

AAMU Collaborates with NASA's Lunar Challenge - p. 8

FREE



Drake Now Offering CDL Classes - p. 7

Friday
February 16, 2024
Vol. 10, No. 24
ValleyWeeklly.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Mrs. Rosa Walker



Scenes from ADC Membership Breakfast -p. 9

"Leadership. There are no warlike peoples--just warlike leaders." - Ralph Bunche

HBC Will Inaugurate 2nd Prez

Huntsville Bible College Board of Directors has announced the inauguration of Rev. Lyle Lee as the College's second president.



The occasion is set for Saturday, February 24, 2024, 11 a.m., at Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, located at 228 Church Street. Immediately following the official inauguration and Rev. Lee's inaugural speech, guests are invited to enjoy a reception.

Rev. Lee has spent much of his career teaching and preaching the Gospel, mentoring children and youths, working in urban communities and serving the marginalized. As the second president of Huntsville Bible College, he will continue the legacy of outstanding achievement in education, providing strategic leadership, financial and operational accountability, and academic excellence.



CATCHING MARDI GRAS VIBES: With Downtown's quaint Catch 25 restaurant as venue, Lamar Braxton, Jr., and lively friends celebrate his 60th birthday with a festive "second line" parade to their heavily adorned tables. (Photo by J. Saintjones)



RECREATION CENTER PLANS UNDERWAY: Plans are moving forward on District 5's first recreation center. The facility will be on Martin Road, just west of Zierdt Road. The project is expected to go out for bid in February after receiving design approval from the Huntsville Planning Commission. The center will be similar to the Mark Russell Recreation Center on Taylor Road. Covering approximately 27,000 square feet, the facility will house two full-size gymnasiums as well as community meeting rooms and, as requested by residents, outdoor pickleball courts. - Huntsvilleal.gov/District 5 Newsletter

Spring Break Camp Registration Thru March 1

Registration for Huntsville Parks & Recreation's Spring Break Camps will continue through Friday, March 1.

Parks & Recreation is offering the option of full-day or half-day Specialty camps. The camps, which run March 11-15, are open

exclusively for Huntsville students in grades 1-6.

Registration links can be found on the respective Day Camp and Specialty Camp pages.

Designed to provide an enriching and engaging experience during spring break, the camps offer a mix

of games, learning activities and athletics. The camps are held at Huntsville Parks & Recreation facilities and are led by highly trained staff members. Transportation is not provided.

"These camps are a great way to keep kids engaged in learning and physical activity during the spring break," said Parks & Recreation Director James Gossett. "They are especially beneficial for working parents and guardians who don't have the luxury of taking a week off work."

The cost for a full-day camp is \$50 per week, with a discounted rate of \$25 per week for each additional child in the same family. Half-day specialty camps cost \$25 for the first child

and \$10 for each additional child. Payments can be made in cash, check, or credit/debit card, and must be submitted to the facility your child will attend before participation. **Full-day** camp locations are: Cavalry Hill Community Center, 2900 Fairbanks St. NW; Dr. Richard Showers, Sr. Recreation Center, 4600 Blue Spring Road NW; Fern Bell Recreation Center, 107A Sanders Road SW; and Mark Russell Recreation Center, 429 Taylor Road SE.

Half-day camps: Optimist Recreation Center (Art Camp): 703 Oakwood Avenue; and Dr. Robert Shurney Legacy Center (STEM Camp), 3011B Sparkman Drive NW.

- Huntsvilleal.gov

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The Valley Weekly
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Sixteenth Page	2.5x2.5	\$75
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Classified	1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

The Valley Weekly
Washington
One Minute

by Ron Hamm

Here is what's happening in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, this week:

1. CONGRESS. The House and Senate are in session this week (although the Senate had originally planned to be in recess). The Senate is expected to complete debate on a \$95 billion Ukraine/Israel aid bill, which does not include the Murphy/Lankford/Sinema bipartisan deal on border and immigration restrictions.

On Sunday, February 11, Senators cleared a key hurdle on the bill invoking cloture on the Murray substitute amendment on a vote of 67 to 27 – with 18 Republicans voting with the Democrats on the bill and more amendments coming this week.

Having narrowly failed to do so last week by a 214 yeas - 216 nays vote, the House has scheduled another vote this week to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. On Tuesday, voters on Long Island, NY, went to the polls to elect the successor to expelled Rep. George Santos (R-NY) in New York's 3rd Congressional District (the House currently has 219 Rs to 212 Ds with 3 GOP vacancies and 1 Dem vacancy).

