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West Blocton Welcomes New Postmaster

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

The Town of West Blocton is welcoming a new leader to its post office, and many residents are hopeful that her experience and dedication will help strengthen an important community service.

Sulentia M. Hughes has officially joined the West Blocton Post Office as Postmaster, bringing with her more than 31 years of experience with the United States Postal Service. Her appointment comes at a time when many local residents are eager to see continued improvements and stability in postal operations after several years that have presented challenges for mail service in the area.

Mrs. Hughes is a graduate of Jess Lanier High School and attended Jefferson State Community College. Throughout her career, she has earned a reputation for providing excellent customer service and maintaining dependable postal operations, qualities that are sure to be appreciated by the West Blocton community.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Hughes is deeply rooted in family, faith, and service. She and her husband, Carl Hughes Jr., an agriculture science teacher and pastor, are the proud parents of four daughters. She also serves as the Minister of Music at her church, reflecting a longstanding commitment to serv-

ing others both inside and outside the workplace.

For many residents, the post office remains a vital part of daily life, connecting families, businesses, and neighbors. The arrival of an experienced Postmaster is welcome news for a community that values reliable service and strong local leadership.

As she begins this new chapter in West Blocton, community members are extending a warm welcome and looking forward to the knowledge, professionalism, and care she brings to the position.

West Blocton is proud to welcome Mrs. Hughes and wishes her much success as she leads the local post office into the future.



Summer EBT Benefits Coming to Families with Eligible School Children

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – The Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR), in partnership with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), plans to distribute Alabama SUN Bucks (Summer EBT) benefits to eligible children again this summer. Alabama SUN Bucks will provide a one-time issuance of \$120 per school-aged child to low-income families to assist them in purchasing groceries over the summer. These benefits are a summer supplement to the free and reduced-price meals that are provided to students during the school year.

Alabama SUN Bucks will be automatically issued to school-aged children who have been approved by

application or direct certification and attending a school that offers the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs. Children that are directly certified through the ALSDE in programs such as SNAP, TANF or Medicaid will be automatically eligible for Alabama SUN Bucks.

If not automatically enrolled, each student may apply for Alabama SUN Bucks. Students receiving free meals through the Community Eligibility Provision will not automatically qualify; however, students may still be eligible for the benefits based on the household's income. Households should visit the Alabama SUN Bucks website to apply or receive additional information.

"With the rising

costs of groceries and gas, the summer break can be challenging for families when children are at home," said Alabama DHR Commissioner Nancy Buckner. "This benefit will help families across the state make it through summer break while also encouraging healthy and nutritious eating."

An Alabama SUN Bucks card will be issued for students who qualify for the program.

Alabama SUN Bucks customer service representatives are available to answer Summer EBT questions by phone at 1-800-443-3536 or email at support@alabama-sunbucks.com from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.



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NEWS

Concerns Over Classroom Screen Time Emerge in New National Study by Professors at Auburn's College of Education and Christopher Newport University



AUBURN, Ala. — A national study led by Auburn University College of Education Associate Professor David Marshall and Christopher Newport University Associate Professor Tim Pressley is shedding new light on how teachers view the growing role of technology in K-12 classrooms.

The study, based on a survey of nearly 600 U.S. teachers in May, found that 85% of teachers believe students spend too much time on screens during class. Marshall and Pressley say the findings highlight a growing shift in educator sentiment and raise important questions about how digital tools are shaping classroom learning.

"Teachers are beginning to wonder whether schools have overcorrected," the authors write, pointing to classroom experiences where devices intended for learning often lead to distraction and diminished focus.

Insights from the study were recently highlighted in a June 2 op-ed in Real Clear Education by Marshall and Pressley, titled "Have We Gone Too Far with Technology in Schools?" The op-ed explores whether schools have "overcorrected" in their reliance on digital tools.

Pressley note that their survey also revealed other concerns. Without prompting, nearly one in six teachers advocated for a return to more traditional paper-and-pencil learning approaches. Many respondents expressed concern about students' declining ability to write for extended periods without assistance from spell check or autocorrect, as well as shortened attention spans and difficulty focusing without digital stimulation.

The findings align with broader national conversations. A recent report from American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten similarly called for reduced screen use and more active, hands-on learning experiences.

