

What's Holding You Back? - p. 4

Friday
 May 15, 2026
 Vol. 12, No. 37
 ValleyWeeklyllc.com

City Official Inspires DLC Cohort XX - Page 10

SALUTE!
 Rosetta James Foundation
 ELDER OF THE WEEK



Dr. John Vickers, Jr.



"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." — Albert Einstein



HPAC Team (l-r): *Ronnie Hawkins, Marvin Williams, Brenda Gurley, Linda D. Fowlkes, Khrista Dees, Mary Elizabeth Smith, Ann Erskine, Gregory Hicks and Ike "Sonny" Rooks, III.* (Photo and text by Jerome Saintjones)

HPAC Recognizes Rolling Hills Teachers, Staff

The dedicated teachers and staff of Rolling Hills Elementary School in Northwest Huntsville were recognized with a special catered lunch on Wednesday, May 6, all part of the national thrust for Teacher Appreciation Week.

Alabama A&M University's Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter, Inc., led by Allen Malone, has paid annual tribute to the employees at the school for several years. The institu-

tion is currently being administered by AAMU alumna LaKeisha Agun, a principal with nearly 20 years in the Huntsville City School System. She proudly receives consistent support from an array of faculty and staff, many of them A&M alumni, as well.

Nine chapter and associate members served a tasty and nutritious meal to the Rolling Hills Family that included a healthy salad, green beans, lasagna, chicken

breasts and assorted desserts.

Joining the team of servers and greeters were local realtor and Huntsvillian **Khrista Dees**; 1998 engineering technology graduate **Marvin Williams**, a NASA retiree and native of Clanton, Alabama; Huntsvillian **Ann Erskine**; loyal supporter and Talladega native **Ronnie Hawkins**, Redstone Arsenal PM Cargo retiree; 1977 accounting graduate **Brenda Gurley**, who was the first black and

female human resources officer with the Dept. of the Army at the Anniston (Ala.) Army Depot; **Mary Elizabeth Smith**, retired budget/program analyst of the U.S. Army, Aviation and Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal; U.S. Army Contracting Command retiree and Birmingham native **Linda D. Fowlkes**; principal mentor and 1984 alum **Ike "Sonny" Rooks III**; and principal/1987 poli-sci grad **Gregory Hicks**.

Shiloh MB Church to Celebrate Homecoming

The entire Tennessee Valley community is being invited to share in the festive "Last Homecoming: Family & Friends Day" of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church on Sunday, May 17, at 11:30 a.m. The church is located off Highway 72 in Woodville, Ala.

All visitors will enjoy "a special time of worship, fellowship and remembrance."

Lunch will be served.

For event additional information, contact Brenda Friend at (256) 682-5842.

VBC: Drake Prepares for Annual Jazz Fundraiser

Mark your calendars! Jazz in the City is back, and this time the fun is being taken indoors, at the Von Braun Center Mars Music Hall, as Drake State celebrates its 65th Anniversary of education, workforce development, and community impact.

The Drake State Foundation's 5th Annual Jazz in the City is presented by Mazda Toyota Manufacturing and will be held on



Friday, June 19, at 7 p.m., headlined by the legendary AJ Ghent and His Singing Guitar.

Ryon Schultz and Nina Marie Live will kick off the evening with special musical performances.

Organizers look forward to sharing

an unforgettable evening of live jazz, great company, and real impact for Drake State students. Proceeds from the event will support scholarships, technology upgrades, and facility improvements, expanding access and opportunity for students pursuing high-demand careers in North Alabama.

Tickets are now available for purchase [HERE!](#)

The Valley Weekly

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Meet Fat Ruby: Arts Huntsville Offers Chance to 'Name that Kitten'

Arts Huntsville, in partnership with the City of Huntsville and District 4 Councilmember Bill Kling, has announced the installation of a new cat-and-kitten sculpture at Jim Marek Park. Created by sculptor Joe McCreary of Birmingham Sculpture, the piece depicts a mother cat and her kitten and was modeled after McCreary's wife's real cat, a beloved feline named Fat Ruby.

The mama cat will keep her namesake, but the kitten still needs a name - and Arts Huntsville is asking the community to help. Residents are invited to suggest a two-word name that includes a gem or jewel name, in keep-

ing with the Ruby theme. Think Tiny Topaz, Dainty Diamond, Sassy Sapphire, or your own creative pairing. Councilmember Kling, whose support made the sculpture possible, will select the winning name from the community's suggestions.

