

Russellville High School principal Jason Goodwin was honored last week by Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow with a resolution recognizing his designation as the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools District 7 North Principal of the Year.



The state of Alabama has joined a civil action impacting the poultry industry. See Page 3.

# RHS students set to take part in DYW competition

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

When 47 young women take the stage next week in Montgomery as part of the 2018 Alabama Distinguished Young Women competition, Russellville High School will be doubly represented.

Juniors Allison Bryant and Ellie Counts-Kerby both won local competitions to advance to the state level. Bryant will represent Franklin County, and Counts-Kerby will represent Lawrence County.

The DYW state competition will take place next Friday and Saturday, January 19-20.

One young woman will advance to represent Alabama in the national competition later this year in Mobile, with a chance to win more than \$100,000 in cash tuition scholarships.

Distinguished Young Women combines the chance to win scholarships with a program offering young women life-skills training to prepare them for life after high school. It costs participants nothing to enter.



Allison Bryant

Participants take part in workshops to develop interviewing and public speaking skills, showcase their achievements and earn an opportunity to win scholarships. Last year, more than \$42,000 was awarded to DYW participants in Alabama.

DYW participants are evaluated in the following categories: Scholastics (25 percent); Interview (25 percent);

See 'STUDENTS,' Page 7



Ellie Counts-Kerby

# Hall's legendary music career had its roots in Phil Campbell

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

He may have been known as the "Father of Muscle Shoals Music," but Rick Hall was a Franklin County resident and student long before he garnered national fame as a record producer, songwriter, producer and musician.

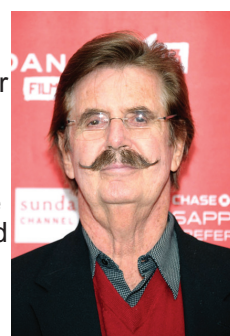
Hall, 85, died last Tuesday morning at his home after a battle with prostate cancer.

One of the centerpieces on Hall's desk was a photo of his high school

agriculture teacher, Grover Morrow, the father of Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow.

Hall wrote on the photo: "To the man who believed in me and my music when nobody did."

Morrow said his father gave Hall his first musical instrument, a mandolin.



Rick Hall

Morrow recalled a childhood memory of listening to Hall and other Future Farmers of America students practicing their string band on his father's front porch.

"I'd sit out there and listen to them practice until two in the morning, getting ready for state," Morrow said. "He always appreciated my father for encouraging him with his music."

Hall grew up in the Freedom Hills area of Franklin County and attended Phil Campbell High School. His musical career began as a fiddle

See 'MUSIC,' Page 7

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**"COMPOSTING"**-Taylor Reeder, Regional Extension Agent-Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests

**Thursday, January 11, 2018**

**"PHYSICAL ACTIVITY"**-Lakita Page, Agent Assistant-Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program

**"GET OUTSIDE!"**-Taylor Reeder, Regional Extension Agent-Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests

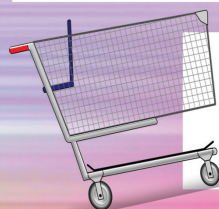
**Thursday, January 18, 2018**



**"LIMIT SALT, FAT, AND SUGAR"**-Lakita Page, Agent Assistant-Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program

**"HERBS"**-Taylor Reeder, Regional Extension Agent-Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests

**Thursday, January 25, 2018**



**"PLAN & SAVE WHEN SHOPPING"**-

Lakita Page, Agent Assistant-Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program

**"GROW YOUR OWN -VEGETABLE GARDENING"**-

Taylor Reeder, Regional Extension Agent-Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests

**Thursday, February 1, 2018**

**"OPEN DISCUSSION"**

**Friday, February 8, 2018**

Lakita Page, Agent Assistant-Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program

Taylor Reeder, Regional Extension Agent-Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests

**Thursday, February 8, 2018**



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**Edison "Papa Ed" Bragwell**, Russellville, age 92  
Died Wednesday, January 3, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

**Sheila Marlene Champion**,  
Pulaski, TN (formerly of Russellville), age 59  
Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time.

**Ralph William "Bill" Clark III**, Moundsville, AL, age 54  
Died Tuesday, January 2, 2018. The family was planning to hold a memorial service at a later date.

**Grace Brewer Hargett**, Russellville, age 91  
Died Sunday, December 31, 2017. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

**Marie Engle Plunkett**, Phil Campbell, age 70  
Died Wednesday, January 3, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Liberty Hill Cemetery.

**Marie Murphree Potter**, Russellville, age 81  
Died Wednesday, January 3, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in Cherry Hill Cemetery in Russellville.

**Randy Eugene Richards**, Tuscumbia, age 57  
Died Saturday, December 30, 2017. The family was planning to hold a memorial service at a later date.

**Elizabeth O. Wooten**, Rome, GA, age 82  
Died Monday, January 1, 2018. Funeral held in the Carl Sidwell Chapel of Salmon Funeral Home. Graveside services held at Pilot Hill Baptist Church in Vina.

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# Police arrest two for theft from local restaurant

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

After receiving a tip from Russellville mayor David Grissom, Russellville Police Department sergeant investigator Jake Tompkins arrested two people last week and charged them with stealing items from a downtown business.

Grissom said he was called to his building in downtown Russellville early last Tuesday morning because of a water issue. Grissom heard sounds

coming from the alley behind his building, and he witnessed a suspicious vehicle parked behind the Bricks Restaurant.

A Russellville patrol unit made a traffic stop on the vehicle, and two suspects were taken into custody. Randy Charles Hill, 50, and Virginia Wilson, 35, both of Russellville, were charged with felony theft of property in the second degree. The pair remained in jail as of last Thursday evening after bond was set earlier in the day.

Among the items taken from the Bricks Inn and

Restaurant, owned by Trent and Michele Stephenson, were a compressor for a walk-in freezer, tools, deep-frying baskets and copper fittings, according to RPD chief Chris Hargett.

The suspects reportedly took the items to Tennessee Valley Recycling Tuesday to sell them for scrap, police said.

When questioned by Tompkins, Hill and Wilson admitted their involvement in the theft.

The Bricks Inn and Restaurant, located at 114 N. Jackson Avenue, is set to open next month.

# AFF heralds state's decision to join civil action

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Alabama joined with 12 other states in a civil action against the states of California and Massachusetts alleging that laws regulating the housing of laying hens are unconstitutional.

Through Alabama attorney general Steve Marshall's office, Alabama joined 12 other states on December 5, 2017, in challenging a California law that requires hens in cages spend most of their day in spaces large enough so they can lie down, stand up, turn around and fully extend their limbs.

Marshall joined in the lawsuit against Massachusetts on December 11, 2017, challenging that state's law barring the sale of eggs, pork and veal not housed according to new regulations.

The lawsuits were filed directly with the United States Supreme Court. Missouri attorney general Josh Hawley is leading the lawsuit against California, alleging the state's law costs consumers nationwide \$350 million annually because of egg prices increasing after the law went into effect in 2015.

Alabama's inclusion in the lawsuit was heralded by the Alabama Farmers Federation in a press release issued last month.

"We appreciate Attorney General Marshall's standing up for farmers and agriculture," said ALFA president Jimmy Parnell. "Agriculture is our state's largest industry. Our poultry and livestock farmers care for their animals and work hard to

provide families around the country and world safe, wholesome food. Other states should not be allowed to regulate Alabama farmers."

In announcing that Alabama joined the lawsuits, Marshall said the attempts by California and Massachusetts to impose agricultural restrictions on Alabama farmers is unconstitutional.

