

Aiming for 'A Guided Life' - p. 4

The Valley Weekly

Friday

September 11, 2026

Vol. 13, No. 2

ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK

Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." — Oscar Wilde

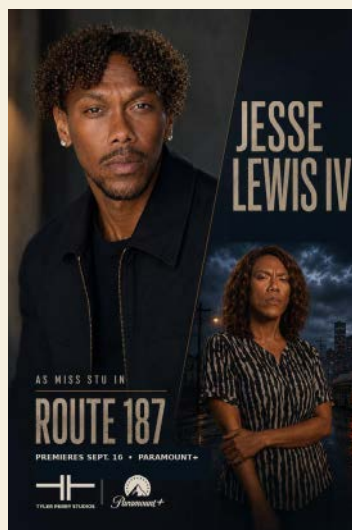
AAMU Alum Makes Portrayal in Tyler Perry's 'Route 187'

Sacramento native and Atlanta-based actor and Alabama A&M alum Jesse Lewis IV portrays Miss Stu in Tyler Perry Studios' Route 187, premiering September 16 on Paramount+.

After two decades across television and film—including Netflix's Florida Man, Tyler Perry's Sistas, TNT's Southland, Queen America, Black Dynamite, and Meet the Spartans—Jesse enters a defining new chapter as Miss Stu, an unconventional neighborhood matriarch who shelters the broken and the hunted in South Winslow.

She carries a familiar cultural authority: the Black matriarch who protects everybody, tells the truth, and holds the community together. But Miss Stu lives in a darker, more dangerous world. She is not there to be the joke - she is there to shift the whole room.

A former collegiate horseman and current full-time MBA student at Boston University, Jesse brings an uncommon mix of discipline, artistry, and business instinct to his work.



TVA Opens Apps for K-12 STEM Ed Awards

Educators in the Tennessee Valley Authority's seven-state region may apply for up to \$5,000 in funding for STEM learning projects in classrooms and schools. Applications are being accepted through Sept. 15. TVA will provide \$1.5 million in partnership with Bicentennial Volunteers, Inc.

"Every student should get the chance to explore big ideas with real-world tools,"

said interim TVA President and CEO Mike Skaggs.

The competitive STEM classroom award program is operated in partnership with the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network, managed by the Battelle organization. The program received 528 grant applications last year, selecting 339 for funding. Since 2018, TVA/BVI has provided \$9.5 million impacting over 845,000 students.

Jennifer Kennedy, a STEM specialist at

Cowart Elementary School in Athens, Alabama, has received multiple awards during the program's history.

Teachers can apply at tva.com/learn/stem-awards for up to \$5,000 to fund STEM projects, with preference given to applications that explore TVA's primary areas of focus: energy, environmental stewardship, economic and career development, and community problem-solving.

"These awards fund hands-on proj-

ects in science, technology, engineering and math, building the teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills students will carry into any career," said Adam Wolcott, BVI Director of Operations.

Eligible applicants are teachers or school administrators in public or private schools, grades K-12. Schools must be in the TVA service area and receive electricity from a local power distributor served by TVA.

Global Ties Alabama Readies for Annual Meeting

Global Ties Alabama announces its 2026 Annual Meeting and Luncheon, commemorating 61 years of fostering international diplomacy, global partnerships, and cultural exchange in Alabama.

The event will take place on Monday, October 5, from

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Jackson Center.

With the theme "Celebrating Diplomacy Legacies," the luncheon will highlight Global Ties Alabama's longstanding role as a center for international exchange and engagement.

Guests will include government officials, corporate partners, diplomacy alumni, community leaders, and long-time supporters of the organization.

Global Ties Alabama is dedicated to promoting mutual understanding between the

people of Alabama and international visitors through citizen diplomacy and professional exchange programs. The organization connects local communities to the world, enriching lives and building bridges of peace and collaboration.

Members of the Diplomatic Corps may purchase individual tickets for \$75 or \$100 per couple.

For more information, sponsorships, or ticket reservations, visit gta3@madison-countyal.gov, or call (256) 532-3560.

The Valley Weekly

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AAMU to Host Author Tayari Jones During Homecoming Week

Alabama A&M University, in partnership with the Huntsville-Madison County Library Foundation, will welcome acclaimed novelist and New York Times best-selling author Tayari Jones back to campus for a special literary event during Homecoming Week.

