Centreville Bress

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Centreville Mayor & Council take Oaths of Office

BY MIKE HOBSON

REPORTER mike.hobson@centrevillepress.com

November 4, 2025

The City of Centreville held a swearing in ceremony for the incoming officers, each elected in August 2025. The officers will serve until November 2029.

The officials include Mayor Barry Cooner, serving his first term as Mayor. New council members include Akeyla Holifield and Aaron Hood. Re-elected council members include Linda Lawrence, Diane Epperson, and Don Mack.

Council Member Mack was re-elected to his 7th term as a council member, dat-

ing back to the 1990's. He has previously served with 6 former Mayors, including Debbie Martin, Dalton Murphy, Tommy Bamberg, Mike Hobson, Terry Morton & Mike Oakley. He has also served on the Water Board.

Liinda Lawrence and Diane Epperson are entering their second term on the council.

The Oath of Office was administered individually by former Circuit Judge Jack Meigs.

A large crowd was in attendance in the historic Bank Building on the Court Square. Following the ceremony attendees were treated to a food buffet and conversation with the new officers.



Former Circuit Judge Jack Meigs swears in new Centreville Mayor Barry Cooner, with Kayla Cooner.



Pictured L-R: Aaron Hood, Linda Lawrence, Mayor Barry Cooner, Diane Epperson, Akeyla Holifield, Don Mack

USDA directs grocery stores not to offer special discounts to SNAP customers — Bibb County families feeling the strain

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

As the federal govshutdown ernment continues into its second month, the fallout is still growing for families who rely on the Supplemental

Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to put food on the table. SNAP payments have been paused, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has now advised grocery stores across the country that they cannot offer special discounts to SNAP-EBT

customers during this

freeze. email An USDA, shared publicly online, reminded retailers that the program's Equal Treatment Rule requires stores to sell eligible food items at the same prices and conditions for all shoppers. Some stores had attempted to temporarily reduce prices or offer special

assistance to help

struggling families get small amount to some by, only to be notified that doing so would violate program rules without a formal waiv-

er in place. This directive comes just as courts have ordered the federal government to find legal means to resume funding, while elected officials continue to place blame across party lines over the stalled negotiations. Meanwhile, this is not just a national storyline. This is landing directly here at home in Bibb County. Families across our communities rely heavily on SNAP benefits, especially households with children, seniors, and neighbors living on fixed incomes. With payments currently paused, many of those same families are staring down empty pantry shelves and are being forced to stretch what little they have further than ever. Even what might seem like a

— an extra \$30-\$50 in groceries — can be the difference between stability and hunger.

With temporary retail discounts now off the table for SNAP users, the safety net feels even thinner than before. And this is the moment when community matters most. Bibb County residents who are able are encouraged to donate to local food banks, churches, and nonprofit food pantries while we wait for federal solutions to return. A bag of canned goods, boxes of cereal, pasta, or other nonperishables may seem small on the surface, but they can make a real, immediate impact for a neighbor who suddenly cannot rely on the benefits they count on

every month. In this difficult season, kindness, generosity, and neighborly compassion are needed more than ever.

Checking in on elderly neighbors, helping a single parent who may be stretched thin, offering to share a meal, supporting local food drives, or simply asking quietly if someone needs something can go a long way. SNAP was designed to protect families from hunger. While courts and agencies debate funding and authority, tens

millions of Americans — including many right here in Bibb County are living the real consequences happening

right now. Until federal benefits resume, the strongest thing we can do is not wait for Washington to fix this crisis, but instead show the resilience our small communities are known for. At a time when families are worried and resources are limited, what we do for one another here at home can make all the difference. It's up to us



now to lend a hand, buy a bit extra if we

and no one else right are able, and show up for our neighbors when it matters most.



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VETERAN'S DAY SPECIAL

Spotlight: Arthur Harris reflects on service, sacrifice, and brotherhood

REPORTER

Veterans Day is a time to honor those who have served and to thank them for the sacrifices they've made for our country. It's also a chance to highlight the stories of local veterans like Arthur Harris, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who served from 1977 to 1997.

Harris remembers his time in the Marine Corps fondly and continues to stay connected with fellow service members across the country. "We stay in touch quite a bit. I'm fortunate enough to have friends in just

BY CANDACE JOHNSON about every state and ally means." overseas, and we keep in touch weekly," Harris said.

> home as bittersweet, following the passing said the lessons and friendships from his years in uniform remain with him. When asked what Veterans celebrates Veterans and respect.

said. "I really think evjoin the military so they what Veterans Day re- Guard," he said.

For Harris, service runs in the family. "My reason for joining was After two decades because of my family of service, Harris de- and their traditions," scribed his return he said. "I had uncles and brothers who were in Vietnam, World War of his father. Still, he II, and Korea. My oldest brother, Jesse, encouraged me to go in, and I really wanted to."

Day means to him, Day by spending time Harris emphasized its with family, attending connection to freedom local school programs, and participating in "It represents free- the annual Veterans dom and respect," he Day Parade in Birmingham. "I marched ery young man should in that parade back in 1979 and 1980 as part can fully understand of the officers' Color

These days, Harris

Now in its 78th year, Birmingham's Veterans Day Parade will take place Nov. 11 from 1-4:30 p.m. Harris said that the simplest gestures often mean the most.

"I've learned that if you just simply thank a veteran for their service, people really don't know how much that means," Harris said.

After 20 years in the Marine Corps, Harris said the most valuable lessons he learned were responsibility, respect, and honor. These are values he carries with him every





Brierfield Ironworks to host Veterans Day celebration honoring local heroes

BY CANDACE JOHNSON **REPORTER**

The Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park will host its Vet-

tion on Nov. 8 from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The family-friendly event will feature live music, food, and festivities FireTown Bluegrass

U.S. Armed Forces.

