

Centreville Press

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205.926.9769 | editor@centrevillepress.com



Public Input Requested on Proposed AL-5 and Vance Road Roundabout Project

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

Residents of Bibb County – and even beyond – are well aware of the risk of the intersection of Highway 5 and Vance Road located in West Blocton. Crossing over this particular place has proven to be quite treacherous at times, resulting in countless accidents. For residents of Bibb County, an opportunity to make your opinion known on how this intersection could be made safer will happen in just a few weeks.

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is seeking public input on a proposed improvement project at the intersection of AL-5 and Vance Road, located west of West Blocton.

The proposed project would add a roundabout at the intersection with the goal of improving overall safety and traffic flow. According to ALDOT, the purpose of the project is to reduce the risk of injury and fatal crashes while also decreasing vehicle idling at the intersection. By allowing traffic to move more continuously through the area, the roundabout design is intended to create a

safer and more efficient roadway for drivers.

Residents of Bibb County might compare this proposed plan to the roundabout that was built in Brent at the intersection of University Way and Highway 5. While it took some getting used to, drivers have seemed to have mostly gotten the hang of it, increasing the ease of the flow of traffic. However, some have critiqued that the radius of it is too small for our many truck drivers to easily go around it without risk of overturning. Concerns such as these should be voiced, heard, and documented as the potential parameters of this project are being evaluated.

Other concerns that have been voiced also include the question of how traffic coming up and down Highway 5 can be slowed down enough in anticipation of approaching a roundabout. Some have argued that a traffic light would be better; however, while it may be safer, it would do little to ease the flow of the high volume of traffic on this highway on a daily basis.

Clearly, there is much to consider and even more to discuss.

Project information is available for public review, and community members are encouraged to share feedback. Comments must be submitted by April 10, 2026.

Residents will have the opportunity to learn more and ask questions during an in-person public meeting scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at West Blocton High School, located at 4734 Truman Aldrich Parkway in West Blocton. The meeting will be informal, allowing attendees to review materials and speak directly with project representatives. The facility is wheelchair accessible, and anyone requiring special assistance is asked to contact the West Central Region office at (205) 507-4487 at least two days prior to the meeting.

In addition to the in-person meeting, ALDOT is offering several ways for the public to submit comments. Community members may complete the online comment form at www.ALDOTinvolved.com, email AL5-Roundabout@dot.state.al.us, leave a voicemail at (205) 554-3214 (three-minute limit), or mail written

ALDOT Online and In-Person Public Involvement

Get Involved! AL-5 and Vance Road Roundabout

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is proposing improvements to the intersection of AL-5 and Vance Road west of West Blocton, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. Information about the project is available to the public for review and comment. Your comments may be provided by US mail, email, voicemail, or online as described below. Comments for the proposed project must be submitted by **April 10, 2026**.

State Highway
Local Roads
West Blocton

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Project Description

The purpose of the project is to improve safety by reducing the risk for injury and fatal crashes and reduce idling at the intersection of AL-5 and Vance Road. The project will add a roundabout to allow traffic to continue to move through the intersection more freely while reducing the risk of crashes that result in injury and fatality.

In-Person Public Meeting

An informal meeting will be held:

Monday, March 9, 2026
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

[West Blocton High School](#)
4734 Truman Aldrich Pkwy
West Blocton, AL 35184

Anyone with a disability requiring special assistance, should contact the Region office at the above address or call (205) 507-4487 at least two days in advance of the meeting. The meeting facilities are wheelchair accessible.

SUBMIT COMMENTS TO:

Online Comment Form: www.ALDOTinvolved.com

Email: AL5-Roundabout@dot.state.al.us

Phone: (205) 554-3214 (3 minute limit)

Mail Comments to: ALDOT – West Central Region Office

Attn: Environmental Coordinator
1100 JULIA TUTWILER DRIVE
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404

Comments on the proposed project must be submitted by April 10, 2026.

comments to ALDOT – West Central Region Office, Attn: Environmental Coordinator, 1100 Julia Tutwiler Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404.

Public involvement plays an important role in shaping transportation projects that

impact daily travel and community safety. Residents are encouraged to review the proposal and share their input before the April 10 deadline.

Project Managers mean well, but they

only know so much about the daily impact changes to our roadways can make for the residents of Bibb County. They do not live here; we do. So come on, folks – let's make our voices heard.

Registration Now Open for the 2026 Miss Cahaba Lily Pageant

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

Mark your calendars — Miss Cahaba Lily 2026 will take the stage on Saturday,

April 25, at West Blocton High School, and registration is officially open now through March 31, 2026. Whether it's a contestant's very first pageant or the next exciting step in her crown journey, organizers say they cannot wait to see each participant

shine.

