

When Healthcare Gets a Velvet Rope - p. 8

FREE

ADC Clarifies Primary Qualifications - p. 3

Friday
January 23, 2026
Vol. 12, No. 21
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mr. Charles Wayne Scruggs

**ANNUAL
MLK UNITY
BREAKFAST**
Photos from the Event
Monday, Jan. 19
Saturn Ballroom
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

The Valley Weekly

"To love at all is to be vulnerable." — C. S. Lewis

Changes Ahead for TARCOG's Senior Employment

TARCOG's senior employment program is back and seeking 48 individuals aged 55 and older looking

for a part-time job. Previously set at \$7.25 per hour, the pay for participants in the current fiscal year has increased

to \$12 per hour, thanks to a new pilot program. To qualify, applicants must be 55 or older, unemployed,

and have a monthly income under 125 percent of the national poverty level. Call (256) 830-0818 for details.

N. Ala. "Shark Tank"-Style Competition Accepting Apps

The Singing River Trail Launch Tank competition is celebrating a milestone moment in 2026. Launch Regional Partnership, in collaboration with Singing River Trail, is now accepting applications for the fifth annual Singing River Trail Launch Tank, marking five years of champion-

ing North Alabama entrepreneurs through this event. This "Shark Tank"-style competition gives local founders the chance to pitch their business ideas live and compete for up to \$25,000 in cash and prizes. Finalists will present their pitches at Singin' River Live

in Florence, Alabama on April 21, 2026. The selected entrepreneurs will not only compete for non-dilutive funding, but will also receive tailored connections to regional programs, mentors, and resources designed to support their long-term growth. Applications are

open to residents or individuals who work in Colbert, DeKalb, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, or Morgan counties. Winners will be announced live at the event. To apply or reserve a seat to attend, visit launchnvalley.org.

Huntsville Happenings

- Gary T. Whitley, Jr.



theater at Cavalry Hill Community Center and is free and open to the public.

HMO, Parks & Rec Ready for Black History Month

The Huntsville Music Office and Huntsville Parks and Recreation invite the community to celebrate Black History Month with "Voices of Hope and Power," a free community choral concert on Saturday, February 7, at 5 p.m. at Cavalry Hill Community Center.

Richard Showers, Sr. Recreation Center in Huntsville. "This concert is a celebration of the city's diverse culture and the incredible musical talent that exists right here in Huntsville," said Huntsville Music Officer Matt Mandrella. "From our high schools to our universities, these

choirs represent the strength, spirit and future of our community. Hearing their voices come together in one space is both inspiring and unforgettable." Doors open at 5 p.m., with the program beginning at 6 p.m. The concert will be held in the

"Voices of Hope and Power reflects the kind of meaningful, community-driven programming we strive to offer at our Parks & Recreation facilities," said Parks & Recreation Director James Gossett. "Events like this bring people together, celebrate history and showcase the talent that makes Huntsville such a special place."

Now in its second year, the event will bring together powerful vocal performances from Oakwood University's Dynamic Praise choir as well as choirs from Alabama A&M University, Lee High School and Jemison High School.

The inaugural concert was held last year at the Dr.

Commissioner Seeking State Auditor Seat

Madison County Commissioner Violet Edwards has announced her run for Alabama State Auditor on the Democratic ticket, citing her record of fiscal responsibility, operational over-

sight, and commitment to accountable government. First elected in 2020 and re-elected in 2024, Edwards made history as the first Black woman to serve on the Madison County Com-

mission. The Alabama State Auditor is a constitutional officer responsible for auditing the State Treasurer's accounts, tracking state-owned property, and reporting on the handling of



public assets and funds.

The Valley Weekly

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IRS Offers Free Filing at No Cost to Taxpayers

The Internal Revenue Service Free File began accepting individual tax returns a few weeks ago, giving eligible taxpayers an early opportunity to prepare and file their federal income tax returns ahead of the official start of the 2026 filing season later this month.

While the filing season begins soon, IRS Free File Guided Tax Software allows taxpayers to prepare and submit returns and hold them for electronic filing once the season officially begins.

For 2026, eight private-sector partners are offering guided tax soft-

ware products through IRS Free File to taxpayers with an Adjusted Gross Income of \$89,000 or less in 2025.

Taxpayers with an AGI above \$89,000 can use the Free File Fillable Forms, available beginning Jan. 26. These electronic versions of IRS paper forms are ideal for individuals who are comfortable preparing their own taxes using IRS instructions and publications.

