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7.5.17 Hamilton: Financial measures will work

Superintendent says personnel moves, new revenue will help county schools

Kadin Pounders
Franklin Free Press

It's been a little more than six months since Greg Hamilton took charge as superintendent of the Franklin County School System, and in that time the former Vina educator and coach says he has applied the same mentality to his current job as he did to his old one: Work as hard as possible for the students and teachers of Franklin County.

Hard work. That is what the job requires,

Hamilton said, but it is also a theme that he hit on multiple times in his interview with the *Franklin Free Press* last week. Even in the summer time—especially in the summer time—the superintendent's day is filled with pressing matters.



Last Thursday morning, Greg Hamilton, before Hamilton talked with the *Free Press*, individuals were filing in to meet with him in

his office.

"That's about how it's been just about every day for the last few weeks," Hamilton said. "There are a lot of hours put into this job that a lot of people probably wouldn't think about."

A few of those matters include capital projects at schools in the system. Just this past semester, a major addition to the Tharptown school was approved.

"When that project is completed, we'll be

See 'HAMILTON,' Page 8

RCS students improve ACT Aspire scores

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Russellville City Schools students showed marked improvement this year in the ACT Aspire standardized testing, with improvements in 26 of 29 areas. Superintendent Heath Grimes told the school board last week about the results at their monthly meeting.

"Those results show teachers are making a difference in the lives of our students and in their instruction," Grimes said.

ACT Aspire testing determines proficiency in five areas—English, math, science, writing and reading. Math, science and reading are state-accredited areas, and testing is conduct-

ed on students in grades 3-8 and 10th grade. The other two areas saw testing for grades 6-8 and 10th grade only. Testing was done on RCS students in April.

"Some improvements were pretty significant, in the 30 to 40 percent range," Grimes said. "Not that we've arrived at the top level of proficiency, but we're seeing growth. Those results show teachers are making a difference in the lives of students and in their instruction."

"Students are given a proficiency level, ranging from 'in need of support' to close to

ready to exceeding," Grimes said. "That proficiency grew in 26 of the 29 areas tested in our system."

When compared to the national average, Grimes said RCS exceeded the score in several subjects.

"For the first time in a few years, we've seen consistent growth with some of that," he said. "Some improvements were pretty significant, in the 30 to 40 percent range. Not that we've arrived at the top level of proficiency, but we're seeing growth, and that's an indicator that what our teachers are doing is paying off."

In other action at its June 29 meeting, the

See 'SCORES,' Page 9

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Marie Landers Morse, Muscle Shoals (formerly of Franklin County), age 89

Died Saturday, July 1, 2017. Visitation will be held Wednesday, July 5, 2017 from 11 a.m. to noon at Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Russellville. Funeral service will follow at noon. Interment in the adjoining cemetery. Pinkard Funeral Home of Russellville assisted the family.

Inge K. Willis, Russellville, age 83

Died Tuesday, June 27, 2017. Graveside service held at Franklin Memory Gardens. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

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

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Moore aims to bring conservative values to U.S. Senate

Kadin Pounders
Franklin Free Press

Former Alabama Supreme Court chief justice and United States Senate candidate Roy Moore visited northwest Alabama last Friday afternoon, making a campaign stop at Homeside Restaurant in Florence.

Moore, 70, spoke in the back room of the restaurant for roughly an hour before opening the floor for questions from the crowd of close to 30 people. The former judge hit on a number of topics ranging from the military to health care to gay marriage and LGBTQ rights.

Moore, a Republican, started off his stump talking about the U.S. Constitution and how he believes it has been misinterpreted or forgotten by lawmakers and judges.

"There is a misunderstanding of the Constitution by those in Washington," he said. "There is intent to disparage the Constitution, and some say we can do it better by making our own form of government."

"Our constitution is as viable today as it was back then [in 1787]."

Moore also criticized judges whom he said take advantage of their position.

"There are judges in this country, mostly federal judges, abusing their power," he said, using the landmark Supreme Court case *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) as an example.

In *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the 14th Amendment's Due Process Clause and Equal Protection Clause guaranteed the fundamental right to marry to same-sex couples, overturning a previous ruling from 1971.

Ultimately, the Supreme Court ruling would be the beginning of the end of Moore's own Alabama Supreme Court career. In January of 2016, then-Chief Justice Moore issued an administrative order to Alabama probate judges regarding the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

The Judicial Inquiry Commission (JIC) accused him of ethics violations, arguing the order meant for probate judges to defy the Supreme Court ruling and stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Moore argued that was not the case and that the JIC had no authority to bring ethics charges, but the Court of the Judiciary ruled against Moore and suspended him for the remainder of his term. Moore appealed, but the Alabama Supreme Court upheld the ruling.

Instead of serving out the remainder of his term (and suspension), which was due to end in 2019, Moore resigned and announced his candidacy for Senate on April 26.

"I have something I think is needed in Washington, D.C.," he said last week. "I think I have experience they don't have. I have experience in the military, I have judicial experience."

"When I was suspended, it just made it

a much easier decision to run [for Senate], because I can help out and get the country back on track."

Moore, who has been no stranger to controversy in his career, said he does not think his suspension matters to the voters.

"Look at the polls," he said. "People know what they did to me and why they did it. You can't fool the people, and the polls indicate that fact."

Moore appears to be the front-runner in the race, ahead of incumbent Luther Strange and current U.S. Representative Mo Brooks. In May, Brooks told the *Montgomery Advertiser* he conducted a six-candidate poll, which showed Moore had a 10-point lead over Strange and a 20-point lead over Brooks.

During his speech at the Homeside Restaurant, Moore said polls showed him at eight to ten points ahead but did not specify which polls he was referring to.

Another topic discussed was the military. As a West Point graduate and a Vietnam War veteran, Moore said he is the only candidate that can bring the right military mindset to the table.

"I can take an understanding of the military to Washington," he said. "Our military is being decimated."

Moore said he believes the military is strong but wants it to be stronger, and he supports President Donald Trump's request to Congress for a \$54 billion increase to defense spending.

While in support of increasing the defense budget, Moore blasted what he called the "transgendering" of the military. In June of last year the Pentagon announced it was lifting the ban against transgender individuals. That lift is scheduled to go into effect in 2018.

"If you're in a foxhole, you don't want to be wondering if the person next to you is a boy or a girl, or if they can change back and forth," he said.

At his stop in Florence, Moore made it clear that his Supreme Court suspension and eventual resignation would not be the end of his fight against gay marriage and certain LGBTQ rights.

"It's not done when your United States Supreme Court rules contradictory to the Constitution," he said, again referencing the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision. "Four members of the court said it was strictly unconstitutional. You understand that Chief Justice [John] Roberts said that ruling strictly disregarded the Constitution? Justice [Antonin] Scalia said that. Justice [Samuel] Alito said that. Justice [Clarence] Thomas said that."

"So because five lawyers said it's over, it's done with? I don't believe that."

At his stop, Moore also took on a subject that has dominated the national media over the last six months: Health care. Citing rising premiums stemming from the Affordable Care Act, Republicans in Congress have been drafting legislation to "repeal and replace" Obamacare. So far, none of the

bills have passed.

The problem with "repeal and replace" is the replacing part, Moore said.

"We should repeal Obamacare as quickly as possible," he said. "Prior to Obama, except Medicare and Medicaid, there was no government in health care. The government can't handle it."

The free market, not government, Moore said, is best suited to handle health care.

"Let free enterprise work," he said. "Your health care costs will go down, and your health care will be better."

Moore also talked about his faith for much of the event, weaving scripture and his religious beliefs into his platform. He frequently recited Bible verses from memory and continued to defend his decision to install a controversial Ten Commandments monument in the Alabama Supreme Court rotunda during his first stint as chief justice.

