

# America's History of Wealth Transfer - p. 9

POSITIVE-INSPIRATIONAL-EDUCATIONAL

FREE

## Not Your Average Bookbag Giveaway - p. 12

Friday  
August 8, 2025  
Vol. 11, No. 49  
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

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



Mother Elizabeth Smith

1st Annual County Corn Fest - Page 12

# Valley Weekly

*"If you want to know who controls you, look at who you are not allowed to criticize." - Voltaire*



## AAMU Exceeds \$5 Million Individual Gifts Goal

Alabama A&M University has surpassed \$5 million in individual gifts as part of its 150th Anniversary fundraising campaign—an inspiring milestone that reflects the deep pride, purpose, and passion of alumni, friends, and supporters worldwide. This remarkable achievement marks a surge of momentum in what is poised to become the most successful fundraising effort in the University's history.

With sights set on transforming the

future of AAMU, the campaign is focused on expanding scholarship support, enhancing campus facilities, and empowering the next generation of Bulldog leaders. Full campaign details and opportunities to give can be found at [www.aamu.edu/150](http://www.aamu.edu/150).

Fueling the campaign's success is the Torchbearer Initiative, a series of giving events where small groups of alumni and supporters unite to raise a minimum of \$25,000 per group. To date, 54

Torchbearers have collectively contributed more than \$1.4 million through the events.

The campaign marches on throughout this special Anniversary year. As the countdown to December 31 continues, the University is rallying all Bulldogs to make history. Every gift—large or small—celebrates the rich heritage and bold future of Alabama A&M.

Visit [www.aamu.edu/150](http://www.aamu.edu/150) to make your contribution today.

## Huntsville to Capture Essence of NYC-Based 'Acute Inflections'

The jazzy R&B duo Acute Inflections will bring to Huntsville its soulful sounds on Thursday, August 14, at Downtown's The Note Jazz Lounge at 7 p.m. (\$45/\$55), 200 Oakwood Avenue NE-Unit A.

Described as a combination of "the glamour of the Harlem Renaissance with modern soul music," Acute Inflections, as seen on HBO and Amazon, delivers a captivating blend of jazz, R&B, and comedy that fans of Erykah Badu and Billie Holiday absolutely adore.



The intimate setting of The Note Jazz Lounge provides the backdrop for a sophisticated evening of soulful music and clever comedy. With over 30,000 fans attending their sold-out shows nationwide and hundreds of five-star reviews, the show is slated for an unforgettable night for the Huntsville community.

For more information, contact (212) 729-8372 or email [info@acuteinflections.com](mailto:info@acuteinflections.com) between 10 a.m.-7 p.m. EST.



**FANTASY PLAYHOUSE**  
CHILDREN'S THEATER & ACADEMY

Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater and Academy (FPCTA) will cut the ribbon on its new location on Triana Boulevard on Wednesday, August 13, at 2 p.m. at 3320 Triana Boulevard.

Expected attendance includes FPCTA Leadership, City of Huntsville

Mayor Tommy Battle, City of Madison Mayor Paul Finley, Madison County Commissioner Mac McCutcheon, and other Alabama leaders in the arts & culture sphere.

The event signifies the official opening of the organization's new location within the historic Merri-

mack Mill Village.

Please contact Emily Maples, Communications Director, at Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy, [emily.rodrick@fantasy-playhouse.com](mailto:emily.rodrick@fantasy-playhouse.com) or (251) 716-6297 for additional information.

