



It's All About the Father - p. 5



Friday
September 4, 2026
Vol. 13, No. 1
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

The Valley Weekly

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mrs. Effie Gaines

"To find yourself, think for yourself." — Socrates

A&M Earns Props Via Forest Service

Alabama A&M University students recently earned national recognition for their professionalism, service and public engagement while representing the University alongside the U.S. Forest Service at the Great American State Fair in Washington, D.C.



Four AAMU forestry students — seniors Alayna Battle of Huntsville, Alabama; David Green of Dallas, Tex.; and Elijah McCray of Tuskegee, Alabama; along with Christopher Burns of Memphis, Tennessee, who graduated in May and now works in Extension — joined AAMU Forester Jeremy Whigham and U.S. Forest Service Student and Emerging Professionals Program Manager Stephanie Love in supporting the agency's exhibit and engaging with thousands of visitors.

Throughout the week, the students assisted with daily equipment setup, conducted public demonstrations and interacted directly with fairgoers. U.S. Forest Service leaders praised the students for their professionalism, adaptability and willingness to step in wherever needed, including assisting visitors experiencing heat-related illness during the extreme summer temperatures.

The partnership also advances AAMU and the U.S. Forest Service's shared commitment to developing the next generation of natural resources professionals while expanding pathways from the classroom to careers.



Arrests Made in Local Labor Trafficking Strike

A 17-day investigation into suspected labor trafficking at a Huntsville business has resulted in three arrested and six search warrants.

The investigation, known as Operation Meteor Strike, began Aug. 9 after HPD's Special Task Force Rescuing and Investigating Kid Exploitation (STRIKE) was

contacted regarding a possible victim of labor trafficking.

Investigators secured arrest warrants for Caiyun Chen, 51, of Huntsville, on a charge of first-degree human trafficking; for Chao Bin Zhang, 64, of Huntsville, on a charge of conspiracy to commit a felony; and for Baudilio Or-

donez Gomez, 44, of Huntsville, also on a charge of conspiracy to commit a felony.

All three have been booked into the Madison County Jail. "This investigation started because one person had the courage to speak up," HPD Chief Kirk Giles said.

- Huntsvilleal.gov

HMA Launches "A Transatlantic Journey"

From the towns of Provence to the ports of North Africa, father and son painters Antoine Ponchin and Jos-Henri Ponchin captured the changing light and timeless beauty of the world around them.

Their works are featured as part of "A Transatlantic Journey" at the Huntsville Museum of Art, Downtown Huntsville, 300 Church Street (www.hsvmuseum.org).

Trained in the tradition of French Impressionism, Antoine infused his



luminous landscapes of France, Tunisia, and Vietnam with color and clarity.

Jos-Henri followed in his father's footsteps, offering bold, expressive views of quaint villages, serene harbors, and sun-washed countryside

scenes.

Now reinstalled, this new gallery brings together the Ponchins' evocative works with selections by American artists similarly inspired by European and North African settings. (Admission: \$5-\$20)

'Caribbean Day at the Park' Set for Sept. 6

The 19th Annual Caribbean Day at the Park will be held Sunday, September 6, at John Hunt Park, 2151 Jaycee Way, Huntsville, Ala., from 11 a.m.

to 6 p.m. The public is invited. The event will feature fun, entertainment, fellowship and food for families, friends and attendees from across the Tennessee

Valley and beyond, as well as a live reggae band.

For additional information, contact www.CANAonline.com, or call (256) 606-6878.