This year's pageant will feature two sessions. The 10:00 a.m. divisions include Baby Miss, Tiny Miss,

Petite Miss, and Little Miss. The 1:00 p.m. divisions will include Young Miss, Junior Miss, and Miss Cahaba Lily.

There are no residency restrictions, making this a wonderful opportunity for contestants from any area to participate. Registration is \$65 and includes one photogenic entry and one pageant admission ticket for pageant day.

Each division will crown one Queen, two Alternates, and one Photogenic Winner. In addition, two Overall Photogenic Winners will be selected from across all divisions, adding even more excitement to the day.

Opening number practice for the Young Miss, Junior Miss, and Miss divisions will be held Monday, April 20 through Friday, April

24, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. An optional open stage rehearsal for the younger four divisions will take place Friday, April 24, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., also at West Blocton High School.

The Miss Cahaba Lily Pageant continues to be a cherished annual event in Bibb County, celebrating confidence, poise, and the unique light each contestant brings to the stage.

Those interested can register online at: <https://pci.jotform.com/rm/260424636552052>

Organizers encourage families and friends to come out and support this special event. The countdown is on — and April 25 promises to be a day full of crowns, confidence, and shining smiles.



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NEWS

AL House Bill Would Require PSC to Hold Public Hearings on Electricity Rates

By Ralph Chapoco, Alabama Reflector

An Alabama representative has filed a bill that would require the state's Public Service Commission, Alabama's public utility regulator, to host public hearings with companies to discuss rates and their operations.

HB 475, sponsored by Rep. Mack Butler, R-Rainbow City, comes amid mounting concerns over Alabama's high utility rates and after an attempt earlier this month to end PSC elections. Butler's bill would require the PSC to host a meeting each year to discuss how it will regulate the utility companies it oversees and other topics within the agency's authority.

The bill would make failing to hold the meetings grounds for impeaching PSC commissioners, though impeachment itself would be a decision for the Alabama House. The bill would also prohibit utility companies, including Alabama Power, from passing the costs they incur for their lobbying efforts, advertising and grants they provide to their customers.

"The PSC has not had a rate hearing in 44 years, and we are paying the highest (electric utility rates) in the

region," Butler said in an interview on Monday. "I think we are the third highest in the nation, 40% more than Tennessee Valley Authority."

The bill, filed as the Legislature hits the midway point of the 2026 regular session, comes a few weeks after Rep. Chip Brown, R-Hollinger's Island, filed HB 392, which authorizes the governor to appoint the president of the PSC, and associate commissioners from a list of candidates selected by the speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives and the Alabama Senate president pro tem.

Brown's legislation was pulled before a vote on Feb. 12 amid public criticism and questions over whether the bill had the votes to pass the Senate. But the bill, like Butler's, also required the Public Service Commission to host hearings for public utilities such as Alabama Power to discuss utility rates and how they are related to the business operations of the company.

Brown's legislation states that utility companies will provide information on "issues affecting its operations, such as cost trends, reliability, and other regulatory issues the commission



deems relevant."

Butler said Monday that the leak of a recorded phone conversation between John Dodd, policy manager for Energy Alabama, a nonprofit that advocates for more renewable energy use in the state, and R.B. Walker, director of state and federal affairs for Alabama Power, was an impetus for the bill. In the recording, Walker encourages Dodd to consider supporting Brown's bill while saying the utility would be publicly neutral about it.

"It infuriated the public," Butler said. "I believe that Chip (Brown) had honest intent because of what happened in Georgia. But there was backlash from the public, especially after that tape. The job of the PSC is to look out for the people, not

for the utility."

A message was sent to Alabama Power on Monday seeking comment.

HB 475 states that the PSC will host hearings to discuss "rates, cost trends, reliability, resilience, general infrastructure investment plans, competitiveness with peer states, economic development impacts, and other regulatory issues the commission deems relevant."

The bill also states that public utilities such as Alabama Power cannot increase customers' electricity rates for expenses related to lobbying, grants that it provides or for advertising.

The legislation does not expressly overturn a process known as Rate Stabilization Equalization, which allows companies such

as Alabama Power to submit their request for a specific rate of return along with supporting documentation. The PSC can then either accept or reject the proposal without a rate case that allows the public to review the evidence and respond to the request for a specific rate of return by the public utility.

Utilities are permitted to receive a guaranteed rate of return from capital expenditures with approval from the PSC while also recouping the costs associated for their operations. The process has been used since 1982, and critics say it keeps the reasons for rate increases unclear and locks out the public.

Energy Alabama Monday said it is neutral on the bill. "Although it addresses transpar-

ency, transparency alone does not lower energy bills," Dodd said in an interview on Monday. "In its current, written language, the bill does not require a formal periodic rate case with sworn testimony and a full evidentiary record. Without that, there is no guarantee that utility spending, rates and profit margins receive meaningful scrutiny."

