


Russellville's Historic Downtown District may soon be on the National Registry. See story, Page 3.

The Franklin County Water Service Authority plans to pitch in and help with a statewide cleanup effort by picking up litter on a stretch of Hwy. 187. See story, Page 8.

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# Worley headlining Sloss Lake Jam

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

The search for this year's featured act at the Jam at Sloss Lake stopped in Savannah, TN, as City of Russellville officials announced Savannah's favorite son, country music star Darryl Worley, as the 2018 headliner.

The ninth annual Jam on Sloss Lake will take place Wednesday, July 4. The event will feature a day of free musical entertainment and will culminate with a fireworks show set to begin around 9:45 p.m.

The day will begin with the Cotton Flats Cruisers Car Show and will continue with day-long entertainment, vendors and activities for children. The festivities take place on the west side of Sloss Lake near the Lee Sports Complex.

The Jam on Sloss Lake is jointly

sponsored by the City of Russellville, the Electric Board of the City of Russellville, the Russellville Gas Board and the Russellville Water and Sewer Board.

Worley's performance will close out a full day of music. The Midnighters will open for Worley Wednesday evening.

"We're excited to have talent the level of Darryl Worley for people to enjoy at this year's Jam on Sloss Lake," said Russellville city councilman Gary Cummings, whose vision for a Fourth of July celebration in Russellville began the annual event. "We want this to be a special day for Russellville and north Alabama."

Worley is known for his philanthropic efforts, including the Darryl Worley Foundation, which has raised more than \$2 million for community programs in Tennessee in and near his hometown.



Darryl Worley

Worley's efforts led to the opening of the Darryl Worley Cancer Treatment Center in Savannah in 2010. The facility provides state-of-

See 'WORLEY,' Page 3

# State education budget includes \$750K to replace science lab/band hall at Vina

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

When an EF-0 tornado damaged the Vina High School science lab/band building on December 18, 2016, there were immediate differences in opinion as to the severity of the damage.

After he took office in early January, Franklin County superintendent of education Greg Hamilton inspected the building and later had an engineer inspect it. Their result? The building was a total loss and structurally unsafe.

Additionally, there was severe damage to the Vina baseball field and gymnasium. The ball field and gym were repaired with new fencing and a new roof on the gym.

But the dispute with the Alabama Division of Risk

Management raged on with the science lab/band hall. Adjusters with the state's insurance arm had a different opinion on the building, believing it could be repaired.

"After more trips to Montgomery than I can remember, and multiple phone calls and multiple portfolios, the great news has finally arrived," Hamilton said. "The Franklin County Board of Education has stood behind me, entrusting me to do what is best for the students of Vina. It's been a long process, but I would do it again without hesitation for any school in this county. It was the right thing to do."

But Hamilton, supported by an independent engineer, held firm. He would not put students back into a building he wasn't 100 percent sure was safe.

See 'VINA,' Page 9

Vote **Barry Moore**  
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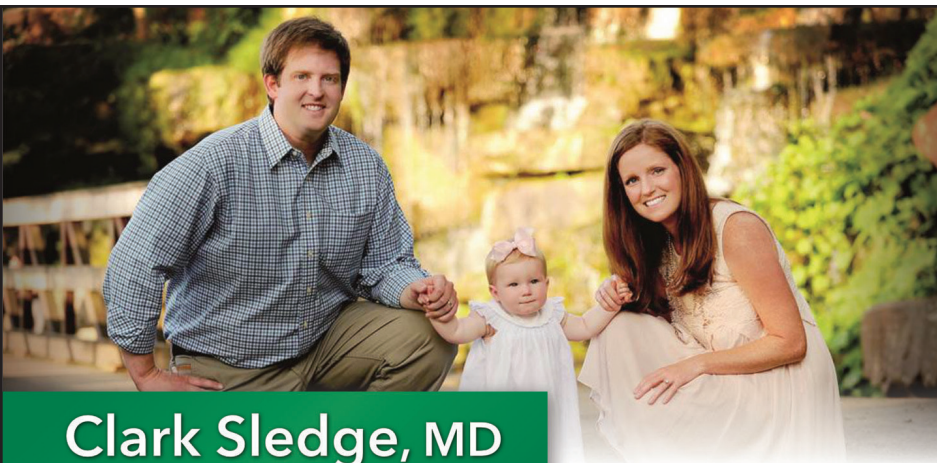
**Daniel Jason Colburn**, Russellville, age 44  
Died Wednesday, March 28, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel.  
Interment in Franklin Memory Gardens.

**Leland Ronald "Country" Dover**, Haleyville, age 70  
Died Sunday, April 1, 2018. Funeral will be held Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 11 a.m. at Pinkard Funeral Home in Haleyville. Interment will be in New Bethlehem Baptist Cemetery.

**Michael Dyar**, Russellville, age 63  
Died Saturday, March 31, 2018. Funeral arrangements had not been announced at press time. Pinkard Funeral Home was assisting the family.

**Barbara King Hooker**, Pearl, MS (originally from Spruce Pine), age 67  
Died Wednesday, March 28, 2018. Friends and family members may attend visitation on Saturday, April 7, 2018 from 5-6 p.m. at Pinkard Funeral Home in Russellville, with a memorial service to follow.

**Sherry Gail McLemore Wollenzien**, Phil Campbell, age 48  
Died Tuesday, March 27, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel in Russellville. Interment in Blue Springs Cemetery.



**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.



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# Officials expect Russellville Downtown Historic District to be on National Registry by year's end

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

Property owners within the Russellville Downtown Historic District received some good news at a March 27 public meeting held at Russellville City Hall.

Phil Thomason, with Thomason & Associates, a preservation planner company based in Nashville, explained the process of nominating a city's historic district for Historic National Register status, and the federal and state tax incentives available for qualified property owners who make improvements to their property.

The City of Russellville, through a \$10,000 grant (50 percent match), hired Thomason's firm to complete a downtown survey of the historic district, identify national register eligible properties, complete historic research on the district and prepare the National Register nomination for the district.

Thomason said he expects the nomination to be approved by the State of Alabama and Russellville's Historic District to be on the National

Registry by the end of the year.

While designation on the historic registry is just honorary, it does carry several benefits for property owners within the district, including tax credits for renovation projects.

**While designation on the historic registry is just honorary, it does carry several benefits for property owners within the district, including tax credits for renovation projects.**

The Russellville Historic District runs from the corner of Washington Avenue and Limestone south to Montgomery Street, then east on Montgomery to Coffee Avenue, then north on Coffee back to Limestone.

Not all buildings within the historic district will qualify for the tax credits. The property must be historic and have retained enough of its original design to remain historically significant.

The federal tax credit is available for repairs to exteriors, structural systems, repair of interior finishes, upgrades to HVAC, electrical and plumbing and architectural, engineering and land surveying fees.

Since 1976, when the tax credit program began, more than 43,000 projects have undergone \$90 billion in renovations, all with a 20 percent federal income tax credit.

Expenditures must exceed the building's adjusted basis to qualify.

The State of Alabama also offers a 25 percent state income tax credit for eligible rehabilitation projects. Expenditures must exceed 50 percent of the building's purchase price or exceed \$25,000 to qualify for state credits.

Property owners are encouraged to contact the Alabama Historical Commission at 334-242-3184 ([www.ahc.alabama.gov](http://www.ahc.alabama.gov)) to request the commission look at the building to see if it's eligible for the tax credit.

Additionally, historical property owners whose buildings are designated as Class III property pay a reduced ad valorem assessment rate of 10 percent, Thomason said.

Property owners should apply for the tax credits early in the planning process and should take and maintain photographic evidence of the before/after condition of the property.

# Affidavit: Madden accessed county system after resigning

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The former Franklin County administrator who pled guilty to felony ethics charges last month logged into her county account remotely after she resigned from her position last year, the *Franklin Free Press* has learned.

Court documents including the affidavit for search warrants and the search warrant signed by Franklin County district judge Paula McDowell indicate Crista Madden logged into her Franklin County account via a computer in the Franklin County Commission Office after her resignation date of August 31, 2017.

The extent of what, if any, actions Madden took while remotely logging into the county computer system has not been indicated by law enforcement.

Madden pled guilty March 19 to two felony charges after she stole more than \$753,000 of taxpayer monies over a 10-year period. The next step in Madden's case will be a sentencing hearing that has not yet been set. She faces a prison sentence of up to 20 years on each count and a fine of up to \$30,000. She will be ordered to reimburse \$753,889.21 to the Franklin County Commission general fund.

Retired Colbert County circuit judge Pride Tompkins is handling the case after Franklin County circuit judge Terry Dempsey recused himself.

The search warrant and the supporting affidavit were signed March 1, 2018. The affidavit, filed by

Alabama Attorney General's Office special agent Sterling J. Frith, indicates that agents were contacted by the Alabama Department of Public Examiners regarding potential fraudulent activity in Franklin County relating to Madden. The investigation began February 17, 2018.

The paperwork presented to law enforcement showed a pattern of false purchase orders generated by Madden and checks that had been altered so she could deposit them directly into her checking account.

Subpoenas were submitted to "multiple financial institutions that were associated with Madden," according to Frith's affidavit. The results of those documents showed \$233,465.52 in purchase orders and fraudulent checks that were deposited into one of Madden's personal checking accounts.