2. THE WHITE HOUSE. The President and First Lady welcomed King Abdullah II of Jordan and Queen Rania Al Abdulla to the White House Monday when the President also

met with the King to discuss a possible end to the Israel-Hamas war. The

President on Monday also addressed the National Association of Counties (NACo) Conference at the Washington Hilton, which HCG has been attending with clients. On Friday, the President will travel to East Palestine, OH, to mark the first-year anniversary of the Norfolk Southern train derailment. Bloomberg News has reported that the President will submit his Fiscal Year 2025 Budget to Congress on Monday, March 11 (four days after his State of the Union Address).

3. SUPREME COURT. Monday, February 12, was the deadline for former President Trump to file an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court to challenge a Feb. 6 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that he is not immune from prosecution for alleged crimes committed while he was in the White House that would allow

Special Counsel Jack Smith to move forward with his case charging the former president with four criminal charges related to his alleged efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION. House Education and the Workforce Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R-

NC) is urging college and university leaders to support three pending higher education and workforce development bills passed recently. On February 7, she spoke about the legislation with community college leaders during their annual legislative conference. HCG also joined Lansing Community College on February 7 to meet with staff for

Chair Foxx to discuss the bills in further detail. We also were advised that the chair will not seek another term to lead the committee.

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300 New Jersey Ave, NW Ste. 900
Washington D.C. 20001
T: 202-596-8384
rhamm@hammconsulting.com
www.hammconsulting.com

The Board of Directors of the Rosetta James Foundation and
Technology Management Training Group, Inc.
- present -

The 15th Annual Rosetta James Foundation
"Honoring Our Elders"
Celebration



BRENDA BEALE RUFUS GILMORE GREGORY MILEY LINDA SPALLA MARY STRONG MITCHELL WALKER

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Twelve O'Clock at Noon

The Jackson Center - Huntsville, Alabama - \$75

www.rosettajamesfoundation.org

"I'd lie for you.
I'd steal for you.
I'd do time for you.
But I can't save you
from yourself."

- Gail Jones

THE VALLEY WEEKLY
**VALLEY
DEATHS**



SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

2505 University Drive NW

Huntsville, AL 35816 (256) 539-9693 - www.serenityfuneralhm.com

Funeral services will be announced at a later date for MR. ROGER MCCAFFERTY (b. 1940) and MR. NICHOLAS DIAZ (b. 1968).

Funeral service for MS. NEDA WARD (b. 1945) was held Saturday, February 10, at St. James Primitive Baptist Church, 1093 Fairbanks Street, Huntsville, Ala.

Funeral service for MR. XAVIER BRADFORD (b. 1993) was held Sunday, February 4, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for MS. DIANA ELLINGTON (b. 1968) was held at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel on Saturday, February 3.

NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

2501 Carmichael Avenue NW

Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-8189 - www.nelmsmemorial.net

Funeral service for MRS. RUTH DAVIS MCBRIDE (b. 1934) was held Saturday, February 10, at First Missionary Baptist Church.

Funeral service for MR. DONNELL ROBINSON (b. 1954) was held Saturday, February 10, in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Funeral service for MR. MELVIN KELLEY (b. 1937) was Friday, February 2, at Phillips Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, with Reverend Henry Brown, Pastor of Gurley CME Church, officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW

Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481 - www.royalfh.com

Funeral service for MRS. HAROLYN LESLIE-WILLIAMS (b. 1979) was held Tuesday, February 13, at the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church (380 Indian Creek Road NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Elder Timothy M. Rainey officiating.

The funeral service for MOTHER VIRGINIA LEE WALLACE (b. 1927) was held Sunday, February 11, at the Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church (759 Pine Grove Road, Harvest, Ala.) with Dr. C. Jermaine Turner officiating.

The graveside service for MRS. LYNDIA JO FEARN SANDERS (b. 1954) was Saturday, February 10, at the Fearn Cemetery (632 Arnold Road New Market, Ala.) with Reverend Dr. Candy Thacker officiating.

