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Russellville Electric Board to interview five candidates for general manager position

John Pilati
 Franklin Free Press

The search for the new general manager of the Russellville Electric Board is moving to the next level as the board voted at an October 8th special called meeting to interview five candidates for the position. The interviews will be scheduled by the REB's attorney, Jeff Bowling, and are expected to take place at a special called meeting set for October 17th. Charles Canida, the outgoing general manager, remains in the position until November 1st, although Canida is no longer coming to work, no

longer has his \$85,000 GMC Yukon Denali and has been removed from all REB bank accounts. Canida is using accrued sick days until his employment ends at month's end. The board received 19 applications for the GM position, although three of those were received after the September 30th application deadline. Of the remaining 16, Bowling's office prepared 'blind' applications, including the candidates' professional work experience and training, but no identifying personal information, according to REB Chairman Nick Willis. Willis said the 'blind' application

See 'REB,' Page 5

RFD Chief Mansell receives hero's welcome at West Elementary School on eve of retirement

Kadin Pounders
 Franklin Free Press

Donning plastic fireman helmets, hoisting handmade signs, and waving pom-poms, scores of students at West Elementary School huddled beside one of the Russellville Fire Department fire engines parked in the school lot Thursday morning. Nearing the end of the school's Fire Safety Week, the young pupils anticipated the arrival of one man who

has spent decades participating in educational events like the one taking place at WES, Russellville Fire Department Chief Joe Mansell, who is set to retire as fire chief early next year. When Mansell did arrive a few minutes later, he was greeted with hoorahs and applause from the students, faculty, and staff at West, as well as Russellville City Schools administrators and other members of the community and the media, who

See 'MANSELL,' Page 8



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Peggy Ann Patterson, age 77, of Russellville, passed away on Friday, October 11, 2024. Spry Memorial Chapel assisted the family.

Carly Mae Weeks, age 24, passed away Tuesday, October 8, 2024. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

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Alabama's '60 Savory Stops' for beef dishes includes one Franklin County institution

*John Pilati
Franklin Free Press*

In celebration of the 60th consecutive year of October Beef Month in Alabama, the Alabama Cattlemen's Association (ACA) has unveiled a promotion titled "60 Savory Stops."

This promotion highlights 60 former restaurant winners and finalists of the Alabama's Best Steak, Bama's Best Beef and Bama's Best Burgers contests, which have been hosted by the ACA for more than a decade. The list includes one Franklin County restaurant and four in the Shoals area.

"To celebrate 60 years of October Beef Month, we decided to look back at our past beef contest winners and finalists," ACA Executive Vice President Erin Beasley said. "The 60 Savory Stops promotion is an effort to highlight Alabama restaurants who are serving up great beef dishes and encourage consumers to visit them during Beef Month in Alabama."

Among the "60 Savory Stops" are Russellville's own Frosty Inn's big cheeseburger, Tuscumbia's Claunch Cafe's roast beef sandwich, Sheffield's George's Steak Pit's ribeye, Muscle Shoals' Mitchell's Smoked Meats' brisket dinner and Tuscumbia's Rattlesnake Saloon's 'The Duke Burger.'

Traditionally, a social media driven contest collects restaurant nominees and puts them head-to-head in a bracket challenge until one is crowned the winner. For more than 10 years, the ACA has hosted these contests in October and, as a result, has established a robust list of fan-favorite beef dishes from across the state of Alabama.

The 60 Savory Stops promotion brings all these previous competitors to the table for a unique spin on the tradition this year. The restaurants and their award-winning dishes can be found on the Alabama Cattlemen Association Facebook page or at www.BamaBeef.org/60.

"This promotion covers the state in recommendations," Beasley said. "From Tuscumbia to Foley and Livingston to Opelika, there are stops where consumers can find a variety of delicious beef meals and excellent restaurant experiences."

This promotion is just one example of the traditions started in Alabama to celebrate Beef Month. Each year, beginning in 1964, the governor has proclaimed "October is Beef Month in Alabama," encouraging Alabamians to recognize the impact of the beef industry across the state. A \$2.5 billion industry, beef production in Alabama includes over 1.1 million head of cattle across the state and producers in all 67 counties, affecting more than just those living on rural cattle operations.

After the proclamation signing kicks off the month of October, the ACA and its county affiliates activate statewide to promote beef to consumers and share more about their way of life. For example, cattlemen will be present at local events to offer samples and beef education; host steak sandwich sales will be held to fundraise for local charities and programs; and visit local schools to participate in Cowboys in the Classroom (a program which offers beef production education, ag literacy opportunities, and safe livestock interactions for students).

In addition to the 60 Savory Stops promotion, Alabama consumers are encouraged to join cattle producers in these celebrations across the state. Above all, consumers are encouraged to partake in the festivities by enjoying beef as a healthy and delicious part of their October diet.

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City soliciting bids for tennis complex resurfacing, renovations

*Kadin Pounders
Franklin Free Press*

The Russellville City Council, at its October 7th, 2024, meeting, approved advertisements to "solicit sealed bids for the repair and resurfacing of twelve tennis courts at the Russellville Sports Complex," a project which will include resurfacing, crack repair, and the drawing of pickleball court lines to four of the tennis courts.

