POSITIVE-INSPIRATIONAL-EDUCATIONAL

America's 250th Celebration: Better with Age? - p. 3

FREE

TIM: "R-E-E-L" People - p. 5

Friday
July 3, 2026
Vol. 12, No. 44
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

GLORIA: On 'Good Pressure' ... - Page 5

The Valley Weekly

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK

Mr. James D. Foster

"What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving them." — Zig Ziglar

HPAC to Hold Leadership Gala

The Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter, Inc. of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association, Inc. will celebrate outstanding leadership and community achievement during its 21st Annual Leadership Award Gala on Saturday, July 11, 2026, at 6 p.m. at The Jackson Center in Huntsville.

The annual gala recognizes individuals and organizations whose leadership, service and professional accomplishments have made a lasting impact on the Huntsville community and beyond. Allen Malone, president of the Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter, said the event reflects the chapter's continuing commitment to honoring excellence while supporting the mission and legacy of AAMU.

This year's awardees include: **Community/Civic**: Ms. Erica C. Washington; **Corporate:** Huntsville Utilities (Mr. Wes Kelley); **Education:** Dr. John Vickers Jr.; **Government/Industry:** Mrs. Dawn Stanley; **Governmental Relations:** Ms. Kathy Jones; **Outstanding Service:** Rev. Dr. Oscar Montgomery; **Religion:** Dr. Mitchell Walker; **Small Business:** Minister Cedric Taylor; **William Hooper Councill Distinguished Alumna of the Year:** Mrs. Sandra Stubbs; **HPAC Alumna of the Year:** Dr. Andrain Yeldell Jones; **HPAC Alumnus of the Year:** Mr. Freeman Holifield Sr.

For additional information, contact Dr. Carla Clift at carla.clift@aamu.edu.

HMA Offering 'Free Day'

The Huntsville Museum of Art (HMA) will offer free admission to all guests on Saturday, July 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Betsy and Peter Lowe Community Free Day will celebrate America's 250th and kick off a new exhibition: *Coming Home.*

The free day is in honor of Betsy and Peter Lowe for their invaluable support of HMA. The event provides a great opportunity for guests and their families to view the wide range of exhibitions currently on display, from captivating artworks by regionally and nationally acclaimed artists in addition to our new installation, A Beautiful Despair: Anila Quayyum Agha, Extinct in the Wild and American Art Galleries.

Through color, texture, and narrative – working across painting, photography, and mixed media – LeXander Bryant, *The Valley Weekly*'s John "Jahni" Moore (above), and Toyin Ojih Odutola explore how identity and place are intertwined, bringing a distinct perspective to the idea of home.

For more information, contact Daniel Owen, Huntsville Museum of Art, at (256) 535-4350.

The Valley Weekly

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AAMU Receives $600K USDA Grant for Ag Data Sci Program

Alabama A&M University has received a $600,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to establish a new data science specialization within existing graduate programs in agricultural and bio-environmental sciences that will prepare students for careers at the intersection of agriculture, environmental sciences, data science and emerging tech.

The three-year award, funded through USDA NIFA's 1890 Institution Capacity Building Grants Program, will support the Integrated Data Science in Agricultural and Bio-environmental Sciences project, known as IDSAB. The initiative will create a data science specialization within existing master's and doctoral programs while expanding research opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students.

Led by principal investigator Dr. Yong Wang, professor in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, the project brings together faculty expertise from agriculture, environmental sciences, computer science and math to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on modern data-driven approaches to solving complex challenges.

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

1. CONGRESS. The House is in session this week, while the Senate is in recess until July 13. Last week, the President declared the voter ID law — the SAVE America Act — a "national emergency," abruptly canceled his planned signing ceremony for a housing affordability bill scheduled for Wednesday, and vowed to withhold his signature from all other legislation until it passes. This immediately shut down legislative activity on Capitol Hill, prompting the House and Senate to send their Members home on Thursday due to the stalemate. This week, the House plans to vote on the $1.5 trillion Defense Authorization bill (to which Rep. Anna Paulina Luna, R-FL, has filed an amendment containing the SAVE America Act) and the FY2027 State Department Appropriations bill. The White House announced last week that it was sending its long-awaited Iran War Supplemental Appropriations request to Congress, totaling $88 billion: (1) $67.1 billion for the Pentagon; (2) $11.1 billion in direct payments to farmers affected by tariffs; (3) $1.4 billion to respond to the Ebola virus outbreak in Central Africa; (4) $500 million for construction projects in Washington, D.C.; and (5) $1 billion for Penn Station in New York City.

