

JOHN 'JAHNI' MOORE: ALIEN NATION: Living Among Them ... - p. 9

FREE



Looking Forward, Not Behind - p. 4

Friday
January 3, 2025
Vol. 11, No. 18
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

On Michael Vick and New Statues - p. 5

The Valley Weekly

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mr. Charles Vedane

"Only a mediocre person is always at his best." - W. Somerset Maugham

Huntsville Begins Accepting Business License Renewals



It's that time of year again for Huntsville business owners to make plans to renew their operating license for 2025.

Existing business owners may start submitting their renewals on Jan. 2 through the City's online portal. The deadline is Jan. 31.

While on-line renewals are preferred, new or existing business owners wanting to submit applications or renewal information in person can do so on the third floor of City Hall, 305 Fountain Circle, during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Businesses needing to update information, including address or contact information, can do so by submitting an Account Maintenance Form. Additionally, if a business

plans to close, this form will also allow owners to finalize their account.

For more information, contact the City of Huntsville Finance Department at 256-427-5080 or email license-tax@huntsvilleal.gov.



TIME FOR CHEER: *The Valley Weekly* staff enjoyed a festive end-of-year activity recently at the home of Editor-in-Chief Dorothy W. Huston, celebrating the online publication's first decade. Pictured above are (l-r) columnist Gloria B. Caldwell, columnist Preston Brown and his wife Terri. (Photo by J. Saintjones)

2025 Road Resurfacing Projects

	STREET NAME	FROM	TO
1	Al 20 HWY NW	Zierdt Rd SW	Governors West NW
2	Bailey Cove Rd SE	Weatherly Rd SE	Mountain Gap Rd SE
3	Bob Wallace Ave SE	Whitesburg Dr SE	Memorial PKY SW
4	Bob Wallace Ave SW	First St SW	Memorial PKY SW
5	Bob Wallace Ave SW	First St SW	Triana Blvd SW
6	California St SE	Governors Dr SE	Whitesburg Dr SE
7	Green Cove Rd SW	Memorial PKY SW	Redstone Arsenal
8	Hobbs Island Rd	Memorial PKY SW	Ditto Landing
9	Holmes Ave NE	Sparkman Dr NW	Jordan Ln
10	Jordan Rd NE	Moore's Mill Rd NE	City Limit Sign
11	Lily Flagg Rd SE	Whitesburg Dr SE	End of Street
12	Lily Flagg Rd SW	Whitesburg Dr SE	Memorial PKY SW
13	Nick Fitchard Rd NW	Blake Bottom Rd NW	Interstate 565
14	Oakwood Rd NW	Jordan Ln NW	Sparkman Dr NW
15	Old Big Cove Rd SE	Billy Lee Rd SE	Hampton Ridge Dr SE
16	Old Monrovia Rd NW	Indian Creek Rd NW	Hunting TRL NW
17	Old Monrovia Rd NW	University Dr NW	Rideout Dr NW
18	Sparkman Dr NW	University Dr NW	Rutledge Dr NW
19	Todd Mill Rd SE	Weatherly Rd SE	Mountain Gap Rd SE
20	Williams Ave SE	McClung Ave SE	Madison St SE
21	Winchester Rd NW	Pulaski PKE NW	Blue Spring Rd NW
22	Winchester Rd NW	Blue Spring Rd NW	Memorial PKY SW

- huntsvilleal.gov

The Valley Weekly

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FTA Awards Funds for University Drive Study

Huntsville has formally accepted federal grant money to spur a transit-oriented development planning study focusing on three clusters along University Drive.

The Federal Transit Authority awarded an \$850,000 pilot program grant to fund the University Drive corridor study.

The study will analyze three key population nodes along University Drive: the area in and around the Northwoods community, the planned development at Executive Plaza on the campus of the University of Alabama in Huntsville and MidCity District. - Huntsvilleal.gov

A&M Names New Head Football Coach

Alabama A&M University welcomed Sam Shade as the 22nd head football coach in program history, announced by Director of Athletics Dr. Paul A. Bryant during a special



edition of the "From The Hill" Podcast Sunday.

"This is a new and exciting time to bring Coach Sam Shade to the Hill," Bryant said. For more, click [HERE](#).

How to Prevent the Spread of Germs This Cold and Flu Season

(BPT) - Chilly temperatures and winter weather aren't the only burden that comes with this time of year - it's also the peak of cold and flu season. Cold and flu germs can lurk on hundreds of common surfaces we encounter daily, and according to the CDC, the flu virus can live and potentially infect a person for up to 48 hours after being deposited on a surface.

