

Centreville Press

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Over \$94,000 in Grants Awarded to Bibb

The Tombigbee RC&D Council presented over \$94,000 in grant awards to Bibb County recipients on Friday, January 23, 2026. The recipients awarded and the grant project descriptions are listed below:

FY 2025 Projects

1. Bibb County Rope Rescue Team-

The establishment of the first rope rescue team in Bibb County, significantly improving the ability of first responders to safely access and rescue patients in complex and hazardous environments. Funding provided NFPA-certified rope rescue equipment, allowing rescues to be performed safely, efficiently, and in compliance with national standards. \$9,180.80

2. Town Park Basketball Renovation/Upgrade-

The recent upgrade to our town's basketball court has revitalized the space and strengthened community engagement. With a new, safer playing surface and modern hoops, the court now supports players of all ages and skill levels while encouraging regular physical activity. Beyond recreation, the court has become a central gathering place for families and neighbors, helping build community connections. Increased daily usage and positive resident feedback clearly demonstrate the success of this project, transforming an underused area into a vibrant hub \$10,000.00

3. Centreville Uptown Beautification-

The primary goal of the Centreville Uptown Beautification Project is to create a more visually appealing and welcoming environment for residents and visitors. By enhancing public spaces, the project aims to encourage community gathering, support existing businesses, and attract new economic development to the Uptown district. The addition of benches and trash receptacles has played a vital role in improving comfort, cleanliness, and usability throughout the area. The project has been widely recognized as a success, as evidenced by positive feedback and praise from local officials, residents, and business owners. \$5,000.00

4. Dive Team Equipment-

This project benefits all citizens by enhancing water rescue and recovery

capabilities. The purchase of updated scuba equipment for the Bibb County Sheriff's Office Dive Team significantly improves the safety and effectiveness of dive operations, ensuring the Dive Team is properly equipped with up-to-date, life-safety-rated gear. This investment strengthens emergency response capabilities, protects first responders, and enhances the ability to serve the community during critical water rescue and recovery operations. \$7,758.07

5. Adventure Awaits-

The project was a clear success, marked by high levels of student engagement and enthusiasm. BES students actively participated in presentations by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and made strong connections between classroom lessons, virtual field trips on the Cahaba River, and hands-on learning experiences. The project concluded with a field trip that allowed students and parents to explore local environments firsthand, reinforcing lessons on conservation and natural resources. Positive feedback and continued student excitement demonstrate the project's impact in increasing curiosity, understanding, and appreciation for local ecosystems. \$10,000.00

6. Infrastructure Maintenance and Accessibility Project-

An All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) was essential for the Sewer Maintenance Department to safely and efficiently access sewer pump stations and lines located in difficult and previously impassable areas. With six pump stations spread across Bibb and Tuscaloosa Counties, the addition of this equipment has significantly improved the department's ability to maintain infrastructure, clear overgrowth, mark sewer lines, and service pump stations. \$10,000.00

7. West Blocton Elementary School Playground-

This project to install turf in West Blocton Elementary's outdoor classroom was a clear success. The new turf provides a clean, durable, and low-maintenance surface that allows students and teachers to comfortably use the space for outdoor learning, classroom activities, and school celebrations regardless of weather conditions. Overall, the project

successfully strengthened the school's outdoor educational infrastructure and enriched the learning experience for students and teachers. \$9,991.49

8. Bibb County Natural Resources Council-

The project successfully educated students and adults on the importance of caring for natural resources. Third-grade students learned about trees, their benefits, and participated in an Arbor Day program that included planting trees to observe growth over time. Fourth graders attended a field trip to Brierfield State Park for hands-on activities during the annual Groundwater Festival. Community outreach included a May tree sale offering affordable oak trees and adult education events for landowners on best management practices, supported by educational literature. Positive feedback from students, teachers, and landowners demonstrates the project's impact in fostering environmental awareness and stewardship across the county. \$15,000.00

9. Workspace for Woodstock-

The new tables and bookshelf in the Woodstock Elementary School library have transformed the space into a versatile learning environment for all 300+ students. The library now serves as an extension of the classroom, allowing students to work on projects, research, and create presentations using Chromebooks. These improvements have been met with excitement and gratitude, making collaborative learning more accessible and effective. \$10,000.00

10. Green Thumb Nursey 7 Greenhouse renovation-

This project has provided students with firsthand experience in the value of hard work and leadership, as they managed every aspect—from selecting tables to promoting the program in the community. While this season's plant production was not sufficient for a sale, the project has already generated interest across Bibb County and neighboring area. The project not only benefits residents but also gives students practical experience in agricultural business operations. \$6,758.82

11. City of Centreville-

The City implemented this project to acquire informational and traffic-monitoring



equipment to enhance public safety, communication, and economic development. The equipment provides real-time traffic data, public messaging for school and community events, and emergency alerts. \$15,000.00

Tombigbee RC&D is a nonprofit organization that awards grants to projects within our serving region. This promotes the advancement and development

of communities as well as providing them with opportunities.

The RC&D Council is the heart of the RC&D concept. The Council is a membership-based nonprofit entity that is established and run by volunteers to carry out the mission of the RC&D. The Council is composed of members that are key community leaders in soil and water conservation, government, and community development.

They are the steering committee and action team to implement the "Area Plan", a community-driven strategic long-range plan to improve the quality of life in the communities in the RC&D Area.

The West Alabama organization serves an 8 county area including Bibb, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Hale, Greene, Pickens Lamar & Fayette counties.

Mobile Eye Clinic Coming to Woodstock

Access Vision Mobile Eye Clinic

Wednesday, February 4, 2026
9 AM - 1 PM - Woodstock Senior Center
28513 AL-5, Woodstock, AL 351188

Affordable, High-quality, Nonprofit Vision Care in Rural Communities

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Contact Information
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Brierfield, AL 35035

Our Staff
Kent M Daum, OD, PhD
Kathy Daum

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

Good vision is more than just seeing clearly — it plays a critical role in overall health, independence, and quality of life. From managing chronic conditions like diabetes to staying safe, active, and connected, regular eye care is essential at every age. That's why the Access Vision Mobile Eye Clinic is such an important resource for our rural communities.

On Wednesday, February 4, 2026, the Access Vision Mobile Eye Clinic will be at the Woodstock Senior Center from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., providing affordable, high-quality, nonprofit vision care close to home. The clinic will be located at 28513 AL-5, Woodstock, Alabama, making professional eye care more accessible for residents who

may otherwise face barriers to receiving services.