Understanding IRS Free File

Each IRS Free File trusted partner sets its own eligibility require-

ments, which may include age, income, state residency and military status. Taxpayers and active-duty military personnel with an AGI of \$89,000 or less in 2025 can find a free federal filing option; some partners also offer free state tax return preparation and filing.

Claim Tax Credits at No Cost

IRS Free File allows eligible taxpayers to claim valuable tax benefits, including the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit and other refundable credits. Refundable tax credits can reduce the amount

of tax owed or result in a refund, even if no tax is due.

How to Find the Right IRS Free File Product

Taxpayers can find the right product by visiting [IRS.gov/freefile](https://www.irs.gov/freefile) and:

1. Select "Explore Free Guided Tax Software", then select the "Find a Trusted Partner" tool for help in finding the right product, or
2. Use "Browse All Trusted Partners" to review each offer,
3. Choose the product that best fits their situation,

and ...

4. Follow the links to the trusted partner's website to begin their tax return.

IRS Free File works on computers, smart phones or tablets.

2026 IRS Free File participants

The following trusted partners are participating in IRS Free File for 2026:

1. 1040Now
2. Drake (1040.com)
3. ezTaxReturn.com (offers English and Spanish)

4. FileYourTaxes.com
5. On-Line Taxes
6. TaxAct
7. TaxHawk (FreeTaxUSA)
8. TaxSlayer

IRS Free File helps taxpayers save money and file their taxes quickly and securely. For more information or to get started on a tax return today, visit [IRS Free File: Do Your Taxes For Free](https://www.irs.gov/freefile).

Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Meetings

The Citizens Advisory Committee of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will meet on **Monday, February 9, 2026, at 5:00 pm, on the 6th Floor of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building, at 305 Fountain Circle SW.** The Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board will meet on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 4:00 pm on the 2nd Floor, (Council Chambers) of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building, at 305 Fountain Circle SW.** To review items on the agenda for these meetings, visit: <http://www.huntsvillempo.org/about/meetings-and-agendas/>. For more information on the MPO, visit: <http://www.huntsvillempo.org/>

PRESSING ON!

WITH

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The Valley Weekly

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Celebrating Dr. Marvin P. Carroll's 90th Birthday

The Valley Weekly

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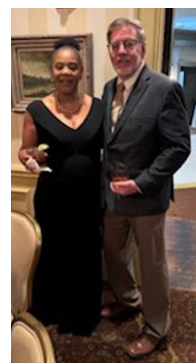
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THEME: "A Life of Impact Through the Decades"
January 16, 2026 | The Ledges | Huntsville, Ala.



JANUARY 23 - MADAM C.J. WALKER - Sarah Breedlove, known as Madam C. J. Walker, was an African-American entrepreneur, philanthropist, and a political and social activist. Eulogized as one of the first female self-made millionaire in the United States, she became one of the wealthiest self-made women in America and one of the most successful women and African-American business owners ever. Walker made her fortune by developing and marketing a line of beauty and hair products for black women through Madame C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company, the successful business she founded. Walker was also known for her philanthropy and activism. She made financial donations to numerous organizations and became a patron of the arts.

- Blackcelebritybirthdays.org



Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



The Valley Weekly

Today's Spiritual Game Plan: "The Narrow Path"

Matthew 7:14 says, "Small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

As we read this scripture, it seems to suggest that most of us would rather do the easy things in life rather than deal with the hard things. This scripture also suggests that most of us would rather hang with the crowd, no matter what direction that they are going because surely everybody can't be wrong?

So, it's easier to walk on the broad path. It's easier to not read the bible on a daily basis. It's easier to not find time to pray.

But remember, just like the bible teaches us, it only leads to destruction. I believe that everybody needs some kind of spiritual covering that comes from hearing the word of God every once and awhile. It could be on the radio or on television or you can watch sermons on Youtube, but it has to come from somewhere. I believe without "spiritual covering", this generation will be lost. Everybody has a