Musical performances will include honoring those who Band, headlining from

have served in the 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., and Lynnox Poe, performing from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a special tribute set featuring

Lainey Wilson. "We're super excited that this will be the first time in years that we've had Bluegrass come and play at the park for this songs by country artist event," Park Manager Erin Hall said. "They'll

be doing some original bluegrass tunes and then also some patriotic tunes as well to honor veterans. Artist Lynnox Poe previpark's flea market on Oct. 11.

Hall says it's important to have community events such as this to not only bring the community together, but to also promote outdoor recreation. "That's something that we really want to promote here at the park, and then just to also share the history of the park as it pertains to the Ironworks," Hall mentioned.

The long-anticipated celebration took months to plan, all leading up to this Saturday.

Guests can enjoy a variety of local flavors as Moe and Moore's ously performed at the BBQ will be on site serving up classic favorites. Southern Veterans will receive free admission as a token of appreciation for their service. Hall noted that the event will take place rain or shine, so quests may want to bring an um-





Nov. 8th - 11am-5:30pm











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LOCAL & GOVERNMENT

Centreville News

By Brenda Hubbard

We wish to extend sympathy to the family of Sonya Cottingham Dorough who passed away on October 19, 2025. A memorial service was held at Centreville Baptist Church on October 28, 2025 at 2:00 P.M. Sonya will be missed by family and friends.

Get well wishes and prayer go out to Larry Speights who has been undergoing tests.t

Belated birthday wishes go out to a few that had birthdays in October; Maddie Kate Watts, Beau Suttle, Bill Murphy and Mike Phil-

Sympathy goes out to the family of Billy Etheridge, 77, who passed away on October 21, 2025. Graveside services were held on October 24, 2025 at Pondville Cemetery in Brent, Alabama. Billy will be missed by his family and friends.

Anniversary wishes go out to Butch and Judy Suttle who celebrated their 53rd Wedding Anniversary on Monday, October 27, 2025.

The Joyful Hearts of Brent Baptist Church met on Monday, October 27, 2025.

out to Kaiden Clinner who will be celebrating

his 5th birthday on November 1, 2025.

Sincere sympathy goes out to the family of Donald Ray Perry who passed away on October 25, 2025. Graveside services were held on October 29, 2025 at 11:00 A.M. at Pineland Memorial Park. Donald Ray will be greatly missed.

Anniversary wishes go out to James and Barbara Smitherman who recently celebrated their Wedding Anniversary.

Enjoying lunch at Main Street Tavern on Monday, October 27th were Charlotte West, Peggy Reynolds and Pam Long. All enjoyed delicious food, a lot of fun and laughter. After leaving Montevallo, Charlotte and Peggy drove to Randolph to pick up Peggy's grandchildren with laughter all the way.

Among those celebrating birthdays in November are Clifford Hughes, Jim Headley, Vivian Ellinghausen, Sheila Watts, Carolyn Caddis, Tami Greer, Marie Cash, Becky Tinsley, Bodie Giddiens, Merilyn Kynard, Doris Jo Varnell and Larry Elam.

If you have news call it in to 205-316-Birthday wishes go 1181. Take care and God Bless.



Centreville Council attends



Photo L-R: Akeyla Holifield, Aaron Hood, Barry Cooner, Don Mack, Diane Epperson, Linda Lawrence.

The newly elected Centreville city council and mayor attended two days of training in Montgomery, conducted by the Alabama League of Municipalities. Beginning with a consolidated front these elected leaders are better prepared to conduct the official business of Centreville. Official swearing in will take place on November 3, 2025.



Bibb County Education Retiree's Association

Education Retiree's Association met at the Brent/ Centreville Library. Stephanie Kemmer, Bibb County Probate Judge attended and declared November 18th " Retired Teacher's Day " in Bibb County. She

The Bibb County to thank the group for their dedication and service to education. Peggy Mobley, President of the Alabama Education Retiree's Association was the guest speaker and shared updates from the state level. Club members brought

Baptist food pantry for Fran Kornegay, Phyllis their monthly service project. Club members attending and guest: JoAnn Medders, Faye Johnson, Stephanie Kemmer, Probate Judge; Peggy Mobley, AERA President; or of Bibb County Edu-Vickie Brown, Judy Elliott, Elaine Jones, Jabrought all the attend- canned food items for nis Conway, Donna ees a caramel apple the West Blocton First Cook, Barbara Smith,

Johnson, Avis Huey, Linda Cottingham.

Davis Whitetails-Kelley and Brett Davis provided a delicious catered brunch in honcation Retiree's.



Mike Oakley receives the 2025 Folds of Honor Patriot Award

Oakley was awarded a distinct honor from the Alabama Chapter of Folds of Honor, Sunday, October 26, 2025. Oakley was selected as the 2025 Elmer B. Harris Patriot Award signifying the Alabama Veteran of the Year in an annual banquet held at Old Overton Golf

Club in Birmingham. the U.S, Army and Al-Oakley and 11 family members were in attendance.

Oakley, a retired Sergeant Major, has long been involved in causes that support veterans, first responders and those who have served our country. He served for nearly 40 years with

abama Army National Guard, retiring in 2017. He is on the Board of Folds of Honor as well as Alabama Veterans and was president of the Enlisted National Guard Association of Alabama (ENGAA) for six years advocating for benefits for servicemembers and retirees.

Folds of Honor is a national non-profit organization that provides educational scholarships to the spouses and children of U.S. Military members and first responders who have been killed or disabled in the line of duty. Founded by Col. Dan Rooney, the organization has awarded over 62,000 scholarships totaling over \$290 million since 2007. The mission is to honor sacrifice with hope through education and to provide support for families. Oakley was instrumental in helping establish

Oakley said, "I am honored to be recognized for this award from an organization that is very dear to my heart. In receiving the award, I said that it doesn't feel right to get an award for something that we should all be doing, working to improve the lives of those who have served our country." The Folds of



Honor Patriot Award a RN at DCH Regional is co-sponsored by Alabama Power and Drummond Coal. Oakley served as Mayor of Centreville and has a long list of community service to his credit stretch-

ing over 40 years. He

and his wife, Sharon,

Medical Center, have three children, Anna-Michael Oakley Longshore (Thomas), Trip Oakley (Ashley) and grandchildren. four Tommy Longshore, Oakley Ann Longshore, Ford Longshore and Jade Oakley.

