

# AAMU Will Help State with Economic Growth Plan - p. 8

**FREE**

## Expanded Valley Happenings - p. 4

Friday  
May 3, 2024  
Vol. 10, No. 35  
ValleyWeeklyllc.com



TIM ALLSTON: Ongoing Lessons from COVID - p. 5



GLORIA B: "Once You Get Up!" - p. 5

PRESTON BROWN: "Don't Fall for That!" - p. 3

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



Mother Elizabeth Smith

*"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now." - Chinese Proverb*



### Drake State Foundation Plans 'Jazz in the Garden'

Drake State Foundation has announced its 3rd Annual Jazz in the Garden event, which will be held scheduled for Friday, June 21.

This is the primary fundraising event of the year, and it is crucial to efforts to make a significant

impact on students' education.

Organizers are working hard to ensure that this year's event will be an unforgettable experience. The talented performers who will be showcased promise to make it a night to remember.

The event will

feature Ryon Schultz, Nina Marie Live, and Huntsville Drumline. Enjoy authentic New Orleans seafood from Forever Grateful food truck, a Huntsville staple!

'Jazz in the Garden' will again be held in the back of the Drake campus

along the tree-lined track.

For tickets and other information, visit <https://drake-state.edu/jazz-in-the-garden>. VIP admission, \$60.

Other admission tickets, \$10-\$25. Children under 12 will be admitted free.

### Huntsville Celebrates Front Row Development

City leaders and private developers recently celebrated the groundbreaking of Front Row, a mixed-use development along Clinton Avenue that will bring new residen-

See FRONT ROW, p. 8



### Theatre Huntsville Performs at A&M

Theatre Huntsville will present Katori Hall's MLK-themed "The Mountaintop" May 10-19 at the Johnson Little Theatre at Alabama A&M University at 7 p.m. (2 p.m. on May 12 & 19. Tickets \$20 via [THTix.com](http://THTix.com).

### Stars Headline Inaugural Concert

The Rocket City will enter the fall-season by grooving to the rhythms of an eclectic array of international superstars as part of the inaugural South Star Music Festival.

Festival producer C3 Presents announced Blink-182, Gwen Stefani, Shinedown, Beck, Ludacris, TLC, Jane's

Addiction, Sublime and Goo Goo Dolls will top the bill of the South Star Music Festival, a two-day event, set for September 28-29 in John Hunt Park.

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle emphasized the significance of the power-packed lineup in establishing Huntsville as a burgeoning

destination for live music lovers.

Huntsville Music Officer Matt Mandrella described the festival's lineup as a dream come true for music fans.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [SouthStarFestival.com](http://SouthStarFestival.com) or Facebook.com/SouthStarFest.

### ICF's 15th Annual White Linen Brunch Set

The Ivy Center of Huntsville/Madison County Foundation, Inc., will sponsor its 15th Annual White Linen Brunch (\$65) on Saturday, June 29, at 10 a.m. at the Knight Center on the campus of Alabama A&M.

Our event supports an array of community causes, including the Sickle Cell Foundation of North Alabama, Boys and Girls Clubs of North Alabama and Operation Making a

Difference. Since its inception, the Ivy Center Foundation also has honored a

number of outstanding citizens for their servant leadership.

For more information on tickets or ads, visit [ivycenter-foundationhsv.org/](http://ivycenter-foundationhsv.org/)

**Harrison Center Hosts Author Tim Allston May 2nd! -p. 9**

The Valley Weekly

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

- Washington in One Minute, Page 2
- Preston Brown's "Spiritual Game Plan," Page 3
- "Jahni" Moore's PowerShots, Page 4
- Caldwell & Allston: Perspectives, Page 5
- Sunday Lectionary, Page 5
- Honoring Our Elders, Page 6

## The Valley Weekly

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**The Valley Weekly**

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The Valley Weekly  
**Washington  
One Minute**

by Ron Hamm

Here are the top issues and events in Washington for the week of April 29.