The Valley Weekly

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

Happenings in Washington, Page 2
Preston Brown's "Spiritual Game Plan," Page 4
Gloria B. & Tim: Perspectives, Page 5
"Jahni" Moore's PowerShots, Page 6
Spotlight on Our Elders, Page 7
Sunday Lectionary, Page 7



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

1. CONGRESS. The House returned to session Aug. 31 after its 5-week summer recess, but the Senate remains out until Sept. 14 — leaving just a few on the Senate's clock before the Sept. 30 federal government shutdown deadline. The House will take up the Senate's version of the FY2027 Continuing Resolution to

keep the federal government open through Dec. 11 (generally, at FY26 levels). The Senate version has some significant differences from the House-passed version, including: (1) a delay of a ban set to take effect mid-November on Hemp products; (2) a ban on the pending OMB rulemaking on terminating grants that diverge from administration priorities; (3) allowing current level funding to flow to the SNAP and WIC

food programs; (4) allowing FEMA to keep spending based on need; and (5) capping Defense spending at FY26 levels (the White House is seeking a \$440 billion increase in the Defense budget). The House will also take a vote to censure Rep. Chuck Edwards (R-NC), who is retiring due to a sexual harassment scandal involving members of his own staff.

2. MID-TERM ELECTIONS. The Mid-Term Elections are 64 days away. The widely followed Cook Political Report now rates 21 House races as toss-ups (16 Rs/5 Ds), with the Democrats needing only a net of 3 to take control. Cook rates 6 Senate seats as toss-ups (5 Rs/1 D) and 1 current GOP-held seat — North Carolina — as “lean D.” Democrats need a net

4 pickups to take control in the Senate ... On Sept. 9-10, the Republican National Committee will host a massive campaign rally in Dallas, TX featuring all GOP incumbents and candidates in the mid-term elections.

3. EXECUTIVE BRANCH. The U.S.-Canada trade war is escalating, with Canada on Aug. 25 formally announcing dollar-for-dollar retaliatory tariffs on roughly \$27.6 billion of U.S. goods — including steel, dairy, appliances, agricultural equipment, pulp and paper, and electronics — in response to the new 50% U.S. Section 338 tariffs on Canadian goods that took effect Aug. 22 ... Last Friday, the White House announced a 25-year deal with Venezuela to develop 17 strategic oil fields with a potential of 65 billion barrels and an investment of more than \$100 billion, which will garner \$209 billion for Venezuela — in a joint venture with a Venezuelan private operator, in which the U.S. will retain a 55% interest. Last Friday, the White House appealed a temporary halt issued by a federal judge in Boston to block the U.S. Postal Service's new rulemaking that would prohibit delivering mail-in ballots to eligible

voters unless states or local election officials submit their mail ballot envelopes and return envelopes and receive advance approval from the USPS. On Sept. 9, the President will travel to Dallas to deliver a speech at the GOP “Mid-Term Convention” campaign rally; on Sept. 11, he will mark the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks with a speech at the Pentagon; and on Sept. 12-13, he will travel to Ireland to attend the Irish Open golf tournament at his golf course in Doonbeg, County Clare.

4. SUPREME COURT. The Court remains in recess until its new term opens Monday, Oct. 5. Last Friday, the White House asked the Supreme Court to reverse a June 1, 2026, ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on transgender service members. The appeals court upheld part of a lower federal court order, holding that the government could not enforce the ban against transgender troops already in the military.

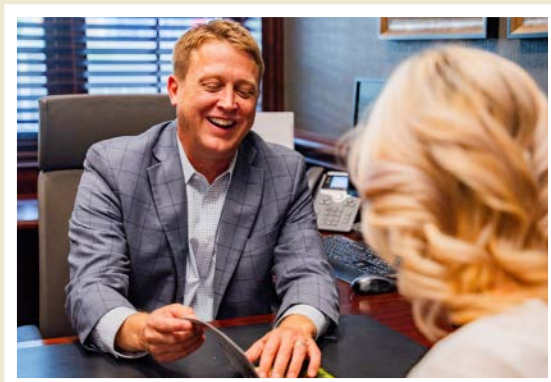
5. EDUCATION GRANT RULES. The Education Department is proposing a sweeping rewrite of its EDGAR grant regulations

that would allow it to terminate grants “for convenience” whenever an award is deemed misaligned with agency priorities, including executive orders, and would largely codify an approach the agency has already been using. The proposal would also require grantees to base hiring, promotions, and compensation “on merit and high standards,” prohibit compelled statements of belief in particular political views as a condition of employment, and require documentation verifying nonprofit status rather than merely permitting it. Other changes would favor applicants with lower indirect cost rates and replace the requirement to announce grant competitions in the Federal Register with a requirement to post them on grants.gov and other electronic platforms. ED says the changes are intended to align its grantmaking practices with those used across the federal government and to improve efficiency in administering competitive grant programs.

