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POSITIVE | INSPIRATIONAL | EDUCATIONAL

The Valley Weekly

The Voice of the Valley

HUNTSVILLE • MADISON COUNTY • NORTH ALABAMA



Friday
November 13, 2026
Vol. 13, No. 11
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

AAMU to Host Third North Alabama Ag Expo

Agriculture and innovation in urban and rural communities will take center stage as Alabama A&M University welcomes families, farmers, students and agricultural enthusiasts to the Third Annual North Alabama Ag Expo on Saturday, November 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the University's Agribition Center.

The free event will feature the area's agricultural industry through interactive exhibits, sessions, live entertainment and activities for all ages. Hosted by AAMU and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and others, the expo highlights the people, programs and innovations shaping ag's future across North Alabama.

Families can enjoy a dedicated Kid Zone, live music from Jimmy Ray's Elderberry Wine band, line dancing led by Alabama Extension's Nkenge Hyter and opportunities to win door prizes. Free lunch will be provided to the first 500 attendees, and the first 100 children will receive complimentary T-shirts.

Tennessee Valley SAR Chapter Honors Vets

The Tennessee Valley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution secured a $25,000 Alabama 250 Commission grant for an America 250 monument honoring Revolutionary War Patriot John Wade Keyes in Athens, Alabama.



Keyes served in one of the first ten rifle companies authorized by the Continental Congress in June 1775. His unit marched 600 miles to join General George Washington at the outset of hostilities with Britain. In 2023, the Alabama Legislature recognized him as one of Alabama's first veterans. The grant will pay for most of the monument's costs.

SAR's Benny Hannah presents check to Athens mayor Ronnie Marks.

Drake, NextOp Announce MOU

Drake State Community & Technical College and NextOp have announced a new partnership focused on expanding education, workforce training, and career opportunities for transitioning service members, veterans, and military-connected individuals throughout North Alabama.

The partnership was formalized through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that connects Drake State's workforce development and academic programs with NextOp's military-transition expertise. Together, the organizations will help military-affiliated individuals access training, credentials, mentorship, career guidance, and pathways to high-demand careers while strengthening the region's talent pipeline.

'Skating in the Park' Returns for Winter Season

The Huntsville Museum of Art (HMA) will open the 15th season of Skating in the Park on Friday, Nov. 20, 2026.



The rink will remain open through Sunday, Jan. 3, 2027, welcoming families, friends and visitors to enjoy one of North Alabama's favorite holiday traditions.

"Skating in the Park has become a signature holiday tradition in Downtown Huntsville, bringing people together and creating lasting memories for families throughout the region," said Christopher Madkour, Executive Director of the Huntsville Museum of Art. "As we celebrate the rink's 15th season, we are proud to continue this tradition with the support the City of Huntsville and our community partners. Skating in the Park makes the holiday season special while encouraging residents and visitors to experience everything downtown has to offer."

Located directly behind the Huntsville Museum of Art in Big Spring Park, Skating in the Park will operate seven days a week, including holidays, with hours varying throughout the season.

Admission is $15 for ages 10 and older and $5 for children ages 9 and younger. Skate rentals are $5, and scooter rentals are $5. Tickets are available on-site. The rink will also host special events throughout the season, including DJ nights and a New Year's Eve celebration.

Skating in the Park is presented by Redstone Federal Credit Union.

For additional information about Skating in the Park, including hours and ticket details, visit hsvmuseum.org.

The Valley Weekly

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A&M Granted NCNW Charter

Alabama A&M University recently celebrated a new chapter in student leadership with the chartering of its National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) Collegiate Section. Held in the Clyde Foster Multipurpose Room, the ceremony united NCNW's legacy of service, advocacy, and sisterhood with AAMU's enduring motto, "Service Is Sovereignty."

The occasion carried a meaningful connection to the University. Dr. Lois Keith, chair of NCNW's Board and a 1972 AAMU alumna, returned to her alma mater to lead the official chartering, present the charter, and install the section's officers. Her participation linked generations of leadership while welcoming AAMU students into a national community committed to advancing women, families, and communities.

Reflecting on the occasion in a Facebook post, Keith recalled entering Alabama A&M as a 17-year-old freshman and returning decades later to welcome a new generation



of leaders into NCNW.

"The beautiful young charter members of NCNW are destined for greatness and they are indeed our future leaders," Keith wrote.

Sponsored by the Department of English & Modern Languages, the section came to fruition through collaboration among student organizers, faculty advisors, and NCNW leadership. Dr. Charlotte C. Teague, associate professor and department chair, serves as founding advisor, and Dr. Lynn Washington, assistant professor of English, serves as lead advisor. Departmental advisors Dr. Yolanda Toney and Ms. Charlotte Canady-Slater rounded out the faculty team supporting the section's establishment.

Dr. Kendra Lee, president of the NCNW Alabama State Coalition, provided additional leadership and support, helping connect the new collegiate section to the organization's statewide community.