"When we came to visit the site, we noticed there was a cat hanging out near the park," said Joe Lockwood, sculptor, on his decision to create a cat for site. He used his wife's rescued stray cat as a model. "You can't tell from the sculp-

ture, but Fat Ruby's a tortie. She has tortitude."

Community members can submit name suggestions for Fat Ruby's

submissions and announce the winning name.

"I love using discretionary funds to put something special in our neighbor-

"Councilmember Kling is a true champion for public art in neighborhood spaces," said Allison Dillon-Jauken, Executive Director of Arts Huntsville.

"He commissioned two sculptures for District 4 parks that were installed last year, and now we're installing a second

round in 2026 with Fat Ruby at Jim Marek Park and another piece coming soon to Mayfair Park. This sustained investment means so much to both the residents who get to enjoy these works, and

the artists who get to make them."

Fat Ruby was selected through a process guided by the Public Art Master Plan and the City of Huntsville Public Art Program, which is managed by Arts Huntsville. More information about the naming campaign and the Public Art Program is available at www.artshuntsville.org. Name suggestions may be emailed to rubyskitten@artshuntsville.org through May 15.



kitten by commenting on Arts Huntsville's social media announcement on Facebook and Instagram. The naming period will be open through May 15, 2026, after which Councilmember Kling will review

hood parks," said Councilmember Bill Kling. "These are the places where folks actually spend their time, and a little art goes a long way toward making a park feel like home."

Let's Learn a Little about Amyloidosis

Many people have never heard of amyloidosis—but early recognition can be life-changing.

Amyloidosis occurs when abnormal proteins build up in the body, affecting organs such as the heart, kidneys, and nervous system. Heart involvement can cause shortness of breath, leg swelling, fatigue, dizziness, or heart failure.

Because these symptoms mimic more common conditions, diagnosis is often delayed. Awareness is especially important in the African American

community, where about 3–4% of individuals carry a hereditary gene mutation linked to amyloidosis—often unknowingly. Not everyone with the mutation develops symptoms, but risk increases with age.

Former NFL player Art Still experienced this firsthand. After his diagnosis with hereditary ATTR amyloidosis, he and his wife Liz founded Still4Life to promote education and early detection, particularly in high-risk communi-

ties. As Art shares, "When you help others, you heal yourself."

Still4Life Amyloidosis Outreach Event (9:30 a.m.)

100 Black Men of Greater Huntsville
Annual Health Fair
Calhoun Community College
102 Wynn Drive - Huntsville, Ala.
May 21, 2026
11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Early diagnosis matters. Carpal tunnel syndrome, back pain, numbness or tingling in the hands and feet, or unexplained heart issues may be early clues.

To raise awareness, Still-

4Life is partnering with the 100 Black Men of Greater Huntsville for an Amyloidosis Outreach Event on May 21, 2026, during their annual Health Fair. Breakfast begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a panel featuring Art and Liz Still and Huntsville

cardiologist Kaushik Jain.

"Our goal is to help people recognize the warning signs early and provide access to our team of amyloid specialists, right here in North Alabama," said Dr. Jain. Whether you have symptoms or simply want to learn more, you're invited to attend.



Council Meetings

Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held on the 1st floor of the Municipal Building.

The meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Meetings

The **Citizens Advisory Committee** of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will meet on **Monday, May 18, 2026**, at 5:00 pm, on the 6th Floor of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building, at 305 Fountain Circle SW. The Metropolitan Planning Organization **Policy Board** will meet on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026**, at 4:00 pm on the 2nd Floor, (Council Chambers) of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building, at 305 Fountain Circle SW. To review items on the agenda for these meetings, visit: <http://www.huntsvillempo.org/about/meetings-and-agendas/>. For more information on the MPO, visit: <http://www.huntsvillempo.org/>

"We accept the love we think we deserve."

— Stephen Chbosky

The Valley Weekly

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The Valley Weekly

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Awareness Can Save Lives: Why Our Community Must Talk About Amyloidosis

There are some illnesses that quietly impact families and communities simply because too few people know their names. Amyloidosis is one of them.

For many, the word itself is unfamiliar. Yet for those living with the disease, the consequences can be devastating when warning signs are overlooked or misunderstood. That is why education, awareness, and early detection matter so deeply—especially in the African American community.

Amyloidosis occurs when abnormal proteins build up in the body and interfere with the normal function of vital organs such as the heart, kidneys, and nervous system. When the heart is affected, symptoms may include shortness of breath, swelling in the legs, fatigue, dizziness, irregular heartbeat, or even heart failure. The challenge is that these symptoms often resemble more common health conditions, leading many people to go undiagnosed for years.

