

How to Successfully Navigate 2024 Scam-Free - p. 8

FREE



A&M's 'Climate-Smart' Practices - p. 7

Friday
January 19, 2024
Vol. 10, No. 20
ValleyWeeklly.com

The Valley Weekly

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mrs. Effie Gaines

"The mind longs for what it has missed." - Petronius

Judy Collins Set for Rocket City



American singer-songwriter and musician Judy Collins will appear at Mars Music Hall on February 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Born in Seattle, the 84-year-old Grammy Award-winning recording artist has produced nearly 40 studio albums in numerous genres.

OU Names Alum to AVP Post

Dr. Dawn M. Turner has been announced as Oakwood University's Assistant Vice President for Research and Faculty Development and Director for Adult & Continuing Education (LEAP).



Dr. Turner, a graduate of Oakwood University, brings over 20 years of dynamic experience in contracts and program management to her pivotal role as an Assistant Vice President.

Throughout her illustrious career, she has adeptly navigated complex contracts and overseen multifaceted programs for leading consulting firms, private sector organizations, and federal agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Her scholarly pursuits have centered around knowledge management in federal contexts, culminating in earning a Doctor of Management degree from the University of Maryland University College (now Global Campus).



LANDMARK: Rev. Randy B. Kelley of Lakeside United Methodist Church is shown above with statues of Black World War II soldiers in San Diego, Calif. (via Facebook)

Huntsville to Expand VBC Concert Hall

The Mark C. Smith Concert Hall will undergo the most extensive changes in its history after the City approved a \$15.3 million contract with Turner Construction Company. The project includes a 12,000-square-foot addition to the facility of about 12,000 square feet as well as about 6,000 square feet of renovated backstage space.

The construction is expected to take about a year to complete.

Von Braun Center Executive Director Steve Maples said the improvements

could be a prelude to iconic Broadway shows like "Phantom of the Opera" or "The Lion King" playing in Huntsville. In fact, Maples said representatives from the "Phantom of the Opera" production in New York traveled to Huntsville to review the concert hall and recommend enhancements.

Maples explained larger theater productions place more demands on a facility, including catering areas and dressing rooms. Those areas would be expanded as part of the agreement.

- huntsvilleal.gov

AAMU Alum Urged to Join Oral History Project

Alabama A&M University alumni are encouraged to participate in the ongoing oral history project which captures the stories of Bulldog Nation



in preparation for the 150th Anniversary Celebration in 2025. The Office of Alumni Affairs is partnering with Publishing Concepts Inc. (PCI) to commemorate the University's remarkable history and the contributions of our vibrant alumni community.

This milestone effort is not just about looking

back; it's about sharing stories and shaping the legacy of AAMU for the future. This project highlights the stories, moments, and personal journeys that define what it means to be part of AAMU.

Learn more about how to complete your interview for inclusion in this historic effort at www.aamu.edu.

The Valley Weekly

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Scenes from 2024 Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade

Sponsored by the Delta Theta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Saturday, January 13, 2024 - Downtown Huntsville - 12 Noon

([CLICK HERE](#) for More Photos by Jerome Saintjones)



The Valley Weekly

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The Valley Weekly

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THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**

**SERENITY FUNERAL HOME**

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www.serenityfuneralhm.com

Funeral service will be announced soon for MS. DEAN-DRA DANIEL (b. 1989) and MR. ISAAC DANIELS (b. 1933).

Funeral service for MR. CLEIVER MORALES DIAZ (b. 2000) will be held Saturday, January 20, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel at 2 p.m.

Funeral service for MR. JOHN COLEMAN (b. 1955) was held Saturday, January 13, at Union Chapel M.B. Church.

NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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

Funeral service for MR. LAWRENCE JONES, JR. (b. 1939) was Sunday, January 14, at the House of Hope and Restoration with Pastor Jarman Leatherwood officiating.

Funeral service for MOTHER ADA HARDIN WILLIAMS (b. 1936) was Saturday, January 13, at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Hernandez Ford officiating.

Funeral service for MR. MOAT BALLARD (b. 1930) was Saturday, January 13, at Saint Andrew Primitive Baptist Church (1393 Swancott Road, Madison, Ala.) with Pastor Calvin Moore officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW
Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481
www.royalfh.com

Funeral service for MR. VAN KENT JONES (b. 1954) was Tuesday, January 16, at the Royal Chapel of Memories with Deacon William Harris officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. EMMA HODGES MILLER (b. 1932) was Sunday, January 14, at the Royal Chapel of Memories.