"This is a project that needs to be done," said Donnie Flanagan of the Russellville Parks and Recreation Department. "The main reason for this project is to repair the cracks in the courts. We have 1300 feet of cracks. When it gets colder and it rains, the water gets in the cracks and freezes and that adds to the damage. It's something that has to be fixed or it will only get worse."

Flanagan said they have received two estimates so far. The estimates received to this point have the project being completed in the summer of 2025.

"Right now it's looking like May," Flanagan said. "That's when the two who have contacted us so far said they could get to us. Of course, that (timeline) could change...but right now it's looking like we would have another (tennis) season before the repairs are made."

Whenever the resurfacing and the repairs are made, an exciting addition will be made to the courts. Pickleball court lines will be drawn on four of the 12 courts at the complex. Pickleball, the fastest growing sport in the country, has plenty of players locally. Flanagan said there has been community interest in adding the pickleball courts.

"We have had quite a few people asking for it," he said. "We have a group of ladies that play indoors on Tuesdays and Thursdays and they'll wait around awhile to play. There's definitely interest in it. It's a sport that's hugely popular, not just in the United States but around the world."

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'REB,' From Page 1

process will allow the board to interview the candidates they believe to be best qualified, without any consideration about personal information or name.

Board members reached a consensus of the five candidates they felt were best qualified and asked Bowling to set up interviews for the October 17th meeting.

Last month, the board approved a job description for the general manager's job and the position was advertised the entire month of September.

Qualifications for the new GM include a degree in Engineering, Business, Accounting, Finance or other equivalent college degree along with at least 5-10 years' experience in public utility management with increasing responsibility.

This is a significant deviation from the process that saw Canida get hired as GM in December 2012, when he went from Chairman of the Russellville Electric Board making \$450/month to making more than \$100,000 and being hired as GM at the same meeting.

Canada's hiring, according to some, violated Alabama's 'Revolving Door' provisions of the state's ethics laws. Those provisions prohibit certain activities by public officials and public employees for a period of two years after leaving their public position.

After Canada resigned at the December 2012 REB meeting from his position of board chairman, he was hired as GM minutes later at the same meeting.

Canada's 2012 hiring was done without the board ever advertising the position or conducting any interviews.

Willis promised this GM search would be conducted fairly, honestly and with transparency. And so far, that's exactly what has happened, including board members remaining in the dark as to candidate names until they are interviewed October 17th.

Willis did not place a timeframe on hiring a GM. While he hopes the right candidate will emerge after interviews, Willis said the board didn't want to be tied to a timeline in its effort to find the best person for the job.

The new general manager will start with an annual salary of at least \$177,000, as outlined in the job description

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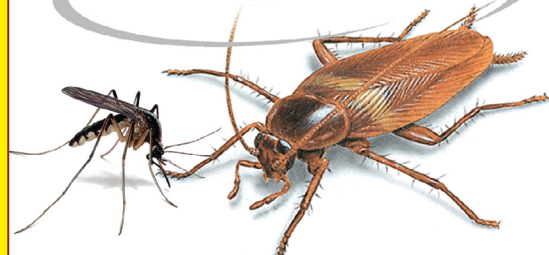
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 **A**shaKiran serves victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking across Alabama. Their vision is to be a 'ray of hope' by bridging the gap between service providers and culturally diverse communities. Their 24-hour crisis line 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.


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 **C**ommunity Action Partnership of North Alabama, also known as Russellville Head Start and Early Head Start, is a non-profit agency serving 3, 4 and 5 year old children absolutely free. We are located at 976 Ronnie McDowell Avenue in Russellville. Our hours are from 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday thru Friday. Call for an appointment today at 256-331-0162. Give your child a Head Start on school readiness! We offer top-quality, comprehensive early childhood educational services provided at no cost to your family. To learn more, visit www.capna.org/children-services.

 **T**he Cowboy Church of Franklin County will host its annual Fall Fest, Thursday, October 31st, at 6 pm. Join them for this fun event with a Chili Cookoff. Have your chili at the church by 5:30 pm. Fall Fest starts at 6 p.m., and ends at 8 p.m. Free hot dogs and chili until gone. Games, candy and cake walk. Everyone is welcome! Church is located at 25100 Highway 24, Russellville.

 **T**he annual Russellville Veteran's Day Parade, sponsored by American Legion Post 64, will take place on Saturday, November 9th, at 12 p.m. Veterans are invited to gather at the Franklin County Courthouse at 11 a.m., to place flowers on the memorial. Parade will assemble at the Farmer's Market behind the A.W. Todd Centre at 11:15. Parade procession will be north on Jackson Avenue. The Antique Car Club will participate. Horse or mule drawn wagons are welcome as well as any other participants. This year's Grand Marshal will be all Veterans from the Vietnam War and earlier. Vehicles will be provided to carry Veterans through the parade route. Veterans' families are also welcome to drive their own vehicle with their Veteran family member if they wish. Please have identifying signs on vehicles carrying Veterans. For more information, contact Grant Atkins at 256-627-2866.