**"We appreciate Attorney General Marshall's standing up for farmers and agriculture," said ALFA president Jimmy Parnell. "Agriculture is our state's largest industry. Our poultry and livestock farmers care for their animals and work hard to provide families around the country and world safe, wholesome food. Other states should not be allowed to regulate Alabama farmers."**

"States and their residents have the right to set their own standards for the production of agricultural goods, especially for reasons of health and safety," Marshall said in a December 21, 2017 release. "However, they don't have the right to impose restrictions on how products from other states are raised, which is what California and Massachusetts have done."

The lawsuit alleges the regulations violate the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress exclusive authority to regulate commerce among the states.

"If allowed to go unchallenged, such unconstitutional regulations could adversely affect all forms of commerce between states," Marshall added. "The citizens of Alabama should not have to live

by the liberal edicts of California and Massachusetts. I have joined two separate lawsuits filed before the U.S. Supreme Court this month aimed at preventing California and Massachusetts from imposing their will on the rest of America."

Alabama farmers say the regulations would be extremely costly because they would force farmers to change their housing systems. Production costs would also increase, and those costs would result in consumers paying more for eggs, pork and veal. California's original law required only California farmers to comply. But the state's farmers argued they would be at a competitive disadvantage with farmers from other states, so the law was expanded to ban the sale of eggs within California from hens not raised in compliance with California's standards.

According to the Alabama Poultry Producers, poultry is Alabama's number two agricultural industry, trailing only forestry. Poultry has a \$15 billion impact on the state's economy each year and is responsible for 86,000 workers.

Alabama is the nation's second-leading broiler chicken producer, processing 21 million birds each week. Georgia processes 23 million weekly.

Approximately 50 billion eggs are produced in the United States annually.

A similar challenge to the California law was unsuccessful at the federal appellate level and ended at the Ninth Circuit of Appeals in 2016.

The Supreme Court is expected to rule later this year whether to accept jurisdiction on the case.

# Northwest-Shoals announces academic honorees

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Northwest-Shoals Community College recently announced its President's and Dean's Lists for the fall semester of 2017.

Requirements for the President's List are a semester grade point average of 4.0 and completion of a minimum semester course load of 12 semester credit hours of college-level work.

Students from the *Free Press* readership area earning President's List honors include:

## Hodges

Kerry Lawler

## Mount Hope

Haley McGuire

## Phil Campbell

Bethany Letteral, Kody Lowery, Lex May, Jennifer Reed and Abby Swinney

## Red Bay

Brooklyn Bolton

## Russellville

Hannah Akers, Fredy Argueta, Susie Boyd, Megan Brockway, Emiliano Chavez-Hernandez, Kayla Cochran, Bethany Cook, Jeffery Dill, Billy Fretwell, Jace Gallagher, Lauren Goines, Daniel Jenkins, David Lugo Barrera, Hunter Milender, Mason Montgomery, John Pierce, Joshua Pinkard, Kaylee Rickard, Sierra Robinson and Noah Coan

## Spruce Pine

Levi Hargett, Austin Hester and Hunter Swinney

## Tuscumbia

Katherine Ansley, Emma Bratton, Kimberly Brooks, Darby Frederick, Lacori Goodloe, Joshua Green, Emilee Moseley, Donovan Tennyson, Elisa Tennyson, Katelyn Tidwell and Alyssa Wallace.

Students earning Dean's List honors must earn a semester grade point average of at least a 3.5 or above, but below a 4.0, and completion of a minimum semester course load of 12 semester credit hours of college-level work.

Students earning Dean's List honors include:

## Littleville

Kathryn Morrow

## Mount Hope

Amber Lynch, Ivey Terry and Samantha Loden

## Phil Campbell

Justin Baker, Ezequiel Gonzalez, Dillion Jackson, Adam Lowery, Stephanie Orrick and Michele Thompson

## Red Bay

Autumn Higginbottom and Alanis Welch

## Russellville

Kalley Baker, Hayden Bell, Tania Betancourt, Salvador Blanco-Perello, Tracey Chavez, Nathaniel Franklin, Wendy Garcia, Lariza Garcia Delgado, Monica Gomez, Pedro Lucas, Allenby Martinez Alarcon, Jill Masterson, Michael Mitchell, Caitlyn Morgan, Jennifer Morgan, Hailey Peters, Allison Standridge, Kaitlyn Vandiver, Noemi Vargas and Christopher Yancey

## Spruce Pine

Clay Cason, Shelby Cooper, Elijah Crandall and Michael Roberson.

Congratulations to these students!



# The Honey Do List: The evolution of plumbing

We've seen a lot of burst water pipes in the last few days, as we experienced our first real frigid temperatures of the season.

Who knows? Here in Alabama, we may or may not have seen the last of it. This might be a good time to review some types of plumbing and how it has evolved in our area.

Many older homes will have galvanized water pipe. Galvanized pipe is very durable, but it can freeze and burst. Galvanized pipe can rust from the inside out, restricting water flow and causing obstructions.

Galvanized pipe can be difficult to handle and replace. Cutting and threading needs to be done with specialized tools, and long rigid pipe can be hard to handle.

Some homes may have copper plumbing. Copper replaces the job of threading with sweating, which is done with a torch and solder.

Repairs can also be accomplished with compression fittings. Copper pipe was always considered a premium feature in a house, but with the mineral content in our water, pin holes can develop over time. Sometimes these aren't discovered

until a lot of damage is done.

Polybutylene plumbing came about with manufactured homes. Its flexibility and crimp ring fittings made it very easy to install.

Polybutylene has been removed from the market and is hard to come by these days. Fittings tend to get fragile and break over time, and a special crimper is required to repair it.

Most of you will be familiar with PVC and CPVC pipe. This pipe is lightweight, easy to cut, inexpensive and is easily installed or repaired with fittings that "glue" in. PVC is used for cold water, while CPVC is used for hot water applications coming off the water heater.

Next week we'll look at the pros and cons of PVC/CPVC, the advantage of PEX and the new Sharkbite fittings.

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



Doug Green

Email us at [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).

## Our House

by Ree Shannon



## FRANKLIN FREE PRESS

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# We can't leave well enough alone

Gail Motes  
*Franklin Free Press*

We've all heard the phrase, "You just need to leave well enough alone!" That means a lot of different things to me.

Maybe you've been told to speak only when you're spoken to, or to think before you speak. Well, what about someone being told not to touch a fence because it's electric and will shock the fire out of you. We all know what happens next. A hand quickly jerks back, and you hear the words, "My goodness! That was hot!"

The bottom line is, very few of us leave well enough alone. Curiosity, pushing boundaries, trying to prove how tough you are, having to put in your two cents worth or even the need to say one more thing are all good examples of not being able to leave well enough alone.

As with most things, there is a positive side to such a phrase. You won't be afraid to try new things. After all, if Thomas Edison had not invented light, we would have a hard time getting up to get a midnight snack. The Wright brothers gave us the opportunity to fly planes we could have never imagined. And a big thank you to Alexander Graham Bell. Who wants to think about no telephone?

You will have to admit, we couldn't try, try again if we left well enough alone. The truth of the matter is, I would have never written this article if it had not been for something I had read. Well, that's just me. One word or one sentence, and

my thought process gets going and I'm off to grab paper and a pen.

Now, I would love to share what I read: A woman brought a very limp parrot into the vet's office. She laid her pet on the table, and the vet got his stethoscope and listened to the parrot's chest. After a few minutes, he shook his head and sadly told her that he was sorry, but the parrot had passed away.

"He might just be in a coma or something," the woman protested. "You have not done any testing or anything." The vet shrugged, rolled his eyes and left the room, returning with a beautiful black lab. The dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the dead parrot top to bottom. He looked at the vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet took the dog out and returned with a cat. The cat jumped on the table and sniffed at the bird. The cat then shook his head and ran out of the room meowing.

