

# Why Context Matters in AAMU State Audit - p. 3

FREE



## TVW Introduces 'Aunt Irma' - p. 9



Friday  
July 25, 2025  
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ValleyWeeklyllc.com

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



Mrs. Josephine Scruggs

*"No state is civilized which has citizens too ignorant to help rule it" - W.E.B. Du Bois*

## AAMU Business Programs Reaccredited

Alabama A&M University has announced the recent reaffirmation of its Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International accreditation – an honor held by fewer than six percent of business schools worldwide.

AACSB accreditation is recognized as the benchmark of quality in business education. The rigorous review process evaluates institutions on several key criteria,



including faculty qualifications, curriculum relevance, student outcomes, and meaningful engagement with the business community.

"This reaffirmation of our AACSB accreditation is a testament to the

dedication of our faculty, students, staff, and supporters," said Dr. Timothy Mantz, dean of the College of Business and Public Affairs.

Originally accredited in 2019, AAMU's Business Programs

have leveraged the AACSB framework to strengthen their academic offerings and expand opportunities for students. The benefits of this accreditation are far-reaching, according to University officials.

Students gain access to a rigorous and innovative curriculum, increased mobility across AACSB-accredited institutions, and a degree recognized by employers around the world.

## Seniors Participate in Hiking Activity on Chapman Mountain



A group from the "Bob" Harrison Senior Advocacy and Wellness Center found that its recent hike on Chapman Mountain was a breath of fresh air! The group hit the trails for a scenic and energizing outdoor adventure.

Surrounded by the natural beauty of North Alabama, they explored the lush woodlands, winding paths, and peaceful overlooks that make Chapman Mountain a hidden gem.

The weather was perfect for hiking,

and the group kept a steady pace while enjoying friendly conversation, moments of reflection, and the peaceful sounds of nature.

Interested in membership? Contact Deitrick Smart at dsmart@madisoncountyal.gov.

## DLC to Celebrate a Transformational Decade

The Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium (DLC) will hold its 10th Anniversary Black Tie Gala, themed "Impacting Communities and Developing Future Leaders," on Saturday, August 23, 6 p.m. (Cocktail Hour, 5 p.m.) at the Jackson Center in Huntsville, Ala.

For a decade, DLC has cultivated emerging leaders from all Huntsville/Madison County communities — empowering them

to become change-makers across government, business, education, and the nonprofit sector. This milestone celebration will honor the work done to develop the over 300 alumni whose leadership now fuels the growth and innovation across the Tennessee Valley.

The community is invited to support this life-changing program by attending the gala. Tickets are \$75 and include a plated dinner, live entertainment, and

a compelling evening program that highlights stories of transformation, community, perseverance, and hope.

"This gala is more than a celebration—it's a call to the action and the work we do – leadership development," said Dr. Edwan O'Neal, DLC executive director.

As Huntsville continues to expand as a hub for technology, defense, and culture, highly developed leadership is not just a val-

ue—it's a necessity. Supporting the DLC means investing in the city's future, building inclusive networks, and elevating voices that shape policy, progress, and possibility.

Whether you're a long-time supporter or new to the mission, let's build a stronger, more unified community—one leader at a time. Tickets available now at <https://dlc10yeargala.swell.gives/>

**JOIN US!**

## The Valley Weekly INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

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# Washington One Minute

by Ron Hamm

Here are the latest top issues and events in Washington:

**1. CONGRESS.** The House and Senate are in session this week. This marks the final week of the House's summer session, after which they will recess for five weeks. Among other bills, the House will consider a bill to impose mandatory minimum prison sentences for individuals with multiple prior removals or convictions for aggravated felonies who re-enter the U.S. illegally, the Coast Guard Reauthorization bill, and legislation aimed at cutting red tape, streamlining reviews, and providing greater regulatory certainty under the Clean Water Act permitting process ...

**2. APPROPRIATIONS.** Congressional Republicans plan to reduce domestic spending, but House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole signaled that cuts will not match the steep reductions proposed by President Trump. The House plans a 6%

cut to non-defense discretionary funding, far less than the 22.6% cut requested by the administration. Trump's budget calls for significant cuts to the Education Department, Pell Grants, and numerous student support programs. While the House proposal is less severe, many programs could still face flat funding or reductions. The Senate will turn to the FY2026 Military Construction/Veterans Affairs appropriations bill this week ...

**3. RESCISSIONS BILL.** Just before a Friday deadline that would have made the bill moot, the House passed Friday at

12:03 a.m. the Senate-amended \$9 billion rescissions bill to zero out funding for public radio and TV stations and cut \$7.9 billion in foreign aid on a 216-213 vote (with 2 Rs, Reps. Fitzpatrick and Turner, joining all Ds voting nay) after the Senate added back \$400 million in funding to preserve the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Program that is credited with saving 26 million lives in 50 countries.

