

# Getting the F-A-C-T-S on Valley Surgeons - p. 8

**FREE**

## K Jahni: In Search of 'Okay' - p. 9



Friday  
April 25, 2025  
Vol. 11, No. 34  
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

**SALUTE!**  
Rosetta James Foundation  
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson

# The Valley Weekly

"Concentrate the mind on the present moment." - Buddha

## AAMU Announces Spring Commencement Speakers

As Alabama A&M University marks its 150th year of excellence and impact, the institution has announced two accomplished keynote speakers for upcoming Spring 2025 Commencement ceremonies.

Michael Ford, a 1988 finance graduate and Senior Vice President of Real Estate & Security at AT&T and corporate board member, will deliver the keynote address at the Graduate Commencement Ceremony at 10 a.m. Margie Malone Tuckson, CFO of Tuckson Health Connections in Atlanta and a long-time advocate for healthcare equity, will address the Undergraduate Ceremony at 3 p.m. Both events will be held in the Event Center on May 9.

Ford currently leads a diverse



global portfolio of nearly 200 million square feet and is responsible for safeguarding the assets and operational integrity of AT&T. A proud alumnus, Ford's career has included executive roles at Microsoft, where he served as corporate vice president and partner of Microsoft's Global Real Estate and Security organization. Before his time in tech, Ford built a robust foundation in business and finance through leadership roles at Spherion Corporation, Aramark Services, and ANC Rental Corp. His service as a Major in the United States Marine Corps further underscores



a lifelong commitment to discipline and leadership. Ford and his wife, Chala, own MT3 Properties, LLC, and he remains an active member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Margie Malone Tuckson brings a unique blend of corporate, nonprofit, and entrepreneurial experience to the podium. After nearly two decades at IBM in marketing and product administration, she pivoted to a purpose-driven path as CFO of Tuckson Health Connections, a firm dedicated to delivering trusted healthcare information to underserved communities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, her leadership helped extend vital messaging to more than one million people. A graduate of the University of South Alabama with a degree in marketing, Tuckson also serves on the university's Board of Trustees.

The ceremony will also reflect the enduring legacy of Alabama A&M University during its Sesquicentennial year.

## Drake State Plans Leidos Ribbon-Cutting Event April 25

Drake State Community & Technical College will hold a ribbon-cutting

event for its new Leidos Advanced Training Complex on Friday, April 25,

at 11 a.m. The 50,000-square-foot facility is designed to support

the aerospace and advanced manufacturing sectors. Info: (256) 551-3111.

## Harrison Center Sponsors 'Boots on the Ground' Dance Party

Mark your calendars! On April 25 at 1 p.m., the Harrison Center will host a Boots on the Ground Dance Party. This fun event

is free to all members and only \$5 to the public. Join them for a day of excitement, good music, and lots of moving!



## AUM Foundation Searching for Female Professionals/Mentors

The AUM (pronounced *Ohm* or

*Omm*) Foundation is looking for

"imperfect" women with a passion to empower under-resourced girls. Working with a mentor can make a big difference in a high school student's academic journey. The mentor can offer practical advice in things (networking, navigating etiquette rules, etc.) not covered in a classroom setting.

Requirements:  
1) One hour once a

week at 3rd spaces; 2) coordination with the AUM Foundation; 3) No activities requiring money needed; 4) attend mentor/mentee meeting June; and 5) monthly reports.

For additional information, contact the AUM Foundation, 472 Providence Main, Suite 201, Huntsville, AL 35806, or call (256) 988-3999 or (334) 603-5919.

## The Valley Weekly

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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 recess this week and will reconvene on Monday, April 28. On Friday, Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) returned from El Salvador, where he met with wrongfully imprisoned Maryland resident Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who had been deported to an El Salvador prison by the Trump Administration on March 15 and remains in custody there, although his return arrangement had been ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court on April 10 ... Last Monday, a dozen House Republicans, led by Reps. Valadao (R-CA) and Bacon (R-NE), sent a letter to the House GOP leadership opposing cuts to the Medicaid program, as the House Energy & Commerce Committee announced a May 7 markup date when it will vote on \$880 billion in cuts to programs in its jurisdiction (including Medicaid) to offset part of the \$7 trillion cost of reauthorizing the 2017 tax cuts in the Reconciliation Bill.