 **G**et ready for a night of haunting poetry at our Florence Art and Museums' Open Mic Night, happening on October 30th, 2024, at 6:30 p.m at the Southall House, 209 E. Tuscaloosa St., Florence. In celebration of Halloween, poets are invited to share their original works that explore their deepest fears.

 **T**his event will feature readings by Jason McCall and Nancy Owen Wilson, followed by an open mic for audience participation. Our goal is to promote poetry and create a welcoming space where both published and unpublished poets can share their work while bringing together our diverse communities. This program is free and is sponsored by the City of Florence Department of Arts and Museums. The Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts is located at 217 E Tuscaloosa Street, Florence, AL, and is open Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. The event will be held at the Southall House, just next to the Art Center office, at 209 E. Tuscaloosa St. Call 256-760-6379 for more information.

 **S**iloam Missionary Baptist Church will host Fall Festival, Sunday, Oct. 27, from 5-7 pm. There will be Trunk or Treat, crafts for kids, cake walk, and hotdogs will be served! Church is located at 1657 Highway 60 in Russellville, across from King Drive In.

Email us at franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

Bonner: America's last bastion for freedom and independent thought?

James Bonner

Special to the Franklin Free Press

(The following is a contributed column from Franklin County resident James Bonner, a veteran of state and local politics. He will be an occasional contributor to the FFP to share his unique, and often controversial, thoughts on politics. Your opinions and responses are welcome.)

Yes Virginia, The government can make you wear a mask. And pants.

Although the legality of requiring you to be vaccinated is outside the domain of federal law, issues of health and safety, as outlined in the preamble to the United States Constitution, are reserved to the several states.

While they may not make you give blood, sacrifice a kidney or take a job, they unequivocally have the right to put you in jail if you don't . Ask Typhoid Mary.

The point of this rant is my dearest friends who say, "I am not against masks --I am against mandates." To this I say, "Well Depends."

I may not agree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it. Just not in my face. You have the right to smoke, however the insurance lady says if you do it in my house my homeowners bill goes up \$150 a month. Freedom is as freedom does. I personally don't carry anything larger than fifty caliber in church, although the Constitution plainly allows it. Which brings me to my point.

The United States Pentagon does stuff. Sometimes not good stuff, but that is a matter of perspective. Psy ops. Psychological Operations are as old as the art of war. The Constitution not only allows but requires the government to promote peace and tranquility. There is no provision for truth.

These psy ops might for example be Apollo 1 exploding at second stage separation and a cover story claiming Gus Grissom was killed by an oxygen leak and velcro. Or It might be a disinformation campaign regarding a presidential candidate's ear. The truth is you have no constitutional right to the truth. It might be little green men in Aurora Texas. The trouble comes in the front door when the truth goes out the back.

In the case of psy ops. The Pentagon is in charge of disinformation campaigns and the President is Commander in Chief of the Pentagon. Case in point--On December 31st of 2019, Russia was our friend (because it is good to have friends with nukes) and most people only knew what they learned about Ukraine from history books on Chernobyl.

On Jan 21st of 2020, Russia was the evil empire and Ukraine was Hunter Biden's boy toy.

So far we have paid \$60 billion on this "war" (minus 10% to the big guy) for nothing. We had a perfectly good war in Afghanistan. Lets see, 60 Billion divided by 200 million tax paying Americans... carry the 5 .. cypher the zero naught plus naught is 'We.. you get the idea .. It is a lot.'

Meanwhile butter is \$5.75 a pound and a single egg costs more than a dozen four years ago -and my new car is a 1996 model. As I told my friend " you don't like to be told what to do--I don't like being told what to think" and if you watch ANY TV you are being told what to think. Even Archie Bunker and Quincy had an opinion but we buttered it to go down easy.

Some episodes of the Beverly Hillbillies are banned because they promote sedition against the federal government. So don't listen to networks. Listen to me--the last bastion of free and independent thought in America!

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'MANSELL,' From Page 1

came to witness the school's fire safety and prevention program and celebration of the longtime RFD boss.

Speaking first to the crowd assembled semi-circle around the red engine was RCS Assistant Superintendent Chris James, who read and presented Mansell with a letter of thanks from West Elementary's students, faculty, and staff.

"On behalf of all the students, faculty, and staff at West Elementary, we want to extend our deepest gratitude for your years of service, dedication, and bravery," the letter began. "Your leadership has been an inspiration to our community, and your commitment to keeping us safe is something we will never forget.

"Throughout the years, you've not only protected our families but have also taught us valuable lessons about fire safety and responsibility. Fire Safety Week has always been a special time for us, and your presence and guidance have made it all the more meaningful," the letter continued. "You've shown us that being a hero isn't just about wearing a uniform, but about caring for others and leading with kindness and courage."

The letter concluded: "Thank you, Chief Mansell, for being our hero. We wish you all the best in your well-deserved retirement."

Speaking next was Russellville Mayor David Grissom, who presented Mansell with a plaque acknowledging his service and dedication to educating students about fire safety and prevention.

