

# The Valley Weekly

"But simply punishing the broken--walking away from them or hiding them from sight--only ensures that they remain broken and we do, too. There is no wholeness outside of our reciprocal humanity." - Bryan Stevenson

FREE

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Friday, December 27, 2019

## "Just Mercy" Private Screening Sells Out

A private screening to 'Just Mercy' will be held at Cinemark Bridge Street and XD, 370 Bridge Street, on Thursday, January 9, 2020, from 6-10 p.m.

'Just Mercy' is the true story of Equal Justice Initiative founder Bryan Stevenson and his early work for social justice and prison reform.

'Just Mercy' chronicles the early work of EJI founder Stevenson on behalf of Walter McMillian, a wrongly imprisoned man in Alabama.

Stevenson's work also led to the exoneration of Anthony Ray Hinton, the author of 'The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row.'

On December 3, 'Just Mercy' won the National Board of Review's Freedom of Expression Award. The film stars Jaime Foxx as McMillian and Michael B. Jordan as Stevenson.

This event is a fundraiser in support of the '212



Stevenson

Community Service Scholarship' being established at Oakwood University through Kenny Anderson's Leadership Empowerment Enterprise, a 501(c)(3) that focuses on education and philanthropy.

When endowed, the scholarship will be awarded to psychology majors who perform community service while earning their degrees and certificates.

## The Valley Weekly

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## Minority Firm Aims to Purchase Valley TV Station

PROJECTXYZ, Inc. has announced its intent to purchase Jamie Cooper Television, a Class A television station in Athens, Ala. Jamie Cooper Television is broadcasted on WTZT-TV - locally on Channel 11.

PROJECTXYZ, Inc. is owned by Kim and Larry Lewis of Huntsville. The company is purchasing the station from Gloria & Jamie Cooper, co-owners since 2003. Jamie Cooper made the announcement recently on his morning show, "Cooper & Company."

The TV station is known under the branding ZTV-11 and can be seen on numerous cable systems. It was founded on November 2, 1988. The station's motto is "Local and Lovin' It!", and it is now the only locally owned television station in north Alabama. The long-running "Cooper & Company" will continue to air, as well as the "Country



Larry Lewis, Gloria Cooper, Kim Lewis and Jamie Cooper

Rover Classics."

"We want to share what's truly happening in the community, and we see a need for more local programming in this area," said Kim Lewis. "We want to help meet that need."

"We feel extremely blessed to have the opportunity to work with Kim and Larry Lewis as they grow ZTV-11 to new heights," said Gloria Cooper. "Merry Christmas,

Happy New Year and we're all staying 'Local & Lovin' It!'"

WTZT will continue to broadcast local programming, as well as programming from COZI TV, a division of NBCUniversal that airs classic TV series from the 1950s to the 2000s.

The new ownership agreement is pending approval by the Federal Communications Commission.

# Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays!

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## Making Financial Wellness a New Year's Resolution in the Valley

(BPT) - While the holiday season is a wonderful time of year, it can also put great financial strain on individuals going into the new year. The demand of holiday spending can lead to worry of unpaid credit card bills, which can lead many to put themselves on a strict "money diet." As you reflect on the past year and the goals you want to set for yourself, you may want to put financial wellness at the top of your list of resolutions.

But financial wellness is not just about achieving a specific dollar amount in terms of savings, advises Amanda Clayman, financial therapist and Prudential's financial wellness advocate. Instead, Clayman recommends establishing overall healthy money habits when it comes to your finances in 2020. It's about being both practical and less reactive when it comes to decisions around money.

Here are some tips for how you can improve your financial wellness heading into the new year.

**1. Set up monthly "money dates."** "One of the smartest things we can do for our bottom line

is simply reviewing our finances," says Clayman. "Dedicate time each week or month (whatever you can do, just keep it consistent) to tackling your money management. These intentional 'money dates' with yourself and/or your family or partner could help you save money throughout the year."

During your money date, review where you are in terms of your budget process, debt you are trying to reduce and your savings plan. Have unexpected expenses come up recently? Focus on how you can handle those, and better prepare yourself to cope with similar expenses in the future.

