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# FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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10.04.17

## County Commission approves budget

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Commission approved a budget for fiscal year 2017-18 in the amount of \$12,596,215 at a special called meeting last Friday.

The budget contains \$6.79 million allocated to the general fund, \$3.39 million to the Franklin County Highway Department and \$2.47 million to the Solid Waste Department.

The budget represents a small increase from the FY 2016-17 budget, which totaled \$12,248,910.83.

"As always, it's a tight budget," said Franklin County probate judge Barry Moore. "Our department heads have done a good job staying within their budgets we had this year, and we look forward to that continuing in the next fiscal year."

While no across-the-board raises were given in the new budget, it does account for any step raises due in the 2017-18 fiscal year. With an increase of 1.5 percent in health insurance premiums for county employees, the budget absorbs that additional cost. Franklin County full-time employees receive individual coverage health insurance and are

charged a partial premium for family coverage.

According to Moore, the difference needed to balance this year's budget will come from transfers from the Capital Improvements Fund, Public Buildings Fund, Public Highway and Traffic Fund and a fund balance brought forward from last year.

Capital outlay items for the Franklin County Sheriff's Department and the highway and solid waste departments will be purchased through those departments.

The new budget does not include revenues

See 'BUDGET,' Page 9

## Medley wins tourism award

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Cassie Medley attended the recent awards banquet for the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA) expecting to enjoy lunch and see various award winners for the past year.

Little did Medley know she'd turn out to be the guest of honor.

Medley was awarded the highest achievement in the North Alabama tourism industry, the Tourism Professional of the Year for 2017, at the September 21 event.

"When they started describing the winner, they mentioned the Watermelon Festival," Medley said, "and it hit me. I said, 'Oh my gosh,' they're

talking about me."

The Tourism Professional of the Year goes to the individual or employee of an Alabama Mountain Lakes Association member organization who has made a great contribution to tourism in the past year. AMLA spans across 16 north Alabama counties.

AMLA officials arranged for Medley's husband, Jamie, and Scott Wiginton, vice-president of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, to attend the event.

"They sneaked in after I was seated, and they did a clever job of seating me where I couldn't see them," Medley said.

Medley came to the Franklin County Chamber

See 'MEDLEY,' Page 3



COURTESY PHOTO

Cassie Medley, center, receives her PEAK Award from Tami Reist, left, and Thereasa Hulgán, right, of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Association.

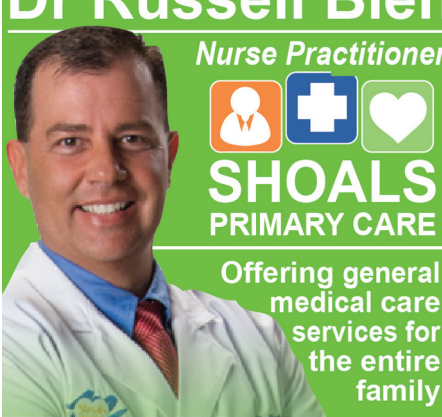
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**Harold Dea Holden**, Russellville, age 72  
Died Wednesday, September 27, 2017. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Colbert Memorial Gardens.

**Vera Carr Jones**, Russellville, age 91  
Died Saturday, September 30, 2017. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Entombment in Franklin Memory Mausoleum.

**Deborah Sheree Mitchell**, Tuscumbia, age 56  
Died Monday, September 25, 2017. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

**Lyla Ann Presley**, 3-day-old infant  
Died Sunday, September 24, 2017. Graveside service held at Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

**Reba Jean Hooper Saint**, Russellville, age 83  
Died Sunday, October 1, 2017. Funeral will be held Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at 1 p.m. at Siloam Baptist Church in Russellville. Pinkard Funeral Home assisted the family.

**Benjamin Ray Watkins**, Russellville, age 69  
Died Saturday, September 30, 2017. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Vandiver Hollow Cemetery with full military honors.



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# New user-friendly GIS website up and running

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

A new website recently introduced by Franklin County revenue commissioner Veronica Stancil will make access to Franklin County maps and property information easier, and it may save users a trip to the courthouse in the process.

The Geographic Information System, or GIS, mapping website is [isv.kcsgis.com/al.franklin\\_revenue](http://isv.kcsgis.com/al.franklin_revenue). Stancil said the new website is more user-friendly and easier to navigate than the previous one.

While many of the users will be realtors, surveyors, attorneys and abstractors of title, the public will also find the site useful for information ranging from acreage to appraised values, dwellings, tax information and ownership of parcels of land.

**"If you are buying property and want to know who owns property around it, this is a useful site," Stancil said. "So far, we've received some real good feedback from users."**

"If you are buying property and want to know who owns property around it, this is a useful site," Stancil said. "So far, we've received some real good feedback from users."

Developed by Keets Consulting Services of Pelham, the GIS mapping website offers a variety of navigation and search tools, map tools, a Google street view of property and a easy-to-use help system if users have any questions or problems.

"If someone's on there and needs help, they can send an email directly to Keets, and they will get prompt assistance and a response usually within two to five minutes," Stancil said.

Stancil said the system was paid for out of funds in the revenue commissioner's reappraisal budget. The Keets program is used by several nearby counties, and Stancil reviewed those sites before deciding to go with the company.

The site has been up almost three weeks, and Stancil said that more people were learning about it everyday. She hopes to have input from users about information they would like to see provided on the website.

"I've told the realtors that if there are things they use that aren't on there, it's real simple to add," Stancil said. "We're trying to help people save time and allow them to make fewer visits to the courthouse for information."

Property record information is available on all parcels in a printable format. That property record card includes the owner's name and address, deed book, page and date, legal description of the parcel, acreage, improvement details, extra features on the parcel and all improvements located on the land.

For more information on the new website, contact the Franklin County revenue commissioner at 256-332-8837.

## 'MEDLEY,' from page 1

of Commerce as its executive director in March of 2012. During her tenure, the Chamber has seen tremendous growth with more than 150 members now part of the organization. The Chamber averages 10 new members each year.

Under Medley's leadership, Franklin County has seen a steady increase in lodging taxes, even with only a few hotels in the area. Medley gives back to the community by serving on several boards and committees across Franklin County. She volunteers with the Franklin County Relay for Life, Camp Courage and the Russellville Marching Hundred Band Parent Association, among others.

Medley and her husband have two children, Sydney and Nathan, and they live in Russellville.

The Franklin County Watermelon Festival has also grown immensely since Medley came on in 2012.

"We try and get a well-known entertainer to come in each year, especially for our headliner," Medley said. "I attribute the festival's growth to that as well as the increase of vendors, and that's all led to larger attendance numbers."

Medley said she was humbled by the honor and shares it with her assistant Chamber director and her board of directors.

"I've never liked attention, and this award isn't just about me," Medley said. "It's due to the work of Susan Hall and our directors. We're all part of the team. Everybody contributes—not just me. I definitely feel like I'm sharing this honor with them."

Medley said the Chamber operates to support its member businesses, and she stresses that when introducing herself to a prospective new member.

"We promote local business and tourism in Franklin County," she said. "We receive calls every day needing some type of service, and we tell callers about our members every day. Whether it's a need for flowers, a plumber, a place to stay overnight, an electrician or whatever the need, we send them in the direction of our Chamber members first."



