

ALLSTON: Beating 'Trump-Xhaustion' - p. 5 FREE



AAMU and MarCom Awards - p. 8

Friday
February 28, 2025
Vol. 11, No. 26
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Dr. Mary Sanford Brown

The Valley Weekly

"I do not weep at the world; I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife." - Zora Neale Hurston



Tuskegee, A&M 1890 Scholarships Hit

The USDA 1890 Scholars Program, aimed to provide educational and career opportunities for students from rural or underserved communities around the country, has been suspended

"pending further review," according to www.usda.gov.

The nearly 100 scholarships provide ag, food science, and environmental science students at Tuskegee, Alabama A&M Univer-

sity and other 1890 land-grant schools with full tuition, fees, books, room and board, as well as work experiences at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

See **IMPACT**.

AAMU Holds Male Initiative Week

The Alabama A&M University Office of Student Activities & Leadership Development presented the 2025 Male Initiative Week - a transformative experience designed to empower, uplift, and prepare the next generation of male leaders -Feb. 16-21 on campus.

This year's theme, "Kings of the Future," underscored the values of growth, leadership, and brotherhood,



fostering a community where men could engage in meaningful discus-

sions, mentorship, and camaraderie.

This year's distinguished guest was renowned actor and producer Cory Hardrict. Hardrict has built an impressive career starring in films such as "American Sniper," "Brotherly Love," and "November Criminals."

Hardrict also owns his own production company, Hardcor Films, and exemplifies resilience, ambition and success.



StoryCorps Sets up at Lowe Mill Thru March 14

The StoryCorps Mobile Tour will be onsite at Lowe Mill ARTS & Entertainment through March 14, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. The public is invited to record and share their stories.

StoryCorps is a traveling oral

history project in partnership with National Public Radio, the Library of Congress, and various museums and archives.

Lowe Mill is located at 2211 Seminole Drive SW, Huntsville, Ala.

Demolition of Old City Hall Now Underway

Demolition of the former City Hall has started, marking the demise of a building that served as the City's center of government for almost 60 years.

The slender, slate gray building at 308 Fountain Circle has been planned for removal as City Hall

relocated to its new facility across the street in May 2024.

Last week, the City unveiled its master plan for the site of the former City Hall, the construction of which will begin soon after the demolition and removal of debris is complete.



Preparation for the demolition has been ongoing for months. Abate-

ment was recently completed and all utilities to the eight-story building have been disconnected. Most of the building's windows as well as precious metals, such as copper, have been removed, leaving essentially nothing but a shell of the

building as demolition began.

The City awarded Britt Demolition and Recycling, Inc., the contract for the project in November.

The contract states the process must be completed by June.

- Huntsvilleal.gov

The Valley Weekly

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Smart Strategies to Boost Savings Like You Mean It

(BPT) - Savings can help meet unexpected expenses, fund short-term spending goals and protect against unanticipated life events. At the same time, leaving too much of your money uninvested can jeopardize long-term financial goals like retirement. Set a goal to be more intentional with your savings by getting clear on your savings goals, ensuring your savings earn a competitive return and putting excess cash to work

for your long-term financial goals.

Set Savings Goals.

1) Ensure a buffer for unexpected expenses; 2) Money to fund these goals that are a year or two away probably shouldn't be exposed to much risk of loss and may be best kept in a cash savings account; 3) Think about building a more substantial financial safety net that can cover three-to-six months of liv-

ing expenses.

Earn What You Deserve.

Saving with intention means selecting the best savings vehicle for your personal savings goals. Consider whether you value FDIC insurance, ease of money movement or if you're simply looking for the highest return on your savings.

Build on your savings foundation.

While crucial for fund-

ing short-term financial goals, an intentional savings plan can also create the foundation for a longer-term financial plan.

Once you have a solid savings plan in place, consider whether you can move excess cash - beyond the amount needed to meet

your identified savings goals - into higher-earning-potential asset classes like stocks and bonds for long-term goals like retirement.

Whether your savings goal is to start your first rainy-day fund or shop around for higher returns on your well-funded pig-

gybank, ensure you have clear goals and a plan for reaching them.

All investing is subject to risk, including the possible loss of the money you invest.

Investments in bonds are subject to interest rate, credit, and inflation risk.