"Our rights come from the Creator," he said. "Our laws are founded on the laws of God."

Moore briefly touched on other topics, as well. He is a supporter of loosening gun laws and restrictions; he wants to eliminate federal government control over education; and he said he wants to see the IRS eliminated and a fair tax implemented.

If elected, Moore said he will stand by his principles and will not take money



U.S. Senate candidate Roy Moore from special interests or lobbyists.

"If you throw away your principles, you throw away everything," he said. "I ran for chief justice in 2012. At the start [of the campaign] I had zero PACs, and at the end I had zero PACs."

"My vote is not for sale."

Moore's official campaign website is roymoore.org.

The special election primaries are set for August 15, with a runoff date of September 26. The general election will be held on December 12.



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Honey Do: Quench that thirst

The word of the day for today is “photosynthesis.” Simply put, this is the biological process by which your grass digests its food and stays healthy and green.

Just like us, it is unhealthy for grass to over-eat or over-drink. If the lawn is fertilized or watered too much (or too little), brown spots, bare spots and unwanted weeds are bound to develop.

So, here are some thoughts on watering the lawn and achieving that healthy, lush grass we all enjoy.

Water early in the morning. This allows the grass to utilize the water before the hot sun and wind arrive to evaporate it. Lawns that are watered at night retain too much water, and insects and disease will quickly move in.

Most lawns need about one inch of water per week. This can come from rain or a sprinkler. A rain gauge situated in the corner of the yard is a good way to track the volume of water.

Save money by collecting rain water. Invest in a rain barrel system and catch water that comes off the roof through the gutter. I think natural rain water is better for gardens and lawns than city water, which is treated with chemicals. Some folks are fortunate to have a creek or pond close by that they can pump water from.

If you use an automatic sprinkler system, be aware of weather forecasts and turn it off if rain is expected.

Aerate your lawn once a year, preferably in the spring as the grass begins to grow. This allows water to get to the roots easier and keeps more water in the yard by reducing run-off. Spike aerators can be towed by a lawnmower or pushed by hand.

Water is great for your lawn, but it should eat as well as drink. Feed it with fertilizer, lime, weed-killer and pest control, as needed.

For best results, know your grass and soil. There is a ton of information on soil at www.aces.edu, sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama A&M University and Auburn University.

Maintain the health of your lawn by keeping it cut at the proper height. Grass cut too short can turn brown, while unattended lawns will fall prey to disease and insects.

A healthy lawn is good for the environment, animal life, your family and your home.

Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.



Doug Green

OUR ^{RED} ^{White} ^{and} ^{Blue} HOUSE By: Ree SHANNON



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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.

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Tips on keeping a chemical-free home

Kadin Pounders

Franklin Free Press

Are you sure you know what you are putting into your body? That is the simple yet not-so-simple question that Beverly Atkins posed at the Russellville Public Library Adult Summer Program Series meeting on Tuesday, June 20.

Atkins, an independent distributor for Young Living Essential Oils, recently returned from a grand convention in Utah where she, along with 33,000 other representatives, participated in a number of presentations.

“Toxic cleaners are everywhere, and people use them every day without knowing the damage they cause to the body,” Atkins said. “People need to know the dangers of these chemicals, and we need to start using plant-based products.”

Inside many household chemicals and cleaners are harmful ingredients that take their toll on the body over time. These include dibutyl phthalate, an endocrine disruptor found in nail care products; parabens found in cosmetics; petrolatum, a carcinogen found in hair products; and triclosan, an endocrine disruptor found in toothpaste and antiperspirant.

“When you go to the store and get these products, you think that someone must have checked to make sure they’re safe to use, but that’s not the case,” Atkins said.

Atkins said many people do not realize that products they use all the time (like shampoo, floor and window cleaners, and deodorizers) are dangerous because no one tells them. Compared to other countries, like those in Europe, the United States is very lenient when it comes to regulating the types of ingredients and chemicals that go in to everyday household items.

“Regulations on what can chemicals can be used are very loose in the U.S. compared to other places,”

Atkins said. “A lot of times, the government doesn’t require that chemicals in products be tested for safety beforehand. It’s innocent until proven guilty.”

To encourage a “chemical-free home,” Atkins gave some tips and advice on how to avoid inducing dangerous toxins.

“Because of products like odor eliminators that are sprayed, the air inside your home can be more toxic than the air outside,” she said. “Open up windows and let fresh air in.”

To get an idea of how harmful a product can be, Atkins plugged a smart phone app called ‘Think Dirty’ that rates a product’s toxicity.

“Open the app and scan the product,” she said. “It will tell you on a scale from 1 to 10 how toxic it is. I’m telling you, you’ll be amazed.”

Atkins also suggested that individuals begin cutting out products they now know are harmful and replace them with all-natural products.

Atkins recommended a number of Young Living’s products, which include soaps, oils, household cleaners, toothpaste and hand purifiers—all of which, Atkins said, are all-natural.

“You’ll be surprised by how much better your body feels after getting rid of all the toxins you’re exposed to every day,” she said. “I’ve been doing this for about three years now, and I could never go back to using other products.”

Atkins was just one of the many individuals to speak at the public library’s Adult Summer Program Series. Other speakers included Lakita Page from the Franklin County Extension Office and historian Jim Phillips, who spoke to a crowd of 26 on the 73rd anniversary of the D-Day Normandy invasion.

“We have two kids programs in July. Those will be on July 14 and 28,” said librarian Ashley Cummins. “The Kids and Kin Program will be doing those.”



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by Dave Ramsey

Let him be mad

Dear Dave,
My dad wants me to buy a house on a 30-year loan for him and my mom in my name, and let them make the payments. I'm 24 years old and have a good credit score and a nice apartment, but my job depends largely on how the oil industry is doing. My dad filed bankruptcy nine years ago, and he's already \$150,000 in debt again, so he's never been very responsible with money. I think this would spell big trouble for me, but I'm sure he will be mad if I say no. What are your thoughts?

Emmanuel

Dear Emmanuel,
Yeah, I think doing something like this would spell big trouble for you. If your dad is irresponsible with money—especially to the point of having to file bankruptcy—what makes you think he'll make these house payments on time?

I know this would be an uncomfortable conversation to have with your dad, but you need to brace yourself and just do it. Be respectful and explain exactly why you won't do this. Think about it, Emmanuel. When he doesn't pay the bill on time, it's going to screw up your credit score. And when you get ready to buy a house, guess what? You're going to have trouble qualifying because you already own a house. Most people don't make enough money to qualify to buy two homes.

Basically, your dad is asking you to not buy a house so they can have one. I can't tell you how to make your dad okay with saying no to this, but I can tell you that your answer *should* be no.

Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

My nephew Junior Baker passed away recently. I would like to personally thank everyone for the beautiful flowers and the food. Your compassion gave us strength in a difficult time.

Also, a big thanks to Spry Memorial Chapel and Bobby Bolton for the great job in handling the arrangements.

Sincerely,
Louise Baker

To the editor:

The Hubbard family's hearts were touched because of the many acts of kindness extended to us by our family, colleagues and many friends during the illness and at the death of our beloved Lanny Hubbard.

Your prayers and all expressions of love and sympathy are greatly appreciated. May God's blessing and love be with you forever.

Sincerely,
Hazel McCulloch

Let him and your mom know that you love them both, but this is something you just can't do.

Dave

Dip in, pay it off!

Dear Dave,

My wife just had our first child. We now have about \$3,000 in medical bills not covered by insurance. We've got \$8,000 in our emergency fund, and I make between \$25,000 and \$30,000 a year. Should we try setting up a payment plan with the hospital, or is dipping into our savings a better idea?