Then, finally, it was Mansell's turn to speak. Not expecting the welcome he received at the school—the chief said he was actually putting fish in his pond before he came into town—Mansell thanked the students, school officials, the community, and his fellow firefighters.

"I wasn't expecting it. I guess that may be why I don't really have the words because I wasn't expecting this," Mansell told the Franklin Free Press. "It's great knowing that I meant something for the fire prevention program and for the fire department for them to come up here and give me this kind of sendoff.

"I've always had great guys, you know, and I couldn't have done anything if I didn't have the department that I've had," he added. "I've had great men to work with, a great administration that, when we tell them we need something, they're always there to support us. I've been blessed to be able to

work for the City of Russellville."

Mansell, hanging up his fire helmet full time after 32 years of service and over 20 as RFD's chief, said being involved in Fire Safety Week, educating young students, and seeing the positive outcomes has been one of his favorite parts of the job during his three decades with the department.

"We've had success stories, seen success stories from this program that we do," he said. "We actually do it throughout the entire county, and just being able to see the success of what we're able to do means more than

anything. Knowing that one child learned something and before something tragic happened.

"These kids love it. They love coming, seeing Sparky (the firehouse dog mascot), and we try to make it fun. We try to make it interesting and keep their attention, but at the end of the day we want them to learn a few things and know what to do in case of a house fire," Mansell added.

"Out of all the years doing this, being able to see success come out of it... anytime we can save one life, that means everything. So, I guess that's the biggest thing: just actually witnessing that what we've done here works."

Throughout the week, students learn ways to prevent fires, precautions they should take before a fire breaks out, and what to do if it ever happens. In a more interactive approach, RFD puts students through their kid's safety house, a mobile trailer that safely simulates some conditions during a house fire, allowing students to practice what to do in a burning home.

"It's so important that these children understand fire safety, whether it be at home or at school or in the community," West Elementary assistant principal Suzanne Glass said. "Our firemen instill such a great lesson about fire safety with the smoke house. It's wonderful.

"It's hands-on...they can touch and feel and actually go through a house that could possibly be on fire so they know what to do."

Glass said the lessons have a greater impact coming from Russellville's firefighters, who serve as role models and participate in school events throughout the year:

"They are huge partners with our school system. Fire Safety Week is always one, but they are always here for our Grandparents' Day celebrations, even Thanksgiving lunches, sitting in as grandparents or parents for those children that may not have them or don't live close by."

Giving back to students and making an impact on the community, Mansell said, is what the job of firefighter and fire chief is all about. Even though he is retiring from full-time work in February 2025, Mansell said he doesn't see the move as stepping away but instead as "passing the torch" to someone else so they can enjoy the blessings he's had.

The faithful public servant said he'll still be around the department to help out and you might see him at Fire Safety Week in the years to come.

"I love Russellville. I'm not going anywhere, and I'm still going to be here," he said. "I'm still going to work part-time for the fire department, just not as the chief. God blessed me 22 and a half years ago to be the fire chief and that's been one of the biggest blessings outside of marriage and having kids. It's meant so much to me to be chief, and all I've ever wanted to do was be able to give back to the community.

"The fire prevention program here is great. You know, I actually got to see my kids go through it, which means a lot to be able to watch your kids go through it," he added. "I was actually hoping to be able to see my grandchild go through it, but maybe I can come up here as a retiree and watch."



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City of Russellville receives clean audit report for FY22-23

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The City of Russellville received a clean bill of health after receiving a report from a certified public accountant who recently completed an audit for FY 2022-23.

The council heard from Don Wallace, CPA, who performed the audit for the period ending September 30, 2023. Wallace's report indicated there were no material compliance issues contained in the financial report submitted to the council prior to its October 7th meeting.

The audit showed the City of Russellville to have approximately a \$1 million excess, or income, as of September 30, 2023. Wallace explained that doesn't mean the city has an extra \$1 million cash flow. Instead, it can represent revenues received through grants, for example, where the expenditures hadn't taken place yet as of the time of the audit.

In other agenda items at its October 7th meeting, the council:

—approved a resolution declaring October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month in the City of Russellville.

—accepted a letter of resignation from Russellville police officer Timothy Balcom, who was rehired by the city last month. The council also approved posting and advertising for the vacancy.

—approved increasing Russellville Street Department Manager Shannon Wilson's salary to Grade 9, Step 13 due to his accepting additional duties, most recently including serving as city dog catcher.

—authorized advertising for bids to repair and resurface the 12 tennis courts at the Russellville Sports Complex, including resurfacing, repairing cracks with membrane and drawing of Pickleball court lines.

—authorized the purchase of three cardiac monitors for the Russellville Fire Department in the amount of \$151,213.50. \$75,606.53 will be paid in the first year, with a year two payment of the remaining half of \$75,606.53. \$75,000 of the purchase price will come from the Rural Emergency Medical Services Grant and the city will receive a \$27,500 credit for the trade-in value of its current cardiac monitors. Total cost to the city will be \$48,713.05. Mayor David Grissom said city officials will request grant funding assistance from the Franklin County Community Development Commission.

