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May 29, 2020 Vol. 6, No. 38 Valley Weeklyllc.com

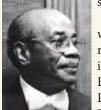


MEMORIAL DAY 2020: HONORING THE BRAVE WHO SACRIFICED FOR OUR FREEDOM

Butler to 11 U.S. Presidents Dies from COVID-19

Author Wil Haygood presented a special talk on his popular book-turned-film "The Butler," about 34-year White Houe butler Eugene Allen, to the Elders of the Rosetta James Foundation in Huntsville, Ala., a few years ago. Now, a man who

served even longer has died.



Wilson Roosevelt Jerman, a former White House butler who worked under 11 U.S. Presidents, died after contracting coronavirus. He was 91 years old. The long-serving employee began working in the White House in 1957 under then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower as a cleaner. He was promoted to butler under former President John F. Kennedy, through the actions of former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.

Jerman initially retired from the White House in 1997 but went back to the White House in 2003. He left the White House in 2012 as maître d' under then-President Barack Obama.

Relatives told CNN that Jerman suffered a stroke in 2011, and the Obamas assisted in making sure he was taken care of while in the hospital, even sending flowers. At the end of his career, Obama honored Jerman for his over five decades of service with a plaque and a coin to represent each President he served.

800,000 Alabamians Live in Poverty

Alabama Possible, a statewide nonprofit organization that breaks down barriers to prosperity, recently released its 2020 Barriers to Prosperity Data Sheet.

More than 800,000 Alabamians, including 256,000 children, live below the federal poverty threshold, which is \$25,701 for a family of four. More than 400,000

Alabamians have lost their jobs since March because of COVID-19.

Poverty has decreased by 2.4 percentage points since it hit a peak of 19.2 percent in 2014. However, Alabama's poverty rate of 16.8 percent remains substantially higher than the national average of 13.1 percent.

Further, the report labels

the state as the 5th poorest in the country.

Alabama's median household income is at a peak of \$49,881. However, the gap between Alabama's median household income and the national median household income stands at \$12,056.

For more details, visit AlabamaPossible.org.

Drake State Issues Census 2020 Challenge

Dr. Patricia Sims, president of Drake State Community & Technical Col-

lege, is issuing a friendly Census 2020 challenge to other organizations in Madison County. The challenge comes after the College achieved 100 percent participation among its full-time employees, including faculty.

"We're really proud and appreciate that our employees understand how important this is for our community," said Dr. Sims. "We want to extend a friendly challenge to other organizations to strive for the same results. Imagine the impact we could have if we came together as a community of businesses to encourage more participation."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, data from Census 2020 will be used to make decisions on funding for many programs and services including several directly related to higher education and workforce

> programs like tuition grant programs, adult education programs and employment training. A low response rate in Alabama could impact funding for these and many other programs that serve the North Alabama com-

response to the pandemic, online, phone and mailed self-responses continue through October 31, 2020.

The Census Bureau's Response Rates Map show Alabama has a Self-Response Rate of 57.7 percent, which is approaching the National Self-Response Rate of 59.5 percent.

The College plans to continue its Census 2020 awareness campaign with a focus on helping students understand the importance of participating and how to respond. For more information, contact Jennifer Malone at jennifer. malone@drakestate.edu.



Spotlight: Hon. Loretta Spencer, Page 2 Perspectives on EGO-holism, Page 3 Champion Game Plan, Page 5 Adjusting to New Normal, Page 7 Llittle Richard Laid to Rest, Page 8 Legacy Center Food Distribution, Page 9

Called Preach by Pastor/Founder Michael D. Rice

Grace Gethsemane Mission Church

God's Divine Twins

Psalm 23:6; 89:14

Goodness and mercy; righteousness and justice; these are the divine twins that are named by these two Psalmists.

Sagaciously suggested by them is both an expectation and an expression that had turned into an experience for both Psalmists.