**2. Be in a good head-space.** Clayman acknowledges that most people find dealing with money stressful, which can cause them to avoid examining these issues or discussing them with spouses or family members.

"It's perfectly normal to feel anxious about money from time to time," Clayman says. "When this happens, take a break and come back to the task when you can think with a clear,

productive mindset."

Dealing with difficult money issues when you're feeling emotionally stressed can lead to less rational decisions. Instead, review the issue when you're more likely to be able to step back and see the big picture without overreacting.

**3. Practice "Unsubscribe Sundays."** Clayman recommends that you take a few minutes every week to unsubscribe from the many promotional emails that clutter up your inbox. These might tempt you to shop impulsively when you don't want or need to spend the money.

After the holidays is a great time to tackle this, as your online purchases may

have gotten your name on a few too many email lists.

**4. Get a money buddy.** It can be helpful and encouraging to share your goals for the future and compare notes with someone who cares about you - and who may have experienced some of the same struggles along the way.

"This not only keeps us more accountable, but we're able to make it fun and create a stimulating discussion," advises Clayman. "Involve your partner, friends and family in your financial wellness journey."

**5. Keep your resolutions positive, not punishing.** In an effort to achieve your financial wellness goals, focus on the positive rather

than the negative. Clayman notes: "As opposed to saying you want to cut spending, think instead of what you want to put that saved money toward, and attach a specific number to it. This process will help you keep track of progress and ultimately reward you for getting there."

This New Year's, make money resolutions you can stick to, not just for your bottom line, but for your overall well-being and peace of mind. "Remember that the path to financial wellness is very personal and in no way linear," says Clayman. "There's no better time to begin the journey to a healthier money mindset than today."

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## GMC, Inc.: Major Step Toward New City Hall

The City of Huntsville Administration presented City Council with an update on plans for a new Huntsville City Hall in a work session held on December 18. During the meeting, the Council heard a presentation from General Services Director Ricky Wilkinson on the new building's "schematic design" or in layman's terms: the first phase that determines the size requirements and goals for the municipal space.

The Huntsville City Council will consider a \$2.7 million architectural contract with Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood, Inc. during its December 19 Council Meeting. The contract would formalize and flesh out the design of the new City Hall.

City officials said renovations alone to the existing City Hall, which offers only half of the current space needed, would cost between \$32.5 million and \$35.8 million.

As it currently stands, City Hall does not meet seismic, ADA, building and fire standards. Structural integrity, code updates, facade issues, failure of major mechanical structures and lack of available space were all listed by the City's Administration as examples of the infeasibility and financial burden of renovating the current structure.

City Administrator John Hamilton told Council the focus for the last 12 – 18 months has been conducting a comprehensive analysis of space requirements for a new City Hall.

"It's important we have accurate data to inform the scope and scale of the facility," Hamilton said. "We're still at the starting line, but this work has served to establish a solid foundation as we move forward with planning for a new building that will allow us to efficiently and effectively provide services to the public."

# From the Editor

Thanks, Bryan Stevenson for "Just Mercy."

In 1988, Johnny D. McMillian was convicted and served six years in federal prison on death row for allegedly murdering a white woman store clerk in Monroeville, Alabama. Although McMillian, along with his family, friends and associates, indicated that he was not guilty of the crime, he was still convicted in Monroeville. I remember the Sunday when the late Ed Bradley from CBS featured the story on "60 Minutes." Stevenson represented McMillian to get him out of prison, from which he was released in 1993.