Matt

Dear Matt,

I'd write a check today and knock out that hospital bill. This falls under the heading of "emergency" in my mind, so pay the bill and jump back into rebuilding your emergency fund.

You've done a really good job of saving on your income, but let's see what we can do about making better money in the future. Extra practical training in your field, or more education in the classroom, could increase your income quickly. Your emergency fund needs to be a little bigger as well, and it'll be a lot easier to make this happen if you're making more money.

I'm sure you're a hard-working guy, but it's going to be tough for even a small family to make it on what you're bringing home now. The unexpected can become a common occurrence when there's a little one in the picture.

Congratulations!

Dave

**Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 13 million listeners each week on 585 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.*

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Dr. Sledge is now seeing patients every Wednesday at the Littleville clinic.

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Members of the Shoals Area Chapter of the Order of St. Luke will be available to pray for you in the meeting room at The Rock Christian Bookstore at 310 N. Montgomery Avenue in Sheffield this Thursday, July 6 from 4-5:30 p.m. We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. All prayer requests are confidential.

You're invited to Tomato Sandwich Day at the Russellville Farmers Market, 202 Green Avenue. The free event will be this Friday, July 7 from 10 a.m.-noon. Enjoy free tomato sandwiches, free totes and free colanders.

The Welch Reunion will be held this Saturday, July 8 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Hee Haw Building at 5504 Hwy. 79, Phil Campbell, 35581. Cold-cut sandwiches for lunch. Each family should bring their bread, meat, drinks, chips and dessert (if wanted). A donation will be collected to help William with overhead. For more info, call Nancy Welch James at 256-627-7635. Please pass the word to others and come on out! We look forward to seeing everyone this year!

The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guest Matt Prater at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville this Saturday, July 8 at 7 p.m. General admission seating. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Group discounts available! Call 256-335-4356. Profits go toward the renovation of the historic Roxy Theatre.

The Russellville High School Football Booster Club will hold a meeting to accept members for the 2017 season and to elect new officers on Tuesday, July 11 at 6 p.m. in the Touchdown Club Room of the RHS Fieldhouse. Membership fee is \$20 per family. If you can't attend the meeting but would like to join, call Tina Stults at 205-487-1315. Call or text no later than July 25.

For anyone with the courage to be honest about life's hurts, habits and hang-ups, FUMC of Russellville will host *Celebrate Recovery!* on Tuesday nights with supper at 6 p.m., worship at 6:30 and groups at 7:30. Free childcare provided. Church is located at 311 North Jackson Avenue. Come and join us!

American Legion Post 64 meets the second Thursday of each month at the Chamber of Commerce office on Jackson Avenue. Meal served around 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m. Next meeting will be Thursday, July 13.

The Russellville Parks & Rec Department will hold its eighth annual basketball camp with sports Hall-of-Famer Rayfield Ragland on Thursday and Friday, July 13-14, from 8 a.m.-noon at the Russellville Rec Center. Camp is for boys and girls ages 6-16. Registration fee is \$35 per camper. For more information, please call the Rec Center at 256-332-8770.

The third annual Red Bay High School Alumni Baseball Game will be held Saturday, July 15 at 7 p.m. Sign-up fee is \$25 per player. Game shirts will be given with number on back for only pre-registered players. If you would like a number, you MUST pre-register by July 4. To pre-register, call RBHS baseball coach Richard Maggerise at 205-495-1170. Players signing up on July 15 will receive game shirts with no number and will be added to teams as evenly as possible. All players are to be at the field on July 15 no later than 6 p.m. so that rosters may be finalized. RBHS baseball will provide catcher's equipment, uniform top, bats, balls and batting helmets. Game will be seven or nine innings, depending on the number of pitchers available.

The American Red Cross will hold a community blood drive in the fellowship building of Russellville First Baptist Church (213 N. Jackson Avenue, Russellville, AL 35653) on Thursday, July 20 from 1-6 p.m. Sponsored by the RHS National Honor Society and RFB. To schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit redcrossblood.org and enter RussellvilleFBC.

Red Bay's first "back to the future" Men's Wood Bat Baseball Tournament will be held July 21-22 (Sunday, July 23 would be used based on number of teams) at the Red Bay High School baseball field. All men ages 18 and over are eligible to play. Rosters must be submitted before the first game and can not be altered once the tournament starts. Double-elimination tournament begins on Friday night. Tournament bracket will be provided, and each team is guaranteed at least two games. AHSAA registered officials will be utilized in all games. All game baseballs will be supplied. No wood bat will be supplied to any team, but the use of catcher's equipment can be requested prior to games starting. Standard baseball rules will be applied. Entry fee is \$25 per player or \$225 per playing team. If you desire to play but can not come up with a team, please call RBHS baseball coach Richard Maggerise at 205-495-1170. To register, call Coach Maggerise. Entry deadline is Friday, July 14. Send entry form and \$225 entry fee to Red Bay Baseball Diamond Club, 109 Truman Street, Red Bay, AL 35582. If you need help with uniforms, please call.

Gentiva Hospice offers a grief support group, "Grieving Well Together," that meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Lenox room at Calvary Baptist Church in Russellville. The next meeting will be held July 27. You are invited to attend.

You're invited to a singing with Heaven's Mountain Band on Saturday, July 29 at 7 p.m. at Liberty Chapel Church, 10780 Highway 81 in East Franklin. Doors open at 6 p.m. Love offering will be received. For more information, call 256-324-8430 or 205-486-3026.

Stars and Stripes



COURTESY PHOTO

Last Tuesday morning, the Franklin County Courthouse hosted 4-H kids for a brief history lesson and a patriotic crafts project. Using paint stirrers, glue and crayons, the students created their own individual American flags.

Extension Office teams up with 4-H on 'Colonial Day'

Kadin Pounders
Franklin Free Press

Just in time for the Fourth of July, the Franklin County Extension Office and 4-H program turned back the clock to Colonial days.

Last Tuesday, the Franklin County Courthouse hosted 4-H kids for a brief history lesson and a patriotic crafts project. To get things started, leaders of the program took the students on an educational journey into our country's history, detailing how people in the 1700s and early 1800s lived day-to-day.

"Back in the Colonial days, only the rich people got to take baths, and they only got to take, like, two baths a year," 4-H assistant Jennifer Pickens told the group. "And the poor people didn't take baths at all. If they were lucky, they might get to bathe once a year."

That information was worthy of some cringing expressions, but Pickens said interesting facts like that stick with kids. The kids also learned about Colonial education, fashion and social norms.

The opportunity to craft something of national importance, and have fun doing it, helps foster patriotism, Pickens said.

After that, the participants received a quick lesson on the American Flag, what it symbolizes and what each color and symbol represent.

"The kids seemed to already know, somewhat, about the flag from their teachers," Pickens said. "The flag is important, because it does stand for our freedom. Our ancestors lived, fought and died for the flag, which sounds pretty crazy, but back in the day that was all they had—to fight for their freedom and their country."

Following the flag lesson, the kids got to participate in a craft project. Using paint stirrers, glue and crayons, the group created their own individual American flags.

"I think when you talk to the kids and show them some hands-on stuff, it really does stick," Pickens said. "The kids seemed to really enjoy the project. Any time they get to make something, they love it."

The opportunity to craft something of national importance, and have fun doing it, helps foster patriotism, Pickens said.

"They loved singing the national anthem and holding their flag in the air."

Pickens encouraged the kids to put their flags to good use during the Fourth of July holiday.

"When you go to see fireworks on the Fourth of July," she told them, "bring the flag you made and hold it up high. Show off your patriotism."