Butler, however, said that the bill requires a rate hearing that will accept input from the public.

"I am sure it will be all that," Butler said. "We did not get all down into the weeds on that, but the bill definitely has rates. They (public utilities) have to be able to justify where they are at."

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LOCAL & GOVERNMENT

Centreville News

By Brenda Hubbard

We wish to extend sympathy to the family of Ruby Murphy Chavers, age 83, who passed away on February 9, 2026. Services were held on February 12, 2026 at Magnolia Chapel South at 2:00 p.m. Burial followed at Pineland Cemetery in Centreville, AL.

Anniversary wishes go out to Darrel and April Weaver who recently celebrated their wedding anniversary.

The Joyful Hearts of Brent Baptist Church met on Monday, February 16, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. with lunch at 12:00 noon.

A speedy recovery goes out to Mary Jo Griffin who recently underwent surgery.

Birthday wishes go out to several that have February birthdays, David Cruce,

Abby Bowman, Phil Cottingham, Butch Wallace, Peggy Reynolds, Joanne Stone Young, Henry Stone, Sheila Leonard, Faye Palmisano, Ricky Nolan, Richard Booth.

Randy and Lisa Brown recently celebrated their wedding anniversary. We send out wedding anniversary wishes to them.

Sympathy goes out to the family of retired Sheriff George Fleming, 89, who passed away on February 15, 2026. Services were February 19, 2026 at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church with burial at Johntown Cemetery. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

If you have news call it in at 206.316.1181. Take care and God bless.

West Eoline News

By Jane Hannah

February was a weird month of cold, warm, wet & dry days. Come on SPRING!

Betty Rainwater hosted Sistas Geneva Mullins, Jo Kitchen, Jane Hannah, Carol Schladerbach, Pennie Mitchell & Baby Sis Sheila Scott on February 3rd! It was Betty's Birthday and the Sistas brought Hunt's Pizza from Jones Citgo, (yum) plus a Mystery Filling Chocolate Cake by Jo. Praying for BLESSINGS GALORE Sista Betty.

Siblings Wayne Deason, C H Deason, Geneva Mullins, Jo Kitchen, Jane Hannah celebrated Barbara Deason's Birthday at Jo's home on February 4th. Home cooking by Jo & Jane (Pork Tenderloin, fresh peas, scalloped potatoes, mixed greens, cornbread and blueberry cobbler with vanilla ice cream) was enjoyed by all. Since we none cook very often, this was a TREAT. HAPPY BIRTHDAY all year Barbara!

Ruth Deason enjoyed her recent cruise to Jamaica even with health issues that limited her walking.

Luke Holladay recently celebrated his birthday at Chow's Country Buffet. Tracey Holladay and Jane Hannah enjoyed the food but also enjoyed him enjoying the expansive and delicious food choices.

There is nothing like the joy of one of your babies running to you with a big smile, arms wide for hugs. After not seeing Kaydi for 2 days, she has seemed happy and super excited to see me. I would love to bottle the joy this gives me. I miss this from my babies in Marshall & Blount County because I don't see them often and they are growing up.

VALENTINE'S DAY - Wayne Deason ate at Taco Casa, her favorite place; in memory of his sweet Betty. ... Stacey & Chad Thompson had the fire pit hot to sear and

cook the steaks, salad was ready, potatoes were baked and garlic toast was ready for the oven when guests arrived; bringing more steaks, shrimp cocktail, peanut brittle and peanut butter balls. The sunset viewed from the dining table was a blessing. After dinner Stacey, Chad, Jim, Josh, Jena, Jane & Ruth enjoyed the cool evening around the fire pit. ... Lashelle & Ronnie Kinney reserved a table at Carabba's but were so disappointed by the food delay and super salty fare.

Fred Boothe brought the fresh caught Brim & Catfish that Stacey helped clean and Chad & Jim cooked for Sunday lunch. She also made slaw, hush puppies, and creamy "spicy" rice that was enjoyed by all. After lunch

Jo Kitchen, Ruth Deason, Jim Kirkendall & Jane Hannah enjoyed Rummikub.

February 21st Ruth Deason, Jim Kirkendall and Jane Hannah had lunch at the 20/59 Bar & Grill. The food was EXCELLENT. In the afternoon Jane & Jim enjoyed games with Jo & Kayla Kitchen.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS -- Best Wishes to these and more: Xavier Carney 3-7, Shirley Mizell 3-8, Maddox Hannah & Olive Garcia 3-9, Bob Hannah & Robbie Drake 3-15, Jo Hinson 3-16, Tress Freeman 3-16, Tanner Caddis & Chad Thompson 3-19, Cindy Garner 3-20, Tracey Holladay 3-25, Haven Hannah 3-28, Briggs Freeman & Christine Griffin 3-30.