We must continue to worry about America having the highest incarceration in the world. Our criminal justice system is really challenging for people of color in our country. Stevenson is founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative and has been working in this space for many years, helping the innocent, poor and condemned. In 2018, Stevenson rolled out two acclaimed cultural sites, the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in our state's Capitol. Take a day and visit Montgomery. You will get *goosebumps!*

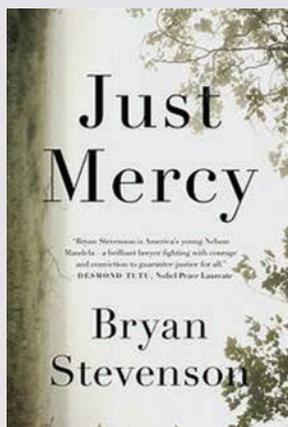
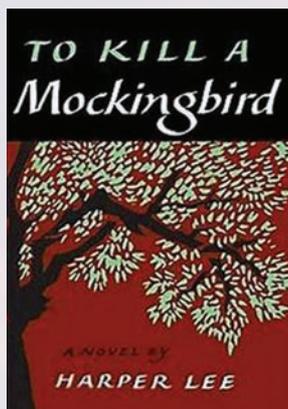
Even when McMillian's narrative was run through the system, he was still found guilty, although many revealed that he was indeed not at the dry cleaners where the woman was killed. So, if the state and government can kill innocent people, why should others be deterred? When a person is killed by the state and federal system and is not guilty, there is no recovery from the real crime of having killed him or her wrongly. Money can't return a life.

The movie "Just Mercy" hits the theaters on December 25th, Christmas Day. Jamie Fox is playing McMillian in the feature. As we celebrate 'The real reason for Christmas Day' and this Holy season, we should each be reminded that every person God created is human, breathes air, circulates red blood and that each of us will be personally held accountable for how we treat others. We can't spend time in church each week and walk and trample on others the other six days and plan to please God. None is perfect and neither are our families. Of course, those with disposable resources are better able to wear the veil of excellence and high moral character while holding others down by actions or inactions.

So, why am I interested? I grew up in Monroeville. We got tired of reading Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* year after year. I left there at 15 years old because at that young age, the appearance didn't look right. Now we are reading *Equal Justice*. And, some of us really have the gall to believe that everyone in jail and prison deserves to be there. Too bad for you!

This has been a long, challenging year. If you have not had a storm or are currently going through a storm, you will eventually confront one. People are leaving here each day: young and old; black, brown and white; with and without. We were born and so we will die. As Christians, we had better think again about how we treat others. Each of us will be held personally responsible for how we live.

Join me in 2020 as we seek to treat others even better than we expect them to treat us. A tall order. Until next week ...



Dorothy

## Where to Find Your FREE Copies of The Valley Weekly

AAMU Office of Public Relations

Albert's Flowers

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Bob Harrison Senior Wellness Center

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Bryant Bank - Church Street

Chester's Barber Shop

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Oakwood University Post Office

Regency Retirement Village

Rocket City Barber Shop

Sam and Greg's Pizza

Sav-A-Lot

Sneed's Cleaners

The Fellowship of Faith Church

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

Woody Anderson Ford

## Huntsville City Council Meetings

Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

City Council work sessions are also held in the Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. People can sign up for notices of Council meetings and special sessions online at <https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1825550/1780821/> For more information, call (256) 427-5011.



## A Good Read



Lan Samantha Chang's



by Jerome Saintjones

### "The Eve of the Spirit Festival"

Told from the point of view of the younger daughter of a Chinese American widower, the story touches on the intricacies of assimilation and how grief can transform itself into misdirected bitterness and anger.

The father is a lab instructor aiming for professorship who, perhaps too late, realizes he will never move up. The older daughter he loves and favors despises him and what she views

as pitiful and embarrassing attempts to assimilate.

Never able to cope with her father's choosing his religion over American medicine to save her mother, she leaves for Berkeley and independence.

The father later suffers from a massive stroke from which he does not recover. Culture notwithstanding, no man can serve two masters.

Later generations, it would seem, must feed on the ones that preceded them. Older generations have to be willing to sacrifice in exchange for a chance to live forever.

## MLK Unity Breakfast, Parade Scheduled

The Delta Theta Lambda Education Foundation of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., will hold its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast on Monday, January 20, 2020, at the Von Braun Center North Hall 1-3.

The Martin Luther King Day Parade will be held in Downtown Huntsville on Saturday, January 18, from 12 noon-1:30 p.m. The starting point is Lot K at 620 Clinton Avenue West. The parade theme is "Keeping the Dream Alive!"

