AUNT IRMA: "A Pill for Everything" - p. 8



PRESTON: 'If God Be for Us' ... - Page 4

POSITIVE | INSPIRATIONAL | EDUCATIONAL

The Valley Weekly

The Voice of the Valley

HUNTSVILLE • MADISON COUNTY • NORTH ALABAMA



SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK





Mrs. Pamela M. Curry

Friday
November 6, 2026
Vol. 13, No. 10
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

# AAMU Achieves Four Years of Record Enrollment

Alabama A&M University has reached another historic milestone, welcoming 8,256 students for Fall 2026 and achieving record enrollment for the fourth consecutive year. The 7.7% increase from a year ago reflects the University's strategic investments in recruitment, academic support, campus improvements, brand visibility, and student success initiatives that strengthen its ability to attract students to Alabama's largest HBCU.

At the heart of Alabama A&M's sustained growth is its expanding portfolio of academic programs, including Alabama's first Bachelor of Science in Artificial Intelligence, supported by a national reputation for STEM excellence. The University ranks No. 1 among HBCUs and No. 3 nationally in producing African American engineering master's degree recipients, while its agricultural legacy includes recognition as the nation's largest producer of African American food science graduates and home to the only professionally accredited forestry program at an HBCU. That academic strength translates into meaningful career opportunities, with 19% of Spring 2026 graduates reporting salary offers of $70,000 or more.

A major contributor to this progress is a coordinated approach to student success, retention and persistence, say officials. Through expanded and more coordinated student success services, the University has strengthened its support infrastructure to help students navigate their academic journeys. Programs like the First-Year Experience, Second Year Experience, Tutorial Network Services, TRIO Programs, Honors Program, and mentoring in collaboration with faculty and staff across the University support academic achievement, personal development and student engagement. These efforts have contributed to measurable progress, including improvements in first-year retention from 59% in 2021 to almost 72% today.

The University has also prioritized expanding its brand visibility in an increasingly digital-first world, growing its social media audience by nearly 400% since 2023 and strengthening awareness of and affinity for the Alabama A&M brand. Coupled with strategic investments in campus facilities, student housing and scholarships, this heightened visibility has helped attract four consecutive record-setting freshman classes. Together, these efforts have positioned AAMU to translate growing interest into sustained enrollment success.





## HMA Names New Board Chair

The Huntsville Museum of Art has announced Wendy Yang as chair of its Board of Trustees. Yang brings experience in arts advocacy, community service and nonprofit leadership to her new role. Yang serves on the board of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra and is a member of the Stronger Together Fund Grants Committee at the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville. She previously served as vice chair of the Board of Directors for Village of Promise and as a docent and docent chair at the Huntsville Museum of Art.

## Local Colleges Part of BCRI Exhibit

HBCUs and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute share a commitment to preserving history, teaching its truth, and carrying its lessons forward.

"Historically Black" celebrates that shared work and a legacy worthy of collective pride.

Home to more HBCUs than any other state, Alabama holds a remarkable legacy of institutions that have educated leaders, created opportunity, shaped culture, and strengthened communities. Huntsville is home to three: Alabama A&M, Oakwood and Drake State.

The exhibit honors that legacy. Co-curated with participating institutions, the exhibition will feature artifacts, photos, documents, and memorabilia representing each of Alabama's 14 HBCUs. For more information, visit www.bcri.org/historically-black/

## TARCOG Assists Triana with Comprehensive Plan

Triana town leaders are working to keep the town's priorities on track by updating its Comprehensive Plan.

"TARCOG assisted Triana with a Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2017, and we have again assisted them in updating their plan to reflect the dramatic increase in population and housing they have experienced in recent years," said TARCOG Economic Development & Planning Director Lee Terry.

Visit https://tarcog.us/

The Valley Weekly

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

Preston Brown's "Spiritual Game Plan," Page 4
Gloria B. & Tim: Perspectives, Page 5
"Jahni" Moore's PowerShots, Page 6
Spotlight on Our Elders, Page 7
Sunday Lectionary, Page 7
This Week in Washington, Page 9

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## Huntsville City Council Meetings

Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held on the 1st floor of the Municipal Building. The meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.



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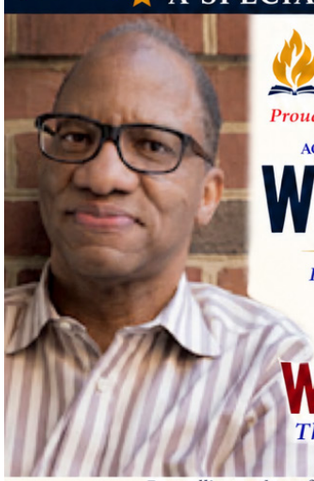
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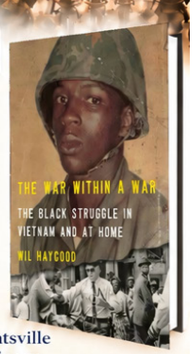
★ A SPECIAL COMMUNITY EVENT ★



THE ROSETTA JAMES FOUNDATION
*Proudly Welcomes Back to Huntsville*

ACCLAIMED AUTHOR & HISTORIAN
WIL HAYGOOD

*Featuring His Powerful New Book*
THE WAR WITHIN A WAR
*The Black Struggle in Vietnam and at Home*




Bestselling author of *The Butler*, Wil Haygood returns to Huntsville for a compelling and timely conversation about the extraordinary contributions and sacrifices of Black Americans who served in the Vietnam War while fighting for equality and civil rights at home.