**1. CONGRESS.** The House and Senate are in session this week. The Senate is expected to turn to the bill reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration, on which Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) filed cloture last Tuesday (although the 4 Democratic senators from MD and VA have pledged to oppose if a provision adding 10 new slots at Reagan Airport are not removed from the bill). The current FAA authorization extension expires on May 10. The House will take up a long list of bills, including a bill to reverse prohibitions on oil and gas development in the 13-million-acre Alaska National Petroleum Reserve and a bill to require the Department of Education to use a broader definition of antisemitism when enforcing federal anti-discrimination laws (in

response to recent campus unrest). On Monday afternoon the Capitol Rotunda was the site for the lying in

honor of Colonel Ralph Puckett, Jr., the last living Medal of Honor recipient for acts performed during the Korean War (lying in honor at the Capitol is a rare tribute for private citizens that has been accorded to only 6 Americans).

**2. THE WHITE HOUSE.** On Sunday, President Biden spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to reaffirm his strong opposition to any Israeli military operation in Rafah. On Tuesday, he attended a campaign event in Wilmington, DE and on Wednesday a campaign event in D.C. On Friday, the President will present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to individuals who have made exemplary contributions to the country. Last Thursday, the Biden Administration released a new regulation that will require new natural gas power plants to either cut or capture 90% of their climate pollution by 2032. Existing coal generators scheduled to run past 2032 also will have to

slash emissions, and fossil fuel plants that aren't retrofitted with pollution controls must exit the grid by 2039. The rules are expected to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the sector by 75% compared to its peak in 2005.

**3. SUPREME COURT.** The Court on Monday was scheduled to issue orders (i.e., orders granting or denying review on the merits in a particular case), as well as issue opinions on cases argued this term.

**4. FEDERAL RESERVE.** The Fed's Federal Open Market Committee met on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss interest rates, although no rate cut is now expected at this meeting. Last Thursday, the Commerce Department announced that real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 1.6% in the first quarter of 2024, down from last quarter's 3.4% (and below economists' expected 2.4%). Consumer spending increased 2.5% in the period, down from a 3.3% gain in the

fourth quarter and below the 3% Wall Street estimate. The same report showed that the Fed's primary inflation gauge, the core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, rose at a 3.7% annual rate in Q1, above 3.4% expectations.

**5. BAN ON NON-COMPETES.** Last Tuesday, the Federal Trade Commission issued a final rule banning non-compete clauses nationwide, affecting 30 million workers in the U.S. Under the new rule, existing non-competes for the vast majority of workers will no longer be enforceable after the rule's effective date (120 days from publication in the Federal Register). Existing non-competes for senior executives - who represent less than 0.75% of workers - can remain in force under the FTC's final rule, but employers are banned from entering into or attempting to enforce any new non-competes, even if they involve senior executives. Employers will be required

to provide notice to workers other than senior executives who are bound by an existing non-compete that they will not be enforcing any non-competes against them.

**6. EDUCATION AND LABOR.** On Tuesday, April 30, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona provided a review of the President's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for the Department of Education to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies. On May 1, the full House Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing to examine the policies and priorities of the U.S. Department of Labor that Acting Secretary Julie Su will present.

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[www.hammconsulting.com](http://www.hammconsulting.com)

**County Heirs' Property  
Watch May 13**

The Madison County Heirs' Property Watch will be held Monday, May 13, at the Alabama A&M University Agribition Center, 4925 Moores Mill Road, Huntsville, Ala., from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

The Heirs' Property Watch Parties will be hosted in 12 counties by Alabama Extension educators throughout the year. At the watch parties, participants will learn about common heirs property issues, hear from experts, engage in Q&A sessions, and receive resources.

Local contacts: Danielle Rudolph at [dr0007@aces.edu](mailto:dr0007@aces.edu) or (256) 372-4949; or Dr. Theresa Jones at [rosscth@auburn.edu](mailto:rosscth@auburn.edu) or (256) 509-5908.

**ON THIS DAY**

**Frederick O'Neal  
becomes first Black  
president of the Actor's  
Equity Association on  
May 3, 1964.**

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# Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



The Valley Weekly

## Don't Fall for That!

Genesis 3: 6, says "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband and he ate it."

You know, sometimes in life there are things that are too good to be true. And when we find ourselves in these kinds of situations we need to realize whether or not it is consistent with the word of God. In this scripture we see that Adam and Eve are being deceived by the greatest liar of all times. Matter of fact when it comes to lies, Satan is the G.O.A.T. In John 10:10 it says the thief only comes to kill, steal and destroy your life. So every lie that has ever been told has its origins from the devil. Now when he lies, we have to be careful because it won't sound like a lie. In other words it will be very logical, like we find in Genesis 3:4-5. Also when he lies, it is about significant things, not just the little things. And the most significant thing that he lies about is God. You see if he can get our minds twisted about the God that we serve, then he knows that we will fall for anything. You see the same methods that he used on Adam and Eve are the same ones that he uses on us today.

