

AAMU Alum Advances on **The Voice** - p. 9

FREE



Post-Hoc Rationalization - p. 8



Friday
October 24, 2025
Vol. 12, No. 8
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mr. Richard Knight

"Never be afraid to sit a while and think." - Lorraine Hansberry

AHA Announces 2026 Programming

In 2026, Americans will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States' first founding document, the Declaration of Independence. To

commemorate, the Alabama Humanities Alliance will offer two new Smithsonian traveling exhibits; an Alabama History Day contest; new Road Scholars will

present talks related to America's founding era; and a fall Healing History convening aims to bring Alabamians together. Visit america250al.org.

Commissioner Tags Allston as Keynoter

Madison County Commissioner Violet Edwards has announced that leadership strategist and four-time Amazon best-selling author Tim Allston will deliver two presentations at the annual Alabama Association of Black County Officials (AABCO) State Conference on

Friday, October 24, at Birmingham's Hilton Garden Inn.

"AABCO and I are proud to feature one of our longtime Madison County residents as a professional speaker and best-selling author," said Commissioner Edwards. The author will keynote



the conference luncheon and facilitate one of the morning's plenary sessions.

In addition to his presentations, Allston will sell copies of his latest book, *Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus*, with proceeds benefiting AABCO initiatives.

Huntsville Enters Phase 4 of Road Resurfacing Projects



The City of Huntsville approved three contracts for roadwork projects in the fourth phase of the 2025 fiscal year resurfacing budget.

Grayson Carter & Sons Contracting LLC was awarded

the bid for asphalt and construction projects.

Rogers Group will resurface residential streets while Lambert Contracting LLC is charged with concrete and ADA upgrades.

About 50 residential streets are included in the fourth phase.

The 2025 budget included more than \$20 million altogether for road resurfacing projects. [UPGRADES](#)

AAMU 150th Anniversary Closing Ceremony Announced

Alabama A&M University will hold its 150th Anniversary Closing Ceremony on Tuesday, December 9, culminating a year-long slate of activities.

Among the previous events were

the 25th Annual Black Tie Scholarship Gala, Eternal Flame Lighting, Magic City Classic Reception, AAMU Fan Central and more.

During the Closing Ceremony,

internationally acclaimed artist Charles Bibbs will reveal a commissioned original artwork to commemorate the institution's historic sesquicentennial year.



IMS Annual Celebration & Awards Dinner Set

The Interfaith Mission Service will hold its 2025 IMS Annual Celebration and Awards Dinner on Thursday, October 23, at 5:30 p.m. in Wesley Hall of Trinity United

Methodist Church, 607 Airport Road, Huntsville, Ala.

The event theme is: "Compassionate Community Connections & Faith Congregations."

The keynote speaker will be Dr.



Randy Barbour, Jr., director of multi-

cultural affairs for the City of Huntsville.

This is IMS' annual fundraiser, and every ticket purchased helps it continue its mission of fostering compassion, unity,

and service in the community.

For tickets to the dinner celebration on Thursday, October 23, visit interfaithmissionservice.org/2025acad/



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Washington One Minute

by Ron Hamm

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

1. CONGRESS. ... Last Thursday, the Senate failed to proceed on a motion by a vote of 50-44 (60 votes were needed) to take up the \$852 billion FY2026 Department of Defense Appropriations Act – an attempt by Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) to reopen a part of the federal government. The Senate is expected this week to vote on a bill sponsored by Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) to pay members of the military during the shutdown, as well as some other non-furloughed gov't workers that reportedly may include Capitol Hill staffers.

2. EXECUTIVE BRANCH. On Tuesday, the President hosted GOP Senators for lunch at the White House to discuss the government shutdown (note: on October 24, federal workers will likely miss their first full paycheck for the October 4-18

pay period). On Friday, the President departs on a 6-day trip to Asia with a brief stop in Japan and then will attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Kuala Lumpur from October 26 to October 28 ...