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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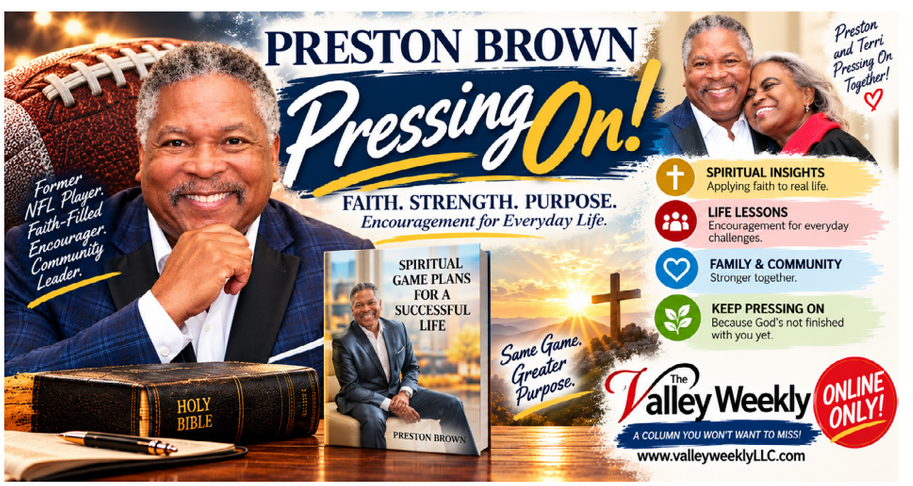
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The Valley Weekly

Publisher
The Valley Weekly, LLC

Editor-in-Chief
Dorothy W. Huston, Ph.D.

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

Editorial Assistant
Linda Burruss

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

Photographers
Anthony "Gip" Gibson
Jerome Saintjones

Website Administrator
Calvin Farier

Mailing Address:
The Valley Weekly
P. O. Box 893 - Huntsville, AL 35804
(256) 651-9028
www.valleyweeklyllc.com
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The Valley Weekly
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Making Impact and Building Legacy

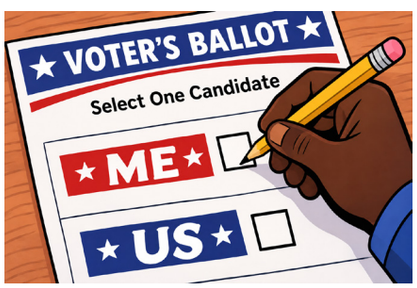
A New Chapter in Political Representation



The November 3, 2026, general election will be remembered as a defining moment in the political history of Huntsville and Madison County. In a county long dominated by Republicans, voters delivered significant victories to Democratic candidates, changing the composition of local government, the judiciary, and our state legislative delegation.

Perhaps most noteworthy was the election of three African American attorneys who are Democrats to the Madison County District Court. Kimberly Kelley Rucker and Jason M. Jones defeated Republican incumbents, each capturing approximately 54% of the vote. Raven Beach won the newly created District Court Place 5 judgeship with approximately 53%. That position was established following Governor Kay Ivey's reallocation of a judgeship from Jefferson County to Madison County.

These victories represent an important milestone for African American representation in our judicial system. They also remind us that the administration of justice must be grounded in fairness, integrity, and equal treatment under the law.



Another historic development was the election of Brett Jones as Madison County Sheriff, defeating Republican incumbent Kevin Turner. His election reflects a changing political landscape in which candidates from diverse backgrounds are competing successfully for positions of public trust.

The Democratic gains extended to the Alabama Legislature. Jared Sluss defeated incumbent Senator Sam Givhan in Senate District 7, while Rudolph Valentino Drake captured Senate District 2. In House District 25, Allison Montgomery defeated Republican incumbent Phillip Rigsby, becoming Alabama's first openly transgender state legislator.

Equally important, three incumbent Democratic state representatives retained their legislative seats. House Minority Leader Anthony Daniels of District 53 secured another term without opposition, while Representative Laura Hall of District 19 defeated Republican challenger Donald Barnes and Representative Marilyn Lands of District 10 successfully defended her seat against Republican Aaron Thomas. Their continued service provides experience and continuity alongside the newly elected members of the Madison County legislative delegation.

Together, these results demonstrate a significant shift in Madison County's political representation, even as Republicans maintain control of the Alabama Legislature.

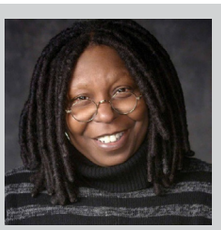
But elections are about more than political parties, historic firsts, or changing seats of power. They are about people, opportunity, accountability, and the responsibility that comes with public service.

Making impact requires leadership. Building legacy requires service. And history will ultimately judge both—not by the offices won, but by the lives they improve. Until next week ...

Dorothy

NOVEMBER 13 - WHOOPIE GOLDBERG - Caryn Elaine Johnson, known professionally as Whoopi Goldberg, is an American actor, comedian, author, and television personality. A recipient of numerous accolades, she is one of 17 entertainers to win the EGOT, which includes an Emmy Award, a Grammy Award, an Academy Award ("Oscar"), and a Tony Award. On her 46th birthday, she was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. On September 4, 2007, Goldberg became the new moderator and co-host of The View, replacing Rosie O'Donnell.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



Spiritual Game Plan

PRESTON BROWN'S



Today's Spiritual Game Plan:

"The Man in the Mirror"

Matthew 7:3, Jesus says, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank that is in your own eye?"