Happy ANNIVERSARY Courtney & Dylan Dowdle March 5th!

GET WELL PRAYERS for: Janice Deason, Ruth Deason, Amy Ellison, Ronnie Kinney, JoAnn Medders, Alyssa Roper.

Send your news by text to 478-396-2513.

Bibb County Pet Welfare to Host Spay and Neuter Event on Feb. 26

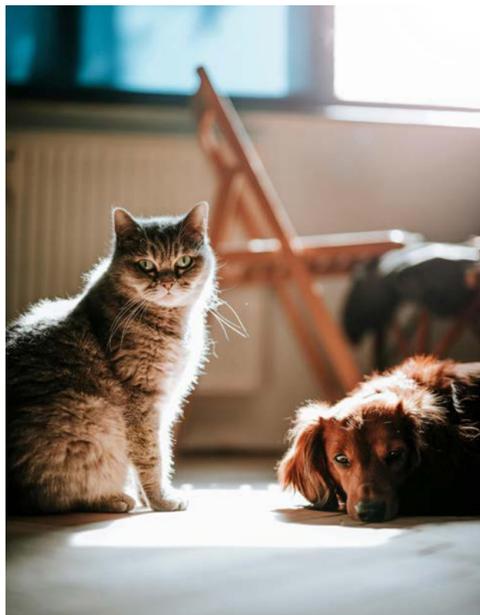
BY CANACE JOHNSON REPORTER

It's that time again, pet owners will have the opportunity to have their animals spayed or neutered through the Bibb County Pet Welfare Program departing from Woodstock First Baptist Church.

Participants must arrive at the church at 6 a.m. to complete the required paperwork and load their pets for travel. The animals will then be transported to the Alabama Spay Neuter Clinic in Irondale, where they will undergo surgery. Pets will be returned to the same pickup location later that afternoon at

4 p.m.

Appointments are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and require prepayment to secure a spot. Once scheduled, pet owners will receive an invoice via PayPal, which can be paid using any debit or credit card. Organizers note that missed appointments are non-refundable and non-transferable. The program is open to residents of any county, provided they can meet at the Woodstock pickup location or arrange to take their pet directly to the clinic on the day of transport.



Shelton State to Host Dual Enrollment Session for Bibb County Families

BY SAVANNA LOGAN REPORTER

Families with students entering 7th through 12th grade next school year are encouraged to attend an upcoming Dual Enrollment Informational Session to learn how students can earn college credit while still in high school – at no cost to them.

Shelton State Community College will host the session on March 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Bibb County Board of Education.

The event will provide an in-depth look at dual enrollment opportunities available in health services, technical programs, and academic pathways.

Through dual enrollment, eligible students can take college-level courses with tuition, fees, and textbooks covered — giving them a valuable head start on their college and career goals while saving families money. College is expensive enough, and dual enrollment programs

such as this offer families a way to make it just a bit more affordable and accessible than it was before.

During the session, representatives will also highlight nursing pathways made possible through Shelton State's partnership with Bibb Medical Center, along with scholarship opportunities

designed to support student success. Regardless, this dual enrollment is open to all students seeking a higher education,

regardless of career choice.

Organizers say the evening will be especially helpful for families who want to better understand how dual enrollment works, what programs are available, and how students can begin planning now for a bright and promising future.

For more information, visit sheltonstate.edu/dual or email dualenrollment@sheltonstate.edu.

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DUAL ENROLLMENT INFORMATIONAL SESSION
MARCH 2, 2026, AT 6:00 P.M. | BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Please join us to learn more about dual enrollment opportunities in health services, technical, and academic programs at Shelton State.

During this informative session, we will highlight the nursing pathways available through our partnership with Bibb Medical Center, as well as scholarship opportunities designed to support student success.

We look forward to sharing how these programs can help students take the next step toward a bright and promising future!

For more information, visit sheltonstate.edu/dual or email dualenrollment@sheltonstate.edu.

It is the policy of the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees and Shelton State Community College, a postsecondary institution under its control, that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, gender, age, or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law, be excluded from participation, denied benefits, or subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Alabama Has a Rare Senate Seat Opening This Year

Inside the Statehouse
By Steve Flowers

February 25, 2026:

the election of his successor Katie Britt.

Folks, we are in for a doozy of a political year in the Heart of Dixie. We have a rare open U.S. Senate race.

Senator Katie Boyd Britt has the makings of being one of the greatest U.S. Senators in Alabama history. She will join Shelby, Hill, and Sparkman in the annals of effectiveness. In fact, she has gotten off to a faster start than all three combined. She got there at a much earlier age and attained committee assignments never seen by any freshman senator in Alabama nor American history. It is unheard of for any state to have any of their senators on Appropriations, Rules, Banking, and Judiciary, much less a freshman senator.