For more information, visit [www.dtlalpha.org](http://www.dtlalpha.org).

## NAAACC Meetings

The North Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce (Huntsville) meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 12 noon.

The meeting location varies. Call (256) 564-7574.

## Perspectives on EGO-holism

by tim allston

### Thanks, FBI's Christopher Wray and the NBA's Joel Embiid: Real Men (Sometimes) Eat Crow Read 1 Chronicles 21:8, 1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22

When David raped, impregnated Bathsheba, he then choreographed her husband's murder.

By sharing cleverly a tale that made the king condemn a similar wrongdoer, prophet Nathan then declared "Thou art the man."

Exposed and self-condemned, David admitted readily his folly, referenced in the above Bible texts.

We rarely find high-profiled public figures admitting any level of blame or culpability when criticized.

That is, until last week, ...

#### From the Senate Courts ...

The Wall Street Journal, December 13: "FBI Director Christopher Wray has ordered more than 40 changes in how the bureau seeks secret surveillance warrants and handles other matters after the Justice Department inspector general pointed out a series of flaws in the bureau's efforts to monitor a former Trump campaign adviser."

#### ... To the Basketball Courts

Yahoo! Sports, December 12: "On Tuesday (Dec. 10), Joel Embiid tallied 22 points, 10 rebounds and six assists while outplaying Nikola Jokovic in a Philadelphia 76ers' win over the Denver Nuggets.

Charles Barkley was not impressed. Neither was Shaquille O'Neal. The "Inside the NBA" analysts and Hall of Fame big men had critical words for the 76ers center despite the big outing.

"We're telling you, you can be great," O'Neal said during TNT's postgame coverage. "You ain't playing hard enough. Twenty-two ain't enough to get you to the next level.

"Do you want to be great, or do you want to be good? If you want to be good, keep doing 22 points. You want to be great, give me 28, give me 30. . . ."

"Maybe they're right," Embiid said. "I do think they're right. I think I need to be more aggressive and just look to impose myself and look to dominate. I think the whole season, I haven't done that. . . . and I've got to make a change."

#### Now, Home Court

Q: As you and I end 2019, reflectively, in what ways can we 'fess up, accept full responsibility for our gaffes, promise sincerely not to repeat our errors, in order to begin 2020 with a clean(er) slate?

The clock's tickin' . . .

Certified Life Coach tim allston is the author of the free book, *7 Steps to Manage Ego Problems: The How-to Guide for "Someone Else,"* free and downloadable now at [www.GetEgoHelpNow.org](http://www.GetEgoHelpNow.org).

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# The Valley Weekly Calendar of Events

## December 26

Kwanzaa Candlelighting Ceremony (Umoja)  
Bridgestreet Near Monaco  
2-4 p.m.

## December 27

Blues Troubadour  
Justin Howl  
Straight to Ale Brands (Campus 805) - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

## December 28

Kwanzaa Celebration (Kujichagulia)  
Showers Center - Blue Spring  
2-7 p.m.

## December 28

Kwanzaa Celebration (Ujima)  
Huntsville Public Library  
915 Monroe Street, 12-5 p.m.

## December 29

Kwanzaa Celebration (Ujamaa)  
Zenzeles Consignment  
2205-F University Drive NW  
3-10 p.m.

## December 30

Kwanzaa Celebration (Nia)  
Madison Public Library  
Madison, Ala., 12-3 p.m.

## December 31

Kwanzaa Karamu (Kuumba)  
Huntsville Public Library  
12-5 p.m.

## December 31

2019 New Year's Eve Mars Masquerade  
U.S. Space and Rocket Center  
Davidson Center for Space Exploration (Couples, \$130; Single \$65)  
8 p.m.

## Soul Songbook

Shayna Steele Sings Aretha and More  
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra - Von Braun Center  
7:30 p.m.