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EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Federal government shutdowns need to end

Inside the Statehouse

A Guest Opinion Column By Steve Flowers

politics has become nationalized today. Therefore, whenever something happens on the national level, I hear about it. I can tell by the number of comments when something has struck a nerve. This latest government due to shutdown, congressional standoff, struck nerve.

It surprised me because these government federal shutdowns have become somewhat routine recent However, years. appears this one to have broken the camel's back. It also seemed more childish than others. Every it happens, it's like children on a playground that, when one of them get doesn't their way, they take their ball and toys home. Someone needs to explain to them that running the United States government is not like play time in kindergarten.

Alabama Our Constitution is arguably antiquated; however, our 1901 framework has some fundamental conservative edicts that the current U.S. government could and should adopt. The cornerstone mandate is that the Alabama Legislature must adopt and write a new budget every year, and that budget must be balanced. This is the only task that the legislature accomplish every year. It is the priority of the Alabama Legislature to pass a balanced budget at each and every legislative session.

The U.S. Congress should adopt this same approach. It has been 15 years since the federal congress has actually structured a singular federal budget. They pass stop gap measures called continuing resolutions.

The U.S. House is evenly divided

between Democrats and Republicans. They have allegiance to their party, rather than their constituents. They each vote lockstep with their party mantra and decisions. There are no nonpartisan legislative leaders who cross party paths to stand up for the American people. They are party pawns. We may as well have AI machines or androids pushing their voting machines.

Which brings me to

the point that causes consternation. me When they reached disagreement on partisan the stalemates with this latest historically lengthy impasse, they literally went home on a fall vacation. Congressmen were getting paid, still getting all their exorbitant healthcare benefits, and unlimited perks. Their flight fares back home were paid while all government employees were going without pay checks.

My suggestion would be that whenever a continuing resolution to dictate the federal budget fails to pass and it shuts down the entire U.S. government and harms our national security, then Congress must suffer and face the consequences of their adolescent behavior. The members of Congress, including 435 House members and all 100 U.S. Senators, automatically lose their salaries, and I permanently. They quit getting a paycheck, and when the stalemate ends, they do not get back pay. It is gone forever. They lose their health insurance while on strike. Furthermore, they cannot be reimbursed for travel

It is abhorrent that this time they arrogantly shut down the government and adjourned and flew home to their district. They should be required to stay

to their district.

in Washington and stay on the floor of Congress the entire time until a budget is resolved. As soon as the continuing resolution to keep the government operating fails to pass and the government closes, all congressional paychecks, health insurance, free travel and staff ends, and all 535 members of Congress summoned to Capitol and must stay there until a budget is passed and the government is back to order.

They also would be prohibited from talking to the media or making any public statements to their respective entertainment news channels. Republicans could not spout their rhetoric to Fox and Democrats could not espouse their liberal diatribe to CNN or MSNBC. Fox will blame the Democrats without any help, and Democratic channels CNN, CBS, and MSNBC will

the Republicans regardless.

Most Americans in the middle blame both parties equally. They say, "a pox on both your houses." This is not a childish "take your toys home" playground spat. This is called running a country.

George Washington, the wise father of our nation, warned against America adopting political parties. He knew that, like in Britain, the House of Commons would owe their allegiance to their Party rather than to the people they are elected to represent.

See you next week.

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. He served 16 years in the state legislature. Steve may be reached at steve@steveflowers.us.

Bibb County BOE Condensed Financial Statement for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2025

Bibb County Board of Education
Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances
Governmental and Expendable Trust Funds
For the Year Ended September 30, 2025

DESCRIPTION	GENERAL	SPECIAL REVENUE	DEBT SERVICE	CAPITAL PROJECTS	TRUST	TOTAL
REVENUES STATE REVENUES FEDERAL REVENUES LOCAL REVENUES OTHER REVENUES TOTAL REVENUES	30,471,124.49 840.00 7,562,621.63 54,460.55 38,089,046.67	0.00 5,543,898,48 1,624,025,71 25,287,87 7,193,212.06	681,028,58 0.00 99,722.06 0.00 780,750.64	588.172.42 0.00 0.00 0.00 588.172.42	0.00 0.00 756.947.63 0.00 756.947.63	31.740,325.49 5.544,738.48 10,043,317.03 79,748.42 47,408,129.42
EXPENDITURES: INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE AUXILIARY SERVICES GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CAPITAL OUTLAY DEBT SERVICE OTHER EXPENDITURES TOTAL EXPENDITURES	20,596,189.13 7,562,371.19 4,154,230,75 3,778,076.07 1,720,599.70 933,507.95 1925 1,296,929.33 40,043,829.12	2,376,414.14 801,990.20 74,428.54 3,373,512.26 373,126.65 9,750.00 0 582,182.92 7,591,404.71	0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 1857928.42 0.00 1,857,928.42	0.00 0.00 37.097.00 1.677.500.00 0.00 1,283,742.56 0.00 0.00 2,998,339.56	350.00 348.173.72 36.193.15 3.922.35 0.00 466.78 0.00 168.251.10 557,357.10	22,972,953.27 8,712,535.11 4,301,949.44 8,833,010.68 2,093,726.35 2,227,467.29 1,859,853.42 2,047,363.35 53,048,858.91
OTHER FUND SOURCES (USES): OTHER FUND SOURCES OTHER FUND USES TOTAL OTHER FUND SOURCES (USES)	581,128.79 1,692,714.97 (1,111,586.18)	728,699.22 362,464.05 366,235.17	1,420,957.80 0.00 1,420,957.80	0.00 244,137.64 (244,137.64)	8,366,60 143,317,26 (134,950,66)	2,739,152.41 2,442,633.92 296,518.49
EXCESS REVENUES AND OTHER SOURCES OVER(UNDER)EXPENDITURES AND OTHER FUND USES	(3,066,368.63)	(31,957.49)	343,780.02	(2,654,304.78)	64639.87	(5,344,211.01)
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE - OCT 1, 2024 ENDING FUND BALANCE - SEPT 30, 2025	15,814,211.24 12,747,842.61	1,913,373.75 1,881,416.26	3,289,268.00 3,633,048.02	3,325,089.81 670,785.03	418,921.80 483,561.67	24,760,864.60 19,416,653.59