The mobile clinic offers comprehensive eye exams at no cost, screening for eye diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes-related eye conditions, and more. Early detection is key when it comes to protecting vision, and these exams can help identify issues before they begin to impact daily life. Glasses are available based on a sliding fee scale, ensuring costs are matched to each patient's ability to pay.

For those who need additional support, a Patient Assistance Program is available to help cover fees, reinforcing Access Vision's mission to serve individuals and families who might otherwise go without care. This approach ensures that financial concerns do not stand

in the way of essential eye health services.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling the Bibb County Extension Office at (205) 926-4310. The clinic is staffed by experienced professionals, including Dr. Kent M. Daum, OD, PhD, and Kathy Daum, who are committed to delivering compassionate, high-quality care to the communities they serve.

Protecting eye health is an investment in long-term wellness, safety, and independence. Opportunities like the Access Vision Mobile Eye Clinic help ensure that everyone, regardless of location or income, has access to the care they need to see clearly and live fully. Community members are encouraged to schedule an appointment and take an important step toward healthier vision.

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NEWS

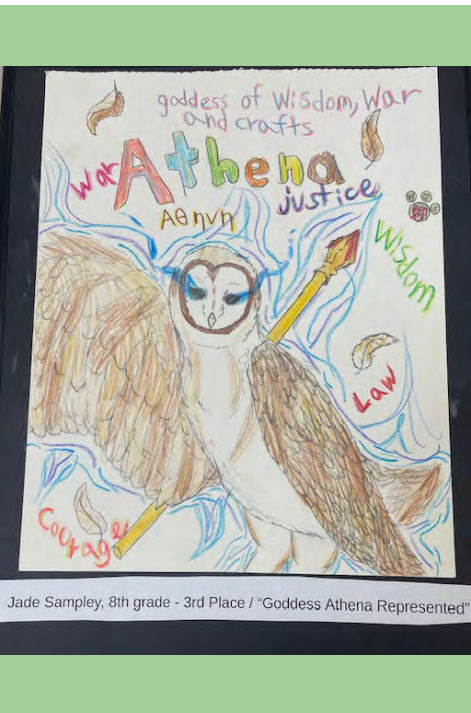
WBMS Art Contest Winners Shine

Students at West Blocton Middle School demonstrated their creativity and artistic talent during a school-wide art contest held in December. The contest invited students to create original artwork, encouraging self-expression and imagination. The contest featured artwork from students in grades 6-8, with submissions including drawings, watercolor paintings, and digital photography. The school faculty and staff voted on entries, and three students were recognized for outstanding artwork. Winners included:

Jade Sampley, 8th grade - 3rd Place / "Goddess Athena Represented"
Jason Pierce, 8th grade - 2nd Place / "Visitor in the Void"
Walker Leach, 7th grade - 1st Place / "Morning Reflection"
According to Mrs. Janet Morris, WBMS teacher and contest organizer, the competition provided students with an opportunity to explore their artistic voice while celebrating creativity within the school community. West Blocton Middle School is proud to support programs that encourage creativity, critical thinking, and student expression.



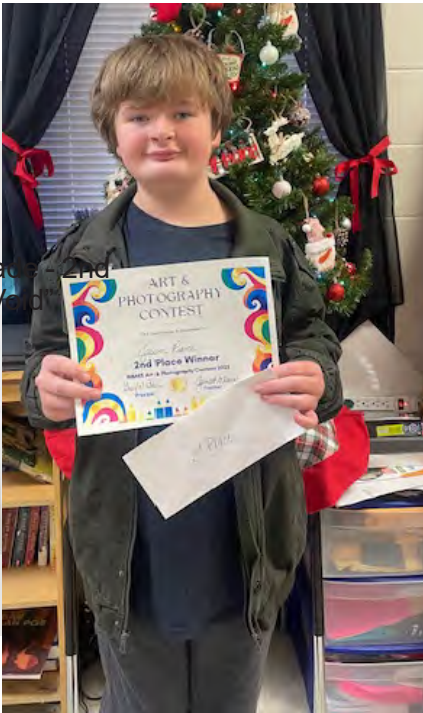
Walker Leach, 7th grade - 1st Place / "Morning Reflection"



Jade Sampley, 8th grade - 3rd Place / "Goddess Athena Represented"



Jason Pierce, 8th grade - 2nd Place / "Visitor in the Void"



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Brierfield Ironworks Announces 2026 Calendar of Events

FEB 21 Growing Mushrooms for Food	AUG 7-9 ASTB Bow Shoot
27-29 NSSA 4 th LA	7 FREE Movie Night
MAR 6 FREE Movie Night	15 Flea Market
14 Flea Market + Bluegrass Festival	28-30 NSSA 3 rd GA Black Powder Shoot
20-22 ASTB State Championship	SEPT 4 FREE Movie Night
24 Starting Your Garden with Seeds	7 Brierfield Pool CLOSES
27-29 NSSA 20 th GA Black Powder Shoot	11-13 ASTB Bow Shoot
APR 4 Flea Market + Easter Egg Hunt	19 Deep South Region Recruit Skirmish
10-12 ASTB Bow Shoot	
10 FREE Movie Night	OCT 3 Flea Market + Car Show
24-25 NSSA 14 th MS Infantry Regiment	9 FREE Movie Night
MAY 1 FREE Movie Night	24 Fun at the Furnace Halloween Event
9 Flea Market	29-31 ASMLA Black Powder Shoot
14-16 ASMLA Black Powder Shoot	NOV 7 Veterans Day Celebration
25 Brierfield Pool OPENS	14 Flea Market
30 Huckabee BBQ Competition	26 Office/Store Closed
JUNE 5 FREE Movie Night	
13 Flea Market	

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN REPORTER

Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park has released its 2026 Calendar of Events, offering a full year of family-friendly activities, historical programs, outdoor competitions, and community gatherings. From educational workshops to festivals, flea markets, movie nights, and seasonal celebrations, the upcoming year promises something for everyone while highlighting the park's rich heritage and role as a local gathering place.

February kicks off with "Growing Mushrooms for Food" on February 21, followed by the NSSA 4th Louisiana event from February 27-29.