A senate seat does not come open every year. It was expected, this time last year, that our first term Senator Tommy Tuberville would run for a second six-year term in 2026. However, Tuberville's decision to leave the U.S. Senate to run for Governor, left the barn door open for our second U.S. Senate seat.

The seat will be filled by a Republican. We are a solidly Republican State. Therefore, the GOP Primary on May 19 will be our election.

At the beginning of the race, it looked like a two-man contest between Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall and Second District Congressman Barry Moore. However, with the endorsement of Congressman Barry Moore by President Donald Trump, coupled with Moore receiving the endorsement and total support of the deep pocketed, dark money, right-wing, Republican Club for Growth, this tandem makes Moore a prohibitive favorite.

As the barn door closed for qualifying three weeks ago, the field, as expected, yielded five combatants: Alabama two-term Attorney General Steve Marshall, South Alabama Congressman Barry Moore, Navy Seal Jared Hudson, Trump and Tuberville staffer Morgan Murphy, and Lineville businessman Rodney Walker.

Prior to Trump's entry, it was developing as possibly an interesting contest for the open seat. Attorney General Steve Marshall was poised to give Moore a good race. He has been elected twice statewide and has some base of support. The three unknowns, Jared Hudson, Morgan Murphy, and Rodney Walker, are running spirited campaigns.

There are two distinctive roles that a U.S. Senator takes. One is to be an ideologue. Another is to be an effective facilitator and advocate and bring home the bacon for their state. Fortunately, for Alabama's sake, we had a facilitator and extremely effective U.S. Senator for 36 years in Senator Richard Shelby. It is because of Senator Shelby that UAB, Huntsville, and Mobile have become the beacons of economic growth and prosperity for our state.

The Daddy Warbucks Club for Growth endorsement of Moore is important because the key to any senate primary election is who has the most campaign money to spend. Money is the mother's milk of politics. Money buys media. Media appearances equate into votes.

For decades, we had a tandem in the Senate that were the ultimate gentlemen, powerful, facilitator senators in America. This duo of Lister Hill and John Sparkman were two of our greatest Senators in Alabama history. Senator Shelby joined them in rounding out our three greatest Senators. Shelby probably eclipsed the magnificent Hill and Sparkman.

It is a given that whichever of these five GOP candidates wins, Katie Britt will be joined by an ideologue. So, it does not matter who of the five we send to Washington, they will see their role as being a right-wing, Fox news chasing, ineffective senator. Both Steve Marshall and Barry Moore have a proven track record that dictates that is their perception of their political role. They will neither one care nor have any interest in being effective for Alabama.

John Sparkman was the Father of Huntsville's Redstone Arsenal. Lister Hill was the Father of the UAB Medical Center. Richard Shelby became the grandfather of these two Alabama economic gems. Shelby took Huntsville and UAB to unimaginable plateaus that Hill and Sparkman could not even imagine.

See you next week.

For almost two decades, we had a two-man tag team of effective statesmen, respected and feared U.S. Senators in Richard Shelby, and the amicable, colorful, witty, and quietly powerful Senator Judge Howell Heflin. Fortunately, for Alabama's sake, Shelby mentored and facilitated

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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THE STAFF

- David Daniel..... President
- Thomas Michael HobsonEditor
- Lynn Hamric.....Reporter
- Savanna Logan.....Reporter
- Candace JohnsonReporter

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- West Blocton Church of
God
Cty Rd. 21 Smith Hill
205-966-4988
- CHURCH OF THE
LORD JESUS CHRIST**
2300 South Scottsville Rd
Centreville 926-5393
- EPISCOPAL**
The Church Of The Holy
Comforter
Montevallo 665-2769
- St. Andrews Episcopal
Church
925 Plowman Street
Montevallo 665-1667
- HOLINESS**
Deliverance Temple Holiness
Four Points 926-5565
- Word of Faith Worship
Center
Centreville 926-4555
- 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
4296
- Friendship Bible Methodist
Church
205-225-4000
Co. Rd. 16 Brent, AL
- Ada Chapel Bible
Methodist Church
12540 N. Scottsville Rd.
West Blocton, AL
513-254-8241
- West Blocton Bible
Methodist Church
355 Camellia Lane, West
Blocton
205.826.5763
- 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
- Tabernacle United Methodist
Lawley
- Waymon Chapel AME
Brierfield 205-665-4730
- West Scottsville
United Methodist Church
North Scottsville Road
451-3624
- NAZARENE**
Ridgeville Church Of The
Nazarene
Brent
- Spencer Church Of The
Nazarene
Brent
- PENTECOSTAL**
New Life West Blocton
Pastor Greg Brock
205.441.2809
- First United Pentecostal
Church of Centreville
- PRESBYTERIAN**
Brent Presbyterian P.C.A.
926-4722
- Centreville First
Presbyterian P.C.A.
926-4261
- 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
926-9455 or 361-2763
Pastor Butch Tucker
- Yahweh's Harvest
926-9044
- 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