Hamm Consulting Group
1717 K Street, NW, Suite 900
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(202) 596-8384
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Publisher
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Editor-in-Chief
Dorothy W. Huston, Ph.D.

**Editorial Consultant/
Senior Editor**
Jerome Saintjones, Ed.S.

Editorial Assistant
Linda Burruss

- Contributing Editors -
tim allston
Minister Preston Brown
Gloria B. Caldwell
Ron Hamm
Gary T. Whitley, Jr.
-and-
“Aunt Irma” (ChatGPT support)

Photographers
Anthony “Gip” Gibson
Jerome Saintjones

Website Administrator
Calvin Farier

Mailing Address:
The Valley Weekly
P. O. Box 893 - Huntsville, AL 35804
(256) 651-9028
www.valleyweeklyllc.com
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Sixteenth Page	2.5x2.5	\$75
Classified	1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

Making Impact & Building Legacy

ANGELA CURRY: Empowering Communities to Lead

Making an impact is about what we do today. Building a legacy is about what remains because we were here. Angela Curry, Founder and Executive Director of United Women of Color (UWOC), is doing both across North Alabama.

Born in Syracuse, New York, and raised in Jacksonville, Florida, Angela came to Huntsville on a full academic scholarship to attend Alabama A&M University, where she competed in track and field as an 800-meter runner. While raising a family, she continued her education at Calhoun Community College and later earned a degree in Political Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Her professional journey has included management, social services, real estate, technical writing, nonprofit leadership, and configu-

ration management. For five years, she worked with foster children and families in crisis, and she spent six years teaching Christian education in local churches. Each experience helped shape her commitment to service and community.

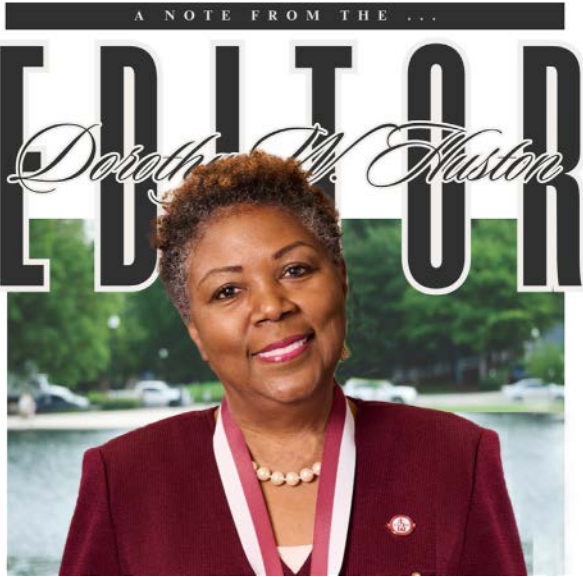
In 2018, Angela founded United Women of Color, transforming a volunteer-led effort into a growing regional non-

and economic opportunity.

Under Angela's leadership, UWOC has engaged thousands of residents through voter education, workforce development, community organizing, justice reform advocacy, mutual aid, leadership development, and community partnerships.

One of Angela's most important contributions may be her commitment to preparing others to lead. She co-created the LIGHT Institute, which equips residents with the skills and confidence to transform community concerns into meaningful action.

Her leadership has earned recognition, including a University of Alabama in Huntsville Alumni Achievement Award. UWOC has also received the Rosa Parks Catalyst for Change Award and an Alabama Forward



Democracy Award.

Angela credits her faith, family, and the example of her parents for shaping her commitment to service. She also draws inspiration from courageous women such as Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ida B. Wells, and Harriet Tubman.