--approved the purchase of six 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit police vehicles, one 2024 Dodge Ram SSV from Stivers Dodge and one F250 from Long Lewis Ford for the Russellville Police Department, to be paid for with United States Department of Justice grant funds.

The next regular meeting of the Russellville City Council will be October 21, 2024, with work session at 6 p.m., and meeting to follow.

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

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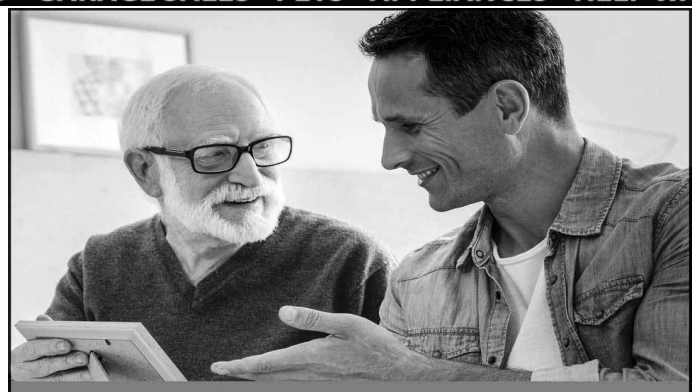

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Golden Tigers' road trip to West Point highlights week for local teams

Kadin Pounders
 Franklin Free Press

Belgreen (2-3)
 BYE

Last week: BYE

Next week: Belgreen will resume its season by traveling to Victory Christian.

Phil Campbell (2-5, 2-3)
 at Gordo (7-1, 4-1)

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024
 Time: 7 p.m.
 Location: Green Wave Stadium

Last week: The Bobcats ended a four-game losing streak and earned their second win of the year on Homecoming, dispatching region foe Carbon Hill 34-12.

What to watch: Phil Campbell starts a three-game road stretch to end the regular season, beginning with region rival Gordo, one of the best teams in the state in Class 3A. The Green Wave are the standard-bearers of the region and are one of the team's PCHS head

See, 'WEEK 8,' Page 13

Vina edges Waterloo for fifth win of the varsity football season

Kadin Pounders
 Franklin Free Press

The Vina High School football team picked up its fifth win of the 2024 campaign on Friday night, surviving a tough battle at home against region rival Waterloo Cougars 16-14 to improve to 5-2 and 3-2 in Class 1A Region 7 play.

A 42-32 victory over Waterloo to finish the 2023 season was the catalyst and the first of a five-game winning streak the Red Devils carried over to start the year. Vina, still in the hunt for a playoff spot, knew going into the game that the result against Waterloo would again be vital.

"Before the game I was letting them know what was at stake," Vina head coach Cody Renfrow said. "We feel like we're on the doorstep of having one of the most successful seasons this program has had in decades.

"We're still fighting for the playoffs and every game is important if we're going to have a chance to earn one of those spots. We really treated this game like a must-win," Renfrow added.

The all-important victory would not be a gimme, though—Vina had to earn it in what turned

See, 'VINA,' page 15

Golden Tigers' road trip to West Point highlights week for local teams

Kadin Pounders
 Franklin Free Press

After suffering a heartbreaking 50-49 loss to region rival Fairview in a three-overtime thriller last week, the Russellville High School varsity football team (5-2, 3-1) rebounded by routing Class 4A Hatton (4-3, 3-2) 56-8 at Golden Tiger Stadium on Friday night.

"It's definitely big to get back in the win column and get the bad taste out of your mouth," said Russellville head coach Dustin Goodwin.

Though the game ended in a whopping victory for the Golden Tigers, it wasn't the most energetic or convincing of starts for the hosts. After Hatton drew first blood, marching 75 yards on the game's opening possession, the Golden Tigers struggled with turnovers, missed chances on opponent turnovers, and penalties.

Russellville did respond—the Golden Tigers went into the halftime break up 21-8 through a passing and a rushing touchdown by freshman quarterback Whit Goodwin in the first quarter and a rushing score by junior running back Cameron Phinizee in the second. Still, it was evident there were some areas Russellville needed to improve on in the second half.

"We definitely felt like we had to clean up some things at halftime, especially offensively," Goodwin said. "Defensively, outside of the first drive, I thought we played pretty well and we tackled much better.

"We were able to clean some of that stuff up, and I thought we executed much better in the second half," he added.

Indeed.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Vina Red Devils earned their fifth win Friday over Waterloo.

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See, 'RUSSELLVILLE,' Page 12

GENERAL NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT

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

THE CITY OF RUSSELLVILLE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. ALL QUALIFIED APPLICANTS WILL RECEIVE CONSIDERATION WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE, RELIGION, COLOR, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, POLITICAL AFFILIATION, DISABILITY, OR ANY OTHER NON-MERIT FACTOR. THE CITY OF RUSSELLVILLE ENCOURAGES APPLICATIONS FOR POSITIONS IN ALL PROTECTIVE SERVICE DEPARTMENTS FROM WOMEN IN AN ATTEMPT TO INCREASE THEIR REPRESENTATION IS PROTECTIVE SERVICE DEPARTMENTS.