"How Great Thou Art"

The history behind the beloved hymn "How Great Thou Art" has been sung by many, many people over the years – but its beginning dates back to the year 1886 in southern Sweden. Carl Boberg, the author and editor, was a member of the Swedish Parliament from 1912 to 1931. Regarding the origin of penning the hymn, Boberg wrote: "It was in 1885, and in the time of year when everything seemed to be in its richest coloring; the birds were singing in trees and wherever they could find a perch. On a particular afternoon, some friends and I had been to Kronobäck where we had participated in an afternoon service. As we were returning, a thunderstorm began to appear on the horizon. We hurried to shelter. There were loud claps of thunder, and the lightning flashed across the sky. Strong winds swept over the meadows and billowing fields of grain. However, the storm was soon over and the clear sky appeared with a beautiful rainbow. After reaching my home, I opened my window toward the sea. The church bells were playing the tune of a hymn. That same evening, I wrote a poem which I titled, 'O Store Gud,' (How Great Thou Art)."

Amazingly, this song made its way through several countries with various translations, such as Germany and Russia, before being translated into English by the English missionary Rev. Stuart K. Hine in the early 1920s. Once Hine heard the song, he not only penned the lyrics into our language, but made his own arrangement of the Swedish melody as well. Years later, J. Edwin Orr brought Hine's translation of "How Great Thou Art" to the United States, where it was made widely popular in 1957 by way of the Billy Graham New York City Crusade, where it was recorded to have been sung 99 times.

How beautiful it is that Orberg allowed God to speak to his soul through His creation in "the rolling thunder." There is no doubt that God has been able to bless and multiply the meaning of the words of this hymn that has been known by millions!

What if we allowed God to speak to our hearts in the same way?

What if we chose something tangible in "the worlds [His] hands have made" so that we, too, could experience "[His] power throughout the universe displayed"? Years ago, a teacher I once had challenged me to do just that – to pick something out in the world that God could use in our lives to speak to us, to say He loved us, to offer us reassurance, to give us peace – anything. To give some examples, she mentioned that maybe we might pick the smell of burning wood, a deer that crosses our path, a certain kind of bird, a certain sound, the feel of rain – the sky was the limit on things we could choose. Whatever we chose was to be between us and the Lord, something special.

Well, I don't mind sharing with you now – I chose a rainbow. Not just the big rainbows we're lucky to see, but any kind of iridescence that can be found in the sky if you look hard enough.

Even the smallest of rainbows can be seen when you are anticipating them. And let me just tell you – the number of rainbows I have seen in my life, most often on my hardest days when my heart is calling out to Him the most – is nothing short of divine providence.

For example, during one of the hardest weeks of my life, it did not matter the time of day nor the conditions of the sky – when I walked outside, there was a rainbow waiting for me, even multiple ones in a single day. Each one communicated to me the ultimate truth of His love and goodness, and that my trust was safe with Him, no matter what my life may have looked like. When my heart has called out to my God in my deepest desperation, I have seen the grandest of rainbows appear and spread across the sky before my very eyes. When I allowed God a place, a way in my life to speak specifically to me, God has used it over and over to pour His love over me.

So, I challenge you – pick something, anything, and watch God work in your life and speak His love to you when you need it most. And by God's grace, may there always be a rainbow hanging over each of your heads.



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OTHER NEWS

Lane Lightsey Seeks To Lead Bibb County Board of Education



LANE LIGHTSEY



Paid For By Friends of Lane Lightsey, 438 Moody Rd, Centreville, AL 35042

Local resident Lane Lightsey officially announced that she has qualified to run for Superintendent of Education for Bibb County Schools.

Bibb County is my home. I have been married to my husband, Darryl Lightsey, for 36 years, and we are blessed with two children, Katie Crumpler and Brett Lightsey (Kaci), and four grandchildren — Jackson (8), Ellie Ruth (6), Dre (3), and Cooper (1). They proudly call me “MeMe.”

Education is part of who I am. My parents, Earl Watts and the late Ruth Watts, faithfully served Bibb County Schools for nearly 40 years as counselor and educator, and I am a proud graduate of Bibb County High School.

I am a lifelong Bibb County educator with more than 30 years of experience serving as a teacher, school counselor, registrar, assistant principal, and currently as a Central Office Administrator. I have worked in Woodstock Elementary, West Blocton Middle, Bibb County High, and Randolph Elementary, giving me a true system-wide perspective.