When it comes to dealing with people and their issues, we tend to look through a magnifying glass at their problems and their mistakes. But what we should be using is a mirror so we can see our own mistakes. You see, we all have issues, and sometimes when we see something in a person that makes us angry or upset, we are really looking at something inside ourselves that we have to deal with. So we have to decide, "Am I going to focus on their issues or my issues?" The key to loving our neighbors as we love ourselves is to put down the magnifying glass, pick up the mirror, and ask God, "What do I need to change in my life to be all that I can be for your glory?" Remember: if we want to make this world a better place, we have to begin with the man in the mirror.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, allow us to not judge one another but instead love one another.

Question: Do you ever see mistakes in others that you don't see in yourself?

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:
"Gifts and Talents"

This Sunday's Lectionary

Sunday, November 15, 2026
Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost



(Track 2, Year A)
First Lesson:
Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18
Psalm 90:1-12
Second Lesson:
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
GOSPEL:
Matthew 25:14-30

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THE VALLEY WEEKLY

VALLEY DEATHS

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*Funeral services for **MS. ANNETTE DUNCAN** (b. 1962) and **MR. CHARLES PENN (b. 1934)** will be announced at a later date.*



*Funeral service for **MRS. ALLEAN KING** (b. 1935) will be Friday, November 13, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel, 2501 Carmichael Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala., at 12 p.,m.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. MILDRED SPRAGINS FIELDS** (b. 1934) was Monday, November 9, at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Wendell Davis officiating.*

*Funeral service for **MRS. MARY STEGER CARROLL** (b. 1947) was held Saturday, November 7, at First Missionary Baptist Church, 3509 Blue Spring Road NW, Huntsville, Ala.*

*Funeral service for **MR. CHARLES BIRDSONG** (b. 1944) was Saturday, November 7, at Potter's Hand Church Ministries, 983 Indian Creek Road NW, Huntsville, Ala..*

*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.*

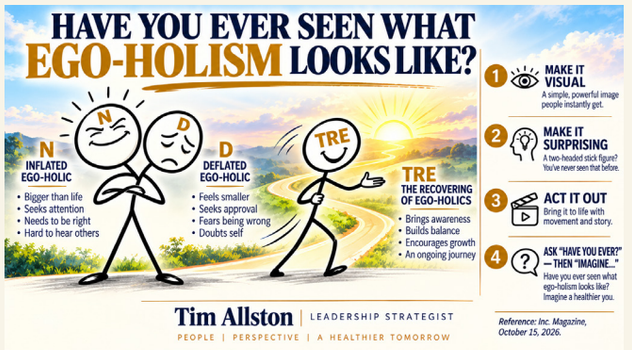
*Funeral service for **MS. CAROLYN ANN RAY** (b. 1947) was Monday, October 26, at Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America with Rev. Dr. Mitchell Walker officiating.*

*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.*

Have You Ever Seen What Leadership Looks Like?



Sometimes, the most powerful leadership lessons don't require an hour-long speech, a PowerPoint presentation, or even a thousand words.

Sometimes, 32 seconds will do.

That's what four NASA astronauts demonstrated during a recent appearance on Jimmy Fallon's television show.

Asked to describe the cramped quarters of their spacecraft, the astronauts didn't simply explain its dimensions. They stood together, formed a small circle, placed Fallon inside, and demonstrated how four adults worked together in that confined space. Thirty-two seconds. One unforgettable lesson.

Writing in Inc. magazine, Minda Zetlin highlighted four communication principles illustrated by the demonstration: Make it visual. Make it surprising. Act it out. Ask, "Have you ever . . .?"

Reading her article transported me back 23 years.

In 2003, I created an unusual self-portrait: a two-headed stick figure.

One head represented the inflated ego-holic, someone who thinks too highly of himself.

The other represented the deflated ego-holic, someone who thinks too little of himself.

Two heads. One body. One problem.

Ego-holism: one's distorted self image.

My discovery was that inflated and deflated egos, although seemingly opposites, can both interfere with effective leadership.

Today, technology offers an opportunity I couldn't have imagined in 2003.

What if those stick figures could move?

What if audiences could actually watch inflated and deflated egos behaving differently in identical leadership situations?

And what if a third character, "Tre," entered the picture?

Tre represents the recovering ego-holic (tre): someone learning to recognize, confront, and manage the ego problems that undermine relationships and leadership.

Notice I said "recovering," not recovered.

Because leadership development isn't a destination or recovery. It's an ongoing discipline, hence recovering.

Here's the larger lesson:

Leaders often confuse delivering information with communicating understanding.

We assume that because we explained something, people understood it.

But understanding doesn't necessarily follow explanation.

Sometimes people need to see what we're saying.

Sometimes they need to experience it.

And sometimes they need to recognize themselves in the picture.

So here's my question: Have you ever encountered someone whose ego seemed too big—or someone who believed theirs was too small?

Perhaps you've encountered both.

Perhaps you've been both.

Now imagine learning to recognize those behaviors before they damage your leadership.

That's when communication becomes more than information.

It becomes transformation.



Tim Allston
Leadership Player-Coach and Four-time Amazon
Best-Selling Author, "Leading from the Middle"
Contact: (256) 212-0949 - https://bit.ly/4aB9Lwm
Email Address: leadingfromthemiddle.tim@gmail.com
Website: www.timallston.com



The Valley Weekly Millennial Moment

by Gloria B. Caldwell

Comfortable Isn't Called ...

Have you ever gone back to something you already left? You didn't go back because it was right. You went back because it was familiar. You knew the hallways. You knew the rules. You knew what it would give you, and you knew what it wouldn't.

