

The Valley Weekly

"The blues is not the creation of a crushed-spirited people. It is the product of a forward-looking, upward-striving people."

- Albert Murray

FREE

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www.valleyweeklyllc.com

Friday, March 10, 2017

Expo Will Focus on Disaster Preparedness

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs unit will hold its first Urban Living Expo (ULE) Saturday, March 25, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Alabama A&M University Agribition Center, located at 4925 Moores Mill Road in Huntsville, Ala.



of interactive displays and to provide a variety of Extension information about disasters to individuals, families, local businesses and organizations.

Organizers says the Expo will be of special importance to community leaders, first responders, educators, students,

emergency and health officials, waste management authorities, senior citizens, as well as to public and private organizations and the general public.

While admission is free, planners are prepared to accept donations of non-perishable food items. Registration is required for all participants and exhibitors.

For additional information, contact Dr. Karnita Garner at (256) 372-8331, Dr. Robert Spencer at (256) 372-4983 or visit www.aces.edu/urban.



Urban League Hosts Huntsville Community Forum

The newly organized Urban League of Huntsville hosted a community forum on Tuesday, February 28, at Jemison High School.

The CEO of the Alabama Urban League, William Barnes, attended, along with Birmingham's President Kamonte Kelly and Vice President Tanieka Huffman.

Local organizers Teneshia LaRoda and

Ameshla Collins welcomed panelists Pastor Troy Garner of The Fellowship of Faith Church, Pastor Adrian Davis of All Nations Church, Michelle Watkins of the Huntsville City School Board, Dennis Madsen of Huntsville's Urban and Long Range Planning Department, Kerry Williams of Wells Fargo Bank, Councilman Devyn Keith of District 1, and moderator Karla

Miller of Alabama A&M University.

The panelist responded to questions related to North Huntsville in the areas of economic development, education, employment, wealth gaps and civic engagement. The Jemison High School choir and ROTC participated on the program by posting the colors and signing the National Black Anthem.

HBC Opens James' Exhibit for Women's History Month

Huntsville Bible College is now featuring the life's work of Mrs. Rosetta James during its Women's History Month. Mrs. James has been (and continues to be) determined to seek and search for ways to serve the underserved, minister to the incarcerated, register citizens to vote, provide for the hopeless throughout Huntsville-Madison County for more than 30 years, an example of "ser-

vant citizenship."

As a civic and community volunteer, Mrs. James has been true to the spirit of community outreach throughout her adult life. Her accomplishments are of immense significance to young generations and are a great way to teach and bequeath the "servant citizenship" skillset.

Mrs. James' artifacts are on display, and HBC invites the public to stop by 906 Oakwood Avenue



to view some of her life's work.

by Eloise McNealey, HBC

Logistician Named Chair of ASU Board

The director of logistics at the JAMS Project Office on Redstone Arsenal has been named to a prominent HBCU post.

Alfreda Green has been elected by the Board of Trustees of historic Alabama State University to head its Board of Trustees.

Green succeeds Trustee Ralph Ruggs. Trustee Angela McKenzie is the BOT's vice chairwoman. Green joined the Board in May 2010 and is a 1980 graduate of Alabama State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in education.



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Mastin Lake Road/University Drive)

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

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Washington in a Minute

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

1. The House and Senate are in session this week. Notably on the House floor this week was the FY17 Defense Appropriations bill, which signals that Congress will attempt to get appropriations bills for the current fiscal year passed before the expiration of the temporary funding measure on April 28. The Senate will debate bills canceling Obama Administration regulations on contractor paycheck transparency requirements for its employees and a Bureau of Land Management rule intended to reorganize the agency's natural resources planning which opponents say gives the agency too much power.

2. President Trump was slated to travel to the Homeland Security Department Monday to sign a new executive order on immigration to replace his previous order. He was also expected this week to withdraw a decision made by the Obama Administration in January to continue implementation of a 2011 EPA rule to double the average fuel economy of vehicles to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Automakers say falling gasoline prices have lessened the demand for fuel-efficient vehicles, making achieving the standards more difficult.

3. Last Thursday, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) announced a 3-week game plan for the House to complete work on an Obamacare replacement bill, starting with bill markups in the House

Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Committees possibly this week, followed by action in the House Budget Committee to combine the bills into a reconciliation package and passage on the House floor on the next week. This schedule should enable the bill to reach the Senate, giving it two (2) weeks of floor time before the start of the Spring Recess on April 7. No bill text has yet been released, although one piece of the bill handled by the Energy and Commerce Committee has been made available to committee members.