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



"I Will Not Be Moved"

Jeremiah 17:8 says, "They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit"

So, what does it mean to be rooted? Looking at our scripture, it means a tree with deep roots will not be blown over

in a storm. The wind may blow some leaves off the branches. However, if the tree has deep roots, it has a chance to withstand any storm and not be moved. The same can be said of us and our spiritual growth. Because when we are rooted in the truth of God's word, nothing can blow us over and nothing will get us off the path that God has us on.

You see, the thing that distinguishes believ-

ers from non-believers, is our inner peace. It's our resolve to handle things, which means we will find solutions to problems when they come up. We will settle disputes when they arise and we will pursue peace. We need to realize and understand that the devil doesn't want our stuff, he wants our peace. So always remember that peace is power and the more that you protect your peace, the harder it will be for anything to move you. Not hardships, not tragedies, not calamities. Remember, "No weapon formed against us shall prosper



(Isaiah 54:17), especially when we are rooted in the word of God

Prayer: Dear God, give us deep roots that only come from reading your word so that we can endure any problems that may come our way.

Question: What are you doing daily to develop your spiritual growth? 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:

"The Setup"

**"The oppressed
will always believe
the worst
about
themselves."**

- Frantz Fanon

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The Valley Weekly
VALLEY
EVENTS
 HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

February 15

Candidate Forum for
 Madison County Commis-
 sioner District 6
 Sponsor: Madison County
 Chapter-Alabama New
 South Coalition

Madison County Chapter
 of the Alabama New South
 Coalition
 Madison County District
 6 Office
 Hi-Lo Circle (Near Drake
 State)
 8 a.m.-9 p.m.

February 29

Student Oratorical Contest
 Sponsor: Madison County
 Chapter-Alabama New
 South Coalition - TBA

March 9
 Rosetta James Foundation
 "Honoring Our Elders"
 Celebration/Day Gala
 Huntsville, Ala.
 12 noon

March 3

Bus Trip to Bloody Sunday

Spelman College Glee Club

Church Street Cumberland
 Presbyterian Church
 228 Church Street
 Downtown Huntsville
 4 p.m.

Concert
 Lawrence Brownlee
 Host:
 Huntsville Chamber Music
 Guild
 Huntsville, Ala.

March 11-15

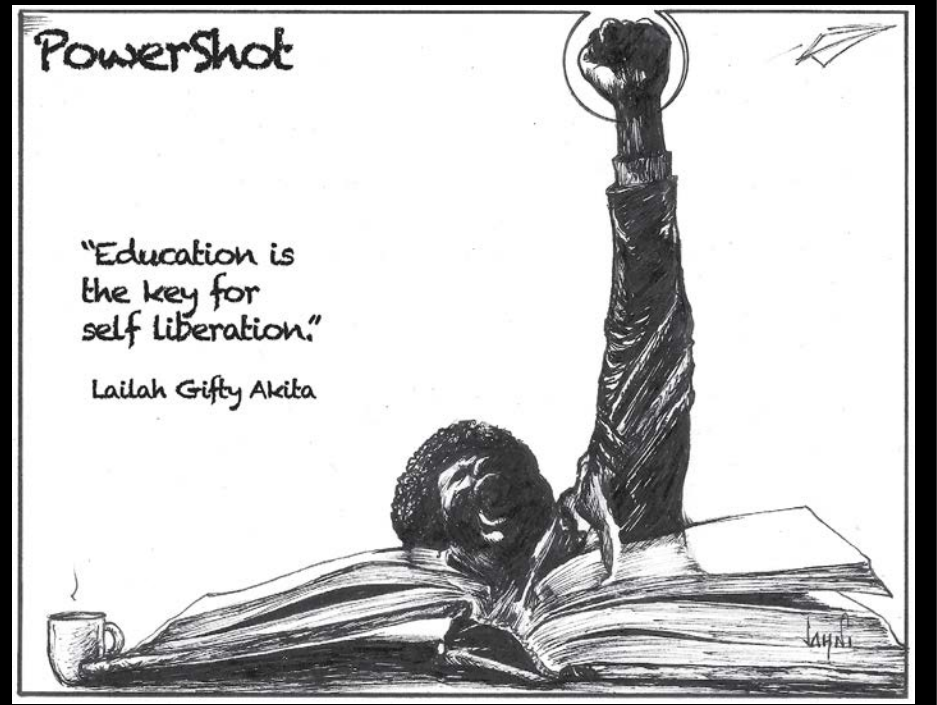
Cove Martial Arts Acad-
 emy
 K-5th Grades (\$250)
 Owens Cross Roads, Ala.
 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

March 22-24

The 4th Annual Women's
 Expo Huntsville
 Von Braun Center
 Huntsville, Ala.

