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06.06.18

Leisure Creations flourishing with facility in Phil Campbell

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

When Leisure Creations president Chris Williams negotiated the purchase of the former Shelter Products, LLC facility last year, he committed to have at least 20 employees within three years at the Phil Campbell facility.

Less than one year into production, Leisure Creations has 36 employees at its Phil Campbell plant with plans to further expand payroll, and town officials have a vibrant business owned by a Phil Campbell native.

Leisure Creations Commercial Pool and Patio Furniture is headquartered in Russellville, with more than 100 employees at that location. The company specializes in manufacturing commercial-grade outdoor furniture and sells primarily to condominiums and apartment complexes.



COURTESY PHOTO

Jason Logan welds a table base at Leisure Creations' Phil Campbell plant.

See 'LEISURE,' Page 8

Riley's success 'a true family effort'

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

Chesley Porter Riley's life took a dramatic turn in 2008, the year after she graduated from Russellville High School.

Riley was pregnant with her daughter Chloe, the first of three children, so the 19-year-old decided she would do whatever it took to take care of her family. And that's just what she did.

"I worked in some dead-end jobs like fast food and retail," Riley said. "I always tried to find something that paid a little more than the last job."

Riley and her husband Darrel now own the Cotton State Barns franchise in Russellville as well as two other businesses, a lawn care business and an online merchandise sales business.

Now the proud parents of two more children (Caylee, 6, and Aubree, 2), Riley and her husband recently purchased their first home together.

chased their first home together.

"When I was six months pregnant with my third child, I started looking for some part-time work," Riley said. "A friend told me about Cotton State Barns, and I've been here ever since. I enjoy every minute of it."

"I truly would not be able to do this without my parents and grandparents. It's a true family effort," Riley said.

"I never thought I could own a business. I didn't go to college and don't have a degree, but I've got to make ends meet. We have three kids, and you've gotta do what you've gotta do to provide for your family."

Cotton State Barns is a dealer of storage buildings, carports, garages, RV covers and custom-sized buildings. Repossessed units are available at a discount, and all units are sold rent-to-own with no credit check, Riley said.

Riley worked for CSB two years before the owners,

See 'FAMILY,' Page 9

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Jesse James Howard, Russellville, age 31
Died Thursday, May 31, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel.

Sarah Nell King, Russellville, age 78
Died Tuesday, May 29, 2018. Funeral held at Spry Memorial Chapel. Interment in
Knights of Pythias Cemetery.

Jeanette M. Mayfield, Russellville, age 89
Died Friday, June 1, 2018. Funeral held at Pinkard Funeral Home. Interment in
Tharptown Cemetery.



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Candidates close out primary season, share final message with voters at Jonesboro event

John Pilati
Franklin Free Press

The final political event of the primary campaign season saw a packed house fill the Jonesboro Community Center Saturday evening.

The event was a fundraiser for the center and an opportunity for candidates to share their final message with voters ahead of the Tuesday, June 5 primary elections.

None of the three Republican candidates for Senate District Six attended the Jonesboro event. Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow (D-Red Bay), the lone Democratic candidate for Senate District Six, shared his concerns about Alabama's opioid epidemic.

"The most serious problem facing our state and nation is illegal drugs and the opioid crisis," Morrow said. "Mental health is another important issue, and those two issues are inseparable."

"I look for Gov. [Kay] Ivey's opioid council to come out with its recommendations soon, and that's an issue the legislature will need to deal with."

Morrow also blasted the Alabama Accountability Act and those in the legislature who supported it.

"I don't know how it got that name, because there's no accountability," Morrow said. "What it does is steal money from Franklin County public schools and send it to private schools in

Montgomery and Mobile."

Of the two Republican candidates for House District 18, the seat Morrow is vacating, only Jamie Kiel attended Saturday evening's event. Kiel said he would make protecting education a priority of his legislative tenure.

Rep. Johnny Mack Morrow, the lone Democratic candidate for Senate District Six, shared his concerns about Alabama's opioid epidemic.

"The most serious problem facing our state and nation is illegal drugs and the opioid crisis," Morrow said. "Mental health is another important issue, and those two issues are inseparable."

"That's what I intend to do—protect our educational system. I have three good reasons to do that," Kiel said, referring to his three daughters who attend Tharptown School. "I'll make sure money gets from Montgomery to our classrooms so teachers can teach and not worry about paying for toilet paper out of their own pockets."

Kiel also said he would handle budgetary issues with the state in the same manner he handles them with his small business.

"If there are things you can't afford, you just don't buy them," Kiel said. "We shouldn't do that in Montgomery either. I'll make sure our state government isn't spending more than we're taking in."

House District 18 Democratic nominee Eddie

Britton also attended the Jonesboro event. Britton will face the winner of Tuesday's Republican primary in the November general election.

The two candidates for Franklin County Probate Judge, both Republicans, addressed the crowd. Joe Mansell said his professional career as a fireman has been about public service and that he hopes to continue serving the county as its next probate judge.

"That's why I decided to do this," Mansell said. "I enjoy working with and helping the public, and that's what I want to do as your probate judge."

Barry Moore talked about his deep-rooted Republican ties.

"I've been a Republican all my life," Moore said. "I remember meeting when you could fit all the local Republicans in a phone booth."

Moore said he's worked for millions in grants through ATRIP and Industrial Access funding to help improve roads and bridges in Franklin County.

"It's all about working together with city and county school boards, governments, our legislators in Montgomery and our officials at the federal level," Moore said. "It's all about working together for what's best for Franklin County."

Republican coroner candidate Charles Adcox attended, as did Franklin County Sheriff Shannon Oliver, who will not face opposition in his bid for another term.

Familiar faces returning for BTCPA summer production

Submitted to the FFP

If you've been on the Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts' website or Facebook page, you have seen the announcement for its first Summer Stock Production, "Natalie Needs A Nightie," set for June 12 and June 14-16.

Often times when the label "summer stock" is mentioned, thoughts of a touring company or at least one or two cast members coming in from outside a group come to mind. For this production, however, the BTCPA is bringing back veterans of its community theater. Each member of this cast has appeared in at least four of their community theater productions in the past.

The BTCPA has been blessed by both the support of the community and the support of other cities as well. A large percentage of its patrons come from Tupelo, the Shoals and even Huntsville. This past season the BTCPA had sold-out shows for its November production and its February production and nearly sold out the shows for its April production. The BTCPA decided after such a successful season to try something new and present a summer play.

The BTCPA produced this hilarious play in the 2010-2011 season thanks to a request from one of their patrons from Huntsville. They are delighted to put this show on again.