4. House Intelligence Committee Chair Devin Nunes (R-CA) said his committee will investigate any alleged surveillance of political parties as part of its investigation into Russian interference in the election, which comes after allegations by President Trump that President Obama had order a wiretap of Trump Tower before the November election.

5. In one of the first actions by new Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao, DOT announced on Thursday that it was suspending further action on two proposed regulations affecting airline travelers. The first proposal would have required airlines to disclose baggage fees alongside airfare prices and the second sought public comment on whether DOT should allow airlines to only offer a portion of their available fares on 3rd party Internet sites, such as Travelocity and Expedia.

6. Last week, former US At-

torney General Eric Holder, chair of newly-formed National Democratic Redistricting Committee, told reporters that former President Obama will return to the political arena helping the group with fundraising and contacts with state legislators as it fights for a more equitable congressional redistricting after the 2020 Census.

7. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) is expected to oppose a GOP effort to scrap Obama accountability regulations under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Several other Senate Republicans, including Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska — who opposed Betsy DeVos' nomination for Education secretary — are also facing pressure to vote no on the Congressional Review Act measure. Many Democrats, civil rights groups and the U.S. Chamber of Congress are urging lawmakers to vote against the measure because they see the rule as critical for ensuring states don't backslide when it comes to holding schools accountable. But despite this opposition, the push to get rid of what's seen as a central example of the Obama administration's overreach in education doesn't appear to be in jeopardy. Senate HELP Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) has led this effort, the House version has already passed, and President Donald Trump has said he would sign a bill passed by Congress.

For more information, contact Ron Hamm at 202-596-8384 or rhamm@hammconsulting.com.

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Economist Launches Black Economic Empowerment Tour

Noted black economist Boyce Watkins recently launched his Black Economic Empowerment Tour in Orlando, Fla., and should reach Birmingham in the future.

The Dr. Boyce Watkins Black Economic Empowerment Institute was founded within Simmons College, an HBCU in Kentucky built by proud former slaves who were determined to educate their own children.

It is a partnership with The Black Business School that seeks to shift the thinking for the African American community when it comes to wealth-building, entrepreneurship and cooperative economics.

"The only way we can obtain true power in this country is by mastering the understanding of wealth, the accumulation of wealth and the protection of that which we've accumulated," commented Watkins. "It is only then that Dr King's dream will be realized."

Tantamount to solving the problem of racism and inequality in America lies with developing a proper economic foundation through financial literacy, buying black and pushing our best and brightest to dedicate their lives to building institutions that sustain the masses rather than simply



borrowing power from those who seek to oppress African Americans.

The great power shift in America will only occur when children are taught to be leaders, rather than followers. They must be entrepreneurs rather than employees, owners instead of renters, and producers instead of consumers.

Over the next several decades, the Tour will be traveling the globe to share the message of black economic intelligence and positioning the black community to be strong for the next generation.

True and meaningful integration can only occur in this country if the black community develops a strong core for its socioeconomic and political base, comments Watkins. This is at least 50 years away, maybe longer, depending on how far and wide this message can be shared.

The tour encompasses Birmingham, Ala., although some dates have yet to be set.

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The Valley Weekly

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From the Editor

Ahhh ... Reading is Fundamental!

As a college student some 40 years ago, I had the opportunity to volunteer with my sorority's national reading program--Reading Is Fundamental (RIF). After returning to Huntsville some 20 years ago, I had the opportunity to volunteer again with the same program. Reading Is Fundamental was sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the MetLife Foundation. Groups of us volunteered to support reading programs at most, if not all, of the Title I Schools in Huntsville City Schools and even some Madison County Schools.



Dorothy Huston reading to students at Rolling Hills Elementary School.

I volunteered to work with my soror, Rev. Versey Jones. Versey and I had a lot of fun working with the children at Colonial Hills Elementary School, which was renamed to Dr. Martin Luther King Elementary School. Under the leadership of Sorors Evelyn Rich, Mary Turner, Willistine Betts, Dr. John Humphrey as principal and a score of wonderfully experienced teachers, we counted and distributed books, organized a robust community reading program, motivated and encouraged children to read and rewarded them with books and other incentives. During our tenure with RIF, the children won state and national medals and recognition by Alpha Kappa Alpha and MetLife for their successes in reading.