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'HAMILTON,' from page 1

getting a new cafeteria, ten new classrooms and a safe room compliant building," said Hamilton, who is serving a four-year term. "We felt like that was a big home run and just a great success for us in the last six months."

Hamilton said the Tharptown project should be completed before the start of the 2018-19 school year.

At Vina, a plan to put a new roof on the gymnasium has been approved, and repairs to the Red Devil baseball field have already been made. But there is one important project at Vina that has hit a wall.

"The science and band building, that project still isn't finished," Hamilton said. "We're still at odds over that, and I'm in a disagreement with Risk Management."

The science building/band room was built in 1948. It was damaged by an EF-0 tornado back in December, and the school system and insurance carrier are now in an argument over whether a new building is needed.

"They think the building can be fixed, and I absolutely disagree," Hamilton said. "I think it's a safety issue, and I'm not going to put the kids in harm's way. I'm not changing my mind on that one."

Until the issue is resolved, Vina is using temporary spaces for the classes displaced.

Hamilton said no other future major capital projects are currently being considered or planned. While he continues to work to get the aforementioned projects started or completed, another issue that is always on his mind—the school system's biggest issue—is finances. The Franklin County School system has been operating in the red for many years, and while former superintendents have worked to lower the system's debt, when Hamilton took over he inherited a \$15 million problem.

According to alabamaschoolboards.org, the Franklin County School system faced a debt of \$15,746,167 for the 2016-17 school year.

"The financial situation is not good," Hamilton said. "We have a large accrued debt, and we're going to ask for approval at the next board meeting for \$1.2 million to get us through this fiscal year."

The county school board is scheduled to vote on that motion for the \$1.2 million at the Tuesday, July 25 meeting. That loan would come from CB&S Bank. At the same time, Hamilton intends to chip away at the debt through personnel moves, revenue streams and by implementing other conservative, money-saving initiatives.

"Personnel moves, transfers, layoffs and a few revenue streams for the next year, I anticipate, will start making the situation much better," he said.

Personnel decisions may include moving some staff into funded positions that do

not use local money, transferring personnel and scaling back on new hires. Another real possibility is layoffs.

"It's hard making personnel decisions that may or may not affect someone's livelihood," Hamilton said. "You have to make decisions that coincide with the budget you have and what's best for the school system. You have to run it as a business."

"There's difficult decisions, there's hard decisions, but you just have to do what's best for the schools."

Hamilton is also looking to continue the teacher bonus incentive plan that he says was a success in its first semester.

"We had 87 employees that received the incentive bonus, so we had 87 employees that didn't miss a day," he said. "A lot of people don't realize the costs of substitute teachers. You not only pay the sub, but you pay for the benefit package on top of that."

"By all indications, it was a good start. We're going to give [the incentive program] another year and hopefully put a big dent in substitute costs."

Last year the incentive was a \$100 bonus, but Hamilton has said in the past that number could go up based on success and money available.

More good news is that Franklin County Schools are looking to receive more state funding for the next school year, too. The system saw an increase in students last year that forced the board to hire more teachers and support personnel.

"Last year the county had to absorb eleven teachers, support personnel, plus all the students we added," he said. "We paid for that ourselves last year, and that put us even further behind financially. But this year we'll be paid for those extra students. Going into this year, we earned fifteen new teaching units for the next fiscal year due to the increased enrollment."

"That's a lot for us. That's basically like adding an entire 1A school to the system."

The financial problems are tough and will likely take many more years to solve, but Hamilton said he knew what he was getting in to when he ran for the job. He is optimistic the steps being taken now have worked and will continue to work.

"My ultimate goal is for Franklin County Schools to have the best teachers and successful students, and part of the process is getting the finances in order," he said. "We have different things always coming down from the state, cutting programs. The federal budget was less this time, but we just have to make adjustments and good decisions when we're faced with them. I foresee that with some of the cuts and new revenue streams, I believe we can get [the debt] down. That's my goal."

Throughout the first six months of his tenure, Hamilton has had to adjust and transition as he went. Hamilton called his first semester in office a "learning experience" and was grateful for the support he has received from those around him.

"The central office staff has been instrumental, my school leaders have done a tremendous job, and they're to be commended for what they do," Hamilton said. "I can't really thank those people enough for the assistance and support they've given me, and I'll continue to rely on it in the future."

"Some days are more difficult than others, but at the end of the day we have to remember that what we're doing, the decisions I make, should be what's best for the kids. That's what we're here for."

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School board to consider \$1.2 million line of credit

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Board of Education will consider approval of a \$1.2 million line of credit at its July meeting in order to meet a financial shortfall for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Franklin County Schools superintendent Greg Hamilton said he has spoken with officials at CB&S Bank about establishing the line of credit. Hamilton told the board last Tuesday the action was necessary to carry the system through September 30, 2017, the end of the fiscal year.

"We need this to get through the year. We'll have a better revenue stream next year due to the increase in student population," Hamilton said. "We've made major cuts and transfers across the county to save us money next year. We'll definitely be in better shape next year, but at the moment we're not."

Alabama law requires public school systems to have a reserve fund equal to one month of expenses, \$2.2 million in the case of Franklin County Schools. The system does not have any reserve on-hand.

"We need this to get through the year. We'll have a better revenue stream next year due to the increase in student population," Hamilton said. "We've made major cuts and transfers across the county to save us money next year. We'll be in better shape next year, but at the moment we're not."

Superintendents of systems without the reserve must attend an annual meeting, Hamilton said, with state officials to outline their plan to build a reserve. Hamilton attended such a meeting in February, one month after he took office.

"My goal this fiscal year is to pay the bills and get

everyone a check," he said. "I know our finances will be better next year with the cuts and the increased student enrollment."

The system increased its enrollment by more than 200 students after Russellville City Schools imposed a \$600 annual tuition for students living outside the Russellville city limits. Most of those new students enrolled at Tharptown and Belgreen Schools. State funding is based on the enrollment of the previous school year, so the system was not funded last year for those new students.

The Franklin County Board of Education approved a resolution last Tuesday to develop a plan to establish and maintain a minimum general fund balance equal to one month's operating expenses.

"Our resolution is to get there through cuts, transfers in funded positions, our incentive plan and to pick up more revenue in the upcoming year through the extra number of students," Hamilton said.

'SCORES,' from page 1

RCS board:

- Approved final budget amendments to the 2016-17 budget that will be submitted to the State Department of Education. These amendments reflect changes to the budget since it was originally prepared.

- Approved facility use requests for RHS facilities on August 12, 2017, for Russellville Kiwanis annual Bike Ride and on May 4, 2018, for use of the RHS football stadium for the Franklin County Relay for Life fund raiser.

- Approved an updated Media Center Policy Manual prepared by the library media specialists.

- Approved personnel moves including:

- Resignation: Joseph Cole, RHS teacher; Kim Horton, RES teacher; Mallory Kincaid, RMS teacher and Katelyn Phillips, RES teacher.

- Leave of Absence: Tanya Cleveland, RES third grade teacher, from Sept. 25, 2017-Dec. 15, 2017.

- Employment in Position: Emily Malone, RMS teacher; Rebecca Logsdon, SPE teacher at RES; and Donna Sykes, engineering/computer science teacher at RHS.

- Employment—contract principal three-year contracts: Jason Goodwin, RHS; Karen Thorn, RMS and

Deanna Hollimon, WES.

- Temporary Employment: Nicole Clingan, 21st CCLC teacher and Kim Palmer, 21st CCLC teacher, both part-time and as needed.

- Athletic Consultants: Chase Gilmer for RMS football, payment not to exceed \$960, to be paid by Football Booster Club; Daniel Hollimon for RMS football, payment not to exceed \$960, to be paid by Football Booster Club; and Wayne Wilkes during spring training for RHS varsity football, payment not to exceed \$1,380, to be paid by Football Booster Club.

