

Of Pond Beat & Mullins Flat - p. 3, 8

Friday
July 17, 2026
Vol. 12, No. 46
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Dr. Mary Sanford Brown

The Valley Weekly

"We suffer more often in imagination than in reality." — Seneca

HP&R's Male Mentorship Program to Open Soon

Huntsville Parks & Recreation's popular Male Mentorship Program will soon open for

registration. The program also offers opportunities for dedicated and com- passionate mentors

to join the team. Scheduled throughout the 2026-2027 school year, the Male Men-

torship Program empowers young men ages 8-15 to grow into confident, positive individuals.

For more information, visit HuntsvilleAL.gov/malementorship.

Area Housing Developments to Attract Jobs, Training Ops

Two affordable housing construction projects in Huntsville — Meridian Commons and New Stone Commons — led by nonprofit Neighborhood Concepts, Inc., will generate employment, sub-contracting, and training opportunities for the local community.

As recipients of federal funding, the projects are



subject to Section 3 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Act, which ensures that economic opportunities generated by HUD-assisted

projects are directed, to the greatest extent feasible, to low-income and very low-income persons and to businesses that provide employment opportunities to those individuals.

Individuals and businesses interested in these opportunities may contact the Section 3 Coordinator at (256) 534-0075 ext. 401.

HMA to Present 'WARHOL' Exhibition July 31

The Huntsville Museum of Art will present WARHOL: film, fashion, photography from July 31 through Oct. 18, 2026, offering

visitors an expansive look at one of the most influential artists of the 20th century through more than 150 works spanning illustra-

tion, film, fashion, photography and printmaking.

The exhibition explores the dazzling universe of Andy Warhol, where art

and celebrity collide, examining how the artist shaped and was shaped by the visual culture of his era.

For more infor-

mation, contact Daniel Owen, director of communications, at (256) 535-4350, ext. 219.

Drake State Strengthened Thru CHANGE Initiative



Drake State Community & Technical College has been selected to participate in the CHANGE Initiative (Community for HBCU Advancement through Networked Growth and Excellence), a partnership led by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) in collaboration with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE).

The CHANGE Initiative is a capacity-building effort designed to strengthen institutional effectiveness by enhancing teaching and learning, advancing faculty and staff development, and implementing systems that improve student outcomes.

Beginning this fall, the initiative will offer hybrid training programs, combining in-per-

son and virtual engagement to ensure flexibility, broaden participation, and support the best possible outcomes.

Through this initiative, Drake State will gain access to:

- TMCF-supported ACUE certification pathways with unlimited faculty and staff participation
- ACUE's Effective Teaching Practices courses recognized by the American Council on Educa-

tion (ACE)

- ACUE Commons, a national community of practice
- EmpowerED by TMCF, a well-being and support program for faculty and staff.

"At Drake State, we understand that meeting workforce demand begins with investing in our people," said Dr. Patricia Sims, president of Drake State Community and Technical

College. "Strong faculty and staff are essential to delivering instruction that equips students with the skills employers need. Through the CHANGE Initiative, we are strengthening our capacity to develop talent in our classrooms and across the institution so we can prepare students for careers and support economic growth in our community."

The Valley Weekly

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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 Senate will hold a series of high-profile hearings on key administration nominees: Attorney General nominee Todd Blanche, DNI

nominee Jay Clayton, and CDC nominee Erica Schwartz will have hearings on Wednesday, and Labor Secretary nominee Keith Sonderling will have a hearing on Thursday. The House will again attempt to bring up the FY2027 National Security/State Dept Appropriations bill, with GOP leadership having to fend

off amendments to end aid to Israel ... Last Wednesday, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) sent a letter to Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) — who has not been seen in public since his hospitalization on June 14 — requesting that he update his constituents on his health. This, combined with Sen. Lindsey Graham's (R-SC) sudden passing on Saturday night, for the time being brings the Senate ratio down to 51 Rs to 47 Ds ... House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) is pressing the House Budget Committee to approve Reconciliation Bill #3 this week, which contains funding for the Pentagon and the text of the SAVE America Act.