Angela Curry's journey—from scholar-athlete at Alabama A&M to mother, professional, community advocate, and nonprofit leader—reminds us that leadership is not simply about having a seat at the table. It is about helping others

find their voices, pull up their chairs, and become leaders themselves.

That is how communities become stronger. That is how impact becomes legacy.

Angela Curry is making an impact and building a legacy—one empowered citizen, one emerging leader, and one stronger community at a time.

Until next week ...

Dorothy

SEPTEMBER 4 - BEYONCE -Beyoncé Giselle Knowles-Carter is an American singer, songwriter and actress. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Beyoncé performed in various singing and dancing competitions as a child. She rose to fame in the late 1990s as lead singer of the R&B girl-group Destiny's Child, one of the best-selling girl groups in history. Their hiatus saw the release of her first solo album, Dangerously in Love (2003), which debuted at number one on the US Billboard 200 chart and earned her five Grammy Awards. Forbes ranked her as the most powerful female in entertainment on their 2015 and 2017 lists, and in 2016, she occupied the sixth place for Time's Person of the Year. With the release of Lemonade, Beyoncé became the first and only musical act in Billboard chart history to debut at number one with their first six solo studio albums.

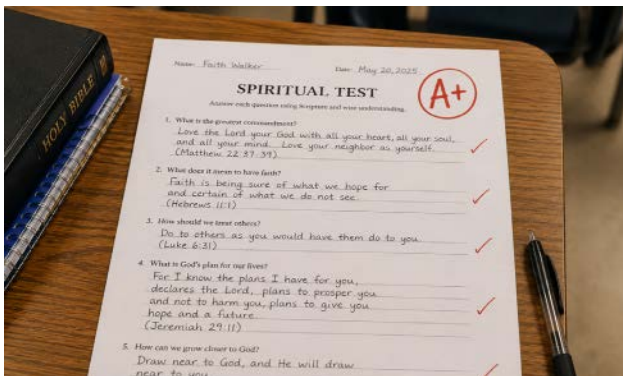
- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S

Valley Weekly



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"A Spiritual Test"

James 1:2 says, "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds."

Whenever I read this scripture, I find it odd that the writer states that facing trials should be considered as "pure joy." What is the message that we need to get from this statement? More importantly, what does this mean for us as believers? Obviously, we should not seek out trials, but we as Christians should know what the outcome of our trials will produce. In other words, in what ways can we profit from our trials?

I believe that there are three things that we will profit from when we go through our tests and trials. The first thing we get is a purified faith. Now to purify something means to remove contaminants from it. When we look at our

physical selves, we need to understand and realize that they have been contaminated by this fallen world. Therefore, God is trying to remove all of the things that hin-

der us from our spiritual growth. The next thing that we get is an abundance of patience. One of the problems that we all have when dealing with our tests is the time factor. Remember, one of the fruits of the spirit is patience. If we are believers, we know that good can come from bad circumstances, but we have to be patient. Finally, our character is perfected. This means we become spiritually mature in our judgment and understanding of God's truth. When we endure our tests and our trials, not only will it perfect our characters, it will also make us complete. Being complete gives us the ability

to fully worship and serve God as well as be servants for God, not lacking in anything.

May God grant you spiritual success in gaining wisdom and truth from your trials.

Question: What did you gain from the trials or tests that you went through?

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 TODAY! So you will be prepared for this upcoming school year!

NEXT WEEK:
"A Guided Life"



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Funeral services for **MS. CANDICE LASHAE SCRUGGS** (b. 1996); **MR. TEVIN BURKS** (b. 1997) and **MRS. MATTIE MOORE** (b. 1956) are incomplete and will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MRS. EVETTE M. STEPHENSON** (b. 1956) will be Saturday, September 12, in Steer Town, St. Ann, Jamaica at Prestigious Boss Funeral Home of St. Ann, Jamaica.

Memorial service for **MR. ROBERT OTIS HARRIS** (b. 1943) was Sunday, August 30, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MRS. ADELAIDE BUMPUS** (b. 1941) was Saturday, August 29, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MR. RICKY DUREN** (b. 1965) was Saturday, August 29, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MR. MICHAEL JURAIL CASH, SR.** (b. 1957) was Saturday, August 29, at Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church with Rev. Gary Battles eulogist and officiant.