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12-24

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Alabama's Workforce Is Key to Manufacturing's Future

by Carolyn Lee and Dr. Patricia Sims

The Valley Weekly

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The Valley Weekly

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Huntsville has long been a symbol of American innovation. From the Apollo missions to the cutting-edge work happening today at Redstone Arsenal and the Marshall Space Flight Center, this city embodies the power of American ingenuity. That same spirit of innovation fuels our nation's manufacturing industry—an industry that is not only driving economic growth but also shaping the future of work.

Right now, manufacturing in the United States is at a crossroads. The industry has momentum—more companies are investing in new facilities and expanding operations than we've seen in a generation. At the same time, the industry faces a stark challenge: a **study** by The Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte projects that by 2033, the U.S. will need to fill 3.8 million manufacturing jobs, yet 1.9 million could go unfilled if we don't act boldly.

This isn't just a workforce issue; it's an economic and national security issue. With Huntsville's role in aerospace and defense, and Alabama's growing advanced manufacturing sector, the state has a unique opportunity—and

responsibility—to help solve this challenge.

Manufacturing is one of **Alabama's economic pillars**, supporting 267,700 jobs and accounting for 15.8% of the state's GDP. These are high-paying, family-supporting careers, with the average manufacturing worker earning more than \$90,384 a year in wages and benefits. Yet companies across the state are struggling to fill open positions.

This workforce shortage isn't a short-term problem—it's structural. Retirements, industry growth and new investments are all contributing to an unprecedented demand for skilled talent. And with rapid technological advancements in artificial intelligence, automation and robotics, we don't just need more workers—we need workers with new skills.

So, how do we meet this challenge? The answer starts with changing perceptions and expanding pathways into manufacturing.

For too long, too many Americans have been told that a four-year degree is the only path to success. But nearly half of all open jobs in manufacturing



Sims and Lee

today do not require a degree—they require skills. That's why it's critical to invest in apprenticeships, technical education and hands-on training programs that allow students to earn while they learn.

A key part of this effort is the MI's **Innovators Quest**, a new, hands-on interactive experience designed to engage young students in manufacturing. Inspired by classic board games like The Game of Life and the storytelling of modern fantasy games, Innovators Quest introduces students to the real-world problem-solving and creativity that make manufacturing careers exciting. Developed with the support of Honda, the program helps kids explore technology, engineering and innovation in a way that makes them see themselves as future manufacturers. We need more programs like this to change outdated perceptions of manufactur-

ing and show young people that this industry is where the future is being built.

Once students are interested in manufacturing, we need to provide clear career pathways. That's where the **Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education** (FAME) comes in.

Originally founded by Toyota and now led by The Manufacturing Institute, FAME is the gold standard for how employers and educators should work together. Here in Alabama, FAME is preparing students at places like Drake State Community & Technical College for careers in advanced manufacturing. Students work three days a week while attending classes two days a week, gaining the hands-on experience that will set them up for long-term success.

These aren't just jobs—they are careers. Within five years of graduating from FAME, many students are earning six-figure salaries. And companies like Toyota Alabama, Mazda Toyota Manufacturing, Blue Origin, Bruderer, Runergy and Plasma Processes are investing in FAME because they know the value of a skilled workforce.

The future of manufacturing is being written right now. With new technologies transforming how manufacturers design, build and create, we need to ensure that America remains the global leader in modern manufacturing. And that starts with investing in our workforce.

Huntsville and Alabama have always been at the forefront of innovation. As we look ahead, manufacturers, educators and policymakers must work together to strengthen our talent pipeline. Whether through partnerships with schools, investments in training programs or efforts to bring more people into manufacturing, Alabama has the opportunity to set the standard for the nation.

Together, we can ensure that manufacturing continues to be the backbone of America's economy—and that Alabama remains a powerhouse of innovation, opportunity and growth.

Carolyn Lee is president of the Manufacturing Institute, the 501(c)3 workforce development and education affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers. Dr. Patricia G. Sims is the president of Drake State Community and Technical College.