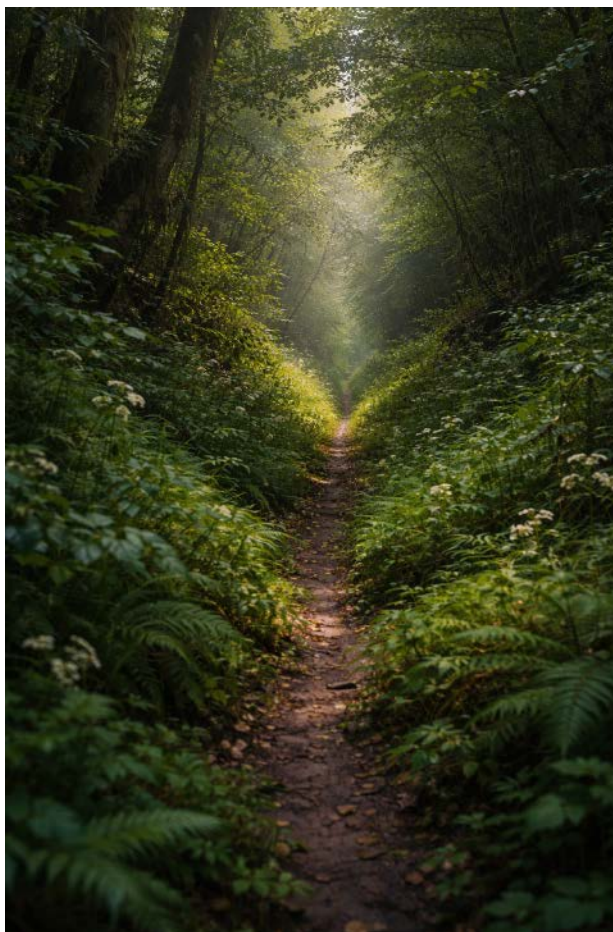
choice in everything that we do in life.

For example, if you really want to exercise, you will find the time and a way to do it. If you really want to get out of debt, then you will stop spending money that you don't need to spend. Also, if you want to grow spiritually, you will find time to read the word of God.

You see, nobody can have everything that they want without any sacrifices. There has to be some give and take.

So, I believe it's time for us to get on the road that is narrow, because our spiritual lives depend on it. Remember—it's the narrow path that leads to life.

Prayer: Loving Father, help us to make the choices in life that keep



us on the narrow path that leads us to your righteousness.

Question: Do you find yourself on the broad path or the narrow path as it pertains to your spiritual journey?

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:
"Make Time"



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THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**



NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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Funeral services will be announced at a later date for the following: MRS. ROSETTA WYNN (b. 1948) and MRS. PATRICIA CARR (b. 1956).



Funeral service for PASTOR ROBERT L. DOUGLAS, SR., (b. 1930) will be held Sunday, February 8, at 11 a.m. at Oakwood Seventh-Day Adventist Church with Dr. Carlton P. Byrd officiating.

Funeral service for MR. REMARCUS COLLINS (b. 1980) will be held Saturday, January 31, at 12 p.m. at St. Rebecca Primitive Baptist Church with Rev. Stacey Stewart officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. BETTIE J. PARKER (b. 1941) will be held Saturday, January 24, at 12 p.m. at Briar Fork Cumberland Presbyterian Church with Rev. Maurice Irving officiating.



Graveside service for MR. JAMES CARL NANCE, JR., (b. 1947) will be Friday, January 23, at 12 p.m. at Valhalla Memory Gardens with Rev. Earla Lockhart Officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. ANNIE (ANN) AARON DICKERSON (b. 1939) was Tuesday, January 20, at Progressive Union Missionary Baptist Church.

Graveside service for MR. WILLIAM D. FAILS, II (b. 1981) was Monday, January 12, at Valhalla Memory Gardens with Elder Dr. Oscar Montgomery officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. LORENE SCRUGGS HUMPHREY (b. 1939) was Saturday, January 10, at St. Mark Baptist Church, 6475 Moores Mill Road, Huntsville, Ala., with Elder Jeremiah Chester officiating.

Funeral service for MR. CHARLES EDWARD THURMAN, SR. (b. 1937) was Saturday, January 10, in Belzoni, Mississippi, at Green Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Belzoni, Miss.

Funeral service for MRS. TIEASE T. HENSON (b. 1971) was Saturday, January 10, at Owens Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville, Ala.



Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

Did You Choose It Away? ...

Did you choose it away? Have you been making decisions, slipping your morals, values, and time away from things that you know aren't good for you?

Did you let your mind beat you for what you know to be a good opportunity, focusing on superfluous things that don't matter?