It wasn't horrible. That's the trap.

Horrible is easy to leave. Comfortable is not.

It can be a job, a relationship, or a habit. It can be a church seat you sit in but don't grow in, or a friendship that only knows the old you. It feeds you something, like a check, a routine, or a sense of being needed. So you stay fed and call it fine. But fed is not the same as growing.



You feel it before you can say it. There's frustration with no clear source. There's a tired that sleep doesn't fix. There's the quiet knowing: I'm not supposed to be here.

Leaving is not simple. It's hard to walk away from something that feeds you. So don't start by walking. Start by naming.

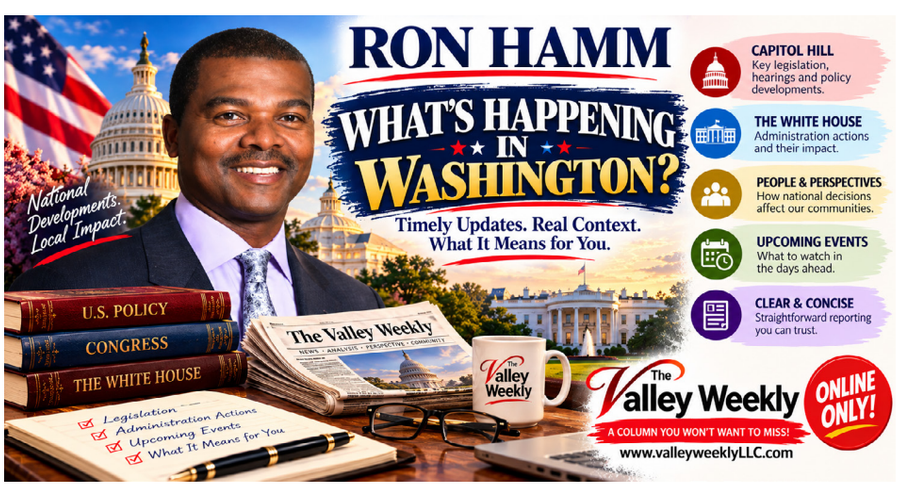
Name what it gives you. Then ask God, and ask yourself, where else that need can be met. Build that bridge before you burn the old one.

Then set a date, because "someday" is how comfortable becomes permanent.

Alignment isn't a feeling. It's a decision you keep making. You were not created to stay recognizable. You were created to expand.

God loves you, and so do I.

He has given you a gift; open it.



The Valley Weekly

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

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
Normal, Ala. | 7 p.m.

December 25
Christmas Day

December 29
Women's Basketball
vs. Allen University
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 6 p.m.

December 30
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. William Carey
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. |

January 1 (2027)
New Year's Day

January 2
Women's Basketball
vs. UAPB
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 2 p.m.

Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. UAPB
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 4 p.m.

January 4
Women's Basketball
vs. Mississippi Valley
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 5:30 p.m.

Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. Mississippi Valley
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 7:30 p.m.

January 16
Women's Basketball
vs. Alabama State
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 2 p.m.

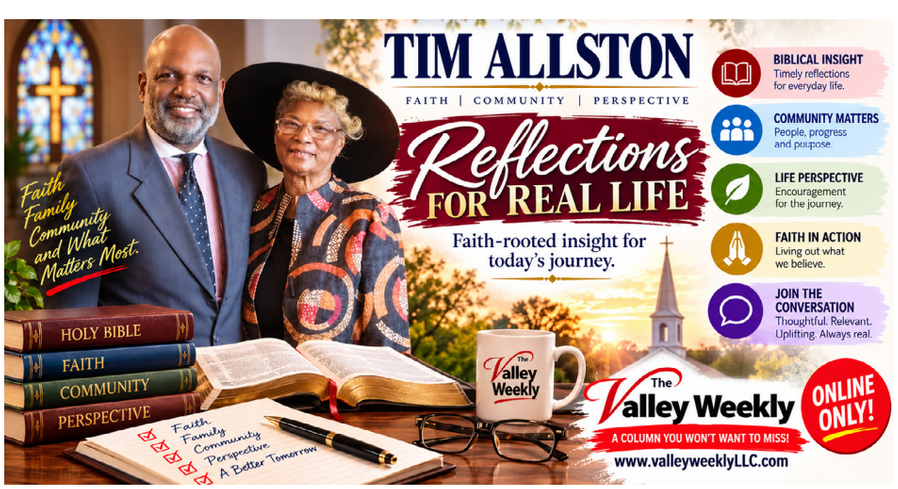
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. Alabama State
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 4 p.m.

January 21
Women's Basketball
vs. Prairie View A&M
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 6 p.m.