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★ SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY ★



GENERAL DENNIS L. VIA (RET.)
*Former Commanding General, U.S. Army Materiel Command*

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BOOK SIGNING AT 4:00 P.M.

FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
3509 Blue Spring Road, NW
Huntsville, AL 35810
Rev. Dr. Carlos D. Williams, Pastor

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ONLINE NEWS ASSOCIATION

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## Making Impact and Building Legacy

# The Bradford Family: A Legacy of Love, Music, Education and Service




Some people live long lives. Others live lives so meaningful that their influence continues long after they are gone. Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford was blessed to do both.

Earlier this year, the Bradford family, members of the Bradford Foundation, and our community experienced a profound loss with the passing of their beloved matriarch, Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford, at the remarkable age of 104. A woman of extraordinary grace, Southern elegance, and unwavering commitment to education, Mrs. Bradford leaves a legacy that cannot be measured in years alone, but in the countless lives she touched.

On Friday, October 23, 2026, the Friends of the Bradfords gathered at Church Street CPCA for their Annual Charity Luncheon and Fundraising Event in support of the Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr., and Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford Scholarship Foundation, Incorporated. Four Alabama A&M University students were awarded $1,500 scholarships. *(See Page 10)*

Although Mrs. Bradford's physical presence was deeply missed, her spirit was evident throughout the gathering. The occasion was more than a fundraiser. It was a beautiful reminder that when a life has been devoted to lifting others, its impact does not end with death. It lives on through those who continue the work.

The luncheon reflected the warmth and enduring relationships that have long characterized the Bradford family. Ms. Margo Gray of WAFF News served graciously as Mistress of Ceremonies, while Ms. Sharon Hicks, a former Bradford student, offered a moving reflection on her personal relationship with Mrs. Bradford through the years. Their heartfelt participation made one thing abundantly clear: Both women are cherished members of the extended Bradford family.

Mrs. Authurine Shackleford-Woods enriched the occasion with a beautiful musical tribute, reminding us of the special place music has always held in the Bradford legacy.

One of the most memorable moments came from Dr. Andrea Bradford, whose closing remarks evolved into what I would affectionately describe as a mini-sermon. With love, conviction, and heartfelt reflection, she beautifully captured the lives, values, and enduring influence of both her parents. Her words reminded us that the greatest inheritance parents can leave their children is not material wealth, but a foundation of faith, character, service, and love for humanity.

The Foundation's commemorative souvenir booklet provided a lasting record of the occasion, while the silent auction offered another opportunity for attendees to contribute to scholarships benefiting deserving students at Alabama A&M University.

Dr. Willie Cowan, President of the Friends of the Bradfords Foundation, Inc., concluded the luncheon by expressing appreciation to the many friends and supporters whose generosity continues to sustain the Foundation's mission.

What I find especially meaningful about this annual gathering is its commitment to something greater than remembrance. The Bradford family and their friends have transformed a legacy of educational excellence into opportunities for future generations. Through scholarships, they are helping young people pursue their dreams while ensuring that the values of Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr., and Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford remain alive and relevant.

That is what making an impact and building a legacy are all about. It is not simply what we accomplish during our lifetime, but what continues to flourish because we lived.

As we look forward to the Foundation's 2027 gathering, may we remember that the most beautiful tribute we can offer those who have gone before us is to continue the good they began.

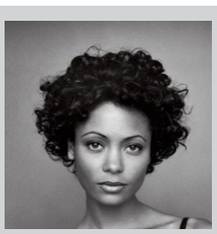
To the Bradford family, Dr. Willie Cowan, and the devoted members of the Friends of the Bradfords Foundation, thank you for reminding our community that love endures, education transforms lives, and a legacy built on service never dies.

Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford lived 104 remarkable years. Through the lives she influenced and the opportunities created in her name, her legacy will live for generations to come.

Until next week ...

*Dorothy*

**NOVEMBER 6 - THANDIWE "THANDIE" NEWTON** - Melanie Thandiwe "Thandie" Newton is an English actress who has appeared in several British and American films. She is known for her starring roles, such as the title character in Beloved (1998), Nyah Nordoff-Hall in Mission: Impossible 2 (2000), and Christine in Crash (2004), for which she received a BAFTA Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role, Linda in The Pursuit of Happyness (2006), Kate Thomas in Norbit (2007), Laura Wilson in 2012 (2009), Tangie Ambrose in For Colored Girls (2010), and as Val in Solo: A Star Wars Story (2018). *- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org*



# Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S

The Valley Weekly

**Today's Spiritual Game Plan:**

## "If God Be for Us"

Genesis 29:31 says, "When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved (by Jacob), He enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless."

The two foundations that drive most of our lives are approval and achievement. But we all need to remember that in God's eyes we are more than the "likes" that we get on Facebook. We are more than the "views" that we get on YouTube. We are also more than the friends that we try to accumulate from various sources.

You see, God is not concerned with our social status. God is concerned with what's going on the inside of us. God is concerned with matters of the heart. Whenever we start comparing our lives to those of other people, we end up frustrated, incomplete, and miserable. So for every person that has been in a relationship and knows the pain of being unwanted, God has a plan for you, because God selects what man rejects.

