

Centreville Press

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Bibb County Schools to Continue Offering Free Meals through the 2026-2027 School Year



BY CANDACE JOHNSON
REPORTER

On July 1, Bibb County Schools announced that they will continue to provide free breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students during the 2026-2027 school year through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Because the district is participating in CEP, families will not need to complete a free and reduced-price meal application. All students enrolled in Bibb County Schools will automatically receive breakfast and lunch at no cost.

The Community Eligibility Provision, established under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, allows eligible school districts in low-income communities to serve free meals to every student. The program is designed to reduce paperwork for families

and schools while ensuring students have access to nutritious meals each school day.

District officials said the program also allows child nutrition staff to spend more time preparing meals and reduces wait times in cafeteria lines, giving students more time to eat. By providing meals at no cost, the district hopes to ensure students come to school well-nourished and ready to learn.

School breakfasts and lunches will continue to meet the nutrition guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

For additional information about the district's child nutrition program, parents and guardians may contact Child Nutrition Program Director Karie Jane Davis at davis@bibbed.org or by calling 205-926-9881, ext. 6019.

Woodstock Mayor Jeff Dodson Inducted into Alabama Boxing Hall of Fame



BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

Woodstock Mayor Jeff Dodson has added another incredible achievement to his long list of accomplishments, recently being inducted into the Alabama Boxing Hall of Fame during the organization's 10th Annual Hall of Fame Boxing Show, held June 20 at the Bryant Conference Center.

The annual event celebrates the past, present, and future of boxing throughout Alabama, featuring a Hall of Fame induction ceremony, a professional boxing card, and recognition of some of the state's top amateur boxers. Mayor Dodson was honored in the Support Personnel category, recognizing his contributions to the sport and the lasting impact he has made both inside and out-

side the ring.

Before serving the Town of Woodstock, Dodson stepped into the ring as a heavyweight professional boxer. Competing from 1998 to 2000, he compiled a professional record of four wins in five bouts, earning victories over Jeffrey Young in his professional debut, Quinta McMath, Curtis Burchfield, and Tony Locastro. With a knockout rate of 50 percent during his career, Dodson demonstrated the same determination and perseverance that many in the community have come to know through his public service.

His involvement in boxing, however, did not end when his professional career concluded. Over the years, Dodson has continued serving the sport as a judge and referee,

Photo courtesy of Cheryl Dodson

and he remains actively involved today as a boxing inspector, helping ensure the integrity and safety of boxing events across Alabama. His continued dedication to the sport is a testament to his passion for boxing and his commitment to supporting athletes at every level.

Today, Bibb County residents know Dodson as Woodstock's mayor, where he continues working to serve and strengthen his hometown. His Hall of Fame induction is a reminder that many of the people leading and serving local communities have unique stories and accomplishments that extend far beyond their public roles.

Bibb County has long been home to individuals who excel in a wide variety of fields, and Mayor Dodson's

induction is another example of the exceptional talent found right here at home. His recognition brings not only personal honor, but also something for the Woodstock community and all of Bibb County to celebrate.

Congratulations to Mayor Jeff Dodson on this well-deserved honor and on being inducted into the Alabama Boxing Hall of Fame. From his days as a heavyweight boxer to his continued service as a judge, referee, and inspector, his lifelong commitment to the sport has left a lasting impact. His achievement stands as a testament to hard work, dedication, and the many ways one person can make a difference — both in the ring and in the community he proudly serves.



Agency on Aging Seeks Public Input

The public is invited to attend and participate in an upcoming Public Hearing regarding West Alabama Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging.

Date: August 10, 2026
Time: 11:30 AM
Location: 4200 Hwy 69 N, Northport, AL 35473

West Alabama Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging (AAA) seeks comments from older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, and others interested in aging their homes and communities. Collected information will be used by AAA to further carryout their

2025-2028 Area Plan on Aging.

Those wishing to speak will have an opportunity to do so during the hearing. Written comments may also be submitted via mail, PO BOX 509, Northport, AL 35476 or emailed to kelli.kimbrell@westal.org.

Community participation is encouraged. Your input is an important part of the decision-making process.

For additional information, please contact:



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NEWS

Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola Bottling Company and Centreville Main Street Unveil Historic Mural

CENTREVILLE, Ala. (July 2, 2026) – Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola Bottling Company, a sales center of Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc. (UNITED), in proud partnership with Centreville Main Street, will unveil a newly restored Coca-Cola mural on Tuesday, July 7, at 10 a.m. at 1100 Walnut St. on Centreville Town Square.

The restored 1940s mural is a tribute to Coca-Cola's longtime presence in Southern communities and reflects a shared commitment to preserving local history. Fully funded through a partnership between Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola and The Coca-Cola Company, the restoration is both a community development initiative and a celebration of Centreville's history.