The play is about a man named Tommy Briggs. In his apartment house, Tommy has his mail, his calls and his visitors frequently misdirected to a girl's apartment whose pen name is also Tommy Briggs. Tommy's boss expects his young executives to be married—and he's coming to town to visit Tommy.

Can quick-witted Tommy come up with the wife and children he has been falsifying before his boss comes to town? His friends are certainly willing to help him—but with friends like this, who needs enemies?

Adding to this confusion is a dutiful chambermaid who snitches drinks and takes all clothing found on a particular chair.

The show dates are Tuesday, June 12, and Thursday through Saturday, June 14-16, at 7 p.m. at the Weatherford Centre in Red Bay. Tickets for the play are \$8 and are on sale now. You may stop by the Weatherford Centre or call 256-356-9829 between the hours of 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday to reserve tickets.

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In Memoriam

Jimmie F. Bianco

9/24/35 – 5/29/2018

My earliest childhood memories are of him. He was the man who I always wanted to be like. Strength, wisdom, humor and faith are all things that I will always remember about him, among others.

When I really needed advice, he was my source. When I needed strength, when I had little, he was there. He was a patriot who loved his country and fought for it, an Airforce/Vietnam veteran and proud of it.

My papaw loved Russellville and the Golden Tigers. He went on a streak of not missing a game (home or away) for nearly 40 years. I can remember riding with him to many a far-away town to cheer them on. He loved watching the football team practice.

He taught me so many of the values that I hold dear. Don't miss work unless your sick. Be early. Take care of your family. Put their needs above your own. These are all things he lived by. If he was right, he would not waver. He worked up until he was no longer able to do so.

He was a father to me when my real father did not want to be.

I remember going downtown with him when I was young. We would eat breakfast at Bradford's Drug Store before going on a surveying job. I'll remember the toothpicks that he always held in his mouth, and the ball caps he always wore on his head.

He taught me how to drive, basically how to be a man. He had friends all over Russellville and all over everywhere. I will remember him as the strong man he was. My life will not be the same without him.

I know now he is in Heaven because he was a born again Christian. I am comforted by the fact that he is with his loved ones who went on before him. He wouldn't want us crying or hurting, because he is no longer in pain.

I will try to live my life much like he lived his, because, in a sense, he was my hero. I will miss you Papaw, but I will see you again one day.

Clint Sikes



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Publisher

John Pilati

Executive Editor

Mike Self

E-mail: franklinfreepress@yahoo.com

Sales Representatives

Linda Bumpers, John Pilati

Content Contributors

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

Graphic Design

Jason Hill

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A few tips for your college student

By Anthony O'Neal

If you're the parent of a child already attending or about to enter college, you probably have a lot on your mind. That's understandable. College is an exciting time of life, full of big choices and exciting opportunities. But let's face it, it's also a stage of life that can bring temptations—money troubles in particular.

If you have a few concerns about how your child will handle their money in college, you're not alone. I'll never forget my own early financial experiences as a young college student—or the day I opened my first credit card bill and saw what I owed. *"Man, that was an expensive pizza!"*

The folks who signed me up told me my credit card came with a free T-shirt and a pizza. I got both of those, but they were far from free. They came with consequences no one had warned me about. It started with a few thoughtless purchases—a dinner out, a shopping spree for gifts—but it added up quick.

Somehow, I hadn't realized the stuff I was buying and enjoying on credit was going to come due as a bill. Throw in the student loans I had taken on, and I was getting into some serious financial trouble. Before I knew what was happening, I was 19 years old, \$25,000 in debt, and—for a short time—even sleeping in my car.

But here's some encouragement. I made it all the way back, got out of debt and learned the right way to handle money. And your child can win with money, despite a world of pressure to do otherwise. It's true! As a youth pastor and speaker, I've met, worked with and walked beside many young people who graduated college as strong budgeters, with a clear plan for the future

and no debt. So can the college student in your life!

The Big Five

While your child is in college, they can lay a solid financial foundation by focusing on just five priorities for managing their money. With this foundation in place, at least two great things will happen for them: They will be in a strong position to build wealth throughout their life, and they will gain an awesome amount of self-discipline to help them in their career.

Save a \$500 Emergency Fund. It might not sound like a lot. But \$500 is usually enough to see a college student through most of the financial emergencies that come up, like a broken phone or computer. I know you're going to want to help them out as you're able, but it's also a great idea to let a young person feel what it's like to solve a money problem with their own money, instead of using yours or a credit card.

Get Out of Debt. You probably remember from your own time on campus that college students are a major target for credit card companies. Help your child understand that going into debt is no way to start adulthood. If they already have credit cards, encourage them to cut those up and pay them off. The sooner they're debt-free, the sooner they can begin using their money to go after their dreams.

Pay Cash for a Car. Most college students will need a car either right away or soon after graduating. But the need for wheels is no excuse to take on a big monthly payment. Paying cash will save your child a lot of money, and they will get a lot more enjoyment from something they actually own.

See 'COLLEGE,' Page 5



Teach them while they're young

Dear Dave,
My wife and I want to begin teaching our son how to make a budget and live on one. He's 16, and he has a part-time job and a hand-me-down car. Is this a realistic idea?

Mike

Dear Mike,
Your son is at a great point in life to learn how to make money behave. Even in his situation, when he's still living at home, there are plenty of things he can include in a budget. There's gas for his car, along with maintenance and insurance. He'll need to save a little money—maybe even for college—and I'm sure he'll want some spending cash, too.

Sit down and teach him how to make a written budget by figuring out the upcoming month's income and expenses ahead of time. Also, make sure he knows how to properly balance and reconcile his bank account.

It's still your responsibility to provide him with the basic necessities at this point. But I love your willingness to teach your son how to handle money intelligently. The sooner he learns some basic money management principles, the sooner he'll be able to handle his finances responsibly in the real world!

Dave

Controlling your cash

Dear Dave,
I work long hours, and I make

pretty good money. The problem is the money from my paychecks always seems to disappear before the end of the month.

I know part of the problem is grabbing quick meals between extra shifts and eating out a lot after work, because I'm usually too tired to cook when I get home.

How can someone who has very little free time start gaining control of their finances?

Sheila

Dear Sheila,

No matter how little free time you think you have, or how tired you are, you *must* make time to do a written budget every month. This is essential.

Making a budget for the month ahead isn't a lot of hard work, and it really doesn't take long. When you give every dollar a name before the month begins, you're taking control of your money instead of allowing a lack of it to control you.

Start with the income you know is predictable. If that isn't possible, look back over the last few months and find the minimum amount you brought home during a month over that period of time. This will be the basis for your budget. Once you've established a baseline income, you can write down and prioritize bills and other expenses. Just remember, restaurants are not a priority!

