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FREE

Friday

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ValleyWeeklyllc.com



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"Adversity makes men, and prosperity makes monsters."

- Victor Hugo



Senator Jones to Address AAMU Commencement

Alabama A&M University officials have announced a July 31 commencement ceremony to celebrate the institution's approximately 721 spring and summer 2020 graduates. The ceremony will begin promptly at 7 a.m. in the Louis Crews Stadium. The rain date will be at the same time and venue on Saturday, August 1.

Face masks will be required for all graduates, who will be physically distanced in chairs on the field. Graduates should wear flat or athletic shoes

for walking on the artificial turf. Families and guests will be required to physically distance in the stands and are required to wear face masks.

Additionally, graduates will receive electronic tickets and will be allowed six guests, who must enter as a group. Additional FAQs, protocols, and logistical information about the event can be found on the University's website at <https://www.aamu.edu/academics/commencement>.

Senator Doug Jones will be the guest speaker. Since



his election to the Senate in a special election held on December 12, 2017, Sena-

tor Jones has brought a lifelong passion for justice and commitment to service to this role in the United States Senate. Additionally, he has served as the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama, Assistant U.S. Attorney, and staff counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. The Senator views public service as a privilege that comes with the responsibility of making the country better for all Americans, regardless of their backgrounds or political views.



Rev. C. T. Vivian

Rep. John Lewis

America Loses Two Civil Rights Icons

On Friday, July 17, 2020, the world lost two of its most prominent leaders of the Civil Rights Movement.

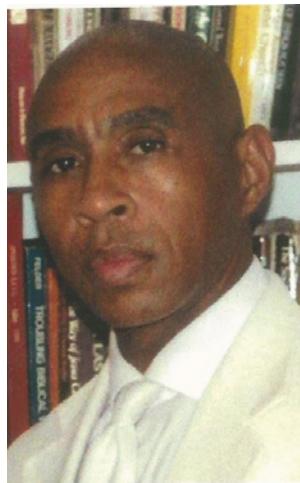
Both the Rev. C.T. Vivian, 95, and U.S. Rep. John Lewis, 80, died in Atlanta, Ga.

Rev. Vivian was a close friend and "lieutenant" of Civil Rights Movement martyr Martin Luther King, Jr. He worked alongside King as

the national director of affiliates for the SCLC.

Lewis was an American politician and civil rights leader from Alabama. Lewis, as chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was one of the "Big Six" leaders of groups who organized the 1963 March on Washington.

Lakeside UMC Welcomes New Senior Pastor



The members of historic Lakeside United Methodist Church are welcoming a new senior pastor.

Dr. Randy B. Kelley is an activist pastor and a political organizer. He was born in Birmingham, Ala., and graduated from Leeds High School, Leeds, Ala.

While serving in the United States Army, he specialized in race relations, substance abuse prevention and combat

infantry training. Kelley graduated at the top of his class as Distinguished Instructor Training Graduate at Fort Ord, Calif., and was a Distinguished Leadership Academy Graduate in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Dr. Kelley earned a B.S. degree from Jacksonville State University in sociology and psychology; a master's degree from Gammon Theological Seminary; and a doctorate from

the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Ga. Kelley has served as an advisor of the Jacksonville State University Masonic Order and as a former instructor at Morris Brown College and Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Ga.

Dr. Kelley and his wife Gelaine have three children: Jabriel, Jamillah and Jamaya.

The Valley Weekly
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Washington in One Minute



Here are the happenings in Washington, D.C.:

1) The House and Senate are in session this week. On Monday at 5:30 p.m., the Senate voted on the nomination of Russell Vought to be Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget (he has been Acting Director since Jan 2019) and then turned back to the \$700 billion FY2021 Defense Authorization bill. At Tuesday's weekly party lunch, GOP Senators were briefed on the contents of the next Coronavirus Relief bill (which would be relief bill #5), including a GOP "must-have" COVID-related liability waiver. The House debated its version of the FY2021 Defense Authorization bill. On Wednesday, the House took up a Senate-passed bill to fund permanently the Land and Water Conservation Fund and then debated amendments to end the Trump Administration's travel ban and to grant the right to counsel for people who are arriving at ports of entry and are subject to secondary or deferred inspection by

Customs & Border Protection. On Thursday and Friday, the House took up its first package of four FY2021 appropriations bills: Agriculture/Interior/Military Construction/State.