**2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH.** On Sunday, Vice President Vance, during a family visit to Italy, had a brief meeting with Pope Francis at Casa Santa Marta, the Pope's residence in Vatican City, just hours before Pope Francis passed away Monday morning at the age of 88. This week, the White House is expected to submit a rescissions package to Congress, cutting \$9.3 billion in approved spending (\$8 billion in canceled foreign aid, along with other cuts including National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting Service). Last Thursday, the President called for Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's dismissal following a Wednesday speech by Powell at the Economic Club of Chicago, where he warned that tariffs are likely to lead to higher prices and slower economic growth, and, therefore, he would pause any further reductions in interest rates. On Friday, U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson halted the mass firings of up to 1500 workers (90% of its workforce) that were ordered on Thursday by OMB Director Russell Vought at the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau,

expressing deep concern that the Trump Administration had violated court orders regarding dismissal conditions ... On the same day, The Washington Post reported that the IRS revoked access for DOGE official Gavin Kliger, who had been managing a 25% reduction of the IRS workforce (more layoff notices had been planned for Friday afternoon, but those notifications have reportedly been paused).

**3. U.S. DOGE SERVICE.** Elon Musk's DOGE-controlled General Services Administration (GSA) last week put the Department of Housing and Urban Development's D.C. headquarters building in L'Enfant Plaza up for sale. However, Bloomberg pointed out in an article that, under a federal historic preservation law passed in 1966, the GSA cannot sell a historically landmarked building without a historic preservation covenant. A GSA press release stated that the building, which opened in 1968, currently faces over \$500 million in deferred maintenance and modernization needs, costing the American taxpayer more than \$56 million in yearly rent and operations expenditures. According to The New York Times, Musk announced at a White House Cabinet meeting on Thursday that he was lowering his goal to trim \$1 trillion from the federal budget by Sept. 30 down to \$150 billion.

**4. SUPREME COURT.** In an extraordinary action announced at 1 a.m. Saturday, the Supreme Court, by a vote of 7-2 (with Alito and Thomas dissenting), ordered an immediate halt to further deportations by the Trump Administration under the rarely invoked 18th-century wartime Alien Enemies Act, blocking the administration from removing "any member of the putative class of detainees from the United States until further order of this court." The Court was reacting to the imminent deportation of 30-50 Venezuelans who were scheduled to be flown out of the country from an immigration detention center in Anson, Texas. This week, the Court will take up cases on: (1) a challenge by a Christian-owned business that objects to the Obamacare mandate to cover PrEP because it believes the drug coverage encourages homosexual behavior, intravenous drug use, and sexual activity outside of marriage; (2) whether a group of Maryland parents can opt to have their children exempted from lessons on LGBTQ+-themed storybooks (such as *Pride Puppy* that tells the story of a puppy that gets lost during a gay pride parade); and (3)

whether fuel producers have a legal right to challenge a waiver granted to California in 2022 that allowed the state to set standards to limit greenhouse gas emissions, as well as require all passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035.

**5. LAW FIRM BANS.** Last Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Loren L. AliKhan blocked a Trump executive order that punished the prominent law firm Susman Godfrey, which successfully sued Fox News for \$787 million for promoting false claims of election fraud. The judge found that the executive order against the firm likely violated the 1st and 5th Amendments, leading to the granting of a temporary restraining order.

**6. HIGHER EDUCATION.** The Trump administration has revoked waivers that previously allowed undocumented students in California and Oregon to participate in federal TRIO programs, which support low-income and first-generation college students. These waivers were granted under the Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3) initiative during the Biden administration and enabled

noncitizens to access services such as academic advising and financial aid counseling. The Department of Education justified the revocation by citing a February executive order aimed at ending taxpayer-funded benefits for undocumented individuals, asserting that TRIO resources should not support non-citizens. Advocates argue that this decision undermines educational equity and removes critical support for undocumented students. Antoinette Flores from New America contends that the waivers were legally sound because the funds were allocated to institutions rather than directly to individuals. In response, colleges are adjusting their TRIO program applications to include citizenship status and are directing affected students to alternative support services. Despite concerns, there seems to be little effort in California or Oregon to challenge this federal action.

