

The Probate Office is looking into seven alleged instances of crossover voting in Franklin County.

Area seniors enjoyed a complimentary lunch at last week's event while learning about important topics.

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Funding still primary broadband issue

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Hopeful desperation. That was the tenor of many of the approximately 200 Franklin County residents who attended last Thursday's community meeting to discuss countywide broadband with officials from a prospective broadband provider. In the end, after a two-hour meeting at which Tombigbee Electric Cooperative president/CEO Steve Foshee laid out the path his company has taken to initiate high-speed internet in its service area, the bottom line came down to the same concerns the members of the Franklin County Broadband Task Force have heard before—are there enough prospective subscribers in the county's heavily populated areas to justify the large expense of infrastructure to provide high-speed internet to the county's rural areas?

The Tombigbee Electric Co-Op created Tombigbee Communications, LLC, a company that is building a network of broadband internet in the cities of Hamilton and Winfield through its freedomFIBER company name. As part of conditional \$40,000,000 investments, freedomFIBER plans to expand into the remainder of Marion County, into Lamar County and into the cities of

Haleyville and Fayette next year.

Last Thursday's meeting was organized by Doug Aaron, executive director of the Franklin County Water Service Authority, which is charged with overseeing and managing countywide broadband after Franklin County citizens approved a Constitutional amendment in 2014.

Are there enough prospective subscribers in the county's heavily populated areas to justify the large expense of infrastructure to provide high-speed internet to the county's rural areas?

"We think we might be able to do Franklin County for around \$30 million," Foshee said. "It's around that number. This has to be a community-driven thing."

Aaron and other officials hoped to gauge whether there is sufficient local interest to present to freedomFIBER. From the turnout and passionate comments from those in attendance, the interest is there. The need is there. The desire and willingness to help are there. But questions remain. And, as they have since the local task force was formed, those questions revolve around funding.

See 'BROADBAND,' Page 7

Green's Dependable celebrating 10 years

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When Doug Green purchased Dependable Hardware in 2007, he had a great business plan.

Green had more than 23 years of experience working for the Batchelor family as manager of the store. His brother Darryl was also an employee, so it would be a family venture.

The only thing Green didn't count on was the economy collapsing. But that's exactly what happened soon after his purchase was complete.

"Six months after we bought the store, the economy just blew up," Green said. "So there have been lots of struggles the last ten years, but we made it through thanks to our cus-

tomers and employees. We have added a lot of features, too, like online catalog orders that can be shipped to the store, True Value credit cards and zero-percent financing on most anything in the store."

"It's all about dependable service. That's what we go by and what we strive to do," Green said. "We focus on customer service. Our employees do a good job, and that's a big part of dependable service."

Green is celebrating the 10th anniversary of Green's Dependable Hardware beginning this month. It's also the 70th anniversary for Dependable Service Center, a business started by Cecil Batchelor.

Green operates his business each day in the manner described on the front door—with dependable service to his customers.

"It's all about dependable service. That's what we go by and what we strive to do," Green said. "We focus on customer service. Our employees do a good job, and that's a big part of dependable service. We greet you when you come in, show you what you need, and offer any helpful information we have as to how to use or what to use depending on what your project is.

"And we work to get you done quickly, knowing our customers' time is important."

There have been changes in the

See 'GREEN'S,' Page 3

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Johny W. Elkins, age 85
Died Thursday, October 26, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in St. Paul Cemetery.

Peggy Mitchell Hester,
Russellville, age 83
Died Sunday, October 29, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Marie Mitchell, age 87
Died Friday, October 27, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

Henry Marion Pearce,
Hodges, age 84
Died Thursday, October 26, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Love Joy Cemetery.

Leonard "Tee" Neal Pennington, Sr.,
Russellville, age 92
Died Wednesday, October 25, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in Lime Rock Cemetery.

Gene Carlton Tollison, age 62
Died Thursday, October 26, 2017.
Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

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City school board renews \$500,000 line of credit

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Board of Education voted to renew a line of credit with CB&S Bank in the amount of \$500,000 at its October 26 meeting.

The board unanimously approved the unsecured line of credit with authorized signers to be superintendent Heath Grimes and Russellville City Schools chief financial officer Lisa Witt. Board member Greg Batchelor abstained from the vote.

Grimes said there is no balance currently on the line of credit and it exists only for emergency situations. In other action, the board:

- Selected board president Brett Gist as the delegate to the Alabama Association of School Boards Convention and Delegate Assembly December 7-9 in Birmingham. Judy Pounders was chosen as the alternate delegate.

- Voted for Ronnie Owens of Lauderdale County Schools as the board's candidate to represent it as District Director for AASB District 8.

- Recognized Deanna Hollimon, Jason Goodwin, Karen Thorn and Kristi Ezzell as part of Principals Appreciation Month.

- Recognized board member Greg Trapp as a Master School Board Member for four years and Pounders and Jerry Groce as Level 4 Board Members.

- Approved facility use requests for the RHS baseball facilities and gym on January 15, 2018, for a baseball camp sponsored by the RHS Baseball Booster Club and RHS Auditorium on May 19, 2018, for Addie's Flip, Tip and Tap recital.

- Approved expenses pursuant to Section 41-16-53 of the Code of Alabama, emergency clause, to remove and replace the Russellville Middle School gym floor. The floor was damaged two weeks ago when a water heater broke and flooded the floor overnight. Covington Flooring, Inc. will provide replacement flooring at a cost of \$152,000. Removal of the old flooring will be done by Hovater Metal Works at a cost of \$20,000, and new lighting will be installed by Cypress Electric at

a cost of \$15,000. Work is expected to be completed by December 15.

Grimes said several home basketball games would be moved to the RHS gym as a result of the repairs. The cost of the repairs will be covered by insurance, Grimes said.

- Approved the following personnel actions:

- Resignation in Position: Derek Ergle, at-risk teacher, RHS, effective September 13, 2017.

- Temporary Employment: Donna Trapp, Jessica Cummings and Cortney Green as 21st CCLC teachers, and Jennifer Lindsey to fill LeJoy Winston's leave October 23 through January 31, 2018.

- Leave of Absence for Sandra Kennedy, RMS custodian, from September 26, 2017-October 29, 2017.

- Athletic Consultants: Nathan Vincent and Matthew Duncan as pro-consults for the varsity and junior varsity baseball teams. Maximum payment shall not exceed \$700 and will be paid by the Baseball Booster Club and from camp proceeds.

'GREEN'S,' from page 1

store during the last decade. Green no longer sells appliances, a decision he made because of the increasing difficulty in servicing them. Customers can still purchase parts for appliances, though. Green added the popular line of Pittsburgh Paints, and the store has been recognized as a Crown Dealer (top level) for Husqvarna and a Diamond Dealer for Briggs and Stratton, another top honor for the company's retailers.

While you might not think about it, most customers who come in the front door of Green's Dependable Hardware have a problem. And Green and his staff are in the problem-solving business.

"That's something different about our store," he said. "Most people who come into our store have a problem. Something's torn up. Something's leaking. Something needs painting. And we want to steer you to what you need to fix that problem."

Green's anniversary sale starts this Friday,

November 3, with special events scheduled into next spring. "This will be ongoing for a while," he said. "We'll have lots of door prizes, lots of giveaways this Friday and Saturday, including a chainsaw and a gas grill. We'll have a bluegrass band there Saturday, and a Holland grill representative will be on hand cooking for our customers. We'll have free popcorn and hot dogs and a bounce house for kids."

Green and his wife Betsy, who co-owns the store and serves as office manager, have 13 employees. Green recently reflected on the many employees who have come and gone over the last decade.

"We've had a lot of good people come and go in the last ten years," he said. "We're blessed to have good employees. We've had a lot of good folks work for us, and we're real proud of the crew we have right now."

Green's offers many of the programs and con-

veniences offered by larger 'box' stores, including the True Value Rewards Program. Customers can log onto www.truevalue.com to sign up for the program. Every purchase the customer makes earns them points toward purchases and coupons.