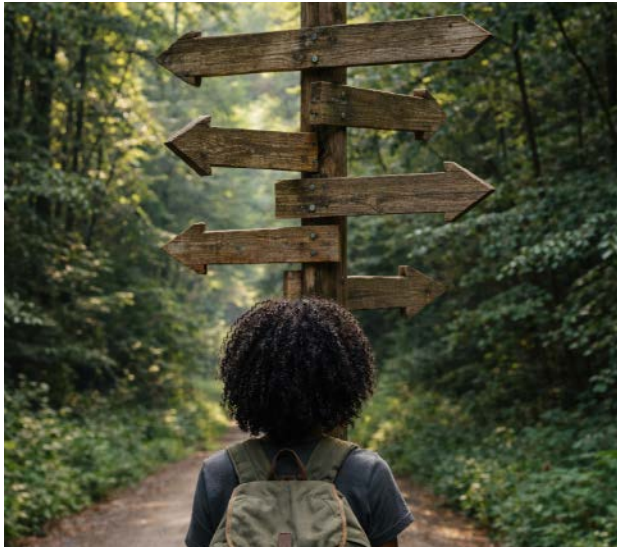
Do you feel your progress slipping away? Or, do you understand you *choose* it away?

Be honest with yourself.

Each decision begets a response, reaction, or circumstance. These decisions ultimately belong to you.

We are given the gift of choice. You can make wise decisions, considering outcomes that will work best for you. You can decide to make decisions and take risks that may or may not pan out.

You can choose to opt



out of opportunities and do nothing.

My point here is that it's all your decision.

It would help if you took accountability for what you gain ... and lose.

Don't choose away the best livelihood you can provide yourself by being lazy, complacent, or afraid.

Choose abundant life

through faith and proper action.

The choice is yours!

Make the right decision.

You can do it. I believe in you! Start believing in yourself.

God loves you, and so do I.

He has given you a gift; open it!

Mild Sleep Apnea and the Leadership Power of the Pause

Let me tell you about a testimony I heard recently. A man was diagnosed with *mild sleep apnea*. Not severe. Not dramatic. Just... mild.

Most people think sleep apnea is about snoring. It isn't. It's about oxygen deprivation—often mild, gradual, and unseen.

His sleep care specialist didn't prescribe a miracle. Instead, she prescribed a pause: *Lose some weight. Change your rhythm. Get some real rest.*

And the outcome surprised me - and it worked. The man said that for four straight weeks, he stayed awake and alert in church!

Black "Lines" Matter

That "prescription" line matters. Because mild sleep apnea isn't really about sleep. It's about *unseen obstruction*. Oxygen slowly restricted ... until presence disappears.

Leadership suffers from the same condition.

I call it "ego-holism" — unmanaged ego, whether inflated or deflated. Like mild sleep apnea, it rarely announces itself. Not loud. Not arrogant. Often, just . . . mild. Leaders still show up. Still speak. Still decide. But something vital is restricted: humility, listening, and presence.

And that's why transformation, that real leadership change, rarely begins with a bold action, rarely with acceleration. It begins instead with a **strategic pause**."

I call this strategic pause "Targeting the Problem". And the first discipline is simple: Glance back quickly. Look honestly at where fatigue, distraction, or disengagement have crept in unnoticed.

I've been telling this story carefully. And intentionally. Because the truth is, **that man... was me.**

And like many of God's lessons in my life, he didn't start with my mouth. He started with my body.

So before we rush forward, the first leadership move is simple: *glance back quickly*. And then ask: where might I be nodding off in a place I claim devotion?"



Tim Allston

Leadership Player-Coach and Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author, "Leading from the Middle"

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Join us Mondays through Fridays for *Tim Allston's Leadership Nuggets: Educating, Equipping, and Empowering Emerging Leaders to Manage Ego Problems in 60 Seconds* (7am, 1pm, and 7pm), as well as for *The Tim Commandments of Leadership* (4pm), all Central Time and all available on Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

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The Valley Weekly

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

January 24

Fantasia with Anthony Hamilton
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
8 p.m.

January 27-February 1

"The Sound of Music"
Mark C. Smith Concert Hall
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.

January 30-February 1

Kountry Wayne
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

February 1

Harlem Globetrotters
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
3 p.m.

February 6

Diana Krall
Mark C. Smith Concert Hall
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
7:30 p.m.

February 6-7

Dedrick Flynn
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

February 12

Season Sips Cocktail Class
The Orion Amphitheater
701 Amphitheater Drive NW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 964-9556
6:30 p.m.