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## Drake State Releases Annual Report to Public

Drake State has advanced its institutional mission through thoughtful

innovation, sustained growth, and a deepened sense of purpose. Read

about industry partnerships, enrollment growth, and community engage-

ment Drake's newly released annual report. Read [ANNUAL REPORT](#).

## ON THIS DAY

Ella Fitzgerald, the "First Lady of Song" who bridged the gap between jazz and pop, was born April 25, 1917, in Newport News, Va. She won 13 Grammy Awards and the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1967.

- wikipedia.org



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# Lights, Camera, Community — Let's Rally Behind the Southern Fried Film Festival

There are few things more powerful than storytelling — and few platforms more dynamic than film to bring those stories to life. That's exactly what Huntsville's own Southern Fried Film Festival sets out to do every summer, and this June, it's back and bigger than ever. Thanks to the generous support from Arts Huntsville, the City of Huntsville, and the Alabama State Council on the Arts, this year's festival promises to be an unforgettable celebration of culture, creativity, and community.

But behind the scenes of this growing festival is a local champion whose vision continues to bring it all to life: Trevite Willis (left), a local film producer, whose dedication to the arts is elevating Huntsville's cultural landscape. It's one thing to enjoy great films from afar — it's another to meet the filmmakers, ask questions, and engage in conversations that linger long after the credits roll. That's what the Southern Fried Film Festival offers: not just entertainment, but connection.



Running from June 5–8, 2025, the festival will take place at various venues around the Rocket City. Attendees can expect an array of culturally rich films, intimate Q&A sessions, and thought-provoking panels with filmmakers from across the globe — all within reach of our own backyard.

When we support events like the Southern Fried Film Festival, we're doing more than buying a ticket — we're investing in our city's identity as a hub of innovation and artistic expression. We're encouraging diverse voices, fostering understanding, and strengthening the kind of community that values inclusion and creativity.

So mark your calendars, grab a friend, and make plans to attend this extraordinary event. Let's show up, show support, and celebrate the visionary work of Trevite Willis and the team behind the Southern Fried Film Festival. They've brought the world to Huntsville — now it's our turn to welcome it.

Let's make it a full house this June — our city, and its stories, deserve nothing less.

Until next week ...

*Dorothy*

**APRIL 25 - BOBBI HUMPHREY** - is an American jazz flautist and singer. She has recorded twelve albums over the course of her career, mostly playing jazz fusion, funk, and soul-jazz. In 1971, she was the first female instrumentalist signed by Blue Note and in 1994, she founded the jazz label Paradise Sounds Records. Humphrey's works, notably Blacks and Blues, have been sampled by Eric B. & Rakim, Grand Puba, Digable Planets, Mobb Deep, Ludacris, and Ice-T. In 2002, Common invited her to play on his album, Electric Circus.



- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org

A NOTE FROM THE ...



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**The Valley Weekly**

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Classified	1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

# Spiritual Game Plan

Valley Weekly  
PRESTON BROWN'S



## Today's Spiritual Game Plan: "A Spiritual Test"

James 1:2 says, "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds."

Whenever I read this scripture, I find it odd that the writer states that facing trials should be considered as "pure joy." What is the message that we need to get from this statement? More importantly, what does this mean for us as believers?

Obviously, we should not seek out trials, but we as Christians should know what the outcome of our trials will produce. In other words, in what ways can we profit from our trials?

I believe that there are three things that we will profit from when we go through our tests and trials.

The first thing we get is a purified faith. Now to purify something means to remove contaminants from it. When we look at our physical selves, we need to understand and real-

ize that they have been contaminated by this fallen world. Therefore, God is trying to remove all of the things that hinder us from our spiritual growth.

The next thing that we get is an abundance of patience. One of the problems that we all have when dealing with our tests is the time factor. Remember, one of the fruits of the spirit is patience. If we are

believers, we know that good can come from bad circumstances, but we have to be patient.

Finally, our character is perfected. This means we become spiritually mature in our judgment and understanding of God's truth. When we endure our tests and our trials, not only will it perfect our characters, it will also make us complete.


Being complete gives us the ability to fully worship and serve God as well as be servants for God, not lacking in anything.

May God grant you spiritual success in gaining wisdom and truth from your trials.

*Question:* What did you gain from the trials or tests that you went through?

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](http://amazon.com).