Additionally, Green's offers zero-interest financing through Tower Loans for eligible customers, and customers can order online and have the item shipped to the Russellville store.

Green feels blessed to have ten years of experience as a business owner. Although he doesn't know what the future holds, his plan to provide great service and fair prices won't change any time soon.

"Every community needs a good hardware store," Green said, "and we try to fill that need for Russellville."

Green's Dependable Hardware is located at 15220-A Highway 43 in Russellville, across from Russellville Hospital.

Probate office investigating crossover voting in county

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Of the 674 Alabama voters who crossed over party voting between the Democratic primary for U.S. Senate in August and the Republican runoff in September, seven are Franklin County residents, according to Alabama secretary of state John Merrill.

Merrill's office sent names of voters in each county who crossed over between the primary and runoff for the U.S. Senate seat vacated by Jeff Sessions earlier this year. Crossover voting is now a felony in Alabama, punishable by up to a \$15,000 fine and a prison term of a year and a day or longer. Additionally, a felony conviction would cause the individual to lose his or her voting rights as well.

The list of the seven Franklin County voters was turned over to probate judge Barry Moore's office. Moore will be charged with verifying that these voters actually voted in the August Democratic primary and the September Republican primary.

"Once that information is verified," Merrill said, "the probate judge will then take the information to the local district attorney or the attorney general to

determine whether and what level of commitment of prosecution will take place."

Moore said last Tuesday that his office had received the seven names and the investigation into how or whether these voters actually engaged in crossover voting was underway.

"We're not finished investigating that," Moore said. "Once the investigation is complete, we will report that information back to the secretary of state's office."

Jefferson County had the most instances of crossover voting, with 380, while Lauderdale and Colbert counties had no voters on the crossover list.

Merrill said safeguards were in place at polling places to prevent crossover voting from taking place, but some poll workers did not follow procedure during the runoff election between Roy Moore and Luther Strange.

"The safeguards should have occurred when the poll workers checked on the sign-in sheet, and each voter should have had a DEM or REP beside his or her name," Merrill said. "That didn't happen everywhere. We found 16,000 instances where it didn't happen but were able to correct it before the runoff and get that number down to

around 1,000 before the runoff."

Moore said the investigation would determine the cause of the crossover voting.

"Once we go through the investigation, we'll be able to answer questions about whether it was human error or what it was. Right now, we don't yet know," Moore said. "We will have to look at it and see what prompted those problems and address issues to correct that."

Merrill said it would not be his decision whether these individuals are prosecuted and that he was simply following the law by submitting the crossover voter names to law enforcement.

"The only thing I can do is introduce the information and identify people culpable at some level. The determination of culpability is ultimately left up to the district attorney or attorney general," Merrill said. "All we know today is our records show these people marked a Democratic primary ballot and a Republican runoff ballot. It's just a matter of enforcing the law."

Of Alabama's 67 counties, 21 had no crossover voters reported. Twelve counties had only one name on the list. Lawrence County had three crossover voters. There were no reported crossover voters in Marion or Winston counties.

Honey Do: The end of time

The end of time is upon us. Well, daylight savings time anyway.

We will "fall back" this weekend, so now feel free to be confused about the time for a while. But, hey, "falling back" is way more convenient than "springing forward." It's much more fun to "accidentally" be an hour early for church, school or work than to be an hour late.

This is also a good time to jiggle your brain about some things that should be attended to before the early darkness and winter weather set in.

Many people use the time change for a reminder to check their smoke alarms, especially now that we are going into prime fire season with heaters and fireplaces back in use.

Is your outdoor lighting working properly? Are entrances and walkways well lit? This important from a safety and security standpoint.

Solar lighting is a great tool for areas where there is no electricity or if you just don't want to do any wiring. Line walkways and steps so that guests won't stumble, illuminate dark corners of the yard, or even light up large areas with wall-mounted flood lights.

Many people use the time change for a reminder to check their smoke alarms, especially now that we are going into prime fire season with heaters and fireplaces



Doug Green

coming back into use. Most smoke and fire alarms have a test button to try out the siren. If the batteries have been there for a while, replace them with fresh ones. Replace any smoke alarms that are over ten years old, as the sensors can go bad over time.

Do you have a good flashlight in the house? There actually should be several that are in good working order. Place them by each bed and at exit points. Even kids should have a flashlight at their disposal. Choose one designed for kids that has the batteries secured or sealed in. If you buy new ones, invest in LED lights. These are more durable and brighter than older styles. Prices have come way down as well.

Thank you, Ben Franklin, for all this confusion with the time, but we can handle it. Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.

OUR ^{COLOR} ME HOUSE By: Ree SHANNON



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Time to get your yard ready for winter

Taylor Reeder
Regional Extension agent

It's that time of year again, when the leaves start falling, the days grow shorter, and pumpkin spice is everywhere. It's fall y'all! And, as we start to slow down, we don't need to neglect our landscapes! Here are a few things you need to be doing in your yard to get ready for winter.

•Disease Control

In the fall we are often prone to cool, wet weather. These conditions provide the perfect breeding ground for diseases. It is important to always keep your plants (and the area around them) clean and free of disease. Sanitation is key to avoiding future disease issues.

Always rake away fallen fruit and diseased leaves, as these are places where diseases and insects can over-winter and plague you next year. If you are still seeing disease issues at this time of year, you can cut out the diseased portions of the plant or apply a fungicide. Winter conditions usually are not conducive to disease development, so as we move into the cooler month's, fungicides aren't always necessary.

Avoid overhead irrigation, as this can spread diseases further. Also, make sure that your plants aren't too close together; lack of airflow is a common factor of disease development in plants.

•Weed Control

Fall is also the time to start controlling your winter and spring weeds. Pre-emergent herbicides, which kill weeds before they emerge from the soil, offer another method of control for those pesky weeds. If weeds do emerge, you can spot treat or pull them. Remember, they are much easier to control when they are young, so catch

them before they get too big!

Always read the label of any chemical you purchase. The label will tell you what it controls, where it can be applied, how much to put out, and plenty of other important information.

•Lawns

Now is the time that we let our warm-season grasses take their long nap before spring. It's best to discontinue any fertilizer applications to your warm-season grasses (i.e. Bermuda & Zoysia). Continue to mow your warm-season lawns until no new growth is noticeable. If you are planning to over-seed/re-seed with rye or fescue, you can do it now.

Now is the time that we let our warm-season grasses take their long nap before spring. It's best to discontinue any fertilizer applications to your warm-season grasses (i.e. Bermuda & Zoysia). Continue to mow your warm-season lawns until no new growth is noticeable.

•Planting Trees & Shrubs

This is the best time of year for planting ornamental trees, shrubs and perennials. If you plant now, it will give the root system plenty of time to get established before the heat and drought of summer. Make sure to not plant too deeply in our clay soils, and water deeply for the plant's root system to get well established. Avoid fertilizing a new plant for a few weeks so that the roots have time to grow.

•Plant Spring Flowering Bulbs

You generally want to plant your bulbs two seasons before they will bloom. Therefore, if you've



Time to leave the day job?

Dear Dave,
I make about \$25,000 a year in my day job, but I have side jobs as a personal trainer and a DJ. I'll make about \$10,000 this year as a trainer, and \$25,000 to \$30,000 working events as a DJ. I've almost got all my debts paid off, and I love both of my side jobs.

I was wondering how to tell when I'm ready to leave my day job and concentrate on personal training and my DJ work.

Steve

Dear Steve,
I always tell people to first get to a point where their side hustle is generating almost as much money as their day job. I want the boat pulled as close to the dock as you can get it, so that when you make the jump from the dock to the boat you don't hit the water.

In your case, I would want the \$10,000 you earn from personal training to look more like \$20,000. When you reach that level, combined with what you're making as a DJ, it would create a pretty safe situation for you to quit your day job.

Maybe you could cheat a little on the personal trainer money, because you're making as much or more as a DJ as you are in your day job. Otherwise, you're giving up \$25,000 for \$10,000 and only hoping the personal training gig will grow. That's not a good idea. I'd like to see that hope proven a little bit more before you walk away from a day job.