**4. WHITE HOUSE.** On Friday, the President sued Rupert Murdoch and his Wall Street Journal for \$10 billion over a story published last Thursday reporting that the President sent a birthday card to convicted child abuser Jeffrey Epstein on his 50th birthday in 2003. Last Wednesday, the President called on the Coca-Cola Company to stop using high-fructose corn syrup in favor of cane sugar in the U.S. production of

its soda drink, drawing an immediate condemnation from the Corn Refiners Association that claims this change would benefit foreign growers at the expense of U.S. corn producers. In an unusual statement on Thursday on the President's health, the White House announced that the President has been diagnosed with chronic venous insufficiency, a condition in which the legs have trouble delivering blood back to the heart ...

**5. SUPREME COURT.** The court is in recess until October 6 and has resolved all of its major cases on the emergency docket for the 2024-25 term.

**6. NEW IMMIGRANT CAMPS.** The Pentagon announced last Tuesday that Indiana's Camp Atterbury and New Jersey's Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst will be used to detain immigrants

lacking permanent legal status.

**7. WIND/SOLAR PROJECTS.** The Washington Post reported on Friday, to fulfill a pledge made to convince reluctant House GOP lawmakers to vote for the Reconciliation/Tax Cut bill, the Interior Department announced that add additional layers of review for wind and solar energy projects to make it harder for renewable energy projects to begin construction by the July 2026 deadline to qualify for tax credits. The July 2026 deadline had been a compromise inserted into the GOP Tax bill to win support from some Republican Senators. Read the Interior Department press release here: Interior Press Release.

**8. INFLATION REPORT.** Last week, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that on an annual basis, as

measured by the Consumer Price Index, inflation in June rose to 2.7% up from May's 2.4%, following warnings from economists that the cost of the President's tariffs would make it through value chains and start to show up in consumer prices over the summer. The Hill newspaper reported that U.S. inventories take roughly 3 months to clear, and there was a huge pull-ahead in orders from U.S. importers before the tariffs. Hence, the April-to-July price lag confirms many economic forecasts of higher prices.

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WE KNOW THE PEOPLE,  
PLACES, AND POLITICS

## HMBCC Meetings

The Huntsville Metro Black Chamber of Commerce promotes, creates and fosters economic development opportunities. HMBCC meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 12 noon. Call (256) 427-2650 or e-mail [info@hsvblackchamber.org](mailto:info@hsvblackchamber.org). VISIT



**HCS Receives Grant from GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund:** Huntsville City Schools has been selected as a GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund grant recipient. This grant will directly support students who lack reliable internet access at home by providing Verizon hotspots through a library checkout system. Each hotspot is content-filtered and compatible only with HCS-issued Chromebooks, ensuring safe, focused, and educational use. This initiative helps extend learning beyond the classroom - keeping all students connected, engaged, and empowered. - Courtesy, HCS



## 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.

## The Chinaberry Tree ... Are You Up to the Climb?

"Rich with vital voices, spiritual undertones, and urgent cultural and historical insight." - BookLife/Publishers Weekly

"Brilliant, biting, and deeply human ...  
The Chinaberry Tree floored me." - Reedsy Discovery

"... the soul of the book lies in its refusal  
to sanitize the truth." - The Valley Weekly

American Fiction Award Finalist 2025



## Great Read!

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"Why should the world be over-wise ...?" *The Chinaberry Tree* is a provocative debut novel by **Jerome Saintjones** that delves deeply and unapologetically into the African-American experience. Discover your passion for reading again! Visit [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and fine bookstores everywhere.

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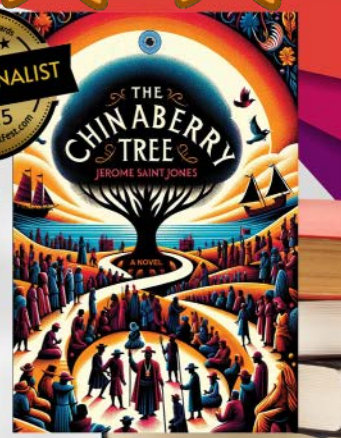
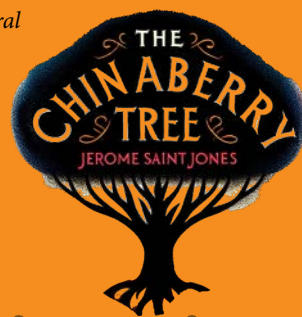
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From Paul Laurence Dunbar's "We Wear the Mask"





# Context Matters in State Audit of Alabama A&M University

Recent headlines about Alabama A&M University’s state audit have ignited a flurry of discussion across the local media. But if the media’s goal is to inform the public accurately and responsibly, then the coverage has fallen disappointingly short. If all that was uncovered in this audit is what’s being reported, then perhaps it’s time to shift the narrative — not to avoid scrutiny, but to demand context, fairness, and respect.

Let’s start with the facts: Alabama A&M University, a historically Black land-grant institution, has made significant progress in recent years. Enrollment is up. Accreditation is solid. New buildings, stronger research, improved faculty development, and a renewed commitment to student success all signal that the university is not just surviving — it is thriving! These successes should not be overshadowed by a state audit that, while important, found no evidence of criminal wrongdoing or systemic mismanagement.



Instead, the media coverage appears to amplify small missteps and routine findings — issues that are often found in audits of every public university. Where is the comparative analysis? Where is the context that shows whether AAMU’s audit findings are more severe, more numerous, or more costly than those of peer institutions or other state-funded colleges and universities.