The vet looked at the woman and said, "I'm sorry, but your parrot is most definitely, certifiably dead." He then turned to his computer terminal, hit a few keys and produced a bill that he handed to the woman for \$150. She looked at it and said, "A hundred and fifty dollars just to tell me my bird is dead!?" He shrugged and said, "If you had taken my word for it, it would have only cost \$20, but with the lab report and the cat scan it costs more."

This is one time she should have left well enough alone!

For updates on news and sports, visit us online at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)!





### Mortgage ratios

Dear Dave,  
Do you have a guideline ratio for mortgage debt to income?

Levon

Dear Levon,  
When it comes to buying a home, I always tell people to get a 15-year, fixed rate mortgage, with monthly payments that are no more than 25 percent of their take-home pay. This type of mortgage is the only debt I don't beat up people for having. Still, I urge folks to pay off these loans in less than 15 years.

The average person following my plan pays off this type of loan in about seven or eight years. That's a pretty big deal in terms of your financial security. And paying extra on your mortgage doesn't have to be a strain. You can start by simply rounding up your payments. If the payment is \$770, make it \$800 instead, and apply the extra to the principal balance. If you want to get more intense, you could make an extra house payment each quarter, or go the route of bi-weekly payments. To do this, simply make half a monthly payment every two weeks. By the end of the year you'll have made 13 payments instead of 12. This will knock years off the length of your loan.

Remember, your income is your largest wealth-building tool. It's so much easier to save, invest and give when all your money isn't flying out the door to make payments!

Dave

### No commodities

Dear Dave,  
Do you recommend having gold and silver as part of your investment portfolio?

Don

Dear Don,  
No, I do not. I also don't recommend oil or corn futures. All of these are examples of commodities, and the commodities market is *extremely* volatile. In addition to the market being wildly volatile, the prices on commodities isn't based on actual production. It's based largely on a supply and demand curve. If there's a shortage on one of them, the price shoots up.

For example, when you're talking about gold and silver, there's more demand than supply when the economy is bad. In this kind of scenario, people are fearful, and lots of them run to buy gold. This drives up the price to unrealistically high levels.

Again, the price on a commodity isn't based on anything other than fear or greed, and a supply and demand curve. The prices aren't based on an actual production of income, like it is with stocks or real estate. I don't buy commodities at all, especially gold and silver. I don't recommend you buy them, either.

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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The advertisement for EyeCare Professionals features three smiling doctors: Dr. Wayne Stevens, Dr. Martha Morrow, and Dr. David Britton. The logo for EyeCare Professionals is at the top. The tagline "Where healthy eyes are our focus" is written in a script font. At the bottom, the website "eyecareprofessionalspc.com" and the address "15255 Hwy 43 • Russellville • 256.332.5440" are listed.

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# What's Happening


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EVENTS OF INTEREST • FAMILY REUNIONS • PLAYS • CHURCH GATHERINGS • EDUCATIONAL • CLUB MEETINGS


 Russellville Masonic Lodge 371 will be selling Boston Butts during Super Bowl weekend. Butts are \$30 and may be pre-ordered by calling 256-810-1970. Pick-up will be Saturday, February 3 from 8-10 a.m. at the Masonic Lodge on Coffee Street.

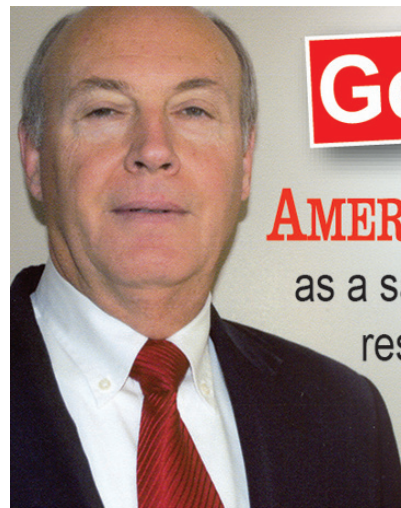
 Kids and Kin dates for January through March in Franklin County are as follows and will be held at the Franklin County Baptist Association Building, 128 Guard Street NE, Russellville, AL: Thursday, January 11 at 5 p.m.—“Tips Relative Child Care Providers Can Use to Guide Children’s Behavior,” Elysia Ergle, Southern Wellness; Thursday, January 25 at 5 p.m.—“Sensory Processing Disorder Signs in Infants and Toddlers,” Alisha Albright, Family Guidance Center of Alabama; Thursday, February 8 at 5 p.m.—“Teaching Children Tolerance,” Rebecca Richmond, Child Care Central; Thursday, February 22 at 5 p.m.—“Healthy Habits,” Alisha Albright, Family Guidance Center of Alabama; Thursday, March 8 at 5 p.m.—“Ready or Not, Here I Come,” Dee McNalley, UCP; Thursday, March 22 at 5 p.m.—“Ways Babies Learn When You Sing to Them,” Alisha Albright, Family Guidance Center of Alabama.

 American Legion Post 64 meets the second Thursday of each month at the Chamber of Commerce office on Jackson Avenue. Meal served around 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m. Next meeting will be Thursday, January 11.

 The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guests Danika and Jeb at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville this Saturday, January 13 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.

 Gentiva Hospice offers a grief support group, “Grieving Well Together,” that meets the third Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Lenox room at Calvary Baptist Church in Russellville. You are invited to attend.

 If you are interested in the study of the Civil War and have an ancestor who was in the Confederate Army, join the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month (except January and July) at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center. Next meeting will be February 1. The SCV is the direct heir of the United Confederate Veterans and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, VA in 1896, the SCV continues to serve as a historical, patriotic and non-political organization dedicated to ensuring that a true history of the period from 1861-1865 is preserved. Membership in the SCV is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate Armed Forces. Membership can be obtained through either direct or collateral family lines, and kinship to a veteran must be documented genealogically. Join us for the celebration of our heritage! The minimum age for membership is 12. Call 1-800-MYDIXIE or 256-324-2317.



## Gene Ellison

is now affiliated with  
**AMERICAN REALTY COMPANY**

as a sales associate. He is a lifelong resident of Franklin County and a 1970 graduate of Russellville High School. He served as

**Gene is a REALTOR and a member of the Shoals Area Association of Realtors**

Revenue Commissioner of Franklin County from 2009-2015 where he

was responsible for mapping, assessment, and appraisal of real properties as well as the collection of ad valorem taxes on property and motor vehicles. He retired after 30 years as a chemist in 2005 from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

If you have any real estate needs please call  
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## 'MUSIC' from page 1

player with the Country Pals, a band that performed at local events and hosted a weekly show on a Hamilton radio station.

Hall went on to co-found Florence Alabama Music Enterprises, or FAME Records, in Florence. He took sole ownership of the publishing company in 1960 and moved it to Muscle Shoals.

Hall produced music for prominent artists including Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin, Clarence Carter and Etta James. He would shift to mainstream music in the 1970s, where he worked with the Osmonds, Mac Davis, Paul Anka and Bobbie Gentry.

His country impact was also strong. The repertoire of country artists he produced songs for includes Jerry Reed, Ronnie Milsap, T.G. Sheppard, Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers, and Shenandoah.

Hall was a subject of a 2013 documentary, *Muscle Shoals*, which recounted the story of FAME Studios and the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio.

**"With Rick's passing, there will be a lot of times things come up, like our golf tournament, that will cause everyone to reflect that he had the vision for this and so much that benefits our community," McKinney said.**

Hall and his wife donated their home several years ago to the Alabama Sheriffs Boys and Girls Ranches, where it would become the Colbert County Girls Ranch, also known as FAME Ranch, a home for young girls with unfortunate family circumstances.