Good luck, Steve!

Dave

Rental properties? Baby Step 6

Dear Dave,
I have a rental property that I still owe some money on, and I've just begun Baby Step 2 of your plan. Should rental property debt be included in the debt snowball?

Matt

Dear Matt,
No, it shouldn't. Baby Step 2 of my plan is where you use the debt snowball to pay off all debt—from smallest to largest—except for your home. This, of course, comes after Baby Step 1, in which you save up

\$1,000 for a beginner emergency fund. I would include rental properties in the "home" category, and I urge people to get serious about paying off their homes a little further down the road in Baby Step 6.

To fill in the gaps, Baby Step 3 is going back and fully funding your emergency fund with three to six months of expenses. Baby Step 4 is investing 15 percent of your household income in Roth IRAs and other pre-tax retirement plans, and Baby Step 5 means setting aside college money for the kids. Baby Step 6 is where you pay off your home, including any rental properties that weren't already paid for in cash, and Baby Step 7 is when you relax, build wealth and give.

If it were me, I would pay off my primary home before taking care of the rental properties. That's simply a risk management perspective. Now, if you owe just \$20,000 on your rental property but still have a \$3 million mortgage on your residence, you might go ahead and knock out the rental property first.

Hope this helps!

Dave

Budgeting for taxes

Dear Dave,
I recently started my own business, and I know I'm supposed to pay taxes quarterly. How do I budget for those, and how much do I save?

McKenzie

Dear McKenzie,
You should always establish a separate checking account when you open a business. All your business income, and nothing else, should go directly into that account. Nothing else goes in or out of that account except for business expenses. What you have left, by definition, is profit.

When you take that home, set aside 25 percent for your federal, quarterly estimates. In most cases—especially with a small, start-up business—that will put you pretty close to what you'll need. If you make more than \$60,000 to \$70,000 in profits, however, you may want to kick that percentage up a little bit. It's always better to save too much than too little. Best of luck!

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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SThe Sons of Confederate Veterans, Lt. Col. John W. Harris, Jr., Camp #1833, will meet Thursday, November 2 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center on Ash Avenue. For more info, call 256-324-2317. Everyone welcome!

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 Ave. in Sheffield this Thursday, November 2 from 4-5:30 p.m. Monthly meeting will follow in the Sheffield Room at Park Place at 6:30 p.m. Wendy Sellers will teach on "What Is Your Vision?" We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. All prayer is confidential. All are welcome.

Restoration Church will hold its first annual golf tournament at Twin Pines Country Club this Friday, November 3. The tournament will be a four-man scramble format with a cost of \$65/person. Registration begins at 11 a.m. with tee-off at noon. Prizes for 1st and 2nd place. For more info, call 256-324-7047.

The United Methodist Women will sponsor their annual Rummage/Bake Sale from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. this Friday, November 3 and 7-11 a.m. this Saturday, November 4 in the Ministry Center directly behind the First United Methodist Church in downtown Russellville. This event is held to raise money for local and foreign missions. Items for sale include household goods, furniture, books and white elephants. Cakes, pies and other homemade baked goods are available for purchase. A \$3 lunch, including homemade chili, crackers and tea, will be served beginning at 11 a.m. until it is gone. Take-outs will be available.

The 4th-6th grade kids class at Belgreen Baptist Church will have a yard sale fundraiser this Saturday, November 4 from 8 a.m.-noon to raise money for coats and non-perishable items for missions.

The Cowboy Church of Franklin County (25100 Hwy. 24, Russellville) will host a Fall Festival & Judgment Hayride this Saturday, November 4. Gates open at 5 p.m. Games in the arena and food from the chuck wagon. First hayride leaves at 7 p.m. Last hayride leaves at 8 p.m. Gates close at 9 p.m.

Beulah Missionary Baptist Church will be selling chicken stew this Saturday, November 4 at Union Community Center in Russellville. Stew will be ready at noon and is available for \$25/gallon, \$15/half-gallon, \$8/quart or \$5/bowl. Bring your own GLASS jar. There will also be a Chinese auction, a bake sale, and arts & crafts. All proceeds benefit the church's youth group.

Franklin County Junior Cattleman's Field Day will take place this Saturday, November 4 from 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Pounders Farm in Phil Campbell. Juniors will participate in multiple stations related to areas of beef cattle production. Make checks payable to Franklin County Junior Cattleman's Association and send to Franklin County Junior Cattleman's Association, c/o Caleb Beason, 201 Co. Road 460, Russellville, 35654. Directions from Russellville: South on Hwy. 243, turn right at the body shop across from Willie's Gas Station, look for the green barn behind the body shop. For info, call 256-577-2027 or 256-436-5126.

Frog Pond Volunteer Fire Department will have a Pancake Breakfast this Saturday, November 4 from 7-10 a.m. at the Frog Pond Community Center. Adults \$6, children six-and-under \$3.

The annual Franklin County Veterans Day Parade will take place this Sunday, November 5 at 2 p.m. in downtown Russellville. Veterans who wish to ride in the parade need to meet at the A.W. Todd Center at 1:30 p.m. People or groups wishing to enter cars, trucks or floats in the parade need to be at Big Star by 1:30 p.m. For more information, contact Grant Atkins at 256-627-2866. A reception will follow the parade at the A.W. Todd Center, sponsored by Veterans of Foreign Wars. The parade is sponsored by American Legion Post 64.

East Franklin Junior High School will hold its annual Veterans Day Program on Thursday, November 9 at 8:30 a.m. at the school. Veterans and their families are invited.

The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts in Red Bay will present its first production of the 2017-2018 season, *In-Laws, Outlaws and other People (That Should Be Shot)*, by Steve Franco, on November 9-12 at Community Spirit Bank's Weatherford Centre in Red Bay. Thursday-Saturday shows at 7 p.m., Sunday show at 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale now and are \$8.00 each. Go by or call the Weatherford Centre from 2-4 p.m. weekdays to purchase or reserve your tickets, or call 256-356-9829. Call Beth Hammock at 256-356-9286 for group sales.

God Cares For You Worship Center (located behind the A.W. Todd Center in downtown Russellville) will have a gospel singing with Jeff and Sherry Easter on Saturday, November 11 at 6 p.m. You are invited each week to attend Sunday School at 10 a.m., Sunday worship services at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., and Wednesday night service at 7 p.m.

Duncan Creek Baptist Church is celebrating 150 years of serving to the spiritual needs of their community and Franklin County. Where: Duncan Creek Baptist Church, 3925 Duncan Creek Road, Russellville, AL 35653. When: Sunday, November 12 at 10:30 a.m. We will have guest speakers, Rev. Harley Hollingsworth, Rev. Larry Dover and our Pastor Rev. Joe Thorn. Also, special music. Followed by refreshments in the fellowship hall. All friends and family of Duncan Creek Baptist Church are invited! Come and help us celebrate!

The Reedtown Back to Basics Life Skills Center will sponsor a free fellowship Thanksgiving dinner on Sunday, November 19 from 2-4 p.m. at the Chucky Mullins Center on Hamilton Street in Russellville. All are welcome!

'BROADBAND' from page 1

"We think we might be able to do Franklin County for around \$30 million," Foshee said. "It's something around that number. This has to be a community-driven thing."

Tombigbee officials were invited to attend the meeting to share their plan and experiences laying out the infrastructure in their service area for high-speed internet. They have not committed to coming to Franklin County, and the meeting was designed to gauge community interest.

With high-speed internet providers already serving Russellville and Red Bay, the county's two largest population areas, Foshee acknowledged the challenge to come in and offer a competing product in those areas was significant.

"That challenge must carefully be looked at," Foshee said. "I tend to do business where I think it will help my community and with one who provides excellence. In our business model, we have to penetrate thirty percent of homes [in Tombigbee's service area] to make it. A model would have to be laid out for Franklin County."

"It took us six months to come up with an effective game plan that our board would sign off on."

Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow (D-Red Bay) moderated the community meeting. Morrow said Tombigbee officials were not there to solve Franklin County's problems. Rather, they were in attendance to answer questions and explain the progress they have made.

"If we are to secure broadband," Morrow said, "it's something that will have to be done collectively and something we all have to be behind."

Foshee said freedomFIBER has reached an agreement with both Russellville Utilities and

Franklin Electric Cooperative to connect fiber-optic line to their utility poles as part of their infrastructure. Even though they already have lines run in Russellville, Foshee said it's not possible for local subscribers to hook up to that line.

The cost for freedomFIBER to connect to Russellville Utilities poles is \$31.99/pole per year. Franklin Electric is charging the company pursuant to a pre-determined fee schedule from Tennessee Valley Authority.

Foshee said his company has four objectives as part of its business model. First is the goal of improving education, which he believes can be done through the use of high-speed internet for student training for the ACT and other standardized testing. Second, Foshee explained, is improving the standard of health care in their service area, which can be done through telemedicine where residents and local health providers can consult live with any expert in the world with a 10-Gigabit connection.

Third is the objective of economic development. With more than 500,000 jobs opening in computer services paying three times the average wage of Alabamians, Foshee said the need for reliable broadband connections will allow prospective workers the chance to work from home.

Finally, he discussed the quality of life objective. He discussed the concern in Tombigbee's service area of top students leaving home after their education was complete. With high-speed internet, the quality of life in the area increases, as does the likelihood of keeping top students at home.

Tombigbee's business model calls for the family at the end of the line, meaning the last home on a

rural road with only a few homes, to receive the same quality service as residents in the cities.

That is only financially possible, he explained, if freedomFIBER receives enough subscriptions in the more profitable city areas where the volume of users is much larger. The profit the company receives from those areas will offset the losses from providing internet to more remote areas.

Chris Williams, owner of Leisure Creations in Russellville and Phil Campbell, said his company can not hire sales representatives from Franklin County because they are not able to access high-speed internet while working from home.

"How can we get this done sooner rather than later?" Williams asked. "What can we do to help expedite this? I'd like the opportunity to hire Franklin County people in those jobs."

Katernia Cole-Coffey, chairperson of the Franklin County Broadband Task Force, said the task force has met with representatives from AT&T, Verizon, Charter and other internet providers, and each time their answer was the same: 'No thanks.'

"We've met with all of them. We even fed them before they told us no," Cole-Coffey said.

Foshee hopes individuals who already have internet service in Marion and Winston counties will go with freedomFIBER after they realize the company is trying to provide countywide service.

Whether Franklin County residents will do the same, or even have the opportunity to make that choice among providers, remains to be seen.

Several residents told Foshee about their frustration in not having reliable internet in various rural areas of Franklin County. They included educators, small business owners and retirees.

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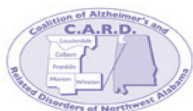
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Grand Opening

PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI
State Farm insurance agent Lee Nickels hosted the grand opening and ribbon cutting for his office Thursday, October 26. Nickels and his family officially opened his office located at 13760 Highway 43, Suite 6, across from Walmart. Nickels, his family and his staff are pictured at left with Franklin County Chamber of Commerce director Cassie Medley and others at last week's ribbon cutting.



Clark Sledge, MD
OB/GYN



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

An Alabama native, Dr. Sledge completed his OB/GYN residency at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, TX (top 10 national medical residency programs). He is able to communicate with both his English and Spanish-speaking patients.



Lee retiring from NW-SCC

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Northwest-Shoals Community College president Humphrey Lee will retire effective December 31, 2017, after serving in the position the past 14 years.

"I love the NW-SCC family and the commitment each of you show toward educating our students and improving the quality of life in our community," Lee told NW-SCC faculty and staff last Thursday morning in an email. "I have devoted 43 years of my life to working in education, and I

think it is time to enjoy the next phase of my life, which includes spending more time with my family."

Prior to his time at NW-SCC, Lee worked for Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa for 29 years.

During Lee's tenure, NW-SCC has constructed and renovated career technical training facilities in areas including automotive service technology, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, machine tool, salon and spa management and welding. He hopes to continue to be a part of the northwest Alabama community.

See 'LEE,' Page 9

Lee Nickels 332-0052

Senior Health Fair a big hit among area residents

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Area seniors enjoyed a complimentary lunch while learning about important topics including weight management and exercise, Social Security updates, gardening tips and food safety as part of the fourth annual Franklin County Senior Health Fair held Thursday, October 26 at the A.W. Todd Centre.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Franklin County Office and the Foster Grandparents Program. More than 250 senior citizens heard presentations by Sylvester White, district manager with the Social Security Administration office in the Shoals; Susan Hill, Regional Extension agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System; and Dr. Jeffrey Manord, general and vascular surgeon at Russellville Hospital.

With October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Manord spoke about the disease with facts and information everyone should know.

The event also featured several vendors offering services and products important to seniors. Annette Wells with Village Square Apartments was on hand to share information about her facility.

"I try to get across the qualifications to move into Village Square and tell them about our specials," Wells said. "A lot of people don't realize you don't have to be 62 to move in. You can be age 50 and disabled and still qualify."

Regina Lawler and Briana Baker manned the table for the Cottage Assisted Living facility. Lawler said they were promoting the Veterans benefits available to veterans and their widows.

"All physical conditions are considered when determining if a veteran or spouse may be eligible for these benefits," Lawler said. "They are based on the person's needs in areas like administration of medication, bathing, dressing, eating and special dietary requirements."

Franklin County Extension coordinator Katernia Cole-Coffey said she and Jessica Latham, Foster Grandparent Program director, work together with their staffs to plan the fair each year. Attendance continues to grow with each fair, both from seniors and vendors.

"We love our vendors, and they appreciate the direct contact the event allows them with seniors to share information on their services or business," Cole-Coffey said. "And there's a great chance to learn from our speakers."



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

Village Square Apartments was one of more than a dozen vendors that participated in last Thursday's Senior Health Fair, sponsored by the Franklin County Extension and the Foster Grandparents Program.

Even if you're retired, there's still a need to continue being educated about what's going on in our society these days."

Latham said she receives positive feedback from fair attendees after each event.

"They seem to enjoy it. We've done other fairs and always had good feedback, so we decided to do our own and help out our county," Latham said. "It's never too late in life to learn. It's also an opportunity for our 80 volunteers in the Foster Grandparent Program go get to interact and visit with each other."

'LEE,' from page 8

"I have always encouraged our faculty and staff to be active in the community," Lee said. "I hope to continue that even after my retirement."

Lee and the NW-SCC administration have fielded concerns about the future of the Phil Campbell campus of NW-SCC. In a recent interview with the *Free Press*, Lee did not specifically commit to keeping Phil Campbell open in the future. When asked if he would pledge to keep the Phil Campbell campus open as long as he remains president of the college, Lee answered:

"The Phil Campbell campus of Northwest-Shoals Community College continues to play a vital role in our mission of educating and training the citizens of our five-county service area in northwest Alabama. Regardless of the decrease in enrollment we have experienced, we remain committed to providing academic, career technical and life-long educational opportunities to area residents."

The *Free Press* has requested information from NW-SCC about the number of courses offered at the Phil Campbell campus the last five years, but there has yet to be a response from the college on the requested information.

Recent staff and faculty cuts of 16 individuals, including elimination of the health and physical education department at Phil Campbell, fueled concerns about the future of the campus.

In spite of self-described funding woes and a decline in enrollment, the college has secured funding for a new workforce training center in Lauderdale County.

Kreme of the crop



PHOTO BY JOHN PILATI

The RHS Chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America and their advisors, Dr. AnnaKay Holland and Mrs. Deedra Moore, would like to thank all the members of the community who helped make this year's Krispy Kreme Doughnut Sale a success. FBLA members sold over 750 dozen doughnuts, which allowed the club to raise more than \$2,000 for the FBLA scholarship fund, state competition and field trip. Pictured above (left to right) are the FBLA officers who unloaded the Krispy Kreme truck at 5:30 am on October 18: Ashton Moore, president; Preston Goad, treasurer; Ellie Kerby, secretary; Kaydee Holland, historian; Ellyse Strickland, projects chairperson; Peyton Reynolds, vice president; Landon Ezzell, parliamentarian; and Noah Gist, reporter.