March includes a FREE Movie Night on March 6, a Flea Market and Bluegrass Festival on March 14, the ASTB State Championship from March 20-22, "Starting Your Garden with Seeds" on March 24, and the NSSA 20th Georgia Black Powder Shoot from March 27-29.

April features a Flea Market and Easter Egg Hunt on April 4, the ASTB Bow Shoot from April 10-12, a FREE Movie Night on April 10, and the NSSA 14th Mississippi Infantry Regiment event from April 24-25.

May brings a FREE Movie Night on May 1, a Flea Market on May 9, the ASMLA Black Powder Shoot from May 14-16, the opening of the Briarfield Pool on May 25, and the Huckabee BBQ Competition on May 30.

June includes a FREE Movie Night on June 5, a Flea Market on June 13, and the 4th Tennessee Black Powder Shoot from June 26-28.

July continues the summer fun with a FREE Movie Night on July 3 and a Flea Market on July 11.

August features the ASTB Bow Shoot from August 7-9, a FREE Movie Night on August 7, a Flea Market on August 15, and the NSSA 3rd Georgia Black Powder Shoot from August 28-30.

September includes a FREE Movie Night on September 4, the Brierfield Pool closing on September 7, the

Egg Hunt on April 4, the ASTB Bow Shoot from September 11-13, and the Deep South Region Recruit Skirmish on September 19.

October brings a Flea Market and Car Show on October 3, a FREE Movie Night on October 9, the Fun at the Furnace Halloween Event on October 24, and the ASMLA Black Powder Shoot from October 29-31.

November features a Veterans Day Celebration on November 7, a Flea Market on November 14, and an Office/Store Closure on November 26.

December wraps up the year with Cookies with Santa on December 19, followed by Office/Store Closures on December 24-25.

Brierfield Ironworks continues to serve as a meaningful place for education, recreation, and community connection, and the 2026 calendar reflects a commitment to preserving history while creating memorable experiences for visitors of all ages. For more information about upcoming events, call 205-665-1856 or visit brierfield-ironworks.org.

LOCAL & GOVERNMENT

West Eoline News

By Jane Hannah

The BS Restaurant in Vance, AL opened January 10 with carry outs and reserved seat dining. Pennie Mitchell, Jo Kitchen, Ruth Deason and Jane Hannah were some of the first customers served. We each had different entrees and we loved each one. We expected delays, but we waited patiently and encouragingly. The wait staff were so nice and efficient while the kitchen worked out some kinks. We will most definitely go back often.

Carol Schladerbach celebrated a great grandson's birthday with the family at Juan's January 24th. Everyone enjoyed the food and had a great time.

Amy Ellison was in therapy at BMC's swing bed for the past few weeks. Without her right hip bone, she had to learn new ways of moving. We are praying for housing and care accommodations soon. In the meantime, she is at home with a special caregiver. Prayers please.

Prayers requested for Ronnie Kinney (my grandson) as he seeks treatment at UAB for his growing GIST Cancer.

Ruth Deason, Jim Kirkendall and Jane Hannah enjoyed Pizza and Rummikub with Jo Kitchen on the 24th.

There was a heavy police presence January 25th on the East side of Hwy 82 on Eoline Road. Situation unknown. Also a white vehicle was removed off the North side of West Eoline Road, near Charley Deason's pond. Looks like a bumper still remains in the deep weeds. I hope everyone is okay

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN February to: Rainey Nickelson 1st, Bobby Kitchen & Betty Rainwater 3rd, Barbara Deason &

Linda Barton 4th, Amanda Passeri & Gunner Baldwin 5th, Theo Garrison 6th, Trotter Turner 7th, Sherry Rylee 10th, Rachel Freeman 11th, Olivia Rowberry 13th, Rondia Baldwin & Jeff Lawrence 14th, Nikki Creel 15th, David Mullins, Peggy Marchant & Maria Pate 16th, Shelby Robinson, Kim Elam & Hal Cottingham 18th, Dawson Fortner 19th, Diana Dailey 21st, Melinda McKnight 22nd, Bo Hamilton 23rd, Carly Garcia, Cade Moody 24th, Bert Suttle & Russell Cox 25th, Eve Hutchison 28th, Addison & Avery Roper 29th.

Jo Kitchen's phone had a 15 mile ride on the hood of Kayla's car! With the leather case, it hung on tight. Upon realizing she had left the phone, probably in her car, Jo quickly drove to retrieve it. After looking inside, she finally noticed it on the hood! She immediately thanked God.

Stacey Thompson took her Dad, Fred Boothe on a memory road trip recently. I was invited to tag along and we toured the site of Old Cahawba, a great historical site.

I enjoyed lunch at Tazikis in Gardendale with my granddaughter Brittney, January 25. On our return home, we loved the chocolate cheesecake for her birthday celebration with Addison, Avery, Jera & Alan. Thanks Alan for the installation of my new battery and air filter. I am blessed.

SYMPATHY: I recently found out about the passing of Ms Margaret Suttle and send prayers to all her loved ones. Ms Nell Stripling was sorely missed over the holidays by her family. Praying for them.

Call 478-396-2513 to share your news.

Obituary – Karleigh Lane Williams

Karleigh Lane Williams, age 30, passed away on Monday, January 12, 2026. She was born on March 19,1995.

Karleigh is survived by her children; son Kylee-in Layne, daughter Nova Lei, son Tanner Chevy Dakota, son Kyle Rhett Thomas; the children's father, Chris Stone of Centreville; her loving mother, Paula Dailey (Jeramie) of Centreville; father, Edward 'Shane' Williams of McCalla; brother, Derek Dailey (Mercedes) of Centreville; sister, Lexie Stevens of West Blocton; brother, Garrett Williams; grandmother, Donna Rice of West Blocton; grandfather, Phillip Vining (Patsy) of Greenpond; grandmother, Dorothy Grady Williams of McCalla; Great-Grandmother, Ervine Vining of Greenpond. As well as a host of nephews, a niece, aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her beloved Paw Paw Tommy 'T.R.' Rice; Uncle George Woodruff; Grandfather Charles 'Eddie' Williams, Great-Grandfather Elbert 'Jr' Vining.

A funeral service to celebrate Karleigh's life will be held on Saturday, January 31, 2026 at New Life Baptist Church in Centreville. The family will receive friends from 12-1 pm followed by a funeral service at 1 pm. Officiating will be Pastor Mark Lovett. Interment will be at Hillcrest Cemetery in West Blocton.