2) The Congressional schedule this week was impacted by the yet-to-be-announced services for 17-term Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), who passed away Friday night at the age of 80. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported on Sunday that funeral services for the civil rights icon and American hero are expected to be held in in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and his place of birth, Troy, Ala.

3) Last Wednesday in Georgia, President Trump announced that his Administration would propose rules to change how the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is implemented, saying that his reforms would shorten reviews of federally-funded infrastructure projects to less than 2 years, with The Hill newspaper reporting that environmental groups have already pledged to file lawsuits challenging the

rollback. Over the weekend, the President held 4, approx. 30-minute, telephone rallies with voters in AZ, MI, NC, and WI, telling them that the COVID pandemic has forced him to cease in-person rallies. On Monday, the President met with House and Senate GOP leaders at the White House on the new Coronavirus Relief bill and then he will attend an evening event at the Trump International Hotel with GOP donors. On Friday, he will award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 1968 Olympic silver medalist and ex-Kansas GOP Congressman Jim Ryun.

4) The Hill newspaper reports that Senate Republicans are preparing to offer a 5-year shield from coronavirus lawsuits, retroactive from December 2019 through 2024, as part of the forthcoming Coronavirus Relief bill #5. The proposal would give federal courts jurisdiction over lawsuits related to personal injuries or medical liability tied to coronavirus infections, preventing lawsuits in state courts where business groups have warned about uneven laws. Institutions including businesses, colleges, schools and churches would only be legally liable if they didn't make "reasonable efforts" to follow public health guidelines and "committed an act of gross negligence or intentional misconduct," according to a summary of the provision. Health care facilities and workers would only be legally liable for "gross negligence and intentional misconduct." The House passed its version

of Coronavirus Relief bill #5, known as the "HEROES Act," on May 15 – but did not include any liability shield language.

5) The Supreme Court, which started its summer recess last week, also issued a series of orders including allowing the federal government to resume executions for the first time in 17 years, rejecting a request by Florida voters to reinstate a lower-court ruling that would have made it easier for people with felony convictions to vote, and granting a request by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance accelerate the date on which the Supreme Court's recent ruling in Trump v. Vance on access to the president's financial records will officially go into effect from August 3, 2020 to immediately. In related news, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg announced Friday that she began treatment earlier this year for liver cancer ...

6) Last Thursday, the

Republican National Committee announced it was scaling back the August 24-27 GOP Convention in Jacksonville due to the COVID surge in Florida and will limit its first 3 days to the attendance of only the 2,500 convention delegates. On the final day (Aug. 27), when President Trump will give his acceptance speech, each of those delegates will be able to have a guest and alternate delegates that will be able to attend, bringing the total to approx. 7,000 people. The Democrats have already converted to a mostly virtual convention asking its delegates to stay home and participate remotely in events on August 17-20 in Milwaukee.

7) On Friday, the District Court of Maryland ruled that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program must be restored to its pre-Sept. 5, 2017, status. That means the Obama-era program must continue the way it was before the Trump administration began

to wind down the program, which includes accepting new applications.

8) In a bit of lighter news, the defending World Series champion Washington Nationals host the New York Yankees on Thursday night to start the abbreviated 2020 60-game baseball season, which will happen in a spectator-free ballpark, but will be televised on ESPN. The Nationals had to get a special waiver from the D.C. government to allow a modified quarantine rule for any players who test positive for COVID-19 or were exposed. D.C. requires 14 days of quarantine, compared to the League's 3 days – but in the end the City allowed a reduced length as long as they otherwise quarantine.