Marshall and Pressley emphasize that their research does not suggest abandoning technology, but rather using it more intentionally. Digital tools continue to offer value in communication, organization and access to information, but their overuse, the researchers note, might be crowding out essential learning skills.

"The solution is not abandoning technology," they write. "Nor is it romanticizing some pre-digital version of schooling. The solution is recalibration."

The study also highlights strong support among teachers for policies that limit digital distractions. Among respondents working in schools with cell phone bans, 91% supported the policy, while more than three-quarters of teachers without bans said they wished their schools would adopt one.

Marshall noted that the rapid expansion of technology — accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic — has made screens central to nearly every aspect of teaching and learning. What began as a necessary shift, the researchers suggest, has in many cases become the default, even when other approaches might be more effective.

Ultimately, the research underscores a growing consensus among educators: while technology remains a powerful tool, its role in the classroom must be carefully balanced to ensure it supports— not competes with— student learning.

"Schools once feared students would fall behind without technology. Increasingly, teachers worry that students are falling behind because of it," Marshall and Pressley stated in their op-ed.

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LOCAL & GOVERNMENT

Centreville News

By Brenda Hubbard

Sympathy goes out to the family of Brown Bolding, age 90, who passed away on May 30, 2026. Funeral services were held on June 6, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. at Randolph Baptist Church with burial at Randolph Baptist Church cemetery. Brown will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

Get well wishes and prayers go out to Charlotte West who has returned home after spending 12 days at Bibb Medical Center.

Odie and Doris Newman spent last week in Branson, Missouri.

Vacation Bible School will be held at Shady Grove Baptist Church beginning June 15-19. It will

be Monday-Thursday 5:30-8:30 each evening, ages 3 to youth. Also an Adult Bible Study each evening during VBS. Everyone is cordially to come on out and join us.

We wish to extend sympathy to the family of Michael Goggin, 76, who passed away on May 27, 2026. Mike will be missed greatly.

The WMU of Brent Baptist Church met on Tuesday evening, June 2, 2026.

Anniversary wishes go out to Mickey and Mandy Nix who recently celebrated their wedding anniversary.

If you have news call it in at (205) 316-1181. Take care and God bless.

New Leadership, More Resources: Brent Elementary Prepares for Transition

BY CANACE JOHNSON
REPORTER

Changes are coming to Brent Elementary School beginning July 1. The school will be divided into two schools, each led by its own principal. David Steele will serve as principal of Brent Elementary, while Heather Lawley will lead Brent Primary School.

Brent Primary will serve pre-K through second grade and is expected to enroll about 330 students. Brent Elementary will serve third- and fourth-grade students, with an enrollment of about 245.

Steele is no stranger to Bibb County. He served as principal of West Blocton Elementary School for one year and as assistant principal of West Blocton High School for 10 years. During his tenure, the school's report card score improved from 84 to 88. He has also served in several other educational leadership roles.

Lawley joins the district from Holt Elementary School in Tuscaloosa. She brings 27 years of experience in education

and was named Assistant Principal of the Year in 2023.

Bibb County Schools Superintendent Kevin Cotner said the split will help address teacher turnover and provide additional resources for students and staff.

"Now, we will have a reading and math coach on the upper floor and a reading and math coach on the lower floor. We will have a counselor on the upper floor and a counselor on the lower floor. The lower floor will have an assistant principal and a principal, and Brent Elementary on the upper floor will have a principal, so it really helps us provide more resources," Cotner said.

The district is also hiring a bookkeeper, so one person is not responsible for the work of two schools. While the schools will operate separately, they will continue to share facilities, including the lunchroom, gymnasium, and library.

Cotner believes the change will improve students' social, emotional, and academic well-being.

The Salon at BMC Expands, Adds Two Experienced Stylists

BY SAVANNA LOGAN
REPORTER

Looking for a fresh haircut, a new color, or simply a little time to relax and recharge? The Salon at Bibb Medical Center is growing and now has two talented stylists available to serve patients, employees, residents, and members of the community.

With decades of combined experience, Cheryl Brayko and Kim Pratt are bringing both professional expertise and a passion for helping people feel their best.

Cheryl Brayko has been a hairstylist for 15 years and says her love for the profession comes from helping others feel confident and beautiful. Beyond the hairstyles themselves, Cheryl especially enjoys the personal connections that are built in the salon chair.