Funeral service for **MR. GERALD WALLACE GARDNER** (b. 1965) is incomplete and will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MRS. LUCILLE JONES** (b. 1936) was Saturday, August 22, at Great St. James Baptist Church in Clarksville, Tenn.

Funeral service for **MRS. ARLEAN BINFORD MEADOWS** (b. 1931) was Saturday, August 15, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MR. CLARENCE "CATFISH" PRUITT** (b. 1949) was Saturday, August 15, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

"TIM: Two Years, Two Years, ... Two Years" "It's All About the Father"

Yesterday, I heard a sermon that would not leave me alone.

Pastor Roger Bernard preached from the familiar story of the Prodigal Son, but from a different perspective. His title was "It's All About the Father."

The son demanded his inheritance and left. The father could have argued, lectured or refused. Instead, he let him go. And waited.

Afterward, I told Bernard, "I don't know who else you were preaching to, but you preached to me."

Then I told him why.



A Daddy-Daughter Deficit

My daughter and I have experienced an unnatural silence for more than two years.

I explained that I had respected her space and still communicated indirectly through group messages I regularly send. Bernard wasn't impressed.

He told me about a relative who once explained why she didn't consider his group messages personal communication: "You didn't send that to me. You sent it to everybody." *Ouch.*

"TIM: TWO YEARS, TWO YEARS, ... TWO YEARS"

Then Bernard told me to reach out personally to my daughter.

I explained again that I was giving her space.

"Tim, how much space does she need? It's been two years." I offered another explanation.

"Tim: It's been two years."

Finally exasperated, I laughed and told him his next sermon should be titled, "Two Years, Two Years, ... Two Years." We laughed. But I heard him.

Giving Space: An Act of Love, or ...?

Maybe giving someone space can be an act of love. But perhaps, after enough time, giving someone space can also become protection from possible rejection.

So today, I am doing something about the only person in this situation whom I can control. Me.

I am reaching out personally to my daughter.

No Victory Stand Here, ...

No group message. No audience. No argument. No deadline. Just Daddy.

I don't know what happens next.

There is no victory stand here. No father-daughter embrace. No testimony declaring, "Here's what I did, and everything worked out." Not yet.

Recovery vs. Recovering

I have spent years teaching the difference between recovery and recovering. Recovery sounds completed. Recovering acknowledges ongoing process.

Sometimes growth isn't measured by whether the other person responds. Sometimes it is measured by whether I do what I know I need to do without controlling what happens afterward.

The father in Jesus' parable could not force his son home. But he could make certain of one thing: The door was open.

Perhaps you have your own "two years." I cannot tell you how your story will end.

I don't know how mine will end.

But perhaps healing doesn't always begin when somebody comes home.

Sometimes healing begins when somebody decides to open the door.

Today, that somebody is me.



Tim Allston

Leadership Player-Coach and Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author, "Leading from the Middle"

Contact: (256) 212-0949 - <https://bit.ly/4aB9Lwm>

Email Address: leadingfromthemiddle.tim@gmail.com

Website: www.timallston.com

Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

No Reference Point ...

I signed the paperwork to start a roofing company on the strength of twenty-four years spent doing something else entirely.



At NASA, I could forecast a budget three years out and defend every line. That skill built a career. But none of it taught me how to price my first roofing job, hire my first crew, or make payroll with no guaranteed check behind me. I had no reference point. For the first time in my working life, my own experience had nothing to offer me.

That's a specific kind of quiet — not confidence, but the quiet of running out of your own

answers.

I could have waited until I had one. Researched longer, built a five-year plan before touching year one. That's what budget analysis trained me to do: don't move until you can see the whole path.

But some assignments don't come with a visible

path. They come with a next step, revealed only after you've taken the first one in obedience rather than certainty. I stopped waiting to see the whole thing and started moving on what I could see, which most days was one step.