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Huntsville Transit Operation Gets Facelift



There's much excitement in the air around Huntsville Transit, which officially rebranded its transportation offerings as part of the City's larger, five-phase Transit Improvement Plan, according to Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle's weekly update

After three decades

in operation, Huntsville Shuttle is now "Orbit," while HandiRide's name has changed to "Access." The rebrand is more than just new colors and logos, though.

It's all about improved signage, easier-to-understand customer information, safer and more

welcoming bus stops, and more user-friendly website content.

All 19 Orbit buses and 25 Access vehicles will be rewrapped by mid-August. Until then, you'll see a mix of our old and new brands on the roadways.

Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

**"DON'T
FOCUS ON
THE CRISIS"**

Hebrews 10:35 tells us "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded."

You know, I believe that anytime we face a crisis situation in our lives, it's not unusual for us to lose our confidence. And, when we lose our confidence, we lose our capability of doing what God has called us to do.

In this scripture, the writer of Hebrews is telling us, "not to throw away our confidence". He is saying don't focus on the crisis but focus on Christ. Don't focus on your circumstances, but focus on the one who can save you from your circumstances.

You see, one of the things that we all need to realize is that we may endure a "crisis" situation in our lives and we may lose people that we love, but don't lose your confidence.

I remember losing my mother while I was in training camp for the New England Patriots. But I

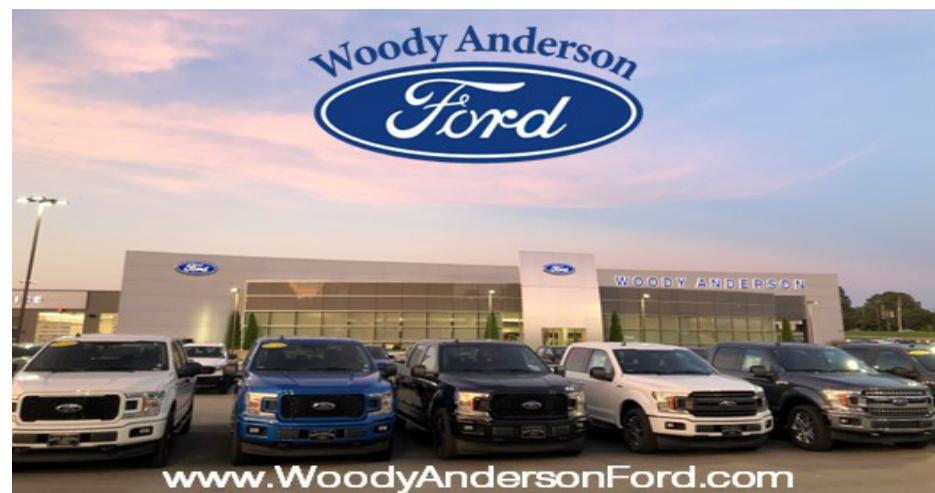
kept my confidence and still made the team that year.

I lost my wife Linda of thirty years, but I kept my con-

fidence and went back to work, and began to preach God's word at the 8:30 praise and worship service at Lakeside United Methodist Church. I also wrote a daily devotional, "A Champion Game Plan For Life."

You see, I believe that God will give all of us a testimony from our test if we don't give up. I also believe that we may lose a lot of things in life, but if we keep our confidence, God will show us a new day, a new life, and a new direction. So don't focus on the crisis and don't throw away your confidence because it will be richly rewarded if we stay inside of God's good and perfect will for our lives ...

Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters. And, make sure you purchase a copy of my book, "A Champion Game Plan For Life" on amazon.com

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Called 2 Preach

by Pastor/Founder Michael D. Rice
Grace Gethsemane Mission Church

"Forced with 'Merciful' Compulsion"

John 21:15-17



This phrase was extracted from a sermon by that great 19th century pastor and expositor, Alexander MacLaren. He was referencing Jesus' confrontation of Peter during His post-resurrection appearance on the bank of the sea of Tiberias. Peter had boldly proclaimed that he was going to be the lone laborer

in the vineyard of the King, even though it had been prophesied that when the Shepherd was smitten, the sheep would scatter. Peter vehemently denied and denounced this prophecy boldly proclaiming that he was not included in that number. His three denials had not only been predicted but it was followed by the Prayer of the Perfect Savior that his faith would not fail.