**NEXT WEEK:**  
"Are We There Yet?"



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THE VALLEY WEEKLY

# VALLEY DEATHS



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*Funeral services for MS. ARNETTA WHATLEY (b. 1932) and MR. JOHN FLETCHER (b. 1945) will be announced at a later date.*

*Funeral service for MR. CLARENCE SMITH (b. 1932) was Saturday, April 12, at Chelsea Cumberland Presbyterian Church of America, 3123 Johnson Road SW, Huntsville, Ala.*

*Funeral service for REV. DR. MOLLIE BRANCH (b. 1952) was Sunday, April 13, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.*

## NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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*Memorial service for MS. MARY LEE CASTLEBERRY (b. 1947) was Saturday, April 19, at Center Grove United Methodist Church with Pastor Seth Shamery, officiating and Rev. Dion Watkins, eulogist.*

*Funeral service for MR. WILLIAM E. HORTON, SR. (b. 1949) was Saturday, April 19, at Syler Tabernacle, Oakwood Avenue, Huntsville, Ala.*

*Funeral service for MRS. PINEY JORDAN (b. 1943) was Friday, April 18, at Progressive Union Missionary Baptist Church.*

## ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

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*Funeral service for MR. JEFFERY EZELL FEARN, SR. (b. 1962) was Tuesday, April 22, at Royal Chapel of Memories.*

*Funeral service for MR. SANDY N. WARD, JR B.K.A. "DANK" (b. 1954) was Saturday, April 19, at Moses Chapel P.B. Church, 372 Moses Chapel Road, Madison, Ala., with Pastor Joe Hereford officiating.*

*Funeral service for DEACON THEODORE R. "NIP" FRANKLIN (b.1939) was Friday, April 18, at St. Barley Primitive Baptist Church, 3020 Belafonte Ave NW, Huntsville, Ala., with Pastor Jaymes R. Mooney officiating.*

## From Self-Confidence to God-Confidence: What Ellis Island and the Last Supper Still Teach Us

Last Thursday, April 17, marks two powerful observances: *Holy Thursday* of Passion Week and *National Ellis Island Family History Day*—two milestones that, together, offer emerging leaders a lesson in breaking free from self.

At the Last Supper, Jesus stunned his disciples. They were too busy jockeying for position in his “kingdom”—Secretary of State, Treasury, Homeland Security—to do the lowliest task: foot washing. So Jesus got up, wrapped a towel around his waist, and washed 24 dusty, self-important feet. No lecture, just a lesson: **the greatest among you must serve**. It was a turning point—away from **self-confidence** and toward **God-confidence**.

That same transformation played out, symbolically, through the halls of **Ellis Island**.

On April 17, 1907, a record 11,747 immigrants passed through that U.S. immigration station, many of them overwhelmed, under-resourced, and totally dependent on God. From 1892 to 1954, 12 million people passed through Ellis Island, laying down the last vestiges of their old lives to embrace a new one.

Today, more than 130 million Americans can trace their roots to that 27-acre gateway—including icons like Einstein, Josephine Baker, and Kwame Nkrumah. But here’s what matters most: **Ellis Island was never the goal—it was just the process**. The goal stood just across the water: **the Statue of Liberty**.

Too often, we treat “self” the way immigrants treated Ellis Island: as a necessary starting point. We cling to **self-confidence, self-worth, self-image**, as if that’s the destination. But all these “selves” are just that—**starts, not summits**.

Like Ellis Island, self must give way to something greater.

Jesus taught it. Immigrants lived it.

And emerging leaders must embody it:

**Not self-confidence, but God-confidence.**

Not self-worship, but Spirit-powered purpose.

Start at your Ellis Island—but don’t settle there.

Move toward your Statue of Liberty.



### Tim Allston

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# Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

## All I Do Is Win ...

Winning in life is not solely about achieving material success; it’s about personal growth, resilience, and fulfillment. To truly win, start by defining what success means to you. Create clear, achievable goals that resonate with your values.

As DJ Khaled, Ludacris, and others famously express, “All I do is win, win, win, no matter what.” This anthem has been my motivation—as I play it while staying on task, working out, planning, organizing my priorities, and being present for my children. To cultivate a winning mentality, you need Faith, Focus, Fearlessness, and Fitness. Ironically, that’s the essence of Knockout



Mentality’s F4 method to success. As the founder of Knockout Mentality, I strive to help everyone live out their purpose and embrace the mantra of “Win, Win, Win!”