After a while, we were told that we were taking away from "instructional time" and that we could not execute the program during the school day. Well that was one very successful initiative thrown out by a "new school of thought." Long story short, the students were the losers! Just last month, we

attended a program at the Showers Recreation Center, where members of the community were asked to sign up to help students at Rolling Hills Elementary School with subjects--like reading. Rolling Hills was served by RIF, I believe. To the old saying, "The more things change, the more they remain the same," the *real* purpose of RIF was manifested.

I had the great opportunity to read at Rolling Hills last Friday as part of Dr. Seuss' birthday activities. One of the teachers asked me why I liked reading, and I was able to share with the children that reading is basic to understanding every subject--math, science, music, biology, psychology, technology, cooking, English, you name it. In addition, you can go places and see things through books. When I was young, I dreamt of going places and doing things from my family's shack through books. I loved reading and the places that books took me.

Think about it, most of us would have a hard time employing someone who could not read, regardless of the job. Even the lawn team and the cleaning crew need to know how to read in order to operate the equipment and use the chemicals that are used today. Thanks to all of the community volunteers who read last week in the local schools, especially to Rep. Laura Hall and Rep. Anthony Daniels, who made it a priority on Monday and Friday when they were not in Montgomery. *Oh, the Places You'll Go* - Dr. Seuss.

Until next week ...

Dorothy

Rep. Anthony Daniels Participates in NEA Read Across America Day at Local Elementary Schools

Dr. Suess "Green Eggs & Ham" Friday, March 3, 2017



Rep. Daniels read to kindergarten and first grade classes at four Huntsville City Schools on Friday, March 3. Following the reading, he made a \$200 donation to the library of each school.

Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

Anytime that we are in a "crisis" situation, we have to learn to control our emotions.

John 14:1 says, "Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, also believe in me." This verse is telling us that we can control

our emotions. God would not give us a command that we could not do. So, if you really believe in God, then you will not panic. This is when we have to use our faith. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world. But how do you know when you are in faith? It's when you have a



crisis issue and you can still sleep at night. You see, when we panic, it releases the power of fear, and fear is not from God. But when we have faith, it releases the power of God into our lives.

God will give us what we need to deal with any crisis in our lives. Remember: the way that you respond to a crisis, will determine the outcome of your crisis.

Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters.

Rep. Laura Hall Shares

Dr. Suess "Fox in Socks" Day Reading at Rolling Hills Elementary School Monday, February 27, 2017



Local Mathematician Key to NASA-MSFC History

A local woman has received a lot of media attention and Internet buzz for her pioneering role as an African-American woman in the early days of NASA.

Jeanette Scissum joined NASA Marshall Space Flight Center over 50 years ago as the first female African American scientist and mathematician.

Featured in social media by the NASA-MSFC and Alabama A&M University, her alma mater, she has been lauded for her important role in the space program.

According to local media reports, Scissum is credited for publishing a paper in 1967 on better ways to predict sunspots.



NASA.gov

She also co-wrote a computer program to determine where the Apollo lunar lander should touch down.

Scissum was a space scientist in Marshall's Space Sciences Laboratory and headed activities in Marshall's Atmospheric, Magnetospheric, and Plasmas in Space project.

Scissum later worked at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center outside Washington, D.C., and at NASA Headquarters in Washington during her career.

She was a project manager traveling to the space agency's centers around the country.

Calendar of Events

March 11
The Rosetta James Foundation "Honoring Our Elders" Celebration
The Jackson Center, 5 p.m.
Moquin Drive
Huntsville, Ala.
5 p.m.

March 12
Spelman College Glee Club
Sponsor: Huntsville Area Chapter - Spelman College Academy for Academics and Arts - \$25
4800 Sparkman Drive
Huntsville, Ala., 5 p.m.

March 14
"Estate Planning for Families with Special Needs Members"
Presenters: Katherine Barr, Esq., Sirote Law Firm; Russ Davis, advisor, Edward Jones Financial; and Kathi Meikus, Phoenix Social Security advisor
3000 Johnson Road
Huntsville, Ala.

Seminar is free, but call (256) 880-0671

March 23-25
American Association of Blacks in Higher Education Annual Conference
Raleigh, N.C.

March 25
Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr. and Mrs. Nell Lane Bradford Scholarship Foundation Inc Friends of the Bradfords Inaugural Gala
Von Braun Center North Hall;
Ads & Sponsorship: Mrs. Veronica Winston - (256) 509-4894
Ticket & Donations: Mrs. Patricia Ward at (256) 350-9054 5 p.m.