**Court documents indicate Madden logged into her Franklin County account via a computer in the Franklin County Commission Office after her resignation date of August 31, 2017. The extent of what, if any, actions Madden took while remotely logging into the county computer system has not been indicated by law enforcement.**

Two search warrants were signed by McDowell that day. The first allowed for the seizure from the Franklin County Commission office of: (1) Binders containing financial records for Franklin County from 2007-2017, and (2) the laptop computer used by Madden during her employment with Franklin County.

That search warrant was served upon Franklin

County probate judge Barry Moore on March 1, 2018. In a statement given to the *Franklin Free Press* last month, Moore indicated he was the one who first reported the alleged fraudulent activity to the state auditors.

Thirty-six financial binders, one stack of financial documents and one Dell laptop computer and external hard drive computer were seized pursuant to the warrant.

A second affidavit and search warrant was executed the same day on Madden's residence. Seized in the execution of this search warrant were bank statements in the name of one of Madden's family members, financial paperwork, a Dell laptop computer, tax records, documents from the Alabama Ethics Commission, bank statements, personal papers, several cell phones, a filing cabinet with financial documents, a Lenovo tablet and a Dell desktop computer.

Madden was placed on administrative leave from her county administrator position in Chilton County four days later, on March 5, after the Chilton County Commission met at an emergency meeting.

Madden pled guilty to intentionally violating the Alabama Ethics Law, including a count of Use of Official Position for Personal Gain and Use of Equipment for Personal Gain.

The plea agreement included language that the State would "ask the Court to take into consideration at sentencing the cooperation of the Defendant."

Madden remains free on \$10,000 bond pending sentencing.

## 'WORLEY,' from page 1

the-art cancer treatment right in the heart of small-town Savannah.

Worley's six country albums produced 18 singles on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart, including three number ones: "I Miss My Friend," "Have You Forgotten" and "Awful, Beautiful Life." "Have You Forgotten" enjoyed a seven-week run as the number one song.

Worley's other hits include "A Good Day to Run," "Tennessee River Run,"

"Second Wind," "If Something Should Happen," "I Just Came Back From a War" and "Sounds Like Life To Me."

Worley's most recent release, "Lonely Alone," debuted in November of 2017.

For more information on Worley and his music, log onto <http://darrylworley.com>.



# Honey Do List: Tiller time

The first three months of this year have been about as wet as I can remember. It's been hard to find a dry time to get in the yard, much less the garden or flower beds.

But maybe in the next few days, with temps a little warmer, a little sun and a little wind, the ground will dry out enough to get some plants in the ground.

A garden tiller is a great tool for working a small to medium garden or yard. Soil that is properly turned and tilled will create a much better bed for seeds and new plants that need to be able to breathe and get sufficient water.

Walk-behind tillers typically come in two distinct models, front tine and rear tine. Front tine machines have the diggers, or tines, in the front and wheels in the back. The tines will turn to the front and pull the machine along. By setting the "drag bar" at the back of the tiller, the machine will be held back more easily and allowed to dig deeper into the ground. Some models have a reverse that will slowly back up the tines should they become snagged on a rock or root.

Rear tine tillers have the diggers, or tines, situated at the back of the machine. These tillers are generally

easier to operate because they are heavier and more stable than front tine tillers.

The tines on a rear tine machine usually turn backward to the wheels, and this allows them to pulverize the dirt better. The wheels are gear-driven and provide the forward motion. Some models allow you to set the tines to turn backward or forward.

Forward-turning tines are great for situations where you don't want to dig as deep, like weeding, and the tiller will move along a little faster.

If you are digging out your old tiller for another season, be sure to service it with fresh fuel, oil and grease. Old fuel and oil should be drained from the tanks and replaced with fresh fuel and oil, before you try to crank the tiller.

Check your owner's manual for the proper oil to use and also the location of grease fittings.

Don't forget to install a fresh spark plug, and you should be ready for a trouble-free season of yard and garden work. Remember, help is just around the corner at your local hardware store.

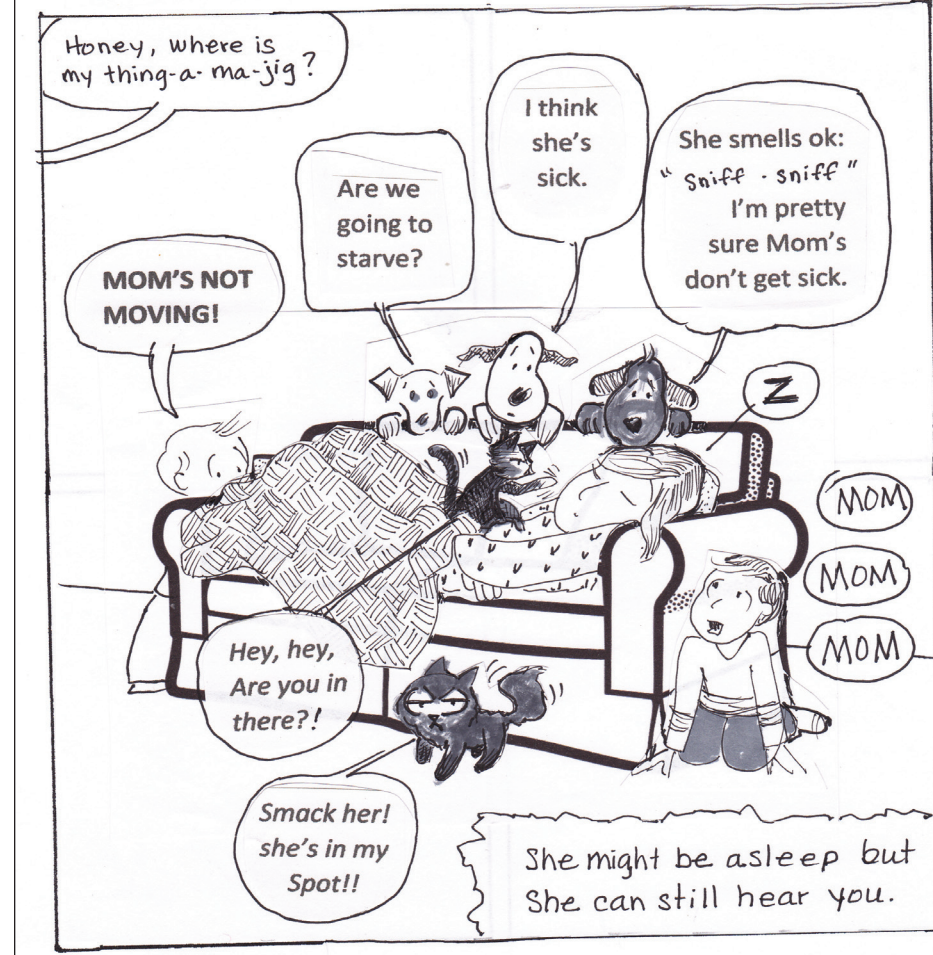


Doug Green

## Our House

by Ree Shannon

When Mom Takes a Break:



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## Embrace leadership at your library & celebrate National Library Week

Submitted to the FFP

Russellville, AL – This week, Russellville Public Library joins libraries nationwide in celebrating the many ways libraries lead their communities through the transformative services, programs and expertise they offer.

April 8-14 is National Library Week, an annual celebration of the life-changing work of libraries, librarians and library workers. Libraries aren't just places to borrow books or study—they're also creative and engaging community centers where people can collaborate using new technologies and develop their skills and passions.

Libraries of all types have long been evolving to meet the needs of the communities they serve. Diverse groups including elected officials, small business owners and students depend upon libraries and the resources they offer. Resources like e-books and technology classes, materials for English-language learners and programs for job seekers are just a few ways libraries and librarians are transforming to lead their communities. Community members can also develop their own leadership skills at the library, with endless opportunity to build skills and confidence through resources and programming.

Russellville Public Library helps lead the community by offering education and information resources, as well as continuous reference sup-

port for the City of Russellville and Franklin County.

"The library helps lead our community by advocating for widespread access to crucial services and lifelong learning," said Ashley Cummins, Library director. "Libraries level the playing field for people of any age who seek information and access to technologies to improve their quality of life."

**Libraries aren't just places to borrow books or study—they're creative and engaging community centers where people can collaborate using new technologies and develop their skills and passions.**

Russellville Public Library is celebrating National Library Week and encourages members of the community to stop by and see everything the library has to offer.

First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country each April.

For more information, visit the Russellville Public Library at 110 E. Lawrence St. in downtown Russellville, call 256-332-1535 or go online to [www.russellvillepubliclibrary.com](http://www.russellvillepubliclibrary.com).

Library hours are Tuesday from 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursday from 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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





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by Dave Ramsey

**Access to my checking account?**

Dear Dave,  
Will paying my taxes online give the government electronic access to my checking account?

Ashley

Dear Ashley,  
If you use your checking account, of course they will have the ability to withdraw that money from your account. I believe I know where you're going with this question, and I think you may be a little confused about my stance on this sort of thing.

There's nothing wrong with certain entities having access to your checking account. I use electronic bill pay for utilities, mutual fund contributions and things like that all the time. The only time I warn people against giving electronic access to their bank accounts is when they're dealing with collectors over a bad debt. The government—even the IRS—isn't known for coming in and randomly taking money out of people's accounts. Collectors, on the other hand, do it all the time.

You're in a fight when you're dealing with a debt collector. It's an adversarial relationship. As a rule, no one in that industry should ever be given electronic access to any of your accounts. There may be a few

decent debt collection companies out there, but many of them will lie, cheat and steal to get your money.

I hope that clears things up, Ashley.

Dave

**Many already know**

Dear Dave,  
How can I convince my fellow millennials that government isn't the solution to their problems?