Russellville resident Buzzy McKinney helps support the ranch by putting on an annual golf tourna-

ment at Twin Pines Country Club.

"With Rick's passing, there will be a lot of times things come up, like our golf tournament, that will cause everyone to reflect that he had the vision for this and so much that benefits our community," McKinney said.

Florence music promoter Debbie Dixon said she was devastated last Tuesday to hear of Hall's passing.

"I couldn't believe it when I first heard the news—a living legend until 2018. We have lost so many in 2017," Dixon said. "January 2, 2018, is another sad day for the music world."

"My youngest daughter always had to have another picture with Rick every time she saw him. She recently compared two that were taken twenty years apart. The legend's memory will live on. Rest in peace, Rick."

## 'STUDENTS' from page 1

Talent (20 percent); Fitness (15 percent) and Self-Expression (15 percent).

Counts-Kerby is the daughter of Stephen and Marla Kerby. She resides in Town Creek but attends RHS, where she is captain of the varsity cheer squad. She also serves as head coach of the Student Booster Club, a Student Council class representative and treasurer of the National Honor Society. She's also involved with the Annual Staff and Mu Alpha Theta and is secretary of Future Business Leaders of America.

Her talent will be musical theater dance. Counts-Kerby plans to attend the University of Alabama and study biomedical engineering.

Counts-Kerby sees the DYW experience as a building block for her life well beyond high school.

"I got involved in the Distinguished Young Women program not only to have the chance to

win scholarships for my college education, but also to be more prepared for life after high school," Counts-Kerby said. "The DYW program helps young ladies with their poise and overall confidence through the interview process, self-expression category and talent portions of the competition."

"The interview is definitely difficult, but I'm ready for the challenge."

When she took part in the Northwest Alabama DYW program in August, Bryant won the fitness, talent, self-expression and scholastics categories.

The daughter of Loni Bryant, Allison plans to begin her collegiate career at the University of North Alabama and later transfer to Auburn to pursue a degree in pharmacy.

At RHS, Bryant is a member of the National Honor Society, Color Guard (for four years, includ-

ing two as Color Guard captain), FBLA, Spanish Club, Chemistry Club and FCCLA.

Bryant's talent performance in Montgomery will include a flag/rifle routine.

Bryant said that preparing for the state competition has been a grind, but she realizes the long-term benefits she'll enjoy from being involved.

"Distinguished Young Women is such an amazing program that teaches young women how to be successful in the world today," Bryant said.

"Through this program I have learned how to prepare for interviews and be graceful and poised, and I've made friendships that will last a lifetime."

"Preparing for state has been hard, from learning fitness routines to practicing for interview, but I am very excited and proud to represent Franklin County in Distinguished Young Women of Alabama 2018."

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

**Senior Fair a big hit**  
Area seniors enjoyed complimentary luncheon at week's event while about 100 people attended.

**Alma of credit**  
Alma is expected to be coming home basketball games at RHS gym as a result of the repairs will be covered by...

**Funding still primary broadband**  
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...

**Green's Dependable ce**  
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 customers and employees."  
Green added a lot of features to the online catalog order system, shipped to the store, credit cards and cash on most any...  
"It's all about that's what we strive to do on customer service do a good job."

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**for voting in county**  
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 the most crossover voters. There were no crossover voters in Marion or Winston counties.

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# Anyone!....





# Why the 401(k) loan option is such a bad idea

By Chris Hogan

There's a trend among 401(k) participants that keeps me up at night. I hesitate to mention it, because if you don't know about it, that's one less person who's losing money. Chances are you've heard about it, though.

It's the 401(k) loan.

There. I said it. You know about it. Now, let me tell you why it's such a bad idea.

In theory, taking out money from your 401(k) sounds like a great option. Rather than the hassle of going through a bank, you can take money from your investment account as a short-term loan. The interest you pay on that loan goes back into your investment account, so you're not really losing any money, right?

Wrong. And I can prove it.

Let's say you take out \$25,000 from your 401(k) for a down payment on a house. After all, you'd rather pay interest to yourself than the bank. You have five years to pay off that \$25,000—\$5,000 a year, plus interest—so you'd pay \$425 a month (or more).

What would happen if you left that \$25,000 alone for five years instead of using it for the house? Your balance would be \$40,000 and change, assuming a 10-percent rate of return. By taking it out, though, you lost \$15,000. That's \$15,000 you can never get back, because the growth was due to compound interest.

And the story doesn't end there. You'll spend the next five years digging yourself out of that hole to get back to your original 401(k) balance—

instead of using that time to increase it even more.

Let's say your original 401(k) balance was \$50,000. If you take out that loan, you'll spend five years getting that 401(k) fund back to its original amount. However, if you spent those years *adding* \$425 a month to that \$50,000, you'd be nearing \$115,000 in the end.

Which balance would you rather have after five years—\$50,000 or \$115,000? I thought so.

In my years as a financial coach, I've talked to thousands of people about their money. The biggest problem I see is debt. Whether it's student loans, credit cards or a 401(k) loan (which is *debt*, people!), being in the red keeps people from reaching their financial goals. And the only way to stem the tide of debt that has flooded our nation is to change the cultural and individual mindset surrounding finances.

Americans need to understand that a 401(k) loan isn't the solution to their financial woes. That only puts a person deeper into the quicksand of debt. It's time that we as a people (and our government) decide to take fiscal responsibility. It's time that we stop blaming everyone else for our financial struggles, roll up our sleeves and get to work to change our situation.

We need a good dose of our grandparents' approach to money. They lived on less than they earned. They didn't take out loans every time they wanted to make a large purchase. They saved up the money until they had enough to buy it—whether it was a car or a washing machine. They understood the value of hard

work and took on extra jobs when finances got tight. And they definitely didn't buy things they didn't need to impress the neighbors. That's a relatively new phenomenon—and a dangerous mindset to have.

The total household debt in the United States is roughly \$12.8 trillion. Of that, credit card debt accounts for \$1 trillion. How can we as a nation expect to prosper if we live beyond our means and hope that someday we'll magically turn our finances around?

I understand that life happens and some problems cost money to fix. But rather than getting a 401(k) loan to pay for life's mishaps, why not prepare in advance and put money aside? Then, when Murphy's Law comes knocking, you already have the money to make it go away.

I'd rather be prepared for a crisis than spend time and energy scrambling to fix it.

The 401(k) loan is simply a symptom of a much larger cultural problem. But change has to start somewhere. And one place to draw a line in the sand is by deciding that the 401(k) loan is off the table. It's not an option. Period.

Not only does it keep people in debt, but it also robs them of money they could be earning in their investments if they hadn't taken out the money in the first place.

And no one comes out ahead in that equation!

*\*Chris Hogan is the #1 national best-selling author of Retire Inspired: It's Not an Age. It's a Financial Number and host of the Retire Inspired Podcast. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram at @ChrisHogan360.*

## Council renews insurance policy with AMIC for three years

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville City Council renewed its insurance policy with Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation at a short meeting last Wednesday afternoon.

The three-year renewal covers all liability, vehicles, equipment and general insurance coverage for the city. By renewing for three years, the city received a two-percent annual discount.

The annual premium is \$182,561.

In other action, the council:

- Accepted the resignation of Skyler Deaton as a Russellville police officer and declared a vacancy for an officer position and asked the Russellville Civil Service Board to submit a list of names to consider.

- Waived the rental fee for the A.W. Todd Center for use by the Franklin County Relay for Life on January 16, 2018.

- Heard an update on the health of councilman David Palmer, who was hospitalized last Monday with blood clots. Palmer was expected to be transferred to Huntsville Hospital last Tuesday.