32,473,718.09

Type of Indebtedness:	Capital Lease	Bonds and Warrants Payable	
Retirement of Debt from:	Fleet Renewal	PSF/Local	
FY2025	20,577.00	1841272.61	
FY2026	20,577.00	4800526.14	
FY2027	18,862.23	1738602.47	
FY2028		1731637.12	
FY2029		1697462.17	
FY2030-2034		7374382.18	
FY2035-2039		5,722,759.45	
FY2040-2044		4,590,509.34	
FY2045-2050		4,778,400.00	

I certify that this report is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Kevin Cotner, Superintendent

Indebtedness of the Board as of September 30, 2025

Centreville Press

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THE STAFF

OUR GOAL: The Centreville Press is published proudly for the citizens of Bibb County and adjoining counties by Bibb Community Media, Inc., Centreville, AL. Our Goal is to produce quality, profitable, community-oriented newspapers that you, our readers, are proud of. We will reach that goal through hard work, teamwork, loyalty and a strong dedication towards printing the truth.

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Free Will Apostolic Holiness Antioch 926-9252

Real Truth Holiness Church 646 S. Scottsville Road Brent 926-5009

Trinity Spirit Holiness Church Centreville 926-4321

METHODIST Brent Bible Methodist 812-675-1543 210 4th St. Brent, AL

Brent Methodist 190 Tabernacle Rd. Brent, AL

Pondville Methodist 9:15 - 10 AM Sundays Freindship Rd. • Brent

Church 205-225-4000 Co. Rd. 16 Brent, AL

Methodist Church 12540 N. Scottsville Rd. West Blocton, AL 513-254-8241

Ada Chapel Bible

West Blocton Bible

355 Camellia Blocton 205.826.5763

Friendship Bible Methodist

Methodist Church 355 Camellia Lane, West

Mt. Sinai Church Centreville 256-577-8137

James Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church 926-5607

Bible Methodist West Blocton 938-0091

Hopewell A.M.E. Zion Harrisburg 926-5777

New Hope AME West Blocton 540-8016

Waymon Chapel AME Brierfield 205-665-4730

West Scottsville United Methodist Church North Scottsville Road 451-3624

Brent

Brent

NAZARENE Ridgeville Church Of The Nazarene Rrent

Spencer Church Of The Naz-

PENTECOSTAL New Life West Blocton Pastor Greg Brock 205.441.2809

Church of Centreville

Centreville First Presbyterian P.C.A. 926-4261

PRESBYTERIAN Brent Presbyterian P.C.A. 926-4722

Green Pond Presbyterian Presbyterian Church Rd 205-938-2344

Pleasant Hill Upper Cumberland Presbyterian Church Centreville 926-4409

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST First Brent Seventh Day Adventist 926-6328

NON-DENOMINATIONAL Fellowship Community 926-6800

Scottsville Union Church

Co. Rd. 9 Scottsville 205-503-6096

Victory Tabernacle Church 1008 Walnut Street Centreville

The Refreshing Place Church 24865 Hwy. 5 Woodstock, AL 35188 Pastor Wayne Keeton

God's House of Prayer 489 Co. Rd. 162 (Heiberger) Marion, AL 36756 334-683-4933 Every Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Sandy Chapel Community Church 926-4934

926-9455 or 361-2763 Pastor Butch Tucker

Yahweh's Harvest 926-9044

Tabernacle United Methodist

Episcopal

Andrews

925 Plowman Street Montevallo 665-1667



ASSEMBLIES OF GOD New Life Assembly of God Woodstock 938-2938

Assembly of God Worship Center Centreville (205) 928-0369

BAPTIST Antioch Baptist Centreville (205) 316-1221

Ashby Baptist Brierfield 665-1111 Bethel Baptist Brent 205-225-4780

Bethlehem Baptist Centreville

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Bibbville Baptist Woodstock 938-2015

Brent Baptist Brent 926-7687

Cahaba Valley Baptist Centreville 926-5927

Calvary Baptist Centreville 926-4079

Camp Branch Baptist Church 2590 Camp Branch Rd West Blocton

Cedar Grove Baptist West Blocton 938-0828

Centreville Baptist Centreville 926-7069 Community Baptist Centreville

Deer Creek Missionary Baptist Church Centreville 225-0460

Ebenzer Baptist Church Brierfield 665-4865

Enon Baptist Centreville 926-4517

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Faith Baptist West Blocton 938-7220

First Baptist Church of Woodstock 205-938-7479

Four Points Baptist Centreville 926-7775

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Haysop Baptist Centreville 205-310-1316

Hopewell Primitive Baptist West Blocton 553-7603

Johntown Baptist West Blocton 938-7621

Liberty Baptist West Blocton 938-2090

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Lucille Baptist West Blocton 966-3556