Funeral service for MRS. GLORIA JEAN JOHNSON (b. 1948) was Sunday, January 14, at the Madison Mission Seventh-day Adventist (183 Shelton Road, Madison, Ala.).

Funeral service for MR. CHARLIE LEE FOWLKS, JR. (b. 1940) was Saturday, January 13, at the Royal Chapel of Memories with Pastor Latonia Malone Crutcher officiating.

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

**"Better IN 2024"**

In Jeremiah 29:11, it says, *I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not harm you, a plan to give you hope and a future.*

You know, God has a long range plan for each and every one of us. No matter how good things are now, they can be better. No matter how bad things are now, they can get better. You see, God has only one thing in mind for your

future, and that's better. He wants us to be better spiritually, better emotionally, and even better financially.

I can remember losing my wife of thirty years and I kept thinking how can things get better? How can this be God's plan for my life? Because she was only fifty-one years old. Now, I've learned that many people lose loved ones in their lives and when we do, we have to make the decision to either "get

busy living or get busy dying". The choice is ours. But the thing that helps is when we partner with God and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Nothing can stop his plan for our lives.

So, no matter what you have been through or what you are going through right now, it is all in his good and perfect will for your life. So let us lean not on our own understanding and trust that God has a great plan for our lives.

Prayer: Most merciful God, continue to lead us and guide us through the storms of life and give us the faith that we need to endure.



Question: Has there ever been a time in your life when you believed that things could not get any better?

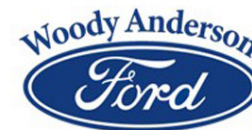
What did you do?
What can you do?

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, Westbow Books or, if you have a PayPal account, email me at prestonbrown81@gmail.com, and I will send you an autographed copy.

NEXT WEEK:
"Realizing Your Full Potential"

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**"The mass of men
lead lives of
quiet desperation."**

- Thoreau

The Valley Weekly
VALLEY
EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

January 19

Comedy
 Katt Williams
 Propst Arena
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.
 8 p.m.

January 20

Huntsville Havoc vs. Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs
 Propst Arena
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala. - 7 p.m.

Huntsville Symphony
 Orchestra
 Mark C. Smith Concert
 Hall
 Von Braun Center
 7:30 p.m.

January 20-21

Collectors & Shooters Gun
 Show
 South Hall 2
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.

January 21

Harlem Globetrotters
 Propst Arena
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.
 3 p.m.

Southern Vintage Flea
 East Hall 2 & 3
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.

January 23

Pineapple Awards Dinner
 Saturn Ballroom 1
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.

January 26

Concert
 American Spiritual Ensemble
 Host: Huntsville Chamber
 Music Guild
 Trinity United Methodist
 Church
 Huntsville, Ala.

January 26-27

BTL Presents "STOMP"
 Mark C. Smith Concert
 Hall
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.

February 1

"Feathered February"
 Huntsville Botanical Garden
 Tickets: hsvbg.org/featheredfebruary
 Huntsville, Ala.

February 2

Mardi Gras at MidCity
 MidCity & The Camp
 Huntsville, Ala.

February 7

Alabama Tactical Officers
 Association's Event
 5827 Oakwood Road
 Huntsville, Ala.
 8 a.m.

February 9

Crafting Social: A Special
 Galentine's Event
 Burritt on the Mountain
 Huntsville, Ala.
 5:30 p.m.

February 10

All Girls State Chess
 Championship
 Alabama School of Cyber
 Technology and Engineering
 9 a.m.

PowerShot

"You've always had
 the power my dear,
 you just had to
 learn it for
 yourself."

Glinda the Good Witch



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*"... And die of nothing
 but a rage to live."*

- Alexander Pope

JANUARY 19 - ANTOINE FUQUA - Antoine Fuqua is an American film director and producer. Initially active as a music video director, he has worked primarily in the action and thriller film subgenres. Fuqua's movies consistently perform well at the box office; he is best known for his Academy Award-winning film *Training Day* (2001). Before launching into feature films in 1998, he began his career directing music videos for popular artists such as Toni Braxton, Coolio, Stevie Wonder and Prince.



- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org

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*"If equal affection cannot be,
 let the more loving be me."*

- W. H. Auden

Prolonging Happiness ...

Millennial Moment by Gloria B. Caldwell

How Long ...