Last Wednesday, a California federal judge ordered the administration to immediately halt the mass firing of 4,200 federal employees initiated since the government has been shut down, siding with two labor unions that challenged the action, and further ordered that no additional RIF notices be issued (OMB Director Russell Vought had announced that he would be firing an additional 10,000 federal workers during the shutdown). On Friday, the President commuted the 7-year sentence of former GOP Congressman George Santos (R-NY) and ordered him released immediately from prison. Also on Friday, the President imposed

new tariff duties (under Section 232 for national security purposes) of 25% on imported trucks and truck parts, as well as 10% tariffs on buses, effective November 1, 2025. In the same order, he extended a tariff relief program for automakers, allowing them to apply for credits to offset the cost of tariffs on car and truck parts until 2030 instead of 2027.

3. SUPREME COURT. On Friday, the administration petitioned the Supreme Court to pause a lower court's ruling (upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit) that blocked the President's deployment of Illinois and Texas National Guard troops to Chicago. The President's deployment of Oregon National Guard troops to Portland is also on hold. The President announced last week that he is considering attending the oral arguments for the 2 tariff cases on November 5 in person, which would be a first for a sitting president in the 235-year history of the court. The cases will determine whether the President has authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to impose his

reciprocal and fentanyl trafficking tariffs. On Saturday, the court announced that it had exhausted its prior year funds and would be closed to the public until further notice ...

4. MORE FEDERAL PROJECT HALTS. Last Friday, White House OMB Director Russell Vought paused \$11 billion in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects in California, Illinois, Maryland, New York, Oregon, New Mexico, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Delaware, and Colorado and said the projects would be considered for cancellation ...

5. STATE HEALTH ALLIANCE. Last Wednesday, 15 Democratic governors

announced the formation of the Governors Public Health Alliance, which they believe is necessary to counter the current turmoil at federal health agencies. The alliance's mission will include monitoring disease outbreaks, setting health policy guidelines, pandemic preparation, and purchasing vaccines. The states that joined the alliance represent approximately a third of the U.S. population: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Guam, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington.

6. HIGHER EDUCATION. President Trump's higher education policy agreement, unveiled just

three weeks ago, is encountering significant pushback from major universities. Six institutions—including Dartmouth College, University of Virginia, MIT, Brown University, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Southern California—have now publicly rejected the administration's "compact," with school leaders citing concerns about government overreach and potential damage to public confidence in higher education ...

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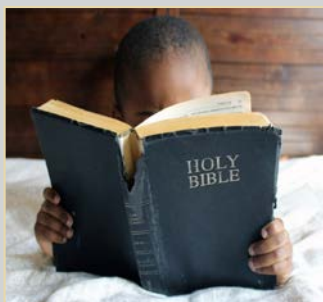
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This Sunday's Lctionary

Sunday, October 26, 2025
Twentieth Sunday
after Pentecost



(Track 2, Year C)

First Lesson:

Sirach 35:12-17

Psalm 84:1-6

Second Lesson:

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

GOSPEL:

Luke 18:9-14

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October: A Time to Stand Up for Our Health and Safety!

Each October, we are reminded of two battles that continue to claim and change lives across our communities—Breast Cancer Awareness and Domestic Violence Awareness. Both are deeply personal, both affect every demographic, and both require vigilance, compassion, and action.

According to the American Cancer Society, one in eight women will develop invasive breast cancer during her lifetime. While progress has been made through education, early detection, and treatment, disparities persist—particularly for African American women, who continue to experience the highest death rates from the disease. It also affects men, though less frequently, with about one in 1,000 developing the disease.

My family, like so many others, has felt the sting of loss. My beautiful sister, Vanessa, (left) was diagnosed with breast cancer at 38 and passed away in 1995. She was the victim of ‘trust.” She found the lump herself; but, she trusted her doctor and the mammogram that indicated it was not malignant. We encouraged her to get a second opinion, but her doctor told her, “You do not have cancer, we have looked at the results of the mammogram.” After months of going back and forth, with a breast that was not healing after the lumpectomy and being told that healing was a ‘slow process,’ we finally convinced her that a second opinion was critical. We went from MD Anderson to Vanderbilt University, from chemotherapy to radiation, to an eventual bone marrow transplant. God knows we tried everything available to our family.