Mission Baptist Woodstock 938-7096

Mt. Carmel Baptist West Blocton 938-2379

Mt. Ebell Baptist Brent 926-9223

Mt. Grove Baptist 938-3410

Mt. Moriah Baptist West Blocton 926-5425

Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church Brent 926-9009

Mt. Tabor Baptist Brent 926-7156

Mt. Zion Baptist Centreville 334-366-5903

New Hebron Baptist West Blocton 938-2101 New Hope Missionary Baptist Randolph 334-366-1199

New Life Baptist Church Centreville 205-541-7072

New Pleasant Valley Brent 926-9045

Pinegrove Missionary Baptist Brent 225-0139

Pineview Baptist Brent 926-9280

Pleasant Sabine Baptist Centreville 926-3867

Pondville Baptist Brent 926-9211

Randolph Baptist 366-4296

Reno Baptist Church Caffee Junction 477-5058 Rising Star Baptist Centreville 926-4115

Rehobeth Baptist Lawley 663-2907

Schultz Creek Baptist West Blocton 938-9766

Shady Grove Baptist Randolph 366-1163

Shady Grove II Baptist West Blocton 938-0120 Pastor 834-2557

Shiloh Baptist Centreville 926-7041

Six Mile Baptist

Smith Hill Baptist West Blocton 938-2379

Thomas Mill Baptist Centreville 926-6882

Union Baptist Church 722 Magnolia St West Blocton

West Blocton First Baptist 938-7392

BIBLE Grace Bible Woodstock 938-7763

<u>CATHOLIC</u> Church Of The Holy Spirit Tuscaloosa 553-9733

St. Thomas The Apostle Church Montevallo 663-3936

CHRISTIAN Marvel Christian Union Montevallo 345-7018

CHURCH OF CHRIST Centreville Church Of Christ 926-LOVE

North Bibb Church of Christ Woodstock 477-6121

West Blocton Church of Christ West Blocton 938-7108

Evangelist Temple Brent 926-6430

CHURCH OF GOD at Eoline 256-393-9625 Pastor Shane Pate

Church Of God Of Prophecy West Blocton 938-2788

Caffee Junction Church Of

God 205-477-5468

River of Life Church of God 9225 Hwy 82, Brent 205-926-7600 West Blocton Church of God Cty Rd. 21 Smith Hill 205-966-4988

CHURCH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST 2300 South Scottsville Rd

















"Peace Like a River"

Few songs in Christian hymnals are as simple yet enduring as "Peace Like a River." With its repetitive verses and gentle imagery, the hymn has been sung by generations of children in Sunday school classrooms, at summer camps, and in congregations around the world. But its roots run deeper than many realize.

The song is believed to have originated in the late 19th century, a period marked by the rise of gospel hymns and spirituals in America. While its exact author remains unknown, "Peace Like a River" reflects the style and structure of African American spirituals—songs that were

passed down orally, often using nature imagery to express the soul's relationship with God. Rivers, in particular, symbolized both the hardships of earthly life and the hope of eternal rest. The lyrics' opening

line, "I've got peace like a river in my soul," echoes the biblical imagery found in Isaiah 48:18: "If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your well-being like the waves of the sea." By comparing peace, joy, and love to flowing water, the hymn connects spiritual blessings with the natural world in a way that is easy for anyone to understand

and remember.

Over time, the song spread through oral tradition and hymn collections, eventually becoming a staple in children's ministry because of its repetitive, singable verses. Its adaptability also allowed worship leaders to add verses about "joy like a fountain" or "love like an ocean," making it both playful and profound.

Today, "Peace Like a River" continues to be sung worldwide, reminding believers that true peace does not come from circumstances but from God Himself. Its history is a testament to the power of simple songs to carry deep truths across generations.



BY WHITNEY BUZBEE

One of the most difficult commands Jesus gave us is also one of the most freeing: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven"(Luke 6:37). Forgiveness does not come naturally. When we are hurt, the instinct is to protect ourselves, to hold on to anger, or to demand repayment. Yet Jesus calls us to a different path—one that mirrors His own love toward us.

When we forgive, we are not saying the

wrong done to us was small or unimportant. Instead, we are choosing to release the burden of bitterness and place the matter into God's hands. Forgiveness is more about our hearts than the offender's actions. It loosens the chains that anger and resentment wrap around us. Think about the

cross. Jesus, in His final breaths, prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). If the Son of God could ex-

tend grace in the face of cruelty, how can we withhold it in our own lives? His example teaches us that forgiveness is not a feeling, but a decision an act of obedience rooted in love. Forgiving may not

erase the pain, but it opens the door for God's healing. It allows peace to replace turmoil and grace to flow where bitterness once grew. In forgiving, we look less like the world and more like Christ.

Plain & Simple Parmesan Garlic Chicken and Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (or thighs)
- 1 ½ lbs baby potatoes (halved or quartered if large)
- 3 tbsp olive oil (divided)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp paprika
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley (chopped, for garnish)

Optional for extra flavor:

- 2 tbsp melted butter (mixed with olive oil)
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes for a little heat

tbsp olive oil, half the garlic, ½ tsp

Italian seasoning, salt, pepper, and 2 tbsp Parmesan. Spread on one side of the pan. 3. Season chicken: Rub chicken with remaining olive oil, garlic, Italian seasoning, paprika,

1. Prep the oven: Preheat to

2. Season potatoes: In a

large bowl, toss potatoes with 2

400°F (200°C). Lightly grease a

large baking dish or sheet pan.

Instructions:

2–3 tbsp Parmesan. Place on the other side of the pan. 4. Bake: Roast for 30-35 minutes, flipping potatoes halfway through, until chicken reaches 165°F internally and potatoes

salt, and pepper. Sprinkle with

are fork tender. 5. Finish & serve: Sprinkle the rest of the Parmesan over everything, broil for 2–3 minutes until golden, then garnish with parsley. Serve warm.