February 28 - RAE DAWN CHONG - Rae Dawn Chong is a Canadian American actress best known for her roles in the films *Quest for Fire*, *Beat Street*, *The Color Purple*, *Commando*, *Boulevard*, and *Time Runner*. Chong is the first daughter of comedian/actor Tommy Chong and Black Canadian Gail Lewis. Her half-sister Robbi Chong, by Maxine Sneed, is a model and actress. She won the Genie Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in 1983. She appeared with her father in Cheech & Chong's *The Corsican Brothers* (1984) and *Far Out Man* (1990) and fellow civil rights activist C.T. Vivian.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**



SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

2505 University Drive NW - Huntsville, AL 35816
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Funeral service for **MS. JULIA OLIVER** (b. 1941) was Saturday, February 22, at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 315 Winchester Road, Huntsville, Ala.

Funeral service for **MS. TAMEKA CONLEY** (b. 1974) was held Saturday, February 15, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.

NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

2501 Carmichael Avenue NW- Huntsville, AL 35816
(256) 539-8189 - www.nelmsmemorial.net

Funeral services for **MS. SHARON D. DARWIN** (b. 1959), **MRS. DEBORAH M. LOLLAR** (b. 1953), **MRS. MARY SMITH** (b. 1928) and **MR. ONREE JACKSON** (b. 1947) will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MR. CORDEL LADON BATTLE** (b. 1994) will be Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 2 p.m. at Eagles' Nest Ministries.

Funeral service for **MR. DARRYL O. SULLIVAN** (b. 1966) will be Friday, February 21, at 1 p.m. in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Minister Walter Sullivan officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. CORA B. KING** (b. 1928) was Wednesday, February 19, at Center Grove United Methodist Church with Rev. Michael Freeman, Eulogist, Pastor Seth Shamery, officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW - Huntsville, AL 35810 -
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Funeral services are currently incomplete for **DEACON JAMES A. RANSOM** (b. 1940), **MR. DARYL DEGRAFFENRIED** (b. 1962), **MRS. VENIS HART** (b. 1936), **MR. DAVID DONNELL PARKER** (b. 1951), **MRS. ERLINDA VILLEGAS WILLIAMS** (b. 1949), **MRS. LAURA FORD** and **MRS. WANDA JEAN SUMMERS MCDANIEL**.

Funeral service for **MRS. RUTH JEFFERSON GARRETT** (b. 1955) will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, February 22, at Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, 228 Church Street, Huntsville, Ala., with Dr. Mitchell Walker officiating.

Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S

Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"Good Fruit"

Matthew 7:15-16 says, "Beware of false prophets, (people) who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." You will know them by their fruit.

So many people choose to live a life of compromise. They may say that they are a Christian, but their actions are far from it. For example, it's really unfortunate when Christians stay angry all the time, because it hurts our witness. We can't afford to be like the rest of the world and compromise our religious beliefs. This is because the world is watching us and listening to us when we face trials of any kind, just to see how we will react.

Now, we all get angry from time to time, but it's what we do and how we behave that is important. Also, we as Christians need to avoid complaining all the time. Once again, complaining affects our witness, because you never know, someone may be watching and listening to you, someone who may be in

the process of becoming a new believer. Let us remember that a good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit (Matthew 17:18)

Prayer: Dear God, help us to be aware of the things that we do and say, so that we don't cause others to stumble or fall.

Question: How important is it to you, as a Christian to act like a Christian at all times?



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:
"A Guided Life"

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Beating “Trump-xhaustion” with a Marathon Mindset

“But the people refused to listen to Samuel. ‘No!’ they said. ‘We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.’” – 1 Samuel 8:19-20

Is it just me, or do these first weeks of Trump’s second term already feel like four exhausting years? Consider:

- One loud proclamation after another, followed by White House walk-backs or judicial smackdowns.
- A parade of underqualified appointees, pulled from a roster of election rejects (see illustration, courtesy [MSNBC/YouTube](#)).
- His 66 executive orders—including revoking DEI initiatives and, bizarrely, renaming the Gulf of Mexico to The Gulf of America.

This relentless chaos fuels what I call “Trump-xhaustion”: the intended wear-down effect of nonstop constitutional challenges, abandoned best practices, and assaults on common sense.

The Marathon Mindset: A Long-Term Strategy

But we can outlast this Trump-xhaustion. History has seen this before.

Pre-inauguration, many low-income Trump voters realized too late that their benefits were on the chopping block. These low-income Trump voters hope he doesn’t slash their benefits - The Washington Post and Low-income Trump voters PANIC, realize he’ll SLASH their benefits.