When you make a prioritized spending plan and start telling your money what to do ahead of time, you'll have the ability to do what's important with what you've earned!

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 14 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.*

'COLLEGE' from page 4

Pay Cash for College. You've probably noticed student loans are getting out of hand in America. In 2016, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that the average college student is graduating with more than \$37,000 in student loan debt to pay back. That's insane! Let your child know that paying for tuition and books is no different than paying for food and gas. By paying for college with cash, they'll immediately be able to use their pay for things they want, instead of paying off debt for years.

Build Wealth and Give. This one is my favorite, because there's no better feeling than the one you get while using your money to help those you care about. As Jesus himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And who has the most freedom to do a lot of good with their money? Those who have been fortunate enough to stay out of debt and build wealth.

One more tip: It's easy to assume you can only build this foundation if you begin early enough in life. Believe me, that's not true. It's never too early to start, but it's also never too late. Whether your child is just beginning to think about college, or is already enrolled, they can apply these principles to take full control of their money—in school and beyond!

You can follow Anthony on Twitter and Instagram @AnthonyONeal and online at anthonyoneal.com or facebook.com/aoneal.

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


 Attention all young ladies of Colbert, Franklin and Lauderdale counties entering 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in the Fall of 2018!!! The Distinguished Young Women Scholarship Program will be held Saturday, August 4 at Norton Auditorium on the campus of The University of North Alabama. Young ladies entering the 12th grade will have the opportunity to compete for cash scholarships as well as many other scholarships to colleges and universities. Also, each county winner will have the opportunity to represent her county at the state program in Montgomery in January of 2019. Young ladies entering the 10th and 11th grades have the opportunity to be "DYW Little Sisters." For more information, contact Susan Hargett at 256-710-9239 or Katernia Cole-Coffey at 256-332-8880, or check information on our Facebook page at Distinguished Young Women of Northwest Alabama, or email dshargett@aol.com. Other information and sign-up is available at www.DistinguishedYW.org. Please contact us no later than June 23, 2018.


 The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Lt. Col. John W. Harris Jr., Camp #1833 will meet Thursday, June 7 at 6 p.m. at the Russellville Rec Center on Ash Avenue in Russellville. Camp #1833 meets the first Thursday of each month EXCEPT January and July. For more information, call 256-324-2317. Everyone welcome!


 The Shoals Area Chapter of the Order of St. Luke will meet in the Sheffield Room at Park Place (501 N. Montgomery Avenue in Sheffield) this Thursday, June 7 at 6:30 p.m. Wendy Sellers will teach on the subject "Alzheimer's: Can Food Fix It?" Prayer for healing will be offered. We believe that God heals spiritually, physically and emotionally. All are welcome.


 The Franklin County Sheriff's Department will host its annual Sheriff's Rodeo, presented by 3-A Rodeo Co., June 8-9 at 8 p.m. at the Cowboy Church Arena, 25100 Ala. 24 in Russellville. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Children five and under admitted free. This is a sanctioned IPRA event. For more information, visit @longhornfarmsarena on Facebook.


 The Kerry Gilbert Band will perform a benefit concert at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Russellville this Saturday, June 9 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.


 Nitrate City Baptist Church, 6175 Second Street in Muscle Shoals, invites you to "Game On" VBS, Monday, June 11 through Wednesday, June 13 from 6-8:30 p.m. Registration is Monday, June 11 at 5:30 p.m. Classes for students who have completed grades 1-6 (children) and grades 7-12 (youth). Tyler Pendley is the pastor.

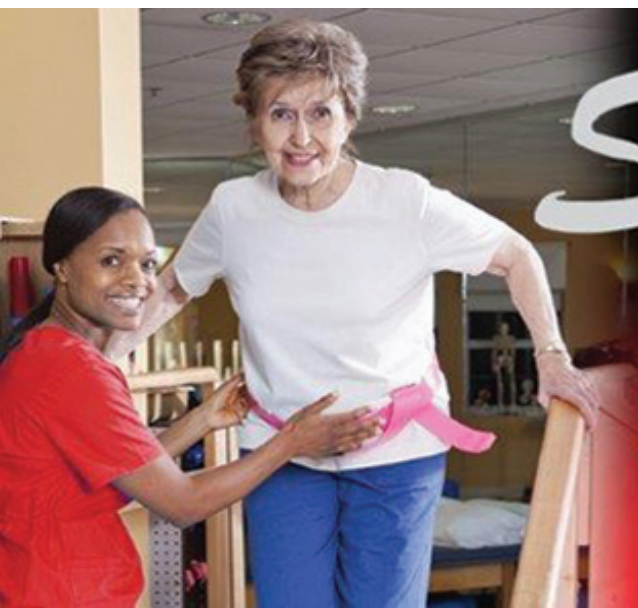
 The American Legion Department of Alabama Conference is June 14-17. The next meeting for American Legion Post 64 will be Thursday, June 21 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

 Orange Baptist Church will hold Vacation Bible School on Saturday, June 16 from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. The church is located at 8153 Highway 34 in Russellville. VBS will be one day only. For more info, call 256-332-2296.

 First Free Will Baptist Church, Russellville, invites you to a fun evening at City Lake Park on Sunday, June 17, starting at 6 p.m. There will be a devotion, food, games and lots of fun! Come join us!

 First Free Will Baptist Church, Russellville, will hold a "Kid's Crusade" for Pre-K through eighth grade on Saturday, June 23 from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. There will be Bible preaching, music, crafts and games. Snack and lunch provided. Church is located at 16140 Hwy. 43 North.

 Mountain Valley Hee Haw features live music every Friday and Saturday night. Show time is 6 p.m. Karaoke at 7 p.m. on Thursday nights. Free admission. No alcohol or drugs. From Russellville, take 243 to Hwy. 79, turn right, go 1/4 mile, third building on left. Call 256-332-5479 or 256-810-4840.



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'LEISURE' from page 1

Williams' business had grown to the point where he needed more room beyond his Russellville facility, so when he saw the opportunity in Phil Campbell, Williams called mayor Steve Bell.

The parties reached an agreement for Leisure Creations to purchase the facility from the town of Phil Campbell for \$300,000, to be paid in \$1,666 monthly payments that began in March of 2017. The sale was an interest-free transaction.

"The financing terms were attractive and fair," Williams said. "It's an old building, but compared to building a new one this saved us a lot of money. It was a good opportunity—that's the way I looked at it," Williams told the *Free Press* in 2017.

In order to receive the standard tax abatements from the State of Alabama, Williams had to commit to having at least 20 employees within three years at the Phil Campbell location. Bell said there are numerous benefits for his city in having sold the property to Leisure Creations.