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Russellville City Council is set for January 16 with work session at 6 p.m. and meeting to follow.

## Can do!



COURTESY PHOTO

Russellville Middle School's FCCLA and SADD members are so grateful for all students, faculty and community members who participated in the 2017 Food Drive. The organizations will be able to make a big impact in the community with a total donation of 2,032 cans. This is the second-highest total to date, so the school is very proud of its students' commitment to making a difference and helping the community.

**For updates on news and sports throughout the week, don't forget to visit us on the web at [www.franklinfreepress.net](http://www.franklinfreepress.net)! Send your guest columns, photos, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to [franklinfreepress@yahoo.com](mailto:franklinfreepress@yahoo.com).**





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## Principal of the Year



### COURTESY PHOTO

Russellville High School principal Jason Goodwin was honored last week by Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow with a resolution recognizing his designation as the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools District 7 North Principal of the Year. RCS is proud of Mr. Goodwin and is thankful for the high quality of educators at Russellville City Schools! RCS also appreciates Rep. Morrow for supporting local educators and for honoring this achievement. Goodwin, center, is pictured with Morrow (left) and RCS superintendent Heath Grimes.

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Vina senior Elizabeth Baty signed a cross-country scholarship with Blue Mountain College in Mississippi last week. For details, see page 18.

## Red Bay boys beat Belgreen

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

Owen Terry scored 14 points for Red Bay on Saturday, and the Tigers rode a fast start to a 43-26 win over Belgreen in the seventh-and-eighth-grade boys bracket of the Junior High Franklin County Tournament at Tharptown High School.

David Lindsay added 11 points for second-seeded Red Bay, which advanced to the championship game and will face Thursday's winner between top-seeded Tharptown and Phil Campbell on Saturday morning in the finals at 11:15 a.m.

Red Bay and Belgreen were tied 2-2 in the opening minute after a basket by the Bulldogs' Cole King, but the Tigers took off with a 14-0 run. Terry scored six points during the run, and Paden Allison capped it off with two free throws to make it 16-2 with 1:47 left in the first quarter.

Belgreen got back within nine at 20-11 on back-to-back baskets by Jordan Wright midway through the second quarter, but Red Bay answered with a 7-0 run that included a pair of buckets by Coby Jackson and a three-pointer by Lindsay. Carson Cox scored twice for the Bulldogs in a 6-0 run to close the half that cut the lead to 27-17.

Belgreen got back within single-digits once more on a three by Brodie Vandiver early in the third quarter, but the Tigers got two free throws from Bryson Hacker and a layup from Terry off a steal to make it 33-20 at the 2:40 mark. Red Bay led by double-figures the rest of the way.

Jackson finished with eight points for the Tigers, and Allison added four. Carson Corum hit a three-pointer, Hacker scored two, and Hayden Seahorn had one. Red Bay shot 5-for-6 from the foul line as a team.

Wright led Belgreen with nine points, and Cox finished with four. King, Vandiver and Jackson Galliano each added three, and Koty Ragan and Austin James had two apiece.

In other action at the Junior High County Tournament on Saturday:

### Seventh/Eighth Grade Boys Phil Campbell 55 Vina 13

The Bobcats led 24-2 at the end of one quarter and 44-4 at the half, cruising past Vina and earning a date with top-seeded Tharptown in Thursday's semifinals at 4 p.m.

Cole Pace led Phil Campbell with 12 points, four of which came in the big first quarter. Cam Habada scored seven of his nine points in the first quarter, and Sage Raper scored all five of his points in the first. Quentin Hyde knocked down an early three and finished with seven points.

See 'RED BAY,' Page 16

## PC girls adjust to new role as county favorites

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

When the 2018 Franklin County Tournament tips off at Belgreen High School next Tuesday, the vibe coming from the varsity girls bracket will undoubtedly be different than it's been in a long, long time.

For starters, Red Bay's girls—winners of the past seven county tournament titles and 18 of the last 19 dating back to 1999—will be playing on opening night as the No. 5 seed against fourth-seeded Tharptown. If the Lady Tigers (6-11 through Sunday) are to maintain their nearly two-decade stranglehold on the county championship, it will require three wins rather than the usual two.

"I've been coaching varsity girls basketball for twelve years, and I don't remember them being in the four-five game," said Chad Green, who coached Tharptown's girls for nine years and is now in his third season with Belgreen. "Sometimes they've been the one seed, sometimes the two seed, but I don't think they've been in the four-five game."

Green would know. His last four teams at Tharptown lost to Red Bay in the county finals, as did his Belgreen girls a year ago. In each instance, Green's counterpart on the Red Bay bench was Donnie Roberts, who led the Lady Tigers to 27 county titles in his 34 years at the helm.

Roberts retired after last season, having led Red Bay to a remarkable record of 37-1 in county tournament play over the past 19 years. [The Lady  
See 'FAVORITES,' Page 14



PHOTOS BY KYLE GLASGOW

Darby Elliott (20) and the Lady Bobcats will be the top seed next week at Belgreen.

## Bulldogs take aim at second straight title

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

Red Bay's boys had Belgreen on the ropes back in mid-November before stumbling late in a 56-53 loss, but Tiger head coach John Torisky believes the Bulldogs are the clear favorites heading into next week's Franklin County Tournament.

"Belgreen is the team to beat," said Torisky, whose team is the No. 2 seed for the tournament and will face third-seeded Tharptown next Friday night in a semifinal game. "They won it last year, and they've beaten everybody in the county so far this year. They have a lot of guys back from last year, and they're used to winning." That's especially the case at home, where the Bulldogs (13-3 overall through Sunday) have lost just twice since the start of last season and are a perfect 5-0 this year.

"The tournament is on their home floor, and it will be really difficult to beat them at home," Torisky said. "We played them there in our second game of the year, and they were pumped up. There was a lot of energy in there. It's always tough to beat them at home, and

See 'BULLDOGS,' Page 15



Belgreen's Brant Bragwell is dangerous from deep.



## 'FAVORITES' from page 13

Tigers' lone loss during that stretch of dominance came to Belgreen in the 2010 championship game.]

"It'll be a little strange," Green said on Sunday. "Donnie's a Hall of Fame coach. It will be different not seeing him on the sidelines."

Roberts' departure—along with that of 2017 graduates Allie Kennedy and Darby Madden, who helped lead the Lady Tigers to six county titles in their six years at the varsity level—has rendered this year's trophy up for grabs. For the first time since Belgreen ended Red Bay's run of 11 consecutive crowns back in 2010, the final outcome of the county tournament doesn't feel like a foregone conclusion.

Or does it?

Phil Campbell (11-5 through Sunday) has asserted himself as the most likely successor to Red Bay's throne; four wins this season against county competition by an average margin of 30 points have certified head coach Craig Thomas and the top-seeded Lady Bobcats as the team to beat next week at Belgreen.

"Right now, Phil Campbell is the favorite," said Green, whose team lost 64-41 at PCHS in mid-December. "Coach Thomas does a great job with them. They've got a good ball team. They've beaten all the county teams they've played during the regular season. I think that definitely makes them the favorite."

Whether they want to be or not.

"I'd rather be the underdog, to be honest with you," said Thomas, whose team will play next Thursday night in the semifinals against the Tharptown/Red Bay winner. "This is quite a turnaround for us. We were the four seed last year. Now we're the one seed. This is new to us."

One expects that Thomas won't mind his team wearing the bullseye quite so much if arriving at the tournament as the favorite means leaving it as the champion. None of Phil Campbell's current players were even born the last time the Lady Bobcats won the county title.