Remember—God being here for us means more than the approvals and achievements of this world. You see, God has a word for the people that, for whatever reason, have not been chosen in this world. God says to all of us, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

Therefore, when this world finds no interest in you, remember that God finds interest in you and He is interested in everything that you do. That's the kind of God that we serve.

*Prayer:* Most gracious and loving Father, thank You for loving us just the way we are and refusing to leave us that way.

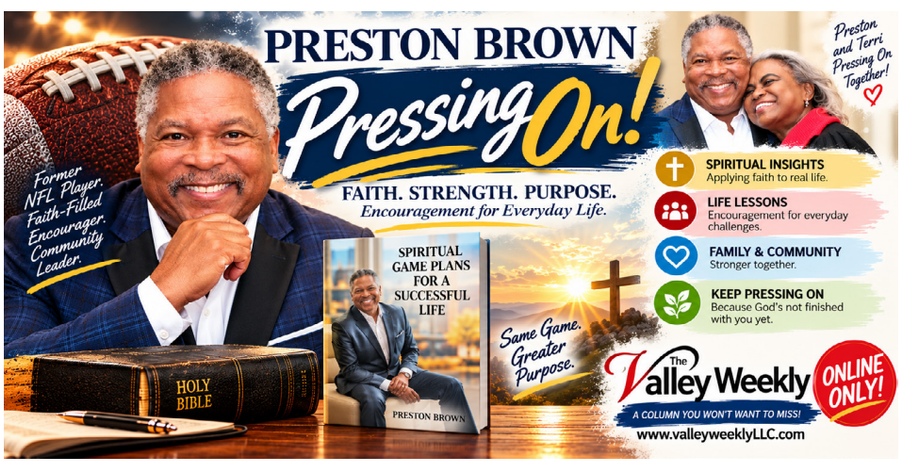
*Question:* Do you ever find yourself seeking the approval of man instead of God, who is our creator?

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:

*"The Man in the Mirror"*




# This Sunday's Lectionary

**Sunday, November 8, 2026**
**Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost**




**(Track 2, Year A)**
**First Lesson:**
Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25
Psalm 78:1-7
**Second Lesson:**
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
**GOSPEL:**
Matthew 25:1-13

THE VALLEY WEEKLY

# VALLEY DEATHS



## NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

**2501 Carmichael Avenue NW | Huntsville, AL 35816**
**www.nelmsmemorial.net | (256) 539-8189**

*Funeral services for **MR. RONNIE E. GAITHER** (b. 1952) and **MR. TERRY J. BONE** (b. 1967) will be announced at a later date.*

*Funeral service for **MR. RANDY "ROCK STEADY" D. GREEN** (b. 1958) was Sunday, November 1, at Bethany Primitive Baptist Church with Pastor Elder James Battles officiating and eulogist.*

*Funeral service for **MS. PATSY L. POPE** (b. 1954) was Saturday, October 31, at Zion Progress Missionary Baptist Church with Rev. Hernandez Ford officiating.*

*Funeral service for **REV. EARLA S. LOCKHART** (b. 1947) was Friday, October 30, at First Missionary Baptist Church, with Rev. Dr. Carlos D. Williams officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MS. CAROLYN ANN RAY** (b. 1947) was Monday, October 26, at Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America with Rev. Dr. Mitchell Walker officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MR. JOHNNY E. WHITE** (b. 1939) was Monday, October 26, at Saint Mark Baptist Church,*

*Funeral service for **MRS. SELENA SIMONS** (b. 1944) was Sunday, October 25, at Oakwood University Church, 5500 Adventist Boulevard NE, Huntsville, Ala.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. FROSTINE STEGER TENNYSON** (b. 1939) was Sunday, October 25, at Flint River Primitive Baptist Church.*

*Funeral service for **MR. JEROME NAPOLEAN KELLY SHOULDERS** (b. 1968) was Saturday, October 24, at Consolidated Flint River and Running Water P. B. Tabernacle, 2131 Highway 72E, Huntsville, Ala. with Rev. Zachary B. Williams officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. HATTIE SUE LOVE** (b. 1952) was Saturday, October 24, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home.*

*Graveside service for **MR. JEREMIAH CHANEY** (b. 1940) was Friday, October 23, at Valley View Memorial Gardens.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. JANICE ROBERTA STRONG WRIGHT** (b. 1956) was Saturday, October 17, at Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor C. Jermaine Turner officiating.*

*- Submissions by Brenda Friend and Angel S. Wilson*

# Beginning Swimming at 72: A Case Study in Ego Management

*"Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances."* — Proverbs

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 18.6% of Americans age 65 and older don't know how to swim.

Until recently, I was among them.

At 72, after decades of teaching leadership, writing books, and advising others, I confronted an uncomfortable truth: I was afraid of water.

My wife, Ginger, challenged me to confront that lifelong aquaphobia.

And so began an unexpected education in leadership, humility, and ego management.

*My John Maxwell Leadership Bible* recently identified seven steps for responsible leadership: **Fought the fear. Sought the Lord. Brought the synergy. Caught the vision. Bought the idea. Taught the plan. Got the victory.**

Those seven steps describe my swimming journey.

First, **I fought my fear.** Then I **sought God's help**.

Next, I **brought the synergy,** though unexpectedly.