"To boost our economy and create jobs is what we were after with this deal," Bell said. "It's nice to have someone willing to come back and invest in Phil Campbell. Leisure Creations is a company

with a good reputation and hometown roots."

It's an impressive sight to tour the Phil Campbell location and see the large amount of inventory being made. Most of the steel products are manufactured in Phil Campbell, along with all the cushions and umbrellas that come with the furniture. It's all the more impressive when you realize every item made on Leisure Creations' manufacturing line has been pre-ordered and sold.

It's an impressive sight to tour the Phil Campbell location and see the large amount of inventory being made. It's all the more impressive when you realize every item made on the manufacturing line has already been pre-ordered and sold.

Mike Norton, manager of Leisure Creations Phil Campbell, said production began in late November of 2017 with welding and sewing. Painting started this February. All products made in Phil Campbell are shipped to Russellville before being distributed to customers.

"The number one thing we make here is the round garbage can steel receptacle," Norton said. "The second-largest thing we make here are pub

tables. We make the bottoms, the bases. The top part is laser-cut steel or aluminum."

Norton said there are plans to add more employees in Phil Campbell prior to next year's peak season. He said the new facility allows Leisure Creations to fill more orders, something they were limited on in past years.

"I started with the company last August," Norton said. "Last year we were limited on how much we could do. We cut it off because we couldn't take any more orders. We've done a good bit more in revenue this year. And we wouldn't have been able to without acquiring the Phil Campbell plant."

Norton said the company has a great working relationship with Phil Campbell town officials.

"I've known the mayor a long time. Anything we need, we've been able to call Mayor Bell," Norton said. "We were having internet problems, and Chris called Mayor Bell and he had someone at CenturyLink's regional office on the phone, and they worked five days at the plant to get the problem fixed. They have been really good to work with. They really helped on the paving project going to the plant. It's a good relationship."



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Future Leaders



COURTESY PHOTO

The RHS Future Business Leaders of America Chapter had six students recently compete at the Alabama FBLA State Competition. The students and their sponsors are pictured above (from left): Mrs. Deedra Moore-sponsor, Emma Claire Bragwell (Business Communication), Addie Scruggs (Business Communication), Rebecca Parrish (Business Calculations), Ashton Moore (Economics), Ellyse Strickland (Word Processing), Kaydee Holland (Word Processing), and Dr. AnnaKay Holland-sponsor. On April 12-13, more than 1,500 high school students attended this conference and competed in more than 30 different business areas. Rebecca Parrish (pictured at left, standing on right), daughter of Ralph and Suzanne Parrish, won first place in the Business Calculations event and was invited to attend the FBLA National Competition in Maryland this month. Ashton Moore (pictured at left, standing on left), daughter of Barry and Deedra Moore, was awarded the District I Scholarship.

‘FAMILY’, from page 1

who lived in Birmingham, told her she’d done so well they were turning the business over to her.

“They let me sign a contract with Cotton State Barns, and the business became ours,” Riley said.

As a small business owner, Riley enjoys the luxury of being able to bring her kids to work. But she quickly admits there’s no way she could run a business without help from her family, including her parents (Bois and Cindy Porter) and her grandparents (Aubrey and Juanita Jackson).

“I truly would not be able to do this without my parents and grandparents. It’s a true family effort,” Riley said. “I never thought I could own a business. I didn’t go to college and don’t have a degree, but I’ve got to make ends meet. We have three kids, and you’ve gotta do what you’ve gotta do to provide for your family.”

Darrel, a Marine Corps veteran, works for B and B Roadway and Security Solutions in Russellville, where he is a lead machinist.

Riley said her willingness to work at several businesses comes from a drive to both take care of her family and to instill in her children a good work ethic for later in their lives.

“I’ll do any work and have always been that way,” Riley said. “I had a summer job as a flower vendor at Walmart one time, because bills have to be paid. I worked through the season, and at the time I was extremely overweight, so working was hard. I had [bariatric] surgery in 2014, and that gave me new energy.

“My kids needed me to be healthy, and that’s when I really got busy.”

After losing 160 pounds, Riley said she had newfound confidence and energy to be able to care for her family.

“I’m not lazy, but I got tired so easily when I was

heavier,” Riley said. “Now I have the time and energy to provide for my kids and give them the life they deserve. My parents did all they could for me, and I want to do the same for my children.”

Riley teared up as she described how hard her husband works, not only at his full-time job, but also his lawn care business and working at home.

“My husband works so hard, so if I can pick up the merchandise and barn business, he won’t have to work so hard,” Riley said. “He’s not afraid to help around the house. I feel we are extremely blessed with everything we have. Sometimes, I feel like we’ve done it all in such a hurry it can get overwhelming.

“But with my husband’s support, my kids’ support and my family’s support, we can come out on top.”

In addition to the love and dedication Riley has for her family, she shares that same drive when it comes to her hometown of Russellville.

“I love this town. I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else,” she said. “I want to help this community. I have future plans to get involved in local politics. There’s a lot that can be done in Russellville, and I want my kids to grow up in a town they can be proud of.”

Riley believes having the voice of a younger parent in city government would be a breath of fresh air to the city.

“We need more of the younger generation to get their input into our community,” Riley said. “There was some controversy about the baseball fields recently. We need people whose kids do these activities to put more focus on youth programs. Kids are our future generation, and we need to give them the best opportunities possible.”

On a recent day at Cotton State Barns, Riley had her oldest daughter Chloe helping unload a pallet



COURTESY PHOTO

Chesley Riley and her husband Darrel own the Cotton State Barns franchise in Russellville. The couple is pictured above with their three girls, Chloe, Caylee and Aubree.

of merchandise for their online business. Chloe said she’s learning a lot by observing her mother at work.

“I have learned how she has to work selling buildings and how that works,” Chloe said. “I think she works hard, and that makes me want to jump in her arms and give her a big hug.”

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43, Spruce Pine. Top of
Spruce Pine Mtn., turn at
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Furniture, King/Queen
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inside and outside toys,
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Yard Sale: Friday, June
8 at 402 Jefferson Street
from 7am-until. Ladies,
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Yard Sale: Friday, June
8, 401 Plum St - across
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Underwood Rd, first
street on the right, from
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COURTESY PHOTO

Brooklyn Bolton of Red Bay received Northwest-Shoals Community College's most prestigious honor recently when she was awarded the President's Award for the Phil Campbell campus. The recipient must have earned a grade point average of 3.7 or higher while also demonstrating leadership and actively participating in community service while attending NW-SCC. Bolton (pictured above with Associate Dean of Instruction Dr. Timmy James) is president of the Student Government Association, a member of the Alpha Zeta Iota chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and a College Ambassador. She will be completing her associates degree and transferring to Mississippi State University to pursue a degree in marketing.