Classifieds

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BUSINESS • LOST & FOUND • GARAGE SALES • PETS • APPLIANCES • HELP WANTED • SERVICES • APPLIANCES • CLOTHING • FURNITURE

YARD SALES/ ESTATE SALES

Christmas Yard Sale at 3151 Hwy. 43, Phil Campbell, on Friday, Nov. 3 from 6 am-6 pm and Saturday, Nov. 4 from 6 am-noon. Lots of Christmas decorations (Christmas dishes, tablecloths, napkins, ornaments, snowmen, candles, etc.), porcelain dolls, plus-size ladies'

clothing and much more! Weather permitting.

Three-Family Yard Sale this Friday and Saturday, Nov. 3-4 from 8 am-until at 1207 College Ave. Lots to choose from. Ya'll come!

Yard Sale this Friday and Saturday, Nov. 3-4, from 7 am-until at 53 Kim Lane, Russellville. Three families. Furniture,

living room suite, washer, dining room suite, bedding for king-size bed.

Muli-Family Yard Sale this Saturday, Nov. 4. Home of Jayne Wells, 415 Hester Ave. 4 blocks south of Frosty Inn on 4th Street. Men's women's & little boys' name-brand clothes, lots of like-new toys, records, CDs, shoes, all the usual

stuff, plus more. Come check us out!

Multi-Family Yard Sale this Saturday, Nov. 4 from 8 am-until at 416 Burgess Street off Waterloo Road. Cancelled if raining.

The 4th-6th grade kids class at Belgreen Baptist Church will have a yard sale on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 8 a.m.-noon to raise money for coats and non-perishable items for missions.

House For Sale. Includes 15 acres. 3 BR/3 BA. Highway 61 in Spruce Pine. Call 256-436-9758. Owner financing available.

House for rent. 2 BR/ 1 BA. 110 Marlin. \$385/month, \$385 deposit. No pets. Call 256-810-3998 or 256-460-5016.

Land for sale. 2808 Duncan Creek Road, Russellville. 5 acres. \$19,900. \$300 down, \$250 per month. Call 256-335-8274. (1)

For rent: New, nearly

1,200-square-foot one-bedroom duplex apartment. Ceramic floors. Washer/dryer hookup. All appliances. \$395/mo. Call 678-634-1835. (1)

House for rent to own in Russellville. 149 Wedgewood Drive. \$2,000 down. \$550 a month. Call 256-412-8333. (2)

FURNITURE

Burgundy recliner, \$75. Computer desk, \$45. Big Boy chair, \$75. Call 256-332-0068. (1)

MISC. FOR SALE

Firewood for Sale. \$65/load. Call 256-460-8467.

Firewood for sale. Call 256-324-9779.

Baby swing for sale. Runs on 3 speeds. Plays music. \$25. Please call 256-324-2917. (1)

Two Fenton baskets, \$37 each. MK purse,

\$40. Green Carnival glass pitcher and six glasses for \$60. Call 256-332-0068. (1)

For sale: 70 concrete blocks. Also, small bush-hogger and small box blade. Call 256-810-7359. (1)

1993 Bandit Wood/Brush Chipper, Model 90, Gas Engine. I have extra knives and the title. Call 256-332-3837. (2)

For sale: Hunting clothes & boots, guns. Loading ramps. 2-hp outboard motor, new. Call 256-383-2058. (5)

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For more information contact our office at Mon-Fri 7:30 - 4:00p.m. 205-993-5464

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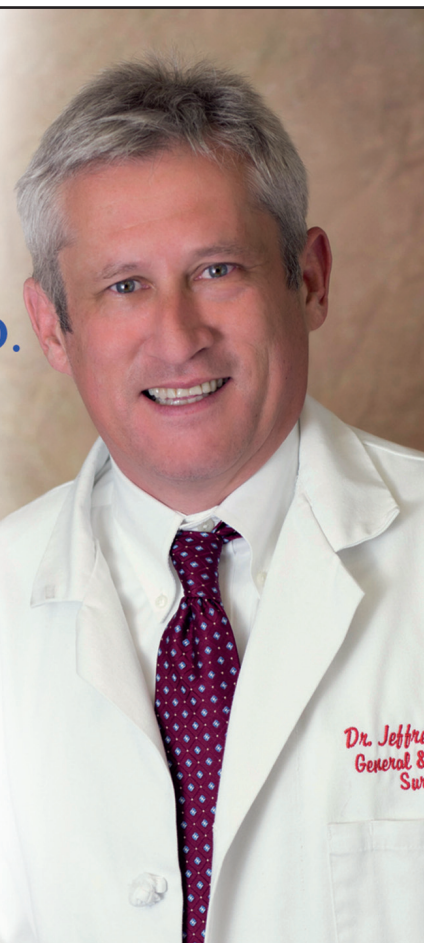
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'YARD,' from page 4

purchased spring flowering bulbs, wait until the ground cools and plant them so they will be ready come next year. If you are storing bulbs, make sure to keep the bulbs cool and dry. Your fridge's vegetable crisper or a cool, dry basement or garage will work.

•Protect Plants from winter damage

To avoid winter damage on your tender plants, the best method is to keep plants healthy and strong so they can better withstand winter stress. Water landscape before a freeze (allow time for foliage to dry). A well-watered soil absorbs more heat and re-radiates it at night.

If you decide to cover your plants, make sure that you don't use plastic! Be sure the cover touches ground, and it's best if it doesn't

touch foliage (but that's not always possible). A breathable blanket, sheet or cover cloth (polypropylene) will work best. Remove the blankets first thing in the morning to avoid burning your plants.

Other methods that work well are: Bunching your containers together, adding a little extra mulch to newly planted trees and shrubs, and moving plants inside.

Hopefully these tricks will give your landscape a good start for the New Year. If you need any more information, you can always contact your local extension office!

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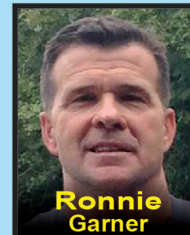
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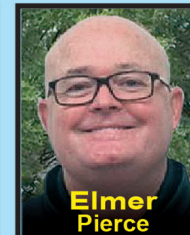
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A late-season surge has Russellville poised to earn the No. 4 seed in Region 8.

Tharptown advanced to its first super-regional tournament since 2013.



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Week 10 in the SEC

The hot seat was a crowded place for SEC coaches coming into the season, but Jim McElwain didn't necessarily seem to be on it. Surely, the thinking went, the first coach to go [not counting Hugh Freeze, who was fired by Ole Miss in August] would be Butch Jones or Kevin Sumlin or Bret Bielema or Barry Odom....



Mike Self
Sports Editor

Or not. McElwain and Florida "parted ways" in stunning fashion on Sunday, one day after the Gators suffered their most lopsided loss to Georgia since 1982 to fall to 3-4 on the year. It also didn't help matters that McElwain declined all week to offer any additional details—to the media or, even more damning, to his own administration—regarding alleged "death threats" that he said he, his family and some of his players have been subjected to this season.

So McElwain, who won 19 games and two division titles in his first two years in Gainesville prior to this season's debacle, is out, and interim head coach Randy Shannon is in—for the time being. There could be a handful of SEC jobs open soon, but Florida—the one nobody saw coming—will likely be the most coveted of the bunch.

The Gators go to Missouri on Saturday, but we'll leave that one alone and focus on the other four conference matchups on the Week 10 slate.