- Substitute: Keith Wilson, bus driver.

Search begins for new principals at Belgreen, Red Bay

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Franklin County Schools saw the departure of two veteran administrators last week with the retirements of Belgreen High School principal Myra Frederick and Red Bay High School principal Kenny Sparks.

The retirements were approved by the Franklin County Board of Education at its June 25 meeting.

Superintendent of education Greg Hamilton said the jobs would be posted immediately and he hopes to have new principals in place as soon as possible.

While the retirements didn't come as a surprise to Hamilton, he was disappointed to see both principals leave the system.

"I've worked closely with both of them and understand their reasoning and wish them nothing but the best," Hamilton said. "Both of them have done a great job for our system."

Consistent with his campaign pledge, Hamilton said he and the board would look to promote current Franklin County Schools employees into the positions if possible.

"The first priority is to look from within and promote excellence, and we'll do that if at all possible," Hamilton said. "We've got some people who have done an excellent job for us."

In other action at last week's meeting, the board:

- Heard a presentation from Jessica Williams with Glimpse, a consulting company that works with school systems to review their return of investment of resources, products, programs and services, about how her company could help Franklin County Schools.

- Received an audit report for fiscal year 2016 from Robin Lakey with the State Examiner of Public Accounts. The audit for Franklin County Schools was clean with the exception of a situation at Vina High

School, where employees were allowed to cash checks from the school's snack fund. One employee, on two occasions, bounced a check but later paid the money back to the fund.

Board members approved an amendment to the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual that mandates no money shall be left in school rooms or offices except in a safe-guarded place approved by the principal. At no time shall more than \$100 be left after hours.

Additionally, the board approved language that restricts any check-cashing for employees or students from the change fund as a result of the problem noted in the audit.

- Awarded the system's paper bid to American Paper and Twine Company for 8.5" x 11" paper per case at \$25.50 and 8.5" x 14" paper at \$35.50 per case.

- Awarded LP gas bid to Bear Creek Propane at bid price of \$.989 per gallon.

- Awarded bid for diesel to Tatum Oil Company at bid of \$1.5715 per gallon.

- Approved out-of-state trips for Vina High School cheerleaders to Panama City Beach Summer Camp from July 23-26.

- Approved the 2017-18 Student Code of Conduct Handbook, including a provision that gives teachers discretion to collect and store cell phones during class.

- Approved giving the superintendent authority to approve out-of-state trip requests that come too late to be placed on a meeting agenda.

- Approved an extensive list of personnel action, including:

- Renewals: Jackie Ergle, principal, Phil Campbell Elementary (three-year contract at present rate of pay); and Scott Wiginton, Career/Technical Education Program Director (three-year contract at present rate of pay).
- Retirement: Andy Cansler, maintenance worker;

Juanita Martin, payroll officer, effective August 1, 2017; Sissy Moore, librarian, PCHS, effective September 1, 2017.

- Resignation: Juanita Martin, central office custodian, effective July 31, 2017; and Carrie Rickman, third-grade teacher, PCES.

- Transfers: Alicia Duncan from special education teacher at PCHS to special education teacher at PCES; Amber Mahurin, transfer from English teacher, half-time Franklin County Career Teach Center/half-time East Franklin Junior High to full-time English teacher EFJH; and Andrea Sornberger, transfer from half-time nurse/half-time health science teacher to full-time health science teacher.

- Employment: Paul Humphres, half-time assistant principal at Vina High School; William Stacy, music teacher/band director at PCHS; Simon Mak, math teacher at Vina; Jason Cooper, math teacher half-time EFJH/half-time Tharptown; Jake Ward, elementary teacher Tharptown; Joseph Brown, physical education teacher Tharptown; Tasha Zills, elementary teacher Tharptown; Callie Henderson, music teacher/band director THS; Jason Harris, head varsity football coach Vina; Jonathan Raper, in-school suspension teacher at PCHS; Abbey Rea, special education teacher Tharptown; Bethany Tracy, speech language pathologist; April Simpson, special education aide PCES; Debra Spillers, part-time temporary gifted teacher; Sonya Marks, physical education/math teacher at Red Bay; Greg Swinney, bus driver; and Paula Jackson, reading coach, half-time Red Bay/half-time Vina.

- Change in Contract: Chris Cantrell, custodian, Vina, from nine-and-a-half month contract to 11-month contract.

The next regular meeting of the Franklin County Board of Education will be Tuesday, July 25 at 5:15 p.m., with work session at 5 p.m.

Classifieds

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Lost Cat. Lost between Littleville and Hwy 72 on Highway 43. Brindle in color with white feet and belly. Please call 205-269-4620. (5)

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Puppy free to good home. Part Shih Tzu and part Schnauzer. 10 weeks old. Tan in color. Call 205-412-4166. (1)

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FREE to good home: Nine-year-old female dog, Jack Russell mix. Spayed. This poor girl lost the only two things she ever had (her owner and her home) when her owner passed away. Desperately needs a generous home with a fenced yard. She's no puppy, but she's not done yet either. Healthy and still playful. An enclosed porch for hot and cold days would be lovely. Please consider adopting Dottie. She is currently living in cramped quarters, and her life is in jeopardy. Text or call 619-548-8212. (4)

YARD SALES/ ESTATE SALES
 Yard Sale this Thursday & Friday, July 6-7, from 7 am-until at 174 Lakeview Lane. Turn off Hwy. 43 near Twin Pines in Littleville. Furniture, jewelry, clothes, shoes, lots of misc. items.

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Eyes on Enterprise



COURTESY PHOTO

EIGHT IS GREAT - Russellville's eight-and-under Dixie Youth All-Stars will head to Enterprise, AL this weekend to play for a state championship. The team clinched a spot in the state tournament by winning the district title. Team members pictured above are: Front row (L to R) - Houston Askew, Chase Phifer, Peyton Scofield, Chandler Benford, Brayden Entrekin, Keifer Hallmark; middle row (L to R) - Gavin Willis, Luke Greenhill, Tripp Cleveland, Jackson Smith, Tristan Ray, Noah Smith; back row (L to R) - Coaches Eric Hill, Dana Greenhill, Tim Cleveland, Blake Entrekin.

Seeking to follow in the footsteps of their varsity brethren, Russellville's eight-and-under All-Stars hope to add to the state championship collection

Kadin Pounders
 Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Dixie Youth Baseball 8U All-Star team is heading to the state tournament in Enterprise after a stellar run to the district title.

After running through the sub-district and district tournaments, the Golden Tigers will start their campaign toward a state championship this Friday with a first-round game against the runner-up of District 5.

"We went 3-0 in sub-district and 6-0 in the district tournament," said head coach Tim Cleveland. "The district tournament was a 12-team, double-elimination tournament. We're the district champs, and we're moving on to the state tournament."

In the sub-district, Russellville defeated Winfield to advance, and in the district championship game, the Golden Tigers beat host Rogersville 9-4 to take the district crown.

"We ended up playing Rogersville, and that's always tough," Cleveland said. "Playing the home team with their crowd, it's tough to win, but our kids played very well."

Cleveland said his team played in some relatively easy games and some really tough games, but every

opponent brought their A-game against Russellville.

"I have no doubt we were getting everybody's best shot," he said. "That was apparent, because there would be a few teams that looked pretty mediocre the day before, and then when they played us it was like they were a completely different team."

"We'll be playing against teams from Birmingham and Mobile and all over the state," head coach Tim Cleveland said. "When you think about Russellville baseball, you think about championships. They may not know where Russellville is on a map, but they'll probably know what our high school team has done, and they'll want to knock us out."