Inaugural Scholarship Gala
Sponsor: Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Psi Alpha Zeta Chapter
Holiday Inn Research Park
7 p.m.

April 1
Serving the City as One
Alabama A&M University
The Quad
www.servingthecity.org

April 13
39th Annual United Negro College Fund Gala
Guest Artist: Jonathan Butler
Special Award: Tom Joyner
Von Braun Center North Hall
7 p.m.

April 20
Huntsville: The Future and Beyond Symposium
Von Braun Center, 9 a.m.
www.futureandbeyondhsv.com

April 27
Harris Home for Children Charity Concert
Featuring: Kool and The Gang
Von Braun Center Arena \$25
8 p.m.

City Council Meetings



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

City Council work sessions also held in the City Council 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.

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All Roads Lead to Alabama

Recently, Hollywood has taken an interest in the South. No longer are big production companies filming in Los Angeles or New York, but cities like the equally appealing Atlanta. Even Wesley Snipes allegedly visited Birmingham last year to discuss possible future film projects. When it comes to cinema, the past year has been good to Alabama. *The Valley Weekly* has compiled the top three achievements.

Get Out

The directorial debut

of comedian Jordan Peele, "Get Out" earned a coveted 100 percent rating with Rotten Tomatoes.



But the film, which grossed over 30 million in its opening weekend, also has small ties to the Southern state. A portion of the film's scenes were filmed in the beautiful town of Fairhope, Alabama.

The comedy-horror also featured Marcus

Henderson, an alumnus of Alabama State University. The actor graduated in 2008 from the Montgomery HBCU, where he excelled in collegiate football before attending the highly competitive Yale School of Drama. However, this isn't the first-time Henderson filmed in Alabama. The St. Louis native was cast in the high school biopic "Woodlawn," which was filmed in Birmingham. In addition to "Get

Out," the rising actor can be seen in "Django Unchained," "Whiplash" and "Pete's Dragon."

Andre Holland

Many might know Bessemer as the hometown of recording artist Gucci Mane, but the small town is also the birthplace of Andre Holland. The actor has had roles in "42," "Selma" and, most recently, the Academy Award-winning film "Moon-



light." The movie, which depicts the three-part story of an African American coming to terms with his sexuality, won Best Picture and Best Adapted Screenplay. If anyone happens to catch Holland in town, it is not a rare occasion. In an Al.com story, the Alabama native revealed that he visits the small city every three months.

Almost Christmas

Director and Producer Will Packer might be known for box office hits like "Think Like a Man"

and "Ride Along," but his recent film "Almost Christmas" took the Southern route. Fans who paid close attention to the opening scenes might have noticed the historic Alabama Theater and a few of Birmingham's popular landmarks. While the holiday flick wasn't filmed in Alabama, the Magic City served as the perfect fictional backdrop for the movie that starred Monique, Gabrielle Union, Danny Glover and Nicole Ari Parker.

by Reggie Allen

Unsung Hero: Ferdinand Lee Barnett "From Huntsville to Omaha"

Ever wonder where Malcolm X, a native of Omaha, Neb., probably got his radical edge?

Well, there's a possibility that a man from Huntsville likely helped plant the seed that made Omaha conducive to the production of one of America's most prominent figures.

Ferdinand Lee Barnett (not to be confused with his lawyer relative of the same name who married

the fiery Ida B. Wells) was born in Huntsville, Ala., in July 1854.

He moved to Omaha and became a successful newspaper publisher of *The Progress*, which received local and national attention. Because of his success, he was elected as president of the Western Negro Press Association, during an era when Booker T. Washington infused considerable influence on the black

press. Yet, he was also a member of the Omaha branch of the militant National Afro-American League, founded by Timothy Thomas Fortune as the black precursor to the NAACP. Both Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois were part of the League (later "Council") until it fell apart in 1908. DuBois would later help to start the NAACP.

- J. Saintjones

"A Winchester rifle should have a place of honor in every black home, and it should be used for that protection which the law refuses to give."

- Ida B. Wells Barnett



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Valley Deaths

Funeral service was held for **Minister Steven J. Moore** at Pentecostal Lighthouse Church on Saturday, March 4, with Pastor Sylvia Moore officiating.

Funeral service was held Saturday, March 4, at Syler Tabernacle with Evangelist Dar-netta Williams.