Josh

Dear Josh,  
I think you're proceeding from a false assumption. Many millennials already understand it's not the government's job to take care of everyone and provide everything. The problem is there's a group of people in every generation that wants someone else to take care of them.

The only thing I can suggest is that you try to be kind to everyone. It does no good to have a political discussion with a political neophyte. If you have friends like this, perhaps you could suggest they work to control and improve the variables in their lives they can actually control and improve—namely themselves.

You can't control the variable of government, Josh. It's not going to come to your rescue. It never has.

Dave

*\*Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven bestselling 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.*



Letters to the Editor

We love to hear from you! Send your guest columns, recipes, cartoons, letters to the editor and other creative submissions to franklinfreepress@yahoo.com.

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



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# What's Happening


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


 **A**ARP Tax-Aide will be offering free income tax preparation at DHR on Thursdays from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. through April 12. You do not have to be an AARP member, be retired or be a certain age to use this service. Call Ben at 256-332-0252 for an appointment.


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


 **M**embers 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, 310 N. Montgomery Avenue in Sheffield, this Thursday, April 5 from 4-5:30 p.m. Monthly meeting to follow in the Sheffield Room at Park Place, 501 N. Montgomery Avenue in Sheffield, at 6:30 p.m. Charlotte Heaps, who was healed of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, will share her testimony. We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. All prayer is confidential. All are welcome.


 **S**t. Paul Missionary Baptist Church Relay for Life team will have a Yard Sale this Friday, April 6 from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, April 7 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. at Born Again Auto Collision Center at the intersection of Hwy. 243 and Hwy. 81 in the Trapptown Community. Pancakes & biscuits/chocolate gravy for breakfast, and hot dogs/ hamburgers for lunch. Bake sale also on Saturday. We will be giving away a 40-inch Samsung TV Saturday at noon. All money raised goes to the American Cancer Society. Call 256-810-0009 for more info.


 **T**he gospel group Purpose will be singing at Tharptown Friendship Holiness Church this Saturday, April 7 at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited! For more information, call 256-627-8784.


 **T**he Autism Society of Alabama will hold a "Funky Fun Run" and 5K race at Red Bay High School this Saturday, April 7. Entry fee (includes T-shirt) is \$30 for adults and \$20 for children age 10 and under. \$5 additional fee to enter 5K race. Register online at [www.FunkyFunRun.com](http://www.FunkyFunRun.com). Dress in your best retro wear. 5K check-in begins at 7 a.m., 5K race begins at 8 a.m. Walk check-in begins at 8:30 a.m., walk begins at 9:30 a.m. Verify start times on registration site. For more information, call 205-951-1364.


 **M**embers of First Baptist Church, Russellville, will show their appreciation and gratitude honoring their pastor, Rev. B.J. Bonner and family, for 28 years of pastoral service this Sunday, April 8. Special guest at 10:30 a.m. will be Rev. Ernest Smith, associate minister of First Baptist Church, Tuscumbia. Special guest at 3 p.m. will be Rev. Jeffrey Braxton, pastor, and congregation of First Baptist Church, Sheffield. We are inviting you to share with us. We pray that you will come and receive a spiritual blessing.


 **A**merican Legion Post 64 meets the second Thursday of each month at the Chamber of Commerce office on Jackson Avenue. Meal served around 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m. Next meeting will be April 12.


 **T**he Belgreen Alumni Banquet will be held Saturday, April 14 at the Belgreen High School cafeteria with social hour from 4-5 p.m., dinner from 5-6 p.m. and annual alumni meeting from 6-7 p.m. This year we will honor the Class of 1968 on their 50th anniversary. Also, we will give special recognition to the classes of 1951-53, 1961-63, 1971-73, 1981-83, 1991-93, 2001-03 and 2011-13. Everyone is invited. \$12 for meal tickets. Please RSVP for meals to 256-332-1376. For more information, call Judy West at 256-277-1211.

 **T**he Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert with special guest Cari Ann Cornelius at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville on Saturday, April 14 at 7 p.m. General admission seating. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Call 256-335-4356.

 **T**he Helen Keller Volunteer Auxiliary will host their \$5 jewelry sale April 16-18 in the Aerobics Room at the Keller Wellcare Center, located on the campus of Helen Keller Hospital. Masquerade Jewelry will be on site with earrings, necklaces, pins, bags, rings and more! All items are only \$5 each! Proceeds benefit the projects of the Helen Keller Hospital Volunteer Auxiliary, including the Louise Isbell Ashe Scholarship Program. These scholarships are given out each spring to graduating high school seniors who are pursuing careers in healthcare. For more information, call 256-386-4476.

 **S**iloam Missionary Baptist Church will hold revival services with evangelist Bro. Randy Taylor Wednesday-Friday, April 18-20, at 7 p.m. each night. Pastor Bro. Jarrod Helms and congregation invite everyone to attend! Nursery provided.

 **K**indred Hospice (formerly 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.

 **N**ew Life Ministries invites you to join them for Sunday School at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings and for worship services on Sundays at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. On the first Sunday of each month, there will be a fellowship lunch after morning services. You and your family are invited to come worship and fellowship with the Lord of Hosts and his children. New Life Ministries is located on Hwy. 24 west toward Red Bay, right behind Tompkins Feed.

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# What's Happening

256.332.0255

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

**W**est Elementary School will hold Kindergarten registration and verification on April 2-17, 2018. Registration packets may be picked up at the Russellville City Schools Board of Education and returned with the required documents. A Kindergarten screening will be administered to all registered students. Please refer to the following information to determine the appropriate time for you and your child to be present for the screening. All screenings will be conducted at the RCS Board of Education building located at 1945 Waterloo Road, Russellville, AL. Hours are 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-2 p.m. Wednesday, April 18, 2018 - Students with last name beginning with A-H; Thursday, April 19, 2018 - Students with last name beginning with I-Q; Friday, April 20, 2018 - Students with last name beginning with R-Z. It shall be the policy of the Russellville City School System to provide nondiscriminatory basis educational opportunities for children. No person shall be denied the benefits of any education program or activity on the basis of race, color, disability, creed, national origin, age, or sex. Pursuant to the requirements of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, all homeless children, migrants and English language learners must have equal access to the same free appropriate public education provided other children and youth. All programs offered by schools within the School System shall be open to all students in compliance with statutory and judicial requirements. The enrollment of homeless, immigrant, migrant and limited English proficient children shall not be denied due to any of the following barriers: Lack of birth certificate; lack of school records or transcripts; lack of immunization records; lack of proof of residency; lack of transportation; unaccompanied; no guardian.

**T**he gospel group Purpose will be singing at Gray Rock FCM Church on Saturday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited! For more information, call 256-627-6404.

**T**he Helen Keller Hospital Foundation is bringing a familiar face from Facebook and YouTube to the Marriott Shoals Conference Center on Saturday, May 5. Heather Land, known for her "I Ain't Doin' It" series of videos, is bringing her comedy and music show to Florence as a fundraiser for the Foundation. The show will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale by calling 256-386-4747. Ticket levels include: Bronze Level \$30; Silver Priority Seating \$40; Gold VIP Level \$100. The Gold VIP Level includes cocktail tickets, hors d'oeuvres, meet and greet with Heather Land, and a group photo. The proceeds from this event will benefit the Pediatric Unit at Helen Keller Hospital. For more information, call 256-386-4747.

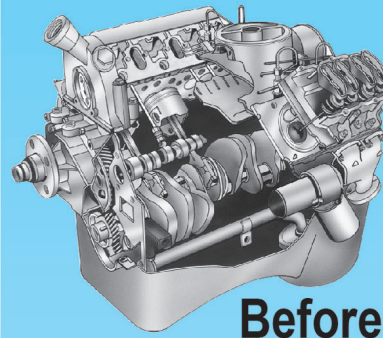
**S**AVE THE DATE: Saturday, May 12, for Pioneer Day, part of Franklin County's Bicentennial Celebration, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Russellville on the east side of Sloss Lake on Hwy 24. Living history demonstrations to show how people lived, worked and played 200 years ago. Actors will portray historical figures. Native Americans. War of 1812 soldiers. Civil war camp. Food and artisan products for sale. Free admission. Free parking in the field across Hwy. 24 from the entrance. Free shuttle bus service. Join in the fun and wear pioneer clothing, if you wish. For more information, email archive@hiwaay.net or call 256-332-8827 or 256-332-4085.

## Birmingham bound



COURTESY PHOTO

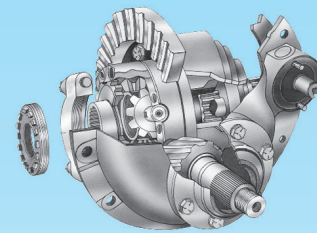
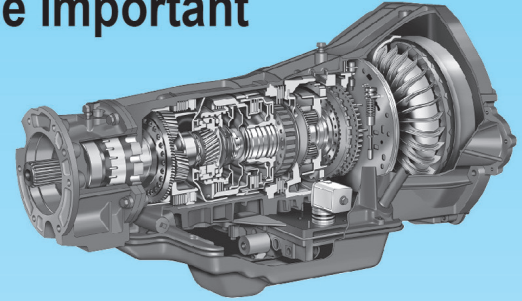
Northwest-Shoals Community College hosted the 2018 Alabama Scholastic Challenge district competition for 10 high schools in Division I and II on February 9 on the Phil Campbell campus. Russellville High School, Division I winner, will compete at the Division I State Tournament on Friday, April 13 at Jefferson State Community College in Birmingham. RHS team members (pictured above) were Cameron Vandiver, Jarrod Lasseter, Georgia Amick and Max Moussad. Not pictured is coach Susan DeArman.



