current Region 8 alignment and they will welcome Brooks and Priceville to round out the region.

Both new schools saw playoff success last season in Class 4A. Brooks reached the quarterfinals and Priceville the second round. They replace A.P. Brewer and Fairview High Schools in what was 5A Region 8.

"I think it will be a more competitive region," said RHS varsity football coach John Ritter. "We are in a great, competitive region and there should be some really good football games, particularly with the two teams coming into the region."

The Golden Tigers will play four non-region games. Deshler and Mars Hill will be two opponents and Ritter is working this week to fill the remainder of his schedule. Athens,

See, 'AHSAA,' Page 12



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'ASHAA,' From Page 11

which played Russellville the past two seasons in a home and home series, could be one of those, as Ritter and Athens Coach Cody Gross are working through scheduling issues.

Ritter said playing in a seven-team region makes scheduling non-region games more challenging, as four opponents must be found and most schools are playing in eight-team regions so bye weeks don't often line up.

"An eight-team region is my preference for sure," Ritter said. "Finding three non-region games is pretty easy. But finding four becomes difficult. In the north, Regions 5 and 8 are eight-team regions, as is 4A Region 8."

Belgreen High School, which fielded a football team for the first time last season, is classified in 2A Region 8, along with Red Bay, Tharptown, Decatur Heritage, Lexington, Tanner and Winston County High Schools.

Phil Campbell's varsity football team will play in 3A Region 5, with Carbon Hill, Gordo, Hale County, Hanceville, Midfield, Oakman and Vinemont High Schools.

Vina was classified in 1A Region 7, an eight-team region including Addison, Cherokee, Hackleburg, Meek, Phillips, Shoals Christian and Waterloo High Schools.

Volleyball Reclassification: Belgreen and Tharptown High Schools will compete in Class 2A Area 14, along with Covenant Christian and Mars Hill. Red Bay was placed in 2A Area 10, a three-team area with Sulligent and Lamar County High Schools. Phil Campbell volleyball was assigned to 3A Area 15, with Colbert County, Colbert Heights and Sheffield High Schools. Russellville will join 5A Area 15, along with Brooks, Lawrence County and West Point High Schools.

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**Merry Christmas
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Where Everybody Knows Your Name...



Six reasons to take your mental health seriously

Stan Popovich
For the FFP

Many people underestimate the impact that mental illness can have on an individual or family. It can be difficult to admit that you have a mental health problem in your life. Secondly, it can be just as difficult in getting the people you know to understand your situation without making any kinds of judgments.

As a result, here are six reasons why you should make your mental health an important priority in your life.

1. Your situation will improve if you get help: Your anxieties and fears can be challenging to manage and more than likely you will need some help. Just as you talk to your doctor about your regular health, you should not be hesitant in seeking help for your mental health. If left untreated, your anxieties and fears may not go away.

2. Drugs and alcohol are not the answer: Drugs and alcohol can make your problems more complicated. Many people have said that drugs and alcohol will only add more problems to your situation. Be smart and learn how to cope with your mental health issues by talking to a qualified professional. There are many health professionals in your area that can give you some ideas on where you can go for assistance.

3. You will save time and money: Eventually, you will have to confront your fears and mental health issues. Save yourself the time and heartache and confront your problems now rather than later. You will save months of struggling by getting help right away. The sooner you get assistance the faster you will start getting some relief.

4. You are not alone: Everyone deals with fear, stress, and anxiety in one's life whether your friends and others care to admit it. In addition, do not be embarrassed that you are getting help. We all learn new things from others on a daily basis and learning how to manage your anxieties is no different. In addition, your goal is to get your life back on track and not to get everyone's approval. If people start asking you questions, just say your dealing with stress. Most people can relate to dealing with stress and anxiety!

5. Do not make the mistake of doing nothing: There are many people who struggled with anxiety and other mental health related issues, and they tried to ignore their problems. As a result, some of these people struggled on a daily basis and eventually things became more difficult. It can be scary asking for assistance, but the key is to take things one day at a time.

6. You have a variety of options: There are many mental health support groups, organizations, and counselors in your area that can help get your life back on track. Talk to your doctor to get more details on where you can go for some assistance. Help is available but you must be willing to make the choice of getting better. Remember that every problem has a solution. You just have to make the effort to find the answers.