2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

Using his new power, granted by the Supreme Court on June 30, to fire formerly independent board members at will, the President removed the two Democratic members of the Election Assistance Commission last Thursday, while a Republican was allowed to resign, leaving the commission powerless and without leadership ... Politico reported last week that 72 members of the European Parliament demanded an investigation into FIFA President Gianni Infantino on Wednesday after FIFA lifted the red card suspension of star U.S. striker Folarin Balogun following a call from President Donald Trump ahead of the U.S.-Belgium match on July 6 (the U.S. lost the match 4-1).

3. SUPREME COURT. The Supreme Court has concluded its 2025-26 term and will reconvene for the 2026-27 term on Monday, October 5. Last Wednesday, the President announced plans to seek a

rehearing from the Supreme Court in the birthright citizenship case in which the Court ruled against his executive order — according to CNBC, the Court has not agreed to rehear a case since 1965.

4. NEW AVIATION TARIFFS AVERTED. The U.S. Commerce Department announced last Thursday that it had completed a Section 232 national security probe into imported commercial aircraft, jet engines, and parts, and found that foreign goods pose U.S. national security concerns. Despite these concerns, the administration will not impose new tariffs, according to Reuters, citing heavy lobbying by the U.S. aviation sector.

5. EDUCATION. Last week, House Republicans introduced a package of 10 bills, dubbed "Less Bureaucracy, Better Education," that would formally transfer many U.S. Department of Education

programs to other federal agencies. The package would codify interagency agreements that are already underway and advance the Trump administration's effort to shrink the department. House Education and Workforce Committee Chair Tim Walberg (R-MI) said the measures would make permanent moves such as shifting career and technical education, adult education, and programs like TRIO to the Department of Labor, while preserving statutory funding and transferring decision-making authority to the receiving agencies. Supporters say the changes would cut bureaucracy and improve service delivery ...

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The Valley Weekly

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LAND, LEGACY AND LOSS: Remembering Pond Beat and Mullins Flat

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — From July 3–5, more than 250 descendants and family members gathered in Huntsville to commemorate the history, resilience, and enduring legacy of the Pond Beat and Mullins Flat communities.

The reunion honored the generations of families whose lives were forever changed in 1941, when the federal government acquired thousands of acres of land to establish what is now the Redstone Arsenal. As a result, families were forced to leave their homes, farms, churches, schools, businesses, and ancestral lands, bringing an end to these thriving rural communities that had existed for generations.

The weekend began on Thursday evening, July 3, with a commemorative dinner at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center’s Davidson Center. Mr. Bryan Cordell served as master of ceremonies. Guests were inspired by a moving presentation from the Dazzlin’ Dymes Dance Team, under the direction of Ms. Brionne Parrish. Through praise dance and storytelling, the performers paid tribute to the history and spirit of the displaced communities.

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of Mrs. Hoodie McGraw, the oldest living descendant of Pond Beat and Mullins Flat. At 104 years of age, Mrs. McGraw received a commemorative plaque and expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the Reunion Committee and attendees for honoring her and preserving the history of their ancestors. Historical presentations were delivered by Mr. Ronald Rice, Ms. Brenda Barley Chunn, and Mr. John “Jahni” Moore, each sharing research, family stories, and reflections that helped preserve the collective memory of the communities.

Ms. Deborah Horton Jordan, chair of the Reunion Committee, welcomed attendees and shared remarks on the reunion’s purpose, expressing gratitude for those who made the gathering possible and emphasizing the importance of preserving the communities’ history for future generations. Adding to the evening’s inspiration, Dr. Janet Kotey performed God’s Grace as the praise dancers ministered through movement. Mr. Trent Griffin presented an original spoken-word performance (see p. 9) that reflected on heritage, perseverance, and hope. Rev. Michael Jones offered the dinner prayer before guests enjoyed an elegant meal featuring prime rib, chicken, assorted vegetables, and desserts prepared by Royal T Cakes. Throughout the evening, The Willie Jazzanova Band provided live entertainment. The closing prayer was offered by Rev. R. Seth Shamery, Senior Pastor of Center Grove United Methodist Church.