They recognized them as twins; fraternal though they may be. Even though they



obviously do not dress alike, that is, they are not homonyms, they do show up at the same place, at the same time, all the time. David said that goodness and mercy were his constant companions.

Ethan described righteousness and justice as the foundation of God's throne. Ethan's pathos and pain of the absence of these twins among his people is what motivated him to remind them that there is an expectation and edict from that throne. David's confidence in his



divine companions still bring comfort thousands of years later just as they did for him.

I believe that one of the reasons that God pairs up these sets of twins is because

they represent who He is to His children; Protector and Parent.

As Protector, He makes sure that His children have the benefit of His goodness

and His mercy, because man's version of those two is tainted with biases and ignorance. As Parent, He desires and demands what every parent does from their children: that is, to represent them well.

The way to do that is by practicing righteousness (Christlikeness) and justice (treating others the way one wants to be treated).

Spotlight on Our Elders ... Featuring

Mrs. Loretta Spencer

Former Mayor Loretta Purdy Spencer graduated from the University of Alabama in 1959 with a B.S. degree in elementary education. She returned to Huntsville, Ala., to teach fifth grade at Fifth Avenue School.

Spencer spent the next 30 years focused on volunteerism, most notably as the president of boards, such as The Boys and Girls Club, The Senior Center, The Botanical Gardens, and as chair of the Huntsville Planning Commission.

While chairman, Spencer helped develop Cummings Research Park West, which emerged into the second largest research park in the United States.

In 1996, Spencer was elected as the first female mayor of Huntsville, as well as the first woman to be elected mayor of a large city in Alabama.

She served three terms as mayor and is credited with such accomplishments as bringing the Toyota V-8 Engine Plant, the Target Distribution Center, the downtown Embassy Suites Hotel, Bridgestreet Town Centre and a host of retail businesses to Huntsville, as well as beginning the revitalization of the downtown area.

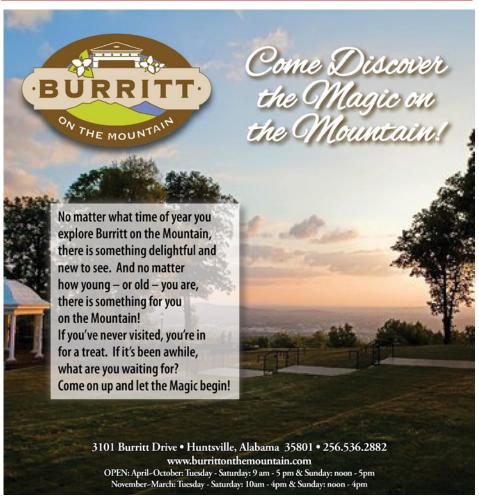
Spencer has received a multitude of awards and much recognition for her vision and leadership.

Since leaving office, Spencer continues to contribute her time and resources to many worthwhile organizations,



including the Army Space and Missile Defense Board (ASMDA), the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Board, the Community Free Clinic, The Calhoun College Foundation Board and the Hudson Alpha Institute for Biotechnology. MAY 22 - HERMAN BLOUNT - Sun Ra was born Herman Blount on May 22, 1914, in Birmingham, Ala. In 1936, John T. "Fess" Whatley's intercession led to Blount being awarded a scholarship at Alabama A&M University as a music education major. He dropped out after a year.





MAY 29 - DR. HENRY MCBAY - Chemist and Professor at Morehouse College. His research with acetyl peroxide—with which many other scientists refused to work because of its volatile nature—led to the synthesis of a hormone used in the **treatment of prostate cancer.** - BlackinTime.info



Alley Weekly

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The Valley Weekly

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Have You Settled in a Stressed Out Place?

Could your town of residence be adding to your daily stress?

BlackDoctor.org reported a listing of the most stressed places in the country in terms of housing affordability, rent, sleep, work hours, commute time, unemployment rate, percentage of poverty, divorce rate, number of yoga and meditation centers, health, and people's attitude about fun.