Pallbearers will be Michael Culp, Tyler Culp, Derek Dailey, Geoff Vining, John 'Tatchi' Miller, and Haiden Smitherman.

Honorary Pallbearer - Chris Stone

Walking for Wellness: BMC Wellness Invites Community to the 2026 Heart Walk

BY SAVANNA LOGAN REPORTER

Community, connection, and heart health will take center stage at the 2026 Community Heart Walk, and everyone is invited to be part of it. Hosted by BMC Wellness, this

event is about more than just steps — it's about showing up for one another and prioritizing wellness together.

The Heart Walk brings together local families, organizations, and business-

es for a meaningful day focused on heart health, wellness education, and community connection.

Participants can get involved in a variety of ways: by forming a walking team, hosting a booth, offering give-

aways, or simply helping spread the word. It's a great opportunity for local businesses and organizations to show their support for community wellness while connecting with neighbors in a positive, energizing environment.

And don't forget to grab your gear! 2026 Heart Walk T-shirts are now available and can be purchased at bmcwellness.com or at the front desk. Wearing your shirt is a simple but powerful way to show support and walk in unity.

To add a little friendly competition, the top participant in each age group will receive a \$100 gift card from Wagner's Shoes. Age groups include 18–39, 40–64, and 65+, giving walkers of all ages a chance to be recognized for their dedication.

This event will take place on Wednesday, February 25 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

So lace up your shoes, invite a friend, and come be part of something that truly matters. Let's walk together — for our hearts, our health, and our community.

HEART WALK

JOIN US!

We are excited to invite you to participate in our upcoming Community Heart Walk, an event focused on promoting heart health, wellness, and community connection.

We would love for your business to be part of this meaningful event by joining us in one (or more) of the following ways:

- Forming a walking team
- Hosting a booth or providing giveaways
- Promoting the event within your business

The BMC Heart Walk will bring together local families, organizations, and businesses to walk, connect, and raise awareness for healthy lifestyles. This is a great opportunity to show your support for community wellness and connect with the community.

Wednesday, February 25th | 10:00am-2:00pm

BMC Wellness Center to Host Adult Soccer Interest Meeting

BY CANACE JOHNSON REPORTER

The BMC Wellness Center will host an Adult Soccer Interest Meeting on Feb. 4 at 5 p.m., welcoming anyone interested in participating in co-ed adult soccer this season. The meeting is designed for both experienced players and

those looking to get back into the game or try something new.

During the meeting, staff will share information about the upcoming season, including registration details, league structure, schedules, and expectations for players. Attendees will also have the opportunity

to ask questions and learn how the program is designed to promote fitness, teamwork, and friendly competition in a welcoming environment.

In addition to learning about the league, the interest meeting provides a chance for local soccer enthusiasts to meet other

like-minded athletes in the community who are eager to stay active and get involved. Organizers encourage anyone curious about the program to attend and explore whether the league is a good fit for them.



UWA Fall 2025 Dean's List

LIVINGSTON, AL (01/26/2026)-- The University of West Alabama has announced more than 700 outstanding undergraduate students named to the Dean's List for the Fall 2025 academic semester.

The Dean's List gives recognition to those undergraduate students those with grade-point averages between 3.25 and 3.79, completing at least twelve semester credit hours, with no grade lower than a "C."

Taylor Alsop of West Blocton, majoring in Early Childhood/Elementary Education
Delbert Deason of Centreville, majoring in Integrated Marketing Communications (Graphic

Design)
Alyssa Falls of West Blocton, majoring in Finance
Courtney Foster II of West Blocton, majoring in Cell and Molecular Biology
Yasmine Griffin of Brent, majoring in Marketing
Izabella Johnson of Centreville, majoring in Biology
Amber Lewis of Centreville, majoring in Sociology
Emilee Smith of Lawley, majoring in Early Childhood/Elementary Education
Savanna Smith of Brierfield, majoring in Psychology
Santanna Thrasher of West Blocton, majoring in Elementary Education



Established in 1835, the University of West Alabama offers a broad range of traditional and uniquely innovative programs, including associate's, bachelor's, master's, education specialist, and doctoral degrees. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), UWA provides outlets for students to strengthen the educational experience through athletics, leadership development, extracurriculars, study abroad, research, and many more engaging opportunities. For more information on UWA, its programs, and its people, visit www.uwa.edu.

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Last Day of Qualifying for Alabama Republican Party Primaries Brings Surprises to Campaign Season

By Paul DeMarco

So the final day of qualifying for the 2026 Alabama Republican Party Primaries last week did not disappoint, as some eye-opening revelations occurred. There were three races where former public officials have thrown their name back in the ring to serve again. Former Senator Gerald Dial is running for his old seat in East Alabama and former State Auditor Jim Zeigler is running for the Public Service Commission, but the legislative race that is getting a lot of attention is one in North Alabama.

Former Congressman Mo Brooks is taking on incumbent Alabama State Representative James Lomax for a seat in the Huntsville area. Brooks has served for decades in public office as a Madison County Commissioner, a state representative and then 18 years in the United States Congress. He left the House to run for the U.S. Senate, but lost to Katie Britt. This will be one of the more interesting campaigns this year pitting a long time Congressman versus an up and coming first term legislator.

Yet, the biggest surprise of the day that got the most attention was what happened in the campaign to be the next Alabama Lieutenant Governor. Alabama Republican Party Chairman John Wahl had been flirting with running for the state's second in command all year, but had never pulled the trigger and it appeared he would not run. Then as we approached the last date to officially declare, President Donald Trump dropped a bombshell and endorsed Wahl in this race. The next day, Wahl signed up in the waning minutes and joined the other seven candidates in the race, This will be a contentious race for certain with two state-wide constitutional officers also in the race, Secretary of State Wes Allen and Commissioner of Agriculture Rick Pate, who have already been on the campaign trail for months now.

Senator Tommy Tuberville is the prohibitive favorite to get the Republican nomination for Alabama governor, thus, the race for Alabama Lieutenant Governor will be one to watch. With the Republican Party Primary on May 19th, get ready for the candidates to get out soliciting votes sooner rather than later.