February 13-15

Joe Gatto
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

February 22

Heart
Concert
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.

February 26-March 1

Disney on Ice
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

March 5

KC and The Sunshine Band
Mark C. Smith Concert Hall/Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

7:30 p.m.

March 6-7

Bill Bellamy
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

March 12

Season Sips Cocktail Class
The Orion Amphitheater
701 Amphitheater Drive NW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 964-9556
6:30 p.m.

Aaron Branch

Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

March 13

Akeem Ali
Live

Mars Music Hall
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

March 15

3rd Annual Rocket City
Blues Festival
Featuring:
West Love
J-Wonn
Tucka
King George
Mike Clark Jr.
EJ Jones (Ticketmaster)
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

March 20-21

DeRay Davis
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

March 27-29

The 6th Annual Women's

Expo Conference
The Westin Hotel
Huntsville, Ala.
www.thewomensexpohsv.com

April 10

The R&B Lovers Tour
Featuring Keith Sweat, Joe, Dru Hill and Ginuwine
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala. - 8 p.m.

April 17

Concert
Rod Stewart
"One Last Time"
(with Special Guest Howard Jones)-RodStewart.com
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala.

April 17-19

Jim Cummings
Huntsville Comic & Pop Culture Expo
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

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

Mr. Charles Wayne Scruggs

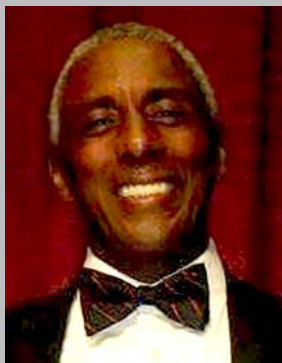
Mr. Charles Wayne Scruggs was born to the late Reverend and Mrs. Earl Scruggs, Sr. He grew up in Toney, Alabama, and attended Sparkman High School. He attended J.F. Drake Technical College and became a certified welder. Later, he continued his formal education at Calhoun Community College, where he obtained an associate degree in education. He earned a B.S. degree in education from Athens State University.

Mr. Scruggs is a retiree of the Madison County Board of Education, Madison County Career Academy, where he taught welding for over 30 years. His common sense approach in a no nonsense teaching environment; and, adopting the philosophy of "no student left behind", formed the basis of his long and successful career in technical education. Because of the high level of training he provided, Scruggs was a community resource person, called upon by local industries and businesses for employment opportunities for his students. His teaching prepared students to become skilled laborers. He is particularly proud that 80-100 percent of his students either went on to post-secondary school or were hired in welding positions at NASA, Teledyne Brown Engineering, Schwarze Industries, and SCI Systems, to name a few. Scruggs was named 2014 Teacher of the Year among Madison County Schools Teacher & Support

Professionals.

Scruggs is known for his love of fishing. Through obedience to God, he is committed to following Christ, and being a fisher of men, in accordance with Matthew 4:19: "And Jesus said unto them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men." This was demonstrated by being actively involved in the first formal witnessing teams at Antioch Baptist Church, East Chicago, Indiana, and establishing the Witnessing/Evangelism ministry at the First Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama, both under the leadership and pastorate of Dr. Julius R. Scruggs. Charles organized witnessing teams, and taught witnessing seminars to equip Christian soldiers to reach the unsaved. These teams actively sought out and witnessed to those seeking salvation, and sometimes those who were lost and needed a loving word from God.

Scruggs is an anointed, gifted, and inspiring teacher. His effective and "tell it like it is" teaching, led to his becoming a faculty member for the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education, where he taught Evangelism and Church Growth for more than 10 years. His classes included pastors and lay ministers, and the impact of his teaching can be found in churches committed to bringing souls to Christ, throughout the United States. Scruggs' dedication to making disciples can be



found throughout the community. He is a sought-after guest Vacation Bible School teacher, and he conducts Evangelism Seminars for churches and outreach ministries. Scruggs has touched thousands of lives and has led countless souls to Christ. He continues to serve at First Missionary Baptist Church as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, Evangelism/Witnessing coordinator, Bible Study teacher, and in other outreach ministries.