Today, people seem to be



"going along with" many different things that are totally against the word of

God. Matter of fact they are just lies that are being spread like cancer to unsuspecting people, like we find with Adam and Eve. You

see any time we begin to participate in the act of lying then we are of the devil (John 8:44).

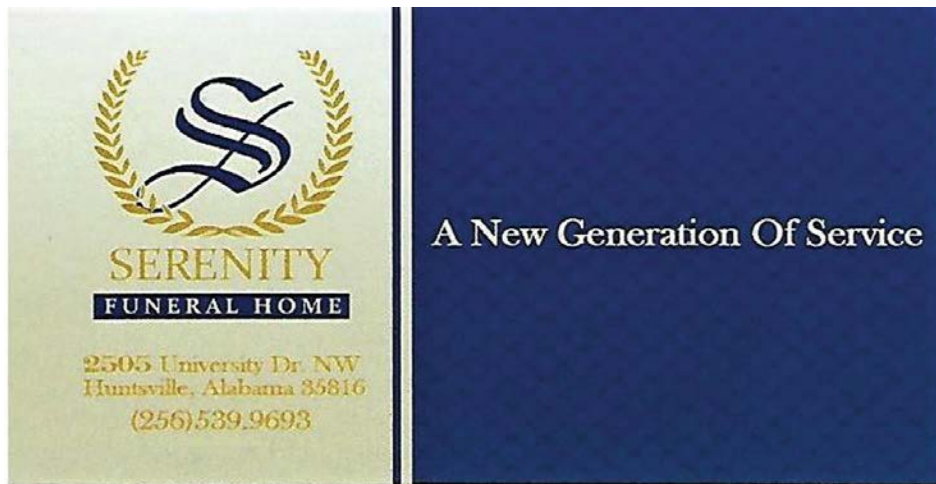
However, there is a solution for us to overcome the devil and his lies. First we need to become followers of Jesus Christ. Then we need to trust that the word of God is true. Because the only way that we can combat the lies of Satan is to know the word of God. Because the word of God will expose the lies of Satan. Then, we need

to be committed. In other words, we have to decide whose side we are on and stay committed. We don't need to be a "fair weather" Christian. Because when we stay committed to the word of God, we won't fall for the devil's lies.

May God grant you spiritual success in your pursuit of the truth! Question: Have you ever believed in something that you later found out that was not true?

Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters. Make sure you purchase a copy of: *Spiritual Game Plans for A Successful Life* and *A Champion Game Plan for Life* at amazon.com or Westbow Books.

**NEXT WEEK:**  
"Stand for Righteousness"



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[www.serenityfuneralhm.com](http://www.serenityfuneralhm.com)

Funeral service for **MR. TONY JOHNSON** (b. 1979) will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MR. MARQUEZ WILLIAMS** (b. 1994) will be Saturday, May 4, at Moses Chapel P.B. Church, 372 Mose Chapel Road, Madison, Ala., at 2 p.m.

Funeral service for **MS. PATRICIA PARKER** (b. 1954) was Friday, April 26, at Serenity Funeral Home.

Funeral service for **MRS. MILDRED SMITH** (b. 1935) was held Monday, April 22, at Town Creek #1 Missionary Baptist Church, 6405 County Road 460, Moulton, Ala.

## NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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[www.nelmsmemorial.net](http://www.nelmsmemorial.net)

Funeral services will be announced at a later date for **MRS. PATSY J. LIGHTFOOT-WHITE** (b. 1957), **MR. BOBBY L. WILLIAMS** (b. 1946), **MR. PAUL E. MOORE** (b. 1959), **MR. CURTIS MURPH, JR.** (1952), **MR. ERROL J. PETTUS** (b. 1968) and **MR. GERALD J. PORTER** (b. 1958).