Paul DeMarco is a former member of the Alabama House of Representatives and can be found on X, at @Paul_DeMarco



Governor Ivey has Sterling Legacy for Appointments

Inside the Statehouse
By Steve Flowers

January 28, 2025:

Governor Kay Ivey will have been Governor for almost a decade when she leaves office in January of 2027. She will have been Governor longer than anyone in state history other than George Wallace. She is also the first woman elected Governor in her own right. In addition, she is the first female Republican Governor in history.

Governor Kay Ivey would go down in the annals at the State Archives as unique and accomplished for these reasons alone. However, she has been a very good Governor.

Her legacy in her cabinet and judicial appointments have been spectacular. The Governor has an enormously large number of important appointments. This power of the Governor is often overlooked and underestimated. Governor Ivey has shown stellar acumen and reason in her choices. In my estimation, this inherent power has become one of the most important achievements of Governor Ivey's administration.

Over the past two years, she has made some outstanding and important appointments. The legislature created the cabinet position of Workforce Transformation. She selected the perfect and probably obvious choice to head this new department. State Senator Greg Reed of Jasper is one of the most profound leaders to come out of the Senate in the past few decades. He had risen to be the President Pro Tem of the Senate. She convinced him to leave his powerful Senate post to take charge of Workforce Development. He is doing a good job.

Kay Ivey convinced another popular and powerful legislator to leave the legislature and take a state position. She garnered Tuscaloosa State Representative Cynthia Lee Almond to take the job of President of the State Public Service Commission. This is a very important position, which Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh handled successfully for years. Twinkle left to head the USDA in the state for the Trump Administration.

The most profound and significant of Governor Ivey's stellar appointments has been in the realm of her outstanding judicial appointments. First, she has had an amazing number of judicial appointments. Kay Ivey has appointed 42 District Court Judges, 33 Circuit Court Judges, 12 Probate Judges, one Judge to the Court of Criminal Appeals, two Judges to the Court of Civil Appeals, and five Justices to the Alabama Supreme Court.

One of her best judicial appointments was Judge Bill Lewis to the State Supreme Court. He served decades as the Circuit Judge for Elmore County. The governor appointed Lewis to the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals in February 2024, then to the Alabama Supreme Court last year. Shortly thereafter, our U.S. Senators plucked him from our State Supreme Court and appointed him as a federal judge.

Governor Ivey chose another successful and qualified judge to take the vacancy on the State Court of Civil Appeals. Covington County Circuit Judge Ben Bowden will move to that State Appellate Court. He is a veteran Circuit Judge, and prior to that was Covington County Probate Judge.

Governor Ivey has chosen outstanding, qualified people for local judicial positions throughout the state. Her choices have been reasonable and logical, and met with overwhelming approval, locally.

She appointed judges in Jefferson County, who are qualified and electable. In Democratic Montgomery County, she has appointed Tiffany McCord as a Circuit Judge. In addition, she chose Azzie Taylor Oliver as Montgomery County District Attorney. Governor Ivey made Scott Brewer the District Judge of Talladega County. She appointed Ashley Siebert as a District Judge in Baldwin County. She also appointed Laurie Hoyt to serve as a new Circuit Judge in Baldwin County. In Jackson County, she appointed Matthew Mitchell to a District Judgeship. Governor Ivey appointed Grace Jeter as a Circuit Judge in Covington County. Grace has been an assistant District Attorney for 20 years.

Her latest judicial appointment may be one of her best. She appointed her General Counsel, Will Parker, to the State Supreme Court in November 2025. Parker served as Governor Ivey's General Counsel for six years. He did an excellent job in this role. Prior to his work with Governor Ivey, he served 10 years as an Assistant Attorney General in the Constitutional Division, which is perfect training for the Supreme Court.

Governor Kay Ivey has a legacy for appointments, especially judicial.

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.