"Respiratory illnesses like common colds and the flu can stop families in their tracks, leading to sick days and missed school or work," said Dr. Mona Amin, Board Certified Pediatrician, IBCLC and Clorox spokesperson. "A holistic germ prevention strategy is one of the most effective ways to help stop the spread of illness-causing germs."

Here are a few simple steps:

Disinfect high-touch and high-traffic surfaces

You likely come into contact with certain high-touch and high-traffic areas in your home multiple times daily that can harbor germs. Think of countertops, doorknobs, light

switches and toilet handles, for example. Disinfect these areas regularly with a disinfectant like Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes to kill 99.9% of bacteria and viruses when used as directed on hard, non-porous surfaces. With any disinfecting product, make sure you follow the product label instructions to ensure you're using it correctly and effectively.

Establish a "drop zone"

Along with high-touch surfaces, germs can be brought home from work and school on items like lunchboxes, reusable water bottles and work bags traveling back and forth. To help mitigate bringing germs home, establish a "drop zone" or a designated place to leave shoes, backpacks and other outside items so that germs don't get tracked through the house.

Practice good hand hygiene

Washing your hands is a simple and effective way to help stay healthy. Make sure to wash your hands often, especially when you are likely to get and spread

germs after being in a public place, before or after preparing or eating food, going to the bathroom or coughing and sneezing into your hands. To make sure you're washing your hands thoroughly, lather your hands including your fingers and under your nails with soap and scrub with warm water for at least 20 seconds - or the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

Take care of your holistic health

Maintaining a balanced diet, staying hydrated and exercising regularly all contribute to your overall immune system. Prioritizing sleep is also an important part of maintaining your immune system, especially when you feel under the weather, because it helps the immune system to repair and rest.

Reset after someone in your household is sick

If you or someone in your household is sick, stay home from work or school to help reduce the chance of others getting sick and prioritize rest and fluids to re-

cuperate. "When someone in your household gets sick, it can feel inevitable that your home will get caught in a 'sick cycle' or a seemingly never-ending loop of getting one another sick," Dr. Amin said. "As a parent with a sick kid, try your best to get a good night's sleep as much as you're able, wash your hands after providing care and disinfect communal surfaces that can harbor germs."

Once your household

has recovered, reset your home. Disinfect hot spots in shared spaces and in the infected individual's room such as doorknobs, light switches and faucet handles. Wash dirty clothing and linens, and to sanitize - or reduce bacteria in laundry - you can add bleach to your wash load of bleach-safe clothing, towels and linens. You can also sanitize dishes after washing them with a bleach and water solution.

Follow CDC guidance

Lastly, the CDC provides up-to-date guidance on vaccines like the flu shot, prevention tactics and different virus trends in your area. Check the CDC's website to stay up to date on the latest information and guidance.

Maintaining a holistic strategy can help you and your household navigate cold and flu season with ease. To find more tips and product recommendations like these, visit Clorox.com.

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ON THIS DAY

On January 3, 1966, one of the most tragic and senseless events of the Civil Rights Movement occurred. Sammy Younge Jr. is shot and killed in Tuskegee, Ala., by White service station attendant Marvin Segrest for using the "Whites Only" restroom at the service station where Segrest worked.



The Valley Weekly

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The Valley Weekly

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	5x10 inches	\$600
Fourth Page	Vertical	
	10x5 inches	\$600
Eighth Page	5x5 inches	\$300
	2.5x5 inches	\$150
Sixteenth Page	2.5x2.5	\$75
	Classified 1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

A Time for Reflections!

As 2024 ended, we found ourselves in a season of reflection and renewal, guided by God's grace. The days between the old and the new offer us a unique opportunity to celebrate the blessings we've received, honor the lives of those we've lost, and embrace the promise of fresh beginnings that God provides. This is a time for thanksgiving—for achievements big and small. Whether it's a personal triumph, a professional milestone, or the simple act of persevering through another year, every accomplishment is a testament to God's faithfulness.

As we gathered with family and friends, we celebrated the joy, resilience, and love that carried us through the year, knowing that every good gift comes from above. Yet, the close of the year also invites us to pause and remember those who have gone before us. Each passing leaves a void that only God can heal, but it also reminds us of the preciousness of time and the importance of our relationships. Let us honor their memory by cherishing those who remain and by living lives filled with kindness and purpose.