2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH. On Wednesday, the President will travel to Medora, ND, for the dedication of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. On Friday, he will be in South Dakota to give an address at Mount Rushmore. Lobbying by Dairy Farmers of America, Land O'Lakes, and Tillamook.

3. HEALTH COVERAGE DROP. On Friday, HHS' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released data showing that 4 million Americans dropped their Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) health insurance plans after Congress failed to extend enhanced subsidies at the end of last year, resulting in double-digit increases in healthcare premiums. According to HHS, enrollment dropped from about 23.1 million last year to 19.2 million by February 2026 — a decrease of 17% ...

4. SUPREME COURT. Last week, the Supreme Court's conservative majority issued 3 major decisions affecting immigrants and gun rights. In a 6-3 decision, the Court handed gun owners a win, striking down a Hawaii law that made it a crime to bring a gun onto private property open to the public without the property owner's specific consent (Wolford v. Lopez). The ruling likely will affect 4 other states – California, Maryland, New York, and New Jersey – with similar laws. In another 6-3 decision, the Court ruled that courts lack authority to review DHS determinations to end temporary protected status (TPS) for Haitian and Syrian immigrants, thereby allowing DHS to begin immediate deportations of 353,000 Haitian and 6,000 Syrian refugees, who — until now — were living in the U.S. legally (Mullin v. Doe) ...

5. HIGHER EDUCATION. As Senate appropriators draft the FY2027 Labor-HHS-Education spending bill, higher education advocates are urging lawmakers to build on the House bill's strengths while rejecting its deep cuts to programs serving college students. A top priority is securing a permanent, adequate solution to the Pell Grant shortfall, with advocates warning that the House's $16.3 billion temporary fix is paid for by permanently eliminating subsidized Direct Loans for undergraduates. There is a push for the Senate to adopt the House bill's increases to programs such as TRIO, GEAR UP, Strengthening Institutions Program, CTE, and the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants, while also securing sufficient funding to close the Pell shortfall through FY2027 and beyond. At the same time, higher education advocates are urging the Senate to restore, or at least level-fund, programs the House slashed, including Adult Basic Education, Federal Work-Study, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act formula programs.

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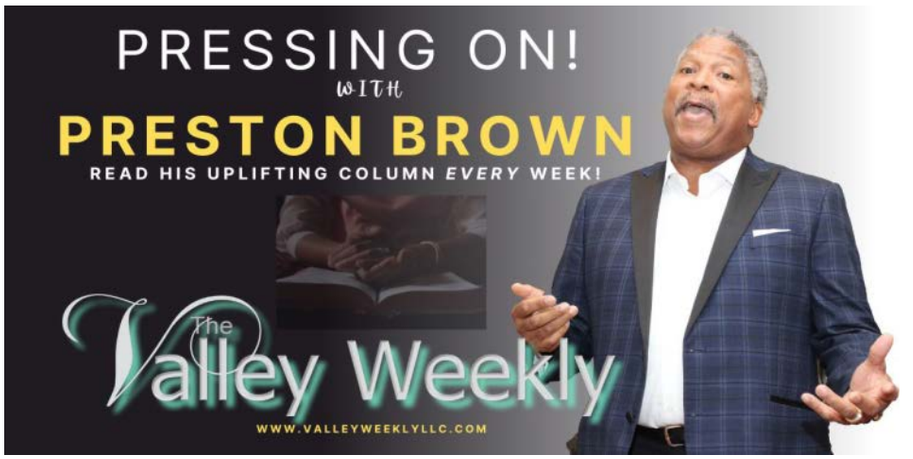

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The Valley Weekly
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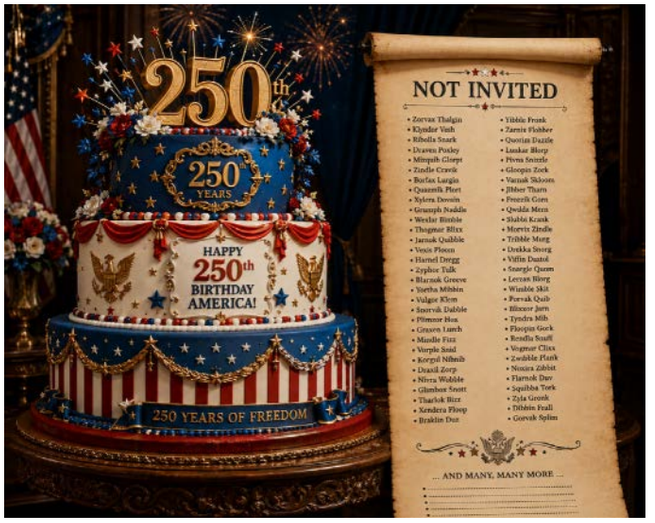
America's Birthday: Will We Continue to Expand Freedom or Retreat from It?