Jesus served Peter and this small band of failing, flailing, and fallen disciples breakfast that included fish that He had made possible for them to catch after they



had fished all night long and caught nothing. Before restoring Peter to his place of leadership, Jesus confronted him about the denial. This is how MacLaren put it: *So, dear brethren! here we have Jesus Christ,*

in His treatment of this penitent and half-restored soul, forcing a man, with merciful compulsion, to look steadfastly and long at his past sin, and to retrace step by step, shameful stage by shameful stage, the road

by which he had departed so far.

Whenever God forces His children to face their sins, it's always a *merciful compulsion*. His mercy always suits our cases. Praise the Lord!

JULY 17 - ALEXANDRE DUMAS - French born novelist whose books, "The Three Musketeers," "The Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Man in the Iron Mask," have made him one of the most widely read authors in the world. - BlackinTime.info



Spotlight on Our Elders ... Featuring

Mrs. Josephine Scruggs

Josephine Scruggs is the daughter of the late Reverend Troy D. and Bettie Stewart. Sister Scruggs served as the administrator for the First Missionary Baptist Church Child Development Center and Academy. Prior to that position, she served as the Assistant Administrator for the CDCA. She taught in the Metropolitan Public Schools of Nashville, Tenn., for 25 years. She also served as a teacher for the Tennessee Baptist Youth Encampment Program and as Youth Director for 10 years. Sister Scruggs is a graduate of Morristown College High School in Morristown, Tenn. She then earned her AA in

Mathematics from Morristown Junior College. She continued her education, earning her B.S. and M.A. in health, physical education and recreation from Tennessee State University.

She co-chaired the drafting and the implementation of the Family Life and AIDS Education Curriculum for the State of Tennessee; was one of three persons in the video on AIDS Education in the Workplace; was named Teacher of the Year, 1980; Hospice volunteer (patient care); and served as a facilitator for children ages 3-18 at the Caring House and First Missionary Baptist Church (which helps children that are dealing with



the death of a loved one).

She is the wife of the Reverend Dr. Julius R. Scruggs (former pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville, Ala., and former president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.).

City Lights & Stars

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Erik Essix - July 24th



"Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground."

- Frederick Douglass

County Commissioner-Elect Will Be Empowered Listener

by Jerome Saintjones

How does an African-American woman from a small town in Walker County, Alabama, achieve enviable milestones in communication, education and local politics?

She simply believes she can do anything she sets her mind to.

There you have it: the driving force behind Violet Edwards--daughter, sister, wife, mother of three and the new Commissioner-elect for District Six of the Madison County Commission.

Violet's story begins in the small former mill town of Cordova, Ala., not far from the county seat of Jasper, where blacks were--as was typically Southern--located on their side of the railroad tracks and were expected to remain in their place, physically and mentally.

Raised by her single mother, Sandi Perry, along with her close sister Raven (Perry-Beach), Violet was well nourished on the inspiration she received daily from the female head of household.

"My mother has been through it all," said Violet. "She survived Jim Crow, beat cancer twice, raised two girls as a single parent and still poured into us strong values and made us go for it. We watched all her battles as a black woman, and how she overcame them in her work and her ministry."

Although her father, Jeff Ruffin, wasn't with them in Cordova, Violet admits he still had "a major impact" on her life. A native of Lisman, Ala., he is also a history maker in Alabama in that he became the first black field agent in the state for the FBI.

As a child, Violet often felt as though she was constantly running into walls meant to keep her out. There was an ongoing dichotomy

of self-will and self-doubt.

"I had to come to terms early that I was different," she said.

It would have been perfectly understandable, after all--especially given the setting and the indoctrinate mindset on both sides of the tracks--to underachieve, to underdream.

But Sandi and her daughters were having none of it. There was nothing that was beyond their grasp, not with their king-sized determination and a heaping commitment to Jesus.

Once, in the wee hours of the morning, Violet heard over the air waves about the availability of a student exchange program. She went all out to become that student participant in her community.