The \$20,000 project took approximately one year to complete and involved extensive historical research, photo verification and preservation planning to ensure the mural accurately reflected its original appearance. Planners credit the mural's authenticity to Jim Oakley, former owner, publisher and editor of

The Centreville Press newspaper. An original photo taken by Oakley in 1946 was instrumental in restoring the mural.

Speakers at the unveiling will include Oakley, Centreville Mayor Barry Cooner, Centreville Main Street Board Chairman Ashton Cottingham, Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola Sales Center Manager Vann Scott, Ian Smith, Director of Franchise Leadership at The Coca-Cola Company, and John Kennedy, owner of the old Cleveland's building where the mural is located.

"This project represents what can happen when businesses, nonprofits and community leaders come together around a shared vision," Cottingham said. "The mural celebrates our history, strengthens our downtown and creates another reason for residents and visitors alike to experience everything Centreville has to offer."

Said Scott, "This mural is a symbol of the relationships Coca-Cola has built with communities like Centreville over generations. We're hon-



Photos courtesy of Fulton Prevost

ored to help preserve this piece of local history and celebrate the people and stories that make this community so special."

"Historic murals tell the story Coca-Cola's connection to hometowns across America," Smith said. "We're proud to partner with local bottlers like Coca-Cola UNITED and community leaders to restore these landmarks, ensuring they can be enjoyed by future generations while supporting the continued revitalization of Main Streets across our region."

Guests in attendance will receive a commemorative

Centreville Coca-Cola bottle and will be the first to learn the location of the next Coca-Cola mural restoration project. Since 2020, Coca-Cola UNITED and the Coca-Cola Company have partnered with communities to restore murals across the Southeast. Locations in Alabama include Calera, Fayette, Waverly and Wetumpka.

Event Details
What: Historic Coca-Cola Mural Unveiling

Who: Speakers at the unveiling will include Centreville Mayor Barry Cooner, Centreville Main Street Board Chairman Ashton Cottingham, Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola Sales Center Manager Vann Scott, Ian Smith, Director of Franchise Leadership at The Coca-Cola Company, Jim Oakley, former owner, publisher and editor of The Centreville Press newspaper, and John Kennedy, owner of the Cleveland Building where the mural is located.

When: Tuesday, July 7, at 10 a.m.

Where: 1100 Walnut St., Centreville, AL 35042 (old Cleveland's building)

About Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc.

Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc. (UNITED), founded in 1902 and headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama, is among the largest bottlers and distributors of Coke

products in the U.S. Now with its fifth generation of family working in the business, Coca-Cola UNITED has more than 10,000 associates located in more than 50 facilities across six southeastern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee). Historically significant franchises in our Coca-Cola UNITED family include Chattanooga, the world's first Coca-Cola bottler; Atlanta, home of the worldwide Coca-Cola System; and Columbus, Georgia, development site of the original Coca-Cola formula.

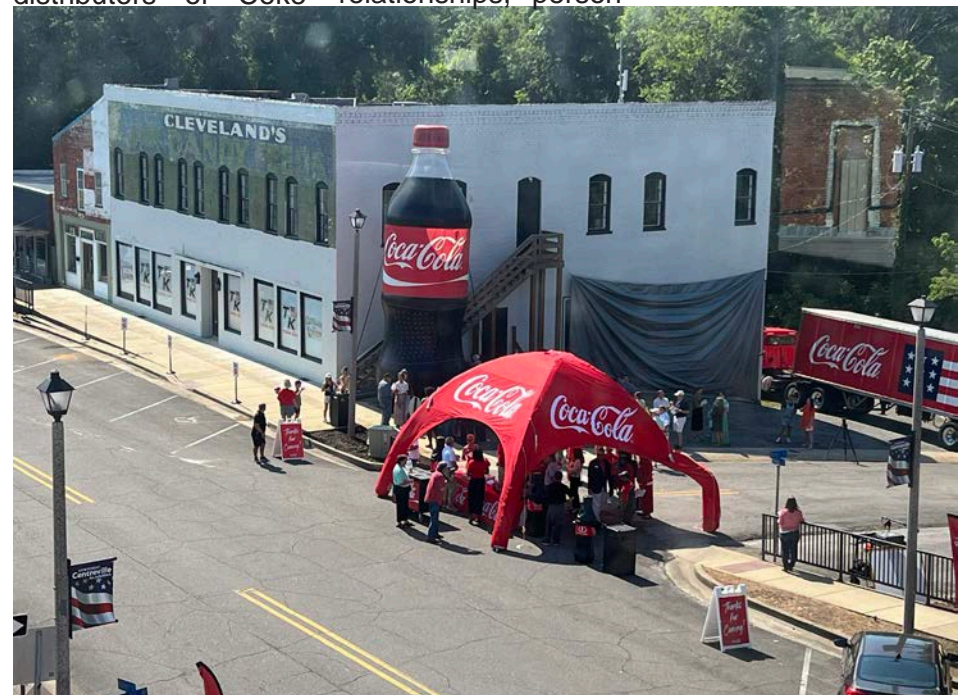
Coca-Cola UNITED is engaged in the production, marketing, and distribution of a diverse portfolio of leading sparkling (Coca-Cola®, Diet Coke®, Coke Zero Sugar®, Dr Pepper®, Sprite® and Fanta®) and still (smartwater®, vitaminwater®, Dasani®, P O W E R A D E ®, BODYARMOR®, Fairlife®, Gold Peak®, Monster® and Minute Maid®) non-alcoholic brands under exclusive franchise agreements principally with The Coca-Cola Company®, Keurig Dr Pepper® and Monster Energy Company®.