"An Evening with Tayari Jones" will be held Tuesday, Oct. 13, at 6 p.m. in the Clyde Foster Multipurpose Room at Alabama A&M University. A book signing will follow the conversation.

Two ticket options are available: \$15 for event admission only and \$35 for event admission plus a copy of Jones' latest novel, "Kin."

Jones previously visited Alabama A&M in 2018 for an event celebrating “An American Marriage,” her acclaimed fourth novel and an Oprah’s Book Club selection. Her return to campus comes as she receives national recognition for “Kin,” her fifth novel, published in 2026.

“Kin” was selected for Oprah’s Book Club and has earned widespread acclaim. The New York Times named it among its best books of 2026 so far, while Amazon editors selected it as their No. 1 book of the year at midyear. Former President Barack Obama also included “Kin” among his Summer 2026 favorites.

For Jones, the return to AAMU also carries a

personal connection.

“Our partnership to host this event on campus is significant, particularly during Homecoming Week,” said Dr. Charlotte C. Teague, associate professor and chair of AAMU’s Department of English and Modern Languages. “There is also a meaningful AAMU connection that many may not know. Her mother, Dr. Barbara Jones, retired from AAMU after serving for many years as a faculty member and dean of the College of Business and Public Affairs.”

Tayari Jones is the author of five novels: "Leaving Atlanta," "The Untelling," "Silver Sparrow," "An American Marriage" and "Kin." "An American

Marriage” received the Women’s Prize for Fiction, the Aspen Words Literary Prize and an NAACP Image Award and has been published in more than two dozen languages.

Jones' literary honors include a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship, a United States Artists Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. Her novel "Silver

Sparrow” was added to the National Endowment for the Arts’ Big Read library in 2016.

In 2026, Jones was named to the TIME100 list of the world's most influential people and elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

A graduate of Spelman College, the University of Iowa and Arizona State University, Jones is an Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell

University and the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Creative Writing at Emory University.

Jones' return to Alabama A&M brings together literary excellence, community partnership and a family connection to the University during one of AAMU's most celebrated weeks.

Tickets are limited and going fast for this special Homecoming Week event. Reserve your seat now.



"POWERSHOTS" John 'Jahni' Moore TRUTH 2 POWER

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 - Nick Caporale



"Dream more than others think practical. Expect more than others think possible. Care more than others think wise."
 - Howard Schultz

POWER SHOTS

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 - J. T. Moore

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A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue lab coat, is smiling and looking at a robotic arm. The background is a bright, clean laboratory or classroom setting. The image is part of a promotional banner for Drake State Community & Technical College's Mechatronics program. The banner has a blue and yellow color scheme with white text. The text 'Imagine Your Invention' is prominently displayed in the upper left. Below it, 'Mechatronics' is written in white on a yellow background. The Drake State logo and name are in the lower left. In the lower right, 'Apply Now' and the website 'drakestate.edu' are displayed on a yellow background. The overall tone is positive and innovative.

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The Valley Weekly
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Back Cover	10x10-inches	\$1,500
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3/4 Page	7.5x10 inches	\$900
Half Page	Horizontal	
	5x10 inches	\$600
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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

Making Impact & Building Legacy

What Will We Leave Behind?

Each week, I use this space to recognize people who are making an impact and building a legacy. But this week, as America pauses to remember September 11, I want to ask you a larger question: *What kind of legacy are we building as a nation?*

September 11 reminds us of a time when Americans were shaken to our core. We grieved together. We prayed together. And, despite our differences, we were reminded that our common humanity was greater than the labels that divided us.

Twenty-five years later, our nation again finds itself at a defining moment. I am deeply concerned about the direction of our country. Too often, diversity is treated as a threat rather than a strength. Democracy is being tested by division and distrust. Compassion can seem to be disappearing from our public discourse, while cruelty and disrespect are too easily excused as strength.

Throughout my life, I have believed that diversity makes institutions and communities stronger. I believe that democracy requires participation, vigilance, and respect for the rights of people with

whom we may disagree. And my Christian faith has taught me that humanity demands that we recognize the God-given worth of every person. Those principles are not political slogans to me. They are our values.