BIOGRAPHY

Stan is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear" which covers a variety of techniques that can drastically improve your mental health. For more information, please visit Stan's website at <http://www.managingfear.com>.



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'Tis the Season of Giving:



The Russellville High School Chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) held its annual toy drive December 1-7 with the theme "Swap a Toy for a Tea Bomb". Members collected toys and donations to be given to children in our community who are in need this Christmas. FBLA was able to collect several bags of toys along with over \$300 in donations.

Pictured above collecting toys the FBLA officers (front row)- Natalie Nichols (Projects Chairperson), Sarah Kate Kiel (Reporter), Kinsley Palmer (Parliamentarian), and Dr. AnnaKay Holland (Sponsor); (second row)- Ella Colagross (Vice President), Will Morgan (Historian), Peyton Parrish (President), Maggie Uptain (Treasurer), and Madison Qualls (Secretary).

Officers delivered the toys to the Russellville Fire Department for distribution.

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'BASKETBALL,' From Page 11

Four RMS players will now join the girls' varsity basketball team to provide some additional depth on the bench. They include Sadie Odom, Blevyn Sappington, Bella Malone and Lourdes Ellis.

"These girls played hard all season and they deserve this opportunity. I'm looking forward to seeing what they can do at the next level. We've prepped them all season, so they are ready," Woods said.

The loss to Belgreen came after Russellville won its previous three games in blowout fashion.

On December 9th, Russellville defeated Mars Hill 46-23, led by Odom's 15 points, Sappington's 10 and Malone's eight, as eight players scored in the win.

On December 11th, Russellville raced past the Hamilton Aggies 45-21, with balanced scoring from seven players, none of whom had double digit scoring.

The team's 14th win came on December 14th with a 37-13 victory over Red Bay.

Malone had eight points, Sappington, Odom and Lilly Hood seven apiece and Ellis and Aleya Lane scored four points.

Russellville Lady Golden Tigers Girls' Varsity Basketball Recap:

The Russellville Lady Golden Tigers varsity basketball team evened its record at 5-5 with a December 15th 48-42 road victory at Belgreen.

Coach Jermaine Groce's team trailed after one quarter, 13-10, but took a halftime lead of four, at 24-20.

Belgreen trailed Russellville 35-32 going into the fourth quarter, which saw the Lady Golden Tigers outscore the Bulldogs 13-10.

Jacey Moore led Russellville with 17 points. Ella Copeland had 16 and Avery Watts and Jemma Moore added six apiece.

Desiree Medina had two and Laila Hill one to complete the Lady Golden Tigers' scoring.

Russellville was set to face Decatur Heritage High School Tuesday, December 19th at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville.

On December 8th, Russellville picked up its fourth win with a 51-38

victory over Brewer High School.

The Lady Golden Tigers trailed after one quarter, but took a lead in the second quarter and never looked back.

Hill and Moore topped the box score for Russellville with 20 points each. Copeland had four and Moore two as four Lady Golden Tigers accounted for all 51 points.

On December 12th, Russellville hosted Florence and the Lady Golden Tigers fell 70-61.

Florence's Kamora Simpson led all scorers with 20 points. Watts and Moore paced Russellville with 17 apiece. Moore and Hill each had seven, Sadie Odom six, Alexia Groce five and Aleah Bonman two.



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From left: Commissioners Chris Wallace, Jason Miller, Joseph Baldwin and David Hester. Seated: Probate Judge Barry Moore.
~ The Franklin County Commission

Franklin Free Press Football Picks Contest

Each Week's Winner Receives a \$25 Pilgrim's Place BBQ Gift Certificate!

Congratulations to 'Ramblin' Rodney McCarley, our Week 15 winner in the FFP Football Contest with 9/10 correct. It's now Bowl Season, and everyone's invited to submit your picks for a chance to win a \$100 grand prize along with a \$25 Pilgrim's BBQ Gift Certificate. Simply email your predictions by December 23rd at 10 a.m., to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com. Include your name, phone number, game selections and tiebreaker.

Troy	Duke
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Clemson	Kentucky
Missouri	Ohio St.
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Alabama	Michigan
Texas	Washington

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*From the Jason & Belinda Miller
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For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

~ Isaiah 9:6 KJV

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