## January 19-March 22

"Harlem, Hollywood, Broadway: African American

Legends" Photographed by Jack Mitchell  
Chan Gallery - Huntsville Museum of Art  
Lecture and Preview Party (Jan. 17) - Featuring Alabama A&M University Jazz Ensemble (\$25/\$50)

## January 27

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UAH (A Learning Community Designed for Adults 50+) Daytime and Evening Courses Begin for Winter Term  
For additional information, contact Osher.uah.edu/Catalog or call (256) 824-6183

## March 14

Rosetta James Foundation Honoring Our Elders Celebration  
The Jackson Center - 12 Noon  
\$50 - (256) 536-9717



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## Champion Game Plan for Life *by Preston Brown*

### THE REAL CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:11, says, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

There are so many stories about Christmas. There is "The Christmas Story" that talks about Ebenezer Scrooge. There is "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." Then, there is "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, just to name a few.

Now all of these are wonderful Christmas stories, but there is only one "real" Christmas Story and that is the story of the birth of Jesus. When it comes to Christmas, it's either real,

or it's just entertainment.

When we look at the gospel of Luke, he depicts what that first Christmas was really like. No lighted Christmas trees, no "fanfare." Just a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, because



there was no room left for him in the inn. Just think how profound that was, because when He came to this world we didn't have any room for Him, and yet

He said, in my father's house there are many rooms.

You see, this is not a "rags to riches" story; this is a riches to rags story, where God came down from heaven and made himself small, like a baby, to be the savior of the whole world.

The bottom line is this: there are many stories about Christmas, but the only one that is the real deal is the one that tells the story of Jesus ... Stay encouraged my brothers and sisters.

Make sure you get a copy of my book, "A Champion Game Plan For Life," available at amazon.com or contact me at pbrown@damson.com.



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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

# Valley Deaths

**NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME - 2501**  
Carmichael Avenue NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256)  
539-8189

A memorial service for **MS. PATRENA LOUISE SCRUGGS** (b. 1969) will be held on Saturday, December 28, at 11 a.m. at Meridianville Primitive Baptist Church. Arrangements in conjunction with Berryhill Funeral Home.

Funeral service for **MR. DEANDRE LOVE** (b. 1990) will be Saturday, December 28, 2019 at 1 p.m. at the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Elder Johnny L. Burrell officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. STANLEY B. NICKLES** (b. 1957) will be held Friday, December 27, at 11 a.m. in the the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for **MRS. LILLIAN ANN BROWN** (b. 1945) was held Saturday, December 21, at the Consolidated Flint River and Running Water P. B. Association Memorial Tabernacle with The Reverend Robert Wynn officiating and The Reverend Henry Brown as eulogist.

**ROYAL FUNERAL HOME - 4315 Oakwood Avenue -**  
Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481

Funeral service for **MR. JAMES LOUIS JOHNSON** (b. 1951) will be 11 a.m., Saturday, December 28, at Taylor's Chapel Primitive Baptist Church (3100 Stringfield Road, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Theodis Acklin officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. THOMAS LANIER, SR.**, (b. 1952) will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, December 28, at the Draper Memorial Church of God in Christ (313 Beirne Avenue NE, Huntsville, Ala.) with Reverend James Strong officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. VIOLA MCCLENDON RICE** (b. 1935) will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, December 27, at Madkins Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (2403 Oakwood Road, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Endia J. Scruggs officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. BETTYE LANGFORD BUSH** (b. 1943) was held Monday, December 23, at Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church (3020 Belafonte Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Kenneth Lankford officiating.

**SERENITY FUNERAL HOME - 2505 University Drive**  
NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-9693

Arrangements for **KORTO JACKSON** are incomplete at this time.



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## Huntsville 2020 Performances Tap Diana Ross

Among a growing list of top entertainers scheduled to perform in the Rocket City in 2020 is a celebrated Motown diva and icon.

Diana Ross is scheduled to give a 7:30 p.m. performance in the Mark C. Smith Concert Hall, Von Braun Center, on Tuesday, February 25. Tickets range from \$84-\$144 each.

Ross' international achievements were acknowledged by the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors in Washington DC (2007), celebrating her lustrous career of excellence in music, film, television and theatre, as well as her cultural influences, humanitarian work and her contributions to American culture.

The National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences celebrated her remarkable career with its highest honor, The GRAMMY® Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012.