# The Valley Weekly

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# HUNTSVILLE ROADSHOW

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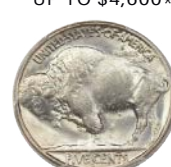
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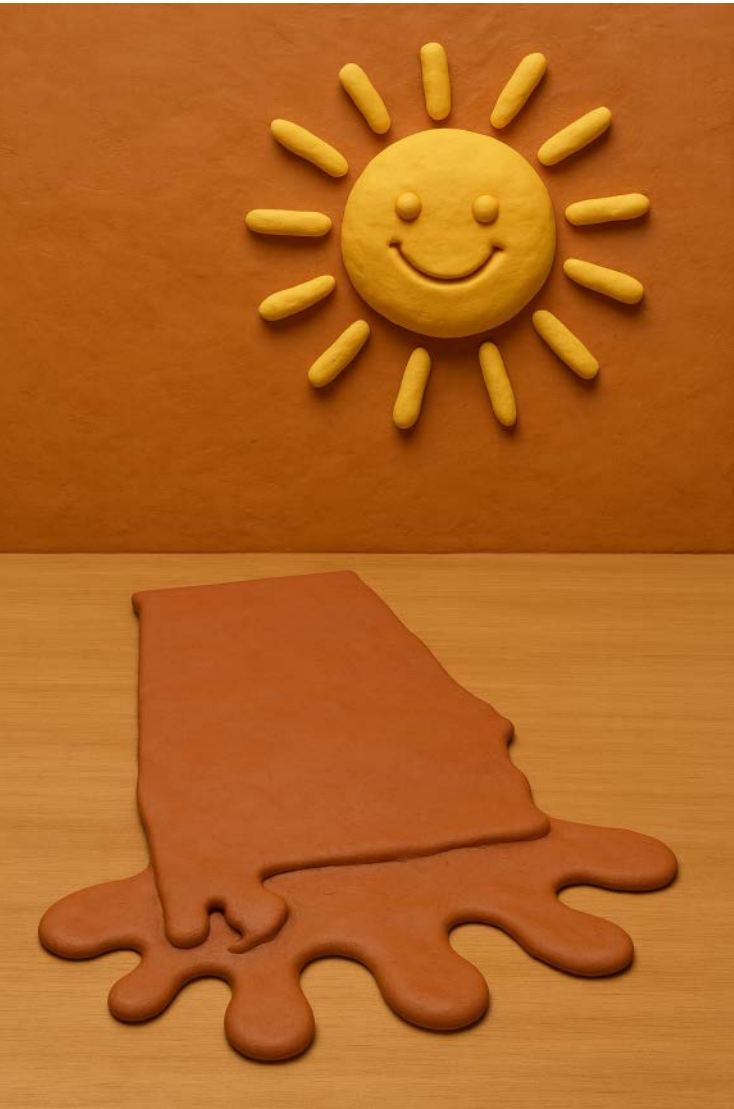
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# This Heat is No Joke—Let’s Take It Seriously!!!

The Southern sun has always been strong, but this summer, it’s turning deadly. Unrelenting heat waves are sweeping through our communities, pushing temperatures well beyond what I’ve seen in my lifetime. Football players are collapsing and dying during practice.



Elders and outdoor workers are suffering heat strokes. Some children will be returning to school in buildings without proper cooling systems. This is not normal, and we must stop treating it like it is.

Whether you believe in climate change or not, the facts are right in front of us. This weather is more intense, more dangerous, and less forgiving than what we’ve seen in decades past. And the most vulnerable—children, the elderly, the poor, and those who work outside—are paying the price.

We need to be vigilant. Stay hydrated. Limit outdoor activities during peak hours. Look out for neighbors who may not have access to air conditioning. Demand that our schools, workplaces, and athletic programs adjust their practices to keep people safe.

Summer is far from over. Let’s not lose any more lives to something that can be prevented with care, caution, and common sense.

Until next week ...

*Dorothy*

**AUGUST 8 - KOOL MOE DEE** - Mohandas Dewese aka Kool Moe Dee, is an American hip hop MC prominent during the late 1970s through the early 1990s. Kool Moe Dee was a member of the rap group Treacherous Three, and also one of the first rappers to earn a Grammy Award and was the first rapper to perform at the Grammys. In 1993, he re-united with his fellow ex members of the Treacherous Three to release the album Old School Flava on Ichiban. His last commercial release was the single “Love Love/What You Wanna Do” which was released on Spoiled Brat Entertainment Inc. Moe Dee appeared in the MTV box office bomb Crossroads as a bartender. Kool Moe Dee attended the State University of New York at Old Westbury, where he received a degree in communications in 1985.

- [BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org](http://BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org)



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

# Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

## "The Reason for the Trial"

James 1:2-4 says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

How many of you want more strength? How many of you want more victory in your lives? How many of you want more patience? I'm sure that all of us want these things for our lives. Let me ask this question: how many of you want tribulations in your life, which can sometimes mean great suffering? I would venture to say that none of us would want this. However, we need to realize that the trials we go through allow us to gain strength. The trials we go through allow us to walk in victory. The trials we go through allow us to have more patience. There is a reason for the trials that we go through. In our scripture, the writer James does an excellent job of explaining these reasons. The first reason for our trials is so we learn to be joyful in all situations and have gladness of heart

even in our trials. The next reason is growth. We grow in our faith whenever we endure trials. All of us grow when we are under stress. Psalms 4:1 says, "Thou has enlarged me when I was in distress." When we look back over our lives, when was it that we grew the most? I would venture to say it was under distress.