Funeral service for **MR. GREGORY R. BONE** (b. 1951) was Saturday, April 20, at Hurricane Chapel Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Gary Battles officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. LOUISE SMART WOODS** (b. 1937) was Saturday, April 20, at Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church with The Reverend Dr. Barbara Clemons officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. CHRISTOPHER MARSHALL** was Saturday, April 20, in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

## ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

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[www.royalfh.com](http://www.royalfh.com)

The funeral service for **MRS. LINDA FAYE PINCHON TONEY** (b. 1954) was Wednesday, April 24, at the Little Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, 884 Indian Creek Road, Huntsville, Ala., with Dr. Jerry Crutcher officiating.

The funeral service **MR. LEONARD SPINKS B.K.A "LEO"** (b. 1947) was Monday, April 22, at the Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church, 3020 Belafonte Avenue, Huntsville, Ala., with Associate Pastor DJ Glover as eulogist and Pastor Jaymes Mooney as officiant.

The memorial service of **MS. DIANE CUTTS OATES'** (b. 1963) was Saturday, April 20, at the Royal Chapel of Memories, 4315 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, AL 35810) with Dr. Don Darvis Butler officiating.

Valley Weekly  
**VALLEY**  
**EVENTS**  
 HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

Register: yray@caa-htsval.org  
 North Huntsville Public Library  
 12-2 p.m.

Bulldog Baseball vs. UT-Martin  
 Bulldog Baseball Field  
 Alabama A&M University  
 2 p.m.

**May 9**  
 Drake State Commencement  
 Speaker: PeggyLee Wright  
 Former U.S. Army Blackhawk Pilot; Owner, THE COMPANY  
 T.M. Elmore Building  
 Alabama A&M University  
 1 p.m.

**May 10**  
 Exhale Huntsville - A  
 Mother's Love Girls Night Out  
 Huemanity Studio  
 Huntsville, Ala. - 7 p.m.

**May 10-19**  
 "The Mountaintop" by Katori Hall (A Play) - \$20  
 The Johnson Little Theatre  
 Alabama A&M University  
 Purchase at THTix.com  
 7 p.m. (2 p.m., May 12, 19)

**May 11**  
 Kittypalooza  
 Lowe Mill A&E- 1st Floor Connector  
 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Spring Fizz (Age 21+)  
 Tickets: \$125-\$1,500  
 808 Masyville Road NE  
 Huntsville, Ala.; 1-5 p.m.

**May 15**  
 Huntsville Utilities Business Matchmaker Event  
 Von Braun Center  
 10 a.m.

**May 16-18**  
 Bulldog Baseball vs. Jackson State  
 Bulldog Baseball Field

Alabama A&M University  
 2 p.m. (1 p.m. - 5/18)

**May 16**  
 Campus 805 After 5  
 Butler Green

**May 17**  
 Food Truck Rally  
 Big Spring Park  
 Downtown Hsv. Inc.

**May 17-19**  
 Miss Pretty Pum Feminine Wellness Exposition  
 5750 Mooreville Road, Ste. #3, Tanner, Ala.  
 11 a.m.

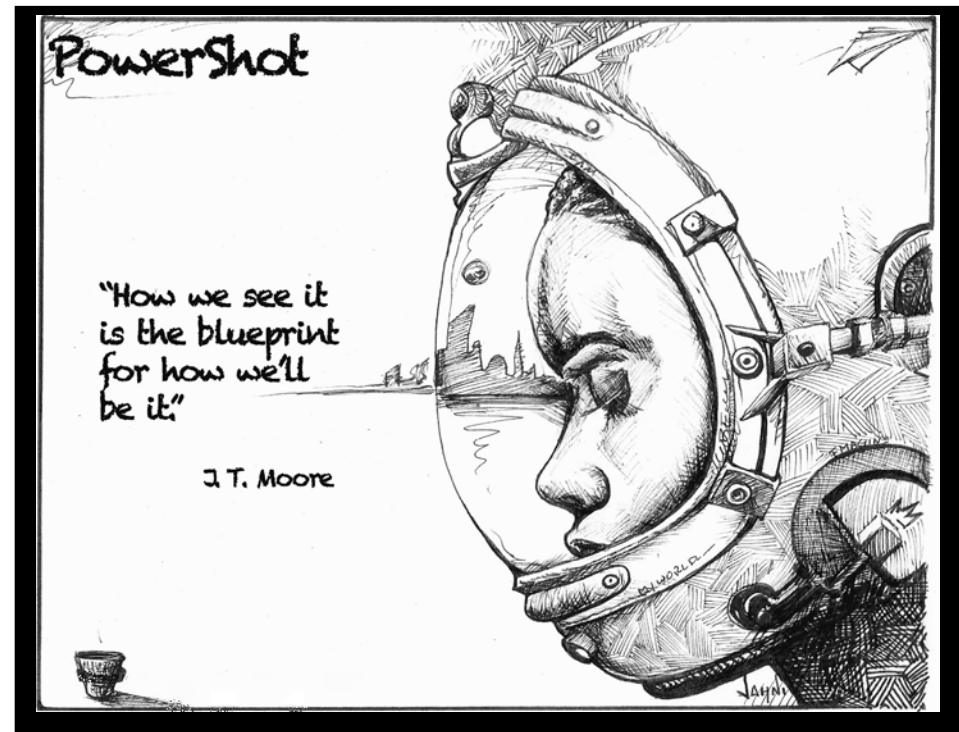
**May 18-19**  
 Rocket City BBQ & Soul Fest  
 National Speleological Society  
 Huntsville, Ala.  
 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