For more than 120 years, Coca-Cola UNITED has remained true to its foundational core values of Quality, Excellence, Integrity and Respect. Local relationships, person-

alized customer service and strong community engagement have been the foundation of our business for more than a century. Each year, millions of dollars are invested in our local communities, supporting education, community development, sustainability and nonprofit organizations that empower and impact those in need. Learn more at cocacolaunited.com and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

About Centreville Main Street

Centreville Main Street is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and revitalizing downtown Centreville through historic preservation, economic development and community engagement. Working alongside local businesses, property owners, volunteers and community partners, we champion projects and events that celebrate Centreville's unique heritage while fostering a vibrant downtown for residents and visitors alike. Through collaboration and investment in the city's historic assets, Centreville Main Street helps strengthen the local economy and preserve the character that makes the community special. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.



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LOCAL & GOVERNMENT

Centreville News

By Brenda Hubbard

Sympathy goes out to the family of Jessie Ray Averette who passed away on June 24, 2026. Services were held on July 1, 2026.

Anniversary wishes go out to Bryan and Kelly McDonald who celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary on June 25, 2026.

David and Joan Wallace celebrated their wedding anniversary on June 24, 2026. We send out wedding anniversary to them also.

Birthday wishes go out to Anne Deason who celebrated her birthday on the 4th of July, 2026.

Remember Celebration on the Green will be held this year on Saturday, July 11, 2026.

Continued get well wishes and a speedy recovery goes out to Charlotte Lovelady West.

Belated birthday wishes go out to Neysa McGee, Martha Kay McRae and Michael Watts, Jr. Anniversary wishes

go out to Johnny & Kim Watts who celebrated their wedding anniversary on July 5, 2026.

Birthday wishes go out to Mr. Ed Lightsey who celebrated his 102nd birthday on July 4, 2026. We wish him many more Happy Birthdays to come.

Several with birthdays in July are Rosalyn Adams, Cindy Suggs, Charles Caddell, Matt Hartzell, Teresa Barron Murphy, Anne E. Deason, Shjerry Nichols, Tammy Johnson Tucker, John Hubbard, Sheila Duncan, Jan Costa Berlin, Frankie Fancher and Kasie Kornegay Stamps. We send out birthday wishes to all of them.

Sympathy goes out to the family of Bert Leon Crocker, age 79, who passed away on June 28, 2026. A graveside service was held on Friday, July 3, 2026. Bert will be greatly missed.

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

Woodstock Drug Launches Free Prescription Delivery Across Bibb County

BY SAVANNA LOGAN REPORTER

Access to healthcare just became a little easier for residents across Bibb County.

As of July 1, Woodstock Drug has officially launched its new free prescription delivery service, bringing medications directly to patients' homes throughout West Blocton and all of Bibb County. The new service reflects the pharmacy's continued commitment to putting patients first by making prescription pickups more convenient and accessible.

For many families, finding time to make an extra stop during

the day can be challenging. Whether balancing work, caring for children or loved ones, or simply facing transportation difficulties, having prescriptions delivered at no additional cost can help remove one more obstacle to staying healthy.

The process is simple. Patients who would like to use the service should call their prescriptions into Woodstock Drug before 11 a.m. and let the pharmacy staff know they would like delivery. Staff members will then return the call to verify the delivery address and form of payment, so patients are encouraged to make

sure their phone numbers are up to date. Deliveries will begin shortly after 11 a.m. and will be available Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

The announcement comes after Woodstock Drug recently sought feedback from the community regarding the possibility of offering prescription delivery. With the service now becoming a reality, the pharmacy continues to demonstrate its dedication to listening to the needs of local residents and finding practical ways to better serve them.