In our community, this issue deserves urgent attention. Medical experts estimate that approximately 3–4% of African Americans carry a hereditary gene mutation associated with ATTR amyloidosis, often without realizing it. While not everyone with the mutation develops the disease, the risk increases with age. That reality makes awareness not just important—but potentially life-saving.



Far too often, people dismiss symptoms as “just getting older.” Persistent back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, numbness or tingling in the hands and feet, unexplained fatigue, or unusual heart problems may actually be early warning signs that deserve further medical evaluation. The earlier amyloidosis is detected, the better the opportunities for treatment and improved quality of life.

Former NFL player Art Still understands this journey personally. After being diagnosed with hereditary ATTR amyloidosis, he and his wife, Liz Still, turned their personal challenge into a mission of hope and education. Through their organization, Still4Life, they have worked tirelessly to bring information, resources, and encouragement to communities that are often underserved in healthcare outreach.

Art Still’s words capture the spirit behind their mission: “When you help others, you heal yourself.”

That spirit of service is now coming to North Alabama through a powerful community partnership. Still4Life is joining forces with 100 Black Men of Greater Huntsville for an Amyloidosis Outreach Event on May 21, 2026, during the organization’s annual health fair in Huntsville.

The event will begin with breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and feature a panel discussion with Art and Liz Still alongside Huntsville cardiologist Kaushik Jain, who emphasized the importance of local access to information and care.

“Our goal is to help people recognize the warning signs early and provide access to our team of amyloid specialists, right here in North Alabama,” Dr. Jain shared.

This outreach effort represents more than a medical discussion. It reflects what can happen when healthcare professionals, community leaders, and advocates come together to protect lives through education and prevention.

In a time when health disparities continue to affect communities of color at disproportionate rates, knowledge remains one of our strongest tools. Awareness creates conversations. Conversations encourage testing. Testing can lead to early diagnosis. And early diagnosis can save lives.

Whether you are experiencing symptoms, caring for a loved one, or simply want to become more informed, this event offers an opportunity to learn something that could make a lasting difference for you or someone you know.

Sometimes the first step toward healing begins with simply knowing what questions to ask. Until next week ...

Dorothy

MAY 15 - SOMMORE - Sommore (born Lori Ann Rambough) is an American comedian and actress. Known as the “Diva of Contemporary Comedy,” her comedic style features a biting sarcasm and frank discussions about money, sex, and equality between the sexes. She first gained fame as the first female host of *Comic View*, a comedy show hosted Black Entertainment Television (BET) as well as one of the female comedians to join *The Queens of Comedy* tour. She appeared in the popular Black films *Friday After Next*, *Soul Plane*, *Dirty Laundry* and she has received the Richard Pryor Award for Comic of the Year.

- Blackcelebritybirthdays.org





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Funeral or memorial services for **MR. CURTIS L. DOUGLAS** (b. 1964); **MS. LORETTA BANKS** (b. 1965); **MRS. SANDRA NORMAN WEAVER** (b. 1954); **MS. JO ANN MIMS** (b. 1947); **MR. JAHZIER IRBY** (b. 2005); **MISS KIRIYANAH HARRIS** (b. 2006); and **MR. RALPH LOGAN** (b. 1955) will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MR. EUGENE "DICK" SCRUGGS, SR.**, (b. 1938) will be held Sunday, May 17, at 2:00 p.m. at St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Dr. Mario Ford eulogist.

Celebration of Life for **MS. TISEMAR TISIANA TISKA JOSEPH** (b. 1976) will be held Saturday, May 16, from 1-5 p.m. at 7500B Byrd Spring Rd SW, Huntsville, Alabama.

Funeral service for **MOTHER HATTLE L. BURTON** (b. 1934) was Saturday, May 9, at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor O. Wendell Davis officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. IRENE STEPTER** (b. 1935) was Friday, May 8, at First Baptist Church of Russellville, 200 South Denver Avenue, Russellville, Arkansas.

Funeral service for **ELDER EDDIE B. RAGLAND, JR.**, (b. 1971) was Sunday, May 3, at the Consolidated Flint River and Running Water Memorial Tabernacle with Elder Danny Baker officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. JULIET BISHARM SOBRYAN** was Sunday, April 26, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MRS. WENDOLYN B. READUS MOORE** (b. 1952) was Saturday, April 25, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Dr. Timothy Rainey officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. MYRTLE GARNER JOLLY** (b. 1949) was Friday, April 24, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association Tabernacle with Elder Terrence Stewart, pastor of Meridianville Primitive Baptist Church, officiating.