God doesn't hand you the blueprint. He hands you the next instruction, timed and ordered in ways your own thinking was never built to produce alone.

Some things you don't plan your way into. You walk your way into.

God loves you, and so do I.

He has given you a gift; *open it!*



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The Valley Weekly

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

September 4

"A Night with Johnny Gill"

AAMU Event Center
Alabama A&M University
Doors Open at 6 p.m.
aamusports.com | \$80
(256) 372-7255

Concert on the Dock
Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment \$10 Parking
6-9 p.m.

"Courtney Little"

Huntsville R&B Concert Series
Huntsville Botanical Garden
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue SW
Huntsville, Ala. | 6-9 p.m.

"A Night in Jazz: Women in Music Edition"

Featuring Can & Taylor Renee
200 Oakwood Avenue NE - Unit A
Huntsville, Ala.

Showtime: 8:30 p.m.

Reservations: (404) 644-9168 or (256) 226-9585

September 4-6

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

September 6

Caribbean Day at the Park
John Hunt Park
2151 Jaycee Way
Huntsville, Ala.
11 a.m.-6 p.m.
www.CANAonline.com
(256) 606-6878

Jazz in the Park

"Nathan Mitchell"

Opening Act: Evan Taylor
Pre-Opening Act: The BrightLight Experience
Big Spring Park West
Downtown Huntsville

5-9 p.m.

September 7

Labor Day

September 10

Bundle Dye Workshop
1818 Farms
(https://1818farms.com)
24889 Lauderdale Street
Mooreville, Ala.
9:30-11:30 a.m.

"The Temptations"

Mark C. Smith Concert Hall | Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.

September 11

Legacy Series: Hybrid Party
"Jeans and Jerseys"
AAMU Alumni Association
Huntsville Marriott
U.S. Space and Rocket Center | 2-10 p.m. \$50
A Day of Dyeing and Eco-Printing at 1818 Farms (\$140)
1818 Farms
(https://1818farms.com)
24889 Lauderdale Street
Mooreville, Ala. | 6-8 p.m.

Concert on the Dock
Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment \$10 Parking
6-9 p.m.

"Keia Johnson"

Huntsville R&B Concert

Series

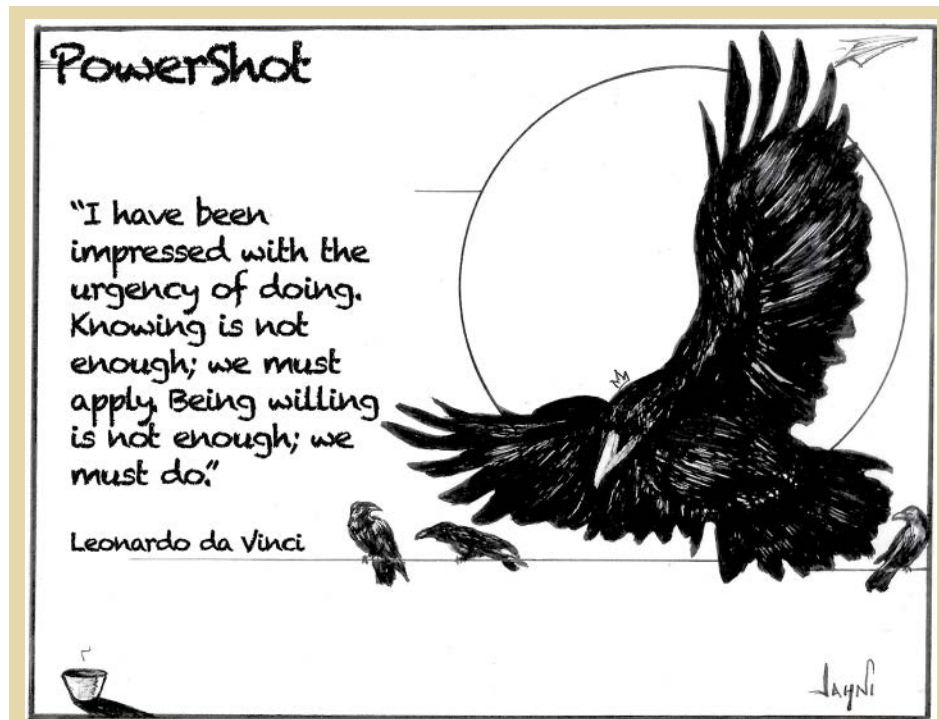
Huntsville Botanical Garden
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue SW

Huntsville, Ala.