We can disagree about elections, policies, parties, and personalities without surrendering our humanity. We can debate vigorously without demeaning

been perfect. I also know that progress did not happen because people remained silent. It happened because ordinary people believed America could become better than it was. We marched, voted, taught, served, challenged injustice, built institutions, opened doors, and sometimes sacrificed everything so the next generation could walk through them.

That is what making



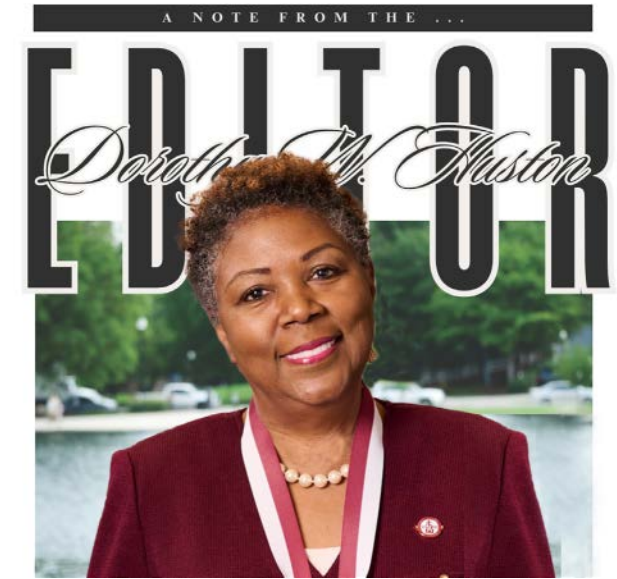
Dorothy Huston protesting at State Capitol in Nashville, Tennessee (Circa 1993)

one another. We can love our country while acknowledging where it has fallen short—and working to make it better. In fact, that is one of the highest forms of patriotism.

As a Black woman who grew up in segregated Alabama, I know that America has never

impact and building legacy looks like.

So, on this September 11, I choose hope—but not passive hope. I choose the kind of hope that requires courage and action. I will continue to stand for diversity. I will continue to defend democracy. I will continue to believe in the



dignity of every human being.

And I will continue to use *The Valley Weekly* to tell the stories of people who build rather than destroy, who unite rather than divide, and who leave their communities better than they found them.

And now, as we approach the 2026 midterm elections, each of us has another opportunity to decide what kind of country we want to leave behind. This is a time for good people to do the right thing. Vote. Pay attention. Ask questions. Look beyond party labels and political personalities. Examine character. Examine truthfulness. Examine whether those seeking

public office respect the Constitution, the rule of law, the dignity of people, and the democratic institutions that have sustained this nation.

History is watching all of us. One day, future generations will ask what we did during this difficult chapter in America's story. Our answer should be that we did not surrender our humanity. We protected democracy. We embraced our differences. We stood for what was right. And we left America better than we found it.

That will be impact worth making. That will be legacy worth leaving.
Until next week ...

Dorothy

SEPTEMBER 11 - LOLA FALANA - Loletha Elayne Falana or Loletha Elaine Falana better known by her stage name Lola Falana, is an American singer, dancer, and actress. Lola Falana was born in Camden, New Jersey. She was the third of six children born to Bennett, a welder, and Cleo Falana, a seamstress (1921–2010). Lola Falana's father, an Afro-Cuban, left his homeland of Cuba to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps, later becoming a welder shortly after meeting Falana's mother, who was African-American. No longer performing, she now tours the country with a message of hope and spirituality. When not on tour, she lives a quiet life in Las Vegas working on the apostolate she founded, The Lambs of God Ministry. The ministry is focused on helping children who have been orphaned in Sub-Saharan Africa, and works closely with the group Save Sub-Saharan Orphans. Lola Falana's last known musical performance was in 1997, at Wayne Newton's theater in Branson, Missouri.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org





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Funeral services for **MR. ISHMAEL JELANI HANNAH**; **MR. DAVID CROSS**; **MR. ERIC DEAN READUS**; **MS. REGINA MICHELLE CHUMANGE** (b. 1981); **MR. WILLIAM DOUGLAS** (b. 1960); **MRS. KATHERINE BONE OCCOMY** (b. 1937); **MRS. LOVONDA ANNETTE MOORE** (b. 1970); and **MRS. MATTIE MOORE** (b. 1956) 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.