As Americans gather to celebrate the Fourth of July, we will proudly wave flags, enjoy fireworks, and honor the birth of our nation. We will celebrate the enduring promise of liberty, equality, and justice for ALL—the very principles upon which America was founded.

But this Independence Day arrives at a troubling moment in our nation's history.

Across America, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives have been dismantled. Books are being banned. History is being rewritten or erased. Constitutional freedoms are being challenged, and hard-fought rights once considered secure are now under attack.

America has never been perfect. From slavery and segregation to the denial of voting rights for women and people of color, our nation has often fallen short of its ideals. Yet, each generation has worked to expand freedom, not restrict it. That is the true American story.



Diversity is not a threat to America. Diversity is America.

Our diversity is not our weakness—it is our greatest strength. Our history should not be hidden—it should be taught. Our freedoms should not be restricted—they should be protected. And our democracy should not belong to some Americans, but to all Americans.

Our strength has always come from people of different races, religions, cultures, and backgrounds joining together to build a stronger nation. Efforts to erase history do not change the past; they only weaken our ability to learn from it and move forward.

As we celebrate our nation's birthday, let us remember that patriotism is not blind loyalty. True patriotism requires us to defend the Constitution, protect the rights of all people, and ensure that freedom remains available to every American—not just a privileged few.

This Fourth of July, let us recommit ourselves to building a nation where liberty and justice truly exist for all. Let us stand up and work to expand our freedoms rather than remain silent as others attempt to take them away.

Happy Birthday, America. The work of democracy continues.

Until next week ...

Dorothy

JULY 3 - MONTEL WILLIAMS - Montel Brian Anthony Williams is a former American television host, actor and motivational speaker. He is best known as host of the long-running daytime tabloid talk show The Montel Williams Show, which ran in syndication from 1991 to 2008. Williams is active with the nonprofit MS Foundation, which he founded after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1999. Additionally, Williams is noted for his service in both the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Navy, from which he was honorably discharged after 15 years of service.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org

The Valley Weekly Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S

Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"Learning to Survive"

In Genesis 50:20, Joseph tells his brothers, *"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."*

When we look at this scripture, we need to understand that when we survive certain things in our lives, it's not just for us. Sometimes it can be for other people, as well. Twenty years ago, I survived cancer. Because of that, I was able to be a blessing to others through my ministry as well as my relationships.

I believe that God not only wants to do things *for* us, He wants to do things *through* us as well. When we look at the life of Joseph, we can see that he knew a thing or two about survival. Remember that he had to survive being sold into slavery, being falsely accused of being with Potiphar's wife, and being thrown into prison. Do you know what? He survived prison, as well. His road to success was not easy. We all need to remember that success does not always come in a straight line. There will be setbacks along the way.

Sometimes we can't see what God has for our lives until we start experiencing life. The best instruction that we will ever receive will come from actual life experiences. There will be failures along the way. However, the good news is, we are all wired for survival. Joseph was wired for survival and he teaches all of us a great lesson about perseverance.

Whatever it is that you really want out of life, you will have to learn how to survive the trials and the tests that try to keep you from what God wants you to do. Because there will be times when you don't see any progress, but you still have to press on and survive.

There may be times where you feel that what you are doing is insignificant. You have to press on and survive. The enemy will also try to intimidate you with thoughts that you are not good enough, but remember anything that the enemy tells you is a lie. You have to press on and survive those attacks. Finally, I pray that God gives you the insight to realize that trials come to make you more aware not angry, stronger not weaker, and better not bitter.

May God grant you spiritual success in learning how to survive the trials that come in your life.

Question: What can you do to help yourself become stronger, wiser and better after a misfortune?