Today, physicians are not offended at the suggestion of a second opinion. Many of them will suggest it when the patient has persistent questions about the results of a test, diagnosis, or nagging medical issue. That was not Vanessa’s case. She was married to her high-school sweetheart and they had three young children. She was a high school teacher who loved life! All of us had to accept the fact that God added another young, beautiful flower to HIS garden.

Equally important, October also shines a light on Domestic Violence Awareness—a reminder that safety at home is as vital as health in the body. Domestic violence knows no boundaries of race, gender, or class. It thrives in silence. As a community, we must continue to speak up for those who cannot, support survivors, and hold ALL abusers accountable. With so much violence going on around us, we must be proactive, ask questions, and seek solutions. Because, the life you save could be your own!

Let’s get busy—because awareness without action is just a word.

Until next week ...



Dorothy

OCTOBER 24 - DRAKE - Aubrey Drake Graham is a Canadian rapper, singer, songwriter, record producer, actor, and entrepreneur. He is one of the best-selling artists of the 21st century. Drake initially gained recognition as an actor on the teen drama television series *Degrassi: The Next Generation* in the early 2000s. Intent on pursuing a career as a rapper, he departed the series in 2007 following the release of his debut mixtape, *Room for Improvement*. He rereleased two further independent projects, *Comeback Season* and *So Far Gone*, before signing to Lil Wayne’s Young Money Entertainment in June 2009. Drake holds several Billboard chart records. He has the most charted songs (186) among solo artists in the history of the Billboard Hot 100, the most simultaneously charted Hot 100 songs in a single week (27), the most time on the Hot 100 (431 weeks) and the most Hot 100 debuts in a week (22).

- Blackcelebritybirthdays.org



THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**



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*Funeral services are incomplete and will be announced at a later date for **MRS. VIRGINIA B. COONROD** (b. 1948); **MRS. LIZA MAE LOFTON** (b. 1934); and **MR. COLEMAN DION HURT** (b. 2002).*

*Funeral service for **MR. SANDERS J. DAVIS, JR.** (b. 1935) was Saturday, October 18, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral service for **MS. RUBY "RURU" HAYGOOD** (b. 1965) was Sunday, October 12, at The Intentional Church, 8155 Highway 53, Toney, Ala., with Bishop Abraham Moore, Pastor, and Apostle Phyllis Morton, Eulogist.*

*Funeral service for **MR. TERRY TIMMONS** (b. 1967) was Saturday, October 11.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. DOLLIE MAE BELL BANKS** (b. 1944) was Saturday, October 11, at Green Grove M.B. Church in Belzoni, Mississippi.*

*Funeral service for **MR. CHARLES EDWARD FORD**, (b. 1943) was Thursday, October 9, at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, 23455 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield, Mich.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. JULIA HALEY CHANDLER** (b. 1950) was Saturday, October 4, at Madkins Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America with Reverend Debra McGlathery-Holden as Officiant and Reverend Terence Haley as Eulogist.*

*Funeral service for **MR. DANNY WARREN** (b. 1954) was Friday, October 3, at Heal Our City Inside Out Ministries in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

*Funeral service for **MS. BARBARA ANN TOWNSEND** (b. 1961) was Saturday, September 27, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home with Rev. Robert Peavy officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MR. RANDOLPH THOMAS** (b. 1960) was Saturday, September 27, at First Church of God in Christ.*

The Valley Weekly
**Spiritual
Game Plan**
PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:
"If You Say So!"

In Luke 5:5-6, Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break."

If you have ever been a parent trying to discipline your child, there will come a time when you will say "Do it because I said so." This is usually followed by frustration on the child's part and a bad attitude, but hopefully the child will obey you. Whether or not you had a good reason for saying this doesn't matter. What really matters is you just want your child to be obedient and trust that it is the best thing for him or her. The child may not understand at the moment, but later it will all make sense.