Spiritual Game Plan

Valley Weekly
 PRESTON BROWN'S

Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"What's Holding You Back?"

Second Corinthians 10:5 says we should "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

You know, there is one thing to hold on to a thought in your mind, but it's another thing when a thought holds you captive. Sometimes it can get so bad that you can't do anything productive. But like this scripture is saying, we have to take control of our thoughts ... because there are thoughts that we think about, that are holding us back from being successful. Thoughts like "I'm not good enough" or "I'm not smart enough" or "I'm not spiritual enough." All these thoughts are not from God, they are from the adversary. When these thoughts get in our minds, they cause us to see ourselves as failures. This is a lie. I believe that we all need to look at our failures from a spiritual perspective. You see, sometimes we think that the opposite of success is failure, but it's not in the spiritual sense. Because

we all fail sometimes. But to me the opposite of success is disobedience to God's calling for your life. So, if you are faithful and obedient to what God has called you to do, even your failures will work. So, don't let negative thoughts like fear of commitment keep you from getting the job that you desire to have, because that same fear will keep you from having the relationships that you should have in your life. It can also keep you from the promise and the destiny that God wants you to have.



Remember, the mind is a terrible thing to waste, so don't let the enemy hold you back with thoughts that are not from God.

Prayer: Loving Father, help us to fill our minds with good thoughts.

Question: What are some thoughts that come to your mind that are holding you back from being all that you can be?

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:
"Plan for Love: Desire, Discipline and Delight"



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 BUT WE CAN MAKE IT EASIER"



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Success Is Not an IQ Test!

A February 26 Inc. magazine article, "Science Says Rich People Aren't Inherently Smarter. Mark Cuban Agrees", reported research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman that challenges a common assumption about success.

Most people believe intelligence plays a major role in financial success. When asked to estimate its impact, respondents often said 25 to 50 percent.



The research suggests otherwise.

Innate intelligence may account for only 1 to 2 percent of the differences in people's income and professional success.

Instead, the traits most strongly associated with success are **self-discipline, perseverance, and diligence.**

NBA's Dallas Mavericks owner and entrepreneur Mark Cuban puts it simply: success belongs to those

willing to "outwork and outlearn everyone."

Those findings resonate strongly with a concept I've been studying and creating for years: ego-holism.

Ego vs Ego-holism

Ego itself is not the problem. A healthy sense of self defined by dictionaries as "ego" is essential to leadership.

But when ego becomes distorted—either inflated or deflated—it undermines the very traits that drive success, or "ego-holism."

Inflated ego makes leaders believe they already know everything; deflated ego convinces them they cannot grow.

In both cases, discipline disappears.

That is why the first stage of the Ego-holism Recovering framework focuses on three steps summarized as T-O-P:

- Target the problem.
- Own the problem.
- Proceed to action.

Leadership expert John C. Maxwell defines discipline as "doing the things you really don't want to do, so that you can do the things you really want to do."

Discipline, in other words, is the daily practice of keeping ego in its proper place.

The encouraging news is that while intelligence and luck may be beyond our control, discipline is not.

Every leader has the opportunity to cultivate persistence, humility, and diligence.

And in the long run, those qualities often matter far more than raw talent.

Tim Allston

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

Contact: (256) 212-0949 - <https://bit.ly/4aB9Lwm>

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

Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

"Reintroduce Yourself ..."

Reintroduce yourself to yourself ...

Life happens, right? Of course, it does. You get lost in the flow of it and forget there is a reason for your existence.

It is so easy to become mundane and wake up morning after morning enduring a mediocre routine that has just happened upon you by simple living.

Now, some of you may be okay with this; no judgment.

But notice how far you go living this way, moseying along, day-to-day, forgetting you are born with greatness inside you.

You aren't even thinking about that matter because life is happening



to you, not for you.

Stop!

Reach back and think of all of the gifts and talents God (or the Universe, whichever you choose to believe) has placed inside you. Smile about it. They are your superpowers. Dust them off and use them.

This wasn't happenstance, this was intentional. Spend the

remainder of your life finding out what you're here for and utilizing those tools to provide a real, fulfilling life for yourself.

Reintroduce yourself to yourself! Hi I'm (insert your name) and I'm a big deal!

Now, act like it!