The reunion officially began earlier that day with registration at the Hampton Inn & Suites Huntsville Research Park Area in the Village of Providence. Each attendee received a welcome letter from Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle as part of their registration packet. Saturday’s activities featured a family picnic filled with fellowship and fun. Evangelist Elaine Tibbs Rice shared stories that connected younger generations with their family’s rich history. Families also enjoyed a gaming bus, a disc jockey, face painting, an old-school car show, board and card games, local vendors, and food trucks.

Lunch, prepared by Scruggs Barbecue, included baby back ribs, pulled pork, brisket, chicken, hot dogs, collard greens, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, pinto beans, cornbread, rolls, assorted cookies, soft drinks, Gatorade, and water. The reunion concluded on Sunday, July 5, with a Farewell of Families at the Hampton Inn. Many participants also attended worship services at Center Grove United Methodist Church, bringing the weekend to a meaningful close.

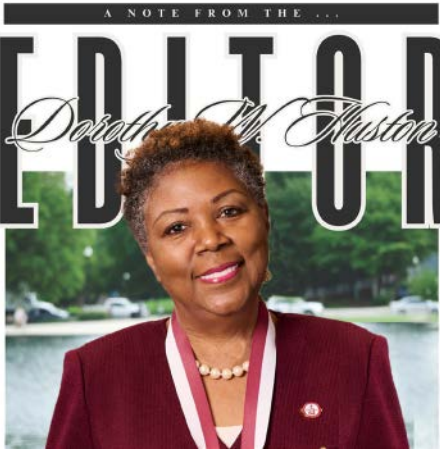
Throughout the three-day celebration, descendants reflected not only on the hardships endured by their ancestors but also on their resilience, faith, and determination. The Pond Beat and Mullins Flat Commemorative Reunion served as a powerful reminder that while land can be taken, heritage, family, and legacy endure through the generations.

Until next week ...

A NOTE FROM THE ...

EDITOR

Dorothy W. Huston



JULY 17 - Diahann Carroll, born Carol Diahann Johnson, was an American actress, singer, and model. She rose to prominence in some of the earliest major studio films to feature black casts, including Carmen Jones (1954) and Porgy and Bess (1959). In 1962, Carroll won a Tony Award for best actress, a first for a black woman, for her role in the Broadway musical No Strings. Carroll was the recipient of numerous stage and screen nominations and awards, including the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress In A Television Series in 1968. She received an Academy Award for Best Actress nomination for the 1974 film Claudine. She was also a breast cancer survivor and activist.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"Things That Really Matter"

Matthew 6:24 tells us that "No one can serve two masters either he will hate the one and love the other or you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Sometimes it's easy to have good intentions but bad motivation for doing something. For example, we seem to live in a time where all the wrong things are emphasized. We worry more about material possessions instead of life itself. Jesus tells us in Luke 12:23 that life is more than food and the body more than clothes. Therefore, since life is short in terms of eternity, Jesus is saying to all of us that we need to concentrate on what is truly important. So often, we gravitate towards things that are meaningless.

There is a story of a father who lost his fortune. Because of this, he had to lay off all of his employees. He also had to get his parents to take care of his children. One evening when this father came home,

filled with the anxieties from work, his little girl climbed up on his lap, put her arms around his neck, and said, "Daddy, I don't want you to be rich again. Because when you were rich, you didn't come into our rooms and talk to us or read us a story or anything like that. But now we can come around you and hug your neck and kiss you and listen to your stories. So daddy, don't get rich again."

When we read a story like this, it's easy to see how someone can get caught up in the worries that wealth can bring. They end up sacrificing the things they really need, which is relationships with the people they love. Sometimes we can allow ourselves to become so busy trying to provide for our families that we miss what is truly important.

May God grant you spiritual success in finding things in life that really matter.

Question: Do you ever find yourself spending time with things that don't really matter? If so, why?

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:

"Stand for Righteousness"



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Funeral service for **MS. TAMARA RECHELLE ANDERSON** (b. 1977) is incomplete and will be announced later.

Funeral service for **MS. JEANETTE SANDERS** (b. 1952) was Friday, July 10, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home with Pastor Larry Davidson, Jr. officiating.

Celebration of Life for **MRS. PAULETTE MCCUTCHEN** (b. 1946) was Sunday, July 5, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Lorenzo Moore officiating.