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:

"It's Time to Tell the Truth"

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THE VALLEY WEEKLY

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*Graveside service for **MR. HUBERT LANSDEN** (b. 1945) was Monday, June 29, at the Chattanooga National Cemetery.*

*Celebration of Life service for **MR. MICHAEL HOLMES** (b. 1957) was Saturday, June 27, at Chelsea Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America with Rev. Terence Haley officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. GLADYS ANTOINTTE GILBERT CRAREY** (b. 1952) was Friday, June 26, at Oakwood University Seventh-Day Adventist Church with Pastor Debleaire Snell officiating and Dr. Toussaint Williams eulogist.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. LILLIAN (bka "Lil") GARNER HAMPTON** (b. 1943) was Friday, June 26, at St. Rebecca Primitive Baptist Church.*

*Funeral service for **MR. JOHN DUNIGAN** (b. 1960) was Saturday, June 20, at Progressive Union Baptist Church with Rev. Jasper Bacon officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. ANNIE M. AKA "FATS" DANIEL** (b. 1940) was Saturday, June 20, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home.*

*Funeral service for **MR. DENNIS TYRONE BLACK, JR.** (b. 1978) was Saturday, June 20, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. JOETTA HORTON** (b. 1946) was Friday, June 19, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral service for **MR. JACKIE DEAMOND PETTY** (b. 1975) was Tuesday, June 16, at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Dr. Larry Davidson, Jr., officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. NINA N. TIMMONS** (b. 1938) was Tuesday, June 16, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home with Pastor Dr. Jerry Crutcher officiating.*

*Memorial service for **MR. COYLE LEE BONE** (b. 1956) was Monday, June 8, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Bishop Carl Pruitt officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MS. ROTINA JANELE TIBBS** (b. 1970) was Sunday, June 7, at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Ricky L. Sykes officiating.*

- Brenda Friend & Angel S. Wilson

THE R-E-E-L Persons *(Recovering Ego-holics & Emerging Leaders)*

Don't Let the Song Go Out of Your Life

When the Israelites faced impossible odds, they didn't sharpen their swords—they tuned their voices. When Israel went to battle, they didn't fight first—they sang. As they began to sing and praise, God ambushed their enemies (2 Chronicles 20:22).

There's a lesson there for every R-E-E-L person—Recovering Ego-holic and Emerging Leader. Our greatest battles are rarely external. They're the inner dragons of arrogance, fear, procrastination, or discouragement. And these dragons hate a joyful heart.

History reminds us: protest songs built movements, not mobs. When Dr. King marched, he didn't start with anger—he sang. "We Shall Overcome" disarmed hate.

"Whistle While You Work" taught us to turn routine into rhythm. Singing changes everything—our mood, our mindset, even our mission.

So let's bookend our days in melody—sing in the morning like the birds, hum through the day like the bees, and praise at night like the robins. As the poet wrote, "Don't let the song go out of your life."

Because when we sing, we don't just change the tune. We change the outcome.

When you face your "dragons"—fear, ego, disorganization—try singing first. Singing shifts focus from anxiety to alignment. It dethrones self and enthrones the Spirit.

Begin your day with one "Victory Song" this week.

Morning melody. Midday hum. Evening gratitude.

Let's not let the song go out of our lives.

#EgoHolismRecovering #SilverMettleLeaders
#LeadershipDevelopment #FaithAtWork

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The Valley Weekly Millennial Moment

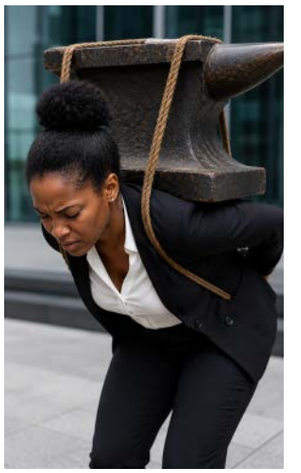
by Gloria B. Caldwell

The *Other* Side of the Pressure ...

We were not built to avoid hard things. We were built to move through them. But somewhere between the disappointments, the setbacks, and the sheer exhaustion of showing up every single day, we started mistaking stillness for strategy.

We stop. We wait. We tell ourselves we are resting when really we are hiding. Not from the world — from the process. From the pressure we know is necessary but do not want to feel.

Here is the truth nobody wants to say out loud. The thing you are avoiding is the very thing that will move you forward.



I learned this in the most ordinary way. Sitting in a Jacuzzi tub, frustrated, carrying more than I needed to. As those jets went to work on every place I had been holding tension, I realized—this is exactly what I have been running from. Pressure applied to the right places does not break you. It sorts you. It shows you what to carry and what to release.