In 2016, Ross received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the most prestigious civilian award given to a U.S. citizen.

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OPEN: April-October: Tuesday - Saturday: 9 am - 5 pm & Sunday: noon - 5pm  
November-March: Tuesday - Saturday: 10am - 4pm & Sunday: noon - 4pm

# Called 2 Preach

by Pastor/Founder Michael D. Rice  
Grace Gethsemane Mission Church

## Living in Three Time Zones

### 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

There are places in certain parts of the state (Alabama), that are in the Eastern Time Zone, which is an hour ahead of the rest of the state that is in the Central Time Zone. Those who live or work in those areas literally live in

two time zones. Making the adjustments for this reality can be challenging for someone who visits these areas compared to those who live there.

The same is true when it comes to one's faith in the truth of God's word. The question is, does our faith visit these truths or

does it live there.

The Apostle Paul's faith actually lived in three time zones. In his epistle to the Corinthians, he shared with them how suffering was not something to be pitied but was a powerful testimony of how God was able to deliver him. The trouble that he described was of such that it was beyond his ability to endure and at times he thought that he would not live through it. He learned however, the lesson that every believer needs to learn: to rely only on God who raises

the dead. As a result of his faith, he came to know that God had rescued him (past); He would rescue him (in his present moments of trouble); and that He will continue to deliver (future).

His faith was not a tourist, it was a resident, living in three time zones. It is still possible.



**“Few people have the imagination for reality”**

- von Goethe

### Spotlight on Our Elders ... Featuring

## Mr. Allie Swann

A native Mississippian, Allie Swann was born in rural Macon, Miss., on a farm owned by his grandfather and father. He earned his bachelor's degree from Mississippi State University in 1958 in accounting and economics. A retired financial officer at NASA-Marshall Space Flight Center, Swann followed up his 35-year stint with the agency with productive community involvement. He proudly served in the United States Army for two years and later earned the Master of Administrative Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville. While in the Army, he played a trombone in the prestigious Army Band. He came to Huntsville to conduct an audit of Redstone Federal Credit Union as an auditor for

the Bureau of Federal Credit Unions. While here, some of his fraternity brothers from Lambda Chi Alpha encouraged him to consider a move here. He has served as a volunteer in numerous community organizations and agencies through the years. He has been a board member and treasurer of Interfaith Mission Services; an adjunct professor of accounting at the University of Alabama in Huntsville; and was a volunteer at Trinity United Methodist Church, First Stop, and the Burritt Museum. Allie and his wife, Linda, have five grown children, two sons and three daughters, all Huntsville residents except one daughter in Nashville.

In addition to his community service, Swann enjoys woodworking. He is an avid



reader of history and political books. He has travelled all over the United States and to Europe, Canada and Mexico.

According to him, “he has had a great life. It's been wonderful.” Actually, if he had to live it all over again, there are very, very, very few things he would change!

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**DECEMBER 27 - JOHN AMOS** - Actor John Amos was born in Newark, New Jersey. He is most well known for his portrayal of James Evans, Sr., on the television series “Good Times.”

- [BlackinTime.info](http://BlackinTime.info)

# Huntsville Site of Mental Health Forum

The Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., participated in the 19th Annual North Alabama Health and Wellness Fair. The purpose of the event was to eradicate health disparities, encourage the community to embrace lifestyle changes by promoting good nutrition, physical activity, ownership of health, and increase awareness about mental health. The health fair provided access to 65 vendors that offered health screenings to include hypertension, hypercholesterol, diabetes, prostate cancer, bone density, hearing, vision, dental, vari-



**My Cry in the Dark Panel:** Dr. Anupama Yedla, LaKrisha Coleman (Huntsville Alumnae), Dr. Bridget Floyd, Mark Arnold

coarse veins, and mental health. The health fair commenced with a walk to promote physical fitness.

The Huntsville Alumnae chapter presented the "My Cry in the Dark" Mental Health Forum. The panel of mental health professionals featured two psychiatrists, two psychologists and a psychiatric screener, who presented

a range of topics on mental health and allowed the community access to professionals to ask questions about issues they personally experience. Community participants embraced the opportunity to network with the health professionals and to take advantage of health screenings for various diseases at no cost.