**My Aqua-Supremes!**




During fitness class, I met Vernell Turner, whose flexibility embarrassed me. Later, seeing her swimming, I asked whether she would teach me.

"Sure," she replied. First assignment? "Blow bubbles underwater!"

Soon, others joined my unofficial coaching staff:

Bunny scolded me: "drink from the water fountain instead of swallowing the chlorinated swimming pool water!"

Brenda flashed an "L" with her fingers: "Stop swimming the pool's width. Start swimming its length!"

Wanda threatened to report my absences to Vernell.

Audrey faithfully encouraged every small improvement.

These weren't merely instructors. They became my truth-tellers.

I **caught the vision**: Become a swimmer by year's end.

I **bought the idea**: Perhaps someday enter a senior swimming competition.

And I **taught the plan** through example: demonstrating that even experienced leaders must sometimes become beginners.

Then **got the victory?** Stay tuned, . . .

**However, . . .**

Some mornings, I manufacture excuses to avoid another 15–30 minutes in the pool.

And water occasionally enters my nose.

But I've discovered something remarkable: It isn't fatal to my confidence. I recover and continue.

My Ego-holism Recovering framework calls this T-O-P: **Target the problem. Own the problem. Proceed.**

I've ...

- targeted my aquaphobia,
- owned my responsibility, and am
- proceeding one uncomfortable lesson at a time.

The greatest lesson? Leadership isn't always about directing others. Sometimes it's about humbly accepting direction.

At 72, I'm discovering that the opposite of ego-holism isn't inadequacy. It's teachability.

And perhaps the greatest victory isn't reaching the opposite end of the pool.

**It's refusing to let fear keep me standing at the edge.**



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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Website: www.timallston.com



# The Valley Weekly Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

## The Seal ...

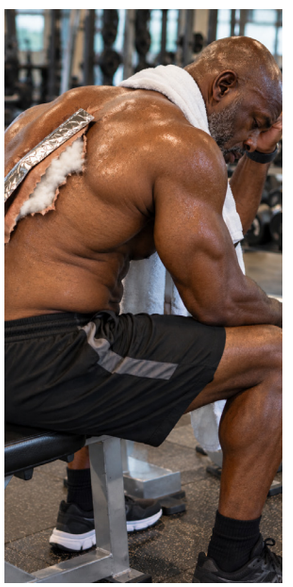
There's a reason you decided to change direction. There's a reason you questioned that relationship, that workplace, the way you parented, the body you neglected. Something in you knew.

Knowing isn't the hard part. Moving is.

That first step busts a seal. It's unfamiliar. It may make you cry. Then comes the second step, just as strange, and that's where most people turn around.

Think about a brutal workout. You're sweating, exhausted, and you feel like you might throw up. It feels like a mistake. It isn't. You're using muscles you've never used and courage you've never called on. Your body doesn't understand it yet.

But soreness and injury



are not the same.

In the gym, a trainer tells you when you're hurting yourself. In faith, you pray and ask God to show you. With your people, good friends notice when your energy and disposition have changed. In business, look for progression: new skills, new clients, good feedback, a return. Failure that teaches is tuition. Failure that repeats is a warning.

If the discomfort comes from doing something new and healthy, keep going. If it comes from staying where you're being hurt, that's not growth. That's injury. Stop.

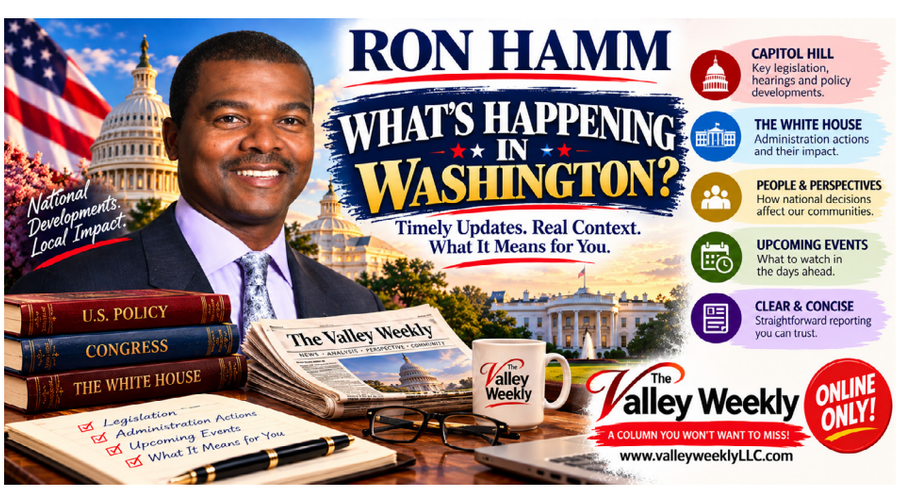
And don't stall at the edge. Israel didn't wander forty years because the road was hard. They kept circling what they'd already been shown. Staying in familiar mediocrity is a decision too.

You know the step. Be prayerful and take it.

Don't turn around. It can only get better.

God loves you, and so do I.

He has given you a gift; open it.



The Valley Weekly

# VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

**November 6**
Von Braun Center Tree Lighting | 4-6 p.m.

Jim Parker's Songwriters Series
Von Braun Center Playhouse
6:30 p.m.

Bulldog Men's Basketball
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 7 p.m.