No one truly knows his or her own strength until he or she endures tests and trials. The next reason for our trials is

that we gain wisdom—but not just any wisdom. There is wisdom that only comes from God through our prayers. Knowledge and wisdom are similar. However, remember that knowledge comes by study, but wisdom comes by trials and tests.

The final reason for our trials is completeness. We need to realize that God does not flunk us when we don't pass the test. God simply re-enrolls us in class so that we will become mature and complete, not lacking in anything (James 1:4).

Furthermore, would you like to fly on an airplane that has never been tested? I'm sure the answer is no because if it hasn't been tested then it

can't be trusted. However, we serve a God we can trust even when we go through our tests and trials.


May God grant you spiritual success in learning to trust him when you are going through problems in your life.

*Question:* Have you ever had a problem in your life that you felt was too big for God to handle?

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:

"A Life Alignment"



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## THE VALLEY WEEKLY VALLEY DEATHS



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Funeral service for **MR. KEITH H. BEECHER, II** (b. 1963) was Tuesday, August 5, at Center Grove United Methodist Church with Pastor R. Seth Shamery serving as eulogist and officiant.

Funeral service for **MR. LYNN DAVID TOWNSEND** (b. 1962) was Saturday, August 2, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MRS. LIZZIE MAE PRUITT** (b. 1936) was Friday, August 1, at St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church (The ReMarkable Church) with Reverend John L. Clay, eulogist.

### ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

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Funeral service for **MRS. VICKY MICHELLE HENDERSON** (b. 1964) was Saturday, August 2, at the First Missionary Baptist Church, 3509 Blue Spring Road., Huntsville, Ala., with Pastor Emeritus Frederick A. Davis officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. MARIUS LAMAR MOORE A.K.A "BOLO BALLADTINO"** (b. 1980) was Saturday, August 2, at the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, 380 Indian Creek Road, Huntsville, Ala., with Elder Timothy Rainey officiating.

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Funeral services will be announced at a later date for **MR. TERRY NANCE SR.** (b. 1968) and **MS. MONICA BUCHANAN** (b. 1978).

Funeral service for **Trustee WILLIAM CARR** (b. 1955) was Saturday, August 2, at Pentecostal Lighthouse, 6107 Blue Spring Road NW, Huntsville, Ala.

Funeral service for **MR. WALTER JONES** (b. 1996) was Friday, August 1, at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 315 Winchester Road, Huntsville, Ala.

## Farewell to a Friend, and the Scaffolding She Built

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”— 2 Corinthians 4:7*

On the quiet Sabbath morning of Saturday, July 26, I received news that pierced my heart: my childhood friend Gail Hamilton-Masondo had passed away peacefully in her sleep.

We first met as kids in junior summer camp in Poughkeepsie, New York—when she was one of my unforgettable preteen crushes. But God had even greater plans for our connection.

In 1988, she became my public relations client when she brought the group Take 6 to our three-person Chicago PR agency. Together, we introduced this a cappella sextet to the Christian marketplace—a foundation that helped catapult them into becoming the most awarded vocal group in music history.

Years later, in 1993, Gail—along-side Grammy Award-winning producer Mervyn Warren—joined me at Hampton University as guest clinicians, fresh off their celebrated work on Handel’s Messiah: A Soul-ful Celebration.

Yet of all these milestones, one moment eclipses them all.

In late 1992, Gail and I shared a vulnerable conversation about our personal battles—what she called “pet” addictions. We prayed. We wept. We grew. That soul-deep conversation led to a rendezvous in Elizabeth City, NC, on New Year’s Day 1993. There, Gail gave me a softcover **Life Recovery Bible**—a gift that still travels with me to this day.

That sacred Bible became part of the **scaffolding** for what I would later call Ego-holism Recovering—my life’s calling and leadership ministry. A full decade before I named my struggles, Gail helped frame my healing.

Gail—known to close friends as “Scooter”—was indeed an earthen vessel filled with transcendent purpose. Her impact continues to echo through my ministry, writing, and teaching.

Farewell, my friend. Thank you for helping me build the platform I now stand on.



*„But we have this treasure in earthen vessels...”*

2 Corinthians 4:7

IN LOVING  
MEMORY  
GAIL  
HAMILTON-  
MASONDO

A vessel through  
whom God’s  
transcendent power  
poured into so many



*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  
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# Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

## Oh, Ye of Little Faith ...

Over and over, we have heard the story of David and Goliath. It is one of the first Bible stories taught to kids. It speaks of faith! It is also the first thing we tend to forget and not exercise.