Jesus makes a similar request to Simon (Peter) when He asked him to cast his net once again, but into "deep water." Casting out into the deeper part of the water requires more effort. The disciples had already started cleaning their nets and getting them ready for the next day. Peter realizes this and perhaps reluctantly says, "Because

you say so, I will do it." God can bless obedience even with a bad attitude. Sometimes your next blessing will come from the place of your greatest frustration. As we see here in this scripture, Jesus gave Peter and the other fishermen a blessing that they could not achieve from their own efforts.

So many people today are about to give up on things because they are frustrated and tired of getting the same results. It could be a relationship



that's not working, or a wayward child who continues to be disobedient or continues to hang out with the wrong crowd. God is asking you to take another step of faith. Stop trying to do things in your own strength. It's time to put Jesus in it. Even if you have a bad attitude and say things like, "I've already tried that," it's time to say to Jesus, "If you say so, I will try again." Out of all your frustrations, hardships,

difficulties, suffering, and pain, there may be a blessing waiting for you if you continue to be obedient and follow the plan that God has for your life

May God grant you spiritual success in not giving up on something that you know in your heart it is what He wants you to do.

Question: What can you do to take another step of faith when nothing appears to be going right?

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.

NEXT WEEK:
"The Faith Bridge"

Nelms Memorial Funeral Home

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BUT WE CAN MAKE IT EASIER"**



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Unschooling Leadership: Stop Teaching Leaders—Let Curiosity Lead

In a recent *Forbes* piece, “Unschooling Leadership: It’s Time To Stop Teaching Leaders—Here’s How,” <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelhudson/2025/09/30/unschooling-leadership-its-time-to-stop-teaching-leaders-heres-how/>, the author names a profound disconnect: despite global organizations investing **over \$60 billion annually** in leadership development, most programs never reach the root of the problem—they treat symptoms, not the underlying ego distortions. *Forbes*

Too many leadership programs focus on models, competencies, and “fixing” performance gaps. But the real obstacle to sustainable leadership isn’t skill deficiency—it’s **ego-holism**: distorted senses of self that derail decision-making, erode trust, and stifle collective intelligence.

How do we reverse the trend? EHR (Ego-holism Recovering) offers a path. Unschooling leadership reframes four core functions:

1. **Convene** – Don’t lead with content. Host questions, listen deeply, and let the room’s collective intelligence emerge. Resist scripting outcomes.

2. **Stimulate** – Ask what’s undiscussed. Challenge group-think. Enable psychological safety. Question the assumptions no one wants to name.

3. **Ground** – When uncertainty reigns—and it always does—anchor in values, purpose, and presence. Model knowing you don’t know. Show up without certainty.

4. **Model** – Leadership isn’t performative. It’s embodied. Your team watches you change your mind, admit mistakes, hold tension, and stay humble.

The *Forbes* author makes clear: the billions spent on leadership development are squandered when they ignore ego’s dominance. *Forbes* Unschooling leadership doesn’t replace training—it reframes it. It doesn’t add more to the agenda—it subtracts the agenda.

The invitation is simple and radical: stop teaching leaders. Start tending them. Because when leaders learn to manage their inner narratives, the outer results tend to follow.

Let your leadership evolve—not via lessons delivered to you—but via life lived through you.



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Focus on Having a Good Day ...

Things have got you down. It happens to all of us. What are you going to do about it? Sleep the day away? Have a bad attitude? Be unproductive? Or adapt a different mindset and be intentional about what you do and say? Perhaps regain focus and unequivocally focus on having a good day.

So, seriously, how do you do that? It starts with the decision to shift your mindset. First, acknowledge your feelings—it’s okay to feel down sometimes. But don’t let those feelings define your day. Instead, choose to

focus on what you can control.

Begin your morning with intention. Set aside a few moments for gratitude; write down three things you’re thankful for. This simple act can shift your perspective and set a positive tone for the day ahead.