Faith is the Epsom salt in that equation. It does not remove the pressure. It works with it. Romans 5:3-4 says suffering produces perseverance, character, and ultimately hope. God never promised to remove the process. He promised to be in it with you.

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The Valley Weekly VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

July 1-2
Rickey Smiley
Huntsville Levity Live
Comedy Club
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala. | 7 p.m.

July 4
Independence Day

July 5
Summer Jazz Jam
Sponsor: The Jazz Caravan
Featuring Ms. Brightlight, Bryan Easter and Sherry Reeves
White Azalea Estate
2659a Jeff Road NW
Harvest, Ala. | 6-10 p.m.

July 6
"Throw Your Rope Across the Fence"
Career Mentoring and Networking Ministry Meeting
First Missionary Baptist Church
3509 Blue Spring Road NW
Huntsville, Ala. | 1-3 p.m.

Bloom Stroll and Bouquet Workshop ($100)
1818 Farms
(https://1818farms.com)
24889 Lauderdale Street
Mooresville, Ala. | 6-8 p.m.

July 8, 10, 14 & 16
Bloom Stroll and Bouquet Workshop ($100)
1818 Farms
(https://1818farms.com)
24889 Lauderdale Street
Mooresville, Ala. | 6-8 p.m.

July 15-26
W.C. Handy Music Festival
Florence, Ala.

July 17
Guided Paddle Lighthouse Sunset Paddle
blackkidsadventures@gmail.com | 5:30-7:30 p.m.

July 17-19
Lavell Crawford
Huntsville Levity Live
Comedy Club
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.

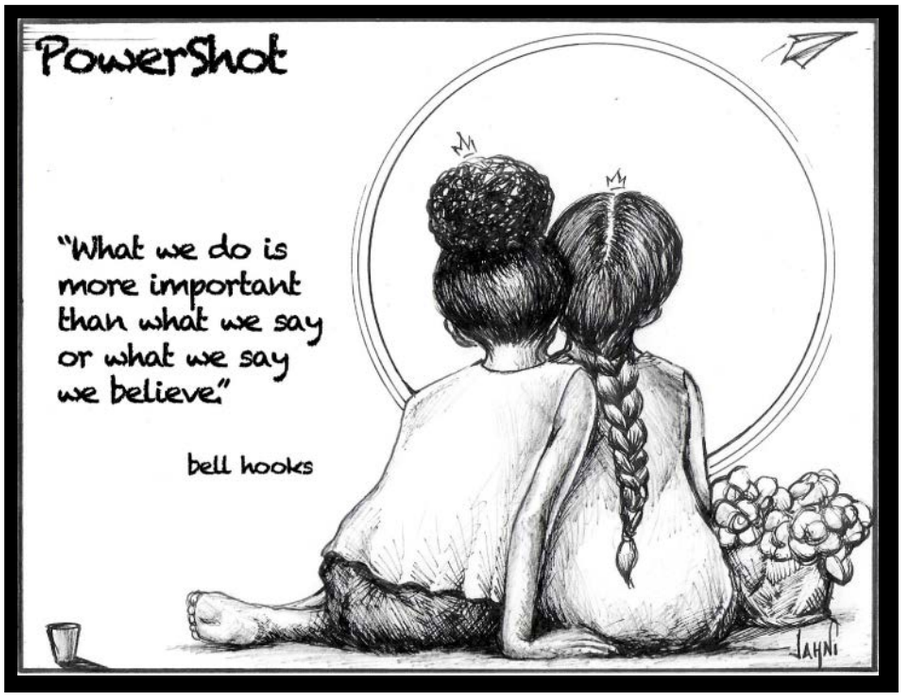
July 18
Rocket City Culture Fest
Music - Art - Food - Heritage - Community
Butler Green Park
Tickets: www.rocketcityculturefest.com
2620 Clinton Avenue W
Huntsville, Ala. | 3-9 p.m.

July 20
"Throw Your Rope Across the Fence"
Career Mentoring and Networking Ministry Meeting
First Missionary Baptist Church
3509 Blue Spring Road NW
Huntsville, Ala. | 1-3 p.m.

July 22
Concert
Creed
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala. -| 7 p.m.

July 25
Guided Paddle Lighthouse Sunset Paddle
blackkidsadventures@gmail.com | 5:30-7:30 p.m.