May 4

Donate Life Alabama
 Donor Dash for Life 5K



*"If I were white,
 I could capture the world."*

- Dorothy Dandridge

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
 CITY OF HUNTSVILLE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
 CDBG PUBLIC SERVICES

The City of Huntsville, Alabama is informing the public that 501(c)3 non-profit organizations may submit proposals for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Services funding for Program Year 2024 from **Monday, February 19, 2024, to Friday, March 15, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

Responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) must be submitted online through the following link: <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/HUNTSVILLEAL/Participant> will be available for access beginning on **Monday, February 19, 2024.**

Public Services activities are funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Eligible Public Services activities under the CDBG program include, but are not limited to: childcare, healthcare, workforce training, recreation programs, education programs, mental healthcare, etc. CDBG Public Services grant funds may be used to cover the organization's operating, administrative and personnel, or professional services costs. Public service activities must meet one of three objectives: benefit to low- to moderate-income persons, prevention and elimination of slums and blight, and urgent need.

Please refer all questions **prior** to the submission deadline, **March 15, 2024** to:

City of Huntsville
 Community Development Department
 120 Holmes Ave
 Huntsville, AL 35801
 or email at: comdev@huntsvilleal.gov

Broken ...


Millennial Moment
 by Gloria B. Caldwell

Have you ever felt disappointment, pain, sadness, emptiness? You're so defeated ... and the world keeps draining you. You feel it's impossible to sink lower into it, yet you keep proving yourself wrong.

You don't know where to turn or what to do.

When you find yourself broken and burdened by the struggles of life, there is no better place to turn than to God. He is ready and willing to transform your brokenness into something beautiful.

One of the most comforting aspects of faith is the realization that we were never meant to carry our burdens by ourselves.

Simply by placing our brokenness in His hands, we open ourselves up to the healing power of His love and grace.

Now, handing over what we cannot control can be pretty challenging. It requires a deep trust in God's plan and a surrendering of our own will. But in doing so, we release the weight of our pain, suffering, and disappointments and allow God to lead our lives.

Remember, brokenness does not equate to defeat. Instead, it is an

opportunity for God to work in and through us. When we surrender our brokenness to Him, we open ourselves to His transforming power. It is in our brokenness

that we often find strength, perseverance, and compassion for others who are hurting.

Put your brokenness in the hands of God. Trust that He will bring restoration and healing in His perfect timing.

Allow Him to write a beautiful story from what may seem like shattered

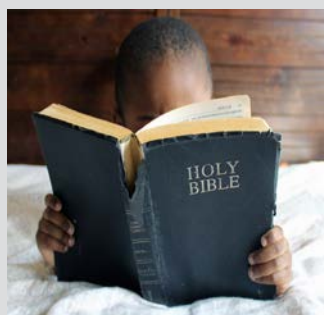


pieces.

"I don't know what the future may hold, but I know who holds the future."

- Ralph Abernathy

This Sunday's Lectionary



Sunday, February 18, 2024

First Sunday
in Lent

(Track 2, Year B)

First Lesson:

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-9

Second Lesson:

1 Peter 3:18-22

GOSPEL:

Mark 1:9-15



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No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.



(Part 4 of 4) More Results from Prayer's "Daily Bread"

Yes, I know. I thought that I was finished discussing prayer with you in my recent three-part daily-bread series, . . .

But I heard a war story recently that I believe will encourage you that our consistent daily prayers get answered. Sometimes even miraculously, . . .

An American soldier in World War I was ridiculed constantly for his consistent daily prayer life - primarily by his commanding officer, an avowed atheist.



The War Prayer

Their army unit was hunkered down in a bombed-out building near Paris. Across the road from them was an abandoned car with the key still in the ignition.

For fear that the enemy would boobytrap that car against the Americans, that commanding officer ordered that praying soldier to move that abandoned car some 500 yards away into an open field.

Dutifully, that praying soldier got behind that car's steering wheel, prayed for about three minutes, cranked up the engine, and then drove that car 500 yards into that open field.

Upon his return, his commanding officer stood up, saluted him, and uttered this confession in front of the entire unit: "Soldier, now I believe in your prayers and in the God you serve.

"That abandoned car that you just drove had no engine in it!"