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# Honey Do: Mrs. O'Leary's cow

I spent most of last week in the “windy city” of Chicago, and every night there I went to bed to the sounds of firetruck sirens and horns. Boy, those guys are busy. They must be really good, as well, because I never saw any flames or fire.

But it did make me think of The Great Chicago Fire and Mrs. O'Leary's cow.

You see, way back in October of 1871 there was a huge fire that did a lot of damage in Chicago. According to NFPA.org, the event killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. Of course, you can imagine that there were way more wooden structures, more primitive fire codes and quite a lack of fire-fighting technology in those days compared to now.

You may remember that Mrs. O'Leary's cow took the heat for this event, at least in pop culture. One cow plus one kicked-over lantern and a lot of hay can get out of hand pretty quickly. Actually, there are several presumed causes of this catastrophe, and the

reporter who made up the “fake news” story on the cow admitted it in 1893.

I sure am glad we don't have to worry about that kind of thing today, more than one hundred years later.

But the fire was not “fake news,” and since 1922 the week in October that contains the ninth day has been recognized as “National Fire Prevention Week.” You can find all of this information on NFPA.org, along with a lot more useful stuff.

This month, as usual for this column, we will be looking at fire safety, fire safety equipment and fire safety education tips.

So, if you see a fireman or firetruck going down the road, give a handshake or a wave. They deserve our gratitude for their dedication to our safety and their willingness to face real danger for our benefit.

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



Doug Green

Please send your letters to the editor, guest columns, cartoon panels and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com). Remember to visit us online at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)!

## OUR HOUSE By: Ree SHANNON



## FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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### Publisher

John Pilati

### Executive Editor

Mike Self

E-mail: [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com)

### Sales Representatives

Linda Bumpers, John Pilati

### Content Contributors

Mike Self, John Pilati, Brady Petree, Ree Shannon, Doug Green, Rebecca Thomason, Sheryl Hamilton, Ashley Cummins, Gail Motes

### Graphic Design

Jason Hill

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## Reflecting on an amazing month for RCS

September was a truly amazing month for Russellville City Schools, as we received several recognitions that should make our community proud!

We couldn't have been more excited to find out this past month that our own Russellville High School was named the #1 Standout High School in Alabama by the nationally recognized school ranking site Niche.com, which was a reflection of the caliber of teachers and students we have in our system.

Our teachers work so hard every single day to make sure the students in their classrooms are getting the best education possible. They use technology and out-of-the-box teaching to get students engaged and to help them apply the things they are learning to real-life situations. And our talented and hardworking students are constantly setting goals for themselves and surpassing them. They don't let obstacles or challenges stand in the way of the bright futures they want to have, and I'm thankful we are able to provide them with the right kind of environment at RCS to achieve those goals.

**We couldn't have been more excited to find out this past month that our own Russellville High School was named the #1 Standout High School in Alabama by the nationally recognized school ranking site Niche.com, which was a reflection of the caliber of teachers and students we have in our system.**

RCS also had the privilege this past month of hosting the statewide AP Celebration, thanks to the amazing growth shown on our students' AP scores from last year to this past year (a 122-percent increase)! At the celebration, Russellville was also named the first School of Excellence by A+ College Ready, which

was a great honor for our system. RCS has so many strengths, and I am proud that academics and learning are at the top of the list of those strengths we have here.

But the lessons learned inside the classroom aren't the only lessons we want our students to learn. In order to make sure our students are prepared for life beyond the walls of our schools, we want our students to also learn lessons about the importance of kindness, compassion, charity and helping your fellow neighbor. To put this in action, our school system “adopted” the Lumberton Independent School District in Lumberton, Texas—a system that had many students and teachers who lost everything to the flooding from Hurricane Harvey.

For two weeks, our students and faculty gathered monetary donations for these fellow Americans in need, and soon our community joined in as well. Our city leaders, first responders, businesses and community members truly stepped up to the plate to partner with us as we tried to help the people of Lumberton. And thanks to the generosity of the people of Russellville, we were able to send more than \$15,000 to the Lumberton ISD to help with their needs. I want to thank each and every person who made a donation to this relief effort or played any part in making this possible. We were truly able to show kindness and compassion to these people in need while also showing our own students that it's always good to help other people—important lessons we could all learn from.

We are also in the middle of our fall sports season, and we appreciate the continued support of our community in this area. We have some very talented



Heath Grimes  
RCS Sup't



**Where do I put the money?**

Dear Dave,  
I have a savings account for my two-year-old that has \$5,000 in it, and about half of that is in gold. I'm going to save for his college separately and give this to him to help start his life after school. Is there a better place to put this other than a traditional savings account?

Laura

Dear Laura,  
First of all, you should not invest in gold. Gold is a very volatile, very dangerous investment. I don't have a dime invested in gold, and I would strongly suggest that you not invest in it either. If you take a look at the life-long track record on gold it will scare you to death.

For the time being, you can leave it all in a traditional savings account. But if he's not going to use it for many, many years you could move it into a conservative mutual fund. In fact, since you started when he was at such a young age, a nice, conservative mutual fund might be a really good idea.

When he gets a little older, he can start adding to it himself from the money he makes from odd jobs and chores and such. After 15 years or so, thanks to your foresight and his contributions, he'll probably wind up with a pretty nice chunk of cash.

Good job, mom!

Dave

**Debt snowball reasoning**

Dear Dave,  
Why do you recommend paying off debts from smallest to largest when doing the debt snowball?

Michael

Dear Michael,  
Lots of people think paying off the debt with highest interest rate first is the best approach. This seems to make sense mathematically, but I realized a long time ago that if those people could do math they wouldn't be drowning in debt.

Debt is not a mathematical problem; it's a behavior problem. Personal finance is 80-percent behavior and only 20-percent head knowledge. The reason the debt snowball pays off debt from smallest to largest—even though it may be mathematically incorrect—is that modifying your behavior and inspiring you to get out of debt is more important than the math. Your probability of becoming wealthy has more to do with your behavior than any sort of financial sophistication or academic degree.

When you pay off a small debt you experience success, and that gives you hope. Then, you move on to the next largest debt. When you pay that one off—and you've wiped out two debts—it energizes you. At that point, you really start to believe in yourself and the fact that you're on the road to becoming debt-free!

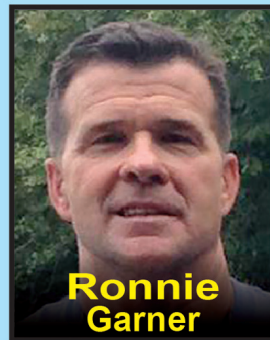
Dave

*\*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.*

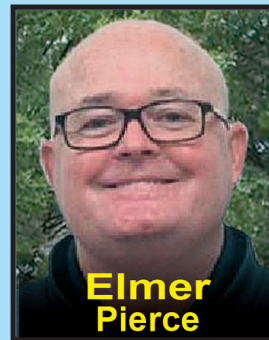
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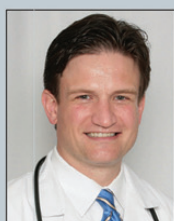
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Matthew 25:35


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 **T**harpstown Elementary School will host a Fall Festival this Thursday, October 5 from 5:30-8 p.m. There will be concessions, bingo, darts, a toy walk, a fortune teller, a cake walk, great prizes, chicken stew and much, much more! Admission is free! Also, come experience the second annual "Haunted Gym" on two nights, Thursday, October 5 from 5:30-8 p.m. and Friday, October 6 from 8-11 p.m. (Haunted Gym not included in free admission.)