July 26
Sundays on the Greenway
Elgies Greenway | MORE
4-5 p.m.



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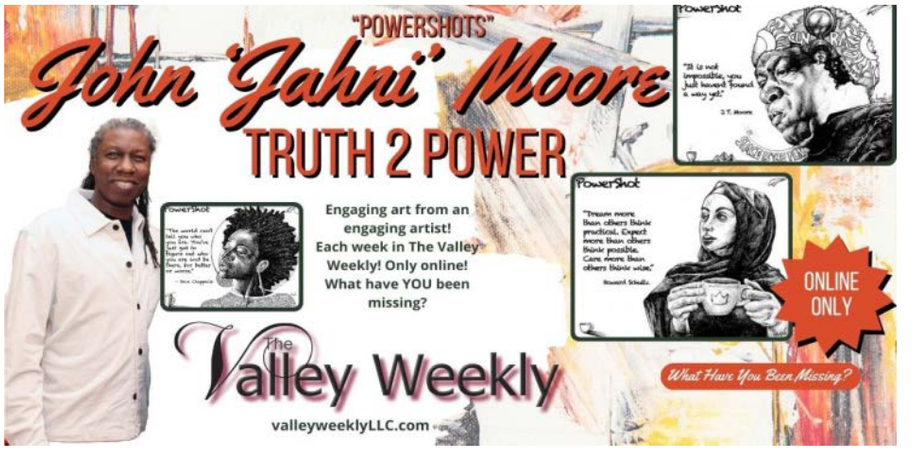
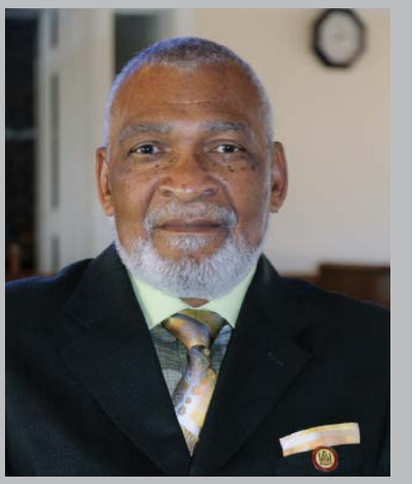


Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

Mr. James D. Foster



A native of Birmingham, Ala., James D. Foster (James d foster) is a graduate of Carver High School. He enrolled in Alabama A&M University and earned a degree in history and government. He later completed two graduate degrees, one in urban studies/city planning and the other in personnel anagement. He did further study in business management at the University of Virginia Charlotte, Va. The administrator also served two years in the Army with assignments in both Europe and Vietnam.

He is a retiree from the federal government following some 38-plus years of service, primarily in the human resources area (civilian personnel administration). He also served two years as Redstone military educational officer; however, he actually began his career in the field of electronics-missile radar systems.

His career is punctuated by a two-year tour in Korea 1976-78 as the personnel training liaison officer. He also served a special split assignment between Headquarters Army Materiel Command, Alexandria, Va., and Redstone Arsenal from 1983-88, directing and coordinating the development of three high level employee development programs.

Foster has been the recipient of several awards for his contributions to his professional work environment, community, civic groups and other membership organizations. He is a life member of the Alabama A&M Alumni Association, once serving as president of the local chapter; life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (served as Polemarch and on various committees); life member of Blacks In Government (BIG); and life member of NAACP.

He has tirelessly given of his time and support to the Huntsville Tennis Association, women's athletic programs at Alabama A&M University; various ministries at Holy Cross-St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, where he serves as treasurer and acting junior warden of the Vestry; and many other organization programs and initiatives.

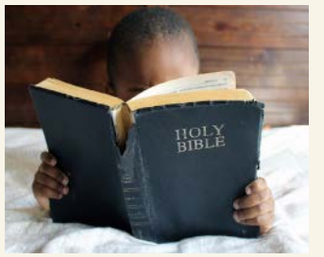
His hobbies consist of golf, collecting old music and old music machines, and future restoration of another antique auto. He is married to the former Velma Marie Sales of Huntsville, Ala., and they have three children: Jarvis, a son, and Deidre and Chris, daughters. He is now the proud grandfather of Landon Woodworth Foster.