That soldier's diet of faith and praying is available to each of us when you and I make it our daily bread.

That praying soldier exercised the selfsame faith as the psalmist David when he declared of God, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" Psalm 91:15.

Now more than ever before, you and I need to pursue that type of prayer life.

And together, we will win battles!



Tim Allston
Leadership Player-Coach & Four-time
Amazon Best-Selling Author
Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus,
www.timallston.com
(256) 212-0949



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

Mrs. Rosa Walker

Mrs. Rosa Rice Walker is a retired classroom instructor from the Huntsville City Schools System with more than 35 years of teaching experience in a variety of systems and settings.

Mrs. Walker's education career is broad and diverse, encompassing kindergarten through high school levels. Moreover, at the postsecondary level, she served as assistant director of the Career Testing and Education Development Center at Alabama A&M University; developed and administered summer learning camps at Alabama State University; and worked in admissions at Troy University (Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., campus). She has taught in public school systems in Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Beyond her public school experience, she also taught at a private Christian academy and served as a teaching effectiveness consultant at another. Additionally, she was a consultant and presenter with Empowerment Concepts, Inc., a business she co-founded with her husband.

Rosa grew up in Huntsville and graduated from William Hooper Councill High School. She earned an Associate of Arts degree at Crane [now Malcolm X] College in Chicago, Ill., a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Alabama A&M University, a master's

degree in counseling at Troy University, and a master's degree in elementary education at Alabama A&M University. Additionally, she attended Hampton University in Virginia for certification in school administration. Her professional certifications and training include Comprehensive Integrated Reading and Composition, Cooperative Learning, Education Technology, High School Enrichment Science, Huntsville Alliance Science Program, Learning Styles, Multi-Cultural Education, Professional Education Training (PET), Service Learning and William Glasser's Choice Theory and Reality Therapy.

Rosa conducted system-wide in-service training, as well as specialized training for individual schools, both public and private, and she has written several mini-grants for reading and science instruction. She also volunteers time to mentor/tutor local high school and college students.

Her current and past board affiliations include: AAMU-UAH Regional In-Service Education Center, Huntsville Education Association, Regional Hands-On Science Center (Tullahoma, Tenn.), Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and South Jackson Civic Center (Tullahoma, Tenn.).

Rosa's community involvement includes Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority,



Huntsville Human Relations Council, Huntsville Depot Museum Curriculum Group, Junior Achievement Classroom Presenter, Madison County Retired Teachers Association, Red Cross Teen Baby Sitter Skills Instruction Program, Searcy Homes Tutorial Program, United Negro College Fund Planning Committee-Oakwood University, United Way Speaker On-Loan Program, Village of Promise and Weeden House Docent.

She has been nominated for the Alabama State Board and Department of Education Teacher of the Year Program, representing East Clinton Elementary School. Rosa is a member of St. John AME Church, where she has taught both Sunday and Bible School, served on the newsletter staff and is currently a stewardess and member of the church's Caregivers Ministry.

She and her husband, Dr. Arthur Walker, have one adult daughter, Angela.

"Spotlight on Our Elders" is a weekly feature sponsored by the Rosetta James Foundation to promote **volunteerism** and **activism** in our community among those who are 70-plus. The Foundation also provides scholarships. Learn more about us at www.rosettajamesfoundation.org. Know an outstanding elder (70+) that you would like to see featured? Send us a photo and 250-word write-up to info@valleyweeklyllc.com.



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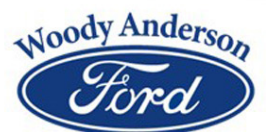


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TARCOG Earns National Accreditation

TARCOG has received the highest possible rating from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) in earning accreditation for its Area Agency on Aging programs.

NCQA awards the status of “Accredited – 3 Years” to organizations that demonstrate strong performance of the functions outlined in the standards for Accreditation of Case Management for Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS).

According to NCQA, the review process evaluates organizations based on industry-leading best practices.

Organizations that earn an NCQA seal have met or exceeded these standards and show they are a good partner to support delivering high quality care.

“This is not an easy process, and we are so

proud to be recognized for our use of best practices and the high level of care that we provide to nearly 900 clients who utilize our services in DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison and Marshall counties,” said TARCOG’s Director of Aging Programs Sheila Dessau-Ivey.

This is the third time TARCOG has received the accreditation seal.