Centreville Press

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Assembly of God Worship Center Centreville (205) 928-0369	Pleasant Sabine Baptist Centreville 926-3867	Brent Methodist 190 Tabernacle Rd. Brent, AL
BAPTIST Antioch Baptist Centreville (205) 316-1221	Pondville Baptist Brent 926-9211	Pondville Methodist 9:15 - 10 AM Sundays Freindship Rd. • Brent
Ashby Baptist Brierfield 665-1111	Randolph Baptist 366-4296	Friendship Bible Method- ist Church 205-225-4000 Co. Rd. 16 Brent, AL
Bethel Baptist Brent 205-225-4780	Reno Baptist Church Caffee Junction 477-5058	Ada Chapel Bible Methodist Church 12540 N. Scottsville Rd. West Blocton, AL 513-254-8241
Bethlehem Baptist Centreville	Rising Star Baptist Centreville 926-4115	West Blocton Bible Methodist Church 355 Camellia Lane, West Blocton 205.826.5763
Bibb Baptist Association Centreville 926-7866	Rehobeth Baptist Lawley 663-2907	Mt. Sinai Church Centreville 256-577-8137
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Cahaba Valley Baptist Centreville 926-5927	Shady Grove II Baptist West Blocton 938-0120 Pastor 834-2557	Hopewell A.M.E. Zion Harrisburg 926-5777
Calvary Baptist Centreville 926-4079	Shiloh Baptist Centreville 926-7041	New Hope AME West Blocton 540-8016
Camp Branch Baptist Church 2590 Camp Branch Rd West Blocton	Six Mile Baptist Brierfield	Tabernacle United Meth- odist Lawley
Cedar Grove Baptist West Blocton 938-0828	Smith Hill Baptist West Blocton 938-2379	Waymon Chapel AME Brierfield 205-665-4730
Centreville Baptist Centreville 926-7069	Thomas Mill Baptist Centreville 926-6882	West Scottsville United Methodist Church North Scottsville Road 451-3624
Community Baptist Centreville	Union Baptist Church 722 Magnolia St West Blocton	NAZARENE Ridgeville Church Of The Nazarene Brent
Deer Creek Missionary Baptist Church Centreville 225-0460	West Blocton First Baptist 938-7392	Spencer Church Of The Nazarene Brent
Ebenzer Baptist Church Brierfield 665-4865	BIBLE Grace Bible Woodstock 938-7763	PENTECOSTAL New Life West Blocton Pastor Greg Brock 205.441.2809
Enon Baptist Centreville 926-4517	CATHOLIC Church Of The Holy Spirit Tuscaloosa 553-9733	First United Pentecostal Church of Centreville
Eoline Baptist Eoline 926-7448	St. Thomas The Apostle Church Montevallo 663-3936	PRESBYTERIAN Brent Presbyterian P.C.A. 926-4722
Faith Baptist West Blocton 938-7220	CHRISTIAN Marvel Christian Union Montevallo 345-7018	Centreville First Presbyterian P.C.A. 926-4261
First Baptist Church of Woodstock 205-938-7479	CHURCH OF CHRIST Centreville Church Of Christ 926-LOVE	Green Pond Presbyterian Presbyterian Church Rd 205-938-2344
Four Points Baptist Centreville 926-7775	North Bibb Church of Christ Woodstock 477-6121	Pleasant Hill Upper Cum- berland Presbyterian Church Centreville 926-4409
Green Pond Baptist Green Pond 938-7769	West Blocton Church of Christ West Blocton 938-7108	SEVENTH DAY ADVEN- TIST First Brent Seventh Day Adventist 926-6328
Haysop Baptist Centreville 205-310-1316	Evangelist Temple Brent 926-6430	NON-DENOMINATIONAL Fellowship Community 926-6800
Hopewell Primitive Baptist West Blocton 553-7603	CHURCH OF GOD Church of God of Proph- ecy at Eoline 256-393-9625 Pastor Shane Pate	Scottsville Union Church Co. Rd. 9 Scottsville 205-503-6096
Johntown Baptist West Blocton 938-7621	Church Of God Of Proph- ecy West Blocton 938-2788	Victory Tabernacle Church 1008 Walnut Street • Centreville 926-9455 or 361-2763 Pastor Butch Tucker
Liberty Baptist West Blocton 938-2090	Caffee Junction Church Of God 205-477-5468	Yahweh's Harvest 926-9044
Liberty Baptist Duncanville 759-9647 / 759-4074	River of Life Church of God 9225 Hwy 82, Brent 205-926-7600	The Refreshing Place Church 24865 Hwy. 5 Woodstock, AL 35188 Pastor Wayne Keeton
Liberty Freewill Baptist 926-6496	West Blocton Church of God Cty Rd. 21 Smith Hill 205-966-4988	God's House of Prayer 489 Co. Rd. 162 (Heiberg- er) Marion, AL 36756 334-683-4933 Every Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Little Hope Primitive Bap- tist Centreville 926-4236	CHURCH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST 2300 South Scottsville Rd Centreville 926-5393	Sandy Chapel Community Church 926-4934
Lowerytown Baptist West Blocton 938-2436	EPISCOPAL The Church Of The Holy Comforter Montevallo 665-2769	
Lucille Baptist West Blocton 966-3556	St. Andrews Episcopal Church 925 Plowman Street Montevallo 665-1667	
Mission Baptist Woodstock 938-7096	HOLINESS Deliverance Temple Hol- iness Four Points 926-5565	
Mt. Carmel Baptist West Blocton 938-2379	Word of Faith Worship Center Centreville 926-4555	
Mt. Ebell Baptist Brent 926-9223	Free Will Apostolic Hol- iness Antioch 926-9252	
Mt. Grove Baptist 938-3410	Real Truth Holiness Church 646 S. Scottsville Road Brent 926-5009	
Mt. Moriah Baptist West Blocton 926-5425	Trinity Spirit Holiness Church Centreville 926-4321	
Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church Brent 926-9009	METHODIST	
Mt. Tabor Baptist Brent 926-7156		
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"I Surrender All"

What comes to mind when you think of surrender? When I asked myself that question this morning as I sat down to write this week's Hymn History, I'll admit that the first thing that came to my mind was from the ever-present shuffle of songs in my mind: "Waterloo" by ABBA. "My, my – at Waterloo, Napoleon did surrender." When one thinks of what it means to surrender, I think it could be universally, mutually agreed upon that to surrender means to lose something, to admit defeat, to give up. But what if the meaning of "surrender" could be subverted, flipped on its head, to mean instead you gain everything instead?

Judson Wheeler Van Deventer accepted Christ into his heart at the age of 17, but like many, he struggled to understand what it meant to truly "surrender all." But it was through his struggles that he found himself in a spiritual place where he penned the well-known hymn, "I Surrender All."

In the year 1896, he found himself at a crossroads that the Lord had brought him to many times before. As an art and music teacher, he had mastered 13 instruments – but he felt God calling him to take his talents and to travel the country as a musical evangelist. After much encouragement from his friends, he took the leap and made the decision to surrender to the call that the Lord had placed on his heart. "For some time, I had struggled between developing my talents in the field of art and going into full-time evangelistic work. At last the pivotal hour of my life came, and I surrendered all. A new day was ushered into my life. I became an evangelist and discovered down deep in my soul a talent hitherto unknown to me. God had hidden a song in my heart, and touching a tender chord, He caused me to sing."

So, he took his life of security and knowing and surrendered to the unknown, following the Lord's lead. After years of evangelistic travel where his music touched the hearts of many, he eventually retired from evangelism and began teaching at the Florida Bible Institute as a professor of hymnology in the 1920s. Even after he fully retired from teaching, he was still a regular visitor of the Institute. It was then that he began to know and influence one of the most well-known evangelists of all time: Billy Graham. Graham recalls the influence Van Deventer had on his life, which was published in Crusade Hymn Stories: "One of the evangelists who influenced my early preaching was also a hymnist who wrote "I Surrender All" — the Rev. J. W. Van de Venter. He was a regular visitor at the Florida Bible Institute (now Trinity Bible College) in the late 1930's. We students love this kind, deeply spiritual gentleman and often gathered in his winter home at Tampa, Florida, for an evening of fellowship and singing."

Van Deventer died in Florida on July 17, 1939 at the age of 83, but he was buried in Maple Grove Cemetery in Dundee, Michigan. On his tombstone are engraved the words that changed the trajectory of his whole life: "I surrender all."

What does it mean in your life if you said, "I surrender all" like Van Deventer did? Just as we are all uniquely made, individual people, I think our calls to surrender are also just as diverse. So when we say "all," do we truly mean the full extent of what "all" might entail? For Van Deventer, it looked like uprooting the life he had always known and devoting his life to traveling evangelism – something that would likely be daunting for anyone, throwing one's life into the unknown and trusting the Lord's complete guidance for where to go and what to do with every resource you have. Surrender isn't meant to be easy. Yet to give up much, it opens up the opportunity to gain much.