Funeral service for **MRS. KATHERINE BONE OCCOMY** (b. 1937) was Saturday, September 12, at St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church, 3020 Belafonte Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.

Funeral service for **MS. CANDICE LASHAE SCRUGGS** (b. 1996) was Saturday, September 5, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **PASTOR MARCUS LANIER** (b. 1964) was Saturday, September 5, at Right Way Church of God in Christ, 5307 Mastin Lake Road NW, Huntsville, Ala.

Funeral service for **MR. TEVIN BURKS** (b. 1997) was Friday, September 4, at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Dr. Larry Davidson, Jr., Pastor officiating and eulogist.

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 M.B. Church with Rev. Gary Battles eulogist/officiant.

Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S

Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"A Guided Life"

Proverbs 3:8 says, "Acknowledge God in all your ways, and He will guide your steps."

I think that our lives would be more enjoyable if we knew how much God wanted to get involved. We don't need to settle for mediocrity when God has called us to excellence. The word mediocre implies a halfway point between success and failure. You see, when we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our hearts, not the desires of our flesh.

So much of life is about the choices we make, and there are principles that we need to live by to make those choices.

One of the things we can start doing is to stop being miserable about things we can't do anything about. Let us all get the spirit of "dread" out of our lives. Sometimes, we dread getting up in the morning, or we dread going to work, or we dread working out. Remember—dread is the opposite of hope. So we need to stay hopeful and stay on the path that God is leading us on which leads to a beautiful life.

Prayer: Loving Father, guide our steps while we run the race that you have set before us, in Jesus's

name we pray.

Question: Have you allowed God to guide your steps or do you depend on your own understanding when it comes to handling situations?

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!

NEXT WEEK:

"A Heart that Pleases God"



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PASSING THE TORCH: When Legacy Is Not Enough

This past weekend, something more important than music happened at Olivia Rodrigo's inaugural Daisy Chain Fields festival.

The event raised \$20 million for organizations supporting women and girls. But what caught my leadership eye was the presence of veteran singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan, whose groundbreaking Lilith Fair helped create space for women artists nearly three decades ago.

McLachlan wasn't merely performing.

She was **passing the torch**.

And it made me wonder: How good are we at doing the same?

Richard Smallwood - where now is Vision?

One of my favorite artists for more than 40 years was gospel legend Richard Smallwood, who died December 30, 2025. Eight months later, I find myself wondering about Vision, the magnificent ensemble he created. Smallwood's music will unquestionably survive him. But will the organization?

I've watched the same question arise closer to home.

Choirs, ministries and organizations flourish for decades under gifted founders. Then the founder retires, ages or dies—and sometimes the organization disappears with them.

That isn't merely a legacy problem.

It is a succession problem.

20th century Black America knows something about charismatic, almost messianic leadership. Consider Malcolm, Martin, Muhammad, Medgar and Marcus. Extraordinary leaders can build extraordinary movements. But if the movement becomes inseparable from the leader, who carries it forward when that leader leaves?

Businesses aren't immune. Driving through Chicago recently, I passed the former headquarters of Johnson Publishing Company and remembered *Ebony*, *Jet* and the enormous cultural influence that once emanated from that building.

Then, during the same trip, I toured the new Obama Presidential Center and sensed something different: perhaps the greatest tribute to Barack Obama's leadership will not be a building bearing his name, but people prepared there to lead after him.

A friend once entered a high-profile position and received surprising instructions from his boss:

"Now, start preparing your successor."

That's leadership.

At 72, I increasingly understand that my assignment cannot simply be building something that survives me. Through TAILLS—the Tim Allston Institute for Leadership Learning Systems—I must help develop people who can eventually lead without me.

Leadership cannot ultimately be about **me**.

It must become **we**.

Because the greatest evidence that we successfully carried the torch may be our willingness—and preparation—to hand it to somebody else.



Tim Allston

Leadership Player-Coach and Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author, "Leading from the Middle"
Contact: (256) 212-0949 - <https://bit.ly/4aB9Lwm>
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Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

Worn Out ...

Have you ever worn yourself out fighting for someone you love?

Not just tired. Worn out. Mentally, physically, financially — giving until there's nothing left, and still making sure your children never feel what's missing. You put yourself aside. You pray. You cry where nobody sees it. You're trying to make someone else's situation better, sometimes two or three at once, while carrying your own weight too.