To report selectively and sensationally on Alabama A&M without giving equal investigative energy to its peers is not journalism — it’s targeted undermining. And for a university with a long legacy of resilience in the face of bias and neglect, this kind of selective attention is especially dangerous.

Let me be clear: no institution should be above scrutiny. Audits are necessary tools for accountability. But the reporting must be complete, balanced, and grounded in comparison. What we’re witnessing now seems less like an effort to protect public interest and more like an attempt to poke holes in the successes of an HBCU that continues to defy odds.

Alabama A&M deserves better — not a free pass, but a fair playing field. So to the local news outlets covering this audit: if this is all you’ve found, perhaps it’s time to find something else worth reporting. Something that tells the full story — a story of progress, excellence, and the continued fight for educational equity in Alabama.

Because context isn’t just good journalism. It’s justice. Until next week ...

A NOTE FROM THE ...



## The Valley Weekly

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Fourth Page	5x5 inches	\$300
Eighth Page	2.5x5 inches	\$150
Sixteenth Page	2.5x2.5	\$75
Classified	1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

JULY 25 - EMMETT LOUIS TILL - Emmett Louis Till was an African American boy who was abducted, tortured, and lynched in Mississippi in 1955 at 14, after being accused of offending a white woman, Carolyn Bryant, in her family’s grocery store. The brutality of his murder and the acquittal of his killers drew attention to the long history of violent persecution of African Americans in the United States. Till posthumously became an icon of the civil rights movement. Till was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. During summer vacation in August 1955, he visited relatives near Money, Mississippi, in the Mississippi Delta region. He spoke to 21-year-old Carolyn Bryant, the white, married proprietor of a small grocery store there.

Dorothy

# Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

## "Faith in the Right Place"

Second Timothy 1:7 says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity but of power, love, and self-discipline."

You know, we've all come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord. But sometimes we allow our faith to be tied to the way that we want things to happen, not the way that God allows them to happen. For example, some people never finish school because their circumstances change. This might be due to an unexpected pregnancy, the death of a loved one, or financial problems.

So many things can get us off track and lead us off the path that God wants us to walk. But if we put our trust in God's plan and don't give up on His promises, we will make it.

Remember what it says in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Not only does He plan to prosper us, but His plan for us is full of hope!

That should be good news to somebody whose

capable hands. We have to say to ourselves, "I believe that God is working things out in my life right now." So, no matter what circumstances you may find yourselves in, don't

circumstance and has a great plan for your life.

*Prayer:* Most gracious and loving Father, continue to lead us and guide us in the way you would like us to go.

*Question:* Have you ever been afraid of what will happen next, when your circumstances change? What did you do?

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](http://amazon.com).

NEXT WEEK:  
"Better"



circumstances have changed. So, the way that we learn to make it, is to put our faith in the right place, which is in God's


let your faith depend on the way that you want things to happen, because God can deal with any

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*Funeral service for MRS. BIRDIE MONTAGUE (b. 1953) was Friday, July 19, at St. John AME Church, Downtown Huntsville, with Rev. Claude Campbell, officiating.*

*Celebration of Life for MR. RODNEY HUMES (b. 1966) was Saturday, July 19, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral Service for MS. JACKIE DENISE BRIGGS (b. 1962) was Thursday, July 17, at Saint Rebecca Primitive Baptist Church with Brother Andrew Boozer, eulogist, and Elder Phil Ford, officiating.*

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*Funeral service for SSGT GILBERT EVERSON (b. 1957) will at 12 noon, Sunday, July 27, at the Royal Chapel of Memories.*

*Funeral service for MR. JOE W. CLAY, JR. (b. 1940) will be at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, July 26, at the Royal Chapel of Memories with Rev. Dr. Don Darius Butler officiating.*

*Funeral service for MR. HUNDLEY BATTIS, SR. (b. 1944) was Friday, July 18, at the First Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1303 Evangel Drive NW, Huntsville, Ala., with Pastor Rickey Sykes officiating.*



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*Funeral service for MR. AQUILLIEL WALTON (b. 1949) was held Saturday, July 19, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral service for MR. NATHANIEL "SLO-POK" FLETCHER (b. 1976) was held Sunday, July 20, at Fellowship of Faith Church, 3703 Memorial Parkway NW, Huntsville, Ala.*



## Tim's Blueprint from Moses' Wilderness

*"It is quite common for supremely gifted people to never approach their potential because they fear failure." — Life Recovery Bible, Exodus 37 commentary*

For decades, I viewed Exodus 37 as one of those "skip-worthy" Bible chapters—packed with painstaking, repetitive detail about how to build the ark, lampstand, and incense altar in the temporary wilderness sanctuary.

But one morning, reading it from the Life Recovery Bible—a version rooted in the 12-Step Alcoholics Anonymous recovery model—I met Bezalel again. This time, I saw myself.

Moses' wilderness sanctuary architect Bezalel wasn't just a craftsman. He was a called, Spirit-filled builder—gifted, equipped, and obedient. The commentary noted how many gifted people never fulfill their potential, not because they lack talent, but because they fear failure. That hit home.