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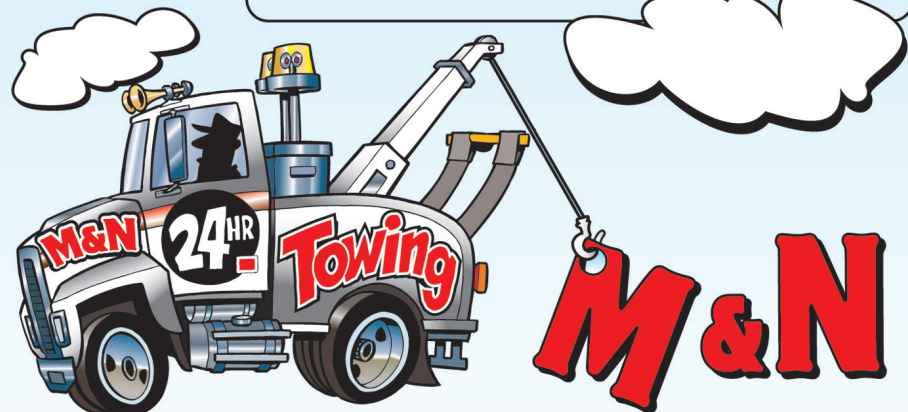


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# Water Authority pitching in to help clean up county

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

The Franklin County Water Service Authority will do its part to clean up Franklin County as part of the annual Alabama People Against a Littered State (ALPALS) "Don't Drop It on Alabama" campaign.

Employees, their families and friends will pick up litter along a stretch of Highway 187 on Saturday, April 28. Doug Aaron, executive director of the Franklin County Water Service Authority, said they will also invite local elected officials and candidates for political office to join them that morning.

"We're doing this in conjunction with other county and state events as part of the annual campaign," Aaron said. "We'll pick up litter that morning, and then everyone will meet back at the water tank and we'll grill hot dogs or hamburgers for lunch."

**2018**

*"Don't Drop It On Alabama"*

**STATEWIDE SPRING CLEANUP**

**APRIL 21-28, 2018**



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*Make Plans Now for Your City, County,  
 School, Neighborhood or Volunteer Group to  
 Join Volunteers, from Every Corner of Alabama for  
 This Annual Statewide Spring Cleanup!*

Volunteers in the local campaign are asked to meet at the water tank, located on CR 16, at 8:30 a.m. Trash pickup will begin at 9 a.m. Aaron said the group will clean 187 from AL 24 south to the

water treatment plant at the intersection of 187 and 16.

Franklin County probate judge Barry Moore announced a local campaign, "Don't Drop It on Franklin County," at the commission's March meeting. Commissioners voted to support the campaign, which runs statewide from April 21-28.

ALPALS is a statewide organization dedicated to making Alabama more beautiful by sponsoring programs focused on cleaning up litter in Alabama's streets, streams, campuses and coastlines.

ALPALS encourages county and municipal governments, civic groups, volunteers, neighborhoods, schools, church groups and other groups and individuals to join in keeping Alabama beautiful.

During the week-long anti-litter drive, all supplies and materials for trash pickup will be supplied by ALPALS.

# Website ranks Franklin County Schools 32nd in state

John Pilati  
 Franklin Free Press

A new ranking of Alabama's top public school systems finds Franklin County Schools as the 32nd-ranked system, and the state's 13th highest-ranked county system.

The rankings, compiled by [www.backgroundchecks.org](http://www.backgroundchecks.org), are based on factors including student performance (math and reading scores), dropout rates, school funding and area poverty rates.

Mountain Brook City Schools ranked at the top of the list, followed by Vestavia Hills, Homewood City, Madison City and Cullman County Schools.

Locally, only three systems ranked ahead of Franklin County. They included Muscle Shoals City at No. 7, Winfield City at No. 13 and Lauderdale County at No. 22. Russellville City Schools ranked No. 80 on the list.

Alabama has 173 school districts serving 744,637 students as of 2017.

Cullman County Schools were cited for becoming Alabama's first 1:1 laptop initiative, as the system now supplies all middle school and high school students with laptops to be used for educational purposes.

*Jeff Elledge's*  
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# Russellville Electric Board earns Risk Management Award

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

The Russellville Electric Board recently received a Gold Risk Management Award from the insurance divisions of the Alabama League of Municipalities.

Approximately 770 public entities participate in one or both of the Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM) sponsored insurance programs, which are the Municipal Workers Compensation Fund (MWCF) and the Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation (AMIC).

Instituting risk management and loss control activities by the members of MWCF and AMIC are considered proactive steps that benefit not only the member's loss ratio but also the overall suc-

cess of the two insurance programs. Not only are employee, property and liability losses minimized, but, most importantly, employees and citizens reap the rewards of a safer workplace and community.

Through the efforts of the Russellville Electric Board, employee, property and liability losses in our community are being minimized.

As a Gold Risk Management Award recipient, Russellville Electric Board has incurred loss ratios below five percent in a five-year period. Recipients of the President's Risk Management Award include the top five percent of members with minimal losses over a five-year period.

The Russellville Electric Board will be recognized in the AMIC and MWCF's spring 2018 newsletter and at the League convention.

The Alabama League of Municipalities was organized in 1935 and has served since that time as the recognized voice of the cities and towns in Alabama.

Representing more than 450 member municipalities, the League works to secure enactment of legislation enabling all cities and towns to perform their functions more efficiently and effectively; offers specialized training for both municipal officers and employees; holds conferences and meetings where views and experiences of officials are exchanged; and conducts continuing studies of the legislative, administrative and operational needs, problems and functions of Alabama's municipal governments.

For more information, go online to [www.alalm.org](http://www.alalm.org).

# ACIJ aiding immigrants through 'Know Your Rights' seminar

John Pilati  
Franklin Free Press

When it comes to legal issues for immigrants, much of the confusion results from individuals simply not knowing their rights and obligations under the law.

A free seminar sponsored by the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice (ACIJ) will work to help immigrants answer those questions. "Know Your Rights," the free seminar, is set for Monday, April 9 from 6-9 p.m. at the Old Reedtown School Back to Basics Center, 129 Winfield Street, near the Chucky Mullins Center.

The seminar will include a presentation and question-and-answer session with an immigration attorney. Materials will be available in Spanish and English. Topics to be addressed include power of attorney, dual citizenship, ITIN number renewal and the deportation process.

Yalitz LaFontaine, Regional North organizer for the ACIJ, is coordinating the April 9 program. The ACIJ was founded in 2006 and gained momentum after the passage of House Bill 56, Alabama's harsh immigration law, in 2011.

ACIJ works to create a grassroots base through unparalleled organizing and a leadership development campaign in Alabama's immigrant communities, including Russellville. The coalition consists of hundreds of community leaders and five non-profit organizations: The NAACP, ACLU, SPLC, HICA and the Greater Birmingham Ministries.

The organization's mission is to work for the rights and dignity of all people by cultivating just policies, encouraging grassroots leadership and participation, building alliances and amplifying the voices and contributions of immigrants in Alabama.

LaFontaine said there are a wide variety of legal issues facing immigrants.

"Everybody has a unique situation that has to be addressed," LaFontaine said. "A lot of people think all immigrants are the same, but there's a lot of variety. It depends on the country of origin, and renewals fluctuate with deadlines and ever-changing rules."

Rev. Charles Dale, who has spent a lifetime working for the advancement of civil rights in Alabama, supports the ACIJ and its efforts to inform immigrants of the right way to handle legal

issues.

"We have immigrants who have been in Franklin County for 35 years," Dale said. "Many have applied for legal status or extensions and are still waiting for documentation. I got involved because of the stories I've been told, particularly from women who were mistreated by law enforcement and local government. I stepped up to the plate and spoke out because that's what needed to be done."

"Civil rights are supposed to be for everyone. Sometimes those in power try to play groups against each other and keep them divided and weak when they really should be supporting each other."

LaFontaine is a former professor at the University of Alabama at Huntsville, where she taught intensive English. She never envisioned her career path leading her to an organization like ACIJ.

"Sometimes, social shifts push a person into a different area," LaFontaine said. "I felt compelled to do something direct to help the immigrant population of our country in a more proactive way. I'm

**See 'SEMINAR,' page 10**

## 'VINA,' from page 1

The situation was shaping up into a potential legal battle that could have lingered for years in the court system.

But Franklin County Schools received good news last Tuesday when the 2018-19 state education budget was approved and reported out of both the Alabama House and Senate with a line item for \$750,000 to replace the science lab/band hall at Vina.

It was the end of a long battle that, without the assistance of Sen. Larry Stutts (R-Tusculum) and Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow (D-Red Bay), could have been much longer.

"I want to thank Senator Stutts and Representative Morrow," Hamilton said. "They were instrumental in getting this resolved. What could have been a long, drawn-out process with Risk Management was avoided."

"I know how important science is, and we needed kids back in a safe building, so we looked for other avenues."

The system won't receive the money until after October 1, 2018, when the new fiscal year begins, but Hamilton expects to bid the demolition of the existing building out and start that process later this year. Hamilton said there will be no local funds

required on the project thanks to the line item inclusion in the education budget.