Here's the part nobody warns you about: sometimes the person you're fighting for starts fighting you. Not because they don't love you — because their pain has



nowhere else to go, and you're standing closest to it.

I heard it put this way once: if you jumped into water to save someone, you'd give everything you had to pull them out. But sometimes God will have you pull back. Not because He's letting you down. His plan was

never for you to be their savior. It was for you to lead them to the One who is.

Nothing you have to offer will ever outdo what He has to offer. Not your strength. Not your sacrifice. Not how many nights you stayed up believing for them.

If you're in the water right now, arms tired, holding someone up who keeps pulling you under — hear this: letting go isn't giving up on them. It's the most faithful thing you can do. Let go. Let God do what only God can do.

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 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.

September 13

Jazz in the Park
"Julian Vaughn"
Opening Act: Cameron
Sankey; Pre-Opening Act:
Richard Shaw
Big Spring Park West

Downtown Huntsville
5-9 p.m.

September 17

"An Evening with the Arts"
Alabama State University
Rocket City Alumni
Chapter (\$20, \$40)
Lee High School Theater
2500 Meridian Street N
Huntsville, Ala.
Contact: Christen Edwards | (256) 683-2954;
Dr. Joseph Henderson,
Chapter President, (256)
683-5648

September 18

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

"Devin Crutcher"

Huntsville R&B Concert
Series
Huntsville Botanical Garden
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue SW
Huntsville, Ala.

September 18-20

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

September 19

*"Bollywood: A Decade of
Impact"*

AUM Foundation (\$175)
Von Braun Center
700 Monroe Street SW
Huntsville, Ala. 35801
6-11 p.m.

September 20

Jazz in the Park
"Eric Darius"
Opening Act: Patrick
Lamb
Pre-Opening Act: Arkose
Big Spring Park West
Downtown Huntsville
5-9 p.m.

September 25

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

"Angie P. Holmes"

Huntsville R&B Concert
Series
Huntsville Botanical Garden
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue SW
Huntsville, Ala.

Concert
Koe Wetzel & Wyatt
Flores
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala. | 7:30 p.m.

September 26

iFEST
International Festival of
North Alabama (Free)
The Orion Amphitheater
12- 5 p.m.

September 27

Jazz in the Park
"Kim Scott"
Opening Act: Jeff Ryan
Pre-Opening Act: Carol
Albert
Big Spring Park West
Downtown Huntsville
5-9 p.m.

October 2-3

Luenell
Huntsville Levity Live
Comedy Club
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.

October 3

11th Annual Pink Ribbon
Gala
"Sneaker Ball"
Dance | Donate | Make a
Difference
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity,
Inc.
Campus 805 - The Caf-
eteria
6-10 p.m. (Formal)

October 7

Five Finger Death Punch,
Cody Jinks & Eva Under
Fire
The Orion Amphitheater
Huntsville, Ala.
7:30 p.m.

October 9

Huntsville Havoc vs. Pen-
sacola Ice Flyers
Exhibition Game
Polaris Ice at Propst
Arena
Von Braun Center
Huntsville, Ala.
7 p.m.

"Change your thoughts and you change your world."