Pay Range is from \$44,865.60 – 69,160.00.

Applications and copies of the Job Descriptions may be obtained at the Russellville City Hall, Office of the Mayor, 304 North Jackson Avenue. Applications submitted to the Russellville Civil Service Board less than one year ago remain active. Those individuals need not reapply in order to receive consideration for this appointment.

Applications must be returned no later than October 25, 2024 by U.S.

Mail to: The Russellville Civil Service Board

P. O. Box 308 Russellville, AL 35653

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

'RUSSELLVILLE,' From Page 11

The Golden Tiger team that came out of the locker room after the intermission took a swatter to the Hornets and exterminated any hopes of a comeback pretty quickly. The Russellville defense, in addition to the four caused turnovers in the first half, forced a few more in the second and pitched a shutout after the opening drive of the contest.

"We want our kids to be able to play fast and execute what they're asked to do," Goodwin said. "I thought, for the most part, we were able to do that (on defense) tonight. The (Hatton) quarterback got away from us a few times—he's a special player, there's no denying that—but all in all, I'm proud of the kids."

Meanwhile, the offense spread the ball around to a number of different playmakers and capitalized on Hatton's mistakes.

The quarterback Goodwin, who threw a touchdown to senior receiver Gunner Sappington in the first quarter, hit another senior, Ty Willis, on a 51-yard touchdown pass to start the third; it was Willis' first touchdown of the year. Later on in the game, in the fourth quarter, Goodwin would sling a short touchdown pass to senior Jah Williams for the quarterback's season-high third passing TD of the night.

Up 28-8, Phinizee, the sixth-leading rusher in the country going into the game, grabbed his second and final rushing touchdown of the night midway through the third quarter, hustling 30 yards for the score to make it 35-8. After Williams' touchdown reception made it 42-8, Zay Hubbard followed it up immediately with a scoop-and-score on the ensuing kickoff return, extending the Golden Tigers' lead to 41 points.

The final touchdown of the game was scored by sophomore running back Tarus Davis from 45-yards out. Davis, who got the start at running back over Phinizee against the Hornets, put together a solid performance with the carries he was given.

"In a non-region game we wanted to give (Davis) an opportunity to start the game and see how he responded, so we did that," Goodwin said. "Then when Cam (Phinizee) came in, he did what Cam does and had a nice night, as well."

On the night, seven different Golden Tigers found the endzone with six different players scoring on offense. Goodwin said it wasn't necessarily planned that way, but it was good to see the wealth spread around and more players get rewarded.

"I'm happy to see different guys get in the endzone," Goodwin said. "We spread it around and saw several different things. Seeing several different guys scoring, it's fun to see. It's not really by design, it's just sort of the way everything worked out."

The 48-point win was the largest margin of victory for the Golden Tigers this season and gives Russellville the series advantage and bragging rights after the first ever meeting between the two programs.

Goodwin said the big non-region win should serve as a shot in the arm for his team as the Golden Tigers turn their attention back to region play. Russellville will hit the road for its final two region contests, starting with West Point next Friday, and will need to be locked in.

"We're back in region play next week and those (games) are the ones at this point that set you up for the playoffs," Goodwin said. "We've gotta come back ready to work on Monday and do the best we can to put us in the best position possible to make plays and win that football game."

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

'WEEK 8,' From Page 11

coach Jacob Hamilton, at the beginning of the season, said the Bobcats will have to raise their level of play to match if they want to achieve their long-term goals. If nothing else, the game against Gordo will prove a measuring stick for the Phil Campbell program. The Green Wave are heavy favorites in this one. Can the Bobcats use their momentum from the Carbon Hill and parlay it into an upset of Gordo?

Series history: Phil Campbell and Gordo have met just once when the two teams played last season. Gordo came out on top in the inaugural meeting, 56-6.

Next week: Phil Campbell remains on the road to play its final region game against Hanceville.

Red Bay (1-5, 1-2)
vs. Decatur Heritage Christian (5-1, 3-0)

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Tiger Stadium

Last week: Red Bay picked up its first win of the 2024 season, beating Franklin County and region rival Tharptown 52-0.

What to watch: No doubt the Tigers are thrilled to finally get a win this season and morale will likely be higher after the Tharptown victory, but Red Bay's challenge against Decatur Heritage this week will be much, much tougher than the seemingly easy contest against the Wildcats. Decatur Heritage has been ranked in the top 10 all season and has outscored opponents 250-89 this season.

Series history: This is the first meeting between Red Bay and Decatur Heritage.

Next week: The Tigers host Tanner in their final Class 2A Region 8 contest.



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Russellville (5-2, 3-1)
at West Point (2-5, 2-2)

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Warrior Field

Last week: After a heartbreaking three overtime loss to Fairview, the Golden Tigers rebounded by trouncing Hatton 56-8. Russellville had a slow start to the game but turned it around to dominate the Hornets in the second half.