In January, Hamilton and Morrow addressed the House Ways and Means Committee to advocate for funding for the Vina project. It wasn't Hamilton's only trip to Montgomery relating to the dispute.

"After more trips to Montgomery than I can remember, and multiple phone calls and multiple portfolios, the great news has finally arrived," Hamilton said. "I want to thank Senator Stutts for all his hard work throughout this entire process. He was instrumental in securing additional funding after it passed from the House to the Senate, as well as protecting it when it went to committee serving as a conferee. I want to thank Representative Bill Poole for allowing me to address the Ways and Means Committee and Representative Morrow for standing beside me as I addressed the committee."

"The Franklin County Board of Education has stood behind me, entrusting me to do what is best for the students of Vina. It's been a long process, but I would do it again without hesitation for any school in this county. It was the right thing to do."

Stutts, who was instrumental in increasing the

line item amount to \$750,000, said he committed to help once he was contacted by Hamilton.

"I was glad to be able to help," Stutts said. "The county schools in Franklin County are seeing increased enrollment, and they needed this building replaced. I gave Superintendent Hamilton my word that what came out of the Senate would have money for this project in it, and that's what happened."

"We added an additional \$450,000 in the Senate because that's what they needed for this project, and I'm glad to have been able to help Vina."

Morrow described the Vina High School line item funding as his "proudest accomplishment this legislative session." Morrow said it was a joint effort from both House and Senate members.

"I am extremely proud to report to the citizens of Vina that working with fellow House members and Senators we have added \$750,000 to the Education Budget," Morrow said. "My friends in the Alabama Legislature, both House and Senate, responded very positively to my appeal for their help. I have helped them during the 28 years I have served in the Alabama Legislature, and today they helped me by including this \$750,000 in the Education Budget."





# Classifieds

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**YARD SALES/ ESTATE SALES**

Three-family yard sale this Friday and Saturday, April 6-7 from 7am-until at 246 Duncan Street, Cedar Creek subdivision in Russellville. Furniture, sofa set, odds & ends, large-size clothes (men's and women's), large-size new and old blue jeans,

shoes, purses, and lots of household items.

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church Relay for Life team will have a Yard Sale on Friday, April 6 from 7 am-6 pm and Saturday, April 7 from 7 am-3 pm at Born Again Auto Collision Center at the intersection of Hwy. 243 and Hwy. 81 in the Traptown Community. Pancakes & biscuits/ chocolate gravy for breakfast, and hot dogs/ hamburgers for lunch. Bake sale also on Saturday. We will be giving away a 40-inch Samsung TV Saturday at noon. All money raised goes to the American Cancer Society. Call 256-810-0009 for more info.

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## PUBLIC STORAGE Public Auction on 4/5/18

at 5 Star Mini Storage located at 13234 Hwy. 243 Russellville AL 35654. Will sell personal property consisting of household and personal effects; office and other equipment; toys and appliances to satisfy owner's lien for rent, pursuant to Ala. Code. 8-15-35.

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## 'SEMINAR,' from page 4

45 years old, and this was a huge career change." Born in Puerto Rico, LaFontaine moved to Alabama from Murpheesboro, TN, a decade ago. She earned her Masters at UAH and decided to start teaching there. A primary goal of the seminar, LaFontaine said, is to provide knowledge to immigrants to help them overcome fears about the legal process. "The biggest concern is that fear," she said. "It's one constant I have encountered—a fear of rocking the boat to the point where they can't even exert their own rights because of it. There are a lot of questions about legalities. How to document, how to become documented, etc. What to do when ICE [Immigrations and Customs Enforcement] arrives if there is a raid? What are their rights, and how have they changed?" LaFontaine has been in her new position just over a month. She's already learning that issues facing immigrants in Russellville, for example, may be different than those facing immigrants in Huntsville. She encourages immigrants to join ACIJ. Membership includes seminars and assistance with issues that come up with new legal decisions. For more information about ACIJ, log onto www.acij.net. For more information on the upcoming seminar, call 205-945-0777 or email info@acij.net.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

On March 22, 2018, Pilati Investments, Inc. filed an Application with the Federal Communications Commission seeking authorization for the construction of an FM Translator to serve the community of Russellville, AL. The proposed FM Translator will operate on Channel 299 at 0.25 kilowatts. The proposed FM Translator will rebroadcast AM station WGOL, Russellville, AL which operates on frequency 920. A copy of the Application is available for public inspection and comment on-line at www.fcc.gov.





## 2018 Miss RHS Winners

### COURTESY PHOTOS

The 36th annual Miss RHS Pageant, held in the RCS Auditorium on March 2, offered an array of talent and beauty. The contestants took part in an opening number, Judge's Interview, Evening Gown Competition and Talent Competition. The pageant is sponsored by the RHS Tiger Track Annual Staff. Ms. Cindy Coan is the pageant director, and Dr. AnnaKay Holland serves as pageant sponsor. Pictured on this page (clockwise, from top left) are: The Miss RHS Court (L to R) - Abby Montgomery (10th Grade Representative), Elizabeth Pierce (11th Grade Representative), Cecilia McLemore (1st Alternate), Ellie Kerby (Miss RHS), Alison Bryant (2nd Alternate), Kylee Grace Plott and Lauren Mae Sturdivant (9th Grade Representatives); 2018 Miss RHS Ellie Kerby; Viewer's Choice Award - Shelby Carson; Best Interview Winners (L to R) - Sydney Medley (10th Grade), Alison Bryant and Cecilia McLemore (12th Grade), Kylee Plott (9th Grade), Elizabeth Pierce (11th Grade), Lauren Mae Sturdivant (9th Grade); Best Talent Winners (L to R) - Abby Montgomery (10th Grade), Ellie Kerby (12th Grade), Kylee Plott (9th Grade), Elizabeth Pierce (11th Grade); Best Evening Gown Winners (L to R) - Lauren Mae Sturdivant (9th Grade), Abby Montgomery (10th Grade), Ellie Kerby (12th Grade), Cecilia McLemore (12th Grade), Elizabeth Pierce (11th Grade); Academic Awards (HGPA and Overall "A" Average) - Alison Bryant, Ellie Kerby (HGPA-12th Grade), Cecilia McLemore, Sydney Medley, Emma Reed (HGPA-10th Grade), Emma Claire Bragwell, Elizabeth Pierce (HGPA-11th Grade), Abby Montgomery (HGPA-10th Grade), Amberly Brown, Destiny Hatton, Shelby Carson, Kylee Plott, Lauren Mae Sturdivant (HGPA-9th Grade); Most Photogenic (L to R) - Emma Reed (10th Grade), Cecilia McLemore (12th Grade), Elizabeth Pierce (11th Grade), Lauren Mae Sturdivant (9th Grade).





# A public notice from the Russellville Gas Board

**RUSSELLVILLE GAS BOARD**  
1296 Walnut Gate Road  
Russellville, AL 35654

The Russellville Gas Board is required by Federal Law to implement and maintain a Damage Prevention Program and a Public Awareness Program. The following information is provided in compliance with those requirements.

## **I. Damage Prevention Program**

A. The Russellville Gas Board (RGB) is to notify parties who periodically excavate in areas where RGB's natural gas lines are located and to inform those parties to request that RGB's natural gas lines be located. Requests for line locations may be made by calling Alabama Line Location Center at 1-800-292-8525 or the Russellville Gas Board at 1-256-332-2020. A 48 hour notice is required.

## **II. Public Awareness Program**

- A. Natural gas has no odor, therefore, in order to identify possible leaks, the Russellville Gas Board (RGB) adds a foul smelling substance to natural gas. If you detect a foul smell near appliances, apparatus, equipment or at any other location near natural gas lines call the RGB at 1-256-332-3850 or after hours at 1-256-332-2230. If the odor is strong, proceed as follows:
- 1) Leave the structure.
  - 2) Do not flip light switches.
  - 3) Do not use electrical equipment.
  - 4) Do not create a spark or flame.
  - 5) Notify the RGB.
- B. Repairs or alterations to any natural gas facility should be performed by a licensed and bonded pipefitter.
- C. It is unlawful to attempt to repair or alter natural gas pipelines or facilities owned by RGB.
- D. The RGB's natural gas pipelines are located underground throughout the area of service. In order for the public to identify the approximate location of underground pipelines, the RGB incorporates the following measures:
- 1) Bright yellow markers identify the existence of underground natural gas pipelines.
  - 2) Above ground facilities are painted silver. Fences have signs attached identifying RGB facilities.
  - 3) An on-site location of natural gas pipelines is available by calling Alabama Line Location Center at 1-800-292-8525 or the RGB at 1-256-332-2020.
  - 4) Detail maps are available at the RGB office located at 1296 Walnut Gate Road, Russellville, AL, 35654.
- E. In the event of damage to RGB's natural gas facilities the affected public should leave the area and the party causing the damage should:
- 1) Leave the equipment and premises immediately.
  - 2) Do not create a spark or flame.
  - 3) Notify the RGB immediately.

Natural gas is a safe and reliable form of energy. By implementing the Damage Prevention Program and Public Awareness Program, the Russellville Gas Board is committed to ensuring that it stays that way.

Russellville Gas Board

La Comisión de Gas de Russellville  
1296 Walnut Gate Road  
Russellville, AL 35654

La Comisión de Gas de Russellville por requerimiento de la ley Federal tiene que implementar y mantener un Programa de Prevención de Daños y un Programa de Conciencia Pública. La siguiente información va de acuerdo a dichos requerimientos.