"Winning the county would be a huge step up for our program," he said. "It would be history-making. It's been a long time since Phil Campbell's girls have been able to say they were county champions. It would be really exciting if we can pull it off."

By all rights, it would qualify as a major upset if they don't. No team in the county can match the Lady Bobcats' combination of length, athleticism, talent, experience and depth.

Junior Abby Davis, a 5'11 post player averaging

a team-best 13.4 points per game through Sunday, went over the 1,000-point mark for her varsity career back in early December. Senior guard Darby Elliott (9.5 points per game) has a chance to join Davis in the 1,000-point club by season's end and also serves as the catalyst for Phil Campbell's suffocating pressure defense.

Veteran guards Dakota Elliott (a junior averaging 8.3 points per game through Sunday) and Chloe Roberson (a senior scoring 7.5 points per game) are solid contributors on both ends of the floor, and freshman guard Caitlynn Mills (5.6 points per game) brings scoring and quickness off the bench.

The real difference-maker for the Lady Bobcats, though, has been sophomore guard Kallie Allen, a Russellville transfer who ranks second on the team in scoring at 12.2 points per game. Allen provides much-needed perimeter shooting (22 threes made through Sunday, tops on the team) and gives Thomas another defensive disruptor to create havoc on the press. [Allen had eight steals—to go along with a season-high 19 points—in the win over Belgreen on December 15.]

"Coach Thomas has a great team with a lot of athletes," Green said. "They pressure the ball well, and they get out in transition. I think they're as good as any 2A team in north Alabama."

Green's Belgreen team will host Phil Campbell in a regular-season game on Friday, and they might get another shot at the Lady Bobcats in the county final next Saturday. First, though, the third-seeded Lady Bulldogs (11-5 through Sunday) will have to get by No. 2 seed Vina (18-5) in next Friday night's semifinals.

Belgreen beat the Lady Red Devils in last year's county semis and then won 81-60 at Vina on December 8 of this season. The two teams were scheduled to meet again at Belgreen on Tuesday of this week, and they'll battle next Friday for a berth in the county finals.

Merely reaching Saturday night's championship game would be a landmark achievement for the Lady Red Devils, who have revived the program to the tune of a 40-14 record since the start of last season. Winning the county title would be nothing short of epic.

"That would be big," head coach Richie Hester said. "The whole thing when we started this winning was to get Vina basketball back to being a championship program again like it was years ago. That's our goal. Vina has won state championships in the past. I remember them winning the county back in the '80s and making it to the final in the '90s."

"This is a good group of girls we have now. They're a good bunch of kids, athletically and otherwise. Their goal is to put Vina basketball on the map."

The Lady Red Devils, who through Sunday were scoring a county-best 67.9 points per game, will aim to shoot their way to a title next week at Belgreen. Senior guard Abby Hester (17.6 points per game), sophomore guard Kaitlyn King (13.9 points per game) and junior forward Emma Humphres (11.5 points per game) have combined to make 173 threes on the season—an average of nearly eight per contest.

"We'll definitely have to defend the three-point line," said Green, whose team held the Lady Devils to just three made threes through the first three quarters of its blowout win at Vina in early December. "They can all shoot it. And we'll have to box out and do a good job getting those long rebounds."

"The first time we played them, we pressured the ball pretty good, and we guarded the three-point

line. For about half the game or maybe three quarters, we rebounded the ball well."

Green has made rebounding an emphasis for the Lady Bulldogs all season long. They're plenty capable in their own right of getting hot from the perimeter, with veterans guards Gabbie Moore (9.5 points per game through Sunday, with 22 made threes) and Jasmine Martin (7.4 points per game, 24 made threes) leading the way and sophomores Gracie Dempsey (6.5 points per game) and Autumn Bragwell (13 threes made in a reserve role) also contributing.

Belgreen has good balance, with freshman Emma Dempsey (the team's leading scorer at 10.4 points per game) and sophomores Ansley Tate (7.2 points per game) and Katie Dempsey (6.8 points per game) all capable of having big games in the paint. The Lady Bulldogs will be a tough test for Vina in next Friday's semifinals, but Hester is hopeful that his team will rise to the challenge this time around.

"We probably played our worst basketball of the season last year right around the county tournament," he said. "We picked back up and played better the last two weeks of the season, but we were playing terrible at the county tournament. This year, I'm hoping we don't play that kind of ball again."

"I feel like we're playing well. We've got Belgreen on Tuesday and Belgreen again in the county next week. Right now, it's all about beating Belgreen. Our girls wanted to come up here and practice [on Sunday], because they're focused on doing that. If they beat us Tuesday, we're gonna come back out and do everything we can to beat them at the county."

If the Lady Bulldogs survive their semifinal meeting with Vina, Green will be back in a familiar setting—the county championship game. The opponent, however, is likely to be different, though it would still require an upset for Belgreen to deliver Green his first-ever county title as a varsity girls head coach.

"Our girls this year are capable," he said. "We're in that two-three game again, and if we're able to take care of business against Vina, we'll more than likely get Phil Campbell in the championship game. We know what we'd have to do in that one. We'd have a game plan. It would just come down to whether or not we could execute it."

The varsity girls county final is set for next Saturday night at 6:30 p.m. The first varsity girls game of the tournament will tip at 5 p.m. next Tuesday, with Red Bay taking on Tharptown (7-8 through Sunday). The Lady Wildcats are led by a pair of sophomores in post player Brooke Daily (10.5 points per game on the season) and point guard Shaylee Wieting (10.0 points per game).

Wieting did not play in the first meeting between the two teams, won by Red Bay 46-35 in late November. Next Tuesday's winner will advance to face top-seeded Phil Campbell in Thursday's semifinals.

The Lady Bobcats have already beaten Tharptown by 50 and routed Red Bay twice, but neither Thomas nor his players will be counting their chickens next week.

"Our girls know we're the favorite, because they know we've beaten all the county teams we've played so far," Thomas said. "But it gets tough trying to beat the same teams two or three times. The first time you face somebody, you can kind of just go out there and play your game. The next time, they know a little more about you and what you like to do and what type of players you have. You might have to make some adjustments."

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## ‘BULLDOGS’ from page 13

it'll be even tougher to do it in the county tournament."

Back on November 17, Red Bay (12-6 overall through Sunday) was on the verge of dealing Belgreen a rare home loss, leading by 10 roughly halfway through the fourth quarter. Then junior post player Gath Weatherford, sophomore point guard Clay Allison and freshman reserve Braden Ray—the Tigers' three top scorers on the season—all fouled out down the stretch, and the Bulldogs rallied to escape with a three-point win.

"I wouldn't say we let them have it. They took it from us," Torisky said on Sunday. "We'd love to have another chance against them in the county tournament. We wouldn't necessarily look at it as a revenge game, though; it would just be another opportunity."

In order to earn that opportunity, the Tigers must first get by Tharptown (6-8 through Sunday) in the semifinals, which is by no means a guarantee. Red Bay survived a 20-point night from senior guard Levi McCormack to beat the Wildcats 52-42 back in late November.

"He had a really big game against us," Torisky said of McCormack, who had made a county-best 39 threes through Sunday and was averaging 13.0 points per game. "I think the key to beating Tharptown is slowing him down a little bit. They have some other guys who are good, too, but we can't let McCormack go off again like he did last time."

Senior forward Cole Daniel leads the Wildcats in scoring at 13.6 points per game. He and McCormack have topped the 20-point mark three times each this season, and sophomore post player Edward Lopez averages a solid 8.3 points per game.