Anniversaries, whether joyful or bittersweet, mark the passage of time and the enduring significance of God's work in our lives. They remind us of where we've been and the people who have shaped our journey under God's sovereign hand. Let us use these moments not only to reflect but also to inspire our steps forward with faith and trust in Him. We especially celebrate our dear friends, Eugene and Anne Dickerson (left), who marked their 65th Anniversary on New Year's Eve. Both are faithful alumni of Alabama A&M University, known for their generosity and Christ-like spirit of kindness throughout our community. *(Their daughters appear at right)*. Eugene played a pivotal role in Katie's life, capturing her accomplishments during her K-12 years as she ran track at various schools and events. His iconic life-sized photo of Katie, which still hangs in the Sparkman 9 Campus's gym, commemorates her achievement as the first State Champion at that school as a 9th grader. Marshall England, a retired State Farm Agent, graciously sponsored this award-winning

display. Congratulations, Eugene and Anne! Your lives are a beautiful testament to God's love and faithfulness, and you mean so much to our family and the Huntsville community.

As we step into a new year, God offers us a blank page—an opportunity to write a new chapter, seek His will, and grow in His grace. This year, let us resolve to live as Christ's hands and feet in the world: to lead with love, practice respect, and embrace the spirit of giving. These principles are timeless and especially relevant in today's complex world. Love, as shown through Christ, has the power to heal, unite, and inspire. Let us strive to love unconditionally, reflecting God's love to those who need it most, and seeing His image in everyone we meet. Respect, grounded in humility and Christ-like compassion, builds strong communities. It starts with listening—to understand rather than to respond. Let us create spaces where every voice is heard and valued, and where differences are bridged by the love of Christ.

Finally, let us give generously. Whether through material gifts, time, energy, or compassion, a simple act of kindness can be a powerful reflection of God's love and can ripple outward, touching lives in ways we may never fully comprehend. As the new year begins, may we carry these intentions in our hearts. Let us build a world where celebrations abound, memories are treasured, and every new beginning is met with hope rooted in Christ. Here's to a year of love, respect, and giving—and to the endless possibilities God has in store for us.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20).

Until next week ...

Dorothy



JANUARY 3 - ANGELA YEE - Angela Yee is an American radio personality. She hosts the nationally syndicated morning show *The Breakfast Club* along with DJ Envy and Charlamagne Tha God. Yee gravitated toward marketing and music industries soon after graduation from college with a major in English. She landed an internship with Wu-Tang Management and was hired to assist the CEO, Divine. She also wrote all the skits on GZA's second studio album *Beneath the Surface*. In December 2010, Yee left Shade 45 and began hosting *The Breakfast Club* on Power 105.1, alongside DJ Envy and Charlamagne Tha God. The show is known for being candid and asking tough questions to artists. *Weekends With The Breakfast Club* launched in March 2013 and is nationally syndicated in over 50 markets.



- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org

THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**



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Funeral services will be announced at a later date for **MS. KATIE AYERS** (b. 1950); **MR. JOHN TURNER**; and **MS. MARIA CASTILLO DE MORALES**.

Funeral service for **MS. MARY TAYLOR** (b. 1962) was Sunday, December 29, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **BABY BOY JEREMY MARTINEZ RAMIREZ** (b. 2024) was Sunday, December 29, at the Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.

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(256) 539-8189 - www.nelmsmemorial.net

Funeral services will be announced later for **MR. DOMINIQUE T. BAKER** (b. 1997); **MRS. ANNA E. OLUKOYA** (b. 1951); **MRS. BOBBIE P. HYDER** (b. 1937); and **MRS. BARBARA COLLINS** (b. 1955).

Funeral service for **MRS. BEULAH ANN BALLARD TONEY** (b. 1935) was Saturday, December 28, at Union Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America with the Reverend Dr. Edward Anderson officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. GREGORY A. TOWNSEND** (b. 1946) was Friday, December 27, in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Reverend Earla Sue Lockhart officiating.