— Norman Vincent Peale

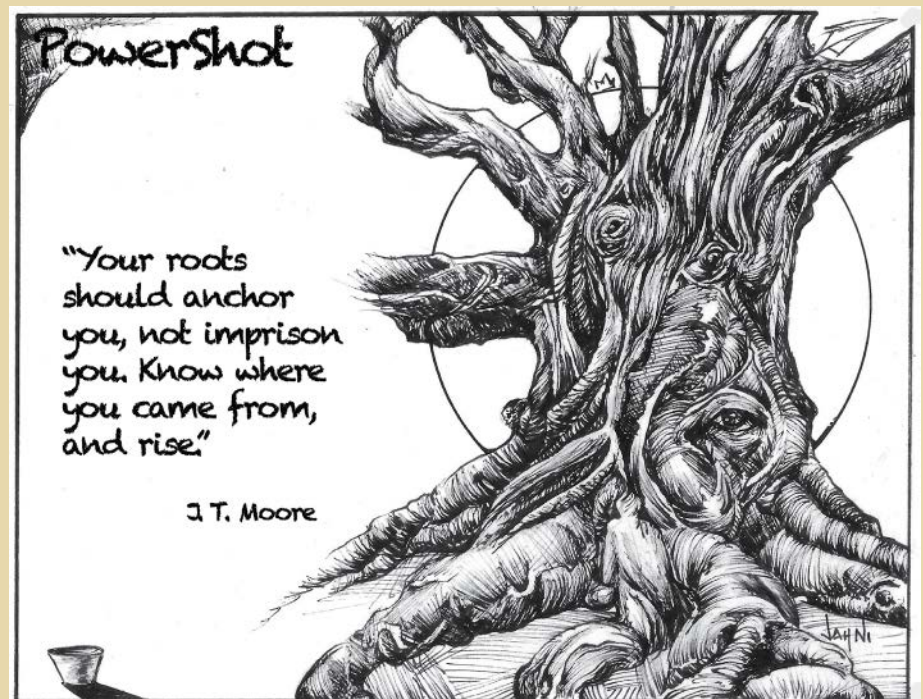


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Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson

Mrs. Dorothy B. Johnson is the true essence of a lady--quiet, dedicated, loyal, dependable, loving, a leader, unselfish, and always willing to help others. She was born and grew up in rural Dodge County in Eastman, Ga., with nine other siblings, working on their family farm. She relocated to Huntsville in 1961 to pursue a job at Alabama A&M University. She was the wife of Joseph J. Johnson for 64 years; mother of three daughters--Cheryl, Jerita, and Cerisa--and the doting and proud grandmother of three grandsons -- Jeremy, Christian, and Jaylen. Her family is the apple of her eyes and if you want to see a big grin on her face, just ask her about her grandsons. She will be happy to tell you about their latest accomplishments and achievements.

Mrs. Johnson obtained her B.S. degree in home economics from Fort Valley State University, her M.S. degree in clothing and textile and psychology from Purdue University, and her Education Specialist degree from Auburn University.

Dorothy, sometimes called "Dot," is a retired educator from Calhoun Community College after teaching and supervising for 31 years. In her honor, Calhoun Community College Child Development

Center named its library the "Dorothy B. Johnson Learning Library" for her dedication and commitment to the child development program. Also, while at Calhoun, Dorothy earned many awards and honors.

Mrs. Johnson has been very involved with her church, Fellowship Presbyterian Church, for over 50 years. For her dedication, unselfishness, and hard work in ensuring the kitchen in the Fellowship Hall was equipped with the state-of-the-art commercial appliances, the Fellowship Hall was named the Dorothy B. Johnson Fellowship Hall.

Mrs. Johnson volunteers at the Manna House three days a week, where she is fondly called "Ms. Dorothy." Ms. Dorothy organizes and helps prepare ready-to-eat foods, supervises distribution in the area of ready-to-eat foods, and supports Manna House financially.

Mrs. Johnson joined Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., on April 1, 1954, at Fort Valley State College (now University). In the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter, she has served as the treasurer, and chair of several committees, such as audit, economic development, scholarship, and Ebony Fashion Fair ticket committees. Also, she received several community service awards from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. A visionary, she prepared and filed the papers to establish their 501c organization -- Diverse Educational



Life Training Activities, Inc. (DELTA, INC.), where she has served as the president and treasurer.

In 2016, the Retired Teachers Association of Alabama presented Mrs. Johnson the Annual Volunteer Award for her services to the community. Professionally, Mrs. Johnson is a member of the Madison County Retired Educators Association, Alabama Education Retirees Association, Incorporated, National Education Association (Life Member), Alabama College Association, and AARP. She loves to travel with them to various cities to the area meetings, regional, and state conferences.

Mrs. Johnson enjoys watching sports on TV, fishing, word scramble puzzles, catering, directing and planning weddings, and volunteering. She especially enjoys traveling back home to Eastman, Ga., to see her sisters and brothers, and to take her grandsons fishing in the family pond.

"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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This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

(Track 2, Year A)

First Lesson:
Genesis 50:15-21
Psalm 103:1-13

Second Lesson:
Romans 14:1-12

GOSPEL:
Matthew 18:21-35

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AUNT IRMA MAKES IT PLAIN ...