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NEWS

Community in Action: Local Departments Show What It Means to Be a Good Neighbor

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

In a time where so many people talk about division, frustration, and what's not working — it's important to stop and highlight when community does work exactly as it should.

Recently, a post from the Bibb County Commission shared an example of what neighborly truly looks like in real time. According to the post, Wilton Water reached out for help after dealing with significant pipe issues affecting residents in Ashby/Brierfield area. Many people had been left without water for several days — a situation that places families, businesses, seniors, and entire households in an extremely difficult position.

Instead of waiting, pointing fingers, or passing responsibility around, the Bibb County Road Department stepped in and stepped up. They put in the physical labor and the problemsolving work needed to get the water fully restored again. Their willingness to respond

when asked made a another agency or tremendous, tangible difference for those are in need right now. residents who were Sometimes it looks struggling.

is This community supposed to be.

When one part of the community needs help — another part shows up. And when we recognize how much these acts matter, we also help build a culture that encourages continued partnership support.

It wasn't just the Road Department who played a role here either. The Centreville Department Water and the Bibb County Commissioners were also actively part of the effort and deserve appreciation for their roles in getting this situation resolved. This is how solutions shared happen: responsibility, shared effort, shared care for the people who live here.

neighborly Being doesn't just mean waving across the yard or checking the mail for someone when they're out of town. Sometimes it looks like rolling up your sleeves and helping

group because people like saying "this isn't what technically our job, but we can help, and we will."

> That small, rural, Southern community spirit — the "we'll figure this together" attitude — is one of Bibb County's greatest strengths. And when it shows up, we should celebrate it, because these examples remind us who we actually are at our best.

To the Road Department, the Centreville Water Department, the Commissioners, and all those who took action: thank you. You showed what neighborliness looks like in action — and many local residents felt the impact of that deeply this week. It mattered.

In small counties like Bibb, moments like this also stand as quiet reminders that our local infrastructure only works when people choose cooperation over competition. Not every rural area has endless resources, budgets, massive



agencies large with unlimited staff. Often, especially emergencies unexpected disruptions, it is these cross-department responses that become the difference between days of hardship and solutions

happening faster than expected. When we choose to value relationships between departments, towns, entities, city and county leadership we create resiliency. We create a network of trust and reliability that residents can

depend on. Not every county in Alabama has that. Not every county in the country has that. It matters that Bibb does and it matters that we keep cultivating that spirit, intentionally. We all benefit when we

protect and nurture it.

Governor Ivey announces funds for food banks

MONTGOMERY Governor Kay Ivey on Tuesday announced she is releasing \$2 million of the state's emergency funds to go towards eight food banks, serving all of Alabama's 67 counties. This comes on the 4th day of the month, which is the first day some of the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients will miss an issuance of those benefits to their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. In Alabama, SNAP benefits are issued to recipients' EBT cards on a specific day from the 4th of the month to the 23rd, so each day U.S. Senate Democrats refuse to reopen the federal government, more Alabama children, seniors and disabled who benefit from the SNAP program will be

impacted. As the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) has noted, SNAP benefits are 100 percent federally funded. Throughout this shutdown period, DHR is also assisting by redirecting an additional \$3 million to the Feeding Alabama food banks network, which touches all 67 counties, for a total of \$9 million for FY26. There are currently 11,434 children in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and DHR is sending an additional \$300 for each of those children to their caregivers. These additional funds should help these families offset

some of their monthly costs due to the lack of SNAP funding.

SNAP is also not the only program impacted by this federal government shutdown, and while it is not feasible, realistic or sustainable for the state to take on the responsibilities of the federal government, Governor Ivey feels compelled to put additional state dollars towards food banks across Alabama who are serving those in need.

"There are real Alabama families who rely on SNAP to put food on their tables, and that includes more than 300,000 children, more than 102,000 seniors and those who are disabled. That is why I am directing \$2 million in emergency funding to go towards food banks serving the people of our state," said Governor Ivey. "We are now in the longest federal government shutdown in history, and it is absolutely ridiculous that families all across our country are suffering - whether that is the school children who rely on SNAP, the air traffic controller not receiving a paycheck or even our military and high number of federal government worker families in Alabama. Hear me loud and clear when I say Alabama cannot be both the state and federal government. And like states all across the country, Alabama is stepping up to help, but this is

not sustainable by any

means. U.S. Senate

Democrats must vote

to reopen the federal

government now." In the meantime, the Trump Administration's U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced SNAP guidance has been sent to states to help partially fund the program while the federal government remains shutdown. The team at Alabama DHR is closely reviewing those details today to act as quickly as possible. As Secretary Rollins notes, this will be a cumbersome process for states and will result in delayed benefits. At this point in Alabama, that exact

timeframe is unknown. A few members of the Alabama Legislature have also inquired about a special session to tap into Rainy Day funds. The governor has said she has no plans to call a special session. According to the law, in order to use Rainy Day funds, the state would need to be in proration which is not the case.

The governor added, "There is only one true solution and that is for Congress to do their one job and reopen the federal government now."

Food banks included in the governor's \$2 million assistance are: Community Food Bank of Central Alabama, Food Bank of East Alabama, Food Bank of North Alabama, Feeding the Gulf Coast, Heart of Alabama Food Bank. Selma Area Food Bank, West Alabama Food Bank and the Wiregrass Area Food

United Way of West Alabama launches \$50,000 food assistance grant for nine counties

Tuscaloosa, AL — United Way of West (UWWA) Alabama has pledged \$50,000 to address the growing food insecurity crisis impacting families throughout our nine-county region-Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Pickens, Sumter, and Tuscaloosa.

With the recent interruption in SNAP benefits and many veterans and workers going without paychecks, the almost 75 food pantries across the area are seeing an unprecedented demand for assistance. In response, UWWA is providing direct support through a Food Assistance Grant designed to help local food pantries meet immediate needs.