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Separate sealed bids for Furnishing and Installing Materials for construction of new Spring Valley Substation will be received at The City of Sheffield, DBA Sheffield Utilities, 300 N. Nashville Ave., Sheffield, Alabama 35660 (PO Box 580, Sheffield, AL 35660), on or before July 3, 2018 at 10:00 A.M., at which time and place they will be opened and read aloud.

The project will consist of Material and Labor for construction of new Spring Valley Substation consisting of:

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- (2) 46 KV Circuit Switchers
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- (9) 12.47 KV Gang Switches
- (5) 12.47 KV Feeder Recloser Positions, with Isolation Disconnects

The materials to be furnished are described in attached Specifications and Drawings.

NOTE: Owner to furnish transformer, and circuit reclosers.

Drawings, Specifications and Contract Documents may be examined at the office of the Owner or at the office of the Engineer. Copies may be obtained from Stewart Engineering, Inc., Electrical Consultants, P. O. Box 2233, Anniston, AL 36202, upon payment of \$150.00 for each set, none of which will be refunded. Three copies of Drawings and Specifications will be furnished to the successful bidder for construction purposes, without charge and additional Drawings and Specifications will be available to the successful bidder at their cost of reproduction.

The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities or to reject any or all bids.

Contractor shall include all applicable taxes with all material prices. The City of Sheffield, DBA Sheffield Utilities will not furnish tax exemption certificates.

No bidder may withdraw his bid within 60 days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

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Tigers tame Cross Creek

Red Bay's boys golf team won the Class 1A/2A Section 4 tournament last month at Cross Creek in Cullman. Codey Cleveland led the Tigers with a round of 80. Cleveland went on to shoot 72 at sub-state in Gadsden, finishing second. See story Page 18.



Russellville puts three in Top 5 at RTJ

Boutwell, Bendall, Murray help Golden Tigers finish as state runners-up in 5A

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

Russellville had three players finish in the Top 5 at the Class 5A state tournament at Robert Trent Jones in the Shoals last month, but the Golden Tigers couldn't match two sub-300 rounds by St. Paul's and settled for a second-place finish and a Red Map.

RHS freshman Eric Boutwell shot a sizzling four-under 68 on Monday, May 14 at Fighting Joe, edging Will McFadden of St. Paul's by one stroke for the best round of the day. Boutwell slipped to 77 the following day but still finished the tournament second overall at 145, five strokes back of McFadden.

"He's so talented," Russellville coach Patrick Odom said of Boutwell, already in his third season as a varsity golfer for the Golden Tigers.

Russellville juniors Brayden Bendall and Jaceton Murray also finished in the Top 5 at the state tournament. Bendall shot 76-74 to finish third overall at 150, and Murray's total of 152 (74-78) was good enough for fifth place, one stroke behind Kyle Cornelius of St. Paul's.

The Saints shot a team total of 299 on Monday, but Boutwell's low round of 68 kept the Golden Tigers in the hunt at 308. St. Paul's had an even better second day, shooting 297 to finish at 596 and run away with a third consecutive Blue Map.

"That's tough to match," Odom said. "But I'm proud of our guys."

Russellville shot 316 on Tuesday and finished at 624, holding off Briarwood Christian (627) for second place. Scottsboro, the sub-state champion out of the North, shot 666 at state and finished fourth.

Lucas McNutt, another junior, rounded out Russellville's scoring with a two-day total of 177 (90-87).

Last month marked the second time in the last three years that Russellville has finished runner-up to St. Paul's in Class 5A. Back in 2016 at Hampton Cove in Huntsville, the Golden Tigers shot a two-day total of 604 to finish 21 strokes behind the Saints (583).

St. Paul's won its second consecutive state title in 2017, shooting 603 at the Auburn

See 'RUSSELLVILLE,' Page 17

Franklin Free Press 2018 All-County Softball Team

Mike Self
Franklin Free Press

Last week we unveiled our All-County picks for high school baseball. This week the ladies take center stage as we announce our 2018 All-County softball selections.

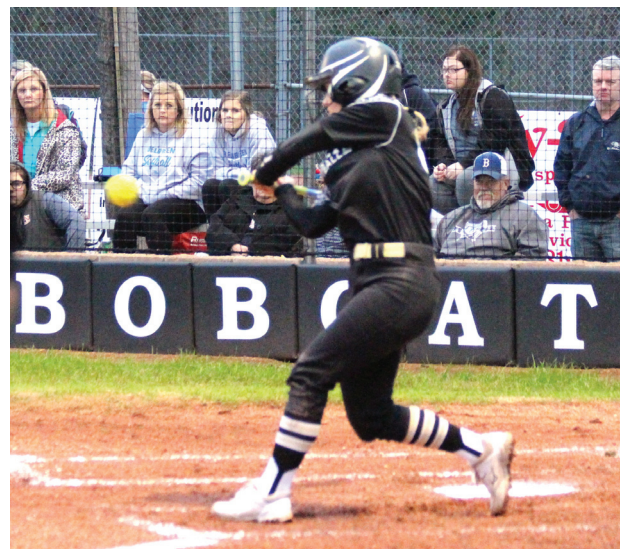
Sticking with the same format as last week, we'll hand out 20 roster spots—10 starters (including a designated player) and 10 reserves. Let's get right to it.

We'll start by naming our 2018 Player of the Year in Franklin County, **Phil Campbell senior Leeah Jackson**. Signed by Snead State as a second baseman, Jackson played shortstop this season for the Lady Bobcats and led them to 23 wins and a second straight berth in the North Regional Tournament.

Jackson was a force to be reckoned with both in the batter's box (where she hit .510 and tied her career-high with eight home runs) and on the bases (where she set a new personal best with 35 steals in 35 tries). Of her 49 hits, an astounding 30 of them went for extra bases [she slugged 18 doubles and four triples to go along with those eight homers]. Jackson drove in 40 runs and scored 38, drawing 22 walks (many of which were intentional) and reaching base at a stellar .624 clip. She struck out only seven times all season in 118 plate appearances.

Jackson posted a batting average of .500 or better three times at Phil Campbell, and she finished her varsity career with 20 home runs, 214 RBIs and 145 stolen bases. She'll anchor our All-County lineup in the No. 3 spot as our starting shortstop.