What to watch: The Golden Tigers are basically a shoo-in for the playoffs, but a win against West Point on Friday will make it official. As always, Russellville will rely on junior running back Cameron Phinzee as the main offensive weapon, but in the last two weeks a number of other players have gotten involved. As freshman quarterback Whit Goodwin has gotten more and more comfortable, the passing game has opened up and he's distributing the ball to more receivers on the perimeter. Meanwhile, sophomore back Tarus Davis got all the carries in the first quarter against Hatton and added a touchdown late. He's seen more and more of the ball as the season has gone on, and he's ran the ball well when given the touches. Expect more and more of the same from Russellville in this one. Defensively, the Golden Tigers have been battered by injuries. The season-ending injuries of Ben Pounders and Paxton Wray on that side of the ball have forced Russellville to move players around and give younger guys more playing time. The Golden Tigers, despite the losses, have still played pretty well defensively but definitely need to stay injury free in this one.

Series history: Russellville is undefeated in 10 games against West Point. The Golden Tigers routed the Warriors 48-14 last season.

Next week: The Golden Tigers travel to Priceville for their final region finale.

Tharptown (0-7, 0-3)
vs. Winston County (7-0, 3-0)

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Tharptown Stadium

Last week: Tharptown remained winless, falling to Red Bay 52-0 in a region contest.

What to watch: The game against a winless Red Bay represented one of the few decent opportunities for Tharptown to pick up a win of their own this season. With an already limited roster, the 52-0 loss to the Tigers doesn't bode well for the Wildcats this week against an undefeated Winston County team that averages 41 points per game and has only allowed six touchdowns all season. This is Tharptown's final home game of the season.

Series history: This is the first meeting between Tharptown and Winston County.

Next week: The Wildcats travel to Lexington for their region finale.

Vina (5-2, 3-2)
at Addison (4-4, 3-2)

Date: Friday, October 18, 2024
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: A.G. Hicks Stadium

Last week: Vina squeaked by Waterloo in a 16-14 defensive battle. The win gave the Red Devils their fifth win—it's their first five-win season since 2015.

What to watch: The stakes are very high. This region matchup against Addison could very well be the most important game of the season for Vina in regards to making the postseason. Vina, Addison, and Cherokee are three teams battling for the region's final two playoff spots, and Cherokee already has the head-to-head advantage over the Red Devils. Beating the Bulldogs would tentatively place Vina fourth in the standings with one region game left to play. A loss doesn't extinguish Vina's chances, but the Red Devils would need some help to get in.

Series history: Vina is just 3-17-1 against Addison. The Red Devils were shutout 50-0 in this game last season.

Next week: Vina hosts Meek in its region and home finale.

Bobcats down Carbon Hill on Homecoming night

Kadin Pounders
Franklin Free Press

The Phil Campbell High School varsity football team (2-5, 2-3 Class 3A Region 5) jumped back into the win column with a homecoming victory over region rival Carbon Hill (1-6, 0-5) last Thursday night, defeating the Bulldogs 34-12 to end a four-game losing skid.

Paired with all the homecoming festivities, the Bobcats faced a shortened week of preparation going into the matchup with Carbon Hill due to the school's fall break. That could've hampered Phil Campbell's prep, but head coach Jacob Hamilton said his guys were laser-focused for the contest.

"I just told them not to let all this homecoming stuff distract you," the second-year coach said. "I felt like we had a great week of preparation, a great week of practice. I think our kids were locked in on the task at hand and understanding all this homecoming stuff isn't as fun if you don't get the homecoming win.

"We executed our game plan well. We didn't play perfect by any means, but I thought we played really well and ultimately we got the win; that's all you can ask for," Hamilton added.

Phil Campbell got off to an inauspicious start on offense in the first quarter, fumbling on their opening two drives. However, the Bobcats were able to turn it around in the second quarter by scoring three unanswered touchdowns and jumping out to a 22-0 lead at the half-time break.

"I told (the players) before the game, we can't lose the turnover battle and win the game. We've struggled with that all year," Hamilton said. "Ultimately we were able to settle in, lock in, and get the pregame jitters out of the way. We got big stops on defense and were able to pound it with the run to get that 22-0 lead at halftime—that was huge.

"We've been behind all year," he added. "We haven't jumped up on

anybody, so it was nice to be able to do that, and it was one of the main reasons why we won the game."

The visitors pulled a touchdown back after halftime, but Phil Campbell responded with another two touchdowns—one in the third and one in the fourth quarter—to extend the lead to 28 points.

Carbon Hill added a consolation touchdown in the waning minutes of the game, but it was too little, too late for the visitors, and the Bobcats celebrated a comfortable three-score victory.

"Not giving (the lead) up (in the second half) and then understanding where we are and what we need to do, it was great," Hamilton said.

It was a bittersweet moment for some of the Phil Campbell players. With the Bobcats closing the regular season out on three consecutive road trips, for the seniors on the team the result represented a final homecoming win and a victory in their last game at Parrish Stadium.

"We have a wonderful senior class," Hamilton said. "They've worked really hard and really set the standard for working hard and trying to accomplish what we're trying to accomplish as a program in building a long-sustaining, successful program at Phil Campbell.