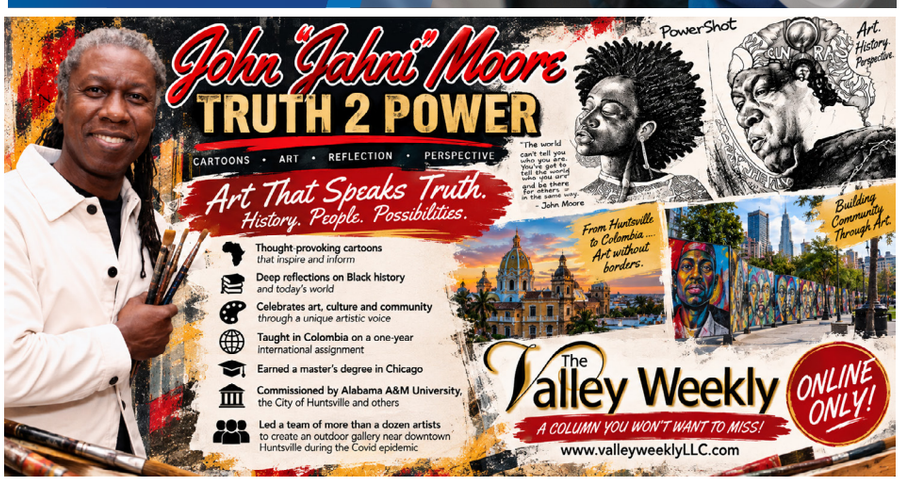
January 23
Women's Basketball
vs. Texas Southern
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center | 2 p.m.

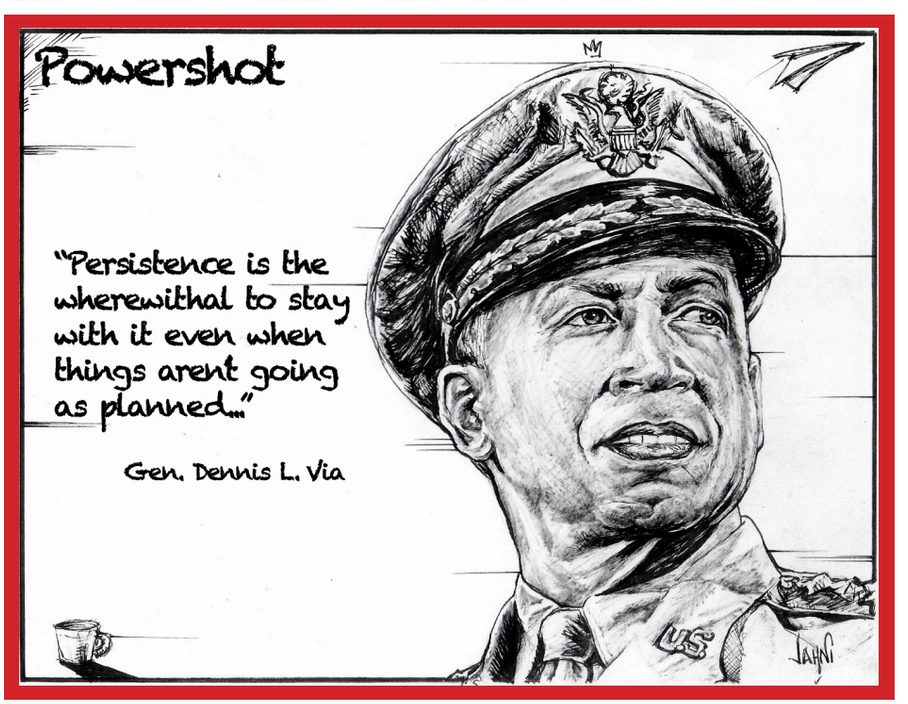
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. Texas Southern
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center
Normal, Ala. | 4 p.m.

January 25
Bulldog Men's Basketball
vs. Prairie View A&M
Alabama A&M University
The Event Center











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

Dr. Dorothy Downing

Dr. Dorothy Downing was born the second of 13 loving children to the union of the late J. D. and Dorothy Louise Downing. She attended and became a proud product of Hillcrest High School. A "family first generation" pioneer and trailblazer, she is a 1972 graduate of historic Alabama A&M University. She later went on to earn the Master of Business Administration degree from her beloved AAMU, as well.

To all who know her well, Dr. Downing is the consummate AAMU fan and is immensely proud of the Downing Family Tradition at AAMU. That tradition was not only celebrated by AAMU, but it also became a powerful fountain of pride of seven graduating siblings. Thus, today that Downing Family Tradition has expanded to include these siblings' children, their grandchildren and generations to come! "Rich in Heritage Divine!"

Dr. Downing's impressive career traces its start to AAMU's Career Development Services office, where she was prepared and selected for the Supply Intern Program for the U.S. Army's Army Materiel Command. Her first two-year assignment with the Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM) in Warren, Michigan, was extended for two additional years. Her extensions and titles expanded, and she became a Maintenance Logistics Management Specialist for several years as part of her lengthy affiliation with the Army Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal in Alabama.

The Normalite boasts multiple assignments in the Continental United States (CONUS) and Outside (OCONUS). Among her other career highlights are two tours - US Pentagon; Headquarters, Department of the Army and overseas tours to Hawaii; South Korea and assigned Latin America countries. The First Tour was in 1989 for the Department of the Army (HQDA) as Staff Officer, Missiles. She temporarily replaced GM Supervisor (who was on maternity leave) in the Regional Division, where she managed the logistics impacting multiple Latin American countries and later received the HQDA Commanding General's Award.



On her Second Tour, Dr. Downing was HQDA Staff Officer for Army Aviation Maintenance Systems. Again, she earned the HQDA Commanding General Award. Finally, on a Five-Year Tour; she was one of only six AMCOM employees selected to participate in Information Technology (IT) Computer Science Corporation (CSC)-led Army Design, Development Engineering Testing; Production and Deployment of the Army's Logistics Modernization Program (LMP).