[The TARCOG Accreditation Team included from left: LeQuitta Gasikin, Kristina Chappell, Kanisha Caldwell, Stacey Peoples, Sheila Dessau-Ivey, Rosa Sanchez, Davitta Phillips, and Melissa Brinkley. Not pictured are Stephanie Holt and Allison Calvert.]

Huntsville Council Meetings



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

Council work sessions are also held in the Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. For more information, call (256) 427-5011.

ON THIS DAY



On this day (February 16) in 1857, Frederick Douglass was elected president of Freedom Bank and Trust.

- blackenterprize.com

Drake, Partners to Launch CDL Classes

Drake State Community and Technical College, Madison County, and Huntsville City Schools (HCS) have partnered to address the growing demand for a skilled workforce in Madison County.

As a notable step towards this shared goal, Madison County has donated a dump truck to facilitate Drake State’s free CDL classes.

HCS will provide space for the classes. This initiative underscores the commitment of Drake State, Madison County, and HCS to equip students with essential skills and certifications to contribute to the local economy.

“Partnerships like this one between are essential to keeping up with the growth in our community,” said Drake State President Dr.

Patricia Sims. “Our goal is to stay ahead of the curve and meet the demand for a skilled workforce.”

“The donation of this truck allows Drake State to train the individuals who will be a great asset to the workforce by earning their CDL License”, said Phil Vandiver, Madison County Commissioner from District Four.

In addition to providing space for the courses, HCS will also promote classes to their students.

“HCS is excited to partner with Drake State and Madison County to provide students essential skills to be competitive in Madison County’s growing workforce,” said Career & Technical Education Director of Huntsville City Schools Zac

McWhorter.

“This strategic collaboration between Drake State, the county, and HCS ensures students have a supportive environment to prepare for the workforce upon graduation,” says District Six Commissioner Violet Edwards.

Commission Chairman Mac McCutcheon expressed the commissioners’ collective enthusiasm for the collaboration, emphasizing their belief in supporting Drake State’s dedication to supplying students with the education required to become integral members of the workforce in Madison County.

Visit www.drakestate.edu for more information.

CDL classes are open to the public. Visit Drakestate.edu to learn more.

Persistence PAC to Present Roy Wood, Jr.

Persistence PAC will hold its 3rd Biennial Bid on Blue Auction, featuring Emmy-nominated comedian, writer, producer, actor, radio personality, podcaster, and Alabama native, Roy Wood Jr.

The event will be held on Friday, March 22, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Von



Braun Center North Hall (Saturn Ballroom) in Huntsville, Ala.

The event will include “a fun-filled night of cocktails, a three-course dinner, and an auction full of incredible items.”

For info and tickets, visit persistencepacal.com.

 **State Farm**

MARY F SPEARS, AGENT

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Bus: 256-837-8899 Fax: 256-837-8225
mary.spears.cffc@statefarm.com



“I have never encountered any children in any group who are not geniuses.”

- Asa Hilliard

AAMU's Agribition Center to Host NASA's Final Break the Ice Lunar Challenge

NASA has selected Alabama A&M University's Agribition Center to host the final level of the agency's Break the Ice Lunar Challenge, using indoor and outdoor space to ground test the finalists' solutions.

The challenge opened in 2020 to find novel solutions for excavating icy lunar regolith and delivering acquired resources in extreme environmental conditions.

In alignment with NASA's Moon to Mars objectives, the challenge aims to develop technologies that could support a sustained human presence on the Moon.

Throughout the challenge, competitors have designed, built, and independently tested robots that could theoretically

withstand the harsh environments inside permanently shadowed regions of the lunar South Pole. The six finalists who succeeded in Phase 2: Level 2 of the challenge were announced in December 2023.

"We were looking for a unique set of criteria to house the Break the Ice Lunar competition, so we partnered with Jacobs Space Exploration Group in finding a facility," said Denise Morris, NASA Centennial Challenges program manager at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. "Alabama A&M is a good fit for this challenge because of the on-site

capabilities they have and being close to NASA facilities makes logistics much easier."

Located a few miles east of the Alabama A&M University (AAMU) campus, the Agribition (agriculture + exhibition) Center is



managed by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System with support from AAMU and its College of Agricultural, Life, and Natural Sciences. Its indoor arena features a large dirt

space, typically equipped to support rodeos and other agricultural expos. Outside, the center sits on roughly 40 acres of land, offering plenty of green space to build the competition's complex infrastructure.