As a locally focused

pharmacy, Woodstock Drug has long emphasized personalized care and customer service. The addition of free delivery is another step toward ensuring that quality healthcare remains convenient and accessible for people throughout Bibb County.

Residents interested in taking advantage of the new service can simply contact Woodstock Drug before 11 a.m., request delivery, and let the pharmacy take care of the rest. For many across the county, it's one more way quality healthcare is being brought a little closer to home.



Brierfield Fire & Rescue Launches Lifesaving Blood Transfusion Program

BY SAVANNA LOGAN REPORTER

Brierfield Volunteer Fire & Rescue has reached a historic milestone in emergency medical care, officially launching its pre-hospital blood transfusion program, an advancement that brings cutting-edge, lifesaving treatment directly to patients across rural Bibb County.

With the program now underway, Brierfield Fire & Rescue has become one of fewer than 20 emergency medical service agencies in Alabama currently carrying blood products in the field. It is also the only 100% volunteer EMS agency in the state to offer this capability, marking a significant achievement not only

for the department but for emergency response throughout Bibb County.

Research has shown that for patients experiencing life-threatening blood loss, every minute without lifesaving resuscitation increases the odds of death by approximately two percent. By carrying blood products directly on emergency vehicles, specially trained Brierfield paramedics can begin treatment long before a patient reaches the hospital, providing critical care when every second matters.

The new program allows responders to administer universal donor packed red blood cells and liquid plasma to patients suffering from severe

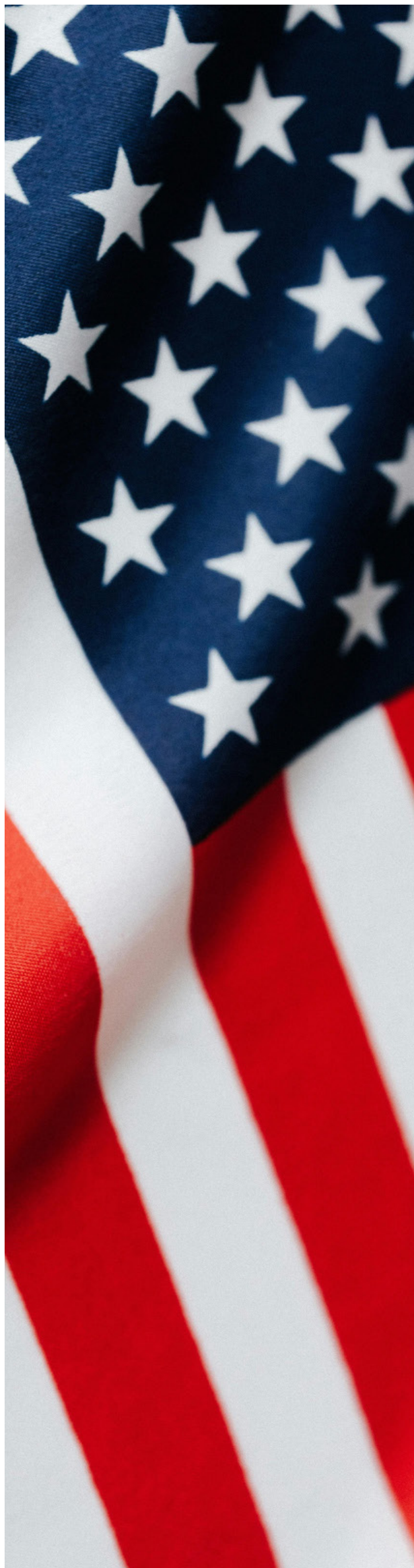
bleeding and other life-threatening emergencies. To ensure this valuable resource is never wasted, blood approaching its expiration date will be exchanged with hospital blood banks.

While the program represents a major step forward for emergency care, it also comes with a significant cost. Treating a single patient with blood products can exceed \$700. Because Brierfield Fire & Rescue is a non-transport agency, it does not bill patients or insurance companies for the care it provides. Instead, the department is able to offer this service through a generous community donor who has fully funded the program as

a 12-month pilot initiative.

Department leaders hope the program will become a permanent part of their emergency medical services, ensuring residents in Bibb County continue to have access to advanced, time-sensitive care close to home.

Community members interested in helping sustain the program beyond its initial pilot period are encouraged to contact Brierfield Volunteer Fire & Rescue to learn more about supporting this lifesaving initiative. Through innovation, volunteer service, and community partnership, the department continues to expand the level of care available to the people it serves.



EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

GOP Primary Runoffs Next Week

Inside the Statehouse
By Steve Flowers

July 8, 2026:

It is apparent that many Alabamians are confused by all the furor and hullabaloo surrounding the continuous federal litigation. The shifting of decisions, new election dates, counting of election results, and which congressman or congressional candidate is in which district has created ongoing uncertainty. I have been around Alabama politics a long time and I have never seen a scenario or so much ambiguity as we have found ourselves in this year. All of the turmoil stems from a Louisianian case – Louisiana v. Callais – where it appears that the U.S. Supreme Court is essentially ruling that the 1965 Voting Rights Act is outdated and unconstitutional.

The Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965 in the wake of the 1964 Presidential election. Lyndon B. Johnson had been elected President for a full term of his own in 1964. He ascended to the Presidency after the horrific assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963.

The country was politically ready for major Civil Rights legislation promised but never delivered by the Kennedy Administration. Kennedy knew that pragmatically, the dismantling of segregation and Jim Crow laws and mores in the South could not be overturned because of the power of the southern block of senators. Because of their seniority and prowess, the senators from the south totally controlled the U.S. Senate. They chaired every major committee, and they were devoted in a dedicated, ironclad block against any Civil Rights or Integration Laws. They were beholden to only white southern voters, as blacks were essentially disenfranchised in the south in 1960.

This group of powerful and distinguished senators were led by Richard Russell and Herman Talmadge of Georgia, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, Russell Long of Louisiana, John Stennis of Mississippi. Our own erudite team of John Sparkman and Lister Hill were in the Southern block. It was led by one powerful “win at all costs” Majority Leader of the Senate, Lyndon B. Johnson. Texan Johnson was an arch segregationists and anti-Civil Rights southerner. His beloved mentor was Richard Russell of Georgia.

When John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, Johnson, who had been put on the Democratic ticket in order to carry the swing Lone Star State in 1960, ascended to the Presidency. Johnson, who had uncanny inherent political instincts, knew that his path to the White House was through the passage of a major Civil Rights Bill.

Johnson used every ounce of political power he possessed to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Bill. He met with Civil Rights leaders Martin Luther King and Roy Wilkins. From their meetings they could determine from the power-driven political animal, crass, tough Texan, that his heart was not in the mission. His “conversion” was based on pragmatism, not morality. Johnson’s forte was not morality.

Johnson ran over his former southern block of senators in ruthless, less than honorable fashion, and passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act. As he signed the monumental law, he looked at the glaring stare of his mentor, Richard Russell, and said prophetically, “I have just signed the south over to the Republican Party for the next 60 years.” He was right, but the Republicans will prevail in the south far past this 60-year plateau.

The 1964 election was a landslide for Lyndon Johnson. He trounced the Republican nominee Barry Goldwater of Arizona. He carried 44 states. The only states he lost were Arizona and the five deep south states of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Johnson came back in 1965 and passed the Voting Rights Act. This legislation only applies to the five states that he lost. It was retribution, rather than equality, that triggered the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Alabama and her sister southern states have been precluded from rightfully and constitutionally drawing our own legislative and congressional districts for 60 years.

The U.S. Supreme Court is determining that the time is up on past discriminatory voting preclusions of black citizens, and that white southern voters are the ones being discriminated against now.

The bottom line is that the Supreme Court has decreed that Alabama can draw its congressional lines the same way that Massachusetts and California can. Going forward, ultimately, we will have a six to one or seven to zero Republican Congressional delegation, rather than a five to two.

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

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The Heart of the Hymn

BY SAVANNA LOGAN

"On the Jericho Road"

Few gospel songs have captured the warmth of Christian fellowship quite like "On the Jericho Road". Written in 1928 by Don and Marguerete McCrossman, the song has remained a favorite in churches and gospel music circles for generations. Though often referred to simply as "The Jericho Road", its original title was "As We Travel Along on the Jericho Road".

Little biographical information is available about the McCrossmans, making the enduring popularity of their song even more remarkable. Just a few years after it was written, the hymn was copyrighted in 1933 by the Stamps-Baxter Music Company, one of the most influential publishers of Southern gospel music.

The song was first released in 1934 by the Propes Quartet, but it gained even wider recognition when the Chuck Wagon Gang recorded it in 1941. Their rendition helped establish it as one of the best-loved quartet songs of its time. Over the years, many well-known artists, including Jim and Jesse, Elvis Presley, and Merle Haggard, also recorded the hymn, introducing it to new audiences while preserving its timeless appeal.