Cleveland believes the success of the Russellville High School baseball team, which has won three consecutive Class 5A state titles, has put a target on the back of any team wearing the Black and Gold.

"I think what the high school team has done over the last few years has played a big part in how hard other teams play against us," he said. "It doesn't matter how

See 'STATE,' page 17

Does AU have the toughest schedule in the SEC West?

Mike Self
 Franklin Free Press

SEC Media Days are set for next week in Hoover, which means the start of the 2017 season can't be too far behind. [It's officially 57 days away, but who's counting?]

With that in mind, now is the perfect time to take a look at the schedules—both in conference and out—for all 14 SEC teams. Which team has the toughest row to hoe in 2017? Which is set up nicely for a potential playoff run? After all, not all schedules are created equally.

Some teams have natural, geographic non-conference rivals [sorry, South Carolina; we feel for you, Florida]; others don't. Some teams draw favorable matchups in cross-divisional play [kudos, Kentucky]; others aren't so fortunate [tough luck, Tennessee]. And, of course, in those pivotal divisional showdowns, it's not only *who* you play but also *where* and *when* you play that can go a long way toward determining which two teams wind up facing off in Atlanta come December.

Let's rank each team's schedule from most challenging to least daunting, starting this week with the SEC West.

Auburn

Non-conference games: Georgia Southern, at Clemson, Mercer, UL Monroe

Cross-divisional games: At Missouri, vs. Georgia

Division opponents on the road: LSU, Arkansas, Texas A&M

Aside from the Week 2 trip to face the reigning national champs, the first half of Auburn's schedule looks fairly friendly—two non-conference gimmes and league games against Missouri, Mississippi State and Ole Miss, none of whom are expected to be contenders this season.

The back half of the schedule is a beast, though, starting with a mid-October trip to Baton Rouge, where Auburn hasn't won since 1999. Trips to Fayetteville and College Station—with a bye week in between—follow, making Auburn the only SEC team in 2017 to play three consecutive games on the road against conference opponents. The final three games of the season are at Jordan-Hare, but two of them are against likely preseason division favorites Georgia and Alabama, neither of whom Auburn has beaten since 2013.

If the Tigers can find a way to knock off a Clemson team that is reloading on offense but still outstanding on defense, then a 6-0 start looks like

See 'SCHEDULE,' page 18

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Youth will be served for Red Bay in 2017

Jackson: Talented freshman class poised to make immediate impact

*Mike Self
Franklin Free Press*

Head coach Michael Jackson's first three teams at Red Bay all shared at least a couple of characteristics in common; namely, they were extremely experienced and supremely successful.

The Tigers have amassed an overall record of 28-6 under Jackson, winning 23 regular-season games in a row at one point, claiming two region titles and making three playoff appearances. Amidst all of that success, Red Bay has had only one player—offensive tackle Hunter Tyler in 2014—earn a starting spot as a ninth-grader on the varsity level.

"That number," Jackson said, "is about to get a lot bigger."

The Tigers are going young in 2017, with four freshmen (Jalen Vinson, Alex Kennedy, Logan Scott and

Cam McKinney) slated to play significant roles on both sides of the ball. Factor in sophomores Caleb Seeley and Dylan Hester on the offensive line and Levi Raper at linebacker, and Red Bay is relying more heavily on young players in key spots than at any point in the past three years.

"This is without a doubt the youngest team I've had at Red Bay," said Jackson, who was the head coach at Buckhorn for nine years and Russellville for three years before taking over the Tiger program in 2014. "We'll probably have anywhere from six to eight guys in the tenth grade and down who will be starters for us."

Jackson, however, doesn't view the youth movement as cause for concern. On the contrary, he's excited about a huge freshman class that numbers 18 players—several of whom are poised to make an immediate impact. The potential of those young playmakers

See 'YOUTH,' page 15



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

The Tigers' first win in 2017 will be Jackson's 100th as a varsity head coach. He is 99-68 in 15 years at Red Bay, Russellville and Buckhorn.

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'YOUTH', from page 14

(many of whom possess size and skill beyond their years) has Jackson convinced that Red Bay is more than capable of reclaiming the Class 2A, Region 8 title despite dressing a total of just 17 seniors and juniors—far fewer than the 25-plus players the Tigers typically have in the top two grades.

"This is the best freshman group of players I've been around in a long time," Jackson said.

The group is led by Vinson, a dynamic and versatile athlete who will back up veteran quarterback Kolby Bragwell while also getting significant snaps at the skill positions on offense and in the secondary. There is also McKinney, a 6'2, 235-pounder who will start both ways at left tackle and inside linebacker. He'll be joined at inside 'backer by the 200-pound Kennedy, who will also split reps with the 205-pound Scott on offense at the H-back position. Scott plays both ways, too, projecting as a starter at defensive end opposite junior Elijah Ingle.

"This is without a doubt the youngest team I've had at Red Bay," said Jackson, who was the head coach at Buckhorn for nine years and Russellville for three years before taking over the Tiger program in 2014. "We'll probably have anywhere from six to eight guys in the tenth grade and down who will be starters for us."

Those four freshmen got their first extended taste of varsity action in the spring game at Tishomingo (MS) County in May, helping Red Bay roll to a 21-7 win.

"I was very excited coming out of that game," said Jackson, whose Tigers went 8-3 last season and finished third in Region 8 behind Lamar County and Sheffield. "I didn't really know how we'd react once the game started, just because of the youth of the team. We had four freshmen who started on both sides of the ball. But it was a good game. I thought our guys performed really well."

Of course, it's not just the new blood that has Jackson looking forward to the 2017 season, which opens with a non-region game at Colbert Heights on August 25. Red Bay returns a solid group of veterans as well, led by Bragwell, Ingle, Tyler, senior tailback Aaron Lewey and senior receiver Max Bullen.

The 6'2, 195-pound Bragwell, a strong-armed junior with dual-threat abilities, is back for his second season as the starting quarterback.

"Kolby has had a great off-season," Jackson said. "He's one of the strongest, most athletic kids on the team. We're expecting big things out of him, both in the passing game and the running game."

Bragwell will spend a fair amount of time handing the ball off to Lewey, who filled in capably last season when starting tailback Tate Ozbirn was injured. The 160-pound Lewey, slightly built but sturdier than he looks, already has six 100-yard rushing games to his credit—including 150 in the spring game against Tish County.

"Aaron is basically a returning starter, because he played so much last year when

See 'YOUTH,' page 16



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

A handful of experienced veterans, including Bragwell (4) and Bullen (6), will lead the way as the youthful Tigers try and climb back on top in Class 2A, Region 8.

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Matthew 25:35

‘YOUTH,’ from page 15

Tate was banged up,” Jackson said. “We’re looking for big things out of him.”

The same can be said of Bullen, who might be the best overall athlete on the team. He has the size (6’2, 188), speed (4.6 seconds in the forty) and strength (255 pounds on the bench, 400 on squats) to physically dominate opponents. Bullen, who caught the game-winning touchdown pass in the final minute of last year’s opener against Colbert Heights, will once again be a favorite target of Bragwell’s at receiver/tight end while taking on a much larger role in the run game.

“He’ll be our jet-sweep guy,” Jackson said of Bullen, who ripped off runs of 40 and 25 yards in the spring game while also hauling in a long touchdown pass from Bragwell. “Max will be a big weapon for us in the passing game and in the run game.”

Bullen heads up an experienced group of pass-catchers that also includes slot receiver Skylar Brazil and outside receivers Luke Rooker and Hayden Murray, all of whom are seniors. Sophomore Colbie King will spell Lewey at tailback while also seeing snaps at slot back.