**May 22**  
 Jewelry Workshop  
 Yellowhammer Brewery  
 Tickets (\$110)  
 6-9 p.m.

**May 25**  
 Memorial Day Ride & Event  
 Redstone Harley-Davidson  
 Sponsor: Morgan County Sheriff's Posse Special Needs Program  
 15100 Old Highway 20  
 Madison, Ala. (\$20/Rider)  
 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

**May 27**  
 44th Annual Cotton Row Run  
 runsignup.com/Race/CottonRowRun/Page-18  
 Big Spring Park  
 202 Church Street SW  
 Huntsville, Ala.  
 7 a.m.

**June 8**  
 Downtown Art Walks (Downtown Huntsville, Inc.)  
 Courthouse Square  
 11 a.m.-3 p.m.



*"Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions."*

- Dalai Lama

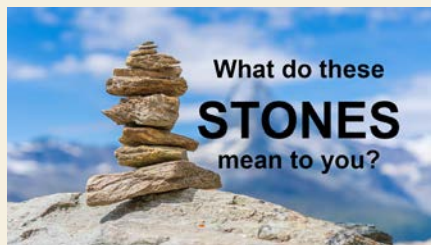
### LEGAL NOTICE NOTICE OF COMPLETION

In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 39, Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, notice is hereby given that Lee Builders, Inc., Contractor, has completed the Contract for Rehabilitation of First Stop's Facility, CDBG-CV Project No. CV-EC-20-010 at 206 Stokes Street NW, Huntsville, AL 35805 for the State of Alabama and the Madison County City of Huntsville (Owner), and have made request for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials, or otherwise in connection with this project should immediately notify Chapman Sisson Architects, Inc., 305 Church Street SW, Suite 805, Huntsville, AL 35801. Lee Builders, Inc., 2049 Fisher Street SW, Huntsville AL 35803.

### AVISO LEGAL AVISO DE FINALIZACIÓN

De acuerdo con el Capítulo 1, Título 39, Código de Alabama, 1975, según enmendado, por la presente se notifica que Lee Builders, Inc., Contratista, ha completado el Contrato para la Rehabilitación de las Instalaciones de First Stop, Proyecto CDBGCV No. CV-EC-20-010 en 206 Stokes Street NW, Huntsville, AL 35805 para el Estado de Alabama y la Ciudad de Huntsville del Condado de Madison (Propietario), y han solicitado la liquidación final de dicho Contrato. Todas las personas que tengan algún reclamo por mano de obra, materiales o de otro modo en relación con este proyecto deben notificar inmediatamente a Chapman Sisson Architects, Inc., 305 Church Street SW, Suite 805, Huntsville, AL 35801. Lee Builders, Inc., 2049 Fisher Street SW, Huntsville AL 35803.

## The Still-Ongoing Lessons from 2020's COVID-19 Crisis



“... And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever.” - Joshua 4:7

Here, Joshua commanded the erection of a monument of 12 stones to honor the Children of Israel's journey. They had traveled from a 400-year Egyptian enslavement to now entering God's Promised Land, Canaan.

More importantly, the monument would remind future generations of the partnership between God's blessings and human sacrifices.