What Happens When the Medicine Gets too Good?



Aunt Irma has been thinking about something that might make a few hospital executives, pharmaceutical companies and insurance folks squirm in their expensive chairs.

What happens if medicine gets *too* good?

Now, before somebody writes me a letter, I am not accusing doctors of wanting us sick. Most doctors would be delighted to see fewer people suffering from heart attacks, strokes, cancer, diabetes and kidney failure. But Aunt Irma understands arithmetic. And there is an enormous American economy built around treating sick people.

Think about it.

A person becomes overweight. Then comes high blood pressure. Perhaps diabetes follows. Then there are three or four prescriptions, regular doctor's visits and appointments with specialists. Years later might come heart disease, kidney problems, hospitalization, rehabilitation or even dialysis.

Every stop along that unfortunate journey creates another medical bill.

But something interesting is happening.

Some new medicines aren't simply treating the final disease. They are beginning to interrupt the journey.

Consider Keytruda, Merck's remarkable cancer drug. Traditional chemotherapy generally attacks rapidly dividing cells, including cancer cells. Keytruda works differently. Cancer has a clever ability to disguise itself

from the immune system. Keytruda essentially releases one of the immune system's brakes, allowing the patient's own T cells to recognize and attack certain cancers.

What began as a treatment for advanced melanoma has expanded into lung cancer, kidney cancer, bladder cancer, breast cancer and numerous other malignancies. Merck didn't simply discover a successful cancer drug. It discovered something approaching a treatment platform.

Then there is Ozempic.

The better comparison is actually semaglutide, the underlying medicine sold as Ozempic for diabetes and Wegovy primarily for obesity. What began as a diabetes treatment has demonstrated benefits involving weight, cardiovascular risk and kidney disease, while the semaglutide franchise has expanded into other metabolic conditions.

Eli Lilly's Mounjaro and Zepbound, based on tirzepatide, have intensified the competition.

Now Aunt Irma wants you to follow the money.

Suppose these medicines—or their successors—eventually prevent millions of cases of diabetes, heart disease, kidney failure and other complications.

Wonderful!

But what happens to all the businesses that make money treating those complications?

Fewer heart attacks mean fewer hospitalizations, cardiac procedures and rehabilitation stays.



Fewer strokes mean less rehabilitation and long-term disability care.

Fewer cases of advanced diabetes mean fewer amputations, medications and hospital admissions.

And if diabetes and hypertension can increasingly be controlled before they destroy the kidneys, fewer people may eventually need dialysis.

That last one should make everybody pay attention.

Dialysis is a lifesaving medical miracle. But it also supports an enormous network of dialysis centers, equipment manufacturers, pharmaceutical suppliers, transportation services and other businesses. Prevent kidney failure and you don't merely improve someone's

health. You eliminate years of potential medical expenditures.

That's when Aunt Irma started wondering about the grocery store.

Americans consume enormous quantities of sodium, much of it already placed in packaged, prepared and restaurant foods before we ever pick up a saltshaker. Researchers have estimated that a substantial nationwide reduction in sodium consumption could prevent tens of thousands of heart attacks, strokes and deaths while saving billions of dollars in healthcare costs every year.

So why spend fortunes treating preventable disease while allowing the food supply to help create it?

Imagine government gradually requiring manufacturers to reduce excessive sodium, added sugars and certain unhealthy fats while encouraging more fiber and nutritionally sound ingredients. Combine that with better preventive care and increasingly effective medicines.

Now we have something potentially revolutionary:

Better food prevents some disease.

Better medicine prevents more.

And fewer people reach the expensive final stages.

That creates an uncomfortable economic truth.

America has constructed much of its healthcare system around treating illness rather than maintaining health. Hospitals get paid when somebody enters the hospital. Specialists

get paid when somebody needs specialized treatment. Drug manufacturers get paid when somebody needs medication. Rehabilitation centers get paid when somebody needs rehabilitation.

Nobody sends you a \$40,000 bill because you didn't have a heart attack.

This doesn't mean the medical-industrial complex disappears. History tells us otherwise.

When medicine defeats one disease, people generally live longer and eventually develop something else. Someone whose heart attack is prevented at 62 might live to 85 and someday require treatment for arthritis, cataracts, Alzheimer's disease or cancer.