Huntsville Havoc vs. Macon Mayhem
VBC Propst Arena | 7 p.m.

"Pictures for Your Ears"
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
VBC Mark C. Smith Concert Hall
7:30 p.m.

**November 7**
"The Great Big Book Festival"
Downtown Huntsville Public Library | 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

"Funny How Careers Work"
Comedy Show & Career Exploration
Hosted by Comedian & Entrepreneur Marcus White
Madison Public Library
Plaza Boulevard
Madison, Ala. | 2 p.m.

"A Celtic Christmas by a Taste of Ireland"
VBC Marck C. Smith Concert Hall
Huntsville, Ala. | 7:30 p.m.

Jim Henson's Labyrinth: In Concert 40th Anniversary
Mars Music Hall | VBC
Huntsville, Ala. | 8 p.m.

**November 8-9**
Concert
October London
VBC Mars Music Hall
Huntsville, Ala.
6 p.m./7:30 p.m. (11/9)

**November 9**
Women's Basketball
vs. Miles
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 11 a.m.

State of the City Address
Mayor Tommy Battle
VBC Saturn Ballroom
Huntsville, Ala. | Noon

Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. DePaul
Chicago, Ill. | 8 p.m.

**November 10**
"Cooking Matters" Classes Begin (Free) | 6 Weeks
Richard Showers Recreation Center
4600 Blue Spring Road NW
Huntsville, Ala.
5 pm.

**November 11**
Veterans Day

**November 12**
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. West Florida
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 7 p.m.

**November 14**
Bulldog Football vs. Texas Southern
Louis Crews Stadium
Alabama A&M University
Normal, Ala.
2 p.m.

**November 19**
Women's Basketball
vs. UAB
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 6 p.m.

**November 19-22**
Don D.C. Curry
Huntsville Levity Live Comedy Club
2012 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, Ala.

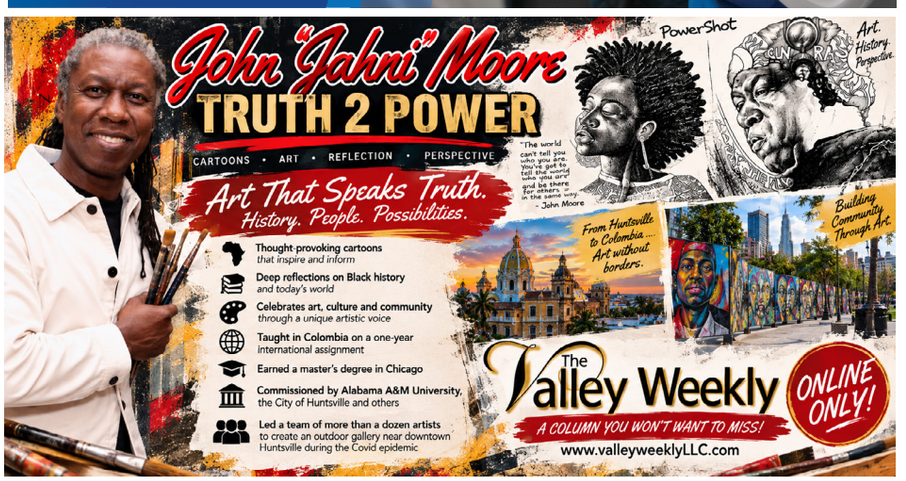
**November 20**
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. Lipscomb
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 7 p.m.