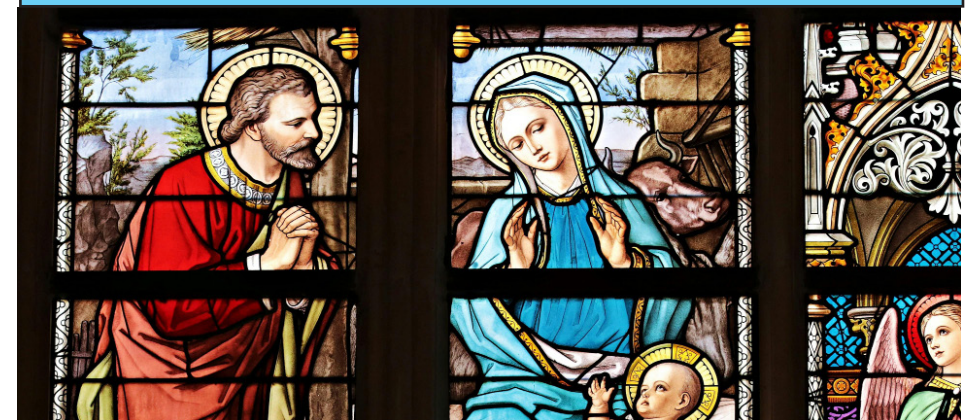
For many Christians, "On the Jericho Road" brings back fond memories of gathering in church to sing in rich four-part harmony. In many congregations, especially those with a strong tradition of gospel singing, it became a favorite because of its uplifting melody and the joy of blending voices together.

While some hymn historians note that its lyrics may not be as poetic or theologically complex as other classic hymns, its memorable tune and beautiful harmonies have allowed it to stand the test of time. More than nine decades after it was first written, "On the Jericho Road" continues to be sung, reminding believers of the comfort found in Christian fellowship and the enduring power of gospel music to unite generations in song.

HOMECOMING 2026

Bethlehem Global Methodist Church in Heiberger is celebrating Homecoming this year on July 12th, 2026. Pastor Tim Craddock will be leading the service beginning at 11:00 AM. Following the service we will have lunch and fellowship with everyone in the fellowship hall.

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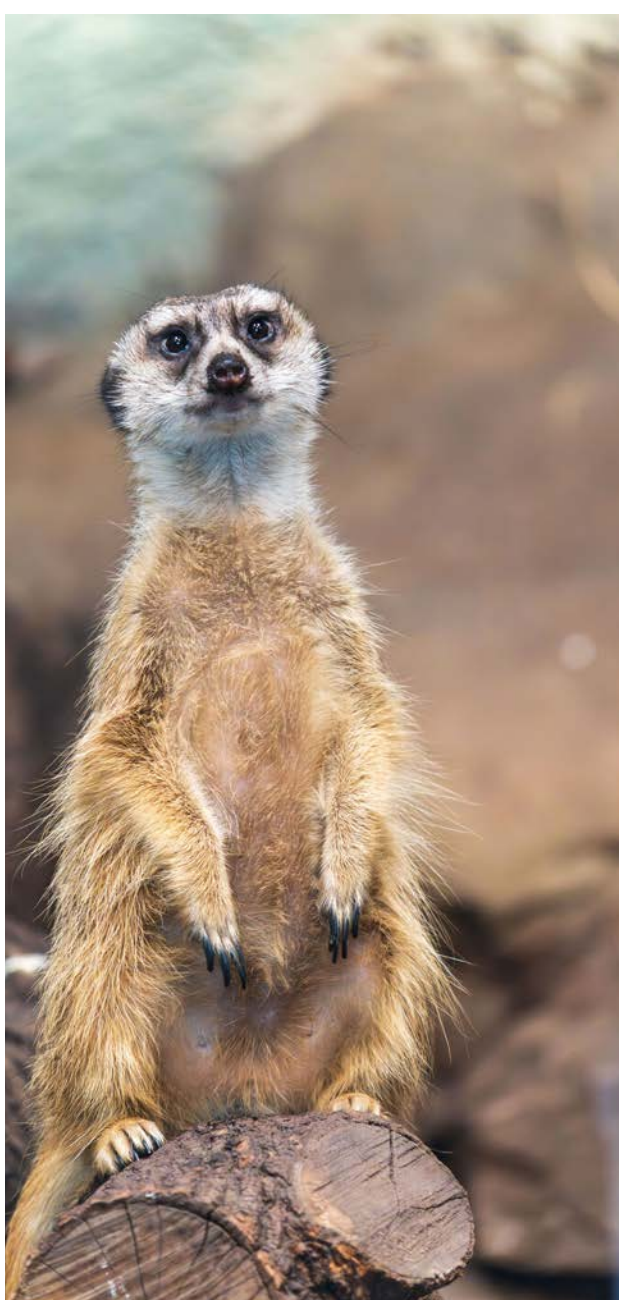
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NEWS

Are You A Subscriber ?