## **I. Programa de Prevención de Daños**

A. La Comisión de Gas de Russellville (RGB) deberá notificar a las partes que periódicamente excavan en áreas en que la RGB tiene líneas de gas natural e informar a dichas partes que piden que las líneas de la RGB sean localizadas. Para pedir la localización de las líneas puede hacerlo llamando al Centro de Localización de Líneas de Alabama al número 1800-292-8525 o en la oficina de la Comisión de Gas de Russellville al teléfono 1-256-332-2020. Se requiere notificar con 48 horas de anticipación.

## **II. Programa de Conciencia Pública**

- A. El gas natural no tiene olor, por lo tanto para poder identificar posibles fugas, la Comisión de Gas de Russellville (RGB) le agrega una sustancia de olor fétido al gas natural. Si usted detecta este olor cerca de algún aparato o equipo o en cualquier otro lugar cerca de una línea de gas natural llame a la RGB al teléfono 1 256-332-3850 o después de horas de servicio al 1-256-332-2230. Si el olor es fuerte, haga lo siguiente:
- 1) Aléjese del recinto.
  - 2) No prenda luces o apagadores.
  - 3) No use equipo eléctrico.
  - 4) No cree una chispa o flama.
  - 5) Notifique a la RGB.
- B. Reparaciones o alteraciones a cualquier instalación de gas natural deberá ser hecha por un tubero con licencia y certificado.
- C. Es contra la ley intentar reparar o alterar una línea de gas natural o instalación propiedad de la RGB.
- D. Las líneas de gas natural de la RGB se localizan bajo tierra en el área de servicio. Para que el público pueda identificar la localización aproximada de líneas enterradas, la RGB incorpora las siguientes medidas:
- 1) Marcadores de color amarillo brillante identifican la existencia de líneas subterráneas de gas natural.
  - 2) Servicios sobre el suelo están pintadas de color plateado. Las cercas tienen señales identificando servicios de la RGB.
  - 3) Se encuentra disponible un servicio para localizar líneas de gas natural llamando al Centro de Localización de Líneas de Alabama al teléfono 1-800-292-8525 o a la RGB al 1-256-332-2020.
  - 4) Hay mapas detallados disponibles en la oficina de la RGB localizada en 1229 Walnut Gate Road, Russellville, AL, 35654.
- E. En el caso de daño a los servicios de gas natural de la RGB el público afectado deberá alejarse del área y la parte que cause el daño debe:
- 1) Dejar el equipo y el lugar inmediatamente.
  - 2) No provoque una chispa o flama.
  - 3) Notifique la RGB de inmediato.

El gas natural es una fuente de energía segura y confiable. Implementando el Programa de Prevención de Daños y Conciencia al Público, la Comisión de Gas de Russellville esta comprometida a asegurar que siga de esa manera.

Comisión de Gas de Russellville





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## Owens, Hardy pitch 'Cats past Guin 6-2

Staff reports

Phil Campbell used a five-run fifth inning to back up solid work on the mound from Nate Owens and Joe Hardy, rallying for a 6-2 win over Marion County in Guin on Saturday.

Trailing 2-1, the Bobcats (16-9 through Sunday) loaded the bases in the top of the fifth on walks to Ridge Raper and Cole Motes and a base hit by Peyton Thomas. Hardy tied the game with an RBI single, and Owens followed with a two-run double to left to put Phil Campbell in front 4-2. Austen Baker added an RBI single later in the inning, and another run scored on an error to make it 6-2.

Hardy relieved Owens to start the bottom of the fifth and pitched around a pair of two-out singles to keep Marion County off the board. The senior righthander finished with a flourish, striking out six straight batters to close out the game and earn his first save of the season.

Owens (5-2) got the win, allowing two runs (both unearned) on three hits in four innings. He struck out three and did not issue a walk, throwing 36 of his 49 pitches for strikes. Hardy was even sharper, striking out seven in three scoreless innings and throwing 29 of his 38 pitches for strikes. He did not walk a batter.

After Owens retired the first six batters he faced to start the game, Phil Campbell took the lead with a run in the top of the third. Raper singled, moved to second on a sac bunt by Motes and took third on a wild pitch. Thomas then walked and stole second, allowing Raper to score the game's first run on an error.

Owens struck out the first two batters in the bottom of the third, but the second reached safely on a passed ball. Two hits by Marion County and an error by the Bobcats allowed the Raiders to score twice and grab a 2-1 lead.

Baker finished 3-for-4 with a double, recording his team-leading ninth multi-hit game of the season. Thomas was 2-for-3 with a double, and Raper went 1-for-1 with two walks and two runs. Owens was 2-for-4 with two doubles and two RBIs, and Rilan Garrison went 1-for-3 with a walk and a run. Hardy had a hit and an RBI.

### Sumiton Christian 4 Phil Campbell 1

Sumiton took advantage of two Bobcat errors to score twice in the bottom of the first and led the rest of the way, ending Phil Campbell's three-game win streak.

Cole Motes took the loss despite allowing just one earned run on six hits in a complete game. He struck out two and walked three.

Trailing 4-0, the Bobcats scored their only run in the top of the seventh when Chase Hutchens doubled and came home on Motes' RBI single. Austen Baker came to the plate as the tying run but flied to center for the final out.

Hutchens was 2-for-3, and Brett Saint went 1-for-2 with a double. Motes was 1-for-3, and Peyton Thomas had a hit and a stolen base.

# Damage done

## Russellville's girls slugged their way to a tournament title at Elkmont, staging a startling display of power and precision

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

In the course of winning five games in two days to take home the tournament championship at the Elkmont Invitational this past weekend, Russellville's varsity softball team put up some eye-popping numbers.

The Lady Golden Tigers had eight players bat better than .400 for the tournament, including four (senior Karlie Moore, sophomores Alivia Clemmons and Makala O'Neal, and seventh-grader Chalea Clemmons) who hit .500 on the nose. Six different players homered at least once, with Moore and Alivia Clemmons going deep three times apiece. The team posted a collective batting average of .420 and got excellent pitching as well, out-scoring its six opponents 55-10.

But one statistic above all others speaks to how locked in Russellville was at the plate on Friday and Saturday. In their six games (five wins plus a pool-play tie with host Elkmont), the Lady Golden Tigers slugged 11 home runs and struck out only 11 times—a power/contact combination so mind-boggling as to demand an explanation.

Head coach Kathryn Montgomery offered one.

**"The girls have taken endless cuts in the cages and on the field," said Montgomery, now in her second season at RHS. "We have worked on proper mechanics, we've done timing drills, we've discussed plate approach, and we've used competition to help the girls get the most out of their already impressive natural ability."**

"The girls have taken endless cuts in the cages and on the field," said Montgomery, now in her second season at RHS. "We have worked on proper mechanics, we've done timing drills, we've discussed plate approach, and we've used competition to help the girls get the most out of their already impressive natural ability. The members of this team and this program are very committed. They're willing to go the extra mile to get where they want to go."

All that hard work certainly paid off this past weekend in Elkmont, where big numbers by



FILE PHOTOS

Logan (above) and Moore (00) were two of six different Russellville players to go deep this past weekend. In six tournament games, the Lady Golden Tigers had the same number of home runs (11) as strikeouts.





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# Malone's walk-off hit, Parker's shutout carry RHS to sweep of Arab

Mike Self  
Franklin Free Press

RUSSELLVILLE - Caden Parker needed just 57 pitches to throw his first career shutout on Saturday afternoon, holding Arab to three hits in seven sharp innings as Russellville finished off a doubleheader sweep of the Knights with a 3-0 win at Russellville Baseball Stadium.

Parker (5-0) took over the staff lead in wins and lowered his season ERA to 1.24. The junior right-hander pounded the strike zone and got quick outs and quick innings all day against an Arab lineup just four days removed from scoring 20 runs in a rout of Cedar Bluff.

Parker struck out just one batter, walking none and hitting two. He got 12 groundball outs, including a 4-6-3 double play to escape a two-on, one-out jam in the top of the third and a terrific defensive play by senior first baseman Layne Johns on a hot shot in the seventh.

The Golden Tigers, who won Saturday's first game 4-3 in eight innings on a walk-off single by Brock Malone, grabbed the early lead in game two with a run in the bottom of the first. Noah Gist drew a leadoff walk, stole second and scored on a line drive to right by Rudy Fernandez to make it 1-0.

The RBI single extended Fernandez's hit streak to seven games, but the senior shortstop sustained an ankle injury on the play and had to leave the game. Heading into this week's pivotal series against area rival Brooks, Fernandez was batting a team-best .341 on the season while also leading Russellville in hits (29), home runs (four) and RBIs (21).

The Golden Tigers (17-10 through Sunday) tacked on another run in the bottom of the second. Parker led off the inning with a double, and courtesy runner Omar Tompkins moved up to third on a sac bunt by Tom Barkley Scott. Tompkins scored on a groundout by Gist to make it 2-0.

Parker plunked Preston Davis to start the third, and John Michael Boles reached on an error to put runners at first and second. Parker retired leadoff man Drew Hudson on a pop-up and then got Dalton Maze to hit a groundball to second, where Malone started an inning-ending 4-6-3 double play.

Parker gave up his first hit (a two-out double by Nic Knighten) in the top of the fourth but retired Russell Brazelton on a foul pop to keep the shutout.

See 'SWEEP,' Page 15

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PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW

SIDESHOW - Ward (1) and his unusual arm angle have been tough on opposing hitters all season. Through Sunday, the senior pitcher had allowed only six earned runs on 16 hits in 30.2 innings while compiling a 3-1 record and two saves.