### Tim Allston as a SPACE Cadet?

In my younger adult years, I didn't fear failing—I feared succeeding at the wrong things. And I did. I used my God-given communication skills and charisma to impress crowds, win deals, and boost my brand. For example, I had or was:

- **S** - smarts, the benefits of a strict faith-based home, weekly church, and private schooling;
- **P** - physically correct-ness as a vegetarian, athletic, tall, dark, and by some estimates, easy on the eyes!
- **A** - articulate, well-versed and quick-witted;
- **C** - charming/charismatic as an engaging unabashed networker; and
- **E** - ethical: honest, never smoked, drank, gambled, drugged, overate, or had other addictions.

But I was, in truth, a well-educated, highly-articulate, and charismatic "SPACE Cadet"—using God's gifts, without acknowledging His gift-giving role. I was a drifting directionless ego-holic, addicted to myself.

Like the Prodigal Son, I ran until I crashed. And in that wreckage, God began my recovering. Not just from arrogance—but from ego-holism: the distortion of self that leads us to overcompensate (inflated egos) or underperform (deflated egos).

### Bezalel: The Master's Builder

Bezalel didn't just build for God—he also taught others to build. That's my calling now. Through EMC<sup>2</sup> (Ego-holism Measurement Calculator for Correction), I'm not just rebuilding my life—I'm training others to build lives and workplaces grounded in purpose, not performance.

So today, I walk in Bezalel's footsteps—not to hoard my gifts, but to multiply them.

Because the temple still needs builders.

And I'm now building to code—**His code**.

*Tim Allston is a leadership strategist, recovering ego-holic, and founder of the EMC<sup>2</sup> Initiative and the TAILS Foundation.*



**Tim Allston**

Leadership Player-Coach and Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author  
"Leading from the Middle"  
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"Like Bezalel, it took me years to learn that those gifts and talents God had given me... were for advancing His kingdom—not mine. I now know."

TIM ALLSTON



## My Peace Is Not Up for Negotiation ...

# Millennial Moment

by  
Gloria B. Caldwell

Say this to yourself, and mean it. Why do you negotiate what you have control to keep safeguarded? In a world that often demands our time and energy, protecting our peace is imperative. So, how do we do that? Well, start by setting boundaries. Boundaries are not just an act of self-respect; they are a necessary step toward maintaining emotional well-being. When we establish clear limits, we empower ourselves to prioritize what truly matters—our mental health and personal hap-

piness.

For instance, cutting people off. Whew, cutting people off can be challenging, but who said you have to be harsh. Approach it with decency and empathy. Understand that not every relationship flourishes our growth, and it's okay to step back from those that drain us. Communicate openly about your feelings, expressing appreciation for the good times while asserting your need for space. Don't feel bad!

By setting boundaries, you create a safe space

where positive relationships can flourish. Surround yourself with those who uplift you and respect your limits. You know who these people are. Even if it is only a few.

Ultimately, protecting your peace is a sign of strength, not selfishness. Prioritize yourself, cultivate the connections that nurture your spirit, and never compromise on your well-being. Your peace is your power—guard it fiercely.

*Lace Up! Let's Go!*



It's our birthday,  
but we're  
celebrating  
you.



This year, as Bryant Bank marks our 20th birthday, it's our customers who deserve the accolades. For two decades, you've trusted us, believed in us and relied on us to help you meet your financial goals. Without you, there would be no us. So thank you to everyone who has been, and continues to be, a valued part of our family.

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The Valley Weekly

# VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES &amp; MORE!

**Thru July 25**

Summer 2025 Nature  
Rangers Camps  
Burritt on the Mountain  
3101 Burritt Drive  
Huntsville, Ala.  
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

**July 26**

The Dinner Detective True  
Crime Murder Mystery  
Dinner Show  
DoubleTree Huntsville  
South  
6000 Memorial Parkway SW  
Huntsville, Ala.  
(866) 496-0535 - 6-9 p.m.

**July 27**

"Weird Al" Yankovic: Big-  
ger & Weirder 2025 Tour

The Orion - MidCity  
Huntsville, Ala.

**July 28**

Meowy Mondays at the  
Garden  
Huntsville Botanical Gar-  
den  
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue SW  
Huntsville, Ala.  
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Author Talk with Sarah  
Crouch  
Madison Senior Center  
1329 Browns Ferry Road  
Madison, Ala. - 10-11 a.m.

Concerts in the Park  
Big Spring International  
Park

200 Church Street  
Huntsville, Ala. (Free)  
Monday Evenings

**July 31**

Calimar White aka Agent  
Ratliff  
Comedian  
Huntsville Levity Live  
2012 Memorial Parkway SW  
Huntsville, Ala.  
(256) 261-3374

**August 1**

Family Fun Night  
Piper & Leaf Tea Co.  
997 Hwy. 231  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5-8 p.m.