"I studied in Germany my senior year of high school and two German students came to Cordova," recalled Violet. "It was a wonderful experience for the whole town."

Each Sunday was a religious pilgrimage between her mother's people and her father's people, with the sets of grandparents calling shots at both churches. First and third Sundays belonged to the Baptists. Second and fourth Sundays belonged to the Methodists.

"Every Sunday and Wednesday, you had to be in somebody's church," recalled Violet. But those good church people taught her to respect herself and how to distinguish between right and wrong.

It was on one of those pews that an increasingly restless teenager received a preacher's burning words that would remain imprinted on her soul to this moment: *Every day you should live so that people can see the God in you.*



Outside of church, however, for a young black girl in a country town, listening to the radio waves from a not-too-distant metropolis was close to heaven. Violet, like so many other black teens in its listenership range, listened loyally to WENN-FM in Birmingham, having become a devotee of pioneer Roy Wood and radio personality Dave Darnell.

This admiration, coupled with an outgoing demeanor and people constantly telling her that she possessed "a nice voice," eventually led her to pursue a communication degree at the University of Alabama.

It wasn't an easy sell, either. There was that gap between her teeth that had haunted her since childhood. Then, she was "too tall", which intimidated a lot of people. She had some dental work done, accepted the height and went for it.

In Tuscaloosa, somewhat to keep her anonymity in Crimson Tide land, Violet worked at radio station WTUG-FM as "Raven Guy."

She later decided to aim her studies toward television. True to her calling, Violet was a phenomenal reporter and ultimately entered the Huntsville market.

"I told many great stories," said Violet, discussing her years in the broadcast industry. "I met many great people. I knew there were stories that I didn't just want to cover; I wanted to be a part of them."

Also, she knew that she wanted marriage and children, and she knew she could not be on call for 24 hours.

"By leaving broadcasting, I was able to be more hands-on in bringing solutions to problems that I once was only covering."

When she directed the non-profit Christmas Charities Year Round, she gained familiarity with various County officials.

In the spring of last year, Violet, having also earned an MBA from UAH and having even taught courses at this point, still wanted desperately to be a part of the community's solutions.

She had volunteered around the community and learned firsthand about the needs of the marginalized in society.

"I thought I had a good grasp of the community," she said, "and I told my family I was going to run for County Commissioner."

Her husband, Selma native and UAH alum Anthony Edwards, is an engineer. Anthony, children and her family members remain her greatest supporters and--with 10 people and prayer--were a formidable force in the July 14 campaign.

"I have taken them through so much," stated Violet. "Anthony took on more roles at home and made sure everything continued to run smoothly. My mother dyed her hair purple to help me with my branding, grabbed literature and went canvassing; my sister was a huge help with community contacts and scheduling outreach, as well as my wonderful campaign manager, Samuel Christopher, one of my former UAH students.

"Samuel really pushed me and kept me motivated, which was a switch in roles for us," she said. Moreover, the aftermath of the campaign has made her children more knowledgeable about government.

Violet acknowledged she also was buoyed by the wise advice she received consistently from long-time and seasoned activists and fellow Huntsvillians, such as Alice Sams, Rev. R.L. Shanklin, Dr. George Grayson and Veronica Curtis.

"They had already been in Huntsville for quite a while, fighting the good fight," she said. She also received inspiration from other African-American women who had sought various offices, in-

cluding State Representative Laura Hall and school board member Michelle Watkins.

Commissioner-elect Edwards said she will be doing "a lot of listening" at her first meeting with District 6 staff.

"I want to learn, to hear what I need to know and to tap into their expertise," commented Violet. "I want to learn about what is and isn't working, how to do things better. I will talk to them collectively and then one-on-one."

Violet said she will also hold meetings with persons who serve on pertinent boards associated with the District.

One of her priorities is to pore over the budget as it relates to the programs and outcomes; to ascertain if money is going where it needs to go, whether reallocations are needed, and whether dollars allocated reflect the priorities of District Six.