The listing includes the following cities:

10. Sacramento, Calif.

- 9. Phoenix, Ariz.
- 8. Lafayette, La.
- 7. New Orleans, La.
- 6. Houston, Tex.
- 5. New York, N.Y.
- 4. Anchorage, Alaska
- 3. Miami, Fla.
- 2. Riverside, Calif.
- 1. Los Angeles, Calif.

The listing, pulled from a popular real estate blog, also lists the following states:

- 10. Arizona
- 9. North Carolina
- 8. Maryland

- 7. New York
- 6. Illinois
- 5. Nevada
- 4. California
- 3. New Jersey
- 2. Georgia
- 1. Florida

Although Florida has Disney World, as a whole Florida ranked as the third worst state when it came to both the percentage of the population without health insurance (25.8 percent) and unemployment rate (11.3 percent) and traffic.

- BlackDoctor.org

PowerShots "Never say never because Limits, Like fears, are often just an illusion." -Michael Jordan

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State Farm





Perspectives on EGO-holism

Jerry Krause, "The Last Dance" and the Danger of the little ego

The king spoke, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built ... by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, . . . The kingdom has departed from you!" - Daniel 4:30,31.

With his own words, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed what could've been an even greater Babylonian dynasty.

Similarly, Jerry Krause destroyed what could've been an even greater Chicago Bulls six-championship dynasty, ac-

cording to ESPN's "The Last Dance."

This spring's 10part documentary series showcased the 1990's winningest sports dynasty featuring Hall of Famers



Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman, coach Phil Jackson and teammate/future Hall shoo-in Steve Kerr.

FOX Sports' Chris Broussard: "The Most Unpardonable Sin in Sports"

"The Last Dance" was so entitled because in 1997, Bulls general manager Krause told then-five-time champion Jackson, "I don't care if you go 82-0, you're still not coming back." Jordan then retorted, saying he'd not return without Jackson.

The 97-98 season ended with the Bulls winning their sixth and final championship. Predictably Jackson left (and coached the Los Angeles Lakers to five titles), Jordan reretired, and starters Steve Kerr, Dennis Rodman and Pippen were either traded or released - but ultimately became Hall inductees.

"Life and death are in the power of the tongue" Proverbs

Organizations and people are as damaged by little egoholism (feelings of insecurity, minimal recognition) as by arrogance, boastfulness and vanity (big ego-holism).

Yes, the series showed Jordan and teammates teasing constantly the shorter rotund Krause, who they excluded from their de facto athletic fraternity. Apparently, the two-time NBA Executive of the Year wanted even more.

In his article "Jerry Reinsdorf reveals Jerry Krause's 'one failing' as Bulls GM," Bruno Manrique noted, "Krause had a genius for building a team that can could contend for hardware and he should be credited for it, though his relentless seeking for credit might have been his biggest downfall as an NBA executive," https://clutchpoints.com/last-dance-newsjerry-reinsdorf-reveals-jerry-krauses-one-failing-as-bulls-

Beside yourself, what and who are you building, then destroying with your words?

Life Coach tim allston is the author of the free book, 7 Steps to Manage Ego Problems: The How-to Guide for "Someone Else," downloadable now at www.GetEgoHelp-Now.org.

Admirers of Nell Lane Bradford Celebrate the Choral Music Legend's 98th Birthday with Parade

Photos by Robert Drake



Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

HAVING A SOLID FOUNDATION

Matthew 7:24-25 says, *Therefore everyone who* hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the steams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

You know, when we read this scripture, it describes two distinct types of foundations that we can build our lives upon. One, is the stability of rock, while the other one is the *in*-stability of sand. Now, in this scripture it doesn't say that you can't build your house on

sand, it just illustrates the expected end when you do.

Now that word foundation means the basis, or groundwork of anything.

Whether it be a house. or a marriage, or any kind of relationship, it all starts with a solid foundation that you can build on.

The same can also be said about our finances. because in order for us to plan for an uncertain future, it all starts with being prepared for the "what if's" in life that will come.