What things are in your morning thoughts? What consumes your mind throughout the day? What is that one thing you can't shake? When your mind goes idle ... it goes back to it. Whatever that thing is, it's what you are allowing to control you.

Is it something positive, or negative? Is it pain, disappointment, or dreams and goals? You need to understand that you can only have one thought at a time. What thought is your thought of choice today?

Reliving hurt and pain that has probably been there over a long period of time, is not conducive to achieving your greatness, or betterment.

It's actually inimical to that which you desire to be. So why allow that to control your destiny? Get over it, forgive it, and move on. This continual thought

that is haunting you has no place setting up residence in your mind. Evict it!!! Replace it with a goal, desire ... want.

You don't have one (a goal)? That definitely means you've been dwelling on your past for too long! Take a moment to reset your mind.

Write out something positive to think of. Look at that every morning, and every night.

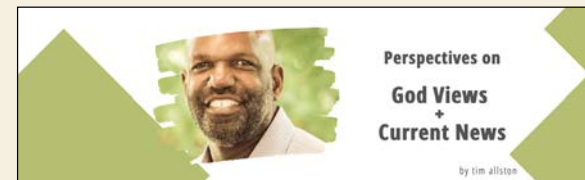
Hopefully, it's something you want to move towards. Whether it's happiness, a business idea, a talent you want to develop, or to

figure out your gift (because you do have one): Be intentional about what your mind frequents!

How long will you be held captive by unforgiveness, dismay, old wounds? Set yourself free! It's your decision. Focus on new life, new love, new hopes, and big dreams. If you set yourself up for that, it will keep you busy and, I promise, in time, you will see gain as opposed to pain!

How long will you prolong happiness? It's up to you.

Don't delay!
Go get it!



Corrections begin at the T.O.P.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." - 1 John 1:9

When top leaders from the business, public service, and sports/entertainment worlds admit errors and apologize, it sends a powerful message of what true servant leadership should demonstrate.

- On January 6, the Federal Aviation Administration grounded some 171 Boeing 737 Max 9 airplanes after a Boeing-manufactured Alaska Airlines flight lost a door plug in mid-air. On January 9th, Boeing CEO Dave Calhoun told employees, "We're going to approach this (by number one acknowledging our mistake" https://news.yahoo.com/boeing-ceo-alaska-airlines-incident-004523173.html?fr=yhssrp_catchall;
- Following his hospitalization for an apparent prostate cancer diagnosis - a hospitalization so secret that neither the White House nor top Pentagon brass



knew, seen as a possible threat to national security - US defense secretary says he takes 'full responsibility' for secret hospitalisation | US news | The Guardian. "I recognise I could have done a better job ensuring the public was appropriately informed. I commit to doing better, . . . But this is

important to say: this was my medical procedure, and I take full responsibility for my decisions about disclosure"; and

- On January 6, the National Basketball Association reinstated four-time NBA champion and All-Star Draymond Green after he missed 12 Golden State Warriors games due to his league "indefinite suspension" for striking an opponent in the face. "I am not one to apologize for things I mean to do, but I do apologize to Jusuf (Nurkic) because I didn't intend to hit him" and later added, "I've cost this team enough."

It's always important and refreshing when mishaps occur - whether individually or corporately - that top leaders step forward and assume responsibility for the incident or infraction. More importantly, these leaders then announce some corrective actions as resolutions.

According to leadership author Mike Bonem, leadership hinges upon influence and relationships. Therefore Dave Calhoun, Lloyd Austin, and Draymond Green have extended their influence and relationships beyond their official business, public service, and sports/entertainment spheres.

Be a T.O.P. Dog!

- Now, you and I must do the same as these top leaders did recently by
1. Targeting a problem in our face;
 2. Owning the problem as our own - and not playing the "blame game"; and then
 3. Proceed to take corrective actions.



Tim Allston
Leadership Player-Coach & Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author
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TARCOG Launches First Employee of the Month

The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG), which combines city, county, state and federal entities to help improve the northeast Alabama region, has launched a new internal initiative.

LaTanya D. Rhines, elder law attorney, has been selected as TARCOG's very first Employee of the Month!

Rhines has worked at TARCOG for more than 24 years, providing legal assistance and advice to senior adults.

Growing up, Atty.



Rhines split her career interest between becoming a lawyer or an English professor. While she does not admit to having any true, world heroes, she often has been influenced by people she has witnessed in their everyday lives.