Embrace a growth mindset. Understand that challenges are opportunities for learning and

improvement. When faced with setbacks, resilience will allow you to bounce back stronger. Surround yourself with positive influences—people who uplift and inspire you to reach your potential.

Finally, practice gratitude. Appreciate the journey, the lessons learned, and the relationships forged along the way. Winning in life is a holistic process—a blend of personal accomplishment, meaningful connections,

and continuous growth. Embrace each moment as a step toward your version of victory. Let’s go “Win, Win, Win no matter what” comes our way. We’ve got this!

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

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The Valley Weekly

# VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

- April 24**  
The War and Treaty Plus  
One Tour  
Princess Theatre  
Decatur, Ala.  
princessstheatre.org
- April 25-27**  
Comic & Pop Culture Expo  
Featuring Mario Lopez  
Von Braun Center  
Huntsville, Ala.
- April 26**  
Arbor Day 5K Race & 3K  
Sapling Fun Run  
Huntsville Botanical Garden  
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue  
Huntsville, Ala.  
8 a.m.
- April 27**  
Gospel Celebration featuring  
The Clark Sisters  
Alabama A&M University  
Event Center  
TICKETS - \$100  
(Deadline: April 1)  
(Clear Bag Policy En-
- forced)  
4 p.m.
- April 28**  
Girls on the Run  
Fern Bell Recreation Center  
107A Sanders Road  
Huntsville, Ala.  
4-5:30 p.m.
- April 29**  
"Chicago Stepping"  
Ballroom  
Robert "Bob" Harrison  
Senior Wellness and Advo-  
cacy Center  
6156 Pulaski Pike NW  
Huntsville, Ala. - (256)  
519-2040  
4 p.m.
- May 1**  
Spring Hat Luncheon  
Huntsville Botanical Gar-  
den  
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue  
Huntsville, Ala.  
10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
- May 2-3**

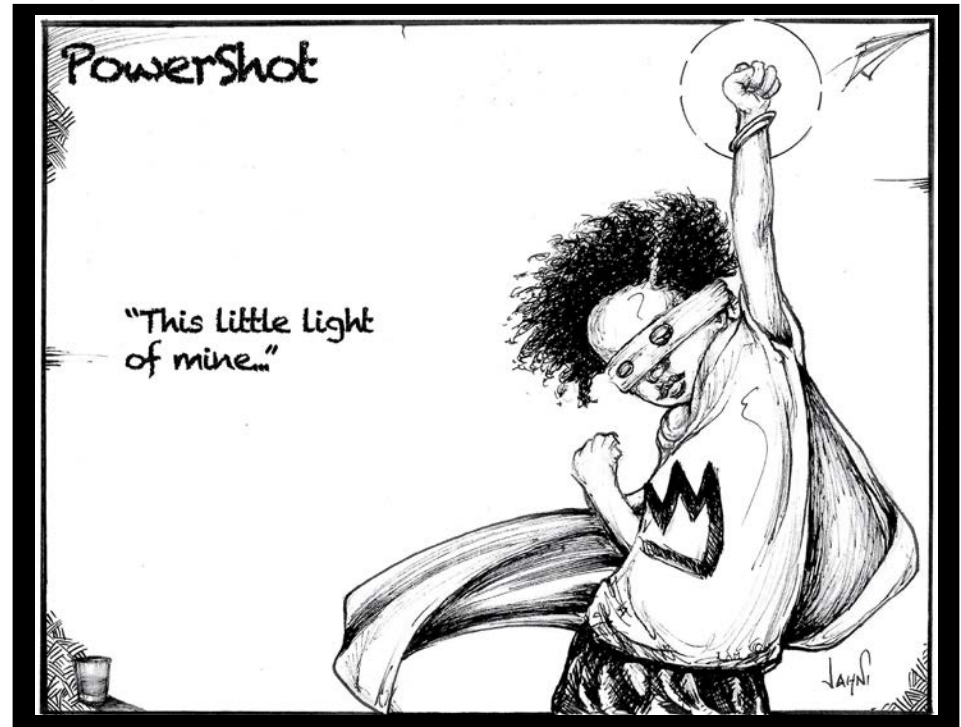
Comedian  
"Earthquake" (4 Shows)  
Huntsville Levity Live  
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**May 3**  
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Challenge  
The People's Patch Com-  
munity Farm  
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9 a.m.