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 ANTOINETTE 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.

Spinning the TOP? Last Week's Three Hardest Leadership Steps

The Yardstick of Leadership

Leadership is not measured by how we perform when everything is going well. It is measured by how we respond when everything begins falling apart.

Last week, the collapse of Maine U.S. Senate candidate Graham Platner's campaign offered another reminder that public crises eventually become leadership case studies.

After allegations of sexual assault surfaced—allegations he has denied—Platner announced that he was suspending his campaign.

Forget the Politics, . . .

What caught my attention, however, was not the politics. It was a comment made afterward by Representative Chellie Pingree during an interview with Lawrence O'Donnell.

She observed that she was surprised not to hear a single "I'm sorry." As she noted, most public servants spend a great deal of time apologizing—not necessarily because they caused every problem, but because leadership begins by acknowledging that people have been hurt.



The TOP Model

That observation reminded me of the first three steps in my T-O-P leadership model:

Target the problem. Don't deny that a problem exists. Name it honestly.

Own the problem. Ownership is not always the same as admitting legal guilt. It is accepting responsibility for your leadership, your decisions, your communication, and the impact your situation has had on others.

Sometimes the most difficult leadership sentence is simply, "I'm sorry."

Proceed to take action. Once the problem has been identified and owned, energy shifts from defending ourselves to rebuilding trust.

As Representative Pingree noted, the work then becomes "picking up the pieces" and moving forward.

21st Century Males' Five Most Difficult Statements to Make

Years ago, Bible teacher D. Stuart Briscoe observed that the five hardest statements for a man to say are:

"I don't know."

"I was wrong."

"I need help."

"I'm afraid."

"I'm sorry."

Each statement requires humility before it requires courage.

Whether in business, government, churches, nonprofits, or families, every leader eventually encounters a crisis.

The question is never whether we will stumble. The question is whether we will have the humility to Target it, the courage to Own it, and the wisdom to Proceed.

Leadership recovering begins when ego stops defending itself and starts telling the truth.

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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Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

TREES OF LIFE: The Fragile Tree ...

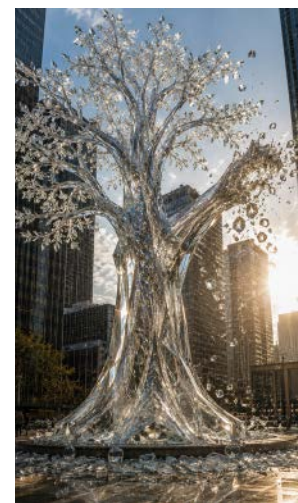
Do you even realize how fragile you are?

Not fragile like broken. Fragile like a tree in a storm that hasn't snapped yet — but is one strong gust away from it.

I watched them from my window last week. Storm rolling in. Alerts on my phone. Thirty-foot trees behind my fence bending, whipping, leaves flying in every direction. Some of them so unstable I couldn't tell where the tree ended and the chaos began.

And I thought about us.

Because some of you are those trees. You've convinced yourself



you're okay. Not just okay — fine. Solid. Holding it together. But the wind doesn't lie. Pressure reveals what's really rooted and what just looks like it is.

Then there's the one who knows they're bending. Ashamed of it. Downplaying it. Hoping

nobody notices the sway.

And then the one at the breaking point who hasn't even named it yet.

God sees all three.

He is not surprised by your fragility. He is not disappointed by your sway. But He is waiting — on you to stop performing stability you don't have and come to the only foundation that holds when everything around you is whipping in the wind.

The storm doesn't discriminate. But your foundation determines your outcome.

Next week — the tree that bends without breaking. There's a difference between flexible and fragile. You need to know which one you are.

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Valley Weekly VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

July 16

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

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 17-26

W.C. Handy Music Festival
Florence, 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.

July 31

Concert
Lord Huron
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala. | 8 p.m.

August 3

"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.

August 6

Concert

Tape B & Levity
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala. | 7 p.m.

August 7-9

Desi Bank

Comedian
Huntsville Levity Live
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.
(256) 261-3374

August 9

Sundays on the Greenway
Tennessee Valley River Greenway
4-5 p.m.

