

# Meet TikTok's Newest Sensation - p. 8

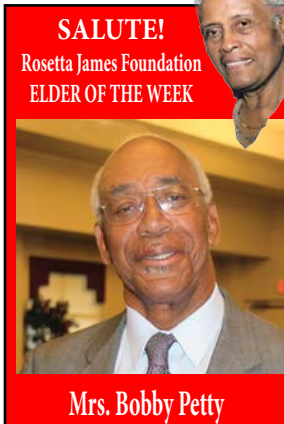
FREE



## "Perception Is Everything" - p. 3

Friday  
July 8, 2022  
Vol. 8, No. 44  
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

# The Valley Weekly



**SALUTE!**  
Rosetta James Foundation  
ELDER OF THE WEEK

Mrs. Bobby Petty

"If you are silent about your pain, they'll kill you and say you enjoyed it." - Zora Neale Hurston

## Local Dealer Unveils Huntsville's First All-Electric F-150

Cathy Anderson-Stender, dealer, Woody Anderson Ford, along with Bobby White, General Manager, Woody Anderson Ford and community leaders unveiled the first all-electric Ford F-150 in the City of Huntsville at Woody Anderson Ford (located at 2500 Jordan Lane) on Thursday, June 30.



With rising gas prices, consumer's interest in electric vehicles is increasing, and the F-150 Lightning represents a defining moment as the United States progresses towards a zero-emissions

future.

The Ford F-Series has been America's best-selling truck for 44 Years, the backbone of working citizens across the country,

and it is the trusted icon for generations of customers.

Since 1961, Woody Anderson Ford has served the North Alabama community by providing retail and commercial sales, maintenance, body shop, vehicle rentals, and is the home to Henry's Mustang Cafe.

The dealership was recently recognized as the largest volume Ford dealership in Alabama in addition to being named one of the top 100 Ford dealerships out of 3,800 in the country.



**247th Army Birthday Dinner at VBC:** Attending the recent affair were (l-r) Hon. Lawrence Haygood, mayor, Tuskegee, Ala.; Dr. Earnest Davis, president and director, North Alabama Center for Educational Excellence (NACEE); LTC (Ret) Audrey Ransom, counselor and outreach officer, NACEE Veterans Upward Bound (VUB); Keneisha Fudge, commander, Young Marines, Huntsville Chapter; Hon. Laura Hall, State Representative, District 19; and LTC (Ret) Samuel Scruggs, operations officer/program coordinator, NACEE VUB.

## Local Artist Selected to Participate in Regional Exhibition

The work of Huntsville artist John "Jahni" Moore has been selected for a regional juried exhibition to open July 21.

The Wiregrass Museum of Art selected only 37 works of art from artists across the Southeast to be a part of B22: Wiregrass

Biennial. The Wiregrass Biennial is a juried exhibition open to all artists living and working in the Southeast over 18 years of age. WMA's call for artists began



in December 2021 for submissions of original work completed within the last three years, and yielded a record number of applications from artists.

To encourage artists in their career advancement and studio practice, WMA will provide five cash prizes in 2022 for select artists in the Biennial exhibition: the Judge's Award (\$1,000); the Alabama Award (\$1,000); and three People's Choice awards.

## The Valley Weekly

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Back Cover	10x10-inches	\$1,000
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# Washington in One Minute



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

1. **ON THE FLOOR.** The House and Senate are out this week and will reconvene next week.

2. **THE WHITE HOUSE.** After spending the weekend at Camp David, the President and First Lady Jill Biden returned to DC on Monday afternoon and hosted military families on the South Lawn for a Fourth of July barbecue. On Tuesday, the President awarded the Medal of Honor to four(4) soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War (1 posthumously) and on Wednesday he traveled to Cleveland to deliver remarks on the economy. On Thursday, the President awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 17 people, including former Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-AZ), Sandra Lindsay, the New York nurse who volunteered to receive the first dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine on Dec. 14, 2020, and a posthumous award to Sen. John McCain (R-AZ). Last Friday,

President Biden met with Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York and 8 other governors (CT, NM, NC, CO, IL, WA, RI & OR), at which the President called for the Senate to carve out an exception to the filibuster to codify Roe v Wade into law and thereby protect access to abortion nationwide.