Our global pandemic crisis is over, hopefully. Therefore, our reduced fatalities, hospitalizations, and social restrictions should teach us three important lessons:

### 1. Finish the Race - A Marathon, not a Sprint

Too often, after pushing hard to achieve a goal, we see the finish line. But mistakenly we slow down, celebrate prematurely, and lose sight of the true finish line.

Remember: The face-masking, six-foot social distancing, and 20-second hand washing inched us toward victory.

### 2. The Biggest Defeats often follow the Biggest Victories

Why do sports champions rarely repeat as champs? Most times, they simply fail to continue the practices that made them champions. Leaders know this and warn us.

White House and medical science leaders urge us to maintain, where appropriate, our COVID-19 safety protocols to avoid a pandemic relapse. And

### 3. Congrats, Alabama: But Don't Stop, . . .

According to the Becker Hospital Clinical Leadership Review <https://bit.ly/3xN7YX0>, 53% of Alabamians are now fully vaccinated; yet we're still ranked #50 behind Mississippi and Louisiana.

Bravo to Washington, DC, which boasts a 91.3 full-vaccination rate - and a 41% Black population, one of the pandemic's most vulnerable groups.

Let's stay the course and finish this marathon race, y'all.

As you and I continue to persevere and do our part to beat COVID-19 our vaccinated arms - along with our "retired" face masks, social distancing and 20-second hand washing - will become our monuments of stone for future generations.



Tim Allston  
Leadership Player-Coach & Four-time  
Amazon Best-Selling Author  
"Leading from the Middle"  
[www.timallston.com](http://www.timallston.com) - (256) 212-0949

## Once You Get Up ...

# Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

Have you ever woke up, whether it was by alarm, having to use the restroom, or body clock, and laid there thinking of the many reasons you need to go back to sleep. Justifying it in your head. Convincing yourself that your excuses are valid. Thinking, "I just need 20 more minutes, I went to bed late. I think my throat hurts. This bed feels extra good today. I'm just gonna close my eyes and say my morning prayer. Maybe I am not feeling good." So many reasons why not. But have you ever flipped that and thought about all or the good

reasons why you should get up?

Oftentimes, we justify anything that allows us to derail the plan. Not purposely, we have an innate instinct to protect ourselves. This instinct is a natural response to help ensure our safety and well-being. There's no problem with that, but what if we use it for excuses. What if it keeps us from the goal? Delays the process.

Even after that snooze alarm goes off, you're still tired. But, once you get up!! When you place those



feet on the ground, move around, and the blood starts circulating, you have loosened that feeling of laziness or resistance.

It's in those moments of action that we often find the motivation and

energy we need to carry us through the day!

Remember, every small step counts towards progress. So, move, get up, and start - you've got this!

Lace Up!  
Let's Go!!

### Huntsville Council Meetings



Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

Council work sessions are also held in the Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. For more information, call (256) 427-5011.

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## This Sunday's Lectionary

(Track 2, Year B)

First Lesson:

Acts 10:44-48

Psalm 98

Second Lesson:

1 John 5:1-6

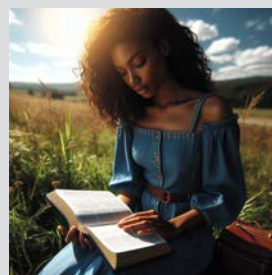
GOSPEL:

John 15:9-17

Sunday, May 5, 2024

Sixth Sunday of

EASTER





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

## Mother Elizabeth Smith

A native of Hinesville, Ga., Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Smith received the Bachelor of Arts degree in both business education and elementary education from her alma mater, Savannah State University.

She daily demonstrates her dedication for people in the community through volunteerism for government, church and public missions in order to improve her city, state and the world. Her compassion for human kind and leadership in numerous organizations demonstrates her up-standing and phenomenal character. Hard work does not deter her at all. She served as Board President for Wellstone Behavioral Health, Madison County, where she conducted business operations, supervised planning, personnel and finances. She currently serves on the governing board, seeking to improve the lives of Madison County families with mental health and addiction challenges through prevention, treatment, and the ultimate goal of recovery. Liz, as she is affectionately known, strives to help support individuals in getting back into the mainstream of society and live improved, productive, happy, and independent lives.