Down the road, by the close of her first term, Violet said she hopes she will have made significant headway in making the Harrison Center self-sustaining; enhancing programs overall; boosting efficiency and distribution of community gardens; launching more youth enrichment programs and shoring up the Project FOCUS program; supporting entrepreneurship; and strengthening collaborations.

Commissioner-elect Edwards said she will continue to communicate with her constituents through social media, as well as more traditional forms of communication.

"We will hold forums and town halls," added Violet. "People have within them solutions. We need to work with them to bring those solutions into being."

Valley Deaths

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Graveside service for MR. RAYBURN B LOVELADY (b. 1962) was held Saturday, July 18, at the Berkley Cemetery with Pastor Joe Kelly officiating.

Funeral service for MR. STACEY PLEASURE (b. 1978) was held Monday, July 13, in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Public viewing for MR. FENNEL LANGFORD, SR., was held July 12, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home.

Graveside service for THE REVEREND JOHN BAKER, JR., (b. 1937) was held Saturday, July 11, at Pine Grove Cemetery (Deposit, Ala.) with Pastor William Carter officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME - 4315 Oakwood Avenue - Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481

Funeral service for MR. NIELS CLEMENTS DORMER will be 11 a.m., Sunday, July 26, at the Royal Chapel of Memories.

Graveside service for MR. RODNEY SMITH will be 11 a.m., Saturday, July 25, at the New Hope Cemetery in Madison, Ala., with Brother John Branch officiating.

Funeral service for MR. WILLIAM EARL "TEE TEE" JONES (b. 1956) was held Monday, July 20, at the Huntsville Dragway (502 Quarter Mountain Road, Harvest, Ala.) with Pastor Donnie Malone officiating.

Public viewing for MS. ELIZABETH BOONE COLE (b. 1946) was held Sunday, July 19, and Monday, July 20, at the Royal Funeral Home.

Graveside service for MRS. VERA KATHY OMAKOR (b. 1956) was held Saturday, July 18, at the Thatch Family Cemetery (Pryor Road Madison, Ala.) with Pastor James Robinson officiating.

Graveside service for MR. RICHARD LEE THOMPSON (b. 1960) was held Saturday, July 18, at the Valley View Memorial Gardens (139 Meridianville Bottom Road, Meridianville, Ala.) with Pastor Bobby Battle, Sr. officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME - 2505 University Drive NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-9693

Graveside services for MR. LLOYD "BOBBY" SALES (b. 1954) will be Saturday, July 18, at 10 a.m. at Turner Cemetery in Toney, Ala., with Pastor C. Jermaine Turner officiating.

MAYHEM IS EXPENSIVE. ALLSTATE IS NOT.



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Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
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providers/](https://hsvchamber.org/restaurant-deliveries-take-out-food-service-providers/)

Tennessee Valley Calendar of Events

July 24

"Friday Night Art Walks 2020"

Presented by Amanda Howard Sotheby's International Realty
Courthouse Square
(Social Distancing Encouraged)
5-8 p.m.

July 26

"Hard Earned: The Military Photographs by Stacy Pearsall and the Veteran's Portrait Project"
Huntsville Museum of Art

July 29

Last Day to Register for Huntsville Virtual Academy
Huntsville City Schools

July 31

Spring/Summer Commencement
Alabama A&M University
(Tickets Required)
Louis Crews Stadium
Huntsville, Ala.
7 a.m.