If the Tigers (who were holding opponents to an average of just 49.6 points per game through Sunday) are able to bottle up McCormack and company and get by Tharptown, the top-seeded Bulldogs could well be waiting in next Saturday night's final. That would afford fans an opportunity to see two of the best big men in northwest Alabama—the 6'3 Weatherford and 6'6 Belgreen junior Mason Bragwell—go head-to-head.

Bragwell, who recently surpassed the 1,000-point mark for his career, was averaging 20.2 points per game this season through Sunday, best in Franklin County. He put up 25 points in last Friday's 69-50 win over Tharptown, topping the 20-point mark for the 10th time this year. Weatherford, meanwhile, was averaging 16.7 points per game through Sunday while making 28 threes and shooting 84 percent (72-for-86) from the foul line.

"Gath has gotten a lot better," said Belgreen coach Clint Isbell, whose team won all three meetings with Red Bay last year, including one in the county semifinals. "He's a more skilled player now. That would be a really good matchup to see."

Weatherford's improvement has been a driving force behind the Tigers' turnaround from a 2-24 team last season to a team with a legitimate shot to host the Class 2A, Area 14 tournament this sea-

son. [Red Bay would earn that right with a win at Lamar County on Tuesday night.] A county championship would be the icing on the cake.

"Red Bay hasn't hosted an area tournament since 2005," Torisky said. "That would be big for us if we can get that win at Lamar County. We haven't really talked a lot about specific goals this season, because I just wanted our guys to focus on playing their best basketball every night. I knew if we did that, we could live with the result. But lately we have talked about a couple of things that are right in front of us."

"Our focus this week is to finish taking care of business in the area and earn the right to host the area tournament. Then we'll have the next week-and-a-half to focus on the county tournament."

The Tigers, who surround Weatherford with capable scorers and shooters in Ray (8.9 points per game), Allison (8.6 points per game, with 20 made threes) and junior guard Colton Corum (7.5 points per game, 21 made threes), should be Belgreen's primary challenger next week, but they won't be the only one. Phil Campbell was just 3-9 through Sunday, but the Bobcats could be a dangerous No. 5 seed—especially now that they're getting closer to full strength.

Senior guard Joe Hardy returned from meniscus surgery last Thursday against Phillips and made an immediate impact, totaling 10 points, eight rebounds, eight assists and five steals in a 68-41 rout of the Bears. Senior forward Peyton Thomas (15.9 points per game through Sunday) is a threat to take over a game on any given night, and Phil Campbell has other capable weapons in junior guard Nate Owens (9.2 points per game, with 19 made threes), senior guards Rhett Benford (7.7 points per game, 12 made threes) and Daniel Smith (7.7 points per game, including a career-high 21 in last week's win over Phillips) and senior post player Brody Nix (7.0 points per game).

The Bobcats, who led Belgreen at halftime of a 68-52 loss on December 15, will face fourth-seeded Vina in a first-round game next Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. A win there would set up a semifinal meeting with Belgreen next Thursday night.

"Phil Campbell played us really tough a couple of days ago," said Torisky, whose team survived a 22-point effort from Thomas to beat the Bobcats 52-48 last Friday. "They're healthier now, and I think they'd have a shot. But, going into it, I think it's definitely Belgreen and then everybody else."

Isbell isn't so sure about that.

"I think it'll be a tough tournament, a good tournament," he said. "Red Bay is playing really well, and Phil Campbell just got one of their players back in Joe Hardy. I expect they'll be better with him. I think it will be a tough time for everybody. All the teams are pretty evenly matched, and everybody can compete. There should be some good matchups and not a lot of blowout games."

Make no mistake about it, though—the Bulldogs, who are 14-1 against county competition since the start of last season, have earned favorite status. Mason Bragwell is the most dominant offensive player in the county, teaming with junior guard

Brant Bragwell (13.7 points per game, with 23 made threes) and senior point guard Jacob Mayberry (9.6 points per game through Sunday) to form a terrific trio.

Isbell's team has depth, too; when Brant Bragwell sat out last Friday's win over Tharptown to rest his sore knee, senior guard Seth Taylor stepped into the starting lineup and promptly scored a career-high 23 points, drilling four threes. Senior guard Eli Hiser (6.5 points per game) had a 20-point game in a December win over Carbon Hill, and senior forward Payton Scott (6.6 points per game) is one of the team's top defenders and rebounders.

All of those players played key roles last season for a Belgreen team that won 22 games and made it to the Northwest Regional. Returning to Hanceville is certainly a goal this season, but the Bulldogs will be focused next week on winning a second straight county championship—this time in front of their home fans.

"That's definitely one of our goals this year," Isbell said. "We've got a lot of goals for the year, and winning the county is a steppingstone to the other ones. To win at a high level in basketball, you have to know how to win tournaments."

Red Bay's boys would love to enjoy the kind of postseason success Belgreen had a year ago. Based on what he's seen, Isbell believes the Tigers are more than capable.

"Coach Torisky does a really good job, and his guys have bought in," Isbell said. "They play extremely hard. They want to win. They expect to win. They have a different mindset now, and you can tell."

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## 'RED BAY', from page 13

Brennan Misner also scored seven points, and Kyle Pace added six. Clayton Demartin finished with five points, and Cooper Riddle and JJ Quillen added two apiece.

### Belgreen 55 East Franklin 16

The Bulldogs cruised to a win in Saturday's opening game, out-scoring East Franklin 13-3 in the first quarter and 22-2 in the second.

Jordan Wright finished with 12 points to lead the Bulldogs, and Brodie Vandiver added 10. Jackson Galliano scored eight points, and Alex Jarnigan had seven. Cole King scored six points, Carson Cox and Austin James each finished with five, and Canaan Stough had two.

Andrew Green led East Franklin with six points, and Trey Benford had four. Hunter Baker scored three, Oscar Molina added two and Jackson Baker had one.

### Seventh/Eighth Grade Girls

#### Tharptown 42 Vina 26

Autumn Montgomery scored a game-high 18 points, helping second-seeded Tharptown earn a spot in Saturday's championship game.

Vina trailed just 10-9 after a basket by LaDava Davis early in the second quarter, but Montgomery responded with seven points in a 10-0 run by the Lady Wildcats. Savannah Romans finished off the run with a layup at the 1:35 mark to make it 20-9. Montgomery then added another layup in the closing seconds of the half, sending Tharptown into the break with a 24-13 lead.

Kassidy Gesler scored on a putback for Vina to open the third quarter, but Montgomery answered with a layup and a jumper to make it 28-15. The Lady Wildcats led by double-figures the rest of the way and will face Thursday's winner between top-seeded Phil Campbell and fourth-seeded Red Bay in Saturday's final at 10 a.m.

Tharptown finished 16-for-32 from the foul line in the win over Vina. Romans scored eight points, and Kaitlyn Simmons added seven. Luz-Maria Alfaro had three points, and Kendall Morgan, Emily Campos and Erica Borden scored two apiece.

Davis led Vina with 13 points. Gesler finished with four, and Madelyn Humphres and Maddie Mills each added three. Kaitlyn Athey scored two, and Carly Blevins added one.

Vina was 14-for-34 from the foul line.

### Red Bay 32 Belgreen 8

The Lady Tigers dominated defensively, holding Belgreen to just two made field goals and earning a date with top-seeded Phil Campbell in Thursday's semifinals at 5:15 p.m.

The Lady Bulldogs scored on their first possession of Saturday's game on a long jumper by Katie Cooper, but they did not make another field goal until a basket by Harley Carter with 2:45 left in the third quarter. During that stretch, the Lady Tigers out-scored Belgreen 23-1.

Sarah Eaton led Red Bay with nine points. She, Kaylie Lindley and Gretchen Davis each knocked down a three-pointer. Bella West, Anna Kate Kennedy and Emily Enis finished with four points each.