Memorial service for **MR. ANTHONY ALLISON** (b. 1956) was Monday, December 23, at the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with the Reverend Dr. W. Temple Richie, Jr. as officiant and eulogist.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW - Huntsville, AL 35810 -
(256) 534-8481 - www.royalfh.com

Funeral service for **MRS. GLADYS COMBRE** (b. 1937) will be Thursday, January 2, 10 a.m., at the Phillips Christian Methodist Episcopal, 2185 Winchester Rd NW, Huntsville, Ala., with Pastor Gregory Scott officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. FREDDIE "DOC" WYCKOFF, JR.** (b. 1937) was Monday, December 23, at the Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 315 Winchester Road, Huntsville, Ala., with Pastor Willie Hinton, Sr. officiating.

Valley Weekly
**Spiritual
Game Plan**
PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

**"Looking Forward,
Not Behind"**

Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

I believe that we all need a faith that looks forward and not behind. Even though it may not look like we are moving forward, if we are faithful God will always continue to bring us through whatever we are going through. Many times, we just want out of our current situations without any action on our part. However, I have found that there are a few things we need to understand about faith and change.

First, we need to understand that faith looks forward not behind. I believe that God is always pointing us toward our future.

Often, it's easy to focus on past hurts and disappointments. However, God doesn't want us to focus on those things. Remember, Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up, do you not perceive it?"

God's plan for our lives is to look forward and not behind. The

apostle Paul says it this way in Philippians 3:13: "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead."

That word straining means making an unusually great effort. Moving forward won't be easy, especially since most of us view life only in the physical. In other words, we can only deal with the things that we can see, touch, feel, or see. However, the spiritual side of us wants to move on. We need to



forget the past and look forward to the future on purpose. The good news is this: God can always make a way out of no way, if we let Him lead us. This year, we all need to start saying, "I'm looking forward to it"—no matter what it is. If God is leading me, then

"I'm looking forward to it."

May God grant you spiritual success in looking forward to the life he has for you.

Question: What are some things that we can do to forget what is behind us and strain toward what is ahead?

Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters, and make sure you purchase a copy of my books, *Spiritual Game Plans For A Successful Life* and *A Champion Game Plan for Life* at amazon.com

NEXT WEEK:
"I Will Not Be Moved!"

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Michael Vick and the new “Statues of Liberty/Ellis Islands”: HBCUs

“Come unto me all ye that labor, and I will give you rest ...” - Matthew 10:28



Credit: NSU Athletics

On Monday, December 23, former eight-time NFL All-Pro Michael Vick was introduced as the new head football coach at Norfolk State University (NSU), Virginia's largest historically Black College or University (HBCU).

(Psst: Add to this list three-time Pro Bowler DeSean Jackson, rumored to soon coach at Delaware State, NFL star expected to take over as HBCU head coach.)

Vick's hiring represents the recent trend of some former pro football stars beginning their college coaching careers at HBCUs.

Most notable HBCU coaching “freshmen” are former NFL All-Pros Eddie George (2021, Tennessee State), and Deion Sanders (2020, Jackson State).

HBCUs: New “Statues of Liberty/Ellis Islands”?

According to Bishop Kim Brown, NSU Board of Visitors chairman, at its press conference, Vick's hiring shows “what HBCUs are all about. Today, we put on full display the mission of HBCUs, . . . We provide opportunity,” At Norfolk State, will Michael Vick be the next Deion Sanders?

HBCUs have always provided opportunities for those just starting out, and seeking to move up - just like modern-day Statues of Liberty and Ellis Islands.

From 1892 to 1954, nearly 11 million immigrants from Europe, Africa, and the Carribeans began their search for better lives and opportunities through New York Harbor's Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Before these immigrants fanned out across the country, Lady Liberty symbolized the “what” of freedom while Ellis Island's disembarkation represented the “how” they would achieve their first steps toward their American Dream.

The “Coach Prime” Effect

And many of these immigrants-turned-college professors began their careers in HBCU classrooms before Deion Sanders, Eddie George, and Michael Vick arrived on their coaching fields.

After that initial HBCU launchpad, many of these immigrant professors moved on to major universities. And so will these coaches, following Deion “Coach Prime” Sanders' example.

After winning two consecutive conference championships at Jackson State - along with making a sizable economic impact on that school and capitol city, Coach Prime, JSU Tigers 2022 Economic Impact on City of Jackson, Sanders moved on to the University of Colorado; is creating there a similar financial boom, The ‘Prime Effect’ is real at Colorado. How long will Deion Sanders stay is a lingering question | AP News; and has become the first HBCU-originated coach to produce the first HBCU-originated Heisman Trophy winner, Travis Hunter, [https://bit.ly/4fBhc8V!](https://bit.ly/4fBhc8V)

Become your organization's Sanders, George, and now Michael Vick. How? Embody the slogan for HBCU Alabama A&M University: “Start Here, Go Anywhere.”