 **E**ast Franklin Junior High School will hold its Fall Festival this Thursday, October 5 at 5:30 p.m. The event will include games, food, cakewalk, Bingo and other fun activities!


 **T**he Sons of Confederate Veterans, Lt. Col. John W. Harris Jr., Camp #1833, will meet this Thursday, October 5 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center on Ash Avenue. Camp #1833 meets the first Thursday of each month EXCEPT January and July. For more info, call 256-324-2317. Everyone welcome!


 **R**estoration Church in Phil Campbell will have a yard sale and bake sale this Saturday, October 7 from 7 a.m.-until. Proceeds will benefit various church ministries, including buying Christmas gifts for children in need.


 **M**ountain View Baptist Church will hold a revival, "Returning to the Word," October 8-11. Services will be Sunday morning at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. nightly thereafter. Evangelist is Dan Garland, director of Pastoral Ministries and Church Consulting for Lifeway Christian Stores. Special music by Terry Welborn and members of church Faith Family. Nursery provided. For more information, contact Sammy Taylor, pastor, 205-993-4610.

 **P**hil Campbell Study Club members are selling tickets for a barbecue dinner by Mr. William Bishop for \$10 each. Dinner will be Thursday, October 12, and plates can be picked up at the Phil Campbell Rescue Squad Building from 3-6:30 p.m. on that day. Dinners consist of smoked chicken half (with white sauce) or BBQ pork (with BBQ sauce), baked beans, coleslaw, roll, bottled water and dessert. Dinners sold in advance will be reserved for that person; however, walk-ins will be served as long as supply lasts. Proceeds will be used for scholarships and other worthwhile community projects.

 **A**merican 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, October 12.

 **M**y Father's House Church (104 Lawrence Street East, Russellville, AL 35653) will be selling spaghetti plates (with salad, bread, dessert and drink) for \$7.00 on Friday, October 13. Lunch will be from 12-1:30 p.m. (eat at church, or delivery is available in the city). Plates will also be served from 4:30-6:30 p.m. (no delivery). For more info or to buy tickets, call 256-460-1376.

 **T**he Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guests Charlton James and Konner Bendall at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville Saturday, October 14 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.

 **N**orthwest-Shoals Community College's Foundation will celebrate its 25th consecutive year of the annual Pathfinders' Dinner on Thursday, October 19 at George's 217 in Sheffield. The semi-formal evening, sponsored by Helen Keller Hospital and Zoey Belle's, will consist of a reception at 6:00 p.m., dinner beginning at 7:00 p.m. and entertainment by the NW-SCC Jazz Band. Tickets can be purchased online via PayPal at <https://www.nwsc.edu/about-nw-scc/foundation> or by calling 256-331-5215/5240. Contributions are federal income tax-deductible, and all proceeds will go to the NW-SCC Foundation Scholarship Fund. Tickets are \$75 or \$600 per table (seats 8) and include reserved seating. Tickets are now available at all branches of First Metro Bank. For more information or tickets, please contact Teresa Harrison at (256) 331-5215 or [teresah@nwsc.edu](mailto:teresah@nwsc.edu), or contact Adriana Wuotto at (256) 331-5240 or [awuotto@nwsc.edu](mailto:awuotto@nwsc.edu).





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## Cream of the CROP



COURTESY PHOTO

Colbert County students and instructor Jeff McKinney are pictured above with a completed CROPS (Cost-effective Rollover Protection Structure) unit.

## Program helps farmers make old tractors safer

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Thanks to a program instituted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), area farmers can make their older tractors safer at no cost to them.

The NIOSH program is called CROPS, an acronym that stands for Cost-Effective Rollover Protection Structures. The program provides farmers the opportunity to have a rollover protection system installed on older model tractors. The program is co-sponsored locally by the Northwest Alabama Resource Conservation and Development Council.

Assembly and installation of the rollover bars will be done by students in the Colbert County High School agriculture program under the supervision of instructor Jeff McKinney. All rollover protection systems include installation of seatbelts on each tractor.

**“Older models are not up to safety standards, and this is a cost-effective way to provide rollover protection,” McKinney said. “Without one, the only option the operator has is to jump off in the event of a rollover. The system acts as a roll cage, and when the operator is strapped in with a seatbelt, he won’t slam into the ground and the machine won’t slam into him.”**

Plans and designs for the CROPS come from NIOSH along with the University of Kentucky, which took on the project to assist farmers in that state. A study showed that many young farmers were using older equipment and tractors due to the high cost of replacing them.

“Older models are not up to safety standards, and this is a cost-effective way to provide rollover protection,” McKinney said. “Without one, the only option the operator has is to jump off in the event of a rollover. The system acts as a roll cage, and when the operator is strapped in with a seatbelt, he won’t slam into the ground and the machine won’t slam into him.”

The installation will be done at Colbert County High School. The program is free, and the only expense a farmer will have is to deliver the tractor to the

See ‘CROPS,’ page 11

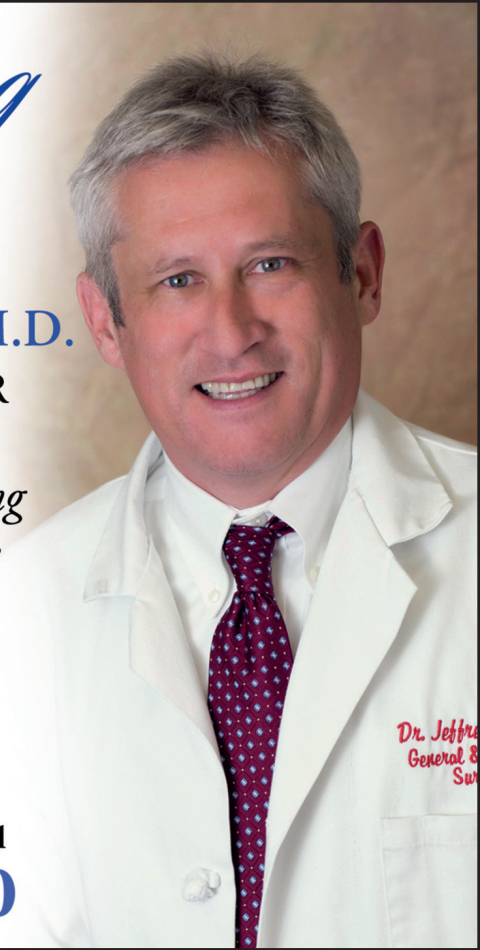
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## ‘BUDGET,’ from page 1

from the one-cent countywide sales tax, which allocates 75 percent of the approximate \$2 million annual revenue for Franklin County and Russellville City Schools and 25 percent for matching funds for Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program grants. After the 2011 tornado, Franklin County received approximately \$12 million in ATRIP grants subject to

the county providing its required matching portion. Those funds are maintained in a separate fund used solely for ATRIP spending, Moore said.