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!

- May 15-16** 8 p.m.
Ms. Pat
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway
SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374
- May 16**
Catfish Festival | Car Show
Jackson County Park
8 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 5th Annual Patriot Car Show
Bob Jones High School
Madison, Ala.
12-3 p.m.
- Concert
Sam Barber
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.
- Concert
Fantasia and Anthony
Hamilton
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
- May 17**
Hampton Cove Corn Hole
Tournament
- May 21**
North Alabama Health &
Wellness Fair
Sponsor: 100 Black Men of
Greater Huntsville
Calhoun Community Col-
lege
Wynn Drive
Huntsville, Ala.
9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
- May 22**
Concert
Hardy
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala.
7:30 p.m.
- May 23**
Butterfly Release
Huntsville Botanical Gar-
den (\$8-\$27)
10-10:30 a.m.
Old School and Blues Festi-

val 2026
Featuring: The Zapp Band,
Cherrelle, F.P.J, Jazz McK-
enzie, Project Pat, Yoshia-
naa, Urban Mystic
www.jde.live
502 Quarter Mountain
Road
Harvest, Ala.
11 a.m.

Concert
Godsmack, Stone Temple
Pilots & Dorothy
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.

May 25
Memorial Day

May 29-30
Kam Patterson
Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway
SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

May 30
Elite Wrestling
Propst Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

May 31
Pop Culture & Wrestling
Expo
“Dream On” (\$12)
Stovehouse Event Center
3414 Governors Drive SW
Huntsville, Ala

June 11-13
“Rock the South”
The Biggest Party in the
South!
Jason Aldean, Riley Green,
Zach Top and Dozens
More!
The Raised Rowdy Stage
The Fields at Decatur
Decatur, Ala.

June 12-14
Marlon Wayans
Huntsville Levity Live

Comedy Club
2012 Memorial Parkway
SW
Huntsville, Ala.

June 14
Flag Day

June 18-21
Alabama Taxidermist
Association 50th Annual
Convention & Competition
Lake Guntersville State
Park

Guntersville, Ala.

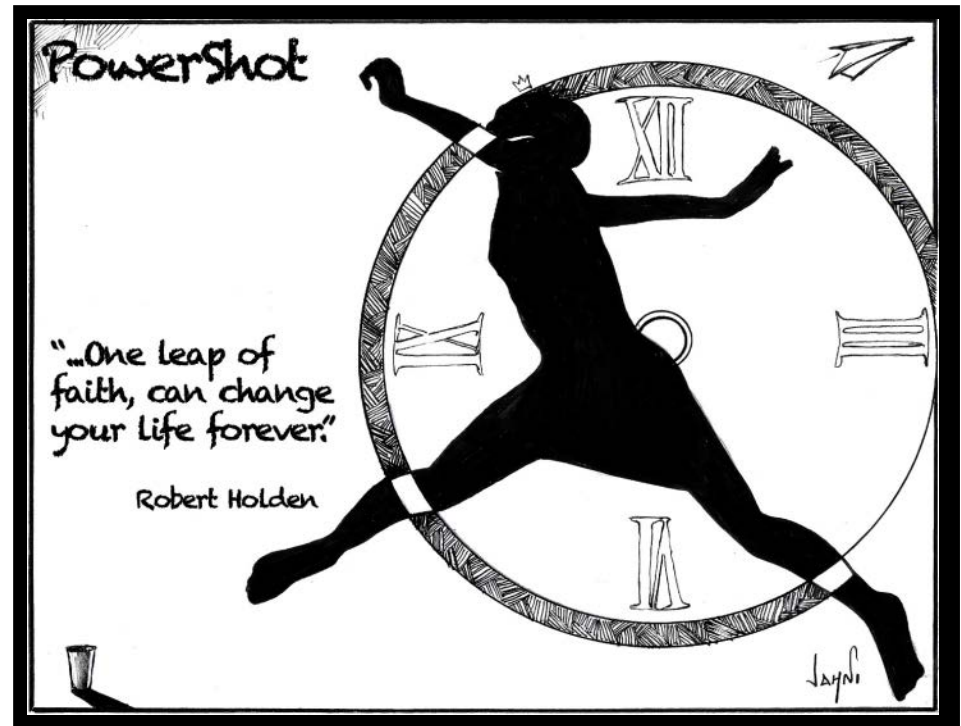
June 19
Juneteenth

June 20
Black Jacket Symphony
Mark C. Smith Concert
Hall
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.