- Last week's record: 4-0**
- Record this season: 27-9**
- Saturday, November 4**
- South Carolina (6-2, 4-2 SEC) at Georgia (8-0, 5-0)**

This is a classic letdown spot for Georgia after finally taking out years of frustration on Florida in Jacksonville last week. Even so, South Carolina's pedestrian offense (eighth in the league in yards per play, tenth in points per game) shouldn't pose much of a threat to a fast and ferocious Bulldog defense that ranks third in the country in both points and yards allowed per game.

The Gamecocks' rush defense has been great during their three-game win streak, but nobody has slowed down that Georgia ground game yet.

- The Pick: Georgia 27 South Carolina 14**
- Ole Miss (3-5, 1-4) at Kentucky (6-2, 3-2)**

Even without Shea Patterson, the Rebels showed last week that they can still be dynamic on offense. They can also still be dreadful on defense. Kentucky back Benny Snell, Jr. (who ran for 180 yards and three scores in the win over Tennessee) should have another big day.

- The Pick: Kentucky 31 Ole Miss 27**
- LSU (6-2, 3-1) at Alabama (8-0, 5-0)**

See 'SEC,' Page 16

Into the Wild

A change on offense has put Russellville on a postseason path

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

Russellville's late-season surge, a push that has the Golden Tigers on the brink of the playoffs following an 0-5 start, has had many driving forces.

Chief among them is the implementation of a Wildcat formation that has given a struggling offense much-needed balance and turned senior back/receiver Bernard Phinizee into a one-man wrecking crew.

See 'WILD,' Page 14



PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

FOUR ON THE FLOOR—Phinizee (4) takes a licking in the Wildcat formation, but he keeps on ticking. The senior has rushed for 411 yards and five touchdowns over the past three games.

'Cats close with sixth straight win

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

One of the most successful seasons in Colbert Heights football history is by no means finished, but even head coach Taylor Leathers has to admit that 9-1 sounds pretty good.

"It has a nice ring to it," Leathers said on Sunday night, 48 hours after the Wildcats spanked East Lawrence 44-2 to close the regular season on a six-game win streak. "It has a really nice ring to it."

This year's Wildcats became just the third team in the program's 52-year history to win nine games in the regular season, joining the 2007 team and the 1968 team. Colbert Heights (9-1, 6-1 in Class 3A, Region 8) is guaranteed to host a first-round playoff game on November 10 and is still very much in the running to win its first region championship since 1999 [see story, page 18].

As good as 9-1 sounds, though, Leathers doesn't plan to bring it up again any time soon.

"I told the players they tied the record for regular season wins at Colbert Heights," Leathers said. "Only two other teams here have ever gone 9-1. I congratulated them after the game last Friday for doing something that hasn't been done very much. Then I told them, 'From this point forward, I'll be referring to our record as 0-0.'"

"What we've done is guarantee ourselves forty-eight more minutes of football. We're gonna spend the next two weeks getting ready for those forty-eight minutes. Then we'll go out and hopefully play well enough to earn another forty-eight minutes."

The Wildcats haven't won a playoff game since that 2007 team beat West End-Walnut Grove 34-6 in the first round, and no team in Colbert Heights

history has been past the second round without buying tickets. This team, which announced its arrival as a legitimate contender with back-to-back impressive wins over perennial powers Colbert County and Lauderdale County in mid-October, has a chance to change that.

Leathers, a Winfield alum and former walk-on defensive lineman at UNA who served as Lexington's offensive coordinator for four years prior to arriving at Colbert Heights in 2016, has quickly remade the Wildcats in his image. The Mountain Air Raid spread attack of old is gone; in its place is a ground-heavy offense predicated on playing physical and winning battles at the line of scrimmage.

A veteran offensive line led by senior tackle Cain Phifer and three other returning starters has paved the way for a pair of rushers each closing in on the 1,000-yard mark. Senior fullback Dylan Chandler ran through the rain, the mud and the East Lawrence defense for a career-high 185 yards and a score on 27 carries last week, giving him 958 yards and a whopping 17 touchdowns on 149 attempts this season. Quarterback Kevin Shaw, another senior, has run for 809 yards and seven touchdowns on virtually the same number of carries (146).

Defensively, the Wildcats have cut their average points allowed per game by nearly two-thirds, from 29.5 last season to just 10.7 this season. Only a blocked punt in the second half of last week's game prevented Colbert Heights from recording its third shutout of the year.

The Wildcats are more than just sound and stingy on defense; they make plays, too, recording

See 'WIN,' Page 18

'WILD' from page 13

Not everything, however, has gone as smoothly with the Wildcat as it would appear on Friday nights. Senior Jeff Lloyd, who serves as Phinizee's lead blocker at fullback in the new set, remembers what happened when his classmate was asked to throw the football out of the Wildcat in practice one afternoon.

"Well, the first time he threw one at practice it almost went in the bleachers," Lloyd said with a laugh. "I didn't know what to think when they called that play the other night, but it didn't end up in the other team's hands, so I was happy about that."

Phinizee's first career pass attempt (broken up by an Ardmore defender in the second quarter of last week's homecoming win) went about as well as Lloyd's first career pass route (more on that later), but in every other respect the shift in approach on offense has been everything the Golden Tigers could have hoped for and more.

Since breaking out the Wildcat in the first half of a loss to Brooks on October 13, Russellville has averaged 201.3 rushing yards and 27.3 points per game while winning two out of three. Those numbers represent a drastic improvement from the first six games of the season (pre-Wildcat), during which the Golden Tigers averaged just 57.2 rushing yards and 10.2 points per game while winning only once.

"They know we're running it, and they still can't stop it," said Lloyd, a 6'2, 205-pound defensive end whom head coach Mark Heaton moved to fullback in Week 6 at St. John Paul II in the hopes of reviving a dormant ground game. "Bernard's done a good job with it. We get in [the Wildcat], and we're like, 'We're getting five yards on this play,' or, 'We're getting a couple of yards on this play.' That's the attitude of our offense right now—we're gonna go forward."

Phinizee isn't big [he's listed at 5'8, 180], but pound-for-pound he's one of Russellville's strongest players. Of the 411 yards he's accumulated on the ground over the last three games, many have come after initial contact with a defender (or three).

"I've got a great blocker in Jeff in front of me," said Phinizee, who carried 28 times for 150 yards in a season-saving win over East Limestone two weeks ago and then erupted for a career-high 205 yards and four touchdowns on 20 attempts in last Friday's 44-6 rout of Ardmore. "I just trust him and get behind him. He creates a hole, and I just take it. Our offensive line's

been great, too. They've done really good."

A front five that includes veteran center John David Palmer and four first-year starters (junior left tackle Will Rushing, freshman left guard Edgar Amaya, junior right guard Ondre Armstead and senior right tackle John David Aycock) has steadily improved, and Lloyd has brought an added element of physicality to the rushing attack.

"It's fun," Lloyd said. "Bernard will tell me, 'I'm gonna get right on your butt,' and I'm like, 'Here we go.' I had never played fullback until that week [against St. John Paul]. It was tough at first, but I like getting in a three-point stance and acting like I'm a lineman or something."

"It's been fun. The first week, I did alright with it. I'm still trying to figure out how to stay on blocks. I'm used to hitting people, but it took a while to learn how to really lock onto them. I'm still getting better with it."

"They know we're running it, and they still can't stop it," Lloyd said. "Bernard's done a good job with it. We get in [the Wildcat], and we're like, 'We're getting five yards on this play,' or, 'We're getting a couple of yards on this play.' That's the attitude of our offense now—we're gonna go forward."

The same can be said for Phinizee, who had never taken direct snaps prior to lining up as the Wildcat quarterback in the first half against Brooks and promptly breaking off a 41-yard run. [The Wildcat, generally speaking, is effective from a pure numbers standpoint; it takes the traditional quarterback out of the equation, gives the offense an extra blocker and often forces an opponent to move a defender out of the box.]

"The second half of this season was the first time I've ever done it," Phinizee said on Sunday afternoon. "I like it. It's working."