Meanwhile, Black non-voters faced the aftermath of sitting out the election, Why Kamala Harris lost, explained - TheGrio.

Similarly, the Israelites rejected God’s leadership for a human king—only to suffer worse than they imagined.

So what’s the solution?



Learn to L-Y-E (Love Your Enemies)

Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies (L-Y-E!) and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-48).

Pastor Charles Swindoll added, “Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.”

We can’t control Trump’s actions, but we can control our responses. We must protest, educate our children, and wield our voting power.

And to the Trump/Musk pink-slipped workers? Lick your wounds quickly—then take your severance, expertise, and contacts and launch that home-based business you’ve always dreamed of.

Sprint through today, but plan for tomorrow.

That’s how we beat Trump-xhaustion.



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

by Gloria B. Caldwell

It’s Time ...

The world is changing, and the new administration has come in like a whirlwind, shaking things up. While there may be complaints about their strategies, I’m not here to discuss politics. Instead, let’s focus on your strategy for change. Have you implemented a plan, or are you navigating life day by day, being reactive rather than proactive? This is your life, after all, and finding a clear path forward is essential.

To create an effective strategy for change, how about you consider these



steps: **1. Set Clear Goals-** Define what you want to achieve. Vague aspirations can lead to confusion and stagnation. That’s not what we want! Be specific! **2. Assess Your Current Situation-** Understand where you stand. Reflection and self-assessment are crucial to identify

areas needing change. **3. Develop an Action Plan-** Outline the steps needed to reach your goals. Break them down into manageable tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Last, but most importantly, **EXECUTE!** A plan without action is a thought and a waste of time.

By taking these proactive steps, you can navigate change with intention, ensuring that you are not merely reacting but actively shaping your own future. Come on, New Year, New Ways!

Lace Up! Let’s Go!

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The Valley Weekly

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

February 28

Heritage Entertainment:
The 2nd Annual Rocket
City Blues Festival
"Blues Is Alright"
VBC Propst Arena
Huntsville, Ala.
Ticketmaster - 8 p.m.

Huntsville, Ala.

February 28-March 2

"Tony Rock"
Comedy Standup
Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW

March 7

15th Annual Black &
White Charity Ball - Har-
lem Nights
Von Braun Center - 7 p.m.

March 8

19th Annual Rosetta James
Foundation "Honoring
Our Elders" Celebration
and Day Gala
The Jackson Center

6001 Moquin Drive
Huntsville, Ala.
12 noon

March 13

Shen Yun 2025
Von Braun Center Concert
Hall
Huntsville, Ala.

March 20

Spring Equinox Camping
Retreat: Joy Journey
Camp Edwards, LLC
205 A Water Tank Road
Toney, Ala.
campedwardsllc.com

March 20-30

Rocket City Fair
2195 Jaycee Way
Huntsville, Ala.

March 27-30

5th Annual Women's Expo
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*"The cave you fear to enter
holds the treasure you seek."*

- Joseph Campbell



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

Dr. Mary Sanford Brown

Although born in Kimo ("KI-mo"), Dr. Mary Sanford Brown grew up in the area of Decatur known as "West Town."

She won the District Elks Oratorical Contest her senior year and was named Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow during her junior year. Outside school, there was reading, piano lessons, movies, and swapping True Confessions with her girlfriends, to name a few. She also often would babysit and clean homes. In the fall, she would pick cotton for spending money.

In 1956, Brown graduated as valedictorian from Lakeside High School and continued her education at Alabama A&M College, graduating in 1960 with honors. As a student at A&M, she was a member of the Student Council and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Although she had been told that she had "a good voice" and had always sung in a choir, she was somewhat intimidated by A&M's choir and never auditioned.

While matriculating at A&M, she continued her friendship with Rather G. Brown, a young man from Moulton, who she met through her Moulton

cousins when they were both in high school. They married in 1961 at First Missionary Baptist Church. They were blessed with one son, Rather Maurice Brown, a history teacher and musician. [Her dear husband departed this life in December 2012.]

In 1962, she began her master's work at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro and received her degree in 1964. By 1971, Brown had begun studies for the Ed.D. degree at The American University in Washington, D. C., earning the degree in December 1975.