As for the rest of our starting lineup, let's begin in the circle, where we'll give the ball to **Tharptown sophomore Olivia Ergle**. Capable of dominating with above-average velocity and a solid four-pitch mix, Ergle threw three no-hitters in a three-week



COURTESY PHOTOS

Jackson (above and below, left) batted .510 as a senior, eclipsing the .500 mark for the third time at Phil Campbell. She also tied her career-high with eight home runs and set a new personal best with 35 steals, helping the Lady Bobcats win 23 games and reach the North Regional for a second straight year.

span from February 23 to March 13, striking out a total of 31 batters in wins over Addison, Phillips and Hackleburg. She posted five games with double-digit strikeout totals, including a season-high 14 K's against Colbert County on March 22 and 11 in a complete game win over Athens Bible at the North Regional Tournament. Ergle (13-10 on the year with a 2.29 ERA) struck out a staggering 161 batters in 112.2 innings while walking only 35 and giving up 97 hits.

Batting in place of Ergle as our designated player and leading off, we'll go with **Vina senior sparkplug Abby Hester**. A catcher by trade, Hester put together a monster senior season for the Lady Red Devils, batting .537 (44-for-82) with 23 walks, a .645 OBP and 46 runs scored in 34 games. She stole 71 bases and was caught only twice, finishing her varsity career second on the AHSAA all-time list with 338 steals. Hester will have the rare opportunity to be a two-sport athlete at the next level after signing offers to play both basketball and softball at Blue Mountain College.

Batting second and playing second base for our All-County squad is **Russellville senior Sydney Burcham**, who led the Lady Golden Tigers to within a game of the state tournament. Burcham laid waste to opposing pitchers with a sweet left-

See 'SOFTBALL,' Page 14

'SOFTBALL' from page 13



handed stroke that is equal parts power and precision. She tied for the team lead with six home runs and 49 runs scored and also led Russellville outright in hits (54), batting average (.466), triples (five), doubles (11), walks (26), on-base percentage (.576) and multi-hit games (16). Burcham went down on strikes just nine times all season in 151 plate appearances and also stole 17 bases in 19 attempts. She capped her career with an outstanding performance at the North Regional last month, going 8-for-16 with five doubles in five games.

Batting behind Jackson in the cleanup spot, we'll go with **sophomore third baseman Autumn Logan of Russellville**. The Lady Golden Tigers had a dynamic offensive attack this season, and Logan was right smack in the middle of it. She led the team with 48 RBIs in 46 games and ranked second (behind only Burcham) with 17 extra-base hits—six home runs, two triples and nine doubles. For a hitter with that kind of thump, Logan made contact at a remarkable rate, striking out just eight times all season in 150 plate appearances. She finished the year batting .367 (51-for-139) with a .407 OBP and 12 multi-hit games.

Catcher might be the most loaded position in Franklin County [Hester and Tharptown's Shaylee Wieting are outstanding, and Katie Thomas had a very good freshman season for Phil Campbell], but starting for us behind the plate and batting fifth in the order is **Belgreen junior backstop Kaycee Wilson**. A left-handed hitter with pop, Wilson batted .464 this season and was a consistent run-producer for the Lady Bulldogs, who won county, area and regional championships on their way to reaching the state tournament for the first time ever. Wilson's excellent defensive work and potent bat were major factors in Belgreen's historical season.

Batting sixth and playing left field for our All-County squad, we'll go with **Alivia Clemmons of Russellville**. Clemmons put together a breakout sophomore season in 2018, batting .390 and ranking either first or second on the team in hits (53), home runs (six), doubles (nine), RBIs (45), runs scored (49) and multi-hit games (14). Clemmons checks in at just 5'5, but don't let her small stature fool you; there's dynamite in her bat. Just ask West Limestone. In a tournament game at the Elkmont Invitational on March 30, Clemmons cranked a pair of homers and drove in eight runs to lead a 16-2 rout of the Lady Wildcats.

Batting seventh and playing first base is **Belgreen senior slugger Cortny Williams**, a six-year varsity veteran who helped lead the Lady Bulldogs to their first-ever state tournament appearance this season. Williams' batting average of .567, though outstanding, doesn't do justice to her knack for coming through with big hits in clutch situations. Belgreen was trailing Covenant Christian by a run in the fifth inning of a winner's bracket game at the North Regional in Huntsville when Williams stepped to the plate with the bases loaded and smashed a ball to left-center for a decisive three-run double. Back in mid-April, Williams went 6-for-8 in an area doubleheader against Vina and Hackleburg, and she drove in four runs to lead the Lady Bulldogs to an 11-3 win over Tharptown in the finals of the area tournament in early May.

Batting in the eighth spot and playing right field for our All-County team, we'll go with **A.J. Taylor, a Russellville sophomore**. Taylor played center field for the Lady Golden Tigers, but wherever you want to put her, mark it down—she's gonna hit. Taylor was one of only two Russellville regulars to

See 'SOFTBALL,' page 15



FILE PHOTOS

Burcham (top of page) and Logan (34) led a dynamic Russellville attack, while Wilson (right) helped Belgreen make its first-ever trip to the state tournament.



'SOFTBALL,' from page 14

bat .400 or better this season; she finished the year at .406, and included among her 52 total hits were five home runs and eight doubles. Taylor drove in 34 runs, scored 42 and put her game-changing speed to good use, stealing 25 bases in 27 tries. She ranked second on the team with a .445 OBP and tied for second with 14 multi-hit games. Taylor was clutch, too, smacking a key home run against East Limestone at the area tournament and coming through with a walk-off hit against Scottsboro the following week in a 5-4 win at the North Regional.

Batting ninth and playing center field, we'll take **Tharptown sophomore Brooke Daily**. Capable of the occasional highlight-reel catch in center, Daily also excelled at the plate this season, leading the Lady Wildcats with 42 hits and a .483 batting average. She hit a grand slam on April 19 in an area win over Hackleburg and also finished the year with nine doubles and two triples. Daily drove in 24 runs, scored 29 and finished second on the team with a .549 OBP.

Topping our list of All-County reserves is another Lady Wildcat, **sophomore catcher Shaylee Wieting**. As Tharptown's leadoff batter and offensive catalyst, Wieting hit .389 this season with a .482 OBP and team-highs in walks (14), stolen bases (30) and runs scored (44). She packed plenty of pop, too, banging out three triples and nine doubles.

Adding a fourth catcher might seem like overkill, but **Phil Campbell freshman Katie Thomas** belongs on our All-County squad. Aside from Jackson, Thomas was the Lady Bobcats' most consistent hitter this sea-

son, ranking second on the team in hits (42), batting average (.382), doubles (11), RBIs (23), walks (15) and on-base percentage (.442). Demonstrating plate discipline beyond her years, Thomas struck out only four times all season in 129 plate appearances.