Commissioners also approved a \$714,190.88 budget for the Franklin County Reappraisal Office. The county is responsible for 60 percent and the state of Alabama for 40 percent of that budget.

## ‘AMAZING,’ from page 4

student-athletes who are learning valuable lessons each week, whether they win or lose. Being part of a team means being part of something bigger than yourself and learning to work together, be a team player, how to be a leader, and learning important lessons about winning and losing with grace and class. Athletic events are so much more than a score on a scoreboard, and I am very proud of our student-athletes and how they handle themselves on and off the field. Positivity goes a long way!

This coming month we will have more exciting things taking place at our schools, and one big event we are looking forward to is the annual Russellville City Schools Education Foundation Run on October 21. This is a great event for the Foundation and a way to raise funds for the student scholarships and teacher grants they give out each year. We’re

hoping to see a lot of participants at this year’s event, so come on out and support our schools! More information about this event will be distributed via social media in the coming weeks.

There is so much more taking place within our system, and we would love for each of you to know about our events, activities and successes. If you want to keep up with what’s going on at RCS on a daily basis, make sure to follow our district Twitter (@RussellvilleK12) and Facebook accounts as well as the Twitter (@Russellville\_HS, @RussellvilleMS, @ResElem, @Westatrcs) and Facebook accounts for each of our four schools. As always, it’s GREAT to be a Golden Tiger!

Heath Grimes  
Superintendent  
Russellville City Schools

**For updates on news and sports throughout the week, visit us on the web at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)!**

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**YARD SALES/ ESTATE SALES**

Garage sale this Friday & Saturday, October 6-7, from 7-4 at 13640 Hwy. 243, Russellville.

Large yard sale at 229 Glenwood Avenue this Friday & Saturday, October 6-7, from 7 am-until. Lots of stuff!

Yard Sale this Friday & Saturday, October 6-7, at 111 SE Hall Avenue. Three families. Plus-size clothing, little bit of everything!

Union Community Center (5988 Hwy. 93, Russellville, AL 35654)

will hold its annual 15-mile yard sale this Friday and Saturday, October 6-7, from 7 am-until. Including Pebble Community Center and highways 93, 81 & 79. Breakfast, lunch and craft and yard sale items for sale. FREE spaces available for sellers (first come, first served). For more info or to donate items, call Stanley Champion at 256-332-0602 or Mac Harris at 205-486-4387.

Yard Sale this Fri./Sat. Oct. 6/7. 8 am-until. Go 1 mile on West Lawrence St. from downtown Russellville. Turn left onto 101 Wheeler Drive. Large variety of items! If rain, held the following week on Oct. 13/14.

Yard Sale at 6052 Highway 22 Spruce Pine this Saturday, October 7. 7 am-until. Women's clothes, kids' clothes and

home items. Yard Sale this Saturday, October 7. Down from Frosty Inn, corner of Hwy. 43 and 1st Street. Nintendo DSi and games, jewelry, scrubs, adult and children's clothing, toys, books, lawnmower trailer, sewing machine, roaster pan, bedding, shoe display racks and more! If rain, following Saturday.

Multi-Family Yard Sale this Saturday, October 7. Kim Lane, left off Underwood Road. Antiques, toys and MORE!

Six-Family Yard Sale this Saturday, October 7 from 7 a.m.-until. Corner of North Jackson Ave. and Cherry Street. Men's and women's clothing and shoes, children's clothes, household items, toys, dishwasher, twin-size headboard, boots, much more!

Yard Sale this Saturday, October 7 from 6 am-1 pm at 107 JoAnn Street, Russellville. Household goods, clothes (men's and women's), shoes, lots of glassware and lots of other items!

Yard Sale this Saturday, October 7 from 7 am-until on Auburn Street. One block behind Church of God on Hwy.

43 North. Furniture, bedspreads, clothes, curtains, household goods and misc. items.

Restoration Church in Phil Campbell will have a yard sale and bake sale this Saturday, October 7 from 7 am-until. Proceeds will benefit various church ministries, including buying Christmas gifts for children in need.

**GIVEAWAYS**

Puppy free to good home. 4-5 months old. Female Boston Terrier. Gets along great with other dogs and cats. Call 256-332-8324.

Free kittens. Five available. Please call 256-332-3908.

FREE to good home: Bobtail cat. This girl was thin and had been trying to survive on the streets.



She has been pushed around, chased and shooed, and she has raised kittens the best she could. She has a

small bobtail and no real home. Last year she was likely a kitten herself. She is charming and appreciative of any safety she gets. She was recently spayed and would love nothing more than to feel the love and security of an indoor-only home. She is well behaved and needs a generous and kind person to say "she's mine." She also has the perfect litter box skills and loves wet food, but eats dry, too. Please consider her. Call 619-548-8212. (5)

**HELP WANTED/ LOOKING TO BUY**

Red Bay T.R.A.C.K.S. afterschool program is off to a great start this school year. Enrollment is up, and there are many exciting enrichment activities for students and their families to enjoy! Due to the increased enrollment, Red Bay is in need of an increase in staff. Positions available include: Teacher, Certified Teacher Aide and Aide. If you are interested in one of these positions, you will need to fill out an employment packet and have a fingerprint/ background check done (through the Franklin County Board of Education's approved sites). There is also a Mandatory Reporter (Erin's Law) training that must be completed online, with a certificate turned in along with your application. For more information or pay rates for these positions, contact Franklin County Community Education at 256-331-0005. (3)

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French provincial dining room set. Includes table, 6 chairs, china cabinet & hutch. Call 205-993-5961 or 256-577-5843. (3)

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Genuine hand-woven Oriental rug. Size 8X10.

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Franklin Free Press Classified Rates  
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## 'CROPS,' from page 9

school. Some of the tractor models that will be eligible for the CROPS program include Ford 8N, Ford 3000, Ford 4000 and Massey Ferguson 135 and 150 models, McKinney said. Due to proprietary concerns, John Deere tractors are not eligible for the program.

Colbert County High School was the only Alabama school chosen to participate in the program. Funding is limited, so farmers are encouraged to reach out to McKinney early to schedule their tractors for the CROPS installation. All farmers are eligible regardless of their county of residence. The students have completed their book work training, and McKinney said he's waiting on the steel to be delivered to start construction of the first rollover protection system.

"All plans are provided by NIOSH engineers," he said. "They will send a safety professor from Clemson University to do an inspection of our process and inspect the system and do a sonogram of the rollover protection system before it goes to the farmer."

To sign up for the CROPS program or to receive more information on the rollover protection systems, contact McKinney through the school website at [www.colbert.k12.al.us](http://www.colbert.k12.al.us), or call the school at 256-446-8214.

To sign up for the CROPS program or to receive more information on the rollover protection systems, contact McKinney through the school website at [www.colbert.k12.al.us](http://www.colbert.k12.al.us), or call the school at 256-446-8214.

"We hope to see this as an ongoing project and not limited to one year. We hope this is something students can use for job experience in the future," McKinney said. Lauranne James, executive director of Northwest Alabama RC&D Council, said participating in the CROPS program is a win-win for RC&D.

"The certification and experience it gives these students for jobs once they graduate is wonderful," James said, "and we're also interested in these small farmers and keeping them safe."