Dr. Downing has been active as the Chaplain for the Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association, Inc. She is an active member of the True Light Church of God in Christ, led by Elder Dr. Terrell Harris, founder and pastor, along with his wife, Dr. Hattie Pearl Harris.

"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.*

Apprenticeships: Drake Partners with Blue Origin

Drake State Community & Technical College is partnering with Blue Origin to prepare Huntsville residents for careers in space manufacturing through ATLAS (Advanced Training & Learning Academy for Space), a registered apprenticeship program that combines technical education with hands-on industry experience.

The program launched in Alabama in October with an inaugural cohort of 10 machinist apprentices. Participants divide their time between classroom instruction at Drake State and paid, hands-on training at Blue Origin's manufacturing facilities, developing the specialized skills required to produce hardware for spaceflight.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to strengthening Huntsville's skilled workforce while creating pathways for residents to participate in the region's growing aerospace, defense and advanced manufacturing industries.

"Partnerships like this connect education directly to opportunity," said Dr. Patricia Sims, president of Drake State Community & Technical College. "As Huntsville continues to grow as a center for aerospace and advanced manufacturing, we have a responsibility to ensure that members of our community have access to the skills and training these industries require. By working with Blue Origin, we are creating pathways to careers that offer economic mobility, while helping employers develop the skilled workforce they need."

ATLAS offers an earn-while-you-learn model that allows apprentices to receive full-time salaries and benefits from their first day of employment. Unlike traditional, for-credit education pathways, the program does not require a four-year degree. Instead, apprentices develop industry-specific competencies through a combination of classroom instruction, technical training and supervised production experience.

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NAACP Applauds Immense Black Voter Turnout in 2026 Midterm Elections

The NAACP recently recognized the historic voter turnout, underscoring the decisive role Black voters played in the 2026 midterm elections, helping shape outcomes across the country and once again demonstrating the unmatched power of civic participation.

From major cities to rural communities, Black voters turned out in strong numbers, helping advance candidates and ballot measures focused on protecting democracy, expanding economic opportunity, safeguarding fundamental rights, and ensuring government remains accountable to the people it serves.

As election results continue to be finalized, one outcome is already clear: Black voters showed up.

"Once again, Black voters have proven that we are not bystanders in this country, we are its builders," said Derrick Johnson, President and CEO of the NAACP. "The Trump Administration tried every trick in the book to block voters from the polls, but we showed up and showed out, and we voted. This election's outcomes are not the finish line. They're a reminder that we the people have the power. And keeping that power requires us to vote, hold elected officials accountable, and fight for our freedom."

Throughout the election cycle, the NAACP's multi-million dollar GOTV program engaged voters through organizing, voter education, grassroots outreach, digital engagement, leadership development, and Election Protection efforts. Working alongside local branches, youth leaders, faith partners, coalition allies, and 52,000+ volunteers, the organization encouraged participation in communities of color.

According to preliminary reports from NAACP organizers across the country, Black voters and volunteers played a critical role in determining outcomes in key federal, state, and local races while helping elevate issues that directly impact the health, safety, and economic well-being of their communities.

"The story of this election is not just about who won," said Dominik Whitehead, Chief of Field for the NAACP. "It's about the Black wave of voters who understood what was at stake and made their voices heard.

People stood in long lines, overcame obstacles, and remained committed to their communities. Their participation helped shape the direction of this country, and it demonstrated the strength of grassroots organizing when it is rooted in trust, relationships, and local leadership."

The efforts of Black voters led to many historic victories, such as Keisha Lance-Bottoms in Georgia, the first Black woman to be elected Governor; Melat Kiros in Colorado, a Black woman and the first Gen Z woman elected to Congress; David Crowley in Wisconsin, the state's first Black governor; Aaron Ford in Nevada, the state's first Black governor; Abdul El-Sayed in Michigan, the first Muslim American ever elected to the U.S. Senate, and so many more.

In the lead-up to Election Day, Black early and absentee voting ran well ahead of 2022 in states like Georgia, Florida, Texas, and Michigan. Increases in early and absentee voting ranged from +20% in Georgia to +53% in Texas compared with the same point in 2022.

Estimated ballot return rates were up in every state, led by Texas (+17.3 points). In Texas, Florida, and Georgia, all of the growth came from early in-person voting, as mail ballots have declined (note that this does not include Election Day data). And in states like Mississippi, reports on the ground show the tremendous Black voter turnout that overwhelmed polling places in many parts of the state.

Across the country, one thing is clear: when Black communities organize, we win.

The NAACP emphasized that meaningful progress depends on more than Election Day victories. The Association called on elected leaders at every level to honor the voices of voters by advancing policies that protect civil rights, strengthen economic opportunity, expand access to quality education and healthcare, safeguard voting rights, and address the persistent inequities facing Black communities nationwide.

As a nonpartisan organization, the NAACP supports policies, not politicians, and is committed to holding all elected officials accountable regardless of party affiliation.

For more information on how the NAACP turned out and protected voters during the 2026 Midterm Elections, NAACP.org/vote.