"It's unfortunate that we've had to deal with the injuries we've had this year—two of those guys are seniors. But they've had positive attitudes and even though the season hasn't gone the way we've wanted it to, we still have a chance to end on a high note if we keep working and keep pursuing our goals," he added. "That's what I can say about this senior class: they never go down without a fight, they always keep their heads on straight, and look at the positive side and continue to put in the work.

"Here at Phil Campbell those guys have set that standard and set that example, and they continue to work hard no matter what adversity comes their way."

In the game against Carbon Hill, then, it was fitting that the player of the game was a senior. Hayden Wingo, who has taken on a heavier workload after the injury losses of fellow seniors Noah Raper and Braxton Mayfield, rushed for 160 yards and scored four of Phil Campbell's five touchdowns against the Bulldogs.

"He's a great football player, and he's really special with the ball in his hands," Hamilton said of Wingo, who leads the team with over 900 yards of total offense this season. "We had a three-headed monster of him, Noah Raper, and Braxton Mayfield, but you look up about week three we've lost Noah and Braxton due to injuries; so, he's done a great job of carrying the load, making plays on both sides of the ball, offensively and defensively, and still excelling at his game and doing what he does best, which is running the football.

"He had a great game. I'm really proud of him. It was his last game at Parrish Stadium, his last homecoming, and he went out with a bang," Hamilton added.

Up next, Phil Campbell will travel to Gordo (7-1, 4-1), currently the second-place team in the Region 5 standings and the No. 6 team in Class 3A. It will be a tough road challenge for the Bobcats against the Green Wave, who won 56-6 in their first ever meeting last season, but Hamilton said his team is going to take the game play-by-play and see what unfolds.

"We've played some tough competition, and we have a tough schedule. We know Gordo is very good competition, and we have a lot of respect for Gordo," he said. "From last year's game we know that they're athletic and they're fast and they're a really good football team. What we can do is focus on ourselves and take it one play at a time. The message we're preaching is to not necessarily look at the scoreboard and not worry about the plays that are ahead but worry about the play that we're in right now and try to beat somebody on that play."

With just three games remaining this year, Hamilton, happy with the efforts of his players and staff, said the Bobcats are going to continue to make the most of the cards handed to them.

"At this point in the season, with the injuries we've been dealt, all we can do is focus on ourselves, and that's what we've been doing," Hamilton added. "I'm really proud of our guys for doing that, proud of our coaches for continuing to work hard, and doing all that we can to still make this season a successful one for these seniors and the future of this program."

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'VINA,' From Page 11

out to be a defensive battle between the Red Devils and Cougars. Unable to keep offensive momentum or find the endzone in the opening 24 minutes, Vina trailed 8-0 at the halftime break.

"We were getting into the redzone, but we just couldn't sustain drives," Renfrow said. "We ended up with three 100-yard rushers (Christian McCarley, Trevor Baker, and Cai Lawler), but in the first half we just couldn't finish.

"Credit to Waterloo. They came ready to play. They scored on their first possession and then we kinda settled in defensively," Renfrow added. "Offensively, we would get into the redzone but whether it be penalties or whatever it may be, we just couldn't finish drives off."

As is typically the case in tight games, the halftime intermission played a crucial role. The Red Devils regrouped during the break and readjusted to what they were seeing from the Cougars.

"At halftime we made some adjustments offensively to our running game and run blocking and it paid off," Renfrow said. "That's a credit to our staff and our kids for making those adjustments going into the second half."

Vina only had three possessions in the second half, but the Red Devils made them count, scoring touchdowns on two of them. Senior Trevor Baker scored both.

"We were still able to move the ball effectively in the second half, but the difference was we were able to finish off drives," Renfrow said.

Up 16-8 the Vina defense continued to play its part and kept the Cougars from scoring again until late. Waterloo's touchdown cut Vina's advantage to 16-14 after the failed two-point conversion. The ensuing onside kick was recovered by Vina to seal the win for the hosts.

Beating Waterloo, Vina sits at 3-2 in Region 7 and is currently tied with its next opponent, Addison, in the region standings. The upcoming game against the Bulldogs is Vina's penultimate region contest and the outcome could very well decide the Red Devils' playoff fate.

"Our message is really to just keep going and playing our game," Renfrow said. "We play on the road at Addison next, which is a really solid program. We know it's going to be a tough game, but we feel like if we continue to play our game then we can be successful."

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Morgan Lauderdale

Morgan Lauderdale - Belgreen Volleyball
 @FCgoodnews

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If approved by Alabama voters, Amendment One on the November 5, 2024 ballot would allow the Franklin County Board of Education to sell or otherwise utilize land in Walker and Fayette Counties owned by Franklin County Schools.

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PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO
APPEAR ON THE BALLOT STATEWIDE

STATEWIDE AMENDMENT 1

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 2022, to grant certain sixteenth section and indemnity school land that is owned in fee simple by the Franklin County school system, is located in Fayette County and Walker County, and is for the exclusive use of schools in the Franklin County School System to the Franklin County Board of Education; and to provide for the distribution of any proceeds and interest generated by this land to the Franklin County Board of Education. (Proposed by Act 2024-301)

YES

NO

Vote *Yes* on Amendment One!