September 12

Raven Knights: faewyld
(A GOTH | DARKWAVE

| EDM Dance Party Event
Railroad Room 7
2211 Seminole Drive SW
Huntsville, Ala. \$10/\$12
8-11 p.m.



"POWERSHOTS"

John 'Jahni' Moore

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

Mrs. Effie Gaines

One of Huntsville's local heroines is known to many as Mrs. Effie Gaines. Effie is also affectionally known throughout the church community as "Mother Gaines," and she is known to her family and close friends simply as "Madea," and "Mu"; and "Aunt Effie" to everyone else.

Effie is the youngest child of the late Al and Laura Douglas. She was married 39 years to the late Mr. Ruben Gaines, and she is the mother of their five children. Mrs. Gaines has extraordinarily juggled being a wife, mother, musician and chef with a warm smile and a soft "Yes, I will." Many know that all it takes is a request for a cake, pie, or homemade rolls for holidays or "just because," and Effie is the one to go to for a heavenly dessert. While Effie was just a small child, other church members began to take notice of the little girl singing her heart out with a voice and fervor beyond her years. She showed great musical promise and taught herself to play the piano at the age of 8 years old. As a result, she is recognized as a gifted soloist and pianist with a voice that exudes feelings from its spiritual roots. Over the years, hundreds of grief-

stricken families have called Effie to perform during home-going celebrations. A true servant, this very gifted and humble lady answers whenever she is called upon to deliver her heart-felt and soothing music. Her music transforms the heaviness of mourning to a place of hope and peace.

The sheer number of performance requests for weddings, funerals, and other church engagements are enormous and performed without an expectation of compensation. Effie's commitment to serving her Father in Heaven is the reward that keeps her going. Mrs. Gaines does not consider herself a great pianist or soloist. She will only say, "I owe it all to God for the gift I have, and I do my best to give it back to Him through songs and praises. Whatever way I can be a servant as I travel this road, I reach out and I extend that helping hand, for I am walking in His will."

Her musical career began in 1953, when she became the pianist at "The Big Brick"--St. Bartley P.B. Church. The historic St. Bartley Church is recognized as the oldest black church



congregation in the State of Alabama, and this year celebrates its 206th anniversary.

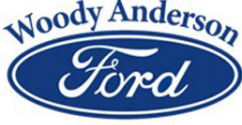
Mrs. Gaines was the primary pianist at St. Bartley for over 40 years and served as the music director for Bethel CME Church. Bethel CME, St. Bartley and many other churches, and individuals throughout the Tennessee Valley have presented Mrs. Gaines with Awards of Excellence for her superior performance and dedication to serving others through her ministry of music.

Gifted, humble, spirited, eloquent, and virtuous are words used when one describes Mrs. Gaines. Whatever and whenever she is called, she answers and continues to serve the community with love and grace.

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




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2500 Jordan Lane, Huntsville, AL



THERE ARE MANY COLUMNISTS, BUT ...

They're Not Like Tim!

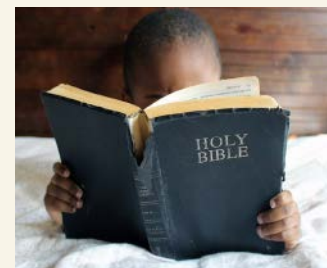


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This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, September 6, 2026
Fifteenth Sunday
after Pentecost



(Track 2, Year A)

First Lesson:

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Psalm 119:33-40

Second Lesson:

Romans 13:8-14

GOSPEL:

Matthew 18:15-20

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