The 6’3, 320-pound Tyler, a senior and four-year starter, provides a veteran, physical presence at right tackle. He and Ingle, a 240-pound junior left guard, are the returning starters on an offensive line that also includes McKinney at left tackle, the 240-pound Seeley at right guard and the 230-pound Hester at center.

Defensively, Red Bay’s split 4-4 front will be anchored in the middle of the line by senior Joseph Newell (5’10, 240) and junior Devin Nichols (6’3, 315) at tackle, with Ingle and Scott setting the edge at defensive end. Kennedy and McKinney are the only pair of freshmen Jackson can recall starting alongside one another at inside linebacker in his 15 years as a head coach. Raper provides depth at inside linebacker.

Bragwell, who picked off a pass and recovered two fumbles in the spring game, teams with Bullen and Brazil to form a special group of outside linebackers/rovers. Murray and Rooker are the corners, and Vinson can play anywhere in the secondary.

The development of Vinson, in particular, is key to Jackson’s stated goal of building better depth at the skill positions; the coach is determined to avoid a repeat of last year, when injuries to Ozbirn and receivers Kaleb Burroughs and Jesus Kelly left the offense in dire straits.

“The strength of this team is the front,” Jackson said, “but our goal is to get more skill guys involved. That really hurt us last year when we had all those injuries and we didn’t have enough skill guys. That’s something we’ve gotta continue to develop through the rest of the summer and on into the fall.”

Jackson’s offense has always been built around a conservative, run-oriented approach, but things could be streamlined even more this season—at least until the young players get their feet wet.

“All of that youth may mean we won’t be as multiple on offense with our formations and our plays, especially early in the year,” Jackson said. “We have to give those guys time to mature.”

Red Bay had won its first 14 region games under Jackson (and 20 region games in a row overall) before falling 21-20 to eventual region champion Lamar County in

See ‘YOUTH,’ Page 17

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'YOUTH', from page 16

Week 6 last season. Jackson believes Region 8 will only be better in 2017. "I think the region will be more competitive than it's been in recent years," he said. "Every team has the capability to make the playoffs. Lamar County and Sulligent are both returning a lot of key guys from last year. Sheffield is always good, and I expect Mars Hill, Phil Campbell and Hatton to all three have the best team they've had in three years."

As the season opener approaches, Jackson draws nearer to a personal milestone that will place him in select company. He's sitting on 99 career wins as a varsity head coach, tying him with Hamilton's Rodney Stidham for second among all coaches in the *TimesDaily* coverage area. Only Muscle Shoals coach Scott Basden (151 career wins with the Trojans, Cordova and Parrish) has more.

Jackson's 99-68 record in 15 seasons as a head coach is made all the more impressive by the fact that his first two teams at Buckhorn in 2002 and 2003 went a combined 3-17. Since then, Jackson has put together five seasons (at three different schools) with at least nine wins and taken nine teams to the playoffs.

He was reluctant to talk about the possibility of win No. 100, which could come as soon as that August 25 opener at Colbert Heights.

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it," Jackson said. Following the trip to Tusculumbia, Red Bay's next two games will also be on the road, at Tharptown and then at Mars Hill in the Region 8 opener. Home games with Hatton and border rival Belmont follow, with an off week set for September 29. The schedule resumes in October with four straight region games at Lamar County, versus Sheffield, at Sulligent and versus Phil Campbell. The Tigers will then wrap up the regular season in early November with a home game against Cherokee.

Red Bay will host Phil Campbell, Hatton and two or three other teams that have yet to be determined for a 7-on-7 camp next Monday, July 10.

"Things always get busier in July," Jackson said. "We've been working three days a week since school ended. It's been a good summer, but things will pick up in July."

'STATE', from page 13

old the players are. When people hear 'Russellville,' they want to be the ones to beat us."

And just because the Golden Tigers are moving on outside the district, Cleveland does not believe the desire of other teams to beat them will change.

"We'll be playing against teams from Birmingham and Mobile and all over the state," he said. "When you think about Russellville baseball, you think about championships. They may not know where Russellville is on a map, but they'll probably know what our high school team has done, and they'll want to knock us out."

Thanks to the Fourth of July holiday, the Russellville 8U team has had plenty of time to practice and rest before the opening round of the state tournament.

"We'll get some good practices in and work on some

areas where we need to improve a little," Cleveland said last week. "I feel pretty good about our chances."

Even at such a young age, some of Cleveland's players already have experience playing at the championship level.

"A few of these kids were with us when the six-and-under [team] went to the state tournament a couple years ago," Cleveland said. "I think that experience will help them out now, so they kind of know what to expect."

"At the end of the day, they're still eight-year-old kids, so you never really know what you're going to get when they get out of bed in the morning. But this is probably one of the most polished teams, at this age, that I've ever seen. I'm very confident that we'll play well when we get down to Enterprise."

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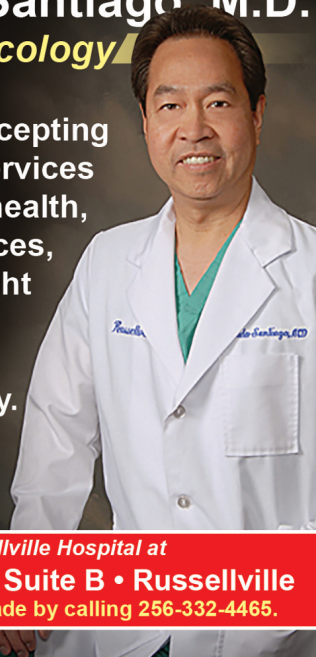
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'SCHEDULE' from page 13

a strong possibility. After that, things get tough in a hurry.

LSU

Non-conference games: BYU (in Houston), Chattanooga, Syracuse, Troy
Cross-divisional games: At Florida, at Tennessee
Division opponents on the road: Mississippi State, Ole Miss, Alabama

Ed Orgeron and company open with a soft September featuring all four non-conference opponents and a trip to Starkville, where LSU hasn't lost a game this century. October and November will be an uphill climb, however, with seven SEC games—including four on the road—in an eight-week span.

Due to last year's weather-related scheduling snafu with the Florida game, the Tigers must play both of their cross-divisional opponents this season on the road; they'll go to Gainesville on October 7 and then visit Rocky Top on November 18. Factor in the trip to Tuscaloosa (where LSU lost to Alabama by a combined margin of 35 points in 2013 and 2015), and the Tigers' road schedule might be the league's toughest.

The winner of the Auburn/LSU game on October 14 could find itself 7-0 and ranked in the top two or three nationally, but plenty of heavy lifting will remain.

Arkansas

Non-conference games: Florida A&M, TCU, New Mexico State, Coastal Carolina
Cross-divisional games: At South Carolina, vs. Missouri
Division opponents on the road: Alabama, Ole Miss, LSU

The month of October has not been particularly kind to Arkansas under Bret Bielema: A 6-8 record overall with just three conference wins in four seasons. This year's October slate looks pretty frightening, as well, with road games at South Carolina, Alabama and Ole Miss, plus a home date with Auburn.

Factor in the tussle with TCU in Week 2 and the trip to Baton Rouge in November, and Arkansas could wind up scrambling for a bowl bid again. It doesn't help that the neutral-site game with Texas A&M on September 23 leaves the Hogs with just three true home games in conference play, or that an extremely early bye week (September 16) means they'll be playing ten games in ten weeks to close out the season.

Ole Miss

Non-conference games: South Alabama, UT Martin, at California, UL Lafayette
Cross-divisional games: Versus Vanderbilt, at Kentucky
Division opponents on the road: Alabama, Auburn, Mississippi State

The non-conference portion of the schedule isn't too intimidating, and the draw from the East looks about as friendly as it gets (although Ole Miss did lose to Vanderbilt by three touchdowns last season, and Kentucky could have its best team yet under Mark Stoops). This ranking is more about the double-whammy of having to play Alabama and Auburn back-to-back, both on the road, to open SEC play. Then, right after a home date with Vandy, LSU comes calling, making a 1-3 (or perhaps even 0-4) start in the conference a real possibility for the Rebels.