June 21
Father's Day

ON THIS DAY

On this day in Black history, **May 15**, key moments include the 1911 chartering of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, the 1832 birth of pioneering mail carrier Mary Fields, and the 1970 deaths of two student protesters at Jackson State. Other significant events include the 1955 death of educator Mary McLeod Bethune. - Blackfacts.com



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

Dr. John Vickers, Jr.

Born in Gadsden, Alabama, in 1932, following the Great Depression, Dr. John Vickers, Jr., is the quintessential "renaissance man," whose eventful life spawns successes in several different areas. Dr. Vickers is among those rare individuals who excelled in numerous fields, adding positive impacts to virtually everything he touches.

He is the oldest of thirteen children--eleven boys and two girls--who blessed the union of a steel mill worker/farmer and an industrious mother. His father was self-taught in reading and writing, but possessed such drive that he would later become a minister and mayor of the rural town to which he later moved his family. His mother also shared in the deep appreciation for the virtues of education and helped to raise an earnest group of children, out of which emerged nearly a dozen college graduates and four doctorate degrees. Dr. Vickers left his familiar surroundings to pursue higher education at historic Alabama A&M University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and a minor

in music. He went on to serve in the Korean War. At the time, the military was integrated, while American society as Dr. Vickers knew it was still segregated. He vividly recalled the late 1950s as a period in time when even an educated African American male and war veteran was not allowed to vote.

Dr. Vickers and his beloved late wife, Clara Teresa Merriweather Vickers, are the proud parents of one son, Dr. Selwyn Vickers. They became prominent educators throughout Alabama and consistently furthered their abilities to train and grow, and they subsequently achieved advanced degrees. Dr. Vickers' life journey is punctuated by his drive to become one of the first African Americans to receive a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Alabama, which he achieved while still serving as a full-time principal.

Dr. Vickers' success as an educator ran the gamut from science teacher to elementary school principal to dean status. Long before his colleagues were even aware of the implications of a World Wide Web, Dr. Vickers had already secured Alabama A&M University's web domain (www.aamu.edu) and had set the foundation, through



campus-wide fiber optic cables, for the University's preparedness for information technology, academic computerization and next-generation research.

Simultaneously, among government-sponsored Title III programs, Dr. Vickers was known throughout the higher education community as a foremost authority and perhaps the initiative's most sought-after consultant.

He retired while serving as the Dean of Education at Alabama A&M University and remained active in numerous community events and projects. He was also inducted as an Elder into the Rosetta James Foundation.

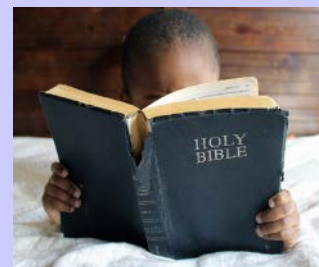
Running parallel to his gifted talents as an educational administrator and coordinator of government programs were numerous viable business ventures he had launched.

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



This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, May 17, 2026
Seventh Sunday
of Easter



(Track 2, Year A)

First Lesson:

Acts 1:6-14

Psalms 68:1-10, 33-36

Second Lesson:

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

GOSPEL:

John 17:1-11

"POWERSHOTS"

John 'Gahni' Moore

TRUTH 2 POWER

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HPAC Visits, Awards AAMU Bowling Team

Alabama A&M University's Huntsville Progressive Alumni Association, Inc., (HPAC) recently recognized The Hill's conference-winning bowling team, led by alumnus and Coach James Moore (center). Chapter President Allen Malone (far right) coordinated a brief ceremony in the lecture room of the T.M. Elmore Gymnasium, with an inspiring invocation from chapter chaplain, Dr. Dorothy Downing. Bowling team members filled the front row of the lecture room, and they were flanked by more than a dozen AAMU alumni who provided support and refreshments. Malone presented the team a \$250 check.

Coach Moore said that he has been especially impressed by the squad's consistent "unity as a whole." He went on to add that every team member demonstrated



tremendous focus and an ability to come together as a tight unit. Some wins were hard-won, such as contests against rival Jackson State, but the Prichard, Alabama, native noted that the team was able to emerge victorious—despite a schedule that physically and emotionally drained both players and

staff.

Bulldog fans will give farewell salutes to seniors Rose Ugbina of Vancouver, Washington, and Alexis Orchard of Detroit, Michigan, along with grad student Anya Nelson of Chattanooga.