One cannot have salvation without first surrender – giving up all that one thinks they know for themselves to be best for their life, relying on their own understanding to carry them successfully through this earthly life. What we surrender may be tangible, like money, or perhaps something even not so tangible but leads to tangible means, like a job. But what about the intangible – your hopes, dreams, worries, sorrows, fears, anxieties? And even then, what about the aspects of yourself that God may ask you to surrender that you may not immediately think of – like your strength, resilience, understanding, determination, or every talent you possess? I would need a few thousand more words to fully relay to you what the Lord is teaching me in my day-to-day life about surrender – but hey, maybe you'll read it in a book I write someday.

When we fully surrender all that we are, all that we have, and all that we will ever be – only then are we ready to receive the gracious gift that is joy, peace, love, and salvation from our Savior. Think of it this way – if your hands are already full of what you so dearly cling to, how then could you possibly receive from the Lord what He has in store for you? And as he is eternally able to do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power at work within us" (Eph. 3:20), do you think that you could find yourself in a place in your life where you can boldly yet humbly, with the bravery that somehow only comes through vulnerability, surrender absolutely all? If you do, you may hold onto the truth that God will surely guide you every step of the way, as is written in Isaiah 30:21 – "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'"

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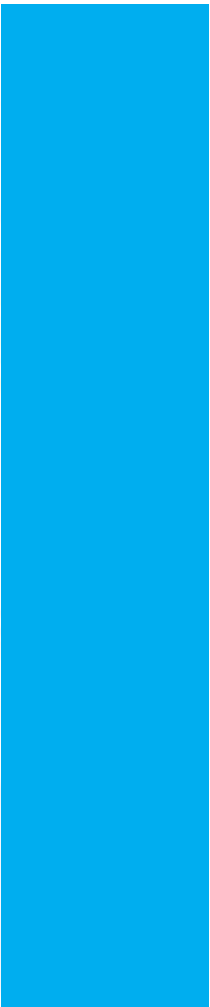
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A LOOK BACK AT 1976



CHOCTAW MAJORETTES SWEEP TWIRLING MEET
The Bibb County High Majorettes walked away with honors Saturday at the National Baton Twirling Association contest held at the BCHS gym. Schools from over the Southeast were represented in the competition. The local team won 14 team and individual trophies. They are (front row) Cindy Elam, Glenda Lightsey (Head), Karen Fancher (Co-head), Robin Schultz (Feature Twirler). (Back) Yvonne McCaleb, Letta Kornegay, Debbie Ponder, Debra Freeman, Mandy Richards, and Stephanie Hood.



CHOCTAW CHEERLEADERS WIN HONORS AT AUBURN
The Bibb County Choptaw Cheerleaders spent last week at Cheerleader camp at Auburn and while there brought back some high honors. They won a number of individual and team ribbons and won the coveted "spirit stick." They are (front row) Joy Elliott, Ginga Hardenbergh, (Head), Angela Medders, (Co-Head), (Standing), Roselyn Tubbs, (Co-Head), Brenda Davis, Alecia Hicks, Glenda Woods, and Ann LaGrone.



WBHS MAJORETTES 1976-77
From left to right: (Kneeling) Drum Majorette, Carol Cowley, Head Majorette, Regina Shadwick, (standing) Amy Lemond, Debbie Mathews and Wendy Reese.

115 Pound Melon Wins

The 1976 version of the annual Centreville Press watermelon contest ended Wednesday with 303 pounds of melons being entered.

Percy Leach, of Brierfield, last year's winner, repeated again this year with his entry of 115 pounds, the largest melon entered in years. He will receive a 3 year subscription.

Joe Chapman, of Brent, entered the second place watermelon of 80 pounds. He will receive a 2 year subscription.

Coming in 3rd place is J. W. Lovejoy, Brierfield, with a 72 pound entry. He will receive a 1 year subscription.

Other melons were entered by J. E. Mitchell of Brent, (58), and Preston Rutledge, Centreville, (50).

At Tannehill-

Thousands See Furnace Refired

It was an invasion, but this time not by Yankee troops. The estimated 10,000 to 15,000 persons who poured into Tannehill Historical State Park Sunday afternoon came to relive a page in Southern history as Tannehill Furnace No. 1 was refired for the first time since the Civil War.

Park officials had estimated prior to the event that "several thousand" would come to see iron produced in the old furnace for the first time since Union troops destroyed it on March 31, 1865.

The program was scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. but was delayed some 45 minutes as park officials waited for some of the speakers and spectators who were delayed to traffic to get to the furnace site.

After the park was filled with more than 1,500 vehicles, persons parked along the road leading into the park and even the main road. Some had to walk a mile and a half to two miles. Some vehicles were parked in a Boy Scout area about a mile from the furnace site and the park furnished buses to get spectators to the main area.

Never before and probably never again have so many people poured into Tannehill. Thousands sat and stood on the hillside on a hot afternoon made even hotter by heat from the furnace. Hundreds of youngsters waded and swam in the creek during the afternoon.

Speeches were short but even after the speaking, it was several hours before iron came streaming out of the furnace. But a large crowd remained when the first iron came pouring out of the furnace about 6 p.m. Ed Nelson, park superintendent, said about four tons of iron taken from the furnace will be made into cannons by the Abex Corp.

James R. Bennett, chairman of the Tannehill Furnace and Foundry Commission, presided to have a part in seeing the historic site transformed into a historical state park.

Hughes said he brought greetings from Frederick C. Langenberg, president of the American Iron and Steel Institute. He then read the brief message.

"Americans have long been concerned with preserving those places where independence and unity have been won on battlefield, and in restoring other evidences of our cultural, political and social history. But industrial archaeology and restoration have become significant only since World War II", he said.

"I am sure that what you are doing at Tannehill will stimulate pride in other places with a rich heritage and nurture futher public interest in preserving that heritage," Hughes said.

Lt. Gov Beasley said "no speeches today" and sat back down and watched the smoke and flames from the furnace soar into the sky.

The re-firing was a "Bicentennial Tribute to Alabama's Iron Industry." The Smithsonian Institute reported that never before in U.S. history has an ironworks, out of service for more than a century been put back into blast for an actual run of iron.

The pre-Civil War Tannehill furnaces (there were three) were the birthplace of the Birmingham iron and steel industry. Into the century-old furnaces went the first scrapping of Red Mountain ore and from its forges came the area's first home-produced tools. During the Civil War, its three cold blast charcoal furnaces produced more than 20 tons of heavy ornanace a day for the Confederacy.