"Our West Alabama community is so generous, and I am proud our Board of Directors has allocated \$50,000 from our reserves to support those suffering from loss of SNAP benefits. Nobody in West Alabama should go

so many resources available," said Jackie Wuska, President and CEO of United Way of West Alabama. "We are seeking additional corporate and government support from our community partners to sustain this initiative as long as needed. We are grateful to The Westervelt Company for helping support efforts in Hale and Tuscaloosa Counties and look forward to others joining us in the cause.

Through this program, UWWA will issue weekly grants ranging from \$250 to \$500 to food pantries that are part of the West Alabama Food Bank network and are located in our nine-county service area. These funds will help replenish pantry shelves and ensure continued access to food for individuals and families in need.

open now at uwwa. org. Eligible food pantax ID letter to apply.

hungry when we have ing on community part-

ners, businesses, and government entities to match or contribute toward this effort to extend the program as long as it is needed.

'The need is urgent and widespread," added Wuska. "Together, we can make sure every person in our community has enough to eat."

Individuals seeking food assistance should dial 2-1-1 to be connected with trained call specialists who can help locate food resources nearby.

About United Way of West Alabama

United Way of West strength-Alabama ens education, income stability, and throughout health Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Pickens, Sumter, and Tuscaloosa counties. By uniting community resources and Applications are partnerships, UWWA helps improve lives and build a stronger, tries must provide a more resilient West Alabama. Learn more UWWA is also call- at uwwa.org.



NEWS

Winner at the BLOC spreads good vibes across West Blocton

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

The BLOCton Sports Grill in West Blocton continues to lift spirits and cultivate what small-town makes life special: kindness, connection, and community care. Their "Love Your Neighbor" campaign — inspired by Mark 12:31 — was created to spotlight and honor the people who make West Blocton shine. Each month for an entire year, one nominated community member is chosen to receive a free large pizza simply for being a source of good energy, generosity, and encouragement.

This month, the honor goes to Wendi Woolwine — recognized for helping spread good vibes and neighborly Blocton. Wendi embodies the true spirit behind this campaign: showing up with heart, uplifting others, and reminding people that even the smallest gestures can leave the biggest impact. The West Blocton community is full of quiet heroes like Wendi and this campaign is meant to bring them to the forefront and celebrate them openly. **BLOCton**

Sports Grill launched this initiative believing that kindness deserves to be seen — and deserves to be rewarded. Their original Facebook announcement stated, "Because in a world that can feel cruel, we believe kindness and good neighbors can make West Blocton

The

that belief continues to be proven true month after month, one winner at a time.

Past honorees, like inaugural winner Cheryl Rice, have shown just how powerful it is when the community rallies around goodness instead of negativity. Now, by shining a light on people like Wendi, the campaign expands that ripple effect even further reminding residents that the way we treat one another directly shapes the culture of our hometown.

The BLOCton Sports Grill has been a community pillar since it opened — a place where fundraisers are held, where neighbors stop in to gather, laugh, and connect, and where local love

love all across West shine brighter." And is given just as generously as the food. The "Love Your Neighbor" campaign is yet another example of how they intentionally invest back into the people who make this town feel like home.

> Any West Blocton resident can nominate someone at any time. If you know someone who is making a difference quietly, consistently, or simply by bringing light into the lives around them — The BLOC wants to hear about them. Nominations can be directly submitted to The BLOC at any time for future consideration, and every

resident nominated

stays in the running for

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS MONTH'S WINNER! THE BLOC'S **LOVE YOUR** NEIGHB And here's the part they want everyone to know: this isn't limited. This isn't exclusive.

future monthly selec-

One pizza at a time, West Blocton is proving again that love, generosity, and community spirit are contagious — and people like Wendi Woolwine are helping lead that charge.

Congrats, Wendi and thank you for helping keep the heart of West Blocton beating strong.

As this continues

month after month, it also becomes a gentle reminder of powerful everyday kindness really is. Not the big, grand gestures but the ordinary, consistent ones. The simple wave. The "how are you?" The helpful hand. person who checks in. West Blocton thrives because of small threads of care woven together

West Blocton Middle School athletes close fall seasons with grit; winter sports begin.

As the crisp October air settles over Bibb County, West Blocton Middle School is celebrating the conclusion of highly character-driven fall sportsseasons and looking forward to the exciting start of winter athlet-

Volleyball Program Emphasizes Growth Over ocores

The WBMS volleyball season wrapped up with its final game on October 2, concluding a challenging schedule against schools in Bibb, Chilton, and young ladies from the 7th and 8th grades formed two teams, focusing intensely on the

fundamentals of the sport. The WBMS volleyball team is led by head coach Brenda Mcree and assistant coach Jerrica Smith. We are so thankful for their hard work and dedication to our students at WBMS.

Without a Little League feeder program, the athletes' passion was self-driven, leading to significant personal growth. A program representative noted. "If you look at the scorebook, you

a successful season. However, if you look at the friendships, relationships, and growth of the girls on and off the court, I would say we had the best season ever." The prosuccessfully gram instilled key lessons in the basics of volleyball, sportsmanship, and coachability, providing the basics needed for students to continue with the sport in high school.

Tigers Football **Shows Heart and Potential**

The 2025 season proved to be one of for the West Blocton Middle School Tigers football team. Under the leadership of Head

Coach Brady Pierson and assistant coaches Jacob Brown and Ryne Sanders, the young Tigers finished the year with a 2-5 record, but demonstrated steady progress and significant prom-

A major highlight was a thrilling 14-point comesecond-half back victory over Oak Grove.

The team's offensive efforts were consistent, finding the end zone in all but one game.

Key contributors included Carter Fancher, Andrew Palmer, Easton LaFoy, Elijah Snelson,

Jase Sibley, Cooper LaFoy, Jonah Hunt, and Garrett Bussey. Coach Pierson praised his young squad's perseverance. Pierson stated, "We had a really young team this year, and we're excited to see what we can do as a program throughout the offseason to better prepare our team for the 2026 season."