She is an active member of Union Chapel Mission-

ary Baptist Church, under the profound leadership of the illustrious Pastor, Dr. O. Wendell Davis, where she currently serves as advisor/mentor to the Ushers' Ministries. Community engagement is what Mrs. Smith lives for and works hard to bring projects, assignments and dreams to fruition. She has always striven to give back as much or more than she has received. She is a member of the American Association of University Women, where she serves as a mentor to young women currently enrolled at J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College, Calhoun Community College, the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and Alabama A&M University. Her power of mentoring has resulted in several scholarships having been awarded to young women to attend J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College, Calhoun Community College and Alabama A&M University. She is also currently serving as the President of the Rolling Hills Elementary School PTA.

Additionally, Mrs. Smith, an associate member of the Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association, Inc., has worked



in several capacities with the organization including, but not limited to, interim chapter secretary, co-chair of the Scholarship Committee, recruiter of new members, coordinator of hosts and hostesses and as the recipient of the National Alumni Association's Chapter Service Award.

She is currently serving on the Huntsville/Madison County subcommittee on African American History "Completing the Story".

She is a proud life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and has held several positions, including corresponding secretary; chairperson, Social Action Committee; chairperson, Ebony Fashion Show; chairperson, Courtesy/Hospitality Committee; and recipient of the Cherished Pearl Award, to name a few.

Mrs. Smith is a retired Budget/Program Analyst for the United States Army, Aviation and Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

**MAY 3 - JAMES BROWN** - His success peaked in the 1960s with the live album *Live at the Apollo* and hit singles such as "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag", "I Got You (I Feel Good)" and "It's a Man's Man's Man's World". During the late 1960s, Brown moved from a continuum of blues and gospel-based forms and styles to a profoundly "Africanized" approach to music-making that influenced the development of funk music. By the early 1970s, Brown had fully established the funk sound after the formation of the J.B.s with records such as "Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Sex Machine" and "The Payback". He also became noted for songs of social commentary, including the 1968 hit "Say It Loud - I'm Black and I'm Proud".

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



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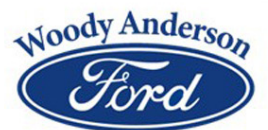
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"Spotlight on Our Elders" is a weekly feature sponsored by the Rosetta James Foundation to promote **volunteerism** and **activism** in our community among those who are 70-plus. The Foundation also provides scholarships. Learn more about us at [www.rossettajamesfoundation.org](http://www.rossettajamesfoundation.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).

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## AAMU Will Help State with Economic Growth Plan

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey has announced Alabama A&M University has been selected to assist in the creation of a new strategic economic growth plan that will guide the state into the next decade and beyond.

A&M researchers will gather comprehensive data to help a small team led by Ellen McNair, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce, to identify the plan's overall objectives, potential new approaches and the target industry sectors best aligned for recruitment and growth.

Collaborating partners include: 1) **McKinsey & Company**, which will conduct a quantitative analysis of the target sectors and develop strategies for each of these sectors spanning the range of innovation and entrepreneurship, business retention/expansion and business attraction. The firm will also engage with industry leaders outside of Alabama for a qualitative analysis; 2) **Troy University's Continuing Education and Outreach** will facilitate focus groups of internal stakeholders including regional economic developers, private sector leaders and business associations;



and 3) **AAMU's Center for Educator Preparation and Certification Services** will bring an academic element to the qualitative analysis through extensive notetaking, review and the preparation of a final report based on the information gathered.

"The AAMU Research Team is looking forward to the partnership with Troy University to analyze the data to develop a report for creating the strategic economic plan for Alabama," says Dr. Lydia Davenport, Lead Researcher for the Project and Director for the Center for Education Preparation and Certification Services.

The AAMU Research Team also includes Dr. Takisha Durm, Assistant Professor of Elementary Education; Dr. Salam Khan, Professor of Mathematics,

and Dr. John Prestridge, Assistant Professor of Instructional Leadership.

The A&M researchers say the data analysis coupled with the writing of the final report will be critical to state lawmakers as they make decisions based on the evidence they will provide.

In addition, the executive committee will continue a partnership with the Hoover Institution, a leading economic policy research center led by former U.S. Secretary of State and Alabama native Condoleezza Rice, which has been analyzing many aspects of the state's economic development practices and strategies.