James said Colbert County ag students were selected for the CROPS program in part due to their success with another project, the Alabama RC&D Eco-Cool Storage Unit Retrofit Project, which saw box trailers converted into cool storage units.

"Truck farmers can transport crops under refrigeration now and keep them at a usable temperature," James said. "The generator-operated trailers are available for use by farmers and can be used in the event of natural disasters when there is no power available to refrigerate food."

Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoon panels, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).

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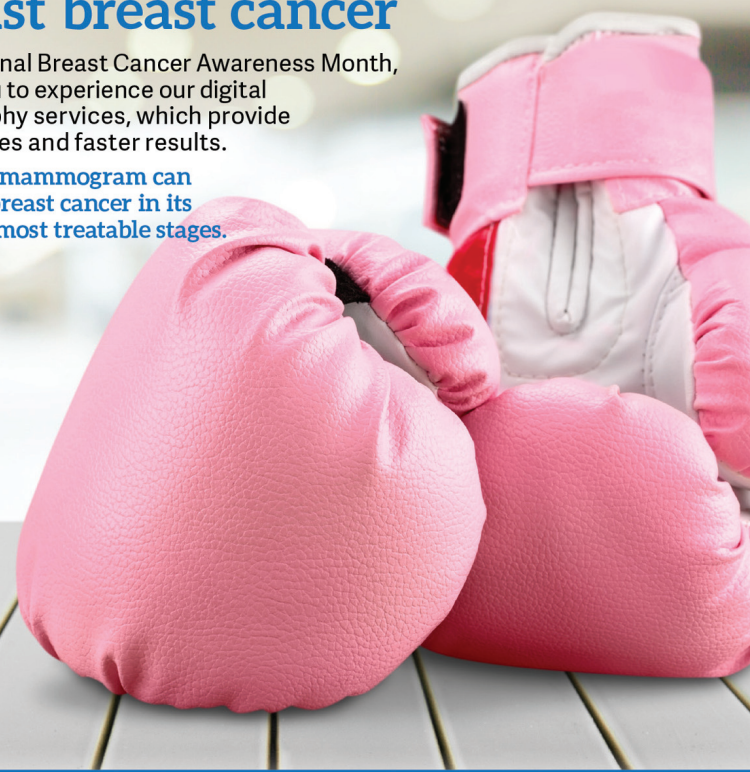
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## Have a Sports Story?

Mike Self, Executive Editor  
franklinfreepress@yahoo.com  
256.332.0255

## Week 6 in the SEC

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

October has arrived, bringing with it cooler temps, shorter days—and a harsh reality for the SEC: Barely a month into the season, only three teams in the league remain nationally relevant.

Alabama is the best team in the country, and Georgia and Auburn both appear to be Top 10 material. Everybody else in the league—with the exception of Florida and Texas A&M—stinks.

It's a crowded conference slate this week, but Georgia should handle Vanderbilt and the Kentucky/Missouri game seems about as blah as it gets. Let's tackle the other four.

**Last week's record: 4-0**

**Season record to date: 15-5**

**Saturday, October 7**

**LSU (3-2, 0-1) at Florida (3-1, 3-0)**

Is it possible that LSU could dismiss a coach mid-season for the second year in a row? Probably not, but Ed Orgeron could certainly use a win in Gainesville. Meanwhile, the Gators are quietly off to a 3-0 start in conference play; a win Saturday would virtually guarantee that the Georgia game at month's end will once again decide the SEC East.

Florida's offense is by no means a juggernaut, but scoring 38 points against Vandy was a step in the right direction.

**The Pick: Florida 20 LSU 14**

**Arkansas (2-2, 0-1) at S. Carolina (3-2, 1-2)**

South Carolina has sputtered after a strong start, and the offense is in dire straits without Deebo Samuel. Still, this one is at home, and Jake Bentley is pretty good.

**The Pick: South Carolina 24 Arkansas 21**

**Alabama (5-0, 2-0) at Texas A&M (4-1, 2-0)**

It's a couple of weeks earlier than usual, but the Aggies' annual late-season swoon may be about to begin. [A road trip to Florida follows this one.]

True freshman quarterback Kellen Mond is an athlete, Christian Kirk is the most dynamic player in the SEC and...ahh, who are we kidding? You know where this is headed. The pleasure cruise continues.

**The Pick: Alabama 41 Texas A&M 17**

**Ole Miss (2-2, 0-1) at Auburn (4-1, 2-0)**

Auburn's defense has allowed 14 points or less in every game thus far and in 12 of 18 games dating back to the start of last season. Coordinator Kevin Steele deserves a lot of credit for getting the most out of a talented unit.

On the other side of the ball, an Auburn offense that reached train-wreck status against Clemson has now scored a total of 100 points in its first two SEC games, with Jarrett Stidham completing 79 percent of his passes and averaging an absurd 14.6 yards per attempt. Those numbers shouldn't take a hit against an Ole Miss defense that was barely there in Tuscaloosa.

**The Pick: Auburn 37 Ole Miss 14**

# OLD SCHOOL

## Riding a stout D and a productive ground game, the 'Cats are breaking streaks and closing in on the playoffs

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

For Colbert Heights coach Taylor Leathers, there's really no debate at all—he'd prefer a shutout to a shootout, any day of the week.

"Any time you can get a shutout, that's a huge confidence-builder for the team," Leathers said Sunday evening, two days after his Wildcats had improved to 5-1 by blanking county rival Sheffield 35-0. "We're

See 'OLD,' page 16



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Cain Phifer (65) and Colbert Heights held Sheffield to just 187 total yards in last week's 35-0 win. The Wildcats, who are only giving up 12.0 points per game, have recorded multiple shutouts in the same season for the first time since 2003.

## Critical stretch begins for Red Bay Tigers visit Vernon to face reigning region champion

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

For Red Bay football coach Michael Jackson, breaking down film of Lamar County is a little like taking a trip down memory lane. With their impressive blend of size, speed and athleticism, the Bulldogs remind Jackson of his Tiger team from 2015, a group that averaged 40 points a game, recorded six shutouts and generally out-classed almost every opponent on its way to finishing 11-1.

"Their team reminds me of that kind of team," Jackson said Sunday night. "Very powerful with speed guys. This is a big team, and when I say big team, I mean they've probably got seven guys on defense who weigh over two hundred pounds. On offense, their two receivers are as fast as anybody we've seen. We're gonna be challenged."

Coming off its bye week, Red Bay (3-2 overall, 1-1 in Class 2A, Region 8) will travel to Vernon on Friday night to face a Lamar County team that has bounced back from an 0-2 start to win its last four games by an average margin of 29 points. The Bulldogs, who snapped Red Bay's 20-game win streak in region play with a 21-20 victory at Fred Bostick Memorial Stadium last year, are once again sitting atop the Region 8 standings at 3-0.

"We're gonna play the most complete team we've played all year," said Jackson, whose team went into the bye week with back-to-back wins over Hatton (32-30) and Belmont (24-7). "I know they have good skill kids returning from last year. They run the ball well, and they throw the deep ball well. They have the best

See 'TIGERS,' page 14



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Aaron Lewey (22) leads Red Bay with 611 yards rushing and seven touchdowns on 109 carries. He'll be looking to post his fifth straight 100-yard game on Friday at Lamar County.