3. **SUPREME COURT.** After issuing its final opinions of the 2021-22 term last week, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was sworn in on Thursday as the 116th Supreme Court justice and the first Black woman to serve on the high court. The court then adjourned until Oct. 3, 2022. Last Friday, Supreme Court Marshal Gail Curley sent letters to Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, Montgomery County (MD) Executive Marc Elrich and Fairfax County (VA) Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay requesting they direct state and local law enforcement to enforce anti-picketing laws outside the justices' homes in view of repeated protests that

have been occurring after the court overturned Roe v. Wade on June 24.

4. **VACCINES + JUUL E-CIGARETTES.** Last Tuesday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee voted to support recommending inclusion of an Omicron-specific component for a COVID-19 booster vaccine for fall 2022. Two Omicron subvariants, BA.4 and BA.5, are now dominating transmission of COVID-19 in the U.S. On Thursday, the FDA issued an order directing Juul to stop selling and distributing its e-cigarettes in the U.S. and that its current products for sale must be removed from shelves (although the order does not forbid individual consumers from possessing or using Juul products).

5. **JUNE JOBS REPORT.** On Friday at 8:30 a.m. ET, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics will release the June 2022 jobs report. Economists are predicting that the report will show that 275,000 jobs were created last month.

6. **EDUCATION.** Last week, the Biden administration finalized new regulations to overhaul the federal Charter School Program. The rules would make it harder for for-profit organizations to secure taxpayer money and require greater transparency and accountability for grant applicants. The program has awarded billions of dollars in

grants over the past several decades for the expansion or opening of charters, which are publicly funded but privately operated, often with little or no public oversight. During the 2020 election campaign, President Biden said that he wanted to end federal funding for for-profit charter schools. However, the final regulations do not accomplish that objective. Charter school supporters who strongly objected to a draft set of rules released earlier this year say these rules are less harmful than the original proposal. Critics of the federal Charter School

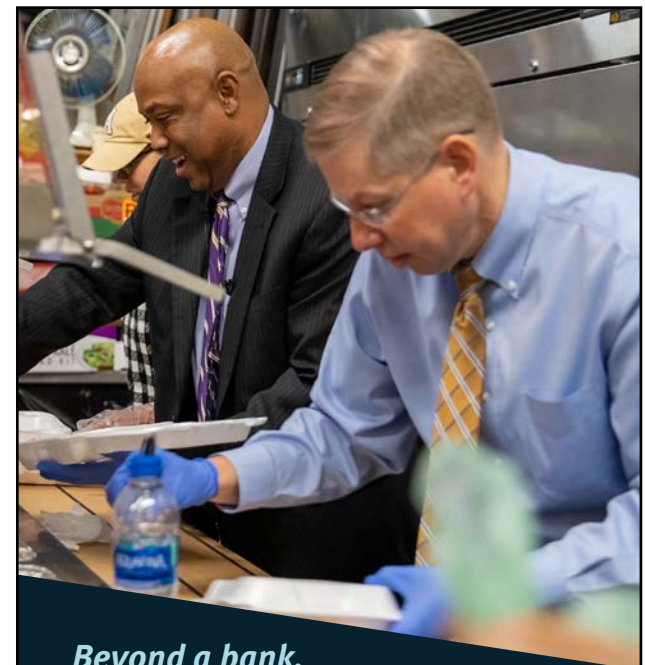
Program said both the draft set of regulation changes and the final versions were important moves to stop waste and fraud in the federal program and provide more transparency to the operation of charters.

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## Drake Introduces Free Robotics Camp

Middle school and high school students can learn new technological skills this summer to design and build robots at Drake State Community and Technical College.