Public News Release for Non-Pricing Programs

The Visions of Learning Academy announces the sponsorship of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA.

The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil

Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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- Persons interested in receiving more information should contact:
- Sponsor Representatives: Deidre Gordon or Tomisha Brown
- Telephone Number: 256-427-5558



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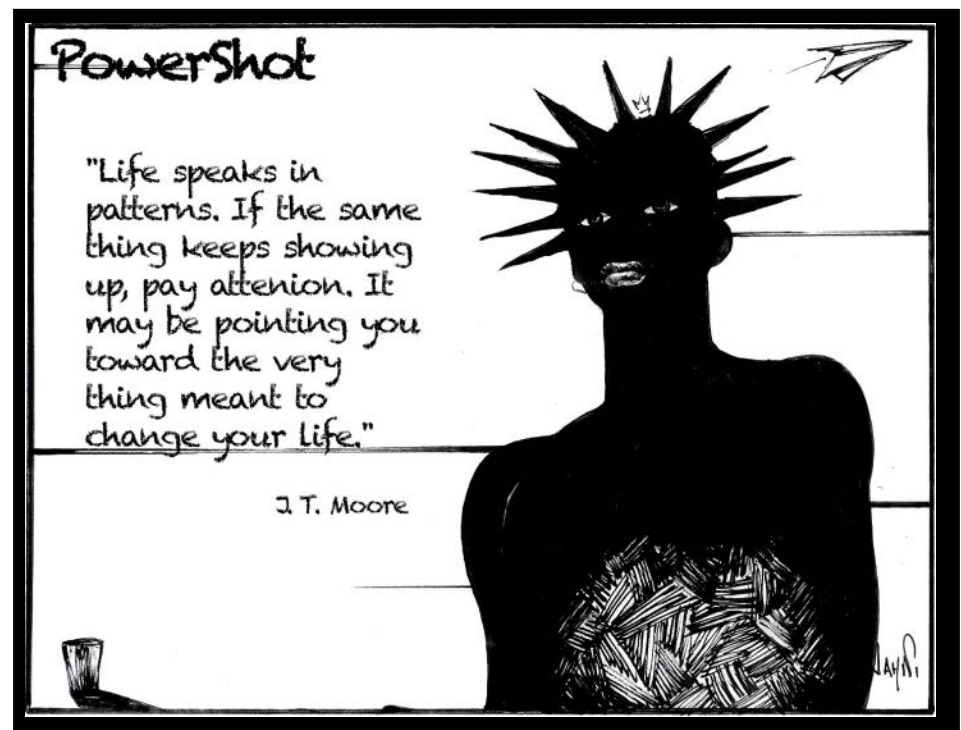
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Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

Dr. Mary Sanford Brown

Although born in Kimo ("KI-mo"), Dr. Mary Sanford Brown grew up in the area of Decatur known as "West Town." She first attended what could have been called kindergarten at David's Temple Primitive Baptist Church in West Town, founded and built by her paternal great-grandfather Booker Bradford. She then began attending Decatur Negro High School, which housed grades 1-12.

Active in a number of organizations and activities--the choir, small singing groups, basketball, cheerleading, plays, etc., she won the District Elks Oratorical Contest her senior year and was named Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow her junior year. Outside school, there was reading, piano lessons, movies, and swapping True Confessions with her girlfriends, to name a few. Her mother didn't particularly like True Confessions, but at least she was reading, which her mother did approve. She also often would babysit and clean homes. In the fall, she would pick cotton for spending money.

In 1956, Brown graduated as valedictorian from Lakeside High School and continued her education at Alabama A&M College, graduating in 1960 with honors. As a student at Alabama A&M, she was a member of the Student

Council and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Although she had been told that she had "a good voice" and had always sung in a choir, she was somewhat intimidated by A&M's choir and never auditioned. While matriculating at A&M, she continued her friendship with Rather G. Brown, a young man from Moulton who she met through her Moulton cousins when they were both in high school. They married in 1961 at First Missionary Baptist Church. They were blessed with one son, Rather Maurice Brown, a history teacher and musician. Her dear husband departed this life in December 2012.