Red Bay's Annaliese Rogers, just an eighth-grader, earns a spot on our All-County team after putting together an outstanding season at the plate for the Lady Tigers. A third baseman by trade, Rogers led Red Bay in hits (42), batting average (.488) and RBIs (21). She also ranked among team leaders with eight doubles, 25 runs scored and 10 stolen bases. Amazingly, Rogers struck out only twice all year in 96 plate appearances.

A teammate of Rogers' at Red Bay, **freshman Lila Blackburn** parlayed her blend of power, patience and pitching into an All-County performance this season. Blackburn led the Lady Tigers with five home runs (including a walk-off three-run blast against Tharptown on March 5) and also finished first on the team with 17 walks and a .510 OBP. She hit .377 (29-for-77) with six doubles, 20 RBIs and 24 runs scored, adding a dozen stolen bases. In the circle, Blackburn racked up a team-high 83 strikeouts in 60.2 innings, a stellar rate of 9.5 K's per seven innings.

Much like Blackburn, our next All-County reserve was also a productive two-way contributor this season. **Russellville sophomore Krista Sikes** enjoyed a breakout season at the plate, batting .378 (45-for-119) with four home runs, 33 RBIs, 34 runs scored

See 'SOFTBALL,' page 16

FILE PHOTOS

Clemmons (below) tied for the team lead with six home runs in a breakout season for Russellville, while Taylor (right) was one of just two Lady Golden Tigers to hit better than .400 on the year.



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'SOFTBALL', from page 15



and a .428 OBP. By season's end, she had hit her way up to the No. 2 spot in a potent Lady Golden Tiger lineup. Sikes was also a major factor in the circle, leading Russellville in wins (10), innings pitched (111.1) and strikeouts (99).

Sticking with the two-way theme, our next All-County roster spot goes to **Belgreen freshman Emma Dempsey**, whose efforts in the circle and at the plate this season helped the Lady Bulldogs reach Montgomery for the first time in program history. Dempsey carried a heavy load as Belgreen's primary pitcher, winning three games at the North Regional to help secure a state tournament berth. She could also do damage with the bat; in the finals of the Class 1A, Area 13 tournament in early May, Dempsey went 4-for-4 with three doubles and four RBIs to lead the Lady Bulldogs past Tharptown 11-3. For her performance this season, Dempsey was voted Area 13 Player of the Year by the area's five head coaches.

Two more Belgreen players also earned reserve spots on our All-County squad. **Sophomore Emmie Scott** provided a steady glove at second base while batting .555 for the season and sparking the Lady Bulldog attack from the top of the order. **Katie Dempsey, another sophomore**, brought tremendous range and athleticism to center field while also batting .512 and anchoring the lineup in the No. 3 spot. In Belgreen's opening game at the North Regional last month, Dempsey went 4-for-4 with a triple, two RBIs and three runs scored to spark a 12-11 win over Decatur Heritage.

Russellville shortstop Karlie Moore is an All-County selection after putting together a big junior season at the plate. Moore hit .364 (47-for-129) and tied for the team lead with six home runs. She also drove in 34 runs, scored 33, stole nine bases

and had 12 multi-hit games.

Rounding out our All-County roster is **Tharptown senior first baseman Ameliah Dawson**, whose .471 batting average this season was second-best on the team. In addition to her 33 hits, Dawson also drew 11 walks and got hit by a pitch 12 times, driving her OBP all the way up to a team-leading .602. She hit a grand slam in a 9-2 win at Shoals Christian on April 2 and also finished the season with five doubles, 19 RBIs and 17 runs scored.

Without a doubt, there were too many worthy candidates and not enough All-County spots to go around. Barely missing the cut but earning honorable mention were Red Bay eighth-grader Emma McCollister (.450 average with 10 doubles, three triples, 28 runs scored and a .500 OBP); Phil Campbell junior Abby Davis (.333 average with four triples, 31 runs scored, 15 stolen bases and a .402 OBP); Tharptown junior Catie Dawson (.389 average with one home run, 22 RBIs, 22 runs scored and a .434 OBP); Vina sophomore Kaitlyn King (.486 average with one home run, six doubles, 26 runs scored and a .590 OBP); and Belgreen junior Camie Terrell (.485 average).

To call the shots for our All-County team, we'll go with **Belgreen head coach Chris Scott**, our choice for 2018 Coach of the Year in Franklin County. Scott's non-stop energy and enthusiasm helped the Lady Bulldogs weather an 0-11 start that might have sunk the season for most teams. Instead, Belgreen turned things around, winning 26 out of 28 games during one red-hot stretch and bringing home a second straight county crown, an Area 13 tournament title and a Class 1A North Regional championship. For the first time ever, the Lady Bulldogs advanced to Montgomery, where they went 1-2 at the state tournament to wrap up the most successful season in program history.

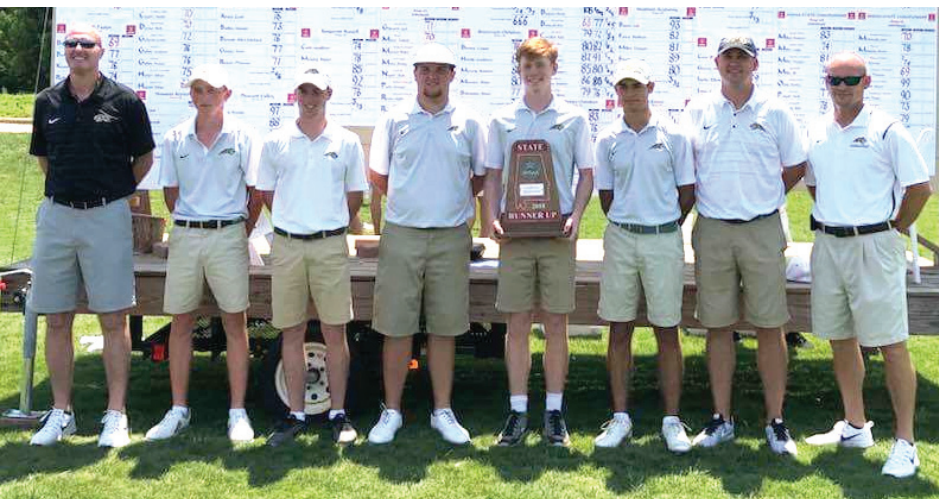
FILE PHOTOS

Clockwise, from below: Ameliah Dawson hit .471 this season and led the Lady Wildcats with a .602 OBP; Russellville's Moore slugged six home runs and hit .364 with 34 RBIs; Emma Dempsey picked up three wins in the circle for Belgreen at the North Regional Tournament, helping the Lady Bulldogs make it to Montgomery for the first time in school history; Scott guided the Lady 'Dogs to a remarkable turnaround, taking them from 0-11 out of the gate to championships at the county, area and regional level.