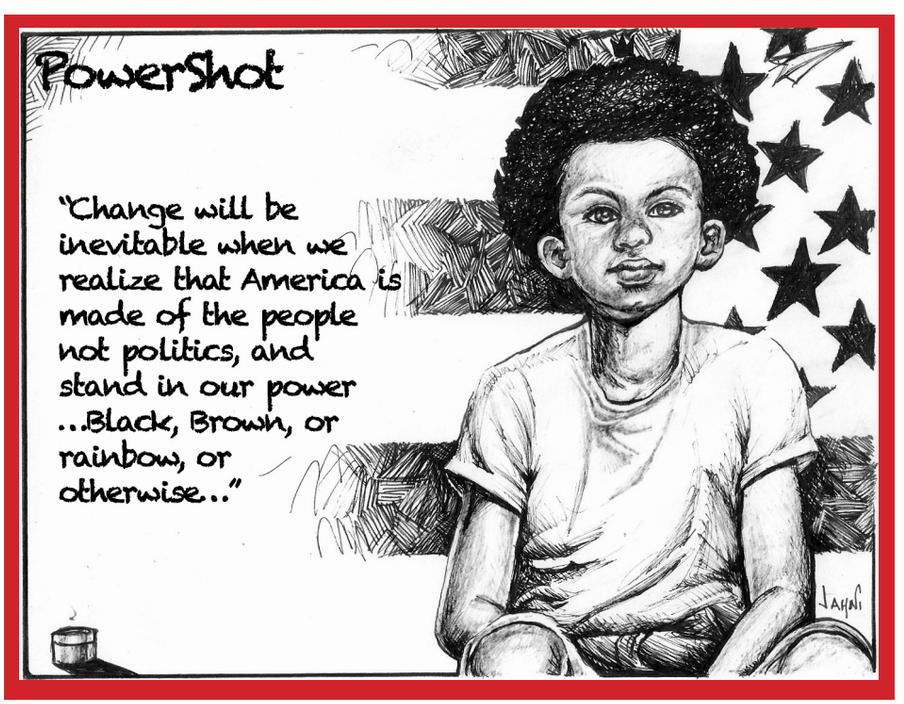
**November 26**
Thanksgiving

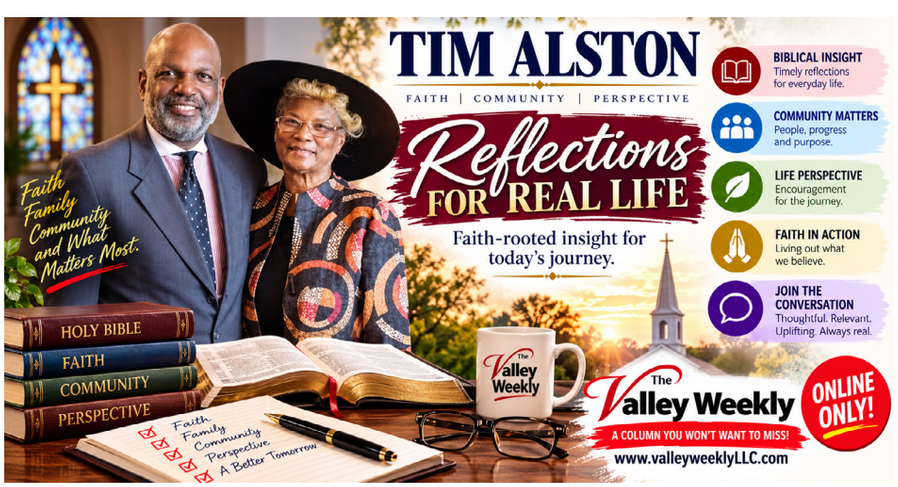
**December 3**
Women's Basketball
vs. Tuskegee
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 6 p.m.

**December 15**
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. LeMoyne-Owen
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center





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

# Mrs. Pamela M. Curry

Pamela Murray Curry embodies a life defined by service, faith, and steadfast devotion to family and community. A native of Dayton, Ohio, she is a graduate of Roosevelt High School and Tennessee State University in Nashville, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work in 1973. Her academic foundation laid the groundwork for a lifelong commitment to advocacy, care, and the well-being of others.

In 1982, Curry relocated to Huntsville, Alabama, where she devoted many years of professional service to the Huntsville City Schools system as a licensed social worker. Through her work, she touched countless lives with compassion, discernment, and quiet strength, retiring in 2007 after a career marked by integrity and dedication to children and families.

Family has always been central to Curry's life. She was married for 46 years to her beloved husband, the late Charles A. Curry, with whom she built a legacy of love and stability. She is the proud mother of Dr. K. Kelli Curry and Candyce A. Curry, and a devoted grandmother to Jackson H. Quarles and Paige A. Quarles. As a sister, aunt, and trusted friend, she is cherished for her wisdom, generosity, and unwavering presence.

Faith has been both anchor and guide throughout her life. Curry is a resolute, longtime member of First Missionary Baptist Church, where she has served faithfully in numerous capacities, including Deaconess, Nursery Sunday School Teacher, Child Development Center Board Member, and participant in multiple ministries. Her service reflects a deep commitment to nurturing faith across generations and supporting the spiritual growth of the church community.

Curry's civic and cultural leadership extends well beyond the church. She is a Golden Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, where she has been an active and dedicated member of the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter, chairing committees and leading community initiatives. She is also a charter member of the Huntsville Chapter of the Tennessee State University Alumni Association and has represented her alma mater through service on the President's Honor Circle and the Women's Legacy



Center board. Her community engagement includes board service with Christmas Charities Year-Round, Harris Home for Children, and, most recently, as a charter member of the Women's Emerald Society of Huntsville Hospital.

Creativity and joy remain vital threads in Curry's life. A talented seamstress and jewelry designer, she has recently embraced crocheting as a new form of artistic expression. An avid shopper and traveler, she delights in shared experiences and new adventures with family and friends.

Guided by a spirit of excellence, Pamela Murray Curry continues to live with purpose—striving to love generously, give selflessly, and serve faithfully—leaving an enduring imprint on her church, her community, and all who are blessed to know her.

"Honoring Our Elders" Rosetta James Foundation

*"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.*

## HUNTSVILLE AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

The **Citizens Advisory Committee** of the Huntsville Area **Metropolitan Planning Organization** will meet on **Monday, November 16, 2026**, at **5:00 pm**, on the **6th Floor of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building**, at 305 Fountain Circle SW. The Metropolitan Planning Organization **Policy Board** will meet on **Wednesday, November 18, 2026**, at **4:00 pm** on the **2nd Floor, (Council Chambers) of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building**, at 305 Fountain Circle SW. To review items on the agenda for these meetings, visit: http://www.huntsvillempo.org/about/meetings-and-agendas/. For more information on the MPO, visit: http://www.huntsvillempo.org/

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# Aunt Irma makes it plain ...

## A Pill for Everything, and Everything for a Pill!



There was a time when you went to the doctor, described what was bothering you, and hoped he could figure out what was wrong. These days, you might leave with three prescriptions, a referral to a specialist, and instructions to come back in six months to see how the medications are working.

Aunt Irma has begun to wonder whether Americans are becoming healthier or simply better medicated.