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

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

In 1967, she launched nearly four decades of work at Alabama A&M. During her



productive tenure at A&M, she served as Chair of the Department of History and Political Science and was the founding director of AAMU's Honors Program, which involved no small amount of work. Navigating the establishment of this program through the various committees and gaining its acceptance was no small feat, she recalls.

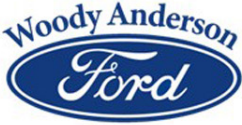
Over the years, Brown has remained a committed member of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association. Her professional affiliations include the NEA, AEA, African American Museums Association, and AERA, and she was selected for the World Who's Who of Women. Brown has been a member of First Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville since relocating in Huntsville in 1967.

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

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




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THERE ARE MANY COLUMNISTS, BUT ...

They're Not Like Tim!



The Valley Weekly

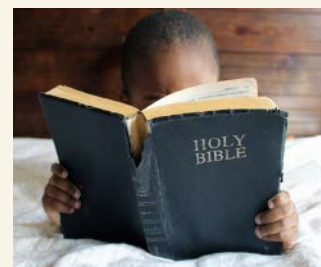
"A thought-provoking and insightful take on the latest news and views. Join TIM ALLSTON every week for interesting perspectives you can't find anywhere else!"

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This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, July 19, 2026

**Eighth Sunday
after Pentecost**



(Track 2, Year A)

First Lesson:

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

Psalm 86:11-17

Second Lesson:

Romans 8:12-25

GOSPEL:

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43



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AROUND TOWN

The Valley Weekly LLC



The Undeniable Soul of Pond Beat and Mullins Flat

The Proud Predecessor of Redstone Arsenal

Friday, July 3, 2026



“Spoken Word”
Performed by Trent Griffin
 U.S. Space and Rocket Center
 Friday, July 3, 2026

Do you remember the time? Pond Beat and Mullins Flat

Do you remember the time we ran in open fields
 When we didn't walk in six inch heels
 When we lived off the land and the produce it brings
 When our women were golden queens and men were black kings

Before chains bound us into servitude
 Before whips and guns tempered our attitude
 Our smiles unfettered and our consciousness sublime
 Our bodies were temples, do you remember the time?

Do you remember a time when emancipation set us free
 A time we could have our own and be who we wanted to be?
 Farmers, carpenters, store owners, hunters providers for our family
 Pastors, teachers, gingers, preachers, with land for you and me

When we walked to school in tattered shoes and holy socks
 And got called some not nice names and pelted with rocks
 And then came that time when we got that \$40 junkyard bus
 They wanted us working their fields now we riding to school, learning was a must!



Do you remember when the army came and made us sell
 Said sorry boutcha land son ...but you know war is hell
 Gave us pennies on the dollar, poor proud people we had no choice
 Didn't think we could fight it, we were told we had no voice

But I too sing America and the dream that we all desire
 But sometimes I think my sleep is making my dream a liar
 I wake up to nightmares and my consciousness gone
 Somebody stole my sweet dreams and left me all alone

Too many of my brothers have fallen by the wayside
 Too many of my sisters have forfeited their pride
 We have taken ourselves for granted and put our values on a shelf
 But we fail to realize how will anybody respect us if we don't respect our self?

Trayvon, Mike and Eric are merely symptoms of the problem
 Somebody thought their lives didn't matter so they decided once again to rob them
 They took their lives and got away, no justice for the crime
 We marched and looted and showed our rage do you remember the time?

The justice system is a turtle system moving slower than molasses
 Some think there's plenty of time and stand still like cows chewing on grasses
 Some just keep on marching in masses, while they continue to harass us...
 Meanwhile some are simply blind to it all, staring through rose colored glasses.

The solution as always remains with us we have to take back what we lost.
 Our self esteem, our wealth our intellect our health it doesn't matter what it cost.
 We are the original kings and the original queens the mountain is not to high to climb
 But we don't have long before we are long gone... Do you remember the time?..

I salute you Pond Beat/Mullins Flat!

AROUND TOWN

The Valley Weekly LLC



SPOKEN WORD: Pond Beat & Mullins Flat

by Trent Griffin (7/3/2026)
 U.S. Space and Rocket Center





ALABAMA A&M
START *here*
go ANYWHERE