"Honoring Our Elders" Rosetta James Foundation

"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, July 5, 2026
Sixth Sunday
after Pentecost



(Track 2, Year A)
First Lesson:
Zechariah 9:9-12
Psalm 145:8-15
Second Lesson:
Romans 7:15-25a
GOSPEL:
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

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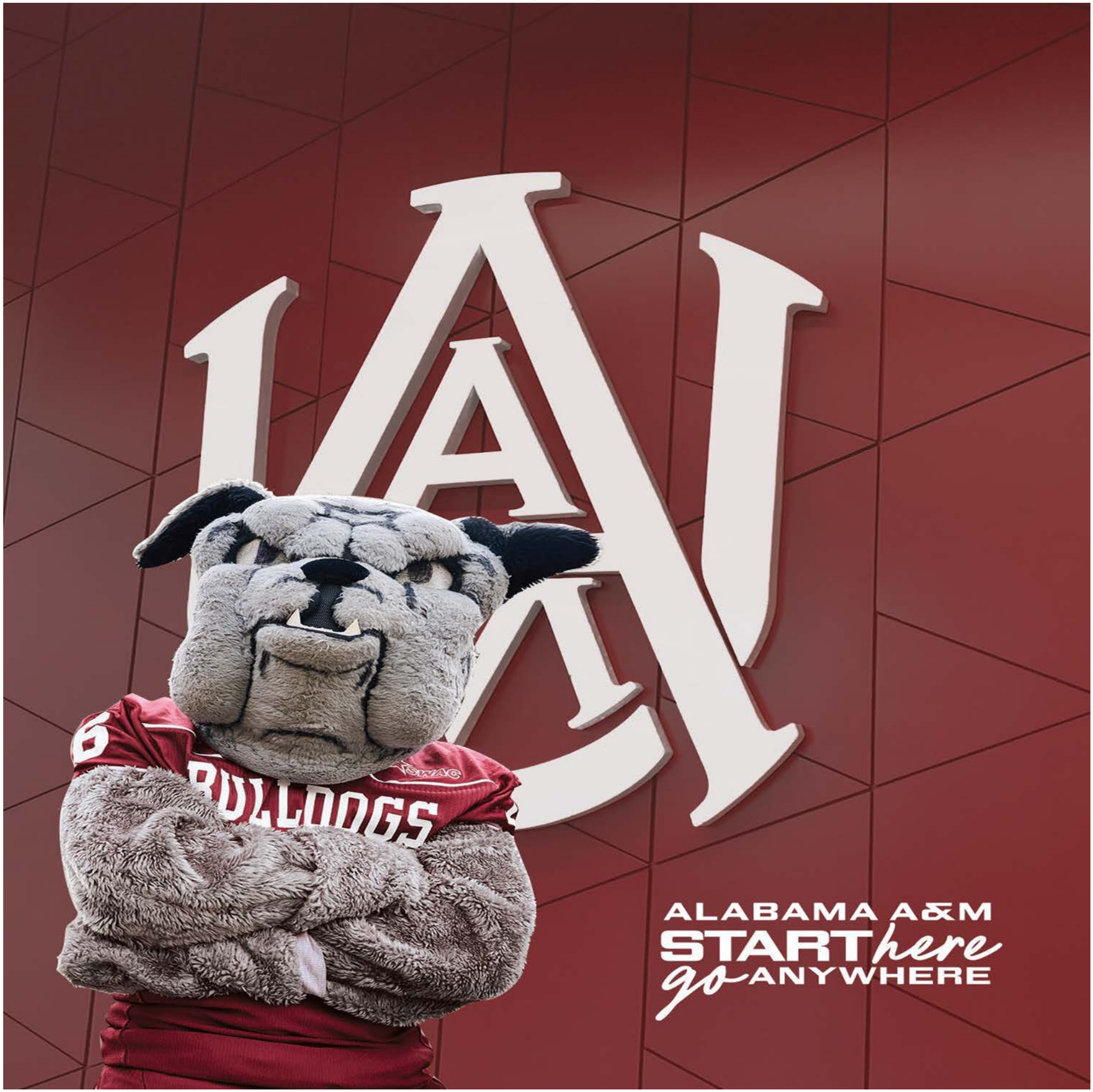
ON THIS DAY

On July 3, 1775, Prince Hall founded African Lodge Number One in Massachusetts, marking the establishment of the first Black lodge of Free Masons in the United States. He became a pioneer of Black Freemasonry and a leading voice against slavery.

SOURCE: New Pittsburgh Courier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