And then some. After being held to just 27 rushing yards in the first half at East Limestone two weeks ago, Phinizee has rushed for 328 yards on 36 attempts (an average of 9.1 yards per carry) over the last six quarters. His four touchdown runs against Ardmore covered one, 45, 55 and 25 yards. [He also hauled in an 83-yard touchdown pass from freshman quarterback Luke Barnwell on the Golden Tigers' first offensive play of the second half.]

After taking the shotgun snap, Phinizee has the option of handing off to fleet-footed senior Robert Hamilton [who rushed for 102 yards and two touchdowns against Brooks in Week 7 and then broke off a 30-yard run on his first carry against Ardmore], but more often than not Phinizee simply keeps the ball and plows forward. Thus far, the Golden Tigers' version of the Wildcat has been less about deception and more about imposing their will on a defense.

Consequently, Phinizee takes a pounding, one that he usually still feels on Saturday morning.

"I've been sore," he confessed. "But I know I've gotta get ready to do it all over again."

Heaton and offensive coordinator Brett Voss don't figure to go away from the Wildcat any time soon. In addition to sparking the ground game, it has also freed Barnwell from the burden of having to throw the ball 25 to 35 times a night. In three games since the switch, Barnwell has excelled as a situational passer, completing 24-of-42 attempts for 372 yards and four touchdowns. The freshman made half a dozen critical third-down throws in the 17-13 win over East Limestone and then tossed two touchdown passes last week, the 83-yarder to Phinizee and a 39-yarder to senior wideout Calen Bragwell.

"Luke has really stepped up," Lloyd said. "He's gotten better every week. Rowe Gallagher, one of our young receivers, has gotten better every week. All our receivers have. Us running the ball makes [the defense] get ready for it. Then we bring in Luke and throw it a few times, and they're not expecting it as much as they were early in the year."

"There's less pressure on Luke when we can start off winning the game instead of getting behind. That's helps a lot, too."

Barnwell has thrown nine touchdown passes on the season, but by all rights he should probably have ten. Leading by four in the final minute and facing fourth down deep in East Limestone territory two weeks ago, the Golden Tigers elected to go for the jugular. Heaton and Voss called for a specially designed play, one they had just installed that week, on which Lloyd lines up at tight end and releases from the end of the line before heading toward the end zone. Lloyd found himself wide open on the play in question, with no East Limestone defenders in the vicinity, but Barnwell's pass bounced off his hands and fell incomplete.

Reliving the play on Sunday, Lloyd couldn't help but smile. [He may be new at this whole pass-catching thing, but he's already demonstrating abundant self-assuredness and the ability to divert blame—true hallmarks of any go-to receiver.]

"I've never actually run a route before," Lloyd said. "They told me I was going to on Monday [of that week], and I kind of laughed. Then they actually

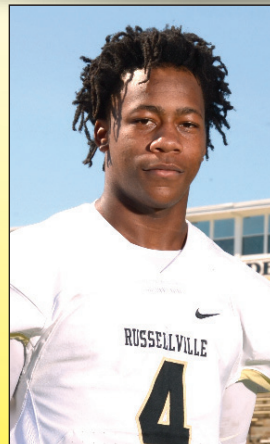
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Senior RB, Russellville



Phinizee wins the honor for the second time this year after totaling 288 yards from scrimmage and scoring five touchdowns in last Friday's 44-6 rout of Ardmore. Taking direct snaps in the Wildcat formation, Phinizee ran 20 times for 205 yards, including touchdowns of 1, 45, 55 and 25 yards. He also hauled in an 83-yard scoring pass.

In a span of just five offensive snaps starting with the Golden Tigers' final play of the first half and going through their fourth play of the second half, Phinizee gained 185 yards from scrimmage and scored four touchdowns.

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Path to the playoffs: How Russellville can punch its ticket

Mike Self
 Franklin Free Press

Russellville, East Limestone and Lawrence County each finished 3-4 in Class 5A, Region 8, tying for fourth place. The team whose defeated non-region opponents (in Class 3A and above) have the most combined wins will earn the fourth and final playoff seed.

•Russellville does not have a non-region win thus far. Russellville closes the regular season Friday with a non-region game at home against Class 3A Colbert County, which has five wins.

•East Limestone's only non-region win thus far was against Class 4A West Limestone, which has four wins. [West Limestone has one game left, at Ardmore on Friday.] East Limestone closes the regular season Thursday at home against Tanner. A win over Tanner would NOT help East Limestone, because Tanner is in Class 2A, and only wins over opponents at class, above class or within two classes count toward the tiebreaker.

•Lawrence County's only non-region win thus far was against Class 4A East Lawrence, which has zero wins. Lawrence County closes the regular

season Friday night with a non-region game at Class 5A West Point, which has six wins.

•Of the three teams tied for fourth, **only Lawrence County controls its own destiny.** Lawrence County would clinch the final playoff spot with a win at West Point on Friday night (no matter what happens in any other game). In that scenario, Lawrence County's defeated non-region opponents would have a combined total of AT LEAST six wins. The maximum number of combined wins for the defeated non-region opponents of both Russellville and East Limestone is five.

•Since a win by Lawrence County at West Point on Friday would eliminate both Russellville and East Limestone from playoff contention, the following scenarios all assume a Lawrence County LOSS to West Point.

If Lawrence County loses to West Point AND...

•Russellville defeats Colbert County, then Russellville clinches the fourth and final playoff seed. Russellville's defeated non-region opponents (i.e. Colbert County) would have five wins. Lawrence County's defeated non-region opponents (i.e. East Lawrence) would have, at most, one win. East Limestone's defeated non-region

opponents (in Class 3A and above) would have, at most, five wins [assuming West Limestone beats Ardmore on Friday].

In that scenario, the defeated non-region opponents (in Class 3A and above) of both Russellville and East Limestone would have five wins each, and Russellville would earn the fourth and final playoff seed by virtue of its head-to-head win over East Limestone.

If Lawrence County loses to West Point AND...

•Russellville loses to Colbert County, then East Limestone clinches the fourth and final playoff seed. In that scenario, Russellville would finish with zero defeated non-region opponents. Lawrence County's defeated non-region opponents would have, at most, one win. East Limestone's defeated non-region opponents would have, at a minimum, four wins.

In the final analysis, here's what each team needs to make the playoffs:

- Lawrence County needs a win over West Point.
- Russellville needs a win over Colbert County AND a Lawrence County loss to West Point.
- East Limestone needs losses by BOTH Lawrence County and Russellville.

'WILD' from page 14

let me do it. My gloves were soaking wet, my cleats were soaking wet, everything was covered in grass. If we went back and ran that play right now, I'd probably catch it. Everything was soaking wet.

"I was shocked we were even running the play."
 And if Heaton and Voss dare to call his number again?
 "Oh, it's a touchdown," Lloyd said.

For the time being, Lloyd's primary responsibility on offense will be continuing to help clear a path in the run game. Next up is rival Colbert County, which visits Golden Tiger Stadium for the regular season finale on Friday night. A win by Russellville (3-6 overall, 3-4 in Class 5A, Region 8) and a loss by Lawrence County (4-5, 3-4) at West Point would put the Golden Tigers in the playoffs—a remarkable feat considering that barely a month ago they were 0-5 and had scored two touchdowns the entire season.

For his part, Phinizee never lost faith that he and his teammates could turn things around.

"It was hard, but we got better as a team," he said. "As a unit, we came out stronger the second half of the season. We weren't all playing together. The last couple of weeks, we started playing as a team now. We're together. It's clicking the same way, and we're all playing together."
 "I knew we would come together. I knew it."

The fact that Russellville is even playing meaningful games down the stretch after such a difficult start is a testament to the team's perseverance under fire.

"It was rough, but we kept fighting," Lloyd said. "Everybody stayed together and kept fighting. Coach Heaton didn't give up on us. We kind of felt like all we needed was something small to turn everything around for us. We all stayed together. It was frustrating, and some people quit on us, but we stayed together for the most part and kept fighting."

"We changed one or two things around, and that helped us a lot."

Critical wins over East Limestone and Ardmore the last two weeks rescued a season on the brink, and now a third straight win could potentially put Russellville in the playoffs for the 17th time in the last 18 years.