**August 1-2**

Funny Marco  
Comedian  
Huntsville Levity Live  
2012 Memorial Parkway  
SW  
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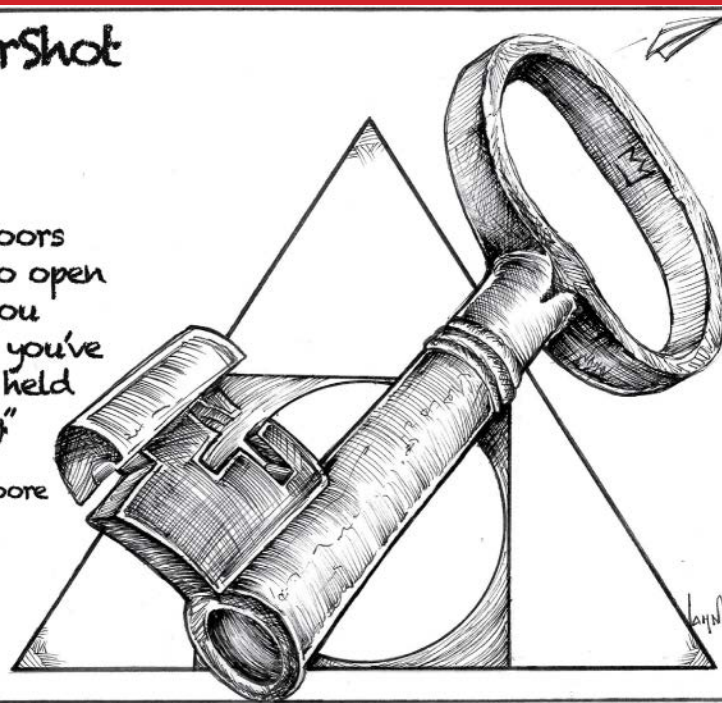
**August 2**

The Market at Leigh Acres  
5655 Maysville Road  
New Market, Ala.  
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

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"We should not permit our grievances  
to overshadow our opportunities.."

- Booker T. Washington





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

## Mrs. Josephine Scruggs

Former First Lady Josephine Scruggs is the daughter of the late Reverend Troy D. and Bettie Stewart. She was the wife of the late 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.).

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 became affiliated with the following professional organizations, community boards and committees: MNEA; NEA; TEA; Retired Teacher Association; YMCA CITY PROGRAM; Phi Delta Kappa; NAACP; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Partnership for a Drug-Free Community; Board Member of Girl Scouts of America;

Madison County Day Care Board; and Rotarian Club.

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 has served as a presenter for the following seminars/workshops: Christian Charm (girls 12-18), Image/Health Tips, Image of a Christian Young Lady, North East Wing-Deacons & Trustee's Wives; The Black Church Meeting the College Students' Needs; Women's Day Speaker in Alabama, Tennessee, and Michigan; Clues/Tips on Being a Pastor's/Minister's Wife Today; Inspirational Speaker for the 4-H Club (Alabama A&M University); Speaker for the Induction Ceremony into the Jr. Honor Society (Davis Hills Middle School and Stone Middle School); Black History Speaker at local city and county elementary schools; AIDS Education and Drug Education presenter; Parenting Classes at the Seminole Service Center; Image Consultant (Making a First Impression); Wedding Consultant/Director (the Ultimate Event); coached



basketball, track and golf for 20 years and started the first Band Boosters Club at Whites Creek High School and Tennessee State University.

Sister Scruggs is the recipient of several awards, but the one that she is most proud of is the Teacher of the Year award. She believes she is at her best when helping others. She has worked tirelessly with underprivileged children and has supported the ongoing Sickle Cell effort. With all of the above, she still has time for attending the various activities of her grandchildren, reading, cross-stitching, collecting "All God's Children," word search puzzles, and visiting the sick and shut-in.

Together, she and Rev. Scruggs were the proud parents of a son, the Reverend Morris (Marty) Tipton, Jr., (Melody) and a daughter, Jennifer Scruggs. They also rejoiced in their grandchildren, Morris (Tre') Tipton III, Morgan Tipton, and Elizabeth Scruggs.

"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](http://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](mailto:info@valleyweeklyllc.com).



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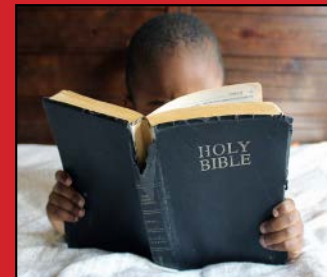
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Sunday, July 27, 2025  
Seventh Sunday  
after Pentecost



(Track 2, Year C)  
First Lesson:  
Hosea 1:2-10  
Psalm 85  
Second Lesson:  
Colossians 2:6-19  
GOSPEL:  
Luke 11:1-13



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# A&M Names First Female Football Play-by-Play Announcer

Alabama A&M University has named Thai Floyd as its new full-time radio play-by-play announcer for football, making her the first woman in school history – and the first at any Historically Black College or University (HBCU) – to hold the role. A seasoned sports journalist and current digital media specialist with AAMU Athletics, Floyd will also serve as host of “The Coach’s Show,” giving fans an inside look at Bulldogs football throughout the 2025-26 season.