Some schools may not offer robotics as an extracurricular activity,

but a free summer camp at Drake State can give students the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills that could lead to careers in aerospace en-

gineering, mobile app and software development, and cybersecurity. For more information about available opportunities, visit [www.drakestate.edu](http://www.drakestate.edu).



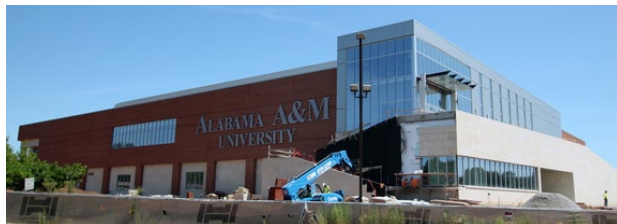
**DRAKE STATE**  
COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

# AAMU's Massive Construction Projects Near Completion

Two large construction projects on the campus of Alabama A&M University are slowly making their way toward the Fall 2022 completion zone. Here is an update obtained by *The Valley Weekly*.

**Event Center.** In November 2020, Alabama A&M University President Daniel K. Wims joined University officials in a groundbreaking ceremony for a multi-functional facility that would help to change the landscape of north Huntsville.

Fast forward. The Alabama A&M University Event Center is on track for completion in fall 2022. By June's end, the facility was 80 percent complete, according to Brian Shipp, director of university facilities, although the building also was 100 percent



“dried-in” at the same time. The jargon simply indicates that the shell of the Event Center has been completed to such an extent that wind, rain or other weather will not pose a problem to its more weather-sensitive areas.

Additionally, drywall is complete, and painting is underway. The HVAC systems have been installed and are online; permanent electrical power is complete; and even scoreboards are installed.

At present, the site work on the massive facility has

started again, and curbs and gutters are being installed. Gradually progressing toward completion, the Event Center is undergoing landscaping; ceiling grid installation; placement of lighting, sound and other electrical systems; floor polishing and ceramic tile placement; as well as the installation of cabinets and stadium-fixed seating.

The 6,000-seat facility will be the venue for a wide range of sporting events, University ceremonies and numerous activities offered by the cam-

pus and community.

## The Welcome Center.

AAMU officials once again pulled together a groundbreaking ceremony in May 2021 for a Welcome Center, located at the corner of Chase Road and Meridian Street.

University administrators joined city and state leaders, students, faculty, staff, alumni, architects, contractors and the construction team for the occasion.

The \$7.6 million structure will house retail space, commercial restaurants and an executive conference area.

Initial plans include the center serving as the home to the AAMU Office of Admissions, as well as providing a one-stop shop for key student-related functions and information.

thing of all was that they put up with it. No one was willing to challenge Goliath until David came along. You see, David didn't look at Goliath the same way

that these soldiers looked at him. David had a different perspective of the situation and he realized that the “battle” was in God's hands and not in the hands of a shepherd with a rock and a sling-

shot. And this message is for all of us when we are facing difficult times. We need to know *where* our help comes from, because so many times we allow the devil to expose our weaknesses in such a way that we are unaware of the strength that we have.

everything looks like a “giant”? But, if we believe in the power of God, we should know that there is no

problem too big for God.

When we look at this scripture, we can read for ourselves that Goliath was a Giant Problem that someone had to deal with.

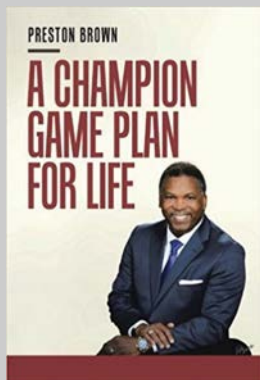
According to the text, Goliath had been defiling the entire Israelite Army for 40 days. But the worst



**“PERCEPTION IS EVERYTHING”**

1 Samuel 17:45 says, *David said to Goliath, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defiled.”*

You know, it's been said that “perception is everything”. So, the way we see things will affect the way that we react to them. For example, what do you do when you are faced with a situation that appears to be too much for you to handle? And when ev-