A self-imposed postseason ban means the Egg Bowl will be the only bowl Ole Miss plays in this season, but Mississippi State has won five of the last six meetings in Starkville.

Mississippi State

Non-conference games: Charleston Southern, at Louisiana Tech, BYU, UMass
Cross-divisional games: At Georgia, vs. Kentucky
Division opponents on the road: Auburn, Texas A&M, Arkansas

The non-conference schedule, per usual, is one of the softest in the league. The Bulldogs open SEC play with a tough trifecta (LSU at home, at Georgia, at Auburn), but the waters get considerably calmer after that. From mid-October on, only the Alabama game on November 11 looks un-winnable.

Texas A&M

Non-conference games: At UCLA, Nicholls State, UL Lafayette, New Mexico
Cross-divisional games: Versus South Carolina, at Florida

Division opponents on the road: Ole Miss, LSU

With the Arkansas game once again in Arlington, A&M will play only one SEC game in an opponent's home stadium—at Florida on October 14—prior to November 18. After opening at UCLA, the Aggies will only leave the state of Texas once in a ten-week span before closing the season with trips to Oxford and Baton Rouge.

All that home cooking notwithstanding, Texas A&M's annual second-half swoon might start a little earlier this season; the month of October opens with a visit from Alabama followed by the Aggies' first trip to The Swamp since joining the SEC.

Alabama

Non-conference games: Florida State (in Atlanta), Fresno State, Colorado State, Mercer
Cross-divisional games: At Vanderbilt, vs. Tennessee
Division opponents on the road: Texas A&M, Mississippi State, Auburn

Evaluating Alabama's schedule can be tough, for two reasons: Number one, the Tide are better than pretty much everybody they play, so none of the games look particularly tough on paper; and, number two, Alabama is the only team in the SEC West that doesn't have to play...Alabama.

Even taking those factors into account, however, this year's schedule looks very manageable compared to other recent seasons. Granted, the opener with Florida State could very well be a showdown between the teams ranked No. 1 and No. 2 in the major preseason polls. But the rest of the non-conference schedule is a cakewalk, and the draw from the East includes a friendly excursion to Nashville instead of a tough test from the likes of Georgia or Florida. Finally, rivals Tennessee and—most importantly—LSU must come to Tuscaloosa, leaving the Iron Bowl as the only legitimate road test.

After opening with FSU in Atlanta, Alabama will probably be a double-digit favorite in its next seven games. The season essentially boils down to two games—home to LSU and at Auburn—that bookend the month of November.

Next week, we'll examine the schedules in the SEC East.

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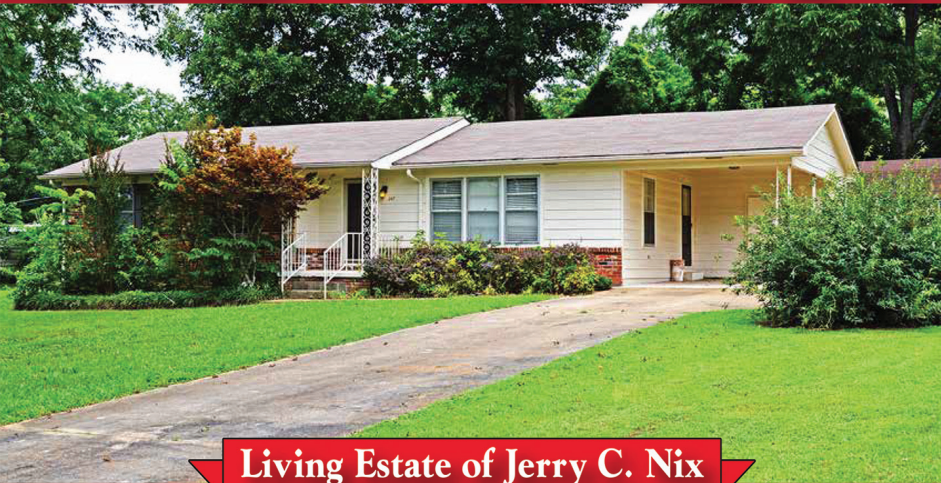
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9 A.M. - SATURDAY, JULY 8TH ABSOLUTE ESTATE AUCTION



Living Estate of Jerry C. Nix



3 Bedroom House on Nice Lot, Portable Storage Building, Furniture, Tools & Personal Property
247 Woodmont Drive - Russellville, AL 35633

This nice 3 bedroom one bath home is located just off Hwy 43 with easy access to the shoals area. The living room has been opened up to the kitchen and dining room to make for a nice open floor plan. The kitchen has oak cabinets and newer counter tops, a gas range, built in microwave and dishwasher. The back yard is fenced and has a small metal storage building. We will also be selling furniture and personal property.



- 10x16 Portable building
- Leather sofa
- Leather recliner
- Leather chair w/ottoman
- Several end tables
- Coffee table
- Flat screen T.V. stand
- Samsung flat screen 58" plasma T.V.
- 3 Bookshelves
- Misc lamps
- Misc tables
- Misc CDs
- Misc house décor items
- Misc books
- Misc Framed art prints
- Case knife "Wild Turkey" #C181
- Tree brand knife, 1 blade German SS
- Stereo equipment
- Several rugs
- 2 White wash china cabinets
- 3 Bar stools
- Butcher block top kitchen cart/island
- Whirlpool side by side refrigerator
- Kitchen wares
- Kenmore stack washer and dryer
- Oak wardrobe
- Bissell vacuum
- King sized tiger oak bed w/marble top chest w/mirror
- L shaped desk
- Glider rocker
- 3 Drawer Lateral File Cabinet
- Credenza bookshelf
- 2 drawers for file cabinets
- Wine rack
- Husky Roll-around Tool Box
- Misc Tools
- Stihl BR-420 Backpack Leaf Blower
- Stihl BG-72 handheld Blower
- Air Compressor
- John Deere Lawn Sweeper
- Appliance Hand Trucks
- Maxx Air Shop Fan
- Gas Powered Edger
- Worx Lawn Tools
- Hedge Trimmer
- Shelving
- Lawn Tools
- Wheel Barrow

Make Plans Now To Join Us!

Lots of Boxes we haven't opened yet!

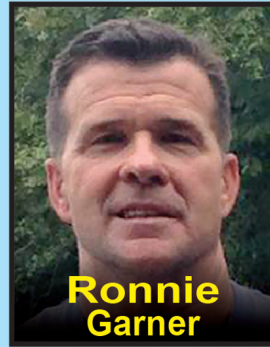
For more information contact Ben Phillips 256-710-9683 or see more @ www.shanealbright.com
DIRECTIONS: From: Russellville go north on Hwy 43 over the Railroad overpass on the north side of town, turn left onto Carney Lane and go to the second street to the right (Woodmont), follow the Shane Albright Auction Signs to property on the left. From: The Muscle Shoals, Alabama intersection of Hwy 43 & Hwy 72 go south on Hwy 43 for 13 miles, turn right onto Parks then left onto Woodmont, Watch for the Shane Albright Auction signs.
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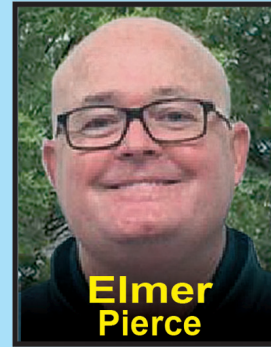
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