- NAACP.org

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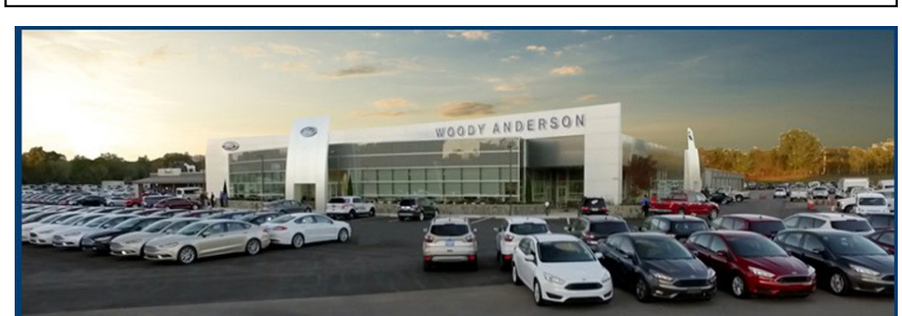


Craig E Satterfeal
Financial Consultant
craig.satterfeal@thrivent.com
connect.thrivent.com/craig-satterfeal
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256-539-9441
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Here are the top issues and events in Washington, D.C., for this week:

1. THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS. By stunning margins, Democrats won control of both chambers last Tuesday. In the House, Democrats now hold at least 253 seats to the GOP's 162, well past the 218 votes needed to take control, with 20 races yet to be called. More than 30 incumbent Members of Congress lost their seats. In the Senate, the party flipped 7 seats: Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, Maine, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas, giving Democrats 54 seats to the Republicans' 44. Two seats in Alaska and Mississippi remain undeclared. In Mississippi, Democrat Scott Colom leads Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith 49.1% to 48.8% and Mississippi does not allow recounts, so the winner will be decided by plurality. In Alaska, Democrat Mary Peltola leads Sen. Dan Sullivan 48.2% to 47.9% and the race could go to a ranked-choice count.

2. CONGRESS. The House and Senate returned Monday for the lame-duck session. The bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees will meet this week to discuss next steps on wrapping up FY2027 appropriations — for which a stopgap bill keeping the federal gov't open expires on Dec 11. Congress also must decide on next steps for the annual defense authorization bill, the farm bill, the surface transportation bill, and the WRDA bill — among other items. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) is expected to force a vote this week to impeach Secretary of Defense/War Pete Hegseth (requiring only a simple majority vote to pass). The Senate this week takes up a bipartisan permitting reform bill.
Leadership elections: House Republicans held their leadership elections Tuesday. Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) has said he will not run for House Minority Leader, and Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) and Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) are competing for the top job. Senate Republicans also vote Tuesday and are expected to elect Sen. John Thune (R-SD) Minority Leader — although Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) is leading a fight to delay the vote. House Democrats will hold their leadership elections Nov. 18 and 19. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) is projected to be the first Black Speaker of the House and Minority Whip Katherine Clark (D-MA) will run for Majority Leader, which would make her the first woman to hold that position. Senate Democrats are expected to hold their leadership elections in December but have not set a date.

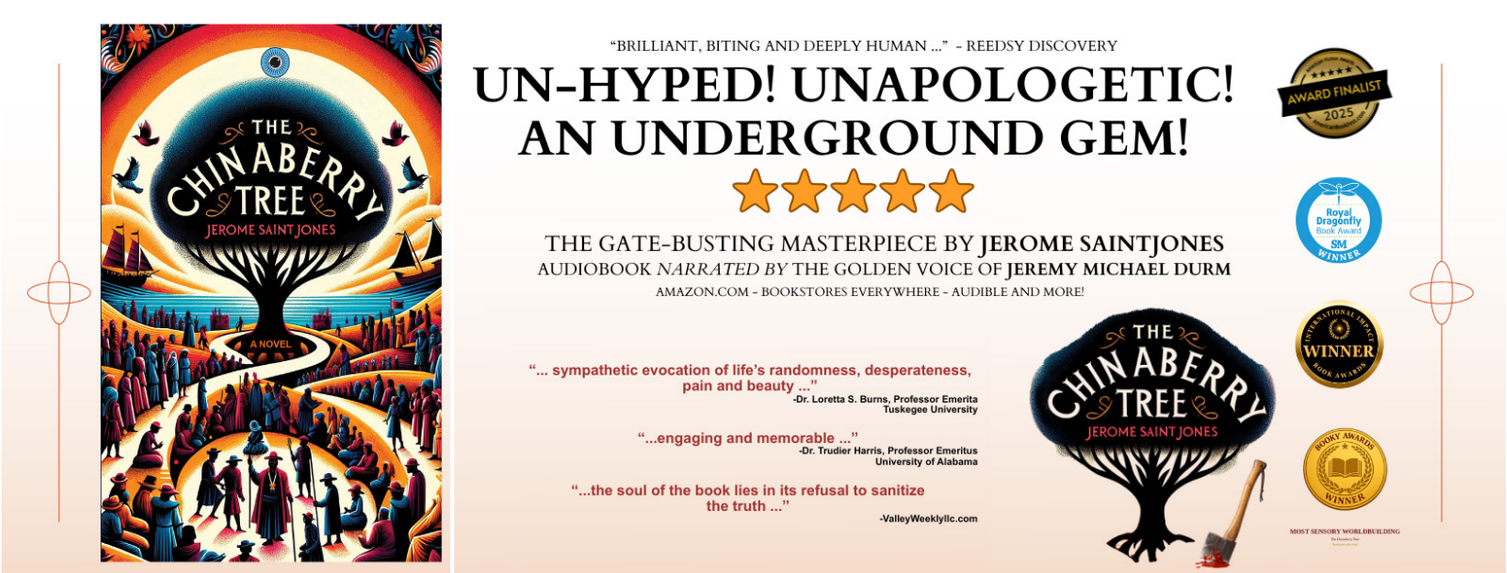
New Member orientation: Orientation for new Members of the 120th Congress began Nov. 8 and runs through Nov. 18, and it includes the room lottery, where members draw numbers that decide who gets the best office space for the next two years. More than 95 new members are expected to join, potentially the largest freshman class in 34 years.