**May 5**  
Girls on the Run  
Fern Bell Recreation Cen-  
ter  
107A Sanders Road  
Huntsville, Ala.  
4-5:30 p.m.

**May 6**  
"Chicago Stepping"  
Ballroom  
Robert "Bob" Harrison  
Senior Wellness and Advo-  
cacy Center  
6156 Pulaski Pike NW  
Huntsville, Ala. - (256)  
519-2040  
4 p.m.

**May 13**  
"Chicago Stepping"  
Ballroom  
Robert "Bob" Harrison



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*"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."*

- Audre Lorde



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

## Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson

Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson is the true essence of a lady--quiet, dedicated, loyal, dependable, loving, a leader, unselfish, and always willing to help others. She was born and grew up in rural Dodge County in Eastman, Ga., with nine other siblings, working on their family farm. She relocated to Huntsville in 1961 to pursue a job at Alabama A&M University. She is the wife of Joseph J. Johnson for over 56 years; mother of three daughters--Cheryl, Jerita, and Cerisa--and the doting and proud grandmother of three grandsons -- Jeremy, Christian, and Jaylen. Her family is the apple of her eyes and if you want to see a big grin on her face, just ask her about her grandsons. She will be happy to tell you about their latest accomplishments and achievements.

Mrs. Johnson obtained her B.S. degree in home economics from Fort Valley State University, her M.S. degree in clothing and textile and psychology from Purdue University, and her Education Specialist degree from Auburn University.

Dorothy, sometimes called "Dot," is a retired educator from Calhoun Community College after teaching and supervising for 31 years. In her honor, Calhoun Community College Child Development Center named its library

the "Dorothy B. Johnson Learning Library" for her dedication and commitment to the child development program. Also, while at Calhoun, she earned many awards and honors.

Mrs. Johnson has been very involved with her church, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, for over 50 years. For her dedication, unselfishness, and hard work in ensuring the kitchen in the Fellowship Hall was equipped with the state-of-the-art commercial appliances, the Fellowship Hall was named after Dorothy B. Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson volunteers at the Manna House three days a week, where she is fondly called "Ms. Dorothy." Ms. Dorothy organizes and helps prepare ready-to-eat foods, supervises distribution in the area of ready-to-eat foods, and supports Manna House financially.

Mrs. Johnson joined Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., on April 1, 1954, at Fort Valley State College (now University). In the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter, she has served as the treasurer, and chair of several committees, such as audit, economic development, scholarship, and Ebony Fashion Fair ticket committees. Also, she received several community service awards from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



A visionary, she prepared and filed the papers to establish their 501c organization -- Diverse Educational Life Training Activities, Inc. (DELTA, INC.), where she has served as the president and treasurer.

In 2016, the Retired Teachers Association of Alabama presented Mrs. Johnson the Annual Volunteer Award for her services to the community. Professionally, Mrs. Johnson is a member of the Madison County Retired Educators Association, Alabama Education Retirees Association, Incorporated, National Education Association (Life Member), Alabama College Association, and AARP. She loves to travel with them to various cities to the area meetings, regional, and state conferences. Mrs. Johnson enjoys watching sports on TV, fishing, word scramble puzzles, catering, directing and planning weddings, and volunteering. She especially enjoys traveling back home to Eastman, Ga.



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## This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, April 27, 2025

Second  
Sunday  
of Easter



(Track 2, Year C)

First Lesson:  
Acts 5:27-32

Psalms 118:14-29

Second Lesson:  
Revelation 1:4-8

GOSPEL:  
John 20:19-31



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



"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](http://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](mailto:info@valleyweeklyllc.com).

# SURGEONS: Getting the Facts on F-A-C-S

(BPT) - *By Patricia L. Turner, MD, MBA, FACS Executive Director & CEO, American College of Surgeons*

When you or a loved one is scheduled to undergo a surgical procedure, you desire confidence that your surgeon is highly skilled, well-trained and prepared to deliver the highest quality care.