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## 'SWEEP', from page 14

intact. Drew Laney led off the top of the fifth with a single, but Parker got Davis swinging for his only strikeout of the game and then got two groundballs to Landon Ezzell at short to end the inning.

Davis, Arab's game two starter on the mound, had retired nine batters in a row before Houston Kitterman led off the bottom of the sixth with a base hit. Malone then bunted for a hit, and both runners moved up on a sacrifice bunt by Devin Buckhalter. With Kitterman racing full-speed for home plate, Parker put down a perfect suicide squeeze bunt to stretch the lead to 3-0.

Ezell had been warming up in the bullpen, but Parker went back out and finished off the complete game shutout. Brazelton singled with one out, but Johns handled a hard-hit one-hopper off the bat of Laney for out number two. Parker then induced a groundball to second to finish off Russellville's third straight win.

Kitterman finished 2-for-3 in game two with a double and a run. Malone also went 2-for-3, and Parker was 1-for-2 with a double and an RBI.

The Golden Tigers led Saturday's opener 3-1 before Arab (9-15 through Sunday) rallied to score twice and tie the game in the top of the sixth. The score remained 3-3 until the bottom of the eighth, when Fernandez beat out an infield hit to start the inning, took second on a throwing error and then scored the winning run on Malone's walk-off RBI single to deep right-center.

Fernandez started the game on the mound for Russellville and pitched well, holding Arab to just one run on five hits in five innings. He struck out three and did not issue a walk.

Fernandez gave up a single to Knighten and a double to Brazelton to start the top of the second, but he got two groundballs with the infield in and a pop-up to avoid any damage. The Knights took a 1-0 lead in the third when Drew Hudson doubled off the left-field fence and later scored on a groundball by Will Hudson. They had a chance to add to the lead but stranded runners at second

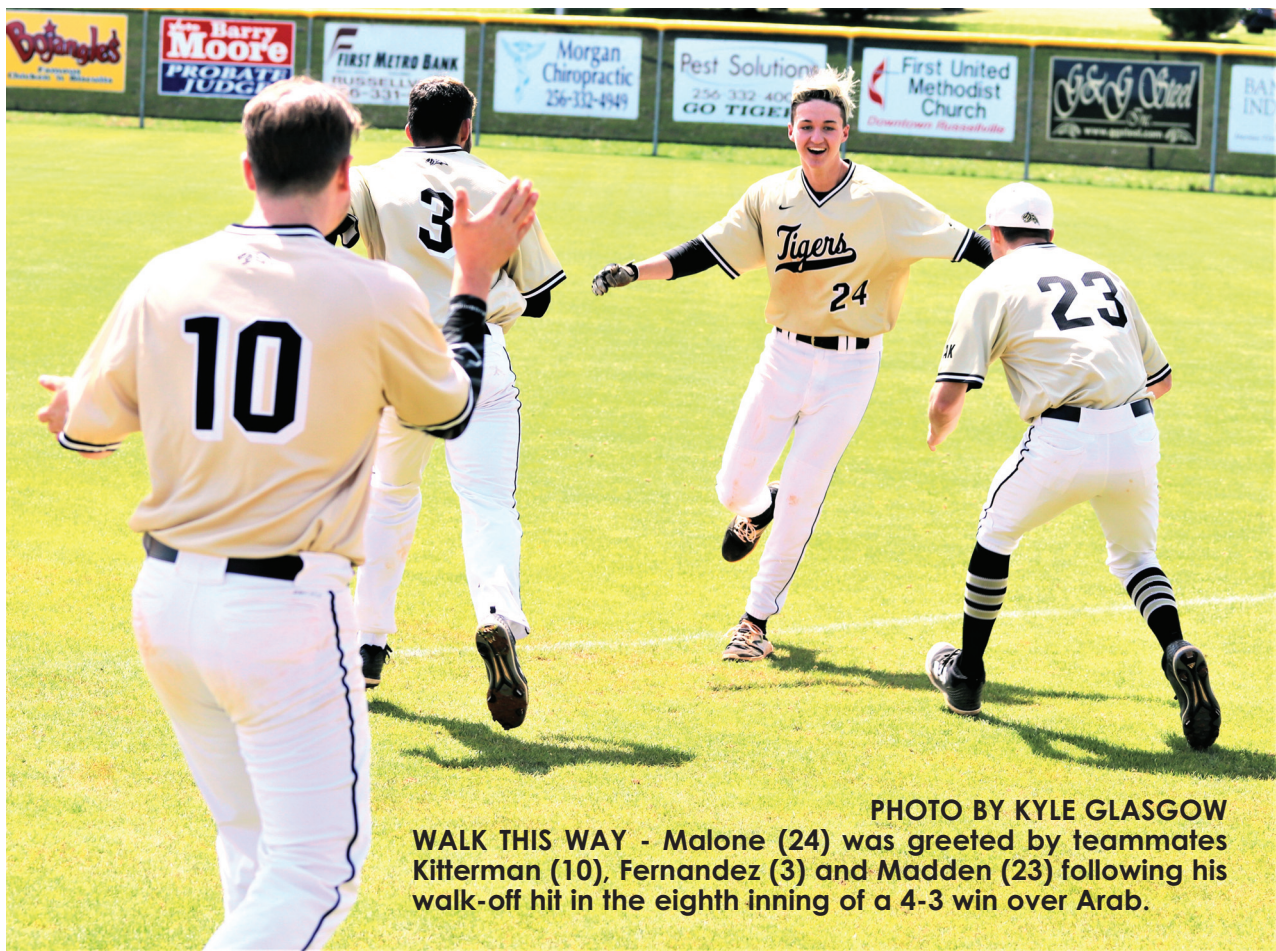


PHOTO BY KYLE GLASGOW  
WALK THIS WAY - Malone (24) was greeted by teammates Kitterman (10), Fernandez (3) and Madden (23) following his walk-off hit in the eighth inning of a 4-3 win over Arab.

and third for the second inning in a row.

Russellville tied the game in the bottom of the third when Parker drew a leadoff walk and eventually scored on an RBI double by Fernandez. The Golden Tigers took their first lead in the fourth, getting back-to-back singles from Kitterman and Malone and then an RBI groundout by Buckhalter to make it 2-1.

Fernandez retired the side in order in the top of the fifth, and then Russellville took advantage of a walk and an error to score an unearned run in the bottom half. Arab got a double, a single, two walks

and a sac fly in the top of the sixth, scoring twice off reliever Jaret Ward to tie the game 3-3. It stayed that way until Malone won it with his walk-off hit in the bottom of the eighth.

Ward (3-1) worked three innings in relief and picked up the win, allowing two runs on three hits and two walks with one strikeout. Drew Hudson took the loss in relief of starter Russell Brazelton, who allowed three runs in five innings.

Malone was 2-for-4 with an RBI, and Parker went 1-for-1 with two walks and a run. Fernandez and Kitterman also had one hit apiece.

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## 'DAMAGE', from page 13

Russellville hitters were as commonplace as eye black and cracker jacks. Alivia Clemmons, the team's three-hole hitter, led the way, going 6-for-12 with three homers, a double, 12 RBIs and seven runs scored. Moore nearly duplicated that stat line toward the bottom of a scary-deep lineup, finishing the tournament 7-for-14 with three homers, two doubles, 11 RBIs and seven runs scored.

Senior second baseman Sydney Burcham ignited the offense from the leadoff spot, going 7-for-16 with a home run, four walks, four stolen bases and seven runs scored. Cleanup hitter Autumn Logan, a sophomore, went 6-for-16 with two homers (including a grand slam) and six RBIs. A.J. Taylor, another sophomore who bats fifth in the order, was 7-for-15 with two doubles, six runs scored and five stolen bases.

Krista Sikes—yet another sophomore—finished the weekend 5-for-11 with a homer, two doubles, four RBIs and six runs scored. O'Neal went 5-for-10 and knocked in four runs, and Lauren Rogers had five hits and five runs scored out of the two-hole. Seventh-graders Chalea Clemmons and Jenna Whitfield—fresh off leading the Russellville Middle School team (page opposite) to a 34-4 record this season—also contributed in their first varsity action, combining to go 6-for-13 with seven RBIs and seven runs scored.

Factor in Jasmine Galloway and Fallin Cox, and eleven different players had at least one hit for Russellville in the tournament; twelve players scored at least one run.

**"This weekend we got to see a glimpse of the true potential of this year's group," said Montgomery, whose team batted .420 for the tournament and out-scored its six opponents 55-10. "They came together offensively, defensively and as individuals. This team has a chance to do something special, and I'm looking forward to more games like these."**

Over the course of two days, the Lady Golden Tigers raised their season batting average from .360 to .376 while doubling their home run total from 11 to 22. They averaged 9.2 runs per game at Elkmont, up from 6.5 per game coming in.

"This weekend we got to see a glimpse of the true potential of this year's group," said Montgomery, whose team was 12-8-1 on the year through Sunday. "They came together offensively, defensively and as individuals. This team has a chance to do something special, and I'm looking forward to more games like these."

Sikes and Emma Whitfield handled the majority of the workload in the circle, combining to go 4-0. Sikes shut out North Jackson on one hit in Saturday night's championship game, finishing the tournament 2-0 with 17 strikeouts and only two earned runs allowed in 14 innings. Whitfield also went 2-0, giving up three earned runs in seven innings.