Next, break your day into manageable chunks. Tackle the tasks that energize you first—those small wins can build momentum. Surround yourself with positivity; whether it’s good music or the company of friends who inspire you and make you laugh, let their energy

elevate yours.

Remember to take breaks and breathe. Step outside, enjoy nature, or just stretch to release tension. It’s incredible how a few minutes of fresh air can clear your mind and reignite your focus.

Finally, commit to being intentional with your words and thoughts. Speak kindly to yourself and others. When things get tough, remind yourself: today is yours to shape. Embrace it, and focus on making it a good day! You’ve got this.

Lace Up!
Let’s Go!

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The Valley Weekly

VALLEY

EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

October 23

Boo Bash
Braham Spring Recreation
Center - 5-8 p.m.

10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Magic City Classic Alumni
Pep Rally
Sponsors: Disney, Amazon
and Coca-Cola
Fairway Social Birming-
ham
114 13th Street South
Birmingham, Ala.
6-10 p.m.

October 25

Blacksmithing II: Orna-
ment Display Stand
Burritt on the Mountain
Huntsville, Ala.
9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Monster Mash
Mark Russell Recreation
Center
10 a.m.-12 noon

Steamers & Dreamers
102 East Laurel
Scottsboro, Ala.

Billy Strings
Orion Amphitheater
7:30 p.m.

October 26

Halloween Decorating
Cupcake Class
Dublin Park
8324 Madison Pike
Madison, Ala. - 1 p.m.

Buffalo Soldier Mural and
Marker Dedication
FX Market
1512 Pulaski Pike
Huntsville, Ala.
2 p.m.

"I Wonder ..."
Fall Concert
The Huntsville Feminist
Chorus (Free)
Huntsville Madison Coun-
ty Public Library
915 Monroe Street
Huntsville, Ala. - 2 p.m.

October 27

"Meow-o-ween"
Huntsville Botanical Gar-
den
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue
Huntsville, Ala.
35805

October 30

Haunted Hallways & Fall
Festival
Calvary Hill Community
Center - 5 p.m.

October 31

Bootacular Family Fall Fest
Fern Bell Recreation Cen-
ter - 3:30 p.m.

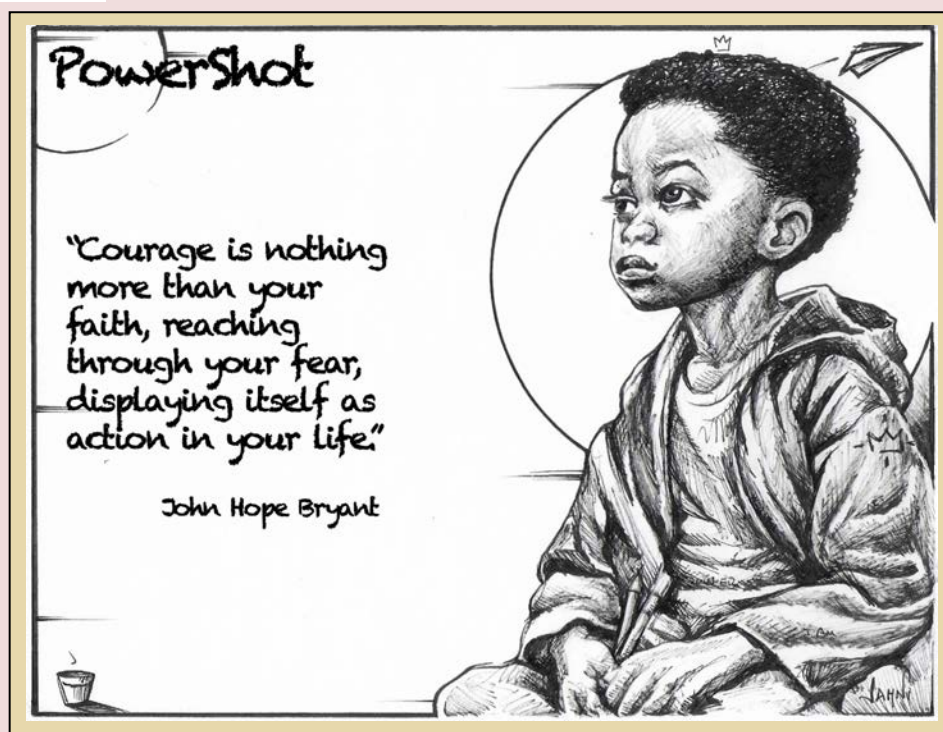
Hallowfest
Lakewood Community
Center
Huntsville, Ala.
6-8 p.m.