Floyd brings a robust resume to the broadcast booth, with experience

covering more than 60 collegiate games on ESPN+ and ESPNU. Her assignments have included the Celebration Bowl, the Cheez-It and Pop-Tarts Bowls, and the inaugural HBCU Women’s All-Star Game. She has appeared on NBC Sports Philadelphia, Sports Illustrated’s HBCU Legends, and ESPN’s Andscape. Her professional journey has taken her from the sidelines of FBS bowl games to the in-game stage of the Florida Classic, and now to the voice of one of the SWAC’s proudest football programs.

A proud two-time

HBCU graduate in the making, Floyd earned her B.S. in Broadcast Journalism at Florida A&M University and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in communications at Alabama A&M. Floyd said the opportunity is a career milestone – but more importantly, a cultural one.

“This opportunity is a dream realized, and I’m deeply grateful to be trusted with it,” said Floyd. “To be the first woman to serve as the full-time voice of Alabama A&M football – and possibly the first to hold



this role at any HBCU – is bigger than me. It’s about legacy, representation, and reminding young Black girls that we belong in every room, every booth, every broadcast.”

Floyd’s appointment reflects Alabama A&M’s continued investment in elevating its athletics and

media presence, while also breaking new ground in the landscape of sports broadcasting. Her work will place her at the center of the action as the Bulldogs open their season on August 30, when fans will hear her historic debut on the mic.

“I’m honored to rep-

resent Alabama A&M, our incredible fans, and the HBCU community on this platform,” Floyd added. “I don’t take the trust that’s been placed in me lightly, and I hope this moment inspires the next generation to chase every dream boldly and unapologetically.

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## ON THIS DAY

In 1972, the notorious Tuskegee syphilis experiment came to light as The Associated Press reported that for the previous four decades, the U.S. Public Health Service, in conjunction with the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, had been allowing poor, rural Black male patients with syphilis to go without treatment, even allowing them to die, as a way of studying the disease.

- The St. Augustine Record



# Telling It Like It Is: The Valley Weekly Introduces 'Aunt Irma'

Sometimes you just want someone (or some **thing**) to simply tell it like is, stripping away all the emotions, eggshells and kid gloves. There are days when you want to get down to the bare essentials, removing the fluff and tact. Enter Aunt Irma. She is The Valley Weekly's periodic columnist from another dimension or, shall we say, *Another Ilk* ... a DEI hiring of Artificial Intelligence, with just a hint of an editor's touch, added to "keep it real." Enjoy! Oh! Have a burning question? Send it to: [info@thevalleyweeklyllc.com](mailto:info@thevalleyweeklyllc.com).

## Most Impactful Black Strategy: Booker T. or Du Bois?

This is a rich and enduring question that historians, educators, and community leaders have debated for more than a century. Both Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois offered distinct and deeply thought-out strategies for Black advancement—each shaped by their historical moment, personal background, and vision for racial uplift.

Here's a balanced comparison to help assess whose strategy might have led to greater long-term impact if fully implemented:

### Booker T. Washington's Strategy

**Philosophy:** Economic self-reliance and vocational training  
**Potential Strengths If Fully Implemented:**

\*Could have created a large, economically stable Black middle and working class by

the early 20th century  
\*Might have established widespread Black-owned businesses and institutions earlier  
\*Emphasized self-determination and local economic ecosystems, similar to those seen in Greenwood (Black Wall Street)

**Limitations:** Tolerated political disenfranchisement and segregation, which allowed white supremacist structures to solidify  
\*Downplayed the urgency of civil rights and federal intervention

**W.E.B. Du Bois's Strategy**  
**Philosophy:** Immediate civil rights and higher education for the "Talented Tenth"  
**Potential Strengths If Fully Implemented:**

\*Could have fostered early Black political power and legal victories

\*Might have accelerated civil rights gains by several decades through federal pressure and court cases

\*Pushed for integration and universal human rights, linking Black struggles to global justice movements  
**Limitations:** Focused heavily on elite leadership, possibly overlooking mass economic empowerment  
\*Relied on systems (law, academia) that were structurally resistant to change without simultaneous grassroots support