Brown began her teaching career at Merritt High School in Midway in Bullock County. She later returned to North Alabama to teach at what is now R. A. Hubbard High in Courtland-founded by her mother's brother, Richard Alexander Hubbard. Following her first year there, she and her husband moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, and she began her master's studies. In 1967, she launched nearly four decades of work at Alabama A&M.

During her productive tenure at A&M, she served as chair of the



Department of History and Political Science and was the founding director of AAMU's Honors Program, which involved no small amount of work.

Navigating the establishment of this program through the various committees and gaining its acceptance was no small feat, she recalls. Over the years, Brown has remained a committed member of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association. Brown has been a member of First Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville since relocating in Huntsville in 1967.

Dr. Brown says she is grateful for the "Village" (i.e., family and friends, church members in Decatur, the AAMU family and others) that has nurtured and encouraged her.



"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, March 2, 2025

Last Sunday
after the
Epiphany



(Track 2, Year C)

First Lesson:
Exodus 34:29-35
Psalm 99

Second Lesson:
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

GOSPEL:
Luke 9:28-36, [37-43a]



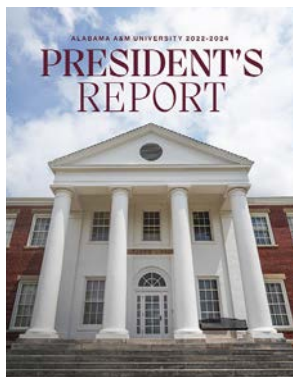
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November–March: Tuesday – Saturday: 10am – 4pm & Sunday: noon – 4pm

AAMU's First-Ever Entries Net MarCom Awards



The MarCom Awards, an international creative competition for marketing and communication professionals, has announced winners in their 2024 contest, and AAMU's Office of Marketing, Communications, and Advancement has captured four awards.

Chosen from more than 7,000 international entries, AAMU earned the following wins: Platinum Award - Social Media Marketing Campaign for its "Free Them" series

highlighting Divine 9 organizations; Gold Award - Educational Institution Publication of the Year for the 2024 President's Report; Gold Award - Magazine Photography

for the 2024 President's Report; and Honorable Mention - Advertisement for the Birmingham SkySign billboard.

This year marked Alabama A&M's first-ever entries in the MarCom Awards program. The University submitted work in four categories, earning wins in each.

The platinum award-winning "Free Them" series was a multi-platform social media campaign which showcased the rich culture of the "Divine 9" organizations

on HBCU campuses through the colorful photography and video story-telling of Alabama A&M's Crew 75 creative content team. Content from the series earned over 700,000 views, driving audience growth and engagement for the AAMU brand across social media.

"The congratulations belong to our team of professional and student staff," said Assistant Vice President of Advance-

ment and Branding Aaron Thompson. "These recognitions reflect our commitment to telling the AAMU story in a compelling way and being intentional about everything we produce." Since its inception in 2004, MarCom has evolved into one of the largest and most-respected creative competitions in the world. The MarCom Awards honor excellence in marketing and communication

while recognizing the creativity and hard work of industry professionals.

The Awards are administered by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals (AMCP), an international organization founded in 1995. AMCP consists of several thousand marketing, communication, advertising, public relations, digital, and web professionals.

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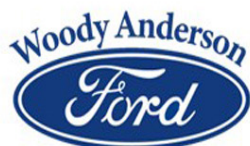


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Introducing ...

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

Rev. Dr. Theodis ACKLIN	Mrs. Mary Lanier CURRY	Dr. Dorothy DOWNING	Rev. Dr. Oscar MONTGOMERY	Mr. Charles Wayne SCRUGGS	Mr. William SMOTHERS	Mrs. Nancy VALKENBURGH	Mr. Richard VALKENBURGH	Rev. Jacqueline WILSON

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
CLICK HERE
(for Tickets/Sponsorship)
<https://rosettajamesfoundation.swell.gives>

NOTES OF A NATIVE SON

CASTING SHADOWS

by afroblastik [John 'Jahni' Moore]

The other day, while walking across a field, staring into the setting sun, squinting my eyes by default, I allowed the waning light to wash over me.

Finally, for a bit of relief I looked away to the opposite side and saw something just as magnificent -my elongated shadow bathed in the glow, stretched much taller than I appear to stand.