In my current role, I oversee system testing coordination, district counseling and mental health services, accountability, secondary curriculum and instruction, and teacher certification — providing firsthand experience with both instructional leadership and the operational demands of running a school system.

I hold a Bachelor’s degree in Secondary Education Mathematics from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Master’s degree in Counsel-

ing & Guidance and Educational Administration from the University of Montevallo.

As Superintendent, I will be committed to listening, leading, and serving with integrity, transparency, and a student-centered vision. I respectfully ask for your support as I seek to continue serving the community I love.

Key Platform Priorities

1. **Student Success First**
 - Strengthen math, literacy, and college/career readiness
 - Support the whole child — academically, socially, and emotionally
2. **Supporting Teachers & Staff**
 - Respect educators as professionals
 - Focus on mentoring, retention of teachers, and clear expectations
3. **Accountability & Growth**
 - Use data to improve instruction, not punish schools
 - Emphasize growth and continuous improvement
4. **Safe, Supportive Schools**
 - Strong counseling and mental health services
 - Partnerships with families and community organizations
5. **Community Trust & Transparency**
 - Open communication with parents and fiscal responsibility
 - Local decisions rooted in Bibb County values

The Republican Primary Election will be held on May 19, 2026. Please consider voting for Lane Lightsey for Bibb County Superintendent of Education.

Local Baptist Church Destroyed By Fire Saturday

Leaping flames gutted the sanctuary of the three-story brick Baptist Church in Centreville Saturday afternoon as firemen battled freezing temperatures and ice to control the blaze which threatened other buildings.

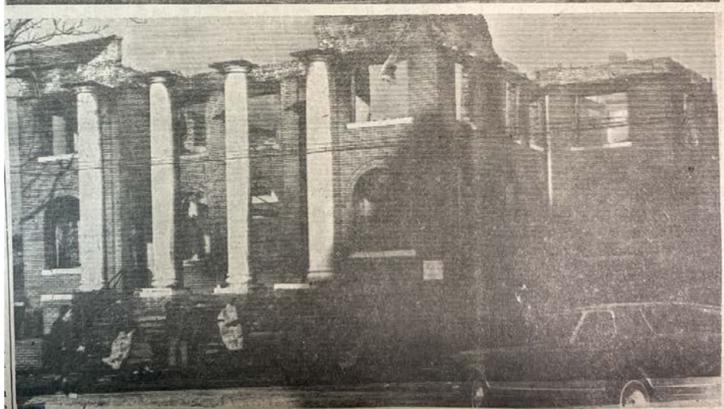
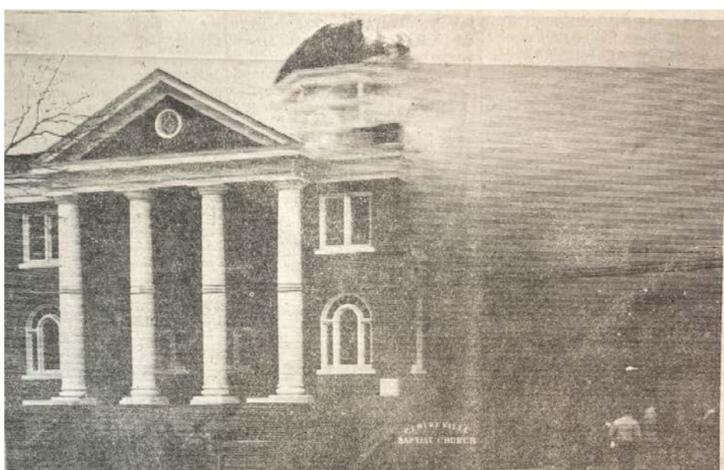
The church is located on the court square of Centreville, about 50 yards from the Bibb County Courthouse. Townsmen here — who joined volunteer firefighters in battling the blaze — feared at one time that sparks from the wind-whipped inferno would set other buildings on fire.

Volunteer firemen from Centreville, Brent and West Blocton fire departments fought the fire. They were hampered by high winds that swept at the licking flames increasing the hazard to surrounding buildings. Water from the hoses froze on the streets and lawn surrounding the burning church.

Firemen were able to bring the fire under control about 5 p. m. and saved the new Sunday School wing of the building. The home of the church pastor — located adjacent to the church building — did not burn.

The alarm was turned in at about 12:45 p. m. Rev. B. A. Lambert, church pastor, discovered the blaze which apparently had been burning for some time when he discovered it. The fire apparently began in the church kitchen area on the basement level of the building.

It was a domed and picturesque structure that commanded an imposing vantage point of Centreville. One observer described efforts of the volunteer firefighters as “her-



CENTREVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH GUTTED BY FLAMES SATURDAY AFTERNOON

The entire sanctuary of the First Baptist Church of Centreville was gutted by flames in a noon fire Saturday. The picture at the top was made shortly after the fire was discovered. Note the billowing black smoke.