In this scripture, Jesus was clear on this, because he tells us in his word that when the rains come, and they will, and when the steams rise and the winds of life come and beat against your house, your

> house will not fall because it was built upon the stability of the rock, not the in stability of the

sand that changes every day. But the good news is this, it's never too late to start building your life on the rock. And for those that don't know the "Rock" is Jesus ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters!



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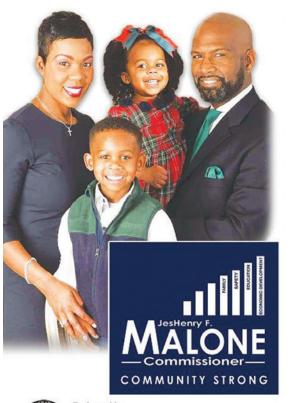


JesHenry Malone Commissioner District 6

As Commissioner, JesHenry Malone:

- Secured the funding for the first road built in 20 years in District 6 and will continue to fight for our fair share for roads and infrastructure.
- · Is working to recruit additional industries to the North Huntsville Industrial Park to provide jobs for our community.
- · Will continue to fight to move our commission forward and to keep our streets safe and lower our crime.
- Moved our county forward by helping to bring Mazda Toyota to our county.
- · Will continue to fight for our quality of life including our schools and recreation.
- · Will continue to support Alabama A&M University, Oakwood University and University of Alabama Huntsville.
- · Led the effort for the new service center to be located in District 6.

TUESDAY JULY 14th!





Valley Deaths

NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME -

2501 Carmichael Avenue NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-8189

Funeral service will be announced later for MRS. ODELL PEARSON BOOKER (b. 1932), a Rosetta James Foundation Elder, as well as for MR. JOHNNY LEWIS MOSS (b. 1945) and MS. GLENDA JONES SMITH (b. 1952).

Funeral service for MR. LEE E. NELMS (b. 1955) was held Saturday, May 23, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. Johnny Burrell officiating.

Public viewing for MR. JOHN RICE, JR. (b. 1954) was held Wednesday, May 20, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home.

Funeral service for MR. JOHN HENRY THOMAS (b. 1936) was held Tuesday, May 19, at the Liberty Christian Faith Center (6017 Stringfield Road - Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Eric Robinson officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME - 4315 Oakwood Avenue -Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481

Funeral service for MR. JOSEPH CRAIG HILL (b. 1942) will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, May 29, location TBA at press time. Interment will be in the Nashville National Cemetery (1420 Gallatin Road, South Nashville, Tenn.).

Public viewing for MR. ANTHONY DILLARD (b. 1957) was held Saturday, May 23, at the Royal Funeral Home.

Graveside service for DEACON THOMAS HAYGOOD, JR., (b. 1950) was held Saturday, May 23, at Haygood Cemetery (7809 Wall Triana Hwy Harvest, Ala.) with Pastor Mylon Burwell officiating.

Graveside service for REV. KENNETH WAYNE CAIN (b. 1960) was held Friday, May 22, at Pleasant Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church Cemetery (15439 Hastings Road Athens, Ala.) with Reverend Robert Rice officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME - 2505 University Drive NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-9693

A private family service of remembrance was held for MS. TANISHA RUSSELL (b. 1986) on Tuesday, May 26, at Serenity Funeral Home with Elder Jerry L. Crutcher officiating.

Funeral service was held for MR. LONNIE M. KEYS (b. 1947) on Saturday, May 23, at West Mastin Lake Baptist Church with Pastor Willie L. Hinton officiating.







William Henry Lewis' "Shades"

One very hot summer day at an annual blues festival in a small Southern town, a mother points out to her son the father he had never seen.

Throughout the son's fourteen years, his mother had not spoken much of his father, except to tell him about how the man she loved had come home drunk one night, had his way with her and then left on a train for the North, leaving his sweaty work shirt on the bedpost.