Medicine's frontier simply moves.

And pharmaceutical companies might actually become more powerful.

There may be more money in preventing disease among 50 million relatively healthy people for decades than treating one million desperately sick people after the damage has occurred.

The future of Big Pharma, therefore, may not simply be selling medicine to sick people.

It may be selling medicine to keep healthy people from becoming sick.

That would gradually shift enormous amounts of money away from hospitals, surgeries, dialysis and rehabilitation and toward prevention, diagnostics, genetic testing, screening, outpatient care and preventive pharmaceuticals.

And Aunt Irma suspects that is where the real healthcare revolution is hiding.

We spend endless time arguing about who should pay America's medical bills—government, employers, insurance companies or individuals.

Maybe we need to spend considerably more time asking why we keep producing so many of those bills in the first place.

Because the cheapest dialysis treatment is the dialysis treatment nobody ever needs.

The cheapest heart attack is the one that never happens.

And the cheapest hospital bed in America might just be the empty one.

Now wouldn't that upset somebody's business plan?

- TVW Staff

Why You Should Consider Using an Insurance Broker

For most families, insurance is one of those expenses we faithfully pay but seldom fully understand.

Auto, homeowners, renters and other policies can contain a maze of deductibles, exclusions, coverage limits and discounts. That is

where an independent insurance broker can be especially valuable.

Unlike an agent who primarily represents one insurance company, an independent broker can generally shop among several insurers to find coverage that fits both a customer's needs and budget. That comparison can be important because two companies

may charge considerably different premiums for similar protection.

A good broker does more than search for the lowest price. The broker can help consumers determine whether they have too much coverage in one area and dangerously little in another.

Brokers may also uncover discounts for bundling policies, safe driving, home improve-

ments or other factors consumers might overlook.

Perhaps most importantly, a broker gives ordinary consumers an experienced advocate who speaks the language of insurance. When renewal premiums suddenly rise, the broker can shop the market again rather than leaving the customer to start from scratch.

The cheapest policy is not always the best policy. For everyday families watching every dollar, the goal should be the right protection at the best reasonable price—and a capable independent broker can help find that balance.

Check around the Valley for these important services today!



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.

Huntsville Approves Traffic Study Contract for Limestone County

To prepare for population growth in the west, the City approved a contract for a traffic study to be conducted with Skipper Consulting Inc. for engineering services.

The contract's scope includes analyzing current and future traffic volumes along the I-65 corridor between I-565 and Huntsville Brownsferry Road for improve-

ments to traffic operations within the area that could include a new interchange.

The Planning Commission last year ap-

proved a master plan developed by the City of Huntsville's Planning Department that scaled out expected growth in housing units and jobs in Huntsville-annexed

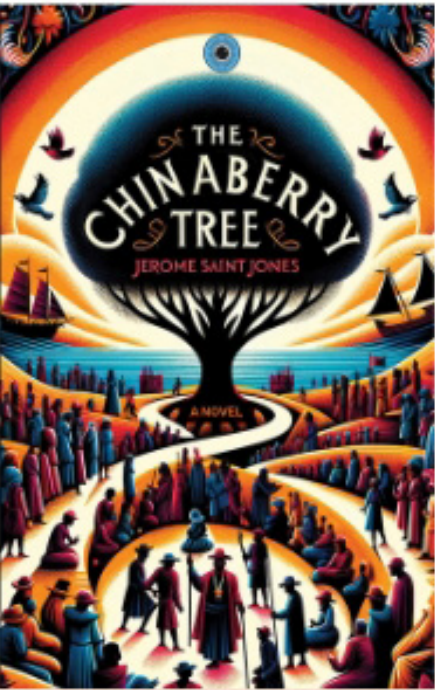
Limestone County (Ala.).

Advanced manufacturing has seen dramatic growth in the area while private developers

have shared plans for constructing hundreds of new single-family homes.

- Huntsvilleal.gov

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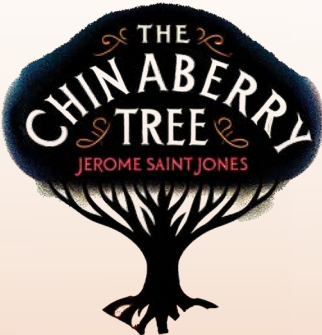


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