The final Phase 2: Level 3 testing will occur June 10-12, 2024. There are two components that each team will focus on mastering: excavation and transportation.

Six identically sized concrete slabs will be set up inside the arena for the finalists' robots to dig. The slabs, measuring 300 cubic

feet, will have qualities similar to a permanently shadowed crater located at the Moon's South Pole. A gravity-offloading crane and pulley system will lift the excavators while working, simulating the one-sixth gravity experienced on the Moon.

Each team will have one hour to dig as much material as possible or until they reach the payload capacity of their excavation robot.

Up to three top-performing teams will earn an opportunity to test their solution inside one of the thermal vacuum chambers located at Marshall, which can simulate the temperature and vacuum conditions at the lunar South Pole.

Athens Native Top Student at Jacksonville State

When it comes to academic, social and civic achievement, Athens, Ala., native Tierra Thatch is on top of the world.

Tierra currently attends Jacksonville State University, where she majors in pre-health biology. Not only that, but the dynamic young lady serves as the Student Government Association president, president of the NAACP Chapter, the Universities Student Presidents Council chair (representing all 14 funded universities), and the president of the Lambda Pi chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

Tierra has served in many other roles at the university, including service as an Ambassador,

an SGA Student Senator, and many other roles.

"As a black first-generation college student, life is particularly challenging as a young adult, and it has brought many trials and tribulations," said Tierra in a moment of reflection. "However, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, 'Faith is taking the first step without seeing the whole staircase.'" Tierra says she lives by the quote daily.

"I am a firm believer that whatever it is we pour into the world, we get back eventually," said Tierra. "This is why I strive to help others when needed, because I have had so many people do the same



for me. I have been told that my dedication, love, passion, and intelligence will call for me to be exemplary in the medical field."

She admits that she finds peace in seeing others smile and knowing that other young people really look up to her for guidance.

"As a leader, I thrive to contribute knowledge about life experiences and medicine, as well as learn while holding leadership positions. I do this to hopefully be able to give back to the community that has given so much to my college journey."

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Scenes from Alabama Democratic Conference Annual Membership Breakfast

Madison County Unit
Saturday, February 10, 2024
Bob Harrison Senior Wellness Center - 9 a.m.
(Photos by Jerome Saintjones)



ADC's Eddie Sherrod and Mayor Steve Reed



Lorraine Parham



Mayor Reed with members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



Michelle Watkins and Commissioner Violet Edwards



Langdon Conaway & Kenny Anderson



Rev. Randy B. Kelly



Mayor Reed with members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.



Alabama Mayors Steve Reed and Tommy Battle



Nicholas Perkins & mother of Decatur Police shooting victim Stephen Perkins



M. Lynn Sherrod



JesHenry Malone



Eddgra Fallin



Reed, Kelly, Sherrods and Battle



Mark Debro, Kim Lewis and Darryl Davis



Kelly, Reed and Sherrod

AHA Grants Now Available

Apply now for a 2024 grant from the Alabama Humanities Alliance to fund your humanities-rich public programming! Here's what's new this year:

Mini Grant applications (up to \$2,500) due the first of each month. Major Grants (up to \$10,000) are now offered three times a year.

Preliminary applications

are no longer required, but they're still strongly encouraged to help strengthen your final proposal — especially for first-time applicants.

Updated Grant Guidelines and Calendar of Deadlines now available. Read them closely! Upcoming deadlines:

February 1: Monthly Mini Grant deadline.

February 15: Major Grants spring preliminary deadline.

March 15: Major Grants spring final deadline.

Before you apply, consider scheduling a call with our grants director, Graydon Rust, to discuss project ideas and confirm your eligibility. Email Graydon at grust@alabamahumanities.org or schedule a call.

"If you want something hard enough, it just gets done."

- Billy Strayhorn

FEBRUARY 16 - THE WEEKND - Abel Makkonen Tesfaye aka The Weeknd has won three Grammy Awards, two American Music Awards, nine Billboard Music Awards, nine Juno Awards, and has been nominated for an Academy Award. "The Hills" was certified Diamond by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). One of the most successful Canadian artists, The Weeknd was awarded the Allan Slaight Award by Canada's Walk of Fame for "making a positive impact in the fields of music, film, literature, visual or performing arts, sports, innovation or philanthropy". He has sold over 70 million records in the US.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org