## City's Vision for Its West Side Clearer

The boom in downtown Huntsville just east across Memorial Parkway has placed development pressure on the area, note city leaders. If they don't act, they won't be able to guide widespread, fair changes in the development that is coming.

This year, the city won a hard-to-win \$1.3 million planning grant from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD).

Planners and public officials discussed what that means and doesn't mean Friday with leaders of Huntsville nonprofit, civic and arts organizations. Those organizations wrote HUD to support the

city's application, and their letters and promise of support are a key reason Huntsville won the grant. They were told they are critical to the area's long-term success.

There's more federal money out there, nearly \$30 million for big improvements if the city and its partners build a strong-enough blueprint for change and make a good start in the three years of planning.

Nothing major will happen for the next three years, the audience was told. There will be pilot projects such as improved lighting on Governors Drive west of Memorial Parkway, a piece of substantial public art and a new park.

The plan will not eliminate public housing in the area. It could rebuild it, and it could remodel it. But 254 units of low-income housing will be there in three years just as they are there now, officials promised. They will have better access roads, be more handicapped accessible and have modern heating and air-conditioning.

There will also be new stores, new restaurants and new "market rate" housing in a new 28-acre "master planned neighborhood," city leaders said. And there will be private investment in the area.

- [Huntsvilleal.gov](http://Huntsvilleal.gov)



## Millennial Thought

by Josh Alex Baker

*"The Blessing in Breaking"*  
While

we are often taught to bend but never break, I have found a significant beauty in the process of breaking.

While I do not attempt to nullify this age-old adage, I seek to shed light on a new perspective. Breaking is not always entirely a bad thing. While society has come to synonymize breaking with weakness, acknowledging a need to break is actually one of the strongest things a person can do.

In order to live a full life, we must constantly seek to expand our level of self-awareness. You owe yourself the truth. You owe yourself

authenticity. You owe yourself the best version of you possible. That best version doesn't always present itself through adding on to what's already there. Sometimes, it lies in starting over.

At certain times in our lives, simple repairs will not suffice. It is only through tearing down and rebuilding that we obtain the complete breakthrough that we so vitally need. Allow yourself to receive what blessings await. We often guilt ourselves into believing that we are not worthy enough to demand more. We present ourselves a false dilemma that all we have is all that there is. We deceive ourselves by believing that all we are now is all that we will be. It is never too late to begin

the journey of living your best life. You reserve the right to break apart and rebuild. While it can be a scary experience, the outcome will prove well worth it. In the process of breaking, what is lost allows room for what needs to be gained. In the rebuilding phase of life, you are being made stronger and more prepared to walk in the fullness of your purpose. There is a great blessing that lies in breaking. Though breaking is not easy, it is often necessary. Imagine a dilapidated house beyond repair. Even though exhaustive work will be required to tear it down, the possibility that lies in the newness of rebuilding is endless. Are you ready to put in the work? Your greatest life waits for you.

*Josh Alex Baker is a Master of Social Work student at Alabama A&M University.*

## Use Year-End Bonus (or Gift) Wisely

If you're getting a year-end bonus from your employer, or possibly a substantial cash gift for the holidays, how can you best use the money?

For starters, you could use it to pay down some debts. The lower your debt load, the more you'll have to invest for your future.

Also, you could start an emergency fund, with the money kept in a low-risk, liquid account. With such a fund in place, you can avoid dipping into long-term investments to pay for unexpected costs, such as a major car repair.

Here's another suggestion: Use your bonus or monetary gift to help fund your IRA for the 2019 tax year.

Or, you could use the money to help fund a college savings account, such as a 529 plan, for your children or grandchildren. A 529 plan offers possible tax benefits and allows you to control the money until it's used.

To achieve all your financial goals, you'll need to take advantage of your opportunities – and your year-end bonus or monetary gift can certainly be one of them.