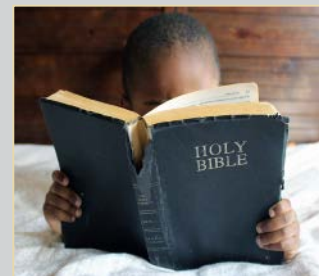
Scruggs, since his retirement, has turned his attention to farming. He can be found tending to his cows, his gardens, and helping neighbors. Even though he has an immediate family of three, his gardens yield enough produce to feed 50 or more. His wife of 49 years, Debra, encourages him to share with as many folks as possible. Charles has three daughters, and two grandchildren. When he wants to relax, you'll find him on the banks or on a boat with his fishing poles, or spending time with family and friends.

"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.



This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, January 25, 2026
Third Sunday after
the Epiphany



(Track 2, Year A)

First Lesson:

Isaiah 9:1-4

Psalm 27:1, 5-13

Second Lesson:

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

GOSPEL:

Matthew 4:12-23

"POWERSHOTS"

John "Jahni" Moore

TRUTH 2 POWER

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AUNT IRMA MAKES IT PLAIN...

When Healthcare Gets a Velvet Rope



They call it *concierge medicine*, but honey, don't let that soft word fool you. This is not about someone bringing you tea and checking your blood pressure. This is healthcare with a velvet rope, a bouncer, and a monthly cover charge.

Concierge medicine is when doctors charge patients a yearly fee—often between \$1,500 and \$10,000—for “enhanced access.” That means same-day appointments, longer visits, and direct phone or text access to your doctor. It sounds lovely. And for folks with money, it is.

But let Aunt Irma pull the curtain back.

This trend didn't rise because doctors suddenly got more caring. It rose because traditional medicine is breaking under corporate pressure. Doctors are **drowning in paperwork, insurance rules, and patient loads** so heavy that many barely have 10 minutes to look you in the eye. Concierge medicine lets doctors escape that grind by shrinking their patient list—sometimes from 2,500 patients down to 300—and charging those 300 people for the

privilege.

That's good for doctors. It's good for wealthy patients. But for everyone else, especially Black communities, it's a warning bell.

Here's why.

Black Americans already face longer wait times, fewer specialists, underdiagnosis, and higher rates of chronic illness. We don't suffer because we don't value health; we suffer because the system was never designed to serve us equally. Now concierge medicine is quietly siphoning off many of

the best physicians into private clubs for the well-insured.

What happens to the rest of us when experienced doctors leave the general pool? We get what's left: overworked clinics, rushed visits, and care that's more reactive than preventive.

And let's talk about money. Many Black families are middle-class on paper but financially stretched in reality—student loans, family obligations, medical debt, rising housing costs. A \$2,000 annual concierge fee might not sound

outrageous to Wall Street, but to a Huntsville household juggling college tuition, aging parents, and a leaky roof, it's another barrier to dignity.

That creates a new kind of segregation—not by law, but by credit card.

Now, don't misunderstand Aunt Irma. There are Black doctors opening concierge practices to serve Black patients better. That can be powerful. Personalized care, longer conversations, and culturally competent medicine save

lives. But if this model becomes the norm, not the exception, we risk a future where high-quality healthcare becomes something you subscribe to like Netflix.

And, when healthcare becomes a luxury product, history tells us who ends up in the discount aisle.

So what should we be doing?

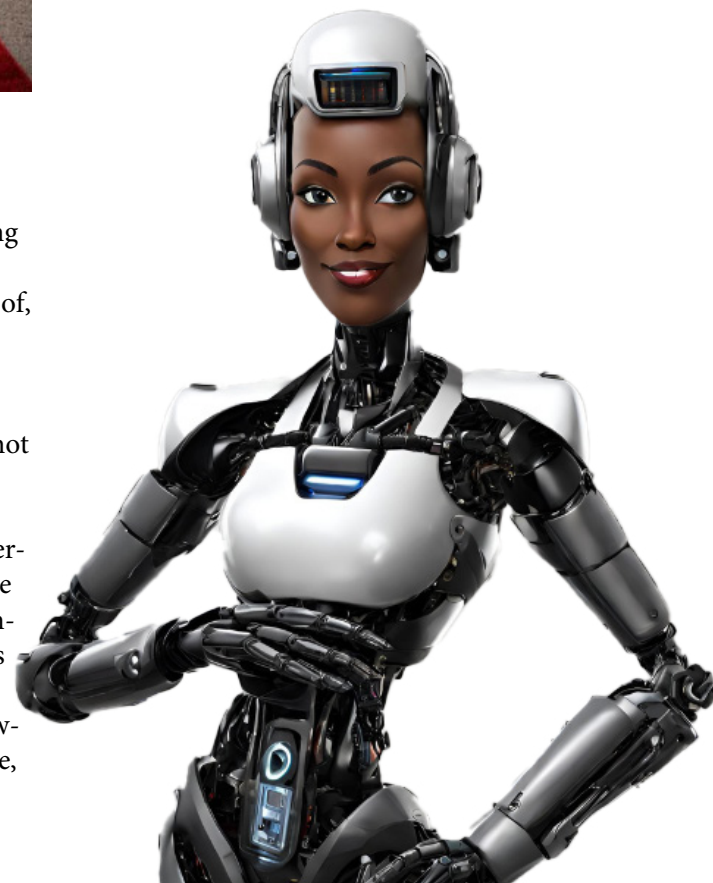
We should demand stronger public clinics, better insurance reimbursement, and incentives that keep good doctors in underserved communities. We should