Why is that? Faith is our biggest tool! It is the one thing that can mature us in our actions. Calm our spirits—stable our mentality.

We choose to forget about it. We take our lives into our own hands, as if we can foresee or change a circumstance through worry and doubt. Well, how has that worked out for us? (insert rolled eyes) How has your lack of faith helped you with your stress and anxiety?

How has it allowed you to sleep or eat properly?



Those with little to no faith experience unnecessary turmoil and self-induced prisons of hardship. Mental blocks and fatigue, or bad attitudes and agony. Sad.

David had unshakable faith. He was not concerned with Goliath’s size or the how. He trusted God! Guess what? You have access to that same God!

Oh, Ye of little faith.  
Let Go! Trust Him!  
Free yourself. It is your decision!  
God loves you, and so do I.  
He has given you a gift; open it!

Mark 9:23:  
“Jesus said to him, ‘If you can believe? All things are possible for one who believes.’”

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# Valley Weekly VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

## August 9

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

City District)  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5-10 p.m.

Cigar Box Guitar Lessons  
Lowe Mill ARTS & Entertainment  
2211 Seminole Drive  
Huntsville, Ala.  
12-2 p.m.

## August 15-16

Faizon Love  
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Huntsville Levity Live  
2012 Memorial Parkway SW  
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(256) 261-3374

## August 20

Market at the Garden  
Huntsville Botanical Garden  
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5-7 p.m.

## August 22-23

Chris Hardwick  
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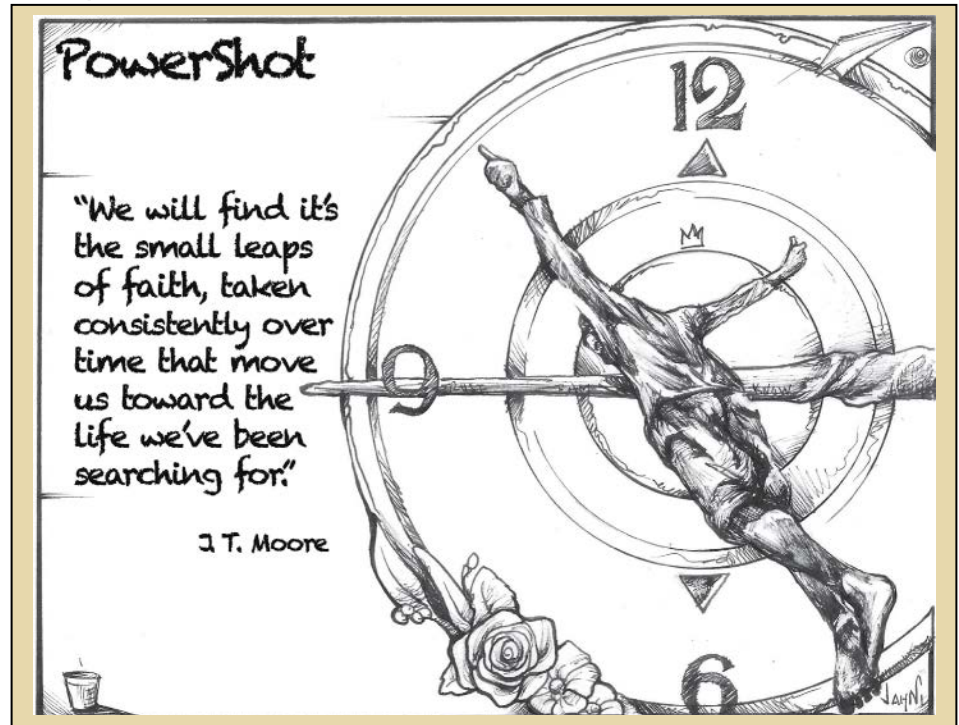
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"Keep alive the dream; for as long as a man has a dream in his heart, he cannot lose the significance of living."

- Howard Thurman



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

## Mother Elizabeth Smith

A native of Hinesville, Ga., Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Smith received the Bachelor of Arts degree in both business education and elementary education from her alma mater, Savannah State University.

She daily demonstrates her dedication for people in the community through volunteerism for government, church and public missions in order to improve her city, state and the world. Her compassion for human kind and leadership in numerous organizations demonstrates her upstanding and phenomenal character. Hard work does not deter her at all. She served as Board President for Wellstone Behavioral Health, Madison County, where she conducted business operations, supervised planning, personnel and finances. She currently serves on the governing board, seeking to improve the lives of Madison County families with mental health and addiction challenges through prevention, treatment, and the ultimate goal of recovery. Liz, as she is affectionately known, strives to help support individuals in getting back into the mainstream of society and live improved, productive, happy, and independent lives.