'RUSSELLVILLE', from page 13

National Course in Opelika to out-pace runner-up Guntersville by 41 strokes. Russellville won its first and only golf state championship in 2015, shooting 614 over two days at Magnolia Grove in Mobile. St. Paul's was the runner-up that year, finishing nine strokes back of the Golden Tigers with a 623.



COURTESY PHOTO

Russellville's boys golf team brought home some hardware from the state tournament for the third time in the last four seasons, finishing second to St. Paul's at Robert Trent Jones last month. Pictured above (from left) are RCS superintendent Heath Grimes, team members Eric Boutwell, Carson Reeves, Jaceton Murray, Lucas McNutt and Brayden Bendall, head coach Patrick Odom and RHS principal Jason Goodwin. The Golden Tigers also brought home a Red Map as state runners-up in 2016, one year after winning the program's first-ever state title in 2015 at Magnolia Grove in Mobile.

Greenhill helps Auburn earn Super Regional bid for first time since 1999

Staff reports

Former Russellville standout Cody Greenhill picked up the win for Auburn on Sunday with a solid relief effort on the mound as the Tigers pounded N.C. State 15-7 to clinch their first NCAA Super Regional berth since 1999.

Auburn (42-21) jumped out to an early 7-0 lead, and Greenhill came on in relief to get the final two outs in the bottom of the fourth. The freshman righthander pitched into the eighth, giving up three earned runs on six hits in 4.1 innings to earn his fifth win of the season. Greenhill (5-2) struck out five N.C. State batters and walked two, throwing 56 of his 86 pitches for strikes.

The Tigers opened play at the regional in Raleigh with a 13-4 win over Northeastern last Friday. They followed that up with a 12-1 rout of Army on Saturday. Freshman outfielder Judd Ward, another former Russellville star, started Saturday's game and went 1-for-5.



Cody Greenhill

Greenhill and Ward both graduated from RHS in 2017 after leading the Golden Tigers to three consecutive state championships. Each was a three-time All-State selection by the Alabama Sports Writers, with Ward being named Class 5A Player of the Year in 2016 and Greenhill taking home POY honors in 2017.

Greenhill, a freshman All-SEC selection, has been a key member of the Auburn pitching staff in his first collegiate season. He enters the Super Regional with a 5-2 record and five saves in 19 appearances. He has posted a 2.11 ERA in 55.1 innings, with 54 strikeouts and 18 walks. Greenhill has held opposing hitters to a .240 batting average.

Ward has played in 34 games as a true freshman, including 19 starts. He's batting .260 (20-for-77) on the season with two doubles, a triple, eight RBIs, nine runs scored and a .352 OBP.

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Tigers triumph



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured above (from left) are Red Bay High School golfers Colton Corum, Matthew Williams, Codey Cleveland and Tucker Fredrick with coach Johnny Cleveland. The Tigers won the Class 1A/2A Section 4 tournament championship last month at Cross Creek in Cullman.

Red Bay boys take home section title

Cleveland finishes second at sub-state, ties for third at Robert Trent

Staff reports

Red Bay's boys cruised to the Class 1A/2A Section 4 championship last month at Cross Creek in Cullman, shooting a team score of 387 to easily outpace runner-up Lindsay Lane by 43 strokes.

Codey Cleveland led the way for the Tigers with a round of 80, tying for low medalist honors. Tucker Fredrick followed with a 93, and Colton Corum shot 101. Matthew Williams finished out the scoring for Red Bay at 113.

The Tigers shot 387 again at the sub-state tournament in Gadsden on May 7, finishing fourth behind Donoho, Westbrook Christian and Cedar Bluff. Cleveland posted a terrific round of 72, finishing two shots back of Cedar Bluff's Nick Sawyer for low medalist honors. Fredrick shot 97 for Red Bay, followed by Williams at 108 and Corum at 110.

Cleveland qualified to compete as an individual in the state tournament at Robert Trent Jones in Muscle Shoals, where he shot three-under 69 on day one and one-over 73 on day two to finish tied for third with an overall score of two-under 142. Cleveland was just three strokes behind Jacob Lecroy of Donoho, who shot 139 to take home low medalist honors. Westbrook Christian's William Wethington finished second at 141, followed by Cleveland and Kinston's Dylan Moulton at 142.

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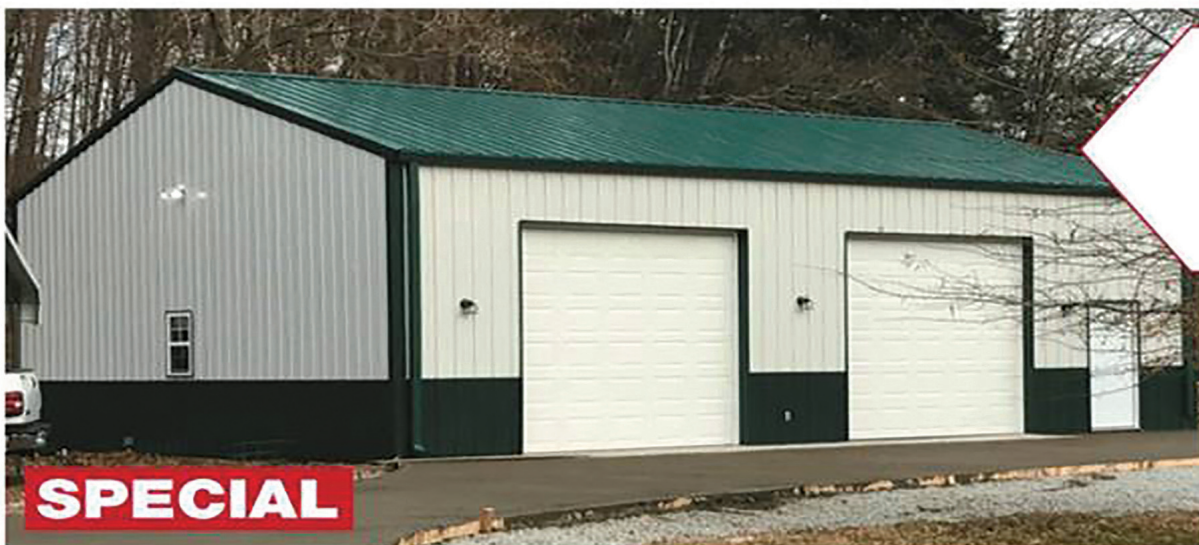
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