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### Brody Nix

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The Bobcats fell to rival Phillips 33-21 last Friday in Bear Creek, but Nix had a big game on both sides of the ball. At tight end, the 6'2, 205-pound senior caught a season-high seven passes for 83 yards. Defensively, he made 14 tackles (also a season-high) from his linebacker position.

Heading into the Bobcats' bye week, Nix leads the team with 22 receptions for 253 yards on the year. He has also led the team in tackles every week, with 49 total stops.



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## 'TIGERS' from page 13

offensive line and defensive line we've seen all year. They're the defending region champions, and they play extremely well at home.

"The only game they've had where they really didn't play as well was against Oakman, which is a 4A school."

Since falling to 0-2 with that 40-14 loss to the Wildcats on September 1, Lamar County has hit its stride with consecutive wins over Phil Campbell (54-12), Mars Hill (28-14), Hatton (48-18) and Berry (49-19). An offense built on a strong rushing attack and a quick-strike passing game is averaging 35.3 points per game on the season.

In last week's rout of Berry, the Bulldogs totaled 473 yards of offense—286 on the ground and 187 through the air on 10-for-11 passing by junior quarterback Ric Rogers. Lamar County had six rushing touchdowns, three of which came from junior speedster Isaac Whittle.

"The best thing they do is run the football," Jackson said. "They're a power run team, and the offensive line is the strength of their team. That makes it tough to hold those guys down on the big play, because they can isolate your corners and let them go one-on-one."

"Our secondary will have to play above their heads this week, because every one of them is playing against somebody who is a really good football player."

Red Bay had allowed a total of just 48 passing yards in its first three games before giving up 255 yards and a handful of big plays through the air in the win over Hatton on September 15. The Tigers bounced back against Belmont two weeks ago, holding their rivals from Mississippi to just 225 total yards and seven first downs while shutting them out until the final minute of the game.

Young corners Colbie King (a sophomore) and Jalen Vinson (a freshman) will have their hands full on Friday with the speed of guys like Whittle and senior receiver Mark Duncan. Jackson said the play of the entire secondary, which also includes safeties/rovers Max Bullen, Kolby Bragwell and Tanner Nichols, will be critical if the Tigers are to hand Lamar County its first region loss.

"Defensively, it's gonna fall on the secondary," Jackson said. "They're gonna be the key to making [Lamar County] earn everything they get. On the defensive side of the ball, Coach [Jamie] Purser has put together a great game plan. The number one thing for us is to not give up the big play. That's how they get people out of the game—hitting the deep ball. They like throwing it deep."

"But you can't empty out the box or they'll run the ball on you and keep the ball the whole time. That's what they did to us last year."

In terms of offensive style, Red Bay's approach isn't all that different from that of Lamar County—pound away with the power running game and then use the vertical passing game to inflict major damage in the form of big plays. Senior tailback Aaron Lewey has rushed for 611 yards and seven touchdowns on 109 carries this season; he'll be looking for his fifth straight 100-yard game on Friday night. Bragwell, the team's junior quarterback, has also been a major factor on the ground, rushing for 360 yards and four touchdowns on 56 attempts.

As a team, Red Bay is rushing for 260.8 yards per game and 6.0 yards per carry. Bragwell has completed just 29 passes (in 62 attempts) in five games, but those 29 passes have gone for 534 yards—an average of 18.4 yards per completion. Senior receiver Luke Rooker has emerged as a dangerous big-play threat, averaging 20.8 yards on his 16 receptions and hauling in touchdown catches of 54 and 74 yards.

In the win over Belmont two weeks ago, Bragwell threw for 110 yards on just 3-for-3 passing, including a pair of touchdowns to Rooker. Jackson said both players will play a key role Friday night in Vernon.

"Offensively, Kolby is gonna have to have a big night throwing the ball and running the ball," he said. "He'll have to make good decisions. And I think Rook has gotta take advantage of his opportunities like he's been doing and come through for us when it's time to make a big play."

Jackson knows that moving the ball consistently and putting points on the board will be a challenge against the Bulldogs' defense.

"Their defensive front is the strength of their defense," he said. "The linebackers are solid, and the secondary is those receivers [Duncan and Whittle] who are extremely quick and extremely fast. And it's all held together by a big free safety who goes about six-three and 215 pounds."

"The number one thing for us on offense is to take care of the ball and not turn it over. Number two, we have to take our shots down the field and make it count when we do. We've been doing a good job of that the last few weeks. And number three is drive the football. We have to be able to drive the football to help control the game a little bit."

The fate of Red Bay's 18-year streak of consecutive playoff appearances will be determined over the next four weeks, with region games against Sheffield, Sulligent and rival Phil Campbell to follow this week's trip to Vernon. Each of the Tigers' first two region games came down to essentially the final play—the win over Hatton and a 26-24 loss to Mars Hill.

"Everything for us from this point out is a playoff game," Jackson said. "One of these next opponents—either Lamar County or Sulligent—is gonna be the region champion. There's not even a question about that. I've seen them all play. Staying healthy through this stretch will be the big thing, because these are all gonna be physical games."



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**‘OLD’, from page 13**

taking a lot of pride in our defense this year. With the exception of the West Morgan game [a 45-25 loss on September 15], we’ve been solid on defense this season. We’ve taken a lot of pride in being a good defensive team. That goes back to my philosophy on how I want to play the game.”

It’s a philosophy that might seem a bit old-fashioned to some and behind the times to others, sort of like the football equivalent of using a flip phone in a smart phone world. But Leathers makes no apologies; he’s convinced that playing physical, fundamentally sound defense—and supporting that defense with a methodical, chain-moving ground game on offense—is a great way to win football games.

“It’s a little different from the mindset of the spread teams that like to throw the football a lot,” said Leathers, a Winfield native and former defensive lineman at UNA who spent four seasons as offensive coordinator at Lexington High before taking over the Colbert Heights program last season. “I’ve been to those clinics and heard those guys speak, and a lot of times there it was almost like, ‘Let’s just let the other team score so we can get the ball back.’ That’s how you get into those high-scoring shootouts. But I believe that good defensive teams win games. Obviously, you have to score some points to do that, but it starts with playing good defense.

“I’m much more comfortable playing the game that way than I am trying to play a shootout with somebody.”

With that in mind, Leathers must be thoroughly enjoying his second season on The Mountain. Coupled with a 30-0 victory over Phil Campbell on September 1, last week’s rout of Sheffield gave the Wildcats multiple shutouts in the same season for the first time since 2003. They’ve allowed a total of just 27 points in their five wins, and only two opponents (West Morgan and Lexington) have managed to score against defensive coordinator Lonnie Robinson’s unit in the first half.

“To me, it speaks to having veteran players on the field who are starting to understand football,” said Leathers, whose team has improved its points-allowed average from 29.5 per game last season to 12.0 per game this season. “In some cases, defense is a lost art in today’s football. So much time is spent [working] on the offensive side of the ball. It’s all about getting the ball in space—not just at the high school level, but at the college and pro levels, too.