August 6

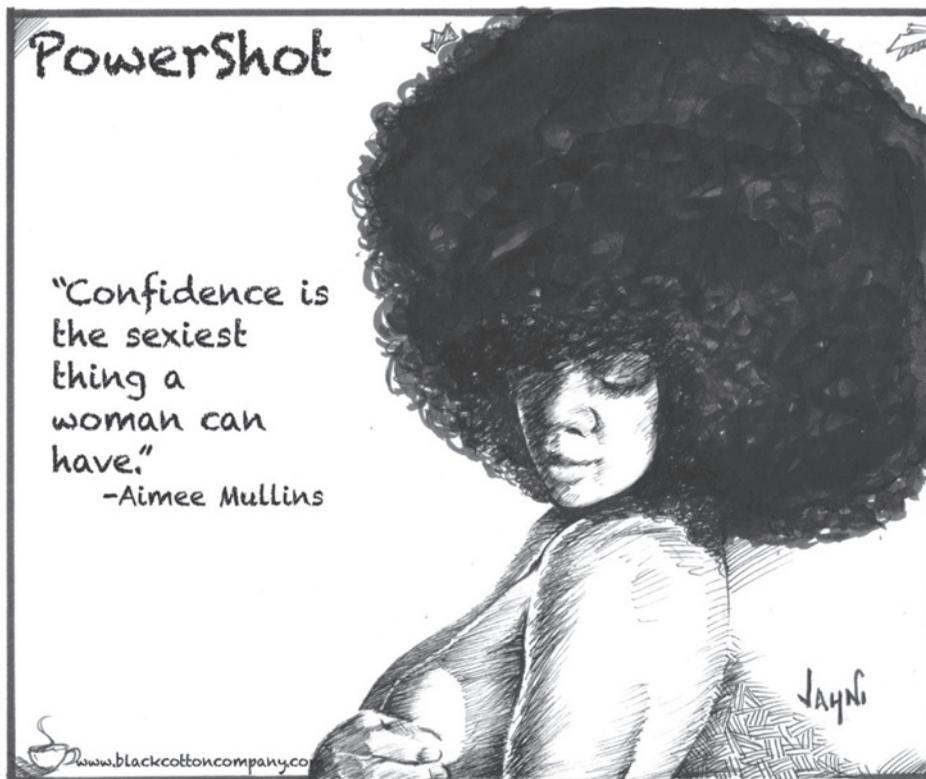
The Price Is Right Live
Von Braun Center
Concert Hall
8-11 p.m.

August 17

Classes Begin at Alabama A&M University

September 19

Escape To Margaritaville
Von Braun Center
Mark C. Smith Concert Hall
Huntsville, Ala.
8-10 p.m.



"When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be."

- Lao Tzu

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Perspectives on EGO-holism

by tim allston

Black Sprinting vs. Marathon Running: Renaming
"Bloody Sunday's" Edmund Pettus Bridge for John Lewis?

(From Valley Weekly - 1/31/2020)



With John Lewis' December 29th announcement of fighting his stage 4 pancreatic cancer, initiatives are underway again to honor this civil rights icon and 17-term Georgia congressman.

Recurring petitions to rename Selma, AL's Edmund Pettus Bridge are now focused upon Lewis.

According to the latest petition sponsor OrganizeFor!, "It's an important thing to honor Congressman John Lewis who is the son of Alabama and show that Alabama has changed to understand the importance of civil rights for all people, especially since Congressman Lewis spilled blood on that bridge in 1963."

For some, however, this campaign appears to be another Black short-term sprint instead of striving for longer-term marathon victories.

The Background

March 7, 1965, "Bloody Sunday", occurred when state troopers beat and bloodied voting rights marchers at that bridge - named for a former Confederate general, U.S. senator and KKK grand dragon. Most notably bloodied was Lewis, the 25-year old chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee chairman.

The Sprints

(2015) 180,000+ petition-signatures for a bridge renaming to "Journey for Freedom" passed the state senate but died in the house;

As of January 23rd, OrganizeFor!'s website has received 8,735 of the needed 9,000 signatures to petition the legislature.

The Marathons

Lewis colleague and Selma native Terri Sewell (D-AL) advocates restoring the 1965 Voting Rights Act's full protections and fighting to get the Voting Rights Advancement Act signed into law would be better, more longlasting tributes. "Renaming the bridge in Selma is thoughtfully symbolic, but passing a law that protects the rights of all Americans to vote is the ultimate action that furthers the legacy of Congressman John Lewis."

Al.com columnist Roy Johnson: "If everyone who signed that petition registered to vote and exercised that right in 2020, it would be honor enough."

tim allston is the author of the free book, *7 Steps to Manage Ego Problems: The How-to Guide for "Someone Else,"* free and downloadable now at www.GetEgoHelpNow.org.



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