The photo on the bottom was made about 5:00 Saturday afternoon, showing the complete destruction of the sanctuary section of the building.

BOARD OF EDUCATION OPPOSES LIBERAL SPEAKER BEFORE THE A. E. A. CONVENTION

The Bibb County Board of Education is very much opposed to having a liberal speaker speak before the A. E. A. Convention this year. Monday Board members sent the following telegram to A. E. A. Board of Trustees:

Board of Trustees, A. E. A.
422 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama

In view of the many fine patriotic speakers available to you, the Bibb County Board of Education by the unanimous consensus of its members finds it hard to understand why you would accept such a speaker as Dr. Max Lerner, a man known to be connected with Communist Front organizations.

You owe a greater responsibility than thus shown to teachers, students and taxpayers, who have just given Alabama Education the largest financial boost in history.

S. E. BELCHER, JR., Chairman
Bibb County Board Of Education

This newspaper agrees with the Board on this matter. Too many liberal speakers are being invited to speak before our educators and Universities. It appears that every effort is being made to brainwash our people into the “liberal” way of thinking. There is now much protest all over Alabama about the A. E. A. inviting Dr. Max Lerner to be their principal spokesman for their A. E. A. Convention.

Centreville Baptists To Hold Services In Masonic Hall

The Centreville Baptist Church has secured the first floor of the Masonic building on East Court Square to hold worship services. The first service will be Sunday, February 20, at 10:55 a. m., and 7:00 p. m.

The Sunday School and Training Union will continue to meet in the regular assigned places.

There will be no mission book taught Friday night. The missionary will speak in the Presbyterian Church at 6:45 p. m.

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Joan Crawford
... in ...

“I SAW WHAT YOU DID”
... plus ...

“SUNDAY IN NEW YORK”
IN COLOR!

The BACK PAGE

March Swimming Lessons with Bess Russell at BMC Wellness



SWIMMING LESSONS with Bess Russell

Our swimming lessons are designed to help participants build water confidence, develop foundational swimming skills, and progress at a comfortable, supportive pace. Instruction focuses on safety, technique, and confidence in the water for all ages and skill levels. For classes other than Mommy & Me, enrollment is limited to a maximum of two participants per class to ensure personalized instruction.

Register now at bmcwellness.com/swimminglessons

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

Registration is now open for swimming lessons with Bess Russell, set for March 23–25 at BMC Wellness. These lessons are designed to help participants build water confidence, develop foundational swimming skills, and progress at a comfortable and supportive pace.

Instruction will focus on water safety, proper technique, and increasing confidence in the water for swimmers of all ages and skill levels. With the exception of Mommy & Me classes, enrollment is limited to a maximum of two participants per class to ensure personalized instruction and meaningful one-on-one guidance.

Learning to swim is more than just

a recreational skill — it is a critical life-saving ability. Drowning remains one of the leading causes of accidental injury and death among children, making early water education essential. Teaching children how to float, tread water, and safely navigate pools and open water environments can dramatically reduce risks while also fostering independence and confidence. Beyond safety, swimming strengthens coordination, endurance, and overall physical health.

Families are encouraged to secure their spot early, as limited class sizes are expected to fill quickly. To register, you can visit bmcwellness.com/swimminglessons.

BMC HEALTH AND WELLNESS CORNER

THE NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ENTRANCE AT BIBB MEDICAL CENTER IS NOW OPEN!

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This new addition to our Emergency Department and Urgent Care Clinic is designed to better serve our patients and families with improved access, convenience, and efficiency when it matters most.

If you or a loved one need emergency care, please use the new entrance for all emergency services moving forward.

We're proud to continue growing and improving to meet the needs of Bibb County. Thank you for trusting us with your care!



BLOOD DRIVE | MARCH 11TH, 10:00AM-2:00PM

Join us this March at BMC Wellness Center in honor of Red Cross Month for our upcoming blood drive in partnership with the American Red Cross. Visit redcrossblood.org to schedule your appointment and help save lives in our community.

PICKLEBALL CAMP

March 14th & March 28th, 10:00am-12:00pm

Ready to learn pickleball? Our Pickleball Camp is now open to anyone 16+, whether you're a member or a nonmember! For just \$10, you can learn the basics, improve your skills, and get ready for some fun on the court! PLUS, it's FREE for all Pickleball League participants!

Registration opening soon!

RESPOND

March 19th, 5:00pm-6:30pm

Get certified in CPR and AED or enroll in RESPOND, our youth safety course designed to build real-life emergency awareness and confidence. Register today at bmcwellness.com/cpr.

BMC Wellness Center
285 Hospital Drive
Centreville, Alabama 35042