Tim Allston
Leadership Player-Coach & Four-time
Amazon Best-Selling Author
“Leading from the Middle”

<https://bit.ly/4aB9Lwm>, <https://bit.ly/4cYZyuz>

Email Address: leadingfromthemiddle.tim@gmail.com

Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

Happy New Year ...

As we welcome a new year, remember that change doesn't solely depend on the flip of the calendar. Just as every day marks a birthday for someone, each day holds the potential for a fresh start for you. You have the power to embrace a new mindset daily and consider it a new beginning. How wonderful is that?

I often reflect on my journey and remind myself of the gift each day brings for a new start, and I tell myself, “Happy New Year! Now, let's embark on a new approach or strategy.”



Whether it's establishing a new routine or adopting a different behavior, you have the liberty to declare it your mission. It's essential be disciplined in practice and committed to transformation.

However, it's equally important to acknowledge that setbacks can happen, and will. If you stray from your path, remember that just as you once declared a fresh year

for yourself, you can do it again. There's no limit to the number of new beginnings you can initiate. Each day presents an opportunity to reset and renew your intentions.

So, as you move forward, don't wait for the new year to make significant changes. Embrace every day as an opportunity to grow. Declare your goals, be disciplined in your efforts, and when challenges arise, simply start anew. Your journey is yours to shape, one day at a time.

God loves you, and so do I. He has given you a gift; *open it.*



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EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

Thru January 5
 Skating in the Park
 Big Spring Park
 Downtown Huntsville

109 Weatherly Road
 Huntsville, Ala.
 11 a.m.

January 3-5
 "Mike Epps"
 Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Parkway
 SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Times: Vary

January 17-18
 "Corey Holcomb"
 Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Park-
 way SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Times: Vary

January 11
 Elite Field Day
 195 Joe Quich Road
 Hazel Green, Ala.
 eliteathletictraining.
 net

January 26
 "Mojo Brookzz"
 Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Parkway
 SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Times: Vary

Bachelor's Auction:
 Date, Fate & Eliminate
 200 Oakwood Avenue
 NE
 Huntsville, Ala.
 6-11 p.m.

January 29
 AEW Dynamite |
 AEW Collision
 AEW Tix.com

January 16
 Historian William
 Hampton, Museum
 Curator
 Latham Church "El-
 derberries" Event
 RSVP is REQUIRED
 to office@latham-
 churchhsv.org NO
 LATER THAN Sun-
 day, January 12

January 30
 Love's Rosetta Stone:
 The Love Language
 Event
 2205 University Drive
 NW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 6:30 p.m.

January 30-February 1
 "Godfrey"

Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Parkway
 SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Times: Vary

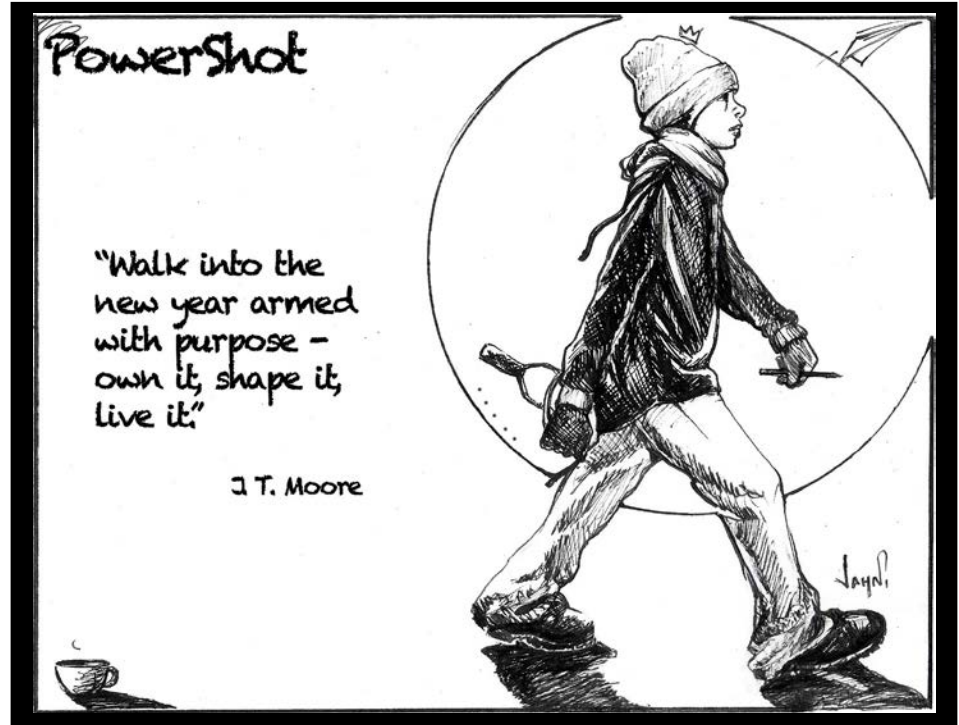
February 8
 R&N Invitation
Featuring:
 Eric Benet, Joe & Mu-
 siq Soulchild
 VBC Propst Arena
 Ticketmaster
 8 p.m.