She is an active member of Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, under the profound leadership of the illustrious Pastor, Dr. O. Wendell Davis, where she currently serves as advisor/

mentor to the Ushers' Ministries. Community engagement is what Ms. Smith lives for and works hard to bring projects, assignments and dreams to fruition. She has always striven to give back as much or more than she has received. She is a member of the American Association of University Women, where she serves as a mentor to young women currently enrolled at J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College, Calhoun Community College, the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and Alabama A&M University. Her power of mentoring has resulted in several scholarships having been awarded to young women to attend J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College, Calhoun Community College and Alabama A&M University. She is also currently serving as the President of the Rolling Hills Elementary School PTA.

Additionally, Ms. Smith, an associate member of the Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association, Inc., has worked in several capacities with the organization including, but not limited to, interim chapter secretary, co-chair of the Scholarship Committee, recruiter of new members, coordinator of hosts and hostesses and as the recipient of the National Alumni Association's Chapter Service Award.

She is currently serving on the Huntsville/Madison



County subcommittee on African American History "Completing the Story".

She is a proud life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and has held several positions, including corresponding secretary; chairperson, Social Action Committee; chairperson, Ebony Fashion Show; chairperson, Courtesy/Hospitality Committee; and recipient of the Cherished Pearl Award, to name a few.

Mrs. Smith is a retired Budget/Program Analyst for the United States Army, Aviation and Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

She is an avid fan of sports, family and traveling. She credits her strong work ethics and her strong faith in God and mankind to her loving parents, Barnie and Naomi Adkins. Mrs. Smith is the mother of two sons, Reginald and Brian. She has one daughter-in-law, Pamela. She also has one handsome grandson, Alexander.

"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).



## 4th Annual 'Dance Africa' Festival Sept. 20

The Academy for Academics and Arts PTA (AAA PTA) has received a grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts. This grant signified that AAA PTA provides programs of artistic quality, serves the needs of the community, and demonstrates high-level administration standards, as well as enhancing education of students at all levels. This year, AAA PTA has partnered with the Alabama Dance Council to host this unique community event.

"The Alabama Dance Council (ADC) is excited to partner with AAA PTA for Dance Africa," says Kerri-Noelle Humphrey, founder of Dance Africa. "Events like this not only build the visibility of dance



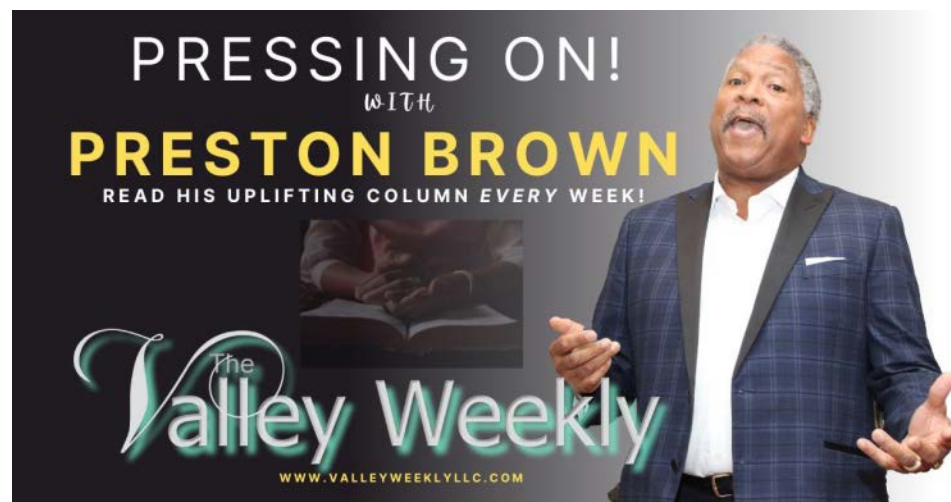
but also broaden who gets to do it. We believe all students should have access to high quality, meaningful arts experiences. Dance Africa will certainly provide that."

The grant award will fund the fourth annual Dance Africa festival, an all-day FREE dance festival. We expect our audience will be in the region of 150 students. The event will be held on Saturday, September 20, from 9 a.m.

-3:30 p.m. at 4800 Sparkman Drive, Huntsville, Ala. and is open to students grades 3-8.