The AAMU bowling program has quietly built

a tradition of resilience and competitive excellence within NCAA Division I athletics. Competing confidently in the Southwestern Athletic Conference, the Lady Bulldogs have established themselves as one of the conference's consistent contenders, highlighted by multiple league champion-

ships—including their 2026 title, the fourth in program history.

That championship run reflected the team's trademark grit, as they battled through elimination rounds and ultimately secured the crown with a decisive victory over a conference rival, earning an automatic berth into the NCAA National Collegiate Championship.

The Bulldog's national profile is not new. Alabama A&M reached the NCAA championship match as early as 2006, signaling its ability to compete with the sport's elite programs on the biggest stage. In recent seasons, the team has continued to blend experienced leadership with emerging talent under the 66-year-old Coach Moore, featuring a geographically

diverse roster and standout performers such as Rose Ugbina and Michele Westmoreland, whose high pin averages and all-conference honors underscore the program's depth.

Taken together, the Alabama A&M bowling team represents more than competitive success—it embodies the steady growth of an HBCU program that has earned respect regionally and nationally. HPAC is proud to recognize the team's ongoing accomplishments.

Their achievements, including conference titles and NCAA appearances, provide a fitting foundation for alumni recognition, celebrating not only wins and accolades but also the discipline, teamwork, and institutional pride, commented Chapter President Malone.

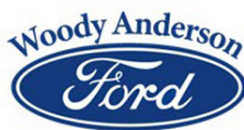
by Jerome Saintjones

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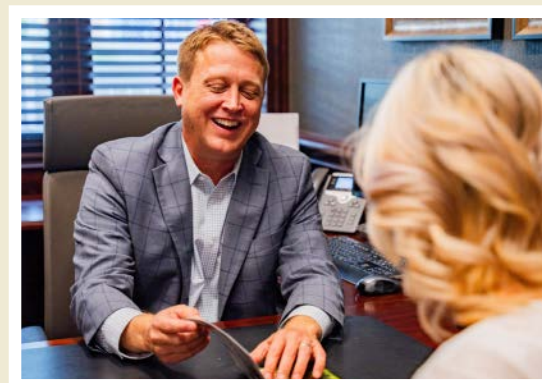


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Here are the top issues and events in Washington, D.C., for this week.

1. CONGRESS. The House and Senate are in session this week. The House will call up the first of the FY2027 appropriations bills, with debate on the Military Construction/Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill and consideration of a bill to permanently allow the year-round, nationwide sale of E15 — 15% ethanol — gasoline that is normally prohibited during the summer months ... The House may also debate a Democratic-led War Powers Resolution dealing with the Iran War (now in its 72nd day). The Senate will vote this week to confirm Kevin Warsh as the new Federal Reserve Chair ...

2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH. On Tuesday, the President departed

Washington for a 2-day visit to Beijing, rescheduled for Thursday and Friday, to hold a summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Last Thursday, the U.S. Court of International Trade ruled that the President's recent 10% across-the-board tariffs, imposed using Sec. 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 for large balance-of-payments deficits, were illegal. They are due to expire on July 24. Also, last Thursday, a New York federal judge ruled that the administration's cancellation of over \$100 million in humanities grants, culled by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) using AI prompts to weed out "DEI" awards, was unconstitutional and unlawful ... Last Friday, the Centers for Disease Control issued an advisory to clinicians and health departments about a new cluster of hantavirus disease cases caused by

infection with the Andes virus that appeared among the passengers of a cruise ship, resulting in 3 deaths and 6 confirmed cases — read the full advisory here: CDC Advisory.

3. SUPREME COURT. The State of Louisiana on Thursday afternoon urged the Supreme Court in *Danco Laboratories v. Louisiana and GenBioPro v. Louisiana* to leave in place an order by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit that prohibits the mailing of mifepristone, one of two drugs used in medication abortions, which are in turn the most common form of abortion in the United States. Justice Samuel Alito, who fields emergency requests from the 5th Circuit, last Monday temporarily paused the lower court's order to give the Supreme Court time to consider a request from two manufacturers of mifepristone to reinstate access to that drug. Alito's order means mifepristone will remain widely available nationwide at least until May 11, the date the temporary pause expires. Last Friday, Virginia Democratic lawmakers filed a motion with the Virginia Supreme Court to stay its 4-3 ruling striking down the new

Virginia congressional map while they appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court for an emergency hearing.

