

Chamber Welcomes New Manager



Luanne Brooks-Craven

In a town like Water Valley, the chamber office is more than a place where business gets done. People stop by with questions, ideas, flyers, news and sometimes just to ask directions.

Now, as Luanne Brooks-Craven steps into her new role as manager of the Water Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, she hopes the Chamber office will continue to be that kind of place.

“When people stop by the Chamber office, I hope they feel welcomed, valued, and heard,” Brooks-Craven said. “I want the Chamber to be a place where people feel comfortable dropping in with questions, ideas, or concerns, and leave feeling encouraged and connected.”

She is not new to Water Valley. Brooks-Craven moved here in 1989 and said she “immediately fell in love with the community and the people here.”

Brooks-Craven spent 32 years with the USDA Farm

Service Agency, where she worked closely with farmers and built strong relationships “based on trust and service.” The job required patience, organization, dependability and the ability to listen carefully — qualities that also fit Chamber work.

“I have always enjoyed working with people and helping them succeed,” she said. “The Chamber Manager position feels like a natural next step because it combines community involvement, relationship building, and supporting local businesses.”

Local businesses are where people buy gifts, grab lunch, meet friends for coffee, get repairs done and handle everyday life around town. They also sponsor ball teams, support school activities, donate to fundraisers and show up when the town needs them.

Brooks-Craven said she understands the important role those businesses play in the community.

“Small-town businesses

are the heart of the community,” she said. “They create jobs, support local events, build relationships, and give a town its personality and character. They aren’t just businesses. They’re neighbors supporting neighbors.”

As she begins her work with the Chamber, Brooks-Craven said she is excited to learn more about the people behind those businesses.

“I’m excited to learn the stories behind the businesses and the people who make them successful,” she said. “Every business has its own journey and purpose, and I look forward to discovering what motivates them, what challenges they face, and how the Chamber can support and promote them.”

She is also looking forward to learning more about the events, traditions and familiar places that help make Water Valley unique.

“Water Valley has a unique charm and strong community spirit,” she said, “and I want to experience and understand what makes it special to the people who call Water Valley home.”

She brings decades of public service experience and a people-first approach to the role.

“I believe one of my greatest strengths is connecting with people and making them feel comfortable,” she said.

In a small town, much of the work still happens through conversations, phone calls and quick visits between neighbors, business owners and visitors.

She also recently celebrated a new chapter in her personal life. On May 23, she married her longtime friend Cliff Craven. She said it was a reminder that life still brings “unexpected blessings and exciting beginnings.”

Brooks-Craven officially begins her new role June 1 and said her goal is to support local businesses and help keep the Chamber connected to the community it serves.

Northwest's Vice President's List 2026

SENATOBIA, MS (05/21/2026)-- The Vice President's List for the Spring 2026 semester at Northwest Mississippi Community College has been released by college officials. Included are the full-time students who completed the semester with a grade point average of 3.5 to 3.74.

Harleigh Stanford of Oakland, Laine Burns of Water

Valley, Jakya Richardson of Coffeeville, Isaiah Webb of Oakland, and Breeunna Wrenn of Oakland.

Northwest Mississippi Community College is a public, two-year institution primarily serving 11 counties in Northwest Mississippi. For more information visit www.northwestms.edu.



First Baptist Coffeeville will hold their Vacation Bible School beginning Sunday, May 31 through Thursday, June 4, from 5:15-7:30 in the evenings for ages 2 through 12. A light supper will be served each night. We will conclude on Thursday night and invite parents to join us that night for our final worship rally at 6:15 in the sanctuary. Come join the fun as we learn through the theme of "Illumination Station" how Jesus is the Light of the World and how His light should shine through us in all that we say and do.

Gospel Singing

Join us for a Gospel Singing Program Sunday, June 7, 2026 at 3:30 p. m. at ROCKY MT. M. B CHURCH, 1339 County Road 92, Water Valley, MS 38965.

The theme is "When We Come Together, We Overcome Together"

Our guests will be Hearts of Joy, Grenada, MS, Sanders's Chapel Church Chior, Water Valley, MS, The

Christian Spiritual Airs, Winoona, MS, The Redeemed, Memphis, TN, The Alexander Family, Water Valley, MS, Visiting Choirs, Soloists and Others.

Contact program coordinator, Min. Lennell Gayden, at (662) 290-4861 with any questions.

Everyone is invited.
Rev. George Forrest
Pastor

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the South Outlet Channel. The barbecue cookoff is sanctioned by the Memphis Barbecue Network.

For more information, visit thunderonwater.org

New Hope Baptist Church Homecoming

New Hope Baptist Church Homecoming will be June 7, 2026.

Service starts at 10:45 with the guest speaker being Bro. Billy Foster and the guest pianist being Michelle Kendall.

There will be Lunch following church service. Bring a dish and enjoy great fellowship and service.

Calhoun/Yalobusha Outreach

On June 6th at Bruce Museum there will be a school supply give away (Parents, please bring children) from 12-2.

There will be a Black History and Father's Day Program at 4:00 P.M. The guest speaker will be Pastor Stacy Gunn and Skuna Valley Male Choir will be singing.

Hope to see you there.
Calhoun/Yalobusha
Outreach

Usher Celebration

Pastor Townsend and the Usher Ministry of Pleasant Grove invite EVERYONE to a celebration of our ushers and our brothers and sisters in this ministry of service, especially those in the Mt. Moriah District Association and surrounding areas. Additionally, we will honor some of our extraordinary ushers who have passed on in recent years. This celebration service will take place June 7, 2026 at 2:30 p.m. Pastor T.K. Townsend will deliver the divine message. All ushers are asked to dress in uniform.