The festival will offer West African dance, West African drums, tap, jazz, and hip-hop classes (<https://www.facebook.com/DanceAfricaHuntsville>).

"Our organizations are committed to enriching the lives of all students, but especially those with limited or no access to dance training/education. We want to offer opportunities to watch, meet, and learn from the artists, provide participants with exercise, valuable cultural information, self-discipline and the tools needed for confident self-expression," says Humphrey.



### ON THIS DAY

On August 8th, Black history is marked by the celebration of Emancipation Day, specifically in Tennessee and surrounding areas. This day commemorates the emancipation of Andrew Johnson's slaves in 1863, which occurred on August 8th. While the Emancipation Proclamation did not initially apply to Tennessee, Johnson's actions as Military Governor of Tennessee freed his own slaves, and this act became a regional celebration known as the "Eighth of August" or "August Eighth".

- BlackFacts.com

# A&M to Host Arts & Culture Exhibition During Crews Classic Weekend

Alabama A&M University will hold a landmark celebration honoring its 150th Anniversary. As part of the sesquicentennial celebration, the university invites the public to attend the Arts & Culture Exhibition—a vibrant showcase of all aspects of arts and culture life that is grounded in creativity and achievement.

The exhibition will take place on Saturday, September 6, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the AAMU Event Center.

This event is scheduled ahead of the highly anticipated Louis Crews Classic football game,



adding to a weekend full of tradition and celebration.

The Arts & Culture Exhibition will spotlight the artistic talents and literary works of AAMU—honoring their diverse contributions to the worlds of visual art, music, poetry, and storytelling. Guests will

experience the richness of the Bulldog spirit through curated pieces that reflect the University's proud history and dynamic future.

"This event is more than an exhibition," said Dr. SanYvette Williams-Foy, Co-Chair of the 150th Anniversary Arts & Culture Subcommit-

tee. "It's a celebration of who we are not only as an academic community, but also to pay tribute to the creativity that has shaped our institution, and is a reflection of the cultural legacy that

continues to inspire new generations."

The deadline for submissions for participation is August 13th. To request information on participating or attending: [CLICK](#)

Admission is free and open to the public. For more information about the Arts & Culture Exhibition or other sesquicentennial events, visit online at [www.aamu.edu/150](http://www.aamu.edu/150).



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## This Sunday's Lctionary

Sunday, August 10, 2025  
Ninth Sunday  
after Pentecost



(Track 2, Year C)

First Lesson:

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20

Psalms 50:1-8, 23-24

Second Lesson:

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

GOSPEL:

Luke 12:32-40

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# AUNT IRMA MAKES IT PLAIN...

## America's History of Wealth Transfer

Several government acts in U.S. history functionally or explicitly granted free or subsidized land to **whites only**, either through legal design, implementation, or social exclusion.

For instance, the **Homestead Act of 1862** granted **160 acres** of public land to any U.S. citizen or intended citizen who paid a small fee and farmed the land for 5 years. Even after emancipation, Black Americans faced immense legal and extra-legal barriers to accessing land: violence, fraud, local discrimination, and lack of access to information or capital.

Native lands were taken by force or treaty and redistributed to white settlers.

About **1.6 million** white families successfully claimed land; few Black families did, and most who tried were blocked.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 authorized the federal government to relocate Native American tribes from their ancestral lands to territories west of the

Mississippi River. This act freed up **millions** of acres of fertile land in the Southeast for white settlers. So, states like Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi redistributed these lands through lotteries or land sales that overwhelmingly benefited white citizens.

*Shocked?* Look up info on the Trail of Tears. Then, the Preemption Acts circa 1841.

### How It Impacts the Here and Now

An estimated 20% of Americans today—about 1 in 5 people—are believed to be descendants of individuals who benefited directly from the Homestead Act of 1862.

Over 270 million acres of federal land—roughly 10% of the entire U.S. landmass—was **given away** under the Homestead Act. These homesteads became **multigenerational** sources of wealth—providing farmland, collateral for loans, and assets passed through inheritance.

Of course, the vast majority of beneficiaries were white, due to legal restrictions, institutional racism, and violence that blocked access for Black Americans and Indigenous people.

Freedpeople were only technically eligible after 1865, and even then, economic, legal, and violent barriers prevented widespread access.

### More Generational Impact to Consider

The homesteading system helped solidify the racial wealth gap:

- \* Many white families were given free land, which often grew in value and enabled future investments (business, education, property).
- \* Black and Native families were systematically excluded from this foundational economic asset.
- \* The effects persist today, as land ownership and *inherited wealth* remain key predictors of economic stability and mobility in America.