4. EDUCATION. On Friday, May 8th, a federal judge in Maryland denied the Trump administration's motion to dismiss a lawsuit challenging its efforts to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education, allowing the case to proceed. The NAACP, the National Education Association, and other education advocacy groups filed the suit in March 2024, arguing that the administration's executive order, cancellation of \$1.5 billion in grants and contracts, and mass layoffs at the department are un-

constitutional because they usurp Congress's authority to assign duties and appropriate funds. Judge Julie Rubin found that the plaintiffs presented a reasonable argument that the administration's handling of the department's funding could be unlawful.

5. APRIL JOBS REPORT. On Friday, the Department of Labor announced that the U.S. economy added 115,000 jobs in April, well above the 67,000 job gains that had been predicted, with the unemployment rate holding steady at 4.3%. Health care jobs and positions in the transportation and warehousing sector led the gains. Job losses oc-

curred in the federal government and the information sector, which includes telecommunications and the motion picture industries. The manufacturing, construction, and white-collar sectors — including finance and professional and business services — lost jobs or showed little change from the prior month.

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UA Launching State's First 'School of Data Science'

The University of Alabama will pursue the establishment of the School of Data Science, the first academic unit of its kind in the state of Alabama focused on artificial intelligence and one of the first dedicated data science schools in the southern United States.

Pending approval by The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, this transformative initiative

positions UA as a regional and national leader in data-driven research, education and innovation centered on the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

Designed as a convening hub that partners with all 13 UA colleges and schools, the School will serve students from every major and minor, ensuring that data literacy, translational data analytics and artificial intelligence become foun-

dational skills for all UA graduates and a defining strength of the University's academic mission.

"The School of Data Science represents a historic investment in Alabama's future," said UA President Peter J. Mohler. "As the first of its kind in the state, and one of the first in the South, it aligns directly with our goal to position The University of Alabama as a national academic leader."



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Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium Graduates Cohort XX

Alabama School of Cyber Technology - 229 Wynn Drive NW - Huntsville, Ala.

Tuesday, May 5, 2026 - 6:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker: *Dr. Randy Barbour, Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs, City of Huntsville*



Dr. Randy Barbour, Jr.



DLC Cohort XX



Shatika Armstrong



Drs. Huston & O'Neal



Stacy Cantrell



Xantheia Watkins



Dr. Edwan O'Neal



Brandon Gaddis



DLC Founder Dorothy W. Huston

Members of Cohort XX of the Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium (DLC) were honored during a graduation ceremony Tuesday, May 5, at the Alabama School for Cyber Technology and Engineering.

Dr. Edwan L. O'Neal is DLC executive director. The program presider was Branden Gaddis, college and career director for the United Way of Madison County.

The occasion represents a transformation, said Dr.

Randy Barbour, Jr., director of the City of Huntsville's Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Barbour went on to express his appreciation for the manner in which "The Village" of his youth constantly "poured into" him. Its ongoing support guided him on a humble path that included stints as a bank teller and janitor, as well as through his studies at Cornell University and attaining his doctoral degree.

"Every step of my jour-

ney has brought me to this moment," said the Huntsville native and Alabama A&M University adjunct professor. "The common thread is service, and learning about leadership changes you." Because of those who untiringly supported him, Barbour said he will always acknowledge the ancestors and their importance to his present.

"Having impact often means stepping outside of our comfort zones," Dr. Barbour noted. Leadership is not a title or position,

he stressed. It is an action word that entails sacrifice, commitment, consistency and relationships.

Barbour encouraged the cohort graduates to volunteer their time and to serve "when no one is watching."

DLC's Cohort XX includes (alphabetically) Chancellor Cole, Dr. Sheena Collier, Jimika Colvin, Leah Henry, Dr. Joshua Herring, Dr. Lamin Kassama, Ellisia McCraw, Cortney Patterson, Dominique Shackelford, Tina Thompson, Tiesha Watts,

Cassandra Williamson and Jamari Wilson.

In addition to Dr. O'Neal, other members of the executive leadership team are Dasi Price, program liaison; Xantheia Watkins, program specialist; and Shatika Armstrong, program coordinator.

Stacy Cantrell is president of the DLC Alumni Association. Other officers include Leviticus Billups, vice president; Marquasha Carter, secretary; Justin York, treasurer; and Van-

essa Weatherly, parliamentarian.

Among the alumni program participants were LTC Shondon Warren, invocation; Linda Fowlkes, greetings; Anthony Davison, solo; Kimberly Blanding, the charge; and other DLC members previously listed.

For additional information about DLC and membership, visit www.tnvalleydlc.com.

Photos and Text by Jerome Saintjones



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