support Black physicians who are trying to innovate without abandoning their people. And we should watch carefully as medicine turns into a two-tier system—one for those who can pay extra, and one for those who can't.

Because once health becomes a membership club, sickness becomes a sentence.

And Aunt Irma doesn't believe anybody in this Valley should have to swipe a platinum card just to be treated like a human being.

- TVW Staff



Local ADC Unit Clarifies 2026 Qualifying Process for May 19 Democratic Primary

The Alabama Democratic Caucus (ADC) - Madison County Unit is initiating efforts to inform the local Democratic electorate of the opportunity to run for a seat on the Madison County Democratic Executive Committee (MCDEC).

MCDEC is the county committee of the (national) Democratic Party and the Alabama Democratic Party.

ADC's goal is to help the local Democratic Party educate registered voters of Madison County who wish to be known as Democrats about the local party's process for becoming an elected member of MCDEC.

No more than three men and three women (including individuals who are non-binary) who have the most votes from each of Madison County's six county commission districts will serve on the MCDEC, They are **elected officials** that lead the party at the local level.

The qualifying process is very easy to run for this office. You must fill-out and **submit your "Declaration of Candidacy" form** (see below) and pay the qualifying (registration) **fee of \$25.**

By completing these steps, your name will appear on the ballot for the **Democratic Primary on May 19, 2026.** The qualifying timeframe is **January 5 through January 23, 2026.**

Note: MCDEC is not a club. The qualifying fees are not membership dues.

MCDEC is providing guidance to all prospective candidates who attend the **registration and information session on January 15, 2026 at 6 pm at University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) Morton Hall.**

Individuals can obtain the required form and submit their fee. If you are unable to attend this session, **you may contact the MCDEC Chair at mcdecbiz@gmail.com** to arrange an appointment to submit your form and fee.

• To confirm your

county commission district, visit madison-countyvotes.org

• The qualifying form, or "Declaration of Candidacy" is available at madisoncountydemocrats.com. Just scroll down until you see the Adobe image:

• There are two fields of information on the form with boxes to be checked. **Skip those two fields.**

• Elections to be held on **Tuesday 19 May 2026; Tuesday 16 June 2026**

• The Office is **Madison County Democratic Executive Committee [include your gender identification of Male, Female, or Non-Binary]**

• The District is the **County Commission District where you live.**

• The qualifying fee can be paid at <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/payqualifying>.

If you have questions or comments about this announcement, please email the ADC Madison County Unit at madi-sonco.adc@gmail.com or call 256-682-9481.



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ANTHONY "Gip" GIBSON

Blue Opulence REALTOR® Charity Ball & Gala

Huntsville Area Association of Realtors

The Huntsville real estate community gathered in elegance and purpose Friday evening as the Blue Opulence REALTOR® Charity Ball & Gala was held at The Jackson Center. The annual event brought together REALTORS®, community leaders, and supporters for an evening celebrating service, leadership, and philanthropy.

Beyond the evening's refined atmosphere, the gala served a meaningful mission: raising support for Girls Inc., an organization dedicated to empowering young girls through education, mentorship, and leadership development.

Attendees were reminded that the night's true purpose extended far beyond fashion and festivities—it was about investing in the next generation.

A highlight of the evening was the installation of the 2026 Huntsville Area Association of REALTORS® (HAAR) president and Board of Directors. Regina Mitchell, broker of Regina Mitchell Real Estate and owner of Madison Alabama Real Estate School, was officially sworn in as the new HAAR President. Her installation marked a historic moment for the association, as Mitchell became only the third Black president in HAAR's 70-year history.