February 14-16
 "Arnez J"
 Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Park-
 way SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Times: Vary

February 15
 "4 Phase of RNB"
 Mars Music Hall/VBC
 700 Monroe Street SW
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Ticketmaster

February 28
 Heritage Entertain-
 ment:
 The 2nd Annual Rock-
 et City Blues Festival
 "Blues Is Alright"
 VBC Propst Arena
 Huntsville, Ala.
 Ticketmaster
 8 p.m.

February 28-March 2
 "Tony Rock"
 Comedy Standup
 Levity Live
 2012 Memorial Park-
 way SW



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"Africans and persons of African descent must assume the primary responsibility and leadership in historical research ..."

- Chancellor Williams



Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

Mr. Charles Vedane

Charles "Chuck" Richard Vedane was born December 6, 1934, on a farm south of Lewis, Iowa, one of the three sons of Victor & Della Vedane. "Chuck" Vedane graduated from Menlo High School in May 1952 and set out operating a farm adjacent to his parents. By 1953, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and took basic training and anti-aircraft artillery radar operations training at Ft. Bliss, Tex. Following this intense training, Vedane was assigned to a base outside of Niagara Falls, N. Y.

From 1955-58, Vedane entered St. Louis University's Parks College of Aeronautical Technology, from which he graduated with a B.S. in aeronautics, and he secured an airframe and engine license and a private pilot's license.

Vedane's productive career includes extensive stints with the Army Ballistic Missile Command in Huntsville, Ala., where he was responsible for systems testing of Jupiter and Jupiter R&D ICBMs; Marshall Space Flight Center, where he tested Mercury Redstone 1 & 2 and the early Saturn 1 vehicles; Teledyne Brown Engineering, where he

organized and managed a Space Operations Department that would eventually employ about 220 people., as well as served as technical director for Systems Integration with the responsibility for managing 330 people.

As a member of Trinity Methodist Church, Vedane in 1963 became involved in church and community affairs in response to the racial strife throughout the nation. He prepared a letter from Trinity's Sunday School Class to the newly elected Governor George C. Wallace informing him that the Governor's historic "stand in the schoolhouse door" at the University of Alabama was not approved of. This decision has led to more than 50 years of work within the interfaith religious community to promote better relations across religious, racial, and cultural differences.

Vedane also represented Trinity Methodist Church during the organization and formation of an interfaith cooperative known as the Interfaith Mission Service. The mission of the cooperative is help the member congregations grow their capability and capacity to provide direct services



and systemic change in the areas of social justice, racial and inter-religious relations.

Vedane, who ran for Huntsville mayor in 1976, has been actively involved in a number of other volunteer efforts, as well. For instance, he was an organizer and a founding member of the Huntsville Emergency Line Program (HELPLINE); the Huntsville Interfaith Volunteer Transportation Service (HIVTS), later absorbed by the Senior Center; Care Assurance System for the Aging (CASA); and AL IMPACT, a faith-based statewide organization to educate the public and advocate for improved public policies in the area of social welfare and justice.

Vedane and his late wife Lucy have two sons (Scott and Kyle) and a daughter (Rebecca).

"Spotlight on Our Elders" is a weekly feature sponsored by the Rosetta James Foundation to promote **volunteerism** and **activism** in our community among those who are 70-plus. The Foundation also provides scholarships. Learn more about us at www.rosettajamesfoundation.org. Know an outstanding elder (70+) that you would like to see featured? Send us a photo and 250-word write-up to info@valleyweeklyllc.com.