The father had not returned to her and probably did not know that, in addition to leaving a woman who loved him, he had left a child.

At first, the boy watches his father from a distance, as his dad appears to be the cool leader of a pack of men intent on having a good time on their quick pass through their hometown.

His curiosity gets the best of him, so the boy works his way through the crowd and gets the attention of the man who was his father in every realm but inside the father's head.

The boy is perfectly willing to accept his father as he is, but his father is called away to other adventures ("We got ladies waiting!") by his buddies. Before his father leaves, he gives the boy his shades.

As though possessed by a thought, he looks beyond the boy, the crowd and the railroad tracks, as though pushed to recall that final night when he forced himself on a woman who loved and believed in him, perhaps leaving a part of himself behind.



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Valley Weekly COVID-19

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COVID-19-RELATED UNEMPLOY-MENT

Alabama Department of Labor (866) 234-5382 labor.alabama.gov

MADISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (256) 539-3711

LATEST COV-ID-19 INFORMATION

Alabama Department of Public Health www.alabamapublichealth.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cdc.gov

TAKEOUT/DE-LIVERY RESTAU-RANTS

https://hsvchamber.org/ restaurant-deliveriestake-out-food-serviceproviders/

Huntsville Bible College Adjusts to New Normal

by Dr. John Clay, President

The community, nation, and the world have been affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Pandemic.

Our physical health, financial stability, and emotional well-being have been challenged, causing us to stop, evaluate, and adjust. Huntsville Bible College (HBC) has not escaped the pains of this virus; it too must Adjust to the New Normal.

When President Donald Trump declared the National State of Emergency in March, and Governor Kay Ivey ordered all schools



closed, HBC had to change, refocus, and adapt. Instructional, financial, and administrative operations were reviewed, keeping the safety of the students, instructors, and staff the first priority. Plans were put in place to Adjust to the New Normal.

HBC had some online classes before the pandemic but transitioned to all online and directed study classes when the "stay at home" order was issued.

Laptops and Chrome Books were made available for student use at home. Students

ended the academic year one week later than scheduled. While classes were held virtually, most of the staff worked from home, and a few employees carried out essential duties at the office. The meetings were held through Zoom.

Classes for the summer session will be delivered online or through directed study. A FREE computer class is offered this summer to help students better navigate online courses. The 2020-2021 academic year is scheduled to start using a hybrid instructional delivery approach. Classes will be online, directed study, or a combination. When school resumes, the CDC recommendations will be followed by using masks, hand sanitizers, social distancing, and other safety measures.

Due to the pandemic, graduation has been rescheduled for July 18, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. at Syler Tabernacle at 904 Oakwood Avenue. Mr. Frank Williams, Owner and Managing Partner of Landers Jeep Ram Dealership, will be the speaker. Seventeen (17) students are expecting to

graduate. Attendance is limited to graduates and their invited guests.

Graduates are allowed two (2) guests each. Guests will only be permitted to enter the graduation with HBC passes provided to the graduate.

The physical health and financial stability of everyone have been challenged during this pandemic, and so has Huntsville Bible College. The virus has not only interrupted the mission of HBC, but the largest fundraiser at the College has succumbed to COVID-19 with the cancellation of the

Annual Vision Banquet scheduled for June 5th.

Despite the cancellation,

the churches, community, and individual donors that invested in the mission of HBC have been generous. The College also received a Federal Gov-

ernment Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan for \$38,195 to cover the payroll for a portion of the employees.

Huntsville Bible College is adjusting, as many have done, to the "New Normal" and is sustained by the Grace of God.



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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.





MADISON COUNTY COMMISSION

PARTNERSHIP FOR MEDICATION ACCESS

SenioRx helps seniors lower their prescription drug costs by enrolling individuals in Patient Assistance Programs directly through the pharmaceutical companies. If approved, this allows individuals to receive their name-brand prescriptions for free or at a discounted cost.