One of her favorite aspects of working at BMC is getting to know the residents and community members she serves. She looks forward to learning each person's story and building lasting relationships along the way.

When she's not in the salon, Cheryl enjoys spending time with her family and making memories with her four children. Whether at home or outdoors enjoying nature, family remains at the center of her life.

Joining Cheryl at The Salon is Kim Pratt,



Contact us!
Cheryl Brayko
(205) 826-1297
Kim Pratt
(205) 657-1536

who brings 25 years of hairstyling experience. Kim knew from an early age that cosmetology was her calling, inspired by visits to the salon with her grandmother and countless hours spent styling her dolls' hair.

Kim enjoys all aspects of hair care but has a special passion for color services and haircuts. What excites her most about serving at BMC is the opportunity to help employees, residents, patients, and community members not only look

their best, but also feel valued and cared for.

Her goal is simple: to be a blessing to others through her work. (And speaking from my own personal experience, she is.)

Outside the salon, Kim enjoys spending time with her husband, whom she describes as the love of her life, and their two sons, Joshua and Shawn. She also loves being outdoors, whether that means relaxing at the beach, camping with family, or simply enjoying nature.

The addition of a second stylist means even more opportunities for community members to enjoy professional salon services close to home. Whether you're looking for a quick trim, a complete makeover, or a little self-care, The Salon at BMC is ready to welcome you.

To schedule an appointment, contact Cheryl Brayko at (205) 826-1297 or Kim Pratt at (205) 657-1536.

Applications Now Open for Shelton State Practical Nursing Program at Bibb Medical Center

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riod runs from June 5 through July 5, 2026.

Applicants must have an ACT score of 18 or higher and must be eligible to enroll in, or have already completed, ENG 101 and MTH 100. Students must also complete BIO 201 during the first term of nursing courses, with BIO 103 serving as a prerequisite.

By offering classes locally, the partnership between Shelton State Community College and Bibb Medical Center helps make nursing education more accessible for area residents while strengthening the future healthcare workforce in Bibb County and surrounding communities.

Anyone interested in pursuing a rewarding career as a Practical Nurse is encouraged to apply during the upcoming application period. With classes held locally, evening scheduling options, and completion in just one year, the program offers a convenient pathway into one of healthcare's most trusted and essential professions.

BY SAVANNA LOGAN
REPORTER

For those who have been considering a career in healthcare, now may be the perfect time to take the first step.

Applications are officially open for the Practical Nursing (PN) Program offered through Shelton State Community College in partnership with Bibb Medical Center. The program provides an opportunity for aspiring nurses to complete their training locally,

with all classes held on the Bibb Medical Center campus.

Nursing has long been recognized as one of the most stable and in-demand career fields, offering opportunities for meaningful work while serving others. As healthcare needs continue to grow, trained nurses remain an essential part of patient care in communities across Alabama and beyond.

The Practical Nursing Program is designed to help students enter

the healthcare workforce in just one year. Classes begin August 17, 2026, and are offered in the evenings, making the program accessible for many students who may be balancing work, family responsibilities, or other commitments. Small class sizes also provide a supportive learning environment where students can receive personalized instruction and guidance throughout their training.

The application pe-



EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

GOP Primary Runoffs Next Week

Inside the Statehouse
By Steve Flowers

June 10, 2026:

The May 19 GOP Primary Election resolved the elections for several important statewide offices. These aspirants are home-free for a coronation to their respective offices in the fall. They will be coronated November 3, because winning the GOP nomination in the Heart of Dixie is tantamount to election. Every statewide office in Alabama is held by a Republican.

Four statewide races have been decided. Tommy Tuberville for Governor, Caroleene Dobson for Secretary of State, Young Boozer for State Treasurer, and Andrew Sorrell for State Auditor, were all elected on May 19.

The most interesting battles of the year will be decided next week in the June 16 GOP Primary Elections. The runoffs for U.S. Senator, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, State Agriculture Commissioner, as well as a seat on the Public Service Commission, are in play.

The marquee race of the year has been the U.S. Senate contest to fill the Seat of Senator Tommy Tuberville. From the beginning of the year, when the race began, the all-powerful "Daddy Warbucks" Club for Growth has been all in for Congressman Barry Moore. This group has become omnipotent in Republican primaries in ruby red Republican states throughout the nation.