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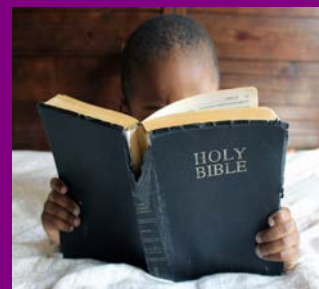
This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, January 5, 2025

Second Sunday

After

Christmas



(Track 2, Year C)

First Lesson:

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalm 84

Second Lesson:

Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a

GOSPEL:

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23



Come Discover
the Magic on
the Mountain!

No matter what time of year you explore Burritt on the Mountain, there is something delightful and new to see. And no matter how young – or old – you are, there is something for you on the Mountain! If you've never visited, you're in for a treat. If it's been awhile, what are you waiting for? Come on up and let the Magic begin!

3101 Burritt Drive • Huntsville, Alabama 35801 • 256.536.2882

www.burrittonthemountain.com

OPEN: April-October: Tuesday - Saturday: 9 am - 5 pm & Sunday: noon - 5pm
November-March: Tuesday - Saturday: 10am - 4pm & Sunday: noon - 4pm

AAMU Secures Advisory Services from Freedom Real Estate and Capital

Freedom Real Estate and Capital (Freedom) today announced that it has been selected by Alabama A&M University to provide advisory services for the construction of its new state-of-the-art Science Building and Student Amenities Building with a combined value in excess of \$140 million. Freedom will oversee the general contractor, design team, and construction process, making recommendations in the owner's best interest.

"We are thrilled to partner with Alabama A&M University again through our advisory services in construction management," said Freedom Project Director, Tyce Hudson. "Having collaborated on several successful projects, this ongoing partnership underscores our shared commitment to innovation and excellence. Together, we are creating a lasting impact as we continue to transform the campus together." "I am proud to reaffirm our partnership with Freedom Real Estate & Capital, LLC for these critical initiatives," said Dr. Daniel K. Wims, president, AAMU. "Freedom's expertise in construction management has been invaluable as we embark on these important projects. Together, we are committed to creating state-of-the-art facilities



firm our partnership with Freedom Real Estate & Capital, LLC for these critical initiatives," said Dr. Daniel K. Wims, president, AAMU. "Freedom's expertise in construction management has been invaluable as we embark on these important projects. Together, we are committed to creating state-of-the-art facilities

that will enhance our campus and support our students' success for generations to come."

The 125,000-square-foot state-of-the-art Science Building will house classrooms and laboratories for the Physics, Biology, and Chemistry departments, provid-

ing students and faculty with modern spaces for teaching, learning, and research. The building is designed to support the university's growing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs, and will enhance both academic instruction and scientific discovery.

The new 93,000-square-foot Student Amenities Building will serve as a hub for

student engagement and support services. It will feature dining facilities, meeting spaces, study areas, faculty offices, a gaming lounge, and social gathering spaces, all designed to enhance the campus experience. This facility will address the university's growing enrollment and will provide a state-of-the-art environment for academic and social development.

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Introducing ...

**The Rosetta James Foundation
19th Annual "Honoring Our Elders" Gala**

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The Rosetta James Foundation is a registered 509(a)(2) Public Charity and educational organization founded for the sole purposes of providing scholarships to deserving students and recognizing the contributions of the elderly in the community while promoting volunteerism and community outreach.

Saturday, March 8, 2025

The Jackson Center
6001 Moquin Drive (Cummings Research Park)
Huntsville, Alabama