Don't misunderstand me. Modern medicine is a blessing. Antibiotics have saved millions of lives. Blood-pressure medications have prevented countless strokes. Insulin has allowed people with diabetes to live long and productive lives. And there are folks walking around today who would have been pushing up daisies decades ago were it not for advances in pharmaceuticals.

But there is another side to the medicine cabinet.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at least 28 percent of antibiotics prescribed in outpatient settings are unnecessary. That's a remarkable figure, particularly when you consider that antibiotics are useless against viruses responsible for illnesses such as the common cold.

Then there are the painkillers, sleeping pills, anti-anxiety medications and acid-reflux drugs that sometimes remain on patients' medication lists long after anyone has seriously reconsidered whether they are needed.

Some people take one pill to sleep, another to wake up, another to settle their stomachs and still another to address a side effect of something already prescribed.

At some point, Aunt Irma would like to know who's keeping score.

Medical researchers have a term called *polypharmacy*, generally referring to the use of five or more medications. It is especially common among older Americans, many of whom have several chronic



conditions requiring legitimate treatment.

Five medications do not automatically constitute five problems. But neither should five prescriptions automatically mean five permanent obligations.

And that brings us to a question that doesn't get nearly enough attention: Who decides when it's time to stop taking a medication?

A doctor might prescribe something during a hospitalization. Another physician might add something six months later. A specialist might introduce yet another prescription. Before long, the patient has accumulated a collection of little orange bottles that would rival the inventory of a neighborhood pharmacy.

Each doctor may have a perfectly reasonable explanation for his or her contribution. But is anybody looking at the entire collection?

And what about the pharmaceutical industry?

Drug companies spend enormous sums developing medications, and many of those investments produce remarkable medical breakthroughs. But they are also businesses whose financial success depends on selling their products. It would be naive to pretend that commercial interests have no influence on how medications are marketed or perceived.

Aunt Irma isn't suggesting that patients throw away their prescriptions, substitute herbal remedies or start second-guessing every physician. That would be foolish, and in some cases downright dangerous.

But she is suggesting that Americans become more inquisitive consumers of healthcare.

Ask what a medication is supposed to accomplish. Ask how long it will be necessary. Ask whether there are alternatives. Ask what might happen if it is discontinued under medical supervision. And perhaps most importantly, ask whether a new symptom could be a side effect of something already being taken.

Doctors are human. Pharmacists are human. Patients are human. Mistakes and oversights can happen anywhere in that relationship.

The best protection is not distrust. It is informed participation.

Aunt Irma remembers when the family medicine cabinet contained aspirin, rubbing alcohol, iodine and a bottle of something nobody could identify. Today, some households practically need a filing system to keep track of their prescriptions.

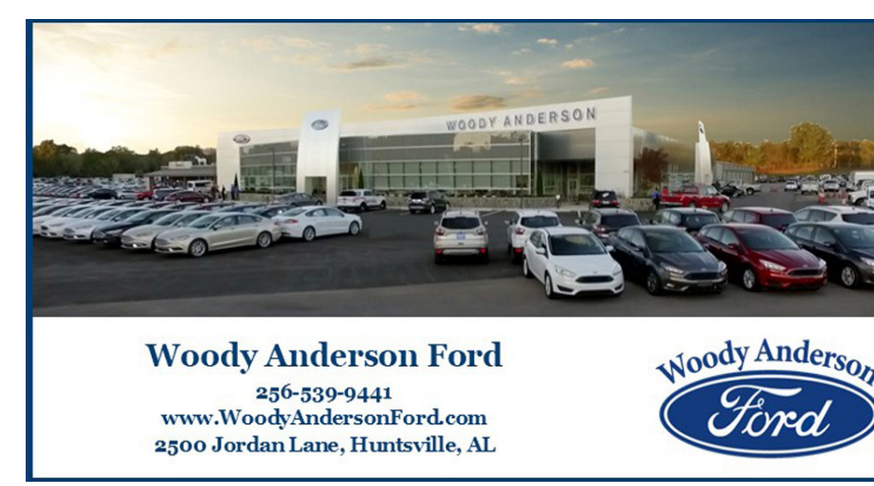
Progress? Certainly.

But progress should mean more than developing another pill. Sometimes it ought to mean discovering that we no longer need one.

And if your doctor tells you that every medication you're taking is necessary, Aunt Irma hopes you'll follow the doctor's advice.

She just hopes somebody has taken the time to ask the question.