In the past decade since their creation, The Club has progressed from being a big dollar contributor to being a mega-dollar contributor as well as a very sophisticated campaign organization. Up until the 2025 Presidential election, they and Trump were not necessarily on the same page. However, after they bankrolled Trump's reelection campaign, Trump and The Club are on the

same team. It is no coincidence that The Club and President Trump endorsed Barry Moore on the same day, shortly after he announced last year.

Barry Moore and his teammate wife, Heather, have run a perfect, flawless campaign fueled by unlimited money. As expected, he led the field in the first primary with 40% of the vote. His closest challengers, Attorney General Steve Marshall and Navy Seal Jared Hudson, garnered 25% each, which was an impressive showing given the financial disadvantage they had to overcome.

Hudson has the unenviable luck to have edged Marshall out of the runoff. Hudson has a hard task to compete with unlimited money and the Trump endorsement. Barry Moore is exactly what The Club and Trump look for in a candidate – a proven Freedom Caucus Conservative. While all signs point to a Moore victory, some recent polling suggests Hudson has a fighting chance.

It was thought that the Club for Growth only got involved in national contests. However, they revealed a wrinkle in their game plan by diving big time into the Alabama Lt. Governor's race this year. They took the then GOP Chairman John Wahl into their fold and did it impressively.

Wahl, an unknown butterfly farmer from Northwest Alabama, was known in the GOP inner circle as Chairman of the Party. However, The Club spent \$2 million, along with the Donald Trump endorsement, and propelled Wahl into a 41% vote against seven opponents. Alabama veteran, thoroughbred workhorse, Secretary of State Wes Allen finish second to Wahl with 38% of the vote. This will be the best and closest contest next Tuesday. It will be old school, Alabama retail politician Wes

Allen versus new school, new money Club for Growth/Trump endorsee John Wahl.

The Attorney General's race has been the most competitive and contentious contest of the year. Assistant Attorney General Katherine Robertson and former Supreme Court Justice Jay Mitchell are headed into a finale Battle Royale next week. Robertson led Mitchell 40% to 34% in the first primary. Early in the race, prognosticators predicted the numbers would be reversed, with Mitchell at 40 and Robertson at 34. However, with lots of out of state right wing money, and the ALFA endorsement, and better TV ads, she moved into the lead, which is what the late polling portended. Blount County District Attorney, Pamela Casey, ran a good, under-financed campaign and finished a strong third. As expected, Pam Casey has endorsed Judge Jay Mitchell in the runoff.

Jim Zeigler garnered an impressive 45% of the vote in the race for Public Service Commission place two. Ole Zeigler has been around the block a few times in Alabama politics. He was elected to the Public Service Commission at age 25 and served one term. He has run statewide eight times and served eight years as State Auditor. He has parlayed his numerous statewide races into a significant 45% to 24% advantage over Chris Beeker.

Next Tuesday will tell the rest of the story to this year's momentous elections.

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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"All Creatures of Our God and King"

Few hymns can trace their roots back more than 800 years, but All Creatures of Our God and King finds its origins in the life and writings of one of history's most beloved Christian figures, St. Francis of Assisi.

Born in Italy in 1182, Francis was the son of a wealthy silk merchant and spent his early years enjoying a carefree lifestyle. However, after a period of illness, imprisonment during military service, and a series of profound spiritual experiences, his life took a dramatically different direction. Francis gradually turned away from wealth and comfort, embracing a life of poverty, service, and devotion to God.

Inspired by Christ's teachings, Francis devoted himself to caring for the poor, restoring neglected chapels, and preaching repentance. His joyful faith soon attracted followers who became known as the Franciscans and the Poor Clares. Though they lived simple lives with few possessions, they became known for their cheerful spirits and songs of praise.

In his later years, Francis suffered greatly from illness and eventually became nearly blind. Living in a small reed hut near the convent of his devoted follower, Sister Clara, he spent his remaining days in prayer, reflection, and worship. It was during this time that he composed a text known as the Canticle of the Sun, also called the Song of All Creatures.

The poem called upon the natural world, sun, moon, stars, wind, water, and all living things, to praise their Creator. Centuries later, this beloved text was paraphrased into the hymn All Creatures of Our God and King, which continues to be sung in churches around the world.