Again, some 20% of Americans descend from

homesteaders. The program was a **massive**, federally sponsored wealth transfer—mostly to white Americans. It plays a major role in the modern racial wealth divide.

While homesteading opened eligibility to freed Black people in theory, less than 6,000 Black claimants secured patents under the **Southern Homestead Act**, versus over 1.6 million white families under the original Act.

As a result, white households

disproportionately benefited, contributing significantly

to the modern racial wealth gap. White median net worth today stands at roughly \$130,800 versus around \$9,600 for **Black** households.

*Humm.* Perhaps they should just **work** harder?

-TVW/ChatGPT

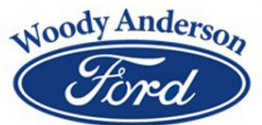


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# HPD School Resource Officers Give Back-to-School Tips

Backpacks are zipped, buses are rolling and for some...alarm clocks are making a very unwelcome comeback. That can only mean one thing: school is back in session.

As students return to campuses across Huntsville City Schools, School Resource Officers (SROs) with the Huntsville Police Department (HPD) are right there with them – ready to protect, support and cheer on students from day one.

Whether you're learning how to open a milk carton or prepping your college applications, SROs want to help you start strong, stay safe and feel confident all year long. We asked a few of them to share their best advice to help you navigate not just the first day but the school year as a whole like a pro.

## Officer M. Joseph

Officer Joseph (above, center) has served as an SRO for more than four years and recently returned to the role after a break during the COVID-19 pandemic. He's assigned to Columbia High School.

Officer Joseph grew up



in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and loved Marine Biology – especially studying the marine life near the beaches he called home. Here's what he wants students to keep in mind as they head into a new school year:

*Everyone's nervous – yes, even you.* “Most students feel just as anxious as you do. You're not alone. Starting at a new school can be intimidating but remember that you are not the only “new” student. Take this chance to make new friends!”

*You're starting with straight A's.* “Today is a brand-new day, and you begin with an A in every grade! Keep up the good work.”

## Officer D. Pugh

Now in his third year as an SRO, Officer Pugh (above, right) serves the students at Grissom High School. His favorite subject was science – especially when labs were involved.

Officer Pugh's advice? Stay focused and don't be afraid to approach the SRO:

*Learn more with your phone put up.*

“You'll be amazed how much easier it is to focus (and remember stuff) without distractions.”

*Don't be shy – come say hi.*

“Don't be afraid to talk to the SROs. We don't bite. Promise.”

## Officer T. Hasting

With five years of SRO

experience, Officer Hasting (above, left) covers Hampton Cove Elementary, Hampton Cove Middle and Goldsmith-Schiffman Elementary. His favorite class growing up? World history,

thanks to a great teacher (Mr. Reynolds) who made learning fun. He's all about staying alert and starting the year off on the right foot – literally:

*Walk, don't run.*

“We know you're excited to see your friends and teachers again, but slow your roll so no one gets bumped, tripped or shoulder checked. And if you're a car rider, have your things ready to go at drop-off and dismissal – it helps traffic move smoothly and safely.”

*See something? Say something.* “If you notice something that doesn't feel right – like bullying, safety concerns or a classmate who seems upset – don't keep it to yourself. Talk to an SRO or a teacher. We're here to help.”

- Lynsey Smith  
HuntsvilleAl.gov

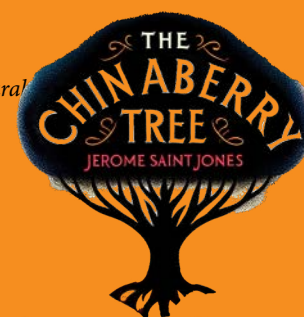
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# Washington One Minute

by Ron Hamm

Here are the latest top issues and events in Washington, D.C.:

**1. CONGRESS.** The House and Senate are in recess until September 2. Last week, Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced a bill to distribute “tariff dividend” checks to Americans earning \$75,000 or less per year (\$150,000 for joint filers) in the form of refundable tax credits of \$600 per adult and dependent child, funded by tariff revenues. The Washington Post estimates that to date, the U.S. government has received \$94 billion in tariff revenue. Before adjourning late Saturday night, the Senate approved 3 Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations bills on the floor: MilCon/VA, Ag, and Leg Branch, and a handful of administration nominees. On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported out the FY2026 Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill that fully funded a number of key programs that the White House had targeted for steep cuts or elimination, including the National Institutes of Health, Ameri-corps, and the Centers for Disease Control (although it provided no money for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which announced it would shutter its operations by the end of September). The Committee’s 26-3 vote also maintains the Pell Grant maximum at \$7,395

and preserves key community college programs, including the \$65 million Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants. The measure rejects the Trump administration’s proposed 34% cut to employment and training programs. Instead, it maintains funding levels for critical higher education initiatives like TRIO (\$1.91 billion), GEAR UP (\$338 million), and programs supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions. The bill also includes \$1.5 billion for career and technical education and \$729 million for adult education, while adding new requirements for the Education Department to maintain adequate staffing and release formula grants to states on time.

**2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH.** On Thursday, the President increased tariffs on goods from 70 countries, effective August 7, and raised the rate on non-USMCA products made in Canada to an immediate 35%, while Mexico received a 90-day delay in tariffs. Meanwhile, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in Washington heard oral arguments Thursday from the Justice Department and a group of small businesses and states, challenging the legality of most of the tariffs. They argue that the Trump administration’s justification for tariffs ex-

ceeded its authority, partly because no emergency exists to justify the law’s use to impose tariffs on foreign goods worldwide. Last Wednesday, the White House announced it had reached an agreement with Brown University, where the university agreed to pay \$50 million, cease DEI programs, not perform gender reassignment surgeries on minors or prescribe puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones, and take steps to improve the campus climate for Jewish students. In return, the federal government unfroze all HHS grants to Brown. Also last Wednesday, the administration imposed an additional 40% tariff on goods from Brazil (raising the total to 50%), starting August 6, and sanctioned Brazilian Supreme Federal Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes for presiding over the prosecution of former President Jair Bolsonaro for his alleged role in a violent coup plot in 2022.

**3. SUPREME COURT.** The Supreme Court will convene its 2025-26 term

on October 6.

**4. JULY JOBS REPORT.** The Labor Department announced on Friday that the U.S. economy added only 73,000 jobs in July, with the unemployment rate rising to 4.2%. The report came in well below the expectations of economists, most of whom projected job gains of at least 100,000. Job growth in May and June

was also much lower than initially reported, according to the Labor Department, which revised down its figures by 258,000 jobs for the past two months. The U.S. only added 19,000 jobs in May compared to an initial report of 144,000, and only 14,000 in June after an initial report of 147,000. With markets declining sharply over the weak job numbers, the

President fired the Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner on Friday.

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**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.



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# BASF ECMS Teams with Barber/Employee in Expansive Back-to-School Activity

Saturday, August 2, 2025 - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Headz Up Barber Shop - 2205 University Drive NW - Suite B  
Huntsville, Alabama (Photos by Jerome Saintjones)



Brent  
Bibbee



Terrell  
King



Long-time Huntsville barber Terrell King has been giving back to the community each year by offering free haircuts and school supplies to local children for quite some time.

His main employer, BASF Environmental Catalyst and Metal Solutions (ECMS), got word of the effort and has been involved in a big way for the last three years, including Saturday, August 2. The company serves customers in many industries, including automotive, aerospace, indoor air quality, semiconductors and hydrogen economy. It also provides full loop services with its precious metals trading and recycling offering.

According to Brent Bibbee, Environmental, Health, Safety and Security (EHS&S) Site Development Manager for BASF ECMS, the school supplies and bookbag giveaway has been facilitated by two of BASF ECMS' employee resource groups: African American Employees Group (AAEG) and Today's Families.

The "smart start" initiative, says Bibbee, aims to help give children and their parents an optimistic start to the school year by providing them haircuts, comprehensive back-to-school supplies in loaded backpacks, hot dogs and music in a welcoming four-hour period.

"I'm incredibly proud of our employee resource groups and the creative ways they continue to serve our community," said Ray Weed, Huntsville site director. "Their dedication, teamwork and heart make a lasting impact. We know strong communities start with strong families, and this event is one small way we can help our neighbors feel seen, supported and ready for a new school year. Who knows? Perhaps one of the children at this event will enter a STEM field and join our Huntsville BASF team one day."

The event reflects BASF ECMS' commitment to community engagement, inclusion and educational support. AAEG and Today's Families are two of the site's eight employee resource groups. AAEG focuses on outreach, mentorship and professional development for Black employees and their communities, while Today's Families provides connection, advocacy and resources for working parents. For more information about the company, visit [www.basf.com/ecms](http://www.basf.com/ecms).



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