“If you go look at the history of scores from a long time ago, many games were won 7-0 or 14-7, those types of games. Throughout history, that’s the way the game’s been played. It was a physical type of game where you lined up and ran the football and the most physical team won the game. The team that played the best defense and got after you, that really hemmed you up and could tackle well, usually won the game. That’s why I’ve always placed a premium on good defense.”

As far as Leathers is concerned, a good defense is a selfless defense. It’s less about individual players making individual plays and more about a group of guys willing to play within a team concept and function as a unit, one in which each man devotes himself to a specific task—no matter how thankless or inconsequential it may seem.

“There’s a mindset out there that you get in a blitzing type of defense and send pressure from everywhere and try and create as much havoc as possible,” Leathers said. “And I’ve seen that be very successful. But we spend a lot of quality time learning how to play fundamental defense. You get in a sound base defense and make sure all your players are fundamental and know how to play that defense, whether it’s a four-four or a four-three or a three-three stack. I feel like you teach a player, ‘In this defensive scheme, this is your job,’ whether it’s to squeeze the tackle and occupy the tackle to keep him from getting on the linebacker so the linebacker can make plays, or whether you’re a one-technique and it’s to draw a double-team every play and make sure you can’t get single-blocked.

“You have to be disciplined to play that way. It’s a mindset of being team-oriented, of being selfless rather than selfish. It’s not about, ‘I’m gonna do my own thing this play.’ It’s about being where you need to be and doing your job.”

See ‘OLD,’ page 17



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## 'OLD', from page 16

Sometimes, where a certain player needs to be might be a place they've never been before. Take senior defensive end Bud Pratt for example. Primarily a scout team player prior to this season who saw himself as more of a receiver/linebacker type, Pratt has flourished since moving to end and now helps anchor the Wildcats' four-man front. He was in the backfield all night against Sheffield, making 3.5 tackles for loss, and ranks fourth on the team this season with 34 total stops.

"Bud Pratt has played good football for us this year," Leathers said. "This is his senior year, but he hadn't really stepped on the field until this year. Up until this past spring and summer, Bud was a skill player. He was a slot receiver back in the spread days [prior to Leathers' arrival, the Wildcats had run their own version of the Air Raid offense for years], but he got bigger in the weight room. We called him in and talked to him, and we told him, 'For you to get on the field, your best opportunity is gonna be playing defensive end.'

"A lot of kids hear that and think, 'I'm not a lineman. I'm a skill player.' Bud has really embraced the role and embraced the change. He's been down there with the D-line group all year, and he's done a great job with that this season. The Sheffield game was probably his best game. He was able to get in the backfield a lot. We're very proud of the way Bud has played this year." Pratt's 5.5 tackles for loss this season are second only to senior linebacker Dylan Chandler, who has six tackles behind the line of scrimmage among his team-leading 51 total stops. Korey Saint, another senior linebacker and probably the most experienced player on the team, ranks second this season with 49 tackles, followed by senior 'backer Brendan Borden and his 41 total stops. Bevin Foust, who has 27 tackles in five games, completes Colbert Heights' quartet of senior linebackers.

Pratt is joined on the defensive line by junior end Tyler Tubbs, who recorded a season-high eight tackles against Sheffield last week and also recovered a fumble. Senior Cain Phifer (21 tackles) also plays a key role up front, and situational pass-rushers Chandler Willis and Blane Howard have combined for 4.5 sacks on the year. On the back end, freshman corner Carson Shaw has 23 tackles and an interception, and senior defensive backs Tanner Rickard and Kevin Shaw have each picked off two passes.

Leathers believes that the Wildcats' transition from an up-tempo spread to a more traditional (i.e. old-fashioned) run-based attack on offense has benefited them on the other side of the ball as well.

"We play a lot of run-heavy teams, and we're a run team," Leathers said. "If your offense is run-oriented, it's gonna help you on the defensive side of the ball. When we say, 'Hey, they're running the buck sweep,' our guys understand what buck sweep is. Or if we say, 'They're running power,' our guys know the fullback is gonna kick out and the guard is gonna loop. That goes back to us running the football on offense.

"Another thing that has contributed to our success on defense is, we spend the same amount of time working on offense and defense every day. I've been at other schools and talked to coaches at other places, and they spend the majority of the time working on the offensive side of the ball. We're pretty close to fifty-fifty." The work has certainly paid off. In snapping a six-

year losing streak to Sheffield, Colbert Heights held the Bulldogs to just 139 rushing yards on 37 carries and only three completions in 14 attempts. A muffed punt early in the first quarter set up Sheffield with excellent field position, but the Wildcat defense rose to the occasion and forced a turnover on downs. Then, with the game well in hand but the shutout hanging in the balance late in the fourth quarter, junior reserve Tyler Taylor jarred the ball loose from a Sheffield ball-carrier just shy of the goal line to keep the zero on the board.

"We had several subs in the game at that point, and it was great to see those young guys preserve the shutout," Leathers said. "Coach Robinson has done a great job coordinating our defense this season, and our secondary coaches [Scott Hunter and Isaac Fuller] did a great job the other night. We were concerned with Sheffield using their speed to get behind us, but our secondary coaches did a good job of making sure that didn't happen.

"Coach [Justin] Helms, our D-line coach, made sure we got pressure when we needed to on those passing downs. Once they got behind in the game and started trying to throw the football, we did a good job with our pressure."

Offensively, the Wildcats complemented their latest stalwart defensive effort with a clock-controlling ground game that produced 270 yards on 40 attempts. Kevin Shaw, the team's senior quarterback, posted his third straight 100-yard game, finishing with 106 on just nine carries. Chandler (a 6'2, 180-pound fullback) served as the closer, rushing for 58 yards and three touchdowns on 12 carries. Borden added a 26-yard touchdown run, and Shaw hooked up with Braden McCaig on a 19-yard scoring toss.

After struggling early this season on offense, the Wildcats have now increased their scoring output from 25 points to 27 to 35 over the past three weeks. They'll look to keep it rolling this Friday at home against Class 3A, Region 8 opponent Elkmont, which has allowed 40-plus points four times during a 1-5 start.

This week is homecoming for Colbert Heights, but Leathers is bound and determined to make sure his team doesn't take the Red Devils lightly.

"Like I told our guys, not a lot of people are gonna remember the bonfire or the car smash," he said. "Very few people will remember the parade. What will be written down in the annual is who won or lost the homecoming game. That will always be remembered. Our part this week is the game. Homecoming is great for the alumni and the school, but our part is from seven o'clock to nine-thirty on Friday night. That's when we have to take care of our business.

"This is a must-win region game," added Leathers, whose team is 2-1 in Region 8 with four region games remaining. "We can't have a lull when it comes to these region games. Each step we take in the region is gonna set us up for getting in the playoffs, and once we're comfortably in, these games will set us up for seeding."

Late last week, just prior to the Sheffield game, Leathers had a conversation over lunch with Jacob Walker, the Wildcats' new boys basketball coach and a Colbert Heights alum.

"He told me we'd been breaking streaks all year long," Leathers recalled, "and we had another streak to break. We beat Red Bay [14-6 in the season opener],

and that broke a streak of six losses in a row to them. Then we beat Lexington [27-7 on September 22], and that broke a streak of five straight losses to them. I told him going into the Sheffield game, 'We'll see if we can get another one.'"