Recovery Trunk or Treat
Faith Covenant Academy
2603 Artie Street, Suite 22
Huntsville, Ala.
6 p.m.

November 8

Round Top Folk Festival
Burritt on the Mountain
Huntsville, Ala.
10 a.m.-4 p.m.

BULLDOG Football
vs. Grambling State
Louis Crews Stadium
Alabama A&M University
Huntsville, Ala.
2 p.m.



"I don't understand why black people have been so quiescent, so passive over the hundreds of years of American history. Why hasn't there been more violence, more armed struggle?"

- John Edgar Wideman



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

Mr. Richard Knight

Born March 1948 in Mobile, Ala., Mr. Richard Knight was the second child of a single parent born. His mother was a firm disciplinarian to Richard and his sister, expertly and lovingly raising them without their father. His mother worked as a "domestic" worker until she was called home to be with the Lord just two weeks after Knight turned 14 years old. Her loss became the pivoting moment in his life. To this day, Knight will tell you that his mother's firm hand made him the man that he became. His aunt took custody of Richard and his sister after their mother's death.

At a very young age, Knight worked long hours doing community service and odd jobs "to earn money." That also included doing farm work. He learned barbering, another skill he could use to earn money. Before the age of 15 years of age, Knight struck out on his own to become a self-made man. The values and work ethic his mother instilled in him from an early age is what got him through very hard and difficult times. He became acquainted with "poverty" conditions early in life and decided he would work hard to change his circumstances in an effort to avoid poverty for the rest of his life. Though very young, he was very wise for his age and began to make solid and responsible choices. To this day, he lives with those values his mother poured

into him.

In 1966, Knight graduated from Union High School in Monroe County, Ala. He loved building things with his hands. He continued his education at J.F. Drake State Technical College, Huntsville, Ala. He took up bricklaying and masonry trades and was an honor student throughout his attendance and graduated in 1968. He had only worked for a short time after his graduation when he was drafted into the U.S. Army; but he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Knight trained hard as a young recruit and was sent to Vietnam in May 1968. He served one tour of duty as an Infantry (0331) Machine Gunner M60.

When he completed his time in the Marine Corps and returned home to the United States, along with his fellow comrades, they were not well received. To their amazement, after putting their lives on the line and experiencing some of the most horrific emotional encounters that nearly cost them their sanity and their lives, much to their dismay, they were met with angry protestors and not a "Welcome Home Parade". But he received an honorable discharge and stepped into the real world "as a man," who took on a wife and started a family of his own. As of August 2025, he has been married for 50 years. They have four (4) children, two (2) grandsons and one (1) granddaughter. Knight



worked for a manufacturing firm as a refractory supervisor and Installer. After 34 years of service, he retired in 2003. In 34 years of service, Knight only used 30 days of leave in 34 years. That is unheard of. This is indicative of his strong work ethic.

After retiring he began to do special work that he says, "The Lord has called me to do": to work with the Vietnam Veterans. This is his ministry. He has worked just as hard, if not harder, since retiring and with no pay. But he absolutely loves it! He is devoted to his calling and loves what he does; and he does it extremely well. He has made such a huge difference in the lives of veterans. He has gotten much done for all of the men and women who have come to him for his help and assistance. This is truly his "high calling".

He and his wife are active members of New Greater Saint John Primitive Baptist Church.

"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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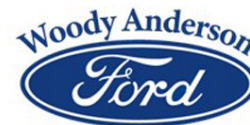
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but we're
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AUNT IRMA MAKES IT PLAIN...