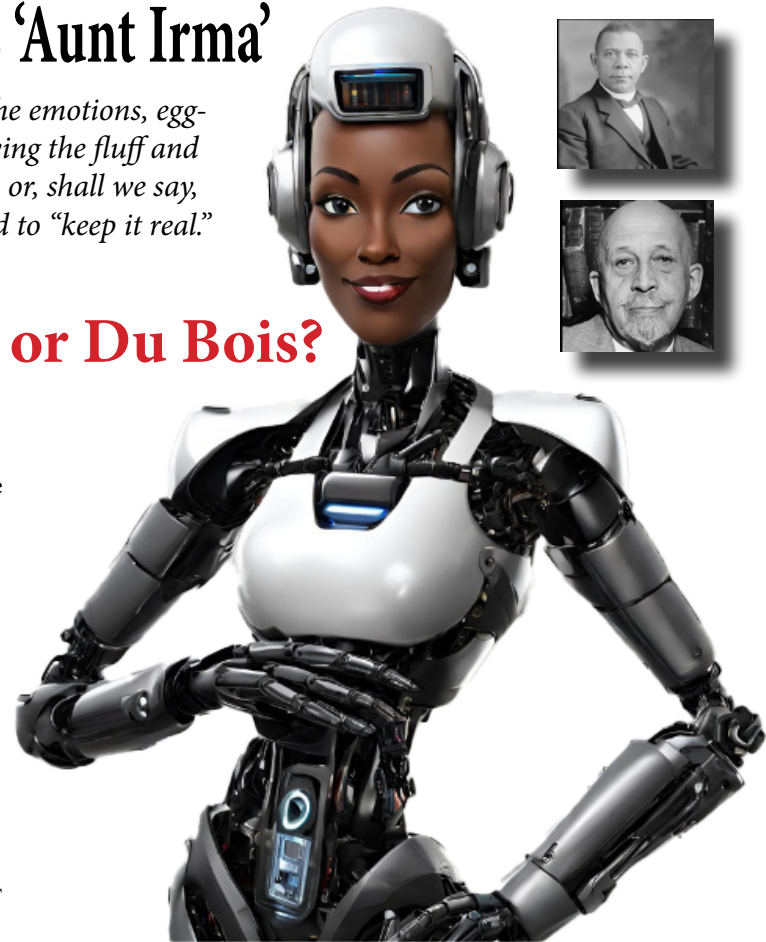
### Which Would Be Most Impactful Today?

If fully implemented in isolation, each strategy had key blind spots: Washington's pragmatism may have left segregation untouched too long; Du Bois's idealism may not have built the economic base needed for sustained independence.

However, a hybrid model—combining Washington's emphasis on self-sufficiency and institutional control with Du Bois's insistence on civil

rights and higher education—may have provided the **most resilient foundation** for Black American progress today. In fact, many modern movements, schools, and communities already reflect elements of both. In a word: collaboration.

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# Trending ... How Content Creators Can Step Up Their Visual Game

(BPT) - You spend hours developing content to reach your audience, but with so much competition for attention online, how can your content stand out?

Compelling visuals are what grabs viewers' attention. So if you're ready to take your visual content - photos, videos or both - to the next level, you need the best tools to help bring your vision to life: including professional-quality camera lenses.

To help you move seamlessly from photography to video and back again, Canon has created three new lenses designed with the needs of content creators in mind. These light, compact lenses work with their mirrorless EOS R series cameras, offering high-speed communication, and feature a control ring for added customization and control.

Here's how these lenses can help transform your visual content.

## Outstanding vlogs, product demos and more

Canon's RF-S14-30mm F4-6.3 IS STM PZ is an accessible, compact, lightweight internal zooming

lens - the Canon's first RF lens with built-in Power Zoom ability. Optimized for smooth, cinematic video, its design makes it an ideal companion to the EOS R50 V camera and is available as a standard lens with the camera in a kit. This lens is also compatible with RF Full Frame cameras when in crop mode.

The small size and light weight of this lens make it highly portable - the perfect choice for handheld vlogging. It offers 5 stops of optical image stabilization. Using an EOS R camera body equipped with in-body image stabilizer with this lens, you can achieve coordinated stabilization at up to 7.5 stops at the image center and 5.5 stops at the image corner.

Combined with a close focusing distance of under 6 inches and maximum magnification of .38 times, the lens is also great for close-up product demonstrations, detail shots and sit-down vlogs.

The ring-style control for power zoom operation lets you zoom from any direction consistently and smoothly, regardless of shooting style. Its flexibility in angle of view adjust-

ments lets you enjoy more creative possibilities with smooth zooming while securely holding the camera, or zooming to change the angle of view from the front when taking selfies.

**Pro tip:** With this lens and camera, your zoom can be remotely controlled by your compatible smartphone using the Canon Camera Connect app, letting you compose your next group photo that you jump into. When the lens and camera are combined, the lens can also be controlled by your computer using the EOS Utility application.

## Panoramic views and action-packed videos

From the great outdoors to the urban jungle, you want to draw viewers in - and convey fast-moving ac-



tion in your video content, indoors or out. The Canon RF16-28mm F2.8 IS STM has a compact design but performs like a larger lens, providing what creators love about wide angle lenses: the ability to convey a sense of place. Lenses with a normal field of view just don't do many scenes justice. Using a wide field of view, you can exaggerate the size of an object or define the expansive scene of a landscape image.

This lens is incredibly sharp, and when in low light or using slow shutter speeds, optical stabilization is up to 5.5 stops. When used with a camera with in-body stabilization like the R6 Mark II, 7.5 stops coordinated stabilization can be achieved.

Best yet, you can take advantage of the Movie

Digital IS to stabilize the camera, even when walking. Photographers and creators will appreciate the autofocus speed and accuracy of this lens, which uses an STM type motor that's quick and responsive even when tracking erratic movement - filming dancers, skateboarders or wildlife.

**Pro tip:** Be sure to play with the foreground and background to really emphasize the subject when using a wide angle lens.

## Full-frame camera users will love this lens

Want stunning image quality, outstanding low-light performance, great sharpness and dynamic range? Check out Canon's RF28-70mm F2.8 IS STM. This useful focal range lens, spanning from 28mm to

70mm, excels in a variety of purposes, including portraits and low-light settings, for photo and video.