Cheerleaders, Majorettes, **Color Guard**

School spirit remains high thanks to the dedicated efforts of the WBMS cheerleaders,

who provided vital support at both football and basketball games. The 2025-2026 squad, led by Captain Ava Pierson, works tirelessly to energize the crowd and motivate the teams. Through countless hours of practice, the cheerleaders perfect their stunts, chants, and routines, showing incredible teamwork and determination. Their enthusicommitment, and school pride shine through in every performance, making them an essential part of the WBMS community. Head Coach We are thankful for Chloe

is of her team, describing them as an amazing group of girls and expressing heartfelt gratitude for their commitment and determination, saying it's been a joy to watch them grow both on and off the field.

The WBMS Majorette and Color Guard teams shine as an important part of the school's spirit and performance groups. Guided by their coach, Janet Morris, these talented students combine discipline, creativity, and teamwork to bring excitement to every event. The Maiorettes impress audiences with their skillful twirling and dynamic

routines, while the Color Guard shows skillful flag work and outstanding choreography.

Together, they embody school pride and dedication, making every WBMS performance full of energy. These girls put in so much hard work throughout the season, and it truly shows.

Basketball Season Is Here!

The winter season has officially begun, and both our boys' and girls' basketball teams are ready to hit the court! These athletes have worked incredibly hard this year, and their dedication shows—both teams are so much fun to watch!

A huge shoutout to our outstanding coaching staff: Boys Basketball - Head Coach Mike Allen and Assistant Coach Ryne Sanders.Girls ketball - Head Coach Chloe Robertson and Assistant Coach Cas-Rutledge. sandra Coach Allen and Coach Sanders also serve as coaches for our WBHS basketball team, providing valuable experience and continuity within our basketball program. Robertson the coaches' hard shared how proud she work and guidance in

helping our studentathletes grow and succeed. We also want to recognize Bethany Sloan for her teamwork with our coaching staff, making sure every athlete was prepared and ready to go on Dragonfly. We'd love to see our stands packed with community support this season!

Tickets are only \$7.00. Let's show our school spirit and support our basketball teams all season long!

Two key members of our athletic department are Coach Chloe Robertson and Coach Jacob Brown, both of whom play vital roles in supporting our students and athletic programs.

Robertson Coach serves in a dual capacity as the cheerleading sponsor and head coach of the girls' basketball and softball teams. Her dedication and leadership provide strong guidance for our student-athletes both on and off the court and field. Coach Brown serves as the assistant football coach and head baseball coach at WBMS. In addition, he contributes to the WBHS football program on Friday nights. Both Coach Robertson and Coach Brown also serve as physical education teachers at WBMS, helping students build skills, confidence, and a love of physical activity. We are very thankful for their commitment, hard work, and the positive impact they continue to make within our athletic programs and school community.

progress The seen across all of West Blocton Middle School's athletic programs is a clear testament to school's unwavering commitment developing wellrounded studentathletes, signaling a bright future for the Tlaers.



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The BACK PAGE

Fun, fitness, and festivities: What's happening at BMC Wellness in November

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

BMC Wellness has several exciting events lined up this month, offering fun-filled opportunities for families and children to celebrate the holidays, stay active, and enjoy time together in the community.

First up is the November **Tumbling** Showcase on November 16th. Families are encouraged to come out, support the kids, and cheer on the participants as they show off the skills they have been building throughout the semester. Additional details about the showcase can be found on the BMC Tumbling Facebook Group.

From November 17th through November 21st, BMC Wellness will be hosting its Kids Club Holiday Party, featuring Thanksgiving and Christmas themed crafts, Letters to Santa, and more. This event brings a fun seasonal twist to the Kids Club experience and is expected to be a favorite for children as they head into the holi-

day season. Please note that the standard limit still applies.

Rounding out the upcoming seasonal excitement is registration for the Candy Cane Lane Tree Trail and Tree Lighting Event,

taking place on Thursday, December 4th two-hour Kids Club from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. This festive evening will officially kick off the holiday season for the community with a magical Christmas tree lighting and a walk-through tree

trail experience that families won't want to miss. Limited spots are available, so families are encouraged to secure their spot early throughout the month of November.

Registration is available at www. and holiday excite-

brentcentlib.com.

These events offer local families a chance to stay engaged at BMC Wellness during one of the most festive times of the year, with activities designed to bring joy, connection,

ment to the commu-

Families are encouraged to mark their calendars, sign up where required, and come be a part of the celebra-

WELLNESS CENTER

www.bmcwellness.com

November **Fitness and Activities Calendar**



17TH-21ST

Let's get social!

Counseling

THANKSGIVING

NOV 27TH

Facebook: BMC Wellness

Director of Social Services Appointments available

every Wednesday. October 22nd - December 3rd.

Instagram: bmcwellnesscenter

NOVEMBER KIDS CLUB HOLIDAY PARTY

Join us for Thanksgiving/Christmas crafts,

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Open **Enrollment:** Oct 15 - Dec 7 **Individual Counseling Couple Counseling** Plan Comparisons

Individualized Recommendations

Why seek help?

There is a lot of information that gets sent out this time of year. Don't make the wrong choice and get stuck with a plan that doesn't match your medical needs for 2024.

Meet with Molly Averette, Director of Social Services, at BMC Wellness Center for more information. To make an appointment, visit our website or give us a call 205-926-3360.



Thank you to our Med-Surg team for the dedication, teamwork, and heart you bring to every shift. You keep our patients, and our hospital, moving forward!



HOSA inspires students to pursue careers in healthcare through leadership, learning, and service. We're proud to support future health professionals who will one day care for our patients, lead our teams, and strengthen our community.