Qualifications:

- A Madison County Resident*
- 55 years old or older OR have a disability at any age and have been deemed disabled by Social Security, applied for disability, or have a doctor's declaration of disability OR are in the 24-month Medicare waiting period
- Take medications daily for a chronic condition
- Meet pharmaceutical company maximum income requirements (differs by company)

Funding is provided by the Madison County Commission and the Alabam Department of Senior Services through the TARCOG/Area Agency on Agi



2020 Federal Poverty Guidelines

2/Household \$68,960

50% 1/Household \$31,900 2/Household \$43,100

300% 1/Household \$32,280 2/Household \$51,720 400% 1/Household \$51,040

Little Richard Laid to Rest at Historic Cemetery

- Story and Photos by Reginald Allen

Richard Wayne Penniman, better known as Little Richard, was laid to rest at Oakwood Memorial Gardens on May 20. After succumbing to bone cancer, Penniman passed in Tullahoma, Tenn. The Rock and Roll legend was 87.

Though heavy hitters like Mick Jagger and Sir Elton John paid their cyber respects to the musical icon, Penniman's service was a private affair with roughly 150 guests in attendance. According to his former bandmembers, that's just what he wanted. No celebrities. No big names. Just those that loved him.

In contrast with his largerthan-life personality, his former band mates recalled the eccentric singer keeping his circle very tight.

Roads leading to the memorial site were closed off to the public, but fans were able pay their respects on Adventist Blvd.

Known for his flamboyant persona, pencil thin mustache and tussled hair, Penniman took the world by storm as Little Richard with chart-shattering singles "Tutti Frutti", "Good Golly Miss Molly" and "Long Tall Sally." As a musician, his stage presence and musical talents earned him the nicknames "The Innovator" and "The Architect of Rock and Roll." But to those that knew him personally, he was a man with a big heart. For some, even a father-figure.

"There was two sides to Little Richard," former bassist James "Big Jaye" Nelson said. "The Little Richard the world knew

-- the flamboyant Little Rich-





ard. But The Little Richard we knew, we're talking about the compassion and kindness. I'm telling you; Little Richard had this sense of forgiveness. People would do something wrong and maybe even wrong to him, but he was the most forgiving person. He really believed in giving people a first, second, even third chance after chance."

Former trumpeter Wayne Chaney added, "If Richard Penniman doesn't go to heaven, we don't have a chance."

Throughout the 90-minute service, the message was the same: he loved music, but was very devout in his faith. Penniman briefly attended Oakwood University, then called Oakwood College, in the late 1950's to pursue ministry. James G. Owens, the pastor of Penniman's final church in Shelbyville, Tenn., spoke of how he bap-

tized the singer a year prior.

"Little Richard was known for his rock and roll, but he was also known for meeting the rock that don't roll and that's Jesus Christ," Owens said.

Oakwood president Dr. Leslie Pollard recalled his fond memories of Penniman, which dates to the early 70s. Pollard remembered riding around Los Angeles with the late singer and how he would pass out money to the homeless from the trunk of his car. Like many attested, Pollard spoke to Penniman's unyielding kindness and his elephant memory.

"Once Richard met you and he knew you, he never forgot you," Pollard said. "He remembered your family, your mother, your father, your sisters, your brothers. Whose birthday was it. What time they were doing what they were doing. How did they get out of the hos-

pital? How did that turn out? He had a genuine interest in people."

In his closing words, Pollard called the homecoming service a "full circle" for the late musician.

"For one year, before going out on the evangelistic trail, we saluted him and now he has circled and come all the way back to Oakwood," Pollard said.

Councilman Will Culver presented the Penniman family with a special plaque that commemorated some of the singer's many achievements throughout his career.

The service featured musical selections from Dr. Janice Browne and Penniman's niece Brandie Inez Sutton. Sutton, a member of the Metropolitan Opera, recounted how her uncle unknowingly served as catalyst for her singing career. Growing up, her parents would encourage her

to sing at large gatherings and Penniman would always step in on her behalf. It was this that inspired the soprano to embark on her musical career, which boast credits in "Porgy and Bess" and "Cendrillion." To honor her uncle, the singer donned a pair of silver sequined heels to accompany her black dress.