12 noon

www.rosettajamesfoundation.org

NOTES OF A NATIVE SON

ALIEN NATION: Existing Among Them or Living as One

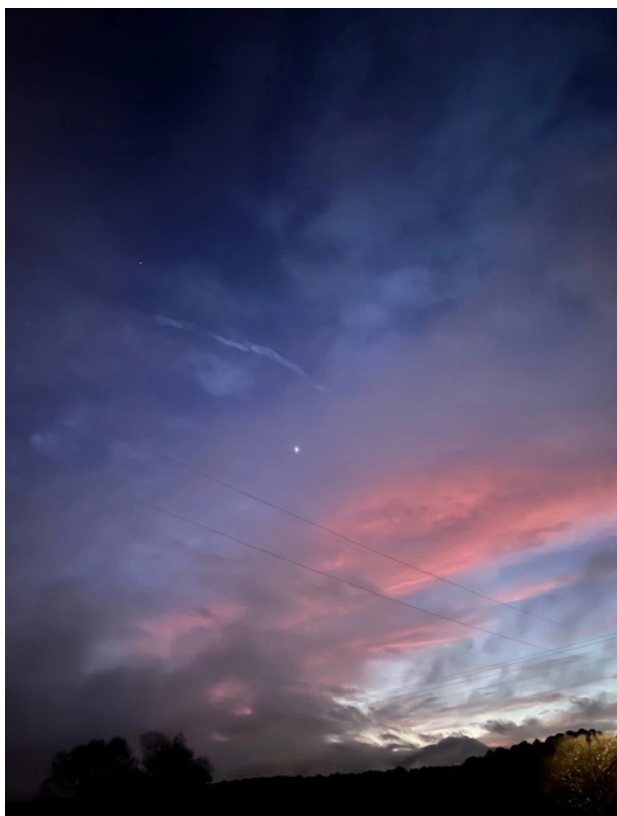
by afroblastik [John 'Jahni' Moore]

There is an ongoing debate regarding the presence of life on Mars and/or other planets. On August 6, 1996, NASA scientists announced that they found evidence of ancient life on Mars in the meteorite ALH 84001, which was collected in Antarctica. We hear of these findings and relegate them as background noise to the sound track of our lives. We simply don't believe or won't because of how we have been instructed to believe. What if there are "99 other un-fallen worlds"? What if we are not really living our own lives? What if we are living this life on someone else's terms? What if we are just falling into line based on patterns set by algorithms and social conditioning? The aptly crowned father of Afrofuturism, musician and philosopher Sun Ra, also from Alabama, spoke of being from another planet, of visiting other worlds. Many, if not most of us, would dismiss this idea or ideal as ridiculous or delusional at best.

Take note that Sun Ra's drummer, Marshall Allen was still touring ... at 100 years old as of May 25, 2024.

In one of the X-Men movies, Aurora and Jean are having a hard time accepting what Kurt is telling them about himself. He responds with these paradigm shifting words: "Most people will only believe what they see with their own two eyes." How limiting that is. This leaves no room for faith or knowing outside of the box. Often when people dare to veer outside the box, they are alienated. Few things are taken into mainstream belief until accepted and co-opted by the status quo. So, most people shuffle through life in quiet desperation, sipping on the tea of forgetfulness, sweetened with a heaping spoonful of groupthink.

The other day I wrestled with this subject and the alien nature of it all. I know where my feet have trod and my mind has traveled. It's been a journey, I tell



you. How many others must also experience the same revelations only to shut them down by the voices of reason encroaching from the outside. All the way home, the ideas of Martians, aliens or whatever else might be out there, here with us or be us, orbited my mind. A short while after arriving home, I received a call from my first born daughter, asking me to go outside and look to the sky (she lives around the corner). I did, and there loomed a luminous starry light.

First, I went through every logical explanation on what it could be. It sat beneath the heavy cloud bank and never moved. It was not a plane or satellite. I finally came inside, knowing what the title of this blog would be. The idea of alienation is inseparable from the idea of living life on our own terms.

What if being alien wasn't about being apart, but being apart from fear? What if we chose courage over comfort, purpose over approval? What if we chose to live on our

own terms, breaking free from the quiet desperation of fitting into lives designed by others? Instead of surviving on what's "dished out," what if we take the raw ingredients of our existence—flawed, messy, miraculous—and create something true and relevant?

The bottom line is that we are all aliens here—strangers to each other, to ourselves, and to the dreams we've been handed, like unwanted but accepted old hand-me-downs. Personal alienation feels as vast and cold as outer space, where the rules of survival aren't written for us or by us but imposed by someone else's limited idea of life space. Are we willing to go where no man has gone before?

Imagine no longer waiting for permission to dream your dream, to love, to thrive in your own rhythm. Imagine a life where alienation isn't exile but liberation, where we reclaim our space and write our narra-



tive among the stars, rather than shrinking into the dark corners of someone else's dream ... or nightmare.

To live fully, boldly, is to embrace the alien within—odd, radiant, and untethered. Life isn't meant to be spent in the shadow of someone else's vision. It's meant to be lived, fully and unapologetically, in the brilliance of our own light. On this planet, where the dishes are often unpalatable and shaped by others, let us become the master chef of our own feasts, the architects of our own worlds. I've caught long glimpses and I know they exist ...

Would you dare to be alien enough to live your dream?