3. THE WHITE HOUSE. On Friday, the President announced that Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller will be promoted to Chief of Staff, replacing Susie Wiles, starting today. A federal judge temporarily blocked the President's proposed "triumphal arch" in Washington, just hours after the National Capital Planning Commission voted to give final approval to the project Thursday night. D.C. District Court Judge Tonya S. Chutkan granted the D.C. and Virginia governments' request for a temporary restraining order late Thursday, halting the administration's efforts to begin construction for at least 14 days. Last week, 3 key officials at the Justice Department resigned following Tuesday's elections that swept Democrats into power: (1) Assistant Attorney General John Eisenberg who was in charge of leak investigations; (2) U.S. Attorney Jason Reding Quiñones who led the "grand conspiracy" investigation targeting the President's political foes and the May indictment of former Cuban President Raúl Castro; and (3) Civil Rights Division Chief Harmeet Dhillon who led crackdowns on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies and campus antisemitism.

4. SUPREME COURT. On Tuesday, the Court heard Department of Labor v. Sun Valley Orchards, as to how much power a federal agency has to fine citizens without going to court. In this case, the Labor Department — after inspecting Sun Valley Orchards in rural New Jersey — levied more than $212,000 in civil penalties and nearly $370,000 in back wages. The farm argued that when the government seeks significant monetary penalties, the Constitution requires an Article III court with access to a jury trial under the Seventh Amendment. The Third Circuit agreed, relying in part on the Supreme Court's 2024 decision in SEC v. Jarkesy. A DOL loss could force the agency to sue agricultural employers in court.

5. OCTOBER JOBS REPORT. The Labor Department announced last week that employers added 165,000 jobs in October, up from 60,000 in September, and the unemployment rate dipped from 4.2% to 4.1%. Economists had expected only 59,000 jobs. The report also included upward revisions adding 84,000 jobs to August and September. Employment grew most in professional and business services, health care, and transportation and warehousing. Average hourly earnings rose 0.4 percent in October and 3.1 percent over the past year.

Hamm Consulting Group
1717 K Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 596-8384
rhamm@hammconsulting.com
www.hammconsulting.com





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November 5, 2026 | Charger Theatre | UAH
Huntsville, Alabama (Photos by Jerome Saintjones)













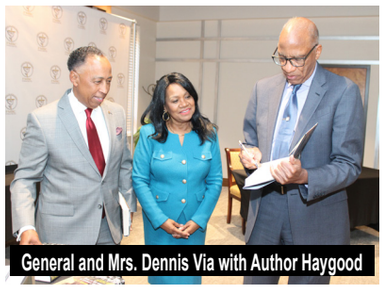


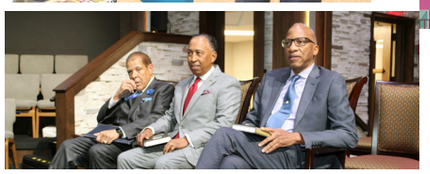


AROUND TOWN

The Valley Weekly LLC




General and Mrs. Dennis Via with Author Haygood



Noted Author Wil Haygood Revisits Huntsville Addresses New Book: "The War Within a War"

November 8, 2026 | First Missionary Baptist Church | Huntsville, Ala.

(Event/Stender Reception Photos by J. Saintjones; Official Event Photos by Greg Miley)


Wil Haygood and Pro Football Hall of Famer John Stallworth

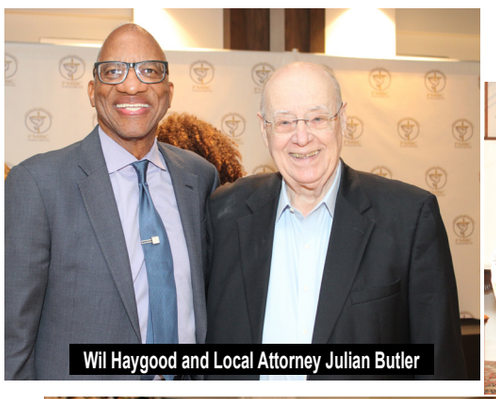


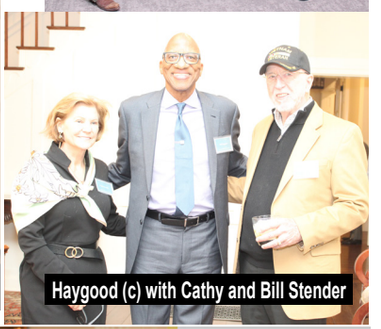

Artist John Moore (r) presents art work to Gen. Via








Wil Haygood and Local Attorney Julian Butler


Haygood (c) with Cathy and Bill Stender




Bill Stender


General Via Moderates Haygood Book Discussion






Catherine Willis (2nd, left) and Dorothy W. Huston join The Stallworths


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