Amber Mason and Brianna Markham scored two apiece for Red Bay, and Audrey Ehler added one.

Noelle Willingham led Belgreen with three points. Cooper and Carter had two apiece, and Ana Anderson added one.

### Ninth Grade Girls

#### Red Bay 31 Belgreen 25

Cassidy Kuykendall led the Lady Tigers with 10 points on Saturday, helping them advance to face top-seeded Phil Campbell in the semifinals on Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

Red Bay led 22-12 after three quarters, and Emma McCollister hit a three-pointer and went 3-for-4 from the foul line in the fourth quarter to help the Lady Tigers hold on for the win.

McCollister finished with eight points, and Makenzie Hester and Kirsten Scott added four apiece. Madisyn Hester and Alexis Tabbs each scored two, and Kylee James added one.

Bailey Oliver scored seven of her 11 points for Belgreen in the fourth quarter, helping the Lady Bulldogs mount a late rally that fell just short. Kaley Chandler made a pair of threes and finished with 10 points. Felicia Campos and Maria Estrada each scored two.

### Ninth Grade Boys

#### Phil Campbell 52 Vina 48

Mason Swinney scored 20 points for Phil Campbell on Saturday, and Blaine Goodson added 18 to help the top-seeded Bobcats earn a date with second-seeded Tharptown in Saturday's final at 1:45 p.m.

Swinney scored eight points in the third quarter, helping Phil Campbell out-score Vina 14-10 to stretch its lead to 41-32. Elijah Whitfield made a pair of threes in the fourth quarter for the Red Devils, but the Bobcats got four points apiece from Swinney and Goodson and held on to win.

J.R. Herring added seven points for Phil Campbell. Boone Swinney had three, and Dylan Jeane scored two.

Whitfield led all scorers with 22 points, hitting four threes and going 2-for-2 from the foul line. Glen Ashley added 10 points for Vina, and Dawson Miller hit two threes and finished with nine.

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## Joe Hardy

Senior Guard, Phil Campbell

Hardy returned from meniscus surgery in impressive fashion last week, flirting with a triple-double in the Bobcats' 68-41 win over rival Phillips on Thursday. The senior guard finished with 10 points, eight rebounds, eight assists and five steals in his first game since late November.

The following night at Red Bay, Hardy knocked down a pair of second-half threes and scored eight points, helping Phil Campbell push Red Bay all the way to the end in a 52-48 loss.



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## On the run



COURTESY PHOTO

Vina High School senior Elizabeth Baty (seated, second from right) signed last week to run cross country with Blue Mountain College in Mississippi. She is pictured above with her parents, Charles Baty and Ladonna Baty, and Blue Mountain coach Page Thorn (seated, second from left). Standing in back is Vina coach Paul Humphres.

## Vina senior signs with Blue Mountain College

Submitted to the FFP

Vina senior Elizabeth Baty has signed a cross-country scholarship with Blue Mountain College in Mississippi.

"I am blessed to get to run for Blue Mountain College," said Baty, whose PR time in the 5K is 21:44. "I felt at home when I toured the campus. I'm glad to have the opportunity to run at the collegiate level."

Baty's best time in the two-mile run is 13:53, and her best mile time is 6:18.

"I am very proud of how hard Elizabeth has worked and how determined she has been throughout her career," Vina coach Paul Humphres said. "It is an honor and a privilege to have coached her."

Blue Mountain cross-country coach Page Thorn looks forward to having the same opportunity.

"I can already see that Elizabeth has such a sweet spirit and also a high level of determination," Thorn said. "She will be a key part of our team, and I'm really thankful to be signing her."

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MULCHING • CLEANING LEAVING  
HEDGING & SHRUBS • EDGING

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**K&S TREE SERVICE**  
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Trimming • Removal • Bucket Work  
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## FINANCIAL

**Edward Jones** | MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING  
IRAs - Investments  
**Mike Jones**, Financial Advisor - AAMS  
256-332-7924  
www.edwardjones.com  
128 N. Jackson Ave. Russellville  
mike.jones@edwardjones.com

## HOUSING

256-332-1561  
73 Flippen St  
"The standard for fixed-income living in Russellville."  
**UNITS NOW AVAILABLE**  
Russellville Housing Authority Incorporated

## MASSAGE

**REWARD YOURSELF OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE**  
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**Angel Harris**  
Licensed Massage Therapist LMT #1495  
Reiki Practitioner II  
Gift Cards Available  
Creative Image Salon  
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## DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**JOEY RUSHING**  
Franklin County District Attorney  
256.332.8870 • 256.710.4713  
(daytime) (after hours)  
ALABAMA GREAT SEAL

## SEPTIC SERVICE

**SUPERIOR SEPTIC TANKS**  
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL  
Septic Tank Sales  
Tank & Grease Trap Pumping  
FOR PROMPT SERVICE  
256-381-7148  
LICENSED BONDED INSURED

## CHURCH

**Come Worship with Us!**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
Sunday: 11:00 - 12:00  
Adult Sunday School: 10:00 - 11:00  
Everyone is invited to join us for this special time of worship.  
201 N. Green Street, Russellville

## PUBLIC SERVICE

**BUCKLE UP! It Could Save Your Life!**  
franklinsheriff.org  
(256) 332-8811  
Compliments of **Shannon Oliver**  
SHERIFF  
FRANKLIN COUNTY

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Franklin County Chamber of Commerce**  
P.O. Box 44 • Russellville, AL  
Cassie Medley, Executive Director  
256.332.1760 • 256.332.1740 fax  
info@franklincountychamber.org  
franklincountychamber.org

## HEALTHCARE

**GET NOTICED!**  
IN THE BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY  
256.332.0214

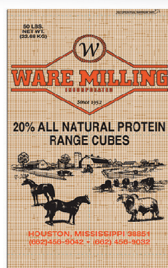
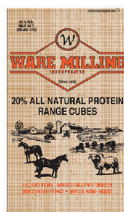
## LISTEN EACH WEEK FOR...

**FOOTBALL FRIDAYS**  
only on  
**WGOL 100.7 FM**  
920AM  
**PREGAME@6:30**  
**GAME@7:00**

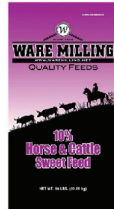




# Mark Tompkins' **FCX** Franklin County Exchange



20% All Natural Range Cubes 50 lbs. **\$8.44**



10% Horse/Cattle Sweet Feed 50 lbs. **\$7.00**



2 Mix 15% Cattle Feed 50 lbs. **\$6.90**



12% Beef Grower 50 lbs. **\$7.39**



200 lbs.

20% All Natural Cattle Supplement Tubs **\$58.46**



Generic Mix Dog Food 40 lbs. **\$10.51**



**12% All Stock Sweet Feed**  
**Cattle • Horses • Goats • Sheep**



P&P 14% High Mag Mineral 50 lbs. **\$11.47**



**Performance Tubs That Last**

28% Positive Cooked Feed Tub 225 lbs. **\$88.98**



15% Livestock Feed Ton. **\$219.35**



**Best Available**

Applegate Heavy Duty Hay Ring **\$211.06**



Sm: \$17.04 per 100  
Lg: \$19.48 per 100  
Jumbo: 95¢ ea

Poultry Feed Trays



Whole Feed Corn 50 lbs. **\$5.75**

**Join our VIP Club by**  
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**to get unbeatable**  
**special offers,**  
**promotions**  
**and sales!**

**FCX** Franklin County Exchange  
**256.332.4785**  
**291 Walnut Gate Road**  
Located in the former Franklin County Co-op building.  
**7:30 to 6 Mon-Sat**

Prices Subject to Change after 01/18/18