Light reveals, defines, and elevates, but it also does something we sometimes overlooked—it casts shadows. Shadows stretch, expand, and shift with the movement of their source, yet they are only made possible by the presence of light.

How often do we stop to appreciate how powerful that light truly is? In life, we can get sidetracked by the obstacles—the heavy,



looming shadows—that we fail to recognize the brilliance creating them.

We mistake the shadow as a sign of obstruction, rather than evidence of the light that fuels our journey. We forget that shadows are elongated echoes of our own presence, reminders that we are standing in something radiant enough to leave a mark beyond ourselves.

The lights in our lives—the passion we pursue, the relationships that uplift us, the convictions that propel us forward—are forces that illuminate our path and give dimension to our existence. Yet, it is easy to dismiss these lights because they do not always appear as grand, blinding beacons.

Sometimes, they are quiet glows, subtle flickers, or even the warm embers of something still strug-



gling to catch on. But they are there, shaping everything we touch, deepening the impact of our charge, and stretching our influence beyond what we can immediately see.

As artists, as visionaries, as creators, as citizens in a world in need of what awe have to offer, we must embrace both the light and the shadows it casts. We must recognize that our art, our voice, and our presence do not exist in isolation. They extend, they shift, they leave

can inspire beyond our home, city, country, or lifetime.

So today, I invite you stand in your light. Recognize the power in your present and your presence. Claim the shadows too. Allow them to serve as proof that you are moving, growing, and

charging forward with purpose.

Because where there is a shadow, there is light—yours, ours, and the collective brilliance of those among and beyond us who dare to shine.



Alabama Women's Caucus Hosts the 6,000 Circle Project Exhibition

The Alabama Women's Caucus for Art proudly presents an exhibition of The 6,000 Circle Project, an international effort to create work that celebrates the feminine.

The event will be

held Friday, February 28-March 29, at Lowe Mill ARTS & Entertainment, 2211 Seminole Drive SW, Huntsville, Ala.

Twenty-eight artists from across the south-east region are featured

in this collaborative show on view now at Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment.

The Alabama Women's Caucus for Art, founded in 2015, is a chapter of the national Women's

Caucus for Art organization. The Women's Caucus for Art was established in association with the College Art Association, in 1972, with the mission to create community through art, education, and social

activism and to promote women's contributions to the arts.

Its members are visual arts professionals, curators, gallery administrators, arts faculty, practicing, working and teaching artists, arts-

based business owners, and other creative professionals.

For additional information, contact the Alabama Women's Caucus for Art at alabamawca@gmail.com.



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Valley Weekly Washington One Minute



by Ron Hamm

Here are the latest top issues and events in Washington:

1. CONGRESS. The Senate and House are in session. Last week, the full Senate approved its version of the FY2025 Concurrent Budget Resolution, which would boost defense and border security funding by more than \$340 billion over four years - including funding to complete the border wall between the United States and Mexico (but does NOT include budgeting for the tax bill reauthorization, deferring it to later this year). The Senate will vote this week on U.S. Trade Representative nominee Jamieson Greer and Army Secretary nominee Daniel Driscoll. Last week, the Senate confirmed FBI Director Kashyap Patel, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, and Small Business Administrator Kelly Loeffler. On Tuesday, the House took up its more expansive version

of the FY2025 Concurrent Budget Resolution to set the stage for one large Budget Reconciliation Bill that would allow up to \$4.8 trillion in new spending and revenue reductions (to pay for the tax bill), at least \$1.5 trillion in savings, and a \$4 trillion raise in the debt limit. Per an amendment by the House Freedom Caucus, the \$4.8 trillion in spending will only be allowed if Congress comes up with \$2 trillion of savings. The House will also begin this week a series of votes to revoke Biden era rulemakings under the Congressional Review Act (that allows Congress to vote on revoking any rules submitted to Congress after August 1, 2024), starting with votes to end the “methane tax” on energy companies and to eliminate new energy conservation standards for gas-fired water heaters.