With its collapsing design and weighing just one pound, it's compact and ready to take anywhere, offering a versatile tool that easily transitions from creating striking still shots to capturing videos of your life. Taking a photo safari or hiking trip? This lens has impressive durability and weather-resistant construction designed for harsh environments.

Video creators will appreciate this lens for its fast, smooth AF system that achieves high-speed, high-precision autofocus. Mobile image stabilization plus Movie Digital IS allows for smooth, stable recording for handheld video content.

**Pro tip:** Photographing with this lens, you can take creative control by blurring the foreground or background with wide apertures that may not be available on standard lenses.

Ready to upgrade your visual content? Visit [USA.canon.com](http://USA.canon.com) to find these options and more.

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# Local Initiative Boosts Digital Inclusion and Broadband Access

## *National Award and Local Grants Draw Attention to Digital Divide*

Strides in bridging the digital divide and enhancing broadband access are being made at both national and local levels, with recent announcements from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) and the GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund highlighting these efforts.

NATOA recently honored leaders in community broadband and digital equity by announcing the recipients of the 2025 Community Broadband and Digital Equity Awards on June 23, 2025. These awards celebrate innovative projects by governments, businesses, and local communities nationwide dedicated to providing affordable, high-speed, and reliable internet access. Among the distinguished winners is a collaboration impactful to the Huntsville area, the GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund. Launched in 2018, the Fund received the Public-Private Partnership (P3) of the Year award. The Fund is a joint effort between the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville and GFiber, recognized for its support of nonprofits dedicated to closing the digital divide in Huntsville, Alabama.

"We are deeply honored to receive this recognition by NATOA for the GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund," said John-Michael Cortez, GFiber's Head of Government and Community Affairs for the South. "Ensuring everyone has access to reliable, high speed internet and the digital skills necessary to thrive requires

a community-wide commitment. Since launching in 2018 in partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville, the Fund has invested in dozens of amazing local organizations working to close the digital divide and foster greater opportunity across the Huntsville community."

Other awardees include the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia; the City of San Jose, California; the Connect Beaver County Broadband project in Beaver County, Pennsylvania; and the ConnectALL Office in New York State's Affordable Broadband Act. The NATOA award recipients will be formerly recognized at NATOA's Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana from August 18th to 21st, celebrating their contributions to advancing digital equity and broadband infrastructure in North America.

The national accolade coincides with the announcement of the 2025 grant recipients from the GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund, which is actively investing in Huntsville's local community. A total of

\$45,000 has been awarded to seven organizations, fostering digital literacy, access, and workforce readiness for underserved populations:

**Boys & Girls Club of North Alabama:** a \$7,500 grant to equip a new Club opening in August 2025 with computers, providing digital learning

sional skills for employment, including resume writing, digital communication, and interview preparation.

**Huntsville City Schools:** a \$7,500 grant to implement a hotspot lending program for students without reliable home internet, providing content-filtered hotspots compatible with school-issued devices to ensure safe,

for youth and adults.

**Huntsville Learning Center:** a \$5,000 grant to establish a new podcast studio, offering underserved students access to modern technology for academic development, creative expression, and career exploration, while building digital literacy, communication, and workforce skills.

**National Children's Advocacy Center:** a \$7,500 grant to increase digital access for young families in its child abuse prevention programming by providing tablets with mobile internet and a desktop computer, supporting access to essential services and facilitating parenting education and skill development.

**Rose of Sharon, Inc.:** a \$7,500 grant to establish an eight-station computer lab within its holistic care model, supporting the Workforce Re-entry Employment and STEM

Computer Lab for Huntsville's homeless and underserved populations with digital literacy, job readiness, and educational resources.

"These initiatives, along with national recognition from NATOA, underscore our shared commitment to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate in our increasingly

digital world," said Melissa Thompson, CEO of the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville. "The investment in digital inclusion projects is crucial for empowering individuals, fostering economic growth, and building stronger, more connected communities."

### About NATOA:

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) is a professional organization of local government employees and officials across the country who are involved in cable television, telecommunications, and other aspects of communications policy and regulation. NATOA provides support to local governments as they develop policies and programs to meet the communications needs of their communities. More information can be found at NATOA News.

### About the GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund:

The GFiber Digital Inclusion Fund, in collaboration with the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville, supports local nonprofits working to close the digital divide and enhance digital literacy and access for all residents of Huntsville, Alabama.

### About Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville

The Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville supports donors in mobilizing their generosity to improve the quality of life in our community.

[www.GiveHSV.org](http://www.GiveHSV.org)



tools, homework assistance, STEM activities, and career exploration resources for up to 2,000 youth annually in North Huntsville.

**His Way Recovery Center:** a \$5,000 grant to enhance recovery programming by providing residents with access to technology, along with coaching and structured training to build digital and profes-

education-focused use and continuous learning beyond the classroom.

**Huntsville Community Drumline:** a \$5,000 grant to continue its iD.R.U.M. (Digital Responsible Unstoppable Musicians) Phase 4 initiative by upgrading its studio and adding a new recording space, expanding equitable access to music and video production and digital literacy training





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