*Photo, l-r: Dr. Lydia Davenport, Dr. John Prestridge, Dr. Peter Eley, Dr. Takisha Durm, Dr. Salam Khan*

## Front Row Development, *Continued from Page 1*

tial, office space and retail offerings into the downtown district in the old site of the Coca-Cola bottling plant.

The development site spans over 11 acres and features 545 residential units, 36,000 sq. ft. of Class-A office space and 47,000 sq. ft. of retail space. A public urban green space with

public art will be located between two six-story buildings that will make up the development's first phase. Retail space is expected to be available in late 2025 with apartments following in early 2026.

The development also has a second phase with hotel, office high-rise, condos and more.

"This is an extraordinary project that will make downtown Huntsville even more attractive to both residents and visitors," said Shane Davis, the City's Director of Urban and Economic Development. "We are grateful for the work by the developers to help bring this project to the start of construction."

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## A&M Fellows Go to the Netherlands

Four Alabama A&M University students participated in Stanford University's Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (d.school) at the University of Twente in Enschede, Netherlands, April 9-15. The students were among 242 students from 63 higher education students in 15 countries named University Innovation Fellows.

The University Innovation Fellows (UIF) program empowers students to become agents of change at their schools. Fellows work to ensure that all students gain the attitudes, skills and knowledge required to navigate a complex world and build the future. These student leaders from schools around the globe create opportunities to help their peers build the creative confidence, agency, and entrepreneurial mindset needed to address global challenges.

AAMU's University Fellows included:

Angel Scott, senior elementary education major from Mobile, Alabama;

Jenee Whitt, junior marketing major from Louisville, Kentucky;

Albert Ball, secondary education (mathematics) graduate student from Oxford, Mississippi; and

Rodney Farrell, kinesiol-



ogy graduate student from Madison, Alabama.

They are the first team to represent Alabama A&M University in the prestigious program. Fellows create student innovation spaces, start entrepreneurship organizations, facilitate experiential workshops, and work with faculty and administrators to develop new courses.

They also serve as advocates for lasting institutional change with academic leaders, lending much needed student voices to the conversations about the future of higher education. The program is run by Stanford University's d.school. With the addition of the new Fellows, the program has trained more than 3,100 students since its creation.

"Our Fellows [worked] on a campus-specific innovative project while learning how to apply design thinking principles to their project," said Dr. Samantha Strachan, Associate

Professor and Program Coordinator in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership. "They also participated in interactive sessions at the University of Twente, where they explored different iterations of their project to address a real-world problem on campus."

Strachan was recently accepted as a candidate into Stanford University's Faculty Innovation Fellowship Program. The two-year candidacy will allow Strachan to work with faculty from all over the world as she applies principles of design thinking to improve teacher recruitment and retention.

Strachan and Dr. Lena Walton, AAMU Associate Professor of Elementary Education, accompanied AAMU's University Innovation Fellows on their trip to Europe.

*Photo, l-r: Dr. Lena Walton, Rodney Farrell, Jenee Whitt, Angel Scott, Albert Ball, Dr. Samantha Strachan*

## Harrison Center Hosts Local Columnist-Author in May 2nd Luncheon Series

The Robert Harrison Senior Wellness & Advocacy Center will feature local columnist-author Tim Allston on Thursday, May 2, discussing his latest Amazon best-seller, *Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus*, as well as his upcoming free online webinar, "How to Tell, then Sell Your Story in 40 Days Without Losing Your Control - or, Your Money!"

"I'm pleased and excited that my Bob Harrison Center is presenting my book, *Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus* - as a perfect graduation and Father's Day gift for persons passionate about the Bible, or sports and the NBA - or both!"

Thanks to what Allston calls its "Synovus Bank 'alley-oop,'" *Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus* asks and answers you have never thought to ask before such as:

- Compare **Michael Jordan's** "The Last Dance" on ESPN with Michael Jesus' "The Last Supper" in the Book of Matthew
- Compare **Captain Magic Johnson** the



Super Laker with **Captain Naaman** the Syrian Leper, and

- Is **Ja Morant** this decade's emerging "Kobe Bryant 2.0"?

"Additionally, you can use my print, digital, or audiobook as a 50/50 fundraiser for your favorite non-profit group, empowering you to make a difference while enjoying a thought-provoking read," he concluded.

Join us for a \$5 "Soul Food Thursday" lunch, an optional addition to the event.

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