How 'Post-Hoc Rationalization' Is Destroying America

Ever notice how Hollywood promotes 'weirdos' as long as they are gifted, getting great results or making plenty of money for some unknown entity?

Ever wonder how slavery could continue for hundreds of years, securing phenomenal profits on a *global* scale--all while the world's major religions fiddled around and took their sweet time crafting a plan for its demise?

Welcome to the house of post-hoc rationalization, and it's highly likely that you are sitting in the living room. Look about you, and you'll find a sneaky dismantling of art, business and culture. Here are but a few examples:

1. The Results-Over-Rules Principle

In entertainment and corporate culture alike, people who produce exceptional results often receive wider latitude in behavior.

In a hospital, the surgeon who brings in donors or wins awards may be tolerated even if abrasive.

In a newsroom, the star reporter with exclusive sources might break decorum but keep their job.

In Hollywood, a "difficult" actor or director keeps getting hired because their projects make money.

The underlying logic: profit or prestige redeems personality. The same way Dr. House's brilliance covers his cruelty, in the real world an individual or division that performs well

often escapes scrutiny — until performance drops or public perception changes.

2. Moral Backfill

That phrase — "we'll justify it later" — captures what ethicists call post-hoc rationalization. First comes the success or financial payoff; then we invent moral or managerial reasoning to make it seem acceptable.

"He's abrasive, but he delivers."

"She's a visionary — you have to give her space."

"They may cut corners, but they get results."

Once the money or acclaim flows, institutions develop a selective blindness — the same blindness TV viewers to world figures willingly adopt toward their favorite anti-heroes.

3. The Psychology Behind It

Humans naturally equate competence with virtue. Psychologists call this the "halo effect." When someone is exceptional in one domain (e.g., sales, innovation, medicine), we subconsciously assume they must be admirable in others. It's comforting to believe talent and morality go together — even when evidence says otherwise.

Just using Hollywood as a too-easy example, television dramatizes this bias by making eccentricity a visible symptom of brilliance rather than a flaw to be managed. In real life, we do

the same thing whenever we excuse a CEO's temper or a genius inventor's cruelty because they "see things differently."

Even obvious problems among people in key leadership positions are often ignored because of their exemplary talents.

4. The Economic Incentive

At its core, this is capitalism's most seductive bargain:

"If you're profitable, we'll find a narrative to make you likable."

The HBCU, Hollywood, Silicon Valley, Wall Street — each has its "House M.D." equivalents. As long as the output (ratings, revenue, innovation) outweighs the disruption, systems tend to reward rather than reform such figures.

5. The Reckoning Stage

The danger is that this tolerance erodes boundaries. When results dip or public scrutiny rises, the justification collapses — think of corporate scandals, celebrity downfalls, or once-beloved showrunners facing backlash.

In both fiction and life, the "brilliant misfit" often meets the same arc: indulgence → exposure → isolation.

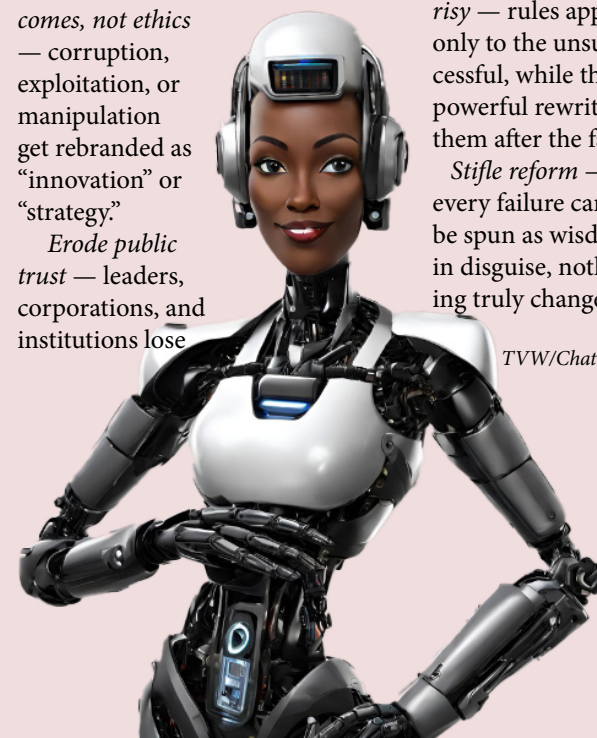
In essence ...