2. U.S. DOGE SERVICE. On Saturday at 4:30 p.m. EST, all 2 million federal

workers began receiving an email from the DOGE-controlled Office of Personnel Management directing them to reply with a description of what they accomplished in the past week in 5 bullet points. The email reply was due back to OPM by 11:59 p.m. Monday. Elon Musk posted to his social media account that “failure to respond will be taken as a resignation.” On Sunday, Reuters reported that employees at several agencies were told by their managers not to respond to the email, including DoD, Homeland Security, Education, Commerce, FBI, FDIC, NIH, and IRS. On Friday, a federal judge issued an order prohibiting DOGE from gaining access to the Treasury Department’s financial systems and databases, leaving in place a temporary ban that had been in effect since Feb. 8.

3. EXECUTIVE BRANCH. The President met with French President Emmanuel Macron Monday and with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Thursday. The President met with the nation’s governors last Friday at which time he and Maine Gov. Janet Mills had a testy exchange

about Gov. Mills’ refusal to go along with the administration’s ban on transgender athletes (deferring to her own state’s human rights statute), with Gov. Mills saying that “we’ll see you in court” when the President threatened to stop federal funds. The Washington Post reported Friday that, on newly confirmed FBI Director Kashyap Patel’s first day on the job, he started the process to relocate 1,500 FBI agents out of DC, relocating 1,000 agents and administrative employees to field offices around the country and transferring an additional 500 to the bureau’s satellite headquarters in Huntsville, AL. Reportedly, the Pentagon will begin streamlining its workforce this week by immediately firing 5,400 probationary workers toward an ultimate target of terminating as many as 76,000 employees. Also fired last week were 1,000 employees in the National Park Service and 1,000 employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Last week, the administration removed Acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director Caleb Vitello reportedly in displeasure over ICE’s slowing pace of ar-

resting immigrants, which had fallen below 600 daily arrests, significantly fewer than the White House’s 1,500 daily target.

4. SUPREME COURT. On Wednesday, the Supreme Court heard the case of Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services, in which a straight Ohio woman sued that she had been the victim of reverse discrimination based on her sexual orientation after a gay woman got the job she wanted at the Ohio Department of Youth Services. Last Friday, in its first ruling on the mass firings happening in the federal government, the court denied the administration’s request to allow the President to remove the leader of the independent government watchdog agency Office of Special Counsel until at least after a lower court hearing next week (the President had wanted to fire him immediately).

5. ANTI-DIVERSITY CRUSADE. On Feb. 11, the Federal Communications Commission began its campaign to root out diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies in the private sector in a letter to Comcast and NBCUniversal, informing them it was

opening an investigation because “there is substantial evidence [the] companies are still engaging in the promotion of DEI.” Read the full letter here: [FCC Ltr.](#) The Washington Post reports that many companies are quickly adjusting to the administration’s ban on DEI, with Pepsi, KPMG, Citigroup, Accenture, Deloitte, Goldman Sachs, and Google all abandoning their workforce representation goals within the last 2 weeks.

6. WORKFORCE. On February 26, the full House Committee on Education and Workforce, chaired by Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI), will hold a hearing entitled “Unleashing America’s Workforce and Strengthening Our Economy.” We joined Lansing Community College on Capitol Hill on February 11 to meet with Chairman Walberg to discuss workforce development and higher education issues.

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A Ray of Hope, Huntsville Sponsor Kite Festival

The City of Huntsville and the Ray of Hope Foundation invite residents to let the wind lift their spirits at the 13th annual Community Kite Festival.

The event is Saturday, March 1, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at John Hunt Park

Festival Grounds, 2195 Jaycee Way. This free, family-friendly event celebrates the spirit of inclusiveness and harmony within the community.

Whether you’re an experienced kite enthusiast or a first-time flyer, this vibrant

festival offers something for everyone. In addition to the excitement of flying colorful kites, attendees can enjoy a variety of food trucks, children’s activities and more.

Attendees can bring their own kite or purchase one

at the event. For a relaxing experience, be sure to bring your blankets or chairs to settle in and enjoy the day’s festivities at the park.

“The Community Kite Festival is a fantastic event that brings together families from all backgrounds,”

said Randy Barbour, director of the City’s Office of Multicultural Affairs. The open spaces at John Hunt Park, directly across from the Jaycee Building, provide the ideal setting for flying kites and enjoying the fresh air, making it the

perfect place for this annual celebration.

“John Hunt Park is one of Huntsville’s greatest assets,” said James Gossett, Director of Huntsville Parks & Recreation.