The Wildcats did so in historic fashion, beating the Bulldogs for the first time since 2010 and posting their largest margin of victory and first-ever shutout in 21 all-time meetings with Sheffield. But there's little doubt as to which streak Leathers and company are most eager to end. They're dead-set on reaching the playoffs for the first time since 2011—and a win on Friday would be a big step in that direction.

"That's definitely been on my list since I took the job," Leathers said. "This is year six, I think, of the playoff drought. It's been five years without going. These next four games down the stretch are gonna determine whether we get in and what seed we get in with. Hopefully we can continue to play well."

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# Russellville hopes to start second-half roll against SJP

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

Russellville football coach Mark Heaton is a bona fide film junkie, but he also recognizes there's a time to look back and a time to look forward.

Sunday afternoon, Heaton was in no mood to relive the Golden Tigers' performance at Hartselle in a 51-0 loss that dropped their record to 0-5. Watching it in person last Friday night was hard enough.

"We weren't ready to play football," said Heaton, whose team trailed 30-0 at the end of one quarter and finished the night with just 57 yards of offense and three first downs, compared to 481 total yards and 22 first downs for Hartselle. "At the end of the day, you've gotta get off the bus with a mindset of trying to win a football game, and we just weren't there. That showed early. A lot of it was a lack of execution early. We had guys who weren't completing their assignments like they were supposed to and who weren't focusing on the things they were supposed to focus on, and it showed. They jumped on us pretty quick, and we had a hard time battling back.

"We didn't spend a lot of time rehashing that on Sunday. I just came in and told our guys I was disappointed and I hoped they were, too. Winners don't go into a game with that kind of attitude, and I expect that to change. But we weren't gonna go back and watch any Hartselle film. We were gonna start focusing on St. John Paul."

**"This is a great opportunity for us to get a region win, one that we desperately need," Heaton said on Monday. "The second half of our schedule is a lot different than the first half. It should be a little bit more competitive for us. That's what we've been working toward. It's been a long first half of the year, but there's still a lot we can accomplish. To do that, we've gotta work our tails off. These guys showed up here at six o'clock this morning with a good attitude, and that's all we can ask for."**

The Golden Tigers (0-5, 0-3 in Class 5A, Region 8) will kick off the second half of the season on Friday night at Discovery Middle School in Madison with a game against the also-winless Falcons (0-5, 0-3), who are coming off a bye week and haven't played since a 42-21 loss at Ardmore on September 22. Russellville and St. John Paul are tied for last in the region standings, but Heaton still believes his team can turn things around over the final five weeks and make a push for the playoffs.

He believes his players believe it, too.

"I think so," he said on Monday morning. "That was the main concern yesterday, just seeing where they are. And I challenged them with that. I told them, 'You guys wanted to be a playoff team. That was one of our goals that we wanted to accomplish together. And that's attainable.'

"The second half of our schedule is a lot different than the first half. It should be a

little bit more competitive for us. That's what we've been working toward. It's been a long first half of the year, but there's still a lot we can accomplish. To do that, we've gotta work our tails off. These guys showed up here at six o'clock this morning with a good attitude, and that's all we can ask for."

In their first 0-5 start since 1943, the Golden Tigers have been out-scored 212-19 by Deshler, Lee of Huntsville, Lawrence County, Mae Jemison and Hartselle—five teams with a combined record thus far of 20-7. Tough home games remain with reigning Region 8 champion Brooks (3-1 overall) and non-region rival Colbert County (3-2), but Russellville also faces St. John Paul, East Limestone and Ardmore—three teams with a combined record of 4-11 on the season.

If a dramatic turnaround is to happen, it must start Friday against the Falcons, who have been out-scored 224-35 in losses to West Morgan, Curry, Lawrence County, Jemison and Ardmore. St. John Paul has lost 35 consecutive games on the field [they were technically credited with a win by forfeit over J.O. Johnson in 2015 due to the Jags' use of an ineligible player] since the start of the 2014 season, including all three meetings with Russellville by an aggregate score of 162-21.

"This is a great opportunity for us to get a region win, one that we desperately need," Heaton said. "At the end of the day, it comes down to consistent execution. That's what wins the game, and that's where we've struggled. But we're gonna continue to work on it."

After making major strides in the passing game against Jemison in Week 4 [freshman quarterback Luke Barnwell set career-highs with 24 completions and 269 yards], the Golden Tigers got virtually nothing going on offense last Friday at Hartselle. Barnwell finished 11-for-20 for 35 yards with one interception, and the running game continued to struggle, producing just 22 yards on 20 attempts.

"Hartselle is a great football team," Heaton said. "They're very sound defensively, always right where they're supposed to be. With the passing game, there just wasn't a lot there on Friday night. That's the way it appeared, but at the same time we had guys running the wrong routes, guys not running routes at all who should have been, and a young quarterback who's still in that growing process.

"But with where we are as a football team, I still think that's our strength right now, the passing game. We're trying to continue developing the run game week to week. The goal is to put it all together, and you know how that goes—once it starts rolling, you gain some confidence in what you're doing, and that makes a huge difference."

The Golden Tigers have now rushed for a total of 150 yards this season as a team, an average of just 30 yards per game. Heaton is hopeful that some personnel adjustments can spark the ground attack on Friday night.

"We're going to try another personnel change or two early in the week to try and help us establish some run-game stuff," he said on Monday. "Right now, we're still trying to find that fit. It's been tough, but I think there's some opportunity for us to establish that this week. We're trying to plug in a new personnel grouping that may help us. We'll see how that goes."

Defensively, Russellville will look to get back on track after surrendering 50-plus points in consecutive games for the first time since October of 1932. Heaton believes the Golden Tigers will have the opportunity Friday night to win the battle at the line of scrimmage with their experienced defensive line led by senior ends Jeff Lloyd, Roman Cortez and John David Aycok.

"They have the potential to dominate up front," Heaton said. "But sometimes dominating with your defensive front means you're actually occupying a couple of offensive linemen so they can't get on your linebackers. That's where we have got to progress, getting those guys to come downhill and make plays when we occupy them up front. If the defensive line can take control, we should be okay.

"We'll have an opportunity to have a good night up front, and offensively I think we'll have the same opportunity."

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Submit your picks to us each week in one of two ways: Fill out the entry form on this page and mail it to us at 113 Washington Ave. NW, Russellville, AL 35653, or email your picks to us along with your name and phone number at franklinfreepress@yahoo.com. Picks sent in by mail for Week 6 must be postmarked by Friday, October 6, and picks submitted by email for Week 6 must be received by Saturday, October 7 at 10 a.m. Each week, the contestant who correctly picks the most games will win a free T-shirt and the chance to pick in the grand-prize final-week contest. If multiple contestants correctly pick the same number of games in a given week, the tiebreaker score will be used to determine a winner. Contestants are only eligible to win the weekly contest once.

Congrats to Week 5 winners CEDRIC DAWSON and DANNY PINKARD, who both picked all ten games correctly and also picked Georgia to beat Tennessee 35-17!

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Cassie Medley, Executive Director  
256.332.1760 • 256.332.1740 fax  
info@franklincountychamber.org  
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## HEALTHCARE

**GET NOTICED!**  
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**PREGAME@6:30**  
**GAME@7:00**