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# Washington in One Minute



Here are the happenings in Washington, D.C., this week:

1. The House and Senate adjourned the First Session of the 116th Congress last Thursday and will reconvene again next year (the Senate on Jan. 3 and the House on Jan. 7). Before adjourning, Congress approved two minibus appropriations bills (containing all 12 annual appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2020) and the Defense Authorization bill for FY2020. In addition, the House approved the new U.S./Mexico/Canada Trade

Agreement. The Senate also managed to approve 12 new federal judges and various other nominations before adjourning. On Thursday, President Trump signed into law the FUTURE Act (H.R. 5363), legislation to revive expired funding for historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and make it easier for students to apply for federal student aid. The new law permanently re-authorizes more than \$250 million in annual funding for historically black colleges and minority-serving institutions that expired at the end of September.

2. President Trump left Washington, D.C. last Friday and is currently staying at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Fla., for the next two weeks. On Sunday, he and Mrs. Trump met with retired Navy SEAL Chief Eddie Gallagher, for whom the President reversed a demotion from Chief Petty Officer to Petty Officer First Class and later ordered the Navy to cancel administrative proceedings intended to revoke Gallagher's status as a Special Warfare Operator.

3. The impeachment process is on pause after the House voted last Wednesday night to approve two articles of impeachment charging President Trump with abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) has delayed sending the articles to the Senate for trial, reportedly, to bring attention to Senate Democrats'

request for 4 witnesses to be subpoenaed for the trial: Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, former National Security Adviser John Bolton, Senior Adviser to the Acting White House Chief of Staff Robert Blair and Michael Duffey, Associate Director for National Security at the Office of Management and Budget.

4. The Supreme Court is in recess until January 10.

5. In an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll released last Thursday before the 6th Presidential Debate, the highlights were Joe Biden remaining the front-runner in the race for the nomination at 28% with Bernie Sanders nearby at 21%; former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg debuting at 4%; and Elizabeth Warren falling 5 points from an October poll to 18%. The other top

candidates were Pete Buttigieg at 9%, Amy Klobuchar at 5%, and Andrew Yang at 3%. The poll of 900 adults was conducted Dec. 14-17 and has an overall margin of error of +3.3%.

*Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!*

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## AAMU Professor to Present in Berlin in February

An Alabama A&M University transportation and environmental health professor will add two major international trips to his busy schedule in 2020.

Dr. Jacob Oluwoye heads AAMU's Center for Urban and Rural Research, and he has been appointed by Osun State University to serve as an external examiner for the master's programs offered under that school's Global Affairs and Sustainable Development Institute next academic year.

Oluwoye also will present at the 9th International

Conference on Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases Conference (Tropical Diseases 2020) in Berlin, Germany, on February 24-25.

The professor is scheduled to speak on "Global Transport Networks and Infectious Disease Spread: A Theoretical Application of Discrete Choice Model for Decision Making for Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation."

Oluwoye is a long-time faculty member in AAMU's Department of Community and Regional Planning, a major unit of



Oluwoye

the College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences.

For additional information, contact Dr. Oluwoye at (256) 372-4994.

### 7th Annual Kwanzaa Celebration

*Mari ya Kwanzaa - Happy Kwanzaa*

**Kwanzaa Candlelighting Ceremony (Umoja) Thurs. Dec. 26th @ Bridgestreet near Monaco 2-4 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Celebration (Kujichagulia) Fri. Dec. 27th @ Richard Showers Center 4600 Blue Spring Rd NW, 35810 2-7 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Celebration (Ujima) Sat. Dec. 28th @ Downtown Public Library 915 Monroe St SW, 35801 12-3 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Celebration (Ujamaa) Sun. Dec. 29th @ Zenzeles Consignment 2205-F University Dr NW, 35816 3-10 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Celebration (Nia) Mon. Dec. 30th Madison Public Library 142 Plaza Blvd, Madison, AL 35758 12-3 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Karamu (Kuumba) Tues. Dec. 31st @ Downtown Public Library 915 Monroe St SW, 35801 12-3 p.m.**

**Kwanzaa Celebration (Imani) Wed. Jan. 1 @ Home (Celebrate wih Family!!!)**

**CONTACT: (256)-652-1625**