"It would mean a lot. That was our goal for the year," Lloyd said. "With us being seniors, we wanted to start over [at the halfway point] at 0-0 and finish 5-0 the rest of the way and make the playoffs. We're 3-1 right now."

"It would mean a lot to get in the playoffs and hopefully knock somebody

off."

Perhaps, along the way, Lloyd will get his chance to catch another pass, and Phinizee his chance to throw another one. If so, he plans to complete it this time.

"Yeah," Phinizee said, "I'm gonna try to."

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Super season



COURTESY PHOTO

The Tharptown volleyball team finished second at the Class 1A, Area 13 tournament last week, earning a super-regional berth for the first time since 2013. Team members pictured above are: Front row (L to R) - Olyvia Egle, Brooke Daily, Isis Ramirez, head coach Tracey Fretwell, Makensy Hester, Erica Gray, Kasey McCormack, Taylor Cameron; back row (L to R) - Macy Petree, Leslie Staggs, Abi Sanchez, Breanna Gasque, Adriana Borden, Annslee Bottoms, Ameliah Dawson.

Lady Wildcats earn trip to Huntsville

Submitted to the FFP

Tharptown's varsity volleyball team clinched its first super-regional berth since 2013 last Monday, finishing second in the Class 1A, Area 13 tournament at Phillips High School.

The Lady Wildcats punched their ticket to Huntsville with a comeback win over rival Belgreen, beating the Lady Bulldogs 19-25, 16-25, 25-22, 25-18, 15-12.

Makensy Hester led Tharptown with 40 assists and 10 digs in the match against Belgreen. Erica Gray finished with eight kills, six aces, five

blocks and eight digs. Brooke Daily had nine kills, ten aces, four blocks and five digs.

Kasey McCormack recorded 50 assists, five aces, four kills and five digs, and Adriana Borden added five kills and five blocks. Annslee Bottoms and Ameliah Dawson each had three kills and three blocks.

The Lady Wildcats lost to host Phillips in the area final, but the tournament champion and runner-up advanced to the super-regional.

Tharptown traveled to Huntsville last Thursday and lost to Faith Christian in the super-regional tournament at the Von Braun Center.

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'SEC', from page 13

Credit Ed Orgeron and LSU for turning around a season that seemed on the brink of disaster. But it's hard to see this being a competitive game for more than a quarter or two. Alabama is a three-touchdown favorite for a reason—namely a defense that looks every bit as good as the ones that have held LSU to 17 points or less in seven straight meetings.

The Pick: Alabama 34 LSU 10
Auburn (6-2, 4-1) at Texas A&M (5-3, 3-2)

The Aggies' annual late-season swoon is underway, as evidenced by last week's three-touchdown drubbing at the hands of Mississippi State. Since the start of the 2014 season, Texas A&M is now 3-12 in SEC games played after October 15.

Now here comes an Auburn team that has won its last two trips to College Station and should be healthy coming off the bye.

The Pick: Auburn 34 Texas A&M 24

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LSU at Alabama	Alabama	
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Clemson at N.C. State	Clemson	
Virginia Tech at Miami	Virginia Tech	
Penn State at Michigan State	Penn State	
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'WIN' from page 13

40 tackles for loss, 10 sacks and 13 interceptions during the regular season. The 6'2, 180-pound Chandler (76 tackles, including 12 for a loss) leads a veteran linebacker corps that also includes fellow seniors Korey Saint (69 tackles, two interceptions), Brendan Borden (54 tackles, 2.5 sacks) and Bevin Foust (41 tackles). Senior Bud Pratt (61 tackles, including 8.5 for loss) has had a breakout season at defensive end, and Kevin Shaw—who has picked off four passes despite playing only in certain situations at free safety—is one of three defensive backs with multiple interceptions. [Corners Tanner Rickard, a senior, and Carson Shaw, a freshman, each have two.]

Leathers said Colbert Heights will likely face either Locust Fork or Holly Pond in round one, depending on how things shake out. Either way, the Wildcats' focus this week during the bye will be on themselves.

"We're gonna work on us," Leathers said. "On the rest side of things, we'll take a couple of days off. We've been going at it hard for ten straight weeks, and our guys could use a chance to rest their bodies and their minds.

"On the football side, we'll focus on some things we haven't done well and need to improve on. We'll work on the timing of the offense and ball security, and our offensive line will work on executing the blocks we like to use.

"By Thursday night or Friday, we should know who our first-round opponent is, and we'll start getting ready for them."

**Road to the region title:
How the 'Cats can clinch**

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

Colbert Heights, West Morgan and Lauderdale County each finished 6-1 in Class 3A, Region 8, tying for first place. The team whose defeated non-region opponents have the most combined wins will be crowned region champion and earn the No. 1 seed for the playoffs.

•Colbert Heights defeated Red Bay (four wins thus far), Phil Campbell (one win) and Sheffield (three wins) in non-region play. Colbert Heights' defeated non-region opponents currently have a combined total of eight wins.

•West Morgan defeated St. John Paul II (zero wins thus far), Priceville (two wins) and Cherokee (seven wins) in non-region play. West Morgan's defeated non-region opponents currently have a combined total of nine wins.

•Lauderdale County does not have a non-region win thus far. Lauderdale County closes the regular season Friday with a non-region game at Brooks, which has six wins. The maximum number of wins by Lauderdale County's defeated non-region opponents would be six, which would be less than the combined number of wins already accumulated by the defeated non-region opponents of both Colbert Heights and West Morgan. Hence, even with a victory over Brooks, **Lauderdale County can NOT win the region.**

•Each of Colbert Heights' defeated non-region opponents (Red Bay, Phil Campbell, Sheffield) has one game remaining. Red Bay hosts Cherokee (7-2), Phil Campbell hosts Hackleburg (8-1) and Sheffield plays at R.A. Hubbard (2-7). All three games are scheduled for Thursday night.

•Each of West Morgan's defeated non-region opponents (St. John Paul II, Priceville, Cherokee) has one game remaining. St. John Paul II plays at Clements (4-5) on Friday, Priceville plays at Westminster Christian (5-4) on Friday, and Cherokee plays at Red Bay (4-5) on Thursday.

•If the combined number of wins by Colbert Heights' defeated non-region opponents winds up being the same as the combined number of wins by West Morgan's non-region opponents, then West Morgan will win the region championship by virtue of its head-to-head victory over Colbert Heights.

•If Cherokee beats Red Bay on Thursday night (no matter what happens in any other game), then West Morgan would be the region champion and Colbert Heights would earn the No. 2 seed. In other words, **Red Bay MUST beat Cherokee on Thursday night for Colbert Heights to remain alive for the region championship.** Therefore, the following scenarios all assume a Red Bay win over Cherokee.

If Red Bay beats Cherokee AND...

•Phil Campbell AND Sheffield both win Thursday, then a loss by either St. John Paul II OR Priceville would make Colbert Heights the region champion.

•Phil Campbell OR Sheffield lose Thursday, then both St. John Paul II AND Priceville would have to lose in order for Colbert Heights to win the region.

•Phil Campbell AND Sheffield both lose Thursday, then West Morgan would be the region champion and Colbert Heights would earn the No. 2 seed. In other words, Colbert Heights needs a win by Red Bay AND a win by either Phil Campbell OR Sheffield to remain alive for the region championship.

•There is no scenario in which Colbert Heights drops to the No. 3 seed. The Wildcats are guaranteed to host a first-round game on Friday, November 10.

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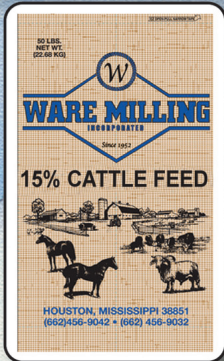
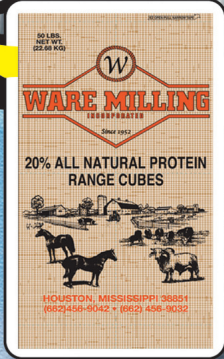
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