Funeral service for **Mr. Jonathan Lockhart** (b. 1989) was held Friday, March 3, at Union Hill CPCA with Rev. Ber-tha Watts officiating.

Funeral service for **Mr. Jesse Winburn** (b. 1947) was held Satur-day, March 4, at First Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Julius R. Scruggs.

Funeral service for **Ms. Gloria J. Lang (b. 1961)** will be an-nounced later.

-Nelms Memorial Funeral Home

Local Scouts Take Part in "Night of Honor"



Class of 2016 Cham-pions "Night of Honor," Greater Alabama Council, Boy Scouts of America's Eagle Scout Reception was held February 25, at Cullman High School in

Cullman, Ala.

Only 4-6 percent of Scouts earn Performance Based, Boy Scouts of America's highest award, the rank of Eagle Scout.

by Verne Spearman

"The thing that makes you exceptional, if you are at all, is inevitably that which must also make you lonely."
- Lorraine Hansberry

A Good Read

by Jerome Saintjones

James Baldwin's "The Fire Next Time"

This book was pub-lished in 1963, but it is still often cited today.

The author often takes to the pulpit to provide a warning to America to change her sinful, racist ways of dealing with her darker children.

The first of two essays is "My Dungeon Shook," which is a letter to his nephew, also named James, that incorporates the 100 anniversary of the Emancipation Proclama-tion.

In the second essay, "Down at the Cross," Baldwin expertly informs readers of what it was like to grow up in the

Harlem of his youth, as well as his experi-ences with the Nation of Islam. He closes the essay out by imploring white Americans and African Americans to find a collaborative way to come to terms with the rift that has devided them for several long centuries.

The Fire Next Time is often regarded as one of Baldwin's most popular works.

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www.rossettajamesfoundation.org

Phillips CME Holds Groundbreaking Ceremony

Members of Phillip Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Boy Scout Troop 400, and nearly 20 dignitaries gathered at 2185 Winchester Road February 26 for groundbreaking ceremony for their new church facility.

The celebration was led by Bishop Teresa E. Jefferson-Snorton, Presiding Prelate of the 5th Episcopal District. Presiding Elder Janice Lewis, who leads the Huntsville District, greeted the congregation. The congregation celebrated with songs, prayers and a groundbreaking ritual.



Among the attendees were State Representative Laura Hall, City Councilman Devyn Keith and Redstone Federal Credit Union CEO Joe Newberry. Organized in 1865,

Phillips CME is the second oldest African American congregation in Huntsville. Rev. Keith E. Ellison is pastor.

Black Doctoral Candidates Lacking in Key Areas

The National Science Foundation (NSF) recently released its annual data on doctoral degree recipients in the United States.

Data for the annual Survey of Earned Doctorates reveals that institutions of higher education in the United States conferred 55,006 doctorates in 2015.

As reported recently in a Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (JBHE) post, African Americans earned 2,281 doctoral degrees in 2015. They made up 6.5 percent of all doctoral degrees awarded to students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents of this country.

However, blacks are vastly underrepresented among doctoral degree recipients in some key disciplines. For example, African Americans earned only 1.7 percent of all doctorates awarded in the physical sciences.

Blacks earned 1.4 percent of all mathematics doctorates and only 1.7 percent of all doctorates awarded in engineering disciplines.

In 2015, according to the NSF, 2,330 doctorates were awarded in the fields of animal nutrition, fisheries science, botany, computational



biology, wildlife biology, zoology, geomorphology, paleontology, oceanography, biophysics, elementary particle physics, nuclear physics, plasma physics, algebra, logic, environmental economics, robotics, Asian history, history of science and technology, classics, art history, music, and music theory.

Not one was earned by an African American.

JBHE has published a similar list of fields where no African Americans have earned doctorates for many

years.

According to JBHE, the good news is that, unlike many prior years, there are some African Americans who have earned doctorates in astronomy, most physics disciplines, most mathematics fields, and many areas of engineering.

The racial gap in doctoral awards in STEM fields remains large, but progress is being made, although at a "very slow rate."

-jbhe.com

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"Whatever may be the tensions and the stresses of a particular day, there is always lurking close at hand the trailing beauty of forgotten joy or unremembered peace."

- Howard Thurman



On This Day - Friday, March 10 - Hallie Quinn Brown - Educator, author and elocutionist who pioneered in the movement for Black women's clubs. She also served from 1892-93 under Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee Institute.

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