"These are not necessarily famous people, but they are people I have seen in my family and community who exhibit strength, resilience and integrity."

Her personal list of top human beings also includes "people who choose to do the right thing, even when it is not easy or popular."

Rhines said she will endeavor to make personal health a key concern and will "enjoy each day as it comes."

Michelle Gilliam serves as executive director of TARCOG.

ON THIS DAY



On January 19, 1969, the University of California-Los Angeles renames its social science buildings in honor of UCLA alumnus and Nobel Laureate Ralph Johnson Bunche.

- blackfacts.com

This Sunday's Lectionary



Sunday, January 21, 2024
Third Sunday after
the Epiphany

(Track 2, Year B)

- First Lesson:
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:6-14
Second Lesson:
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
GOSPEL:
Mark 1:14-20



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

Mrs. Effie Gaines



One of Huntsville's local heroines is known to many as Mrs. Effie Gaines. She is also affectionally known throughout the church community as "Mother Gaines," and she is known to her family and close friends simply as "Madea," and "Mu"; and "Aunt Effie" to everyone else.

Gaines is the youngest child of the late Al and Laura Douglas. She was married 39 years to the late Mr. Ruben Gaines, and she is the mother of their five children. Mrs. Gaines has extraordinarily juggled being a wife, mother, musician and chef with a warm smile and a soft "Yes, I will." Many know that all it takes is a request for a cake, pie, or homemade rolls for holidays or "just because," and Effie is the one to go to for a heavenly dessert.

Over the years, hundreds of grief-stricken families have called her to perform during home-going celebrations. A true servant, this very gifted and humble lady answers

whenever she is called upon to deliver her heartfelt and soothing music. Her music transforms the heaviness of mourning to a place of hope and peace. The sheer number of performance requests for weddings, funerals, and other church engagements are enormous and performed without an expectation of compensation.

Mrs. Gaines does not consider herself a great

pianist or soloist. She will only say, "I owe it all to God for the gift I have, and I do my best to give it back to Him through songs and praises. Whatever way I can be a servant as I travel this road, I reach out and I extend that helping hand, for I am walking in His will."

Gifted, humble, spirited, eloquent, and virtuous are words used when one describes Mrs. Gaines.

"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.



"A writer should get as much education as possible, but just going to school is not enough; if it were, all owners of doctorates would be inspired writers."

- Gwendolyn Brooks

'Go Red' Affair Scheduled for February

The Central North Alabama Alumnae (CNAA) Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and the Rouge Foundation will present "ROUGE – A Go Red Event: The Silver Anniversary Collection."

The event will be held at the Von Braun Center, East Hall 1, in Downtown Huntsville on February 10, 6-11:30 p.m.

This night of elegance will feature community leaders, business owners and influencers who are selected as model ambassadors to advocate for heart health. Proceeds will benefit the American Heart Association as well as fund CNAA's programs.

According to the Cen-

ter for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cardiovascular disease is a prominent and fatal ill-



ness in women within the United States.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, is committed to advocating for local and inter-

national communities to bring awareness of various program initiatives. The CNAA Chapter proudly serves Lawrence, Limestone and Morgan counties.

Wear radiant red cocktail attire, put on dancing shoes and preparing for a night of fashion, fun, and fundraising for a tremendous cause! Cocktail Hour will begin at 6 p.m. and the ROUGE Program will follow at 7 p.m.

For ticket purchase information, visit cnaadst.org/services-5. Event sponsorships are available through The Rouge Foundation. You may contact therougefoundation@gmail.com for more information.

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AAMU to Foster 'Climate-Smart' Agroforestry Practices in Alabama



Three AAMU scientists in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences received a \$1.153 million grant to teach farmers how to select crops and trees that are resistant to climate change.

The grant is part of a 5-year, \$5 million grant awarded to four 1890 Agroforestry Consortium Institutions: Tuskegee University, Alabama A&M University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Virginia State University by The National Institute of Food and Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NIFA-NRCS).

Dr. Srinivasa Rao Mentreddy, Professor of Crop Science (AAMU Campus PI), Dr. Colmore Christian, Professor, Forestry, and Dr. Dedrick Davis, Associate Professor, Soil Physics, will

use the grant to promote climate-smart agroforestry alley cropping among marginal producers and landowners in Alabama.