BY MIKE HOBSON
REPORTER
mike.hobson@centrevillepress.com

Last week we ran across an accounting ledger and several old bank drafts for a former subscriber who lived in Brent and was probably a barbershop owner. He paid his annual \$1.00 subscription to the Centreville Press in 1925!

What Is Community News Really Worth These Days?

Every now and then someone tells us the local news "isn't worth the paper it's printed on." We get that a lot. And we accept the criticism that many of our citizens don't use electronic devices to read the news. Times have certainly changed.

That's certainly their right. Everyone decides for themselves what has value.

One interesting fact that is worth mentioning here is that the number of readers who access our online content each week, without a paid sub-

scription, continues to be a huge multiple of the number of readers who purchase a subscription.

This leads us to an interesting question.

What is anything worth?

One hundred years ago, in 1925, a year's subscription to the Centreville Press cost \$1.00. Today it costs \$45.00. That sounds like a staggering increase until you do the math. Spread over an entire century, the average annual increase is about 3.9 percent per year—approximately equal to the average annual rate of inflation.

More importantly, today's subscription costs about 85 cents a week, or roughly 12 cents a day.

Twelve cents.

That won't buy much. Not a postage stamp. It won't buy a stick of gum or a handful of jelly beans. It won't buy a bottle of water, a cup of coffee, or even a plastic

grocery bag in some places.

It sure won't buy a cigar at today's prices. And by the way, what happened to Tampa Nuggets? We will write more about that later. Cigars are no longer manufactured in Ybor City, Florida, they are all imported at outrageous prices.

Yet twelve cents a day supports reporters who often attend and report on city council meetings, county commission meetings, school board meetings, court proceedings, ball games, festivals, community events, and community celebrations. It helps preserve local history, publish important public notices, recognize student achievements, celebrate births and anniversaries, and remember neighbors who have passed away. And yes, we still publish local church events when asked.

We don't follow fire trucks or police cars these days, nor do we report on who got arrested last night. Social media and TV stations enjoy that lane. Every citizen with a cellphone can report what just happened faster than a news organization possibly can. We choose to focus on community news and the preservation of our community story.

Still, some insist that the reporting of local news should be free.

The internet has created that expectation. Search a topic, click a link, scroll a headline, and it feels like information simply appears out of thin air. But it doesn't. Someone paid to gather it, verify it, edit it, photograph it, and publish it. Good journalism has never been free to produce. Only the bill has become less visible.

Consider something else most of us carry every day.

An iPhone can easily cost \$1,000 or more before adding a monthly wireless plan. Over a typical three-year ownership period, the phone itself alone costs about 90 cents a day. Add the service plan, and many people spend \$2 to \$4 every single day just to own and use the device.

Most of us don't think twice about that expense.

Streaming television? Another two bucks or more each day.

Coffee? Three to six dollars.

Fast food? Can you buy a meal for under \$10 these days?

A soft drink from a convenience store? Try to buy one for under Two dollars.

Yet somehow, twelve cents a day for a local news organization that watches over your local government, reports your child's accomplishments, keeps up with your community, and records your hometown's history is considered too expensive by some of us.

Perhaps the better



question isn't whether community news is worth twelve cents a day.

Perhaps the question is what happens when communities decide it isn't.

Across America, thousands of community newspapers have disappeared. When they do, government receives less oversight, voter participation declines, rumors replace verified reporting, and communities slowly lose part of their identity. Historians have called these places "news deserts." Once they exist, rebuilding them is remarkably difficult.

No newspaper is perfect. In fact, news "papers" are rare in the digital age but we still use the term.

We make mistakes, and we accept honest criticism. But the value of local journalism cannot be measured

only by the cost of production. Its real value lies in the information citizens need to make good decisions, hold public officials accountable, and remain connected to one another.

At the end of the day, a newspaper subscription costs less than the loose change most of us leave in the cup holder of our car.

The real question is not whether in-county community news is affordable.

The real question is whether we can afford to lose it.

If you read our news each week, including the free access content that we make available online without a subscription, we urge you to consider becoming a subscriber.

Join the subscribers who believe that preserving our community history matters.

Join the subscribers who believe that preserving our community history matters.



Figure 1 Tampa Nuggets Ready For Shipment

ForestryWorks® "FORESTCAMP26" Equips Alabama Agriculture Teachers with Hands-On Forestry Education and Industry Training

Brierfield, Alabama—Alabama agriculture teachers, forestry professionals, and workforce development leaders gathered June 23–24th at Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park for FORESTCAMP26, a two-day professional development workshop designed to strengthen forestry education and prepare educators to better support student success in forestry programs.