Mitchell's leadership represents both progress and promise for the organization, reflecting a commitment to inclusivity, professional excellence, and community engagement within Huntsville's real estate industry.

The Blue Opulence Gala once again proved that elegance and purpose can walk hand in hand. Through charitable giving, recognition of leadership, and a shared dedication to service, the evening embodied the spirit of a profession that not only builds homes—but also strengthens communities.

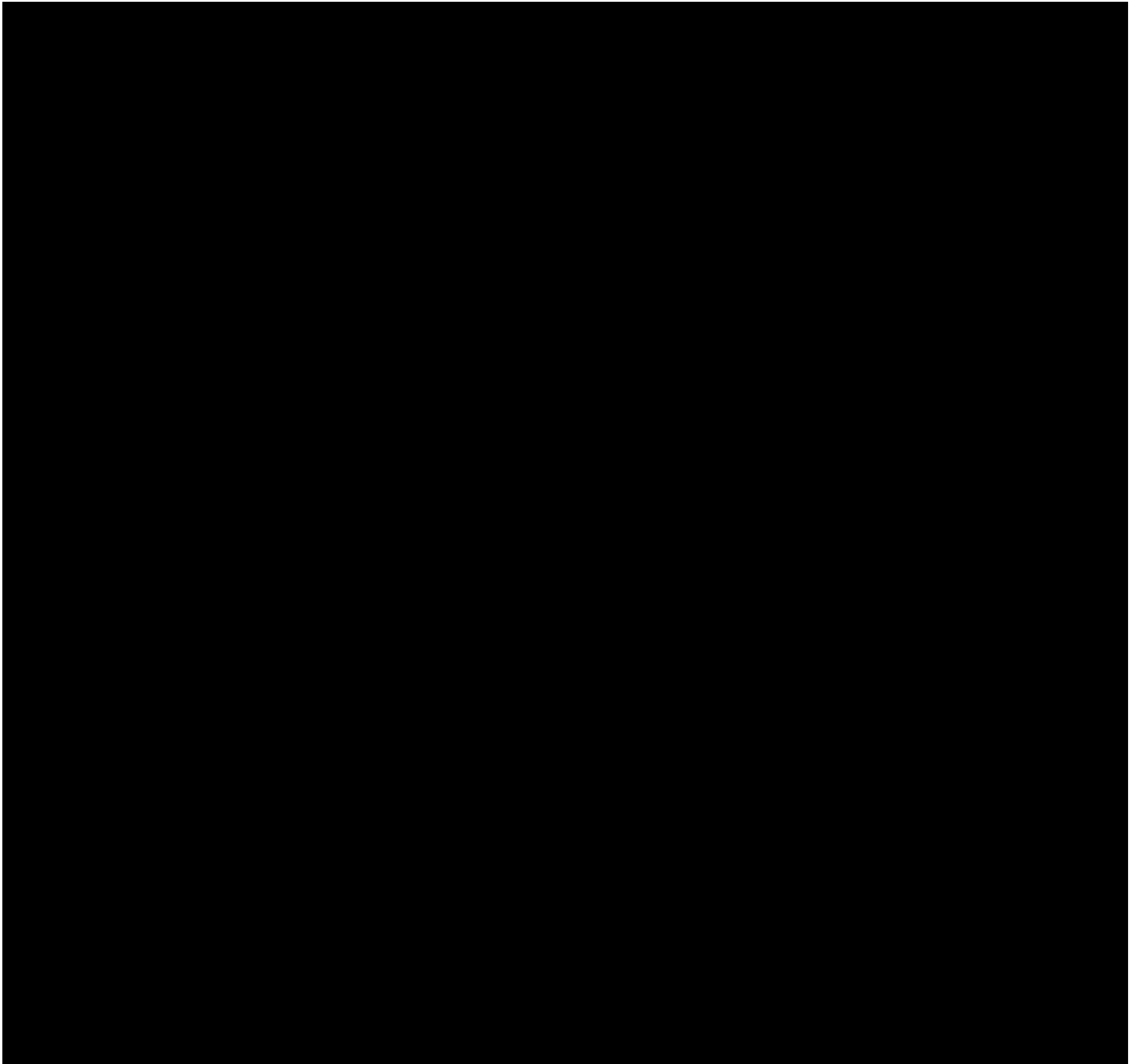


Delta Theta Lambda-Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Scenes from Annual MLK Unity Breakfast

Photos by Jerome Saintjones







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