Although peak production came during the Civil War, the old ironmaker had its beginning

PROGRAM LISTED FOR TANNEHILL EVENTS
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th
COMMISSION 2 p.m. OPENING BY
CHAIRMAN JIM BENNETT

Remarks

Governor George C. Wallace

Douglas P. Wheeler, Deputy Secretary
U. S. Department of the Interior

Walter Flowers, Congressman
7th Congressional District

James J. Hughes, Vice President
Public Relations of U.S. Steel

Lt. Gov. Jere Beasley

Music Furnished by the Maxwell Air Force Band-
Honor Guard furnished by the Birmingham Chapter,
National Reenactment Society.

3 p.m. Firing of the Furnace by Ray Farabee,
Retired Metallurgist, U. S. Steel

Chairman Bennett, will pay special tribute to a some 35 corporation and a number of individuals who made contributions of one type or another to the event. Special thanks will go to a couple of Birmingham industries, U. S. Steel Corporation, who donated 50 tons of iron ore, 70 tons of coke and 20 tons of limestone for the firing and to American Cast Iron Pipe Company who donated a \$20,000 industrial type blower.

Tannehill was first established in 1855 and the last iron was poured on March 31, 1865.

Records at the Smithsonian Institution indicate that Tannehill will become the first furnace over 100 years old to be re-fired.

The BACK PAGE

Follow the Yellow Brick Road: Bibb County Children’s Theatre Celebrates 25 Years with The Wizard of Oz



BY **SAVANNAH LOGAN**
REPORTER

There’s no place like home — and there’s certainly no place like Bibb County Children’s Theatre when it comes to nurturing creativity, confidence, and community. This year, BCCT is proudly celebrating its 25th anniversary with a special production of *The Wizard of Oz* – Youth Edition, featuring eighty-five talented children from Bibb County. This milestone performance highlights not only a beloved classic, but also the incredible dedication of the young performers and the program that has helped shape generations of local youth. Public performances will take place on Saturday, January 31, at 2:00 p.m. and

6:30 p.m., and Sunday, February 1, at 2:00 p.m., at the Bibb County Board of Education. Community members are encouraged to attend, show their support for the arts, and celebrate the hard work these students have poured into bringing the magical world of Oz to life. The production features a wonderful cast of principal characters, including Caroline Jones as Dorothy, Cara Knight as the Scarecrow, Noah Hollifield as the Tin Man, Addison Gray as the Cowardly Lion, and Lydia Allen as Glinda. Isabella Lopez takes on the iconic role of Miss Gulch and the Wicked Witch of the West, while Allora Bell portrays Professor Marvel and the Wonderful Wizard of

Oz. Supporting roles include Alexa Williamson as Aunt Em, Walker Leach as Uncle Henry, Channing Davis as Hunk, Holden Foster as Zeke, Ulman Goode as Hickory, and Kherington Hubbard as Nikko. Munchkinland is brought to life by a delightful group of performers filling roles such as the Mayor, Coroner, Barrister, City Father, and City Mother, along with members of the Lollipop Guild, Lullaby League, and Munchkin Ensemble. The Land of Oz is further expanded by a vibrant Ozian Ensemble, Winkie Ensemble, Flying Monkeys, Jitterbugs, Apple Trees, and Crows, creating a lively and immersive experience that showcases the collaboration and teamwork

behind this large-scale youth production. Bibb County Children’s Theatre continues to be one of the most impactful youth programs in the county, providing children

with opportunities to build confidence, creativity, and lifelong skills through the performing arts. This anniversary production is a celebration of that legacy, and the com-

munity is invited to be part of the moment by attending a performance and supporting the arts in Bibb County.



BMC HEALTH AND WELLNESS CORNER **AMERICAN HEART MONTH**

February is American Heart Month, a time to focus on heart health education and prevention. Knowing the signs of a heart attack and understanding your blood pressure are important steps in protecting your heart. Common heart attack warning signs may include chest discomfort, shortness of breath, pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach, lightheadedness, nausea, or unusual fatigue. Blood pressure is another key indicator of heart health. High blood pressure often has no noticeable symptoms, which makes regular monitoring especially important. Keeping blood pressure within a health range helps reduce strain on the heart and lowers the risk of serious complications. This American Heart Month, take time to learn the signs, know your numbers, and prioritize heart health through education, prevention, and regular care.

HEART WALK



We are excited to invite you to participate in our upcoming Community Heart Walk, an event focused on promoting heart health, wellness, and community connection. This event brings together local families, organizations, and businesses to walk, connect, and raise awareness for healthy lifestyles. This is a great opportunity to show your support for wellness and connect with the community.

**February 25th
10:00am-2:00pm**

T-Shirts available to purchase for \$20 at the Wellness Center!

BMC WELLNESS CENTER



Scholarship Applications

Spring Soccer: Registration Opens February 9th
Swimming: Registration Opens February 16th

During February, apply for a scholarship for our Youth Soccer and Spring Break Swimming Lessons. These scholarships are designed to help make programs more accessible in our community!



Valentine’s Day

Gift certificates available
Enter our **Love Your Skin Giveaway** on social media

Give the gift of wellness this Valentine’s Day with a Wellness Center gift certificate, a thoughtful way to support health and self-care.

RX: MOVEMENT

This month, RX: Movement highlights cardio and the important role it plays in supporting heart health. Cardiovascular movement helps strengthen the heart, improve circulation, increase endurance, and support overall energy levels. It can also help manage stress and support long-term health at every stage of life.

At BMC Wellness, cardio looks different for everyone. From walking and group fitness to aquatics and running, members have a variety of ways to stay active and build consistency in a supportive environment. February is a reminder that heart health is not built in a day, it is built through regular movement and habits that last.

Join us throughout the month as we focus on moving with intention, supporting heart health, and building routines that carry well beyond February!

ADULT CO-ED SOCCER

Thinking about playing adult co-ed soccer this season? Join us for a Q&A interest meeting to learn more about what to expect. We’ll go over the upcoming season, registration details, league format, and answer any questions you may have. This is also a great chance to meet others interested in playing and share input that can help shape the season ahead!

Wednesday, February 4th, 5:00pm

BMC Wellness Center Meeting Room

Valentine’s Body Sculpt

With Rebecca Fondren
February 10th, 5:45pm
Wear red and pink!