Sponsored by the Alabama Association of RC&D Councils, the workshop brought together agriculture teachers from across Alabama alongside ForestryWorks® staff and industry professionals for an immersive learning experience focused on Alabama's forest industry and forestry career pathways.

The workshop featured presentations from respected forestry and education professionals, including retired Bibb County agriculture teacher Roger Brothers, Lamar Dewberry of Dewberry Lands in Linville, Alabama, and Monroeville forester Rick Dorrance. Drawing on decades of combined experience, the speakers shared

practical knowledge and real-world insights into forest management, forestry careers, and industry best practices.

Throughout the two-day event, participants received hands-on instruction covering each phase of FFA's (Future Farmers of America) Forestry Career Development Event, including tree identification, compass course, timber cruising and estimating, timber stand improvement, and equipment identification. The training was designed to provide teachers with practical techniques and resources they can immediately implement in their classrooms while preparing students for forestry competitions.

In addition to technical instruction, teachers had the opportunity to obtain the ForestryWorks Forest Worker program certification or recertification. This allows educators to provide the industry written and recognized Forest Worker program and certification opportunity to high school students.

FORESTCAMP26 reflects the continued commitment of the Alabama Association



of RC&D Councils, Alabama Forestry Foundation, and ForestryWorks to support agriculture educators and strengthen the pipeline of skilled workers entering Alabama's forest industry through career education, career promotion and training.

About the Alabama Association of RC&D Councils
The Alabama Association of RC&D

Councils is made up of nine non-profit Councils that depend on the leadership, abilities and unique skills of the individuals within the communities they serve. The high level of volunteer commitment and credibility has made RC&D one of the most successful delivery systems in Alabama. RC&D Councils are dedicated to conserving, enhancing, and

developing Alabama's natural and human resources, making Alabama a better place to live, work and play.

A b o u t ForestryWorks® The Forest Workforce Training Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation established in 2018 to develop a pipeline

of workers for the forest industry. ForestryWorks® is FWTI's workforce development initiative created to recruit a sustainable supply of qualified workers for the forest industry through forestry education, career promotion, and training solutions.



The BACK PAGE

New Cahaba River Coalition Strengthens Conservation Efforts, Celebrates Land Acquisition

BY SAVANNAH LOGAN
REPORTER

A new chapter in protecting one of Alabama's greatest natural treasures has begun as Cahaba Riverkeeper and Cahaba River Society have officially merged to form the Cahaba River Coalition, creating a unified organization dedicated to preserving the Cahaba River and its watershed for generations to come.

The merger brings together decades of experience in conservation, education, recreation, science, and advocacy under a single mission focused on protecting a river that is recognized around the world for its extraordinary biodiversity.

Flowing through the heart of Bibb County, the Cahaba River is home to an incredible variety of plants and wildlife, making it one of the most biologically diverse river systems in North America. However, increasing development, pollu-

tion, and more frequent extreme weather events continue to pose challenges to its long-term health.

As the newly formed Cahaba River Coalition, the organization will be better positioned to respond quickly to pollution reports and citizen concerns, expand environmental education and stewardship programs throughout five counties, partner with local leaders to encourage sustainable development, and inspire future generations to become life-long advocates for the river.

Already, the coalition is celebrating an exciting victory for conservation in Bibb County.

The organization recently announced the acquisition of 151 acres in Bibb County, protecting additional land connected to the Cahaba watershed. Preserving land along the river helps safeguard water quality, provides habitat for countless species, and supports the over-



all health of an ecosystem that benefits communities throughout central Alabama.

For Bibb County residents, the Cahaba is far more than a scenic destination. It provides opportunities for fishing, paddling, recreation, wildlife observation, and the an-

nual blooming of the world-famous Cahaba lilies, which draw visitors from across the country each spring. Protecting the river today helps ensure those experiences remain available for future generations.

By combining their resources and exper-

tise, the Cahaba River Coalition hopes to amplify the impact of both organizations while continuing the work that has made each a respected steward of Alabama's longest free-flowing river.

As conservation efforts continue to gain momentum, the recent

merger and the protection of additional Bibb County land serve as encouraging reminders that meaningful progress is possible when organizations and communities work together for a common cause.

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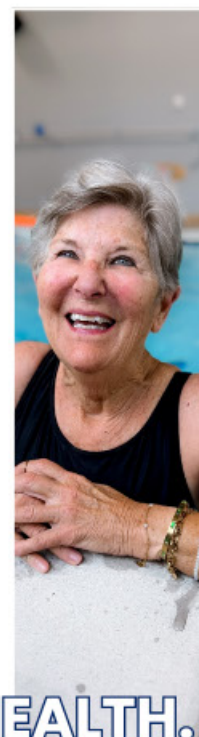


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