St. Francis died on October 3, 1226, while singing Psalm 142. Today, he is remembered as the patron saint of animals and the environment, and his enduring message of gratitude and praise lives on each time this joyful hymn is sung. Through its words, generations of believers have joined Francis in celebrating the beauty of creation and giving glory to the God who made it all.



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The BACK PAGE

Sharpen Your Skills This Summer at BMC Wellness Basketball Camp

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

For young athletes looking to improve their game, build confidence, and have some fun along the way, BMC Wellness has a great opportunity coming up this summer.

Registration is now open for the Basketball Summer Camp with Bibb County High School Head Basketball Coach Jamesio Rhine, taking place July 20–24 at the BMC Wellness Center in Centreville. Open to boys and girls ages 8 to 18, the camp is designed to help players develop their basketball fundamentals while learning valuable lessons about teamwork, discipline, and personal growth.

Whether a participant is picking up a basketball for the first time or looking to fine-tune existing skills, camp offers a welcoming environment where athletes can learn, compete, and grow. Throughout the week, players will have the chance to work on core basketball skills, gain experience through drills and instruction, and challenge themselves alongside other young athletes from across the area.

The camp will be held each morning

from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m. at the BMC Wellness Center, located at 285 Hospital Drive in Centreville.

Coach Jamesio Rhine will lead the camp, bringing his knowledge of the game and passion for helping young athletes reach their potential. Beyond basketball skills, camps like this often provide opportunities for participants to build friendships, strengthen confidence, and develop habits that can benefit them both on and off the court.

Registration is open to everyone ages 8 through 18. The cost is \$75 for BMC Wellness members and \$100 for non-members.

Summer can be a great time for young people to stay active, try something new, and continue learning outside the classroom. For families looking for a productive and engaging activity during the summer break, this camp offers a chance to do exactly that.

For more information or to register, contact BMC Wellness Center at 205-926-3360 or email bibbwellness@gmail.com.



BASKETBALL SUMMER CAMP
WITH **COACH JAMESIO RHINE**

DATE: JULY 20TH-24TH
TIME: 8AM - 11AM
LOCATION: BMC WELLNESS CENTER
285 Hospital Drive
Centreville, AL 35042

REGISTRATION

MEMBER	NON-MEMBER
In House ends on Jul 20, 2026 Online ends on Jul 20, 2026	In House ends on Jul 20, 2026 Online ends on Jul 20, 2026

ELIGIBILITY
Open to everyone from ages 8 to 18

COSTS
Member: \$75.00
Non-Member: \$100.00

CONTACT
BMC Wellness Center
bibbwellness@gmail.com
205-926-3360

ABOUT COACH RHINE

- ✓ Graduated from Bibb County High School in 2016
- ✓ Played basketball all 4 years of high school
- ✓ Graduated from Hiwassee College in 2018
- ✓ Graduated from Tennessee Wesleyan University in 2021
- ✓ Played 4 years of overseas basketball
- ✓ Now the Head Coach of the Bibb County Choctaws

BIBB COUNTY CHOCTAWS

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BMC HEALTH AND WELLNESS CORNER

FLAG FOOTBALL REGISTRATION

The number one reason families choose NFL FLAG is simple: it's fun. The no-contact format and team-centered approach make it easy for kids to play without the stress or risk of tackle football, while still enjoying all the excitement of the game.

bmcwellness.com/flagfootball



YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS

Registration is now open for our Volleyball Camp and Summer Camps at BMC Wellness. Financial assistance is available to help more kids join the fun this summer.



Join us as we celebrate International Yoga Day with a special event led by Dr. Patil on **Friday, June 19th** from 12:00pm-12:45pm. Take a midday break to relax, reset, and focus on your wellness through movement and mindfulness.

JUNE IS MEN'S HEALTH MONTH TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

Men's Health Month is a reminder to take a proactive approach to your health through regular checkups, physical activity, healthy habits, and preventive care. Many common health concerns, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and stress-related conditions, can often be improved through early detection and lifestyle changes. Small daily choices can make a lasting impact on your overall health and well-being.



DIABETES MANAGEMENT SUPPORT GROUP MONDAY, JUNE 29TH 5:30PM

Discover encouragement, support, and community in our diabetes management support group. Whether you're newly diagnosed or have been managing for years, this group provides understanding and strategies to help you feel empowered.