In a 4-0 win over North Jackson in the final, Sikes struck out eight batters, walked four and gave up just one hit in a five-inning complete game. The Lady Golden Tigers broke up a scoreless tie with four runs in the top of the fourth.

Alivia Clemmons drew a one-out walk, and Logan followed with a base hit to left. Taylor's RBI single made it 1-0, and then Sikes added to the lead with another RBI single. Moore capped the rally with a two-run double to center to make it 4-0.

Sikes took care of the rest in the circle, striking out two batters in the bottom of the fourth and then working around a leadoff walk in the bottom of the fifth to finish off the shutout win.

"Krista had a really good tournament for us," Montgomery said. "She hit well and pitched well."

In previous action:

### Russellville 9 Giles County (TN) 1

Krista Sikes held Giles County to just three hits in four innings, and Karlie Moore broke open a tight game with a three-run homer in the top of the third as the Lady Golden Tigers advanced to the championship game.

Russellville scored twice in the top of the first, getting a leadoff single from Sydney Burcham, a bunt hit from Lauren Rogers and RBI singles from Alivia Clemmons and A.J. Taylor. After Giles County scored a run in the bottom half, the Lady Golden Tigers took control with a five-run third.

Autumn Logan singled with one out, and then Sikes reached on an error with two outs to extend the inning. Moore made Giles County pay, smacking her fourth home run of the season over the centerfield fence to make it 5-1. Singles by Makala O'Neal, Burcham and Clemmons led to two more runs.

Russellville finished off the scoring in the top of the fourth when Jenna Whitfield delivered a two-run double to right to make it 9-1.

Clemmons went 2-for-3 with two RBIs, and Burcham was 2-for-3 with a run.

### Russellville 9 East Limestone 4

Down 3-0 early, the Lady Golden Tigers rode a six-run first inning to a big win in their first bracket-play game on Saturday.

See 'DAMAGE,' page 17

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## Krista Sikes

Sophomore P/OF, Russellville

Sikes had a big weekend at the plate and in the circle, helping Russellville win the Elkmont Invitational title. She started the tournament with a bang, going 3-for-3 with a home run and two doubles in a 16-2 rout of West Limestone Friday. Sikes then struck out eight Elkmont batters in a five-inning one-hitter to wrap up pool play.

Sikes was back in the circle Saturday, shutting out North Jackson on one hit and striking out eight in a 4-0 win in the championship game. She finished the tournament 2-0 with 17 K's and only two earned runs allowed in 14 innings.



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# 'DAMAGE', from page 16

East Limestone jumped in front with three runs in the top of the first, but the lead did not last long. Sydney Burcham led off the bottom of the first with a home run to center, her third of the season. One out later, Alivia Clemmons doubled to center and then scored on a base hit by Autumn Logan to make it 3-2.

A.J. Taylor singled, Krista Sikes reached on an error, and then Makala O'Neal put Russellville on top with a two-out, two-run single to right. Jenna Whitfield capped the rally with another two-run single.

Leading 6-4 in the bottom of the third, the Lady Golden Tigers got an RBI single from O'Neal and a sac fly from Lauren Rogers in a three-run rally that put the game away.

Emma Whitfield (6-2) got the win, allowing just one earned run on six hits in four innings. She struck out one and walked two. O'Neal was 2-for-2 at the plate with three RBIs and two runs scored, and Burcham went 2-for-2 with a homer. Jenna Whitfield was 2-for-2 with two RBIs.

### Russellville 15 Athens Bible 1

Karlie Moore hit a three-run homer in a five-run first inning, and Autumn Logan launched a grand slam in a six-run second inning as the Lady Golden Tigers made quick work of Athens Bible in their final pool play game on Saturday morning.

Alivia Clemmons also went deep for Russellville, which out-hit ABS 10-2. Chalea Clemmons (1-0) was the winning pitcher, allowing one unearned run and striking out three in three innings.

The Lady Golden Tigers took advantage of two errors and two walks to score five runs in the top of the first on just one hit—Moore's three-run blast. Athens Bible scored a run in the bottom of the inning, but Russellville erupted for six more runs in the top of the second.

An error, a hit by Lauren Rogers and a walk to Alivia Clemmons loaded the bases, and Logan unloaded them with her fourth home run of the season to make it 9-1. The Lady Golden Tigers tacked on two

more runs on a double by A.J. Taylor, an RBI single by Moore and an error. Russellville finished the scoring with four runs in the top of the third. Rogers bunted for a hit, and Alivia Clemmons followed with her team-leading fifth home run of the season to make it 13-1. Makala O'Neal had an RBI single later in the inning.

Moore went 2-for-3 with a homer, four RBIs and three runs scored. Rogers went 2-for-3 and scored twice, and O'Neal also had two hits. Clemmons was 1-for-1 with a two-run homer, two walks and three runs scored. Taylor was 1-for-3 with two runs and two stolen bases.

### Russellville 2 Elkmont 2 (tie)

The Lady Golden Tigers led 2-1 after solo home runs by Karlie Moore in the third and Autumn Logan in the fourth, but Elkmont scored a run in the bottom of the fifth, and Friday's pool-play game ended in a tie.

Krista Sikes pitched a complete game for Russellville, striking out eight and allowing just one hit and one earned run. Sydney Burcham and A.J. Taylor each had one hit.

### Russellville 16 West Limestone 2

Alivia Clemmons hit a three-run homer in the first inning and a grand slam in the third, finishing 2-for-3 with eight RBIs as the Lady Golden Tigers opened pool play on Friday with a rout of West Limestone.

Krista Sikes also had a big day at the plate, going 3-for-3 with a home run, two doubles, three RBIs and three runs scored. Seventh-grader Chalea Clemmons went 2-for-3 with a homer, two RBIs and two runs.

Russellville finished with 15 hits as a team, including four home runs and three doubles. Sydney Burcham was 2-for-2 with two walks and three runs scored, and A.J. Taylor was 2-for-3 with a double, two runs and two stolen bases. Lauren Rogers went 1-for-1 and scored twice, and Jasmine Galloway was 1-for-1 with an RBI. Karlie Moore was 1-for-2 with a run and an RBI.

Emma Whitfield picked up the win, allowing two earned runs on three hits in a three-inning complete game.

# Golden girls



COURTESY PHOTO

The varsity squad isn't the only softball program enjoying great success at Russellville. The middle school team finished its season with a remarkable record of 34-4, winning three tournament titles. RMS team members pictured above are: Front row (L to R) - Katie Brooke Cummings, Madilyn Calderon, assistant coach Lily Holt, Summer Butler, Jenna Whitfield; Middle row (L to R) - Anna Beth Oliver, Maddy Green, Jaiden Calvert, head coach Tori Lee, Jayna Poss, Tori Tiffin, Leah Rushing; Back row - Chalea Clemmons.

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# Murray tosses six innings of one-hit ball for Red Bay in 7-1 win over Carbon Hill

Staff reports

Hayden Murray held Carbon Hill to one hit in six innings this past Saturday, leading Red Bay to a 7-1 win in the first of two games for the Tigers at Winfield High School.

Red Bay put together four walks, an RBI single by Kaleb Bragwell and an error by the Bulldogs to score three runs in the top of the first. Murray (4-2) took care of the rest, allowing a third-inning solo homer by Austin Ivie and nothing else. The senior righthander retired the final ten men he faced, striking out two batters in a one-two-three fourth, two more in a one-two-three fifth and then setting down the side in order again in the sixth.

Murray finished with six strikeouts and issued only one walk, throwing 48 of his 68 pitches for strikes. Kolby Bragwell came on to pitch a scoreless seventh inning, working around an error with the help of a game-ending double play.

Leading 3-1 in the top of the fourth, the Tigers took advantage of a walk and two errors to score twice and extend the lead to 5-1. They added another run in the fifth when Kolby Bragwell singled, stole second, stole third and scored on a base hit by Cade McKinney.

Red Bay got its final run in the top of the sixth when Alex Burroughs walked, stole second and scored on an RBI single by Skylar Brazil to make it 7-1.

McKinney finished 2-for-2 with an RBI and a steal. Burroughs and Kolby Bragwell both walked twice and scored twice. Murray walked three times, and Max Bullen scored a run. Kaleb Sims drove in a run.

In other action:

### Winfield 4 Red Bay 1 (five innings)

The Tigers (11-9 through Sunday) tied Saturday's second game 1-1 on an RBI single by Kaleb Bragwell in the top of the fourth, but Winfield scored three runs in its final at bat to take home the win.

Chase Allen (3-3) took the loss for Red Bay in a complete game, allowing four earned runs on seven hits in 4.2 innings. Bragwell's RBI single was the Tigers' only hit of the game, and Kolby Bragwell scored their only run.

### Colbert Heights 9 Red Bay 4

The Wildcats had only three hits but made the most of 11 walks issued by Red Bay pitchers in last Friday's game at Colbert Heights.

The Tigers had an early 2-0 lead before the Wildcats put together two walks, a single and a double to score four runs in the bottom of the second.

Red Bay tied the game 4-4 on a two-run single by Alex Burroughs in the top of the fourth, but Colbert Heights took advantage of five walks and three passed balls to score four more runs in the bottom of the inning and take an 8-4 lead.

Red Bay out-hit the Wildcats 7-3 in the loss. Kaleb Bragwell went 2-for-4 and scored twice, and Burroughs was 1-for-4 with two RBIs and a stolen base. Kolby Bragwell was 1-for-2 with two walks, and Max Bullen went 1-for-3 with a run scored. Hayden Murray and Cade McKinney each had one hit.

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