The large box in the den dramatizes a truth we already live by:

If the payoff is high enough, society grants per-

Reward outcomes, not ethics — corruption, exploitation, or manipulation get rebranded as "innovation" or "strategy."

Erode public trust — leaders, corporations, and institutions lose



credibility because people sense the justifications are hollow.

Normalize hypocrisy — rules apply only to the unsuccessful, while the powerful rewrite them after the fact.

Stifle reform — if every failure can be spun as wisdom in disguise, nothing truly changes.

TVW/ChatGPT

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AAMU Alumna Jazz McKenzie Advances to ‘The Voice’ Knockout Rounds

Alabama A&M University alumna Jasmine “Jazz” McKenzie delivered another unforgettable performance on NBC’s “The Voice” this week, earning her place in the Knockout Rounds of Season 28.

In the Battle Rounds, McKenzie was paired with teammate Trinity for a duet of Jamiroquai’s “Virtual Insanity.” McKenzie stunned celebrity judges – Reba McEntire, Snoop Dogg, Niall Horan, and Michael Bublé – with her smooth vocals and confident stage presence.

“The song was chosen by my coach,” McKenzie said. “He told us he’d been trying to get this song on the show for several seasons, and this was the first time it stuck. I had never even heard it before, so it was interesting to learn. But I was honored to perform one of his favorites.”

Despite the challenge, McKenzie and Trinity delivered a flawless duet that drew enthusiastic praise

from the judges.

“Working with Trinity was awesome,” McKenzie added. “She’s a powerhouse. We pushed each

other to do our best, and it turned out beautifully.”

Trinity earned a “save” from Bublé, but McKenzie ultimately advanced – so-

lidifying her reputation as one of the standout vocalists of the season.

Now one of just 36 contestants remaining,

McKenzie is preparing for the next phase of the competition – the Knockout Rounds – where singers perform solo for a chance to advance to the live shows.

“It always makes my heart smile to hear the judges’ reactions right after a performance,” she said. “You can tell their responses are genuine and fresh. To have artists I’ve admired for years speak directly to me and pour into me – it’s beautiful.”

McKenzie, a Birmingham native who now lives in Huntsville, made her “The Voice” debut in September with a “four-chair turn” during the blind auditions – an achievement few contestants earn. Though Bublé turned his chair last, he won McKenzie to his team after McEntire used her one “block” to keep Snoop Dogg from claiming her.

McKenzie says her passion for performing blossomed at Alabama A&M University when she joined Sigma Alpha Iota, an international music fraternity. She returned to campus last weekend for AAMU’s 150th Anniversary Home-

coming Celebration.

“Homecoming was incredible!” she said. “The Day Party and the tailgate were definitely the highlights for me! The food, the vibes, the people – it was all perfect. I got to reconnect with classmates and felt so much love and support. It truly meant a lot.”

Heading into the Knockout Rounds, McKenzie said her focus remains on purpose, not perfection.

“I always say, ‘What’s for you won’t miss you,’” she said. “I went into this round with doubts, but I came out with peace. I wasn’t chasing perfection – I was chasing purpose. That’s what carried me through.”

You can watch McKenzie as “The Voice” continues Mondays and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. CST on NBC. The most recent “The Battles” episode aired Oct. 20, according to the NBC website. Once contestants have gone through “The Battles,” McKenzie and the remaining contestants will appear in what’s known as “The Knockouts.”

(Photos courtesy NBC)



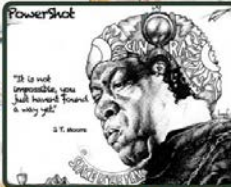
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