Surgery may feel overwhelming, regardless of age or health status. With so many factors to consider, one reliable method to inspire confidence is to select a surgeon with the letters F-A-C-S after their name. This designation means that the surgeon is a Fellow

of the American College of Surgeons, the largest surgical organization in the world. The ACS has, for more than one hundred years, set the standards for high-quality surgical care.

## What does FACS mean?

Earning the FACS designation involves a rigorous application process, verification of credentials, review of a surgical case log, recommendations by colleagues, and interviews conducted by a panel of experts. These steps ensure that surgeons meet and uphold the highest standards of surgical care and ethics.

By choosing a Fellow of the ACS, you are selecting

a surgeon who meets and exceeds standard qualifications, such as board certification. The FACS designation is a higher bar.

## Who are the Fellows of the ACS?

The ACS currently has more than 93,000 members worldwide. Fellows provide care in settings ranging from small rural clinics to large academic medical centers. Fellows of the ACS are also represented throughout all of the surgical specialties.

Fellows have reached many milestones in surgery, both past and present, and been at the forefront of medical breakthroughs

for more than 100 years. In 1935, Columbia University surgeon Allen Whipple, MD, FACS, was the first American to perform a complex operation for treating pancreatic cancer - a procedure that bears his name today. Alton Ochsner, MD, FACS, made the first link between tobacco and lung cancer - in 1939. Cardiac surgeon Bartley P. Griffith, MD, FACS, performed the first successful pig-to-human heart transplant in the world in 2022. The bottom line is that Fellows of the College make it a point to stay at the head of the class so that they can provide their patients with the best possible care.

## Why does the FACS designation matter?

### nation matter?

Providing high-quality surgical care for our patients has been the focus of the American College of Surgeons since our founding in 1913, and this prioritization continues today. From surgical education and research to patient access, hospital standardization and clinical care, the ACS has remained a global leader in advancing the field of surgery.

When you see FACS after a surgeon's name, those four letters represent the gold standard in surgical quality. FACS indicates that the surgeon's education and training, professional qualifications,

surgical competence and ethical conduct meet the high standards established by the American College of Surgeons.

When you prepare for surgery, one of your questions should be "Is my surgeon a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons?"

Visit [www.facs.org](http://www.facs.org) to find a Fellow the next time you need surgical care.

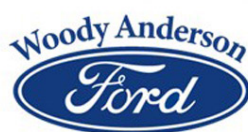
*Patricia L. Turner is the Executive Director & CEO of the American College of Surgeons, the largest professional association of surgeons in the world, founded in 1913.*



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## NOTES OF A NATIVE SON

## In Search of Okay

by afroblastik [John 'Jahni' Moore]



This morning, as I lay in bed far past usual, with the sunlight spilling into the room, my mind circled around a familiar yet complicated idea of being okay. What does it really mean to be okay, to be alright? Not in the way we toss it around in passing conversations, but in the quiet, honest places within ourselves.

On the path I've chosen — this project-based, often unpredictable existence as an artist, I find myself constantly moving between points — this project, that commission, this opportunity, that possibility. And in every moment, I realize I'm often searching for a position where I can quietly say to myself, I'm okay. Not necessarily victorious. Not defeated. Just okay. Okay with where I am, or where I thought I'd be by now. It's a constant negotiation between expectation and acceptance.

When we meet people, we ask how they're doing.

"I'm okay." "I'm alright." Simple words that cover so much. Sometimes they're true. Sometimes they're placeholders. And sometimes, they're shields we use to keep the deeper, heavier parts at bay. Lately, I've started to wonder — what do I mean when I say I want to be okay? Is it peace? Is it progress? Is it simply a quiet wrinkle in time where everything doesn't feel like it's pressing in?

Am I hoping for a point in my life, or my work, where I can be completely alright with what is? And if so... does that place even exist, or are we forever chasing it, catching only glimpses as it moves just out of our reach?

I'm learning that maybe okay isn't a permanent destination. Maybe it's a fleeting pause — a breath — a fragile alignment between what's happening around me and what's happening within me. It's the moment I stop measuring, stop



chasing, and simply allow myself to be.

Today, I'm in search of an okay that may not be

a finish line or a reward, but a quiet, honest moment where I can say to myself, I'm alright... as I

am, right here, right now. And maybe for today, that's enough. So if you find yourself searching too,

know that sometimes, okay isn't a place you arrive at — it's a moment you allow.

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