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

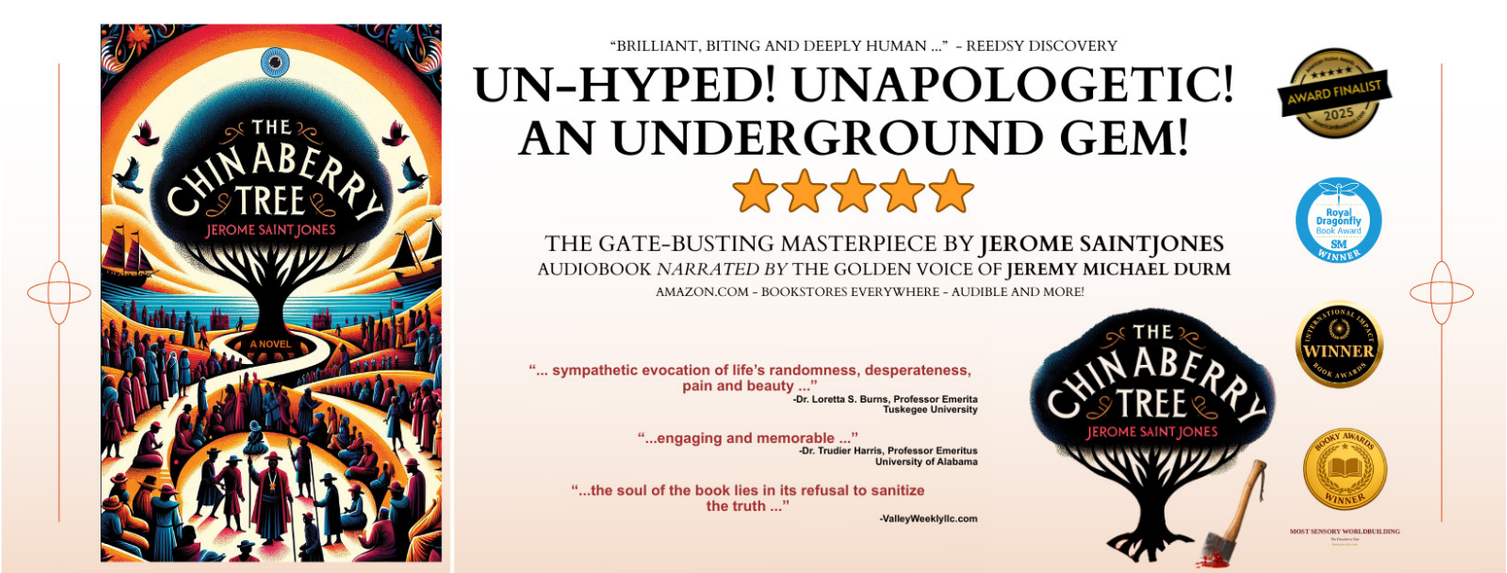
**1. CONGRESS.** The House and Senate are in recess until November 9. According to the Associated Press, House Democrats have prepared an ambitious 100-day agenda focused on affordability and far-reaching oversight of the administration if the party wins control on Tuesday. The agenda includes reinstating the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) tax breaks, reversing GOP Medicaid cuts, voting against the Iran war, and undoing the President's tariff regime. Last Friday, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) sent a Dear Colleague letter to fellow Democrats stating that he had created a Task Force of 100 Senate Democratic staffers to monitor and report on elections in 9 key states, and that he had also created a War Room "to help coordinate the post-Election Day overarching campaign against Trump's effort to steal the election." Read the full letter here: Schumer letter.

**2. THE WHITE HOUSE.** On Sunday, the President held his final in-person campaign events in Kansas and Iowa ahead of Tuesday's elections (he will hold tele-rallies today). In a blow to the administration's election strategy, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday rejected the Justice Department's plan to seize 20,000 California ballots that it claimed were sent to non-citizens. On Saturday, a federal judge in Miami dismissed the President's $10 billion defamation lawsuit against The Wall Street Journal over its reporting on the President's ties to Jeffrey Epstein. On Sunday, a federal judge in Alaska dismissed the Justice Department's bid to stop Alaska from certifying its U.S. Senate election if the GOP candidate loses, and ruled that the state cannot be forced to keep and segregate ballots from those who voted for independent candidate Daniel J. Sullivan (the administration said it would appeal the decision to the 9th Circuit).

**3. SUPREME COURT.** On Tuesday, the Supreme Court heard St. Mary Catholic Parish v. Roy, which asked whether the State of Colorado lawfully excluded a Catholic preschool from the state's universal preschool program because it refuses to admit LGBTQ children and children with LGBTQ parents. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit rejected the preschool's argument, ruling that the state's conditions were neutral and generally applicable to all preschools, regardless of religion – the kind of government action the Supreme Court held in 1990, in Employment Division v. Smith, does not normally violate the Constitution.

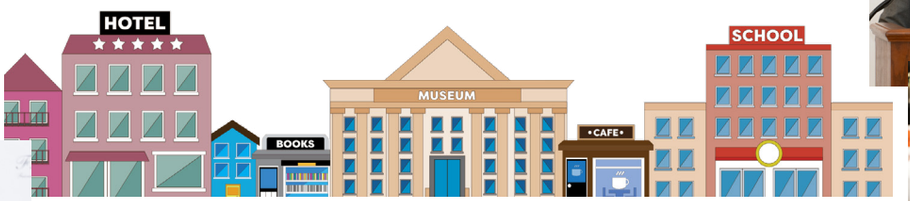
**4. HIGHER EDUCATION.** On October 29, the U.S. Department of Education finalized the Accreditation, Innovation, and Modernization (AIM) rule, which takes effect on July 1, 2027. The rule lowers barriers for new accreditors and makes it easier for institutions to switch accreditors. It also requires accreditors to evaluate schools based on completion, licensure pass rates, and earnings relative to cost. Colleges that deny transfer credit for comparable coursework must explain each denial in writing. Higher education advocates responded with mixed views: the Council for Higher Education Accreditation said many of the field's central concerns "remain largely unresolved," while the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) welcomed the transfer-credit protections but objected to expanded federal oversight of academic freedom and intellectual diversity. Institutions should begin reviewing their transfer, outcomes, and governance policies now.

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# AROUND TOWN

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