During the Eulogy, Pastor Joseph McCoy cited that the "Good Golly Miss Molly" singer was a devout Christian until his last breath. He recalled Penniman giving out religious materials to concert patrons after shows and well after his retirement.

Out of respect and privacy to the family, Penniman was not immediately let in the ground until media left the premises. Following the service, attendees were encouraged to sing hymns to their hearts content as they paid their final respects to

the singer.

David Person, a spokesperson for the Penniman family released the following statement:

"Richard Penniman was a special human being. His musical talents, sense of style and charisma made him one of the most enduring cultural icons the world has ever known. But Richard was so much more than a cultural icon. He was a devout Christian and a faithful member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Many of his fans have only known him as 'Little Richard,' the self-proclaimed 'Architect of Rock & Roll.' And it's indisputable that he was that.

"They saw the flamboyant persona that he projected with the make-up, the dramatic pompadour hairstyle and the manic gestures that deconstructed conventional ideas about gender identity and sexual orientation. They know about some of his struggles and challenges with addictions and other vices. Yes, these facts are well documented and undeniable.

"But just as indisputable and undeniable is that from the time he was a child until he drew his last breath. Richard Penniman was a Christian. He believed in an Almighty God. And Richard pursued God relentlessly, often in full view of all his fans and fellow entertainers. His journey was not always perfect or easy. And while his many successes were public, so were some of his shortcomings."



Extension, Legacy Center Partners Assist in Distribution of Food Through USDA Program

Many individuals and families across the nation have been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. In its wake, the virus has left people without jobs and, therefore, the ability to meet basic needs such as buying adequate food. Some people now find themselves in food distribution lines for the very first time.

Luckily, staff and volunteers from organizations like The Legacy Center, Inc., the Basic Needs Coalition and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Alabama A&M University (AAMU), and several other partners, are stepping up to address food insecurity issues in the Huntsville area.

The Legacy Center, Inc., was approved as a distributor for the United States Department of Agriculture's Farmers to Families Food Box Program that provides familysized food boxes.

These boxes contain a combination of produce, dairy, or meat products to aid residents in need as a result of COVID-19. The chair of the Basic Needs Coalition, Andrea Morris, who also works for Alabama Extension at AAMU, heard of this endeavor and was able to secure 100 boxes of food.

Starting on Wednesday, May 20, and continuing over the next six weeks, 50 AAMU students and 50 individuals or families in the nearby Edmonton Heights community will be able to receive food boxes containing fresh produce and other food items.

"The AAMU Basic Needs Coalition has provided food relief for students through a mobile food pantry since the University closed in March. By joining with our community partner, The Legacy Center, Inc., and with the support of Alabama Extension at AAMU, these efforts have begun to reach more families that need immediate assistance during this time. The need is great and we are proud to connect the community with these resources."

Other partners in this endeavor include Alabama State Representative Laura Hall, and volunteers from 26 local churches, three nonprofits and 7 small businesses that assist with logistics and distribution. These efforts will continue weekly through the end of June.

"Where there is strategic community collaboration, great things happen," said Chanda Crutcher, chief visionary officer of The Legacy Center, Inc.

The Legacy Center, Inc., was

established to address the gaps that prevent successful aging. The Basic Needs Coalition was established in 2019 to address the food insecurity, mental and physical health of students on the Alabama A&M campus.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is the outreach organization of

Alabama A&M University and Auburn University that provides practical education to help Alabama residents solve economic, food insecurity and other issues that impact their daily lives.

For more information about the Coalition, contact Morris at (256) 937-6341. Interested person can also learn how to access Alabama Extension at AAMU from home by visiting its Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionAAMU or the Alabama Extension website at www.aces.edu.

by Wendi Williams (Photos by J. Saintjones)

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