“Climate-smart agriculture integrates adoption, adaptation and mitigation strategies for addressing climate change effects,” says Mentreddy. “In this project, we teach farmers by demonstrations, how to select crops that are adapted to combat climate change effects, mainly drought and heat stress. Crops can be adapted to stresses using cultivation practices such as selecting crops and trees that have low a carbon-foot print and sequester carbon by shedding leaves in winter, and using water effectively for fruits that fetch premium prices.”

“This project is led by Tuskegee University,” says Christian. “Alabama A&M University and University

of Maryland Eastern Shore will focus on promoting Agroforestry alley cropping specialty vegetable and medicinal herbs between rows of fig and persimmon trees by providing immersive training and education to ten farmers each in Alabama and Maryland.”

Tuskegee University and Virginia State University scientists will promote silvopasture, which integrates forage grasses and forest trees with livestock on ten farms each in Alabama and Virginia.

Mentreddy will be responsible for training marginal farmers in establishing and managing alley crops and fruit trees. Davis will assess greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration in the alley cropping systems, and Christian will recruit farmers and coordinate training activities with the help of

extension outreach professionals. The collaborator at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore will be responsible for determining cost-benefit ratios of the system by gathering data on production costs and market value of the produce from the participating farmers in three states, Alabama, Virginia, and Maryland.

“In this project we will promote fig and persimmon trees that have low carbon foot print and sequester carbon and their fruits fetch premium prices in the market,” says Mentreddy. “Alley crops such as Indian eggplants, mariachi and colored peppers, pumpkins, ginger,

and turmeric are drought tolerant and also fetch high prices for farmers.”

“These add carbon to the soil at the end of the season,” says Davis. “This system of growing fruit trees and high value vegetable and medicinal herbs will generate a steady stream of income throughout the year, improve farmer’s economic status and ensure sustainability overall in the face of climate change effects.”

The AAMU scientists say the process of selecting farmers has now begun and the alley cropping systems will be established on farms in early spring or summer of 2024.

“This project will sup-

port small-scale and other underserved producers and farmers in Alabama, Maryland and Virginia, with financial and technical assistance to transform their traditional production into a multi-pronged agroforestry-based climate-smart, sustainable production system,” say Drs. Mentreddy and Christian.

“Partners will form a marketing network for labelling, packaging, and branding CS commodities,” adds Davis. One AAMU graduate student will also receive full assistantship to pursue a Ph.D. in Plant and Soil Science.”

Left: Drs. Christian, Mentreddy and Davis



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A New Generation Of Service

How You Can Make 2024 the Year of Living Scam-Free

(BPT) - These days, many Americans do a lot of their shopping and charitable giving online. That is why it's important for consumers to be conscious of financial scams to protect their identities, bank accounts and monetary transactions. From check fraud and peer-to-peer digital payments (i.e., Zelle, Venmo, Paypal or CashApp) to imposters posing as representatives of banks, roughly three-quarters of Americans reported being targeted by scams last year.

The Consumer Bankers Association (CBA) recommends taking the following steps to minimize the possibility of falling victim yourself:

1. Be wary and slow down! Scammers sometimes send text messages or emails claiming to be a fraud alert from the app or your bank. If you don't recognize the email or phone number, you should proceed with caution. Don't open attachments or click links from unknown sources, even if they say they are coming from your bank. Like many online



scams, scammers will sometimes offer products at unrealistic prices to trick consumers, so resist demands to act quickly.

2. Don't give out personal information.

If a text message asks you to provide any PINs, passwords, Social Security numbers, account information or any other sensitive information, it is likely a scam. Banks rarely ask for this information over the phone and will never ask

for a one-time login code. If you have any suspicions, hang up and immediately call your bank.

3. Triple-check payments. And, if you are sending money over a payment app, check every number to ensure accuracy. Some apps prompt senders to verify the recipient's phone number or otherwise verify their identity. While this is important, double-check the recipient's account information

before you click send. Instant payment apps act like cash, so treat it as such.

"Fraudsters and scammers are getting more sophisticated to trick

consumers out of their own money. That's why it's so important to be mindful before making a payment to someone, providing any personal information, and especially before giving your bank information to anyone," CBA President and CEO Lindsey Johnson said. "Please be vigilant and encourage others to do the same."

The Consumer Bankers Association and its membership comprising the nation's leading consumer retail banks encourage consumers to protect their own information and money to avoid falling victim to scams and fraud. More information can be found at www.consumerbankers.com.

*"You can't
sing about love
unless you
know about it."*

- Billy Eckstine

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.

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