I believe our strength comes from the wisdom that we get from God. You know, I heard someone say that “everyone else looked at Goliath and said he's too big to kill,” but David looked at Goliath and said “he's too big to miss.” You see, perception is everything ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters. And make sure you purchase a copy of my book, “A Champion Game Plan For Life,” at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

## THE VALLEY WEEKLY VALLEY DEATHS



### NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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

*Graveside service for MR. DAVAR THOMAS BURNETT (b. 1978) will be held Thursday, July 7, at Faith Memorial Park with Pastor Vincent M. Leslie, eulogist.*

*Funeral service for MRS. GLORIA HEATHINGTON PRICHARD (b. 1938) was held Thursday, June 30, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

*Funeral service for MASTER JOSIAH J. REED (b. 2019) was held Monday, June 27, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.*

### ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

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

*Funeral service for MR. JEROME WILLIE DAVIS, SR., (b. 1966) will be 12 noon Saturday, July 9, at the Everlasting Love Christian Fellowship Church (2227 Drake Ave SW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Theodore Wright officiating.*

*Graveside service for MR. TRISTAN RAY KING (b. 1981) will be held Thursday, July 7, at the Meadowlawn Garden of Peace (450 Mount Lebanon Road, Toney, Ala.) with Elder Reginald Burrell officiating.*

*Funeral service for MRS. ESSIE VERA COLE (b. 1954) will be held Wednesday, July 6, at the Royal Chapel of Memories with Pastor Jaymes Mooney officiating.*

*Funeral service for MR. ALFONDZO LAFONZ HEWLETT (b. 1995) was held Sunday, July 3, at Lakewood Church of Christ (2813 Mastin Lake Road NE, Huntsville, Ala.) with Minister Timmy Smith officiating.*

*Funeral service for MR. DAVID DEAN CHISOM (b. 1947) was held Saturday, July 2, 2022 at the Fletcher's Chapel Primitive Baptist Church (30592 Hardiman Rd., Madison, Ala.) with Elder Kenneth Langford officiating.*

*Graveside service for MR. DAVID LESTER STINNETT (b. 1948) was held Tuesday, June 28, at the Collier Cemetery in Athens, Ala., with Pastor Robert Rice officiating.*

### SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

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

*Homegoing Services for MS. TERESA ANN MARTIN (b. 1963) will be held Friday, July 8, at 11 a.m. at Serenity Funeral Home (2505 University Drive NW, Huntsville, Ala.), with Pastor Gary L. Crum Sr. of Ellwood Community Church (Selma, Ala.) officiating.*



THE VALLEY WEEKLY

# VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES &amp; MORE!

**Thru July 29**

Mae Jemison Jaguar Tennis

Sponsor: Youth Development Association

Summer Tennis &amp; Reading Camps

(Ages 5-18)

Beginners: \$160

Intermediate/Advanced: \$200

Contact: Coach Garrett

E-mail: y.d.a@att.net

**July 7-17**

The World Games

Birmingham, Ala.

**July 15**

AAMU Day at The World Games

**July 23-24**

Spiritual Retreat (Conducted by Swami Sarvapriyananda of Vedanta Society of New York)

Sponsor: Hindu Cultural Center of North Alabama  
<https://tinyurl.com/2nwftcky>**August 2**

"Your Life, Your Huntsville"

Monthly Forum

Sponsor: Councilman John Meredith

First Floor Chambers City Hall

4 p.m.

**August 5-7**

DL Hughley Comedian

Stand Up Live Huntsville Huntsville, Ala.

**September 17**

Bulldog Football vs. Austin Peay

Louis Crews Stadium

Alabama A&amp;M University 2 p.m.

**October 1**

Bulldog Football vs. Bethune-Cookman

Louis Crews Stadium

Alabama A&amp;M University 2 p.m.

**October 4**

Concert

Earth, Wind &amp; Fire

Orion Theater

[www.axs.com](http://www.axs.com)**October 8**

Bulldog Football vs. Grambling State

Louis Crews Stadium

Alabama A&amp;M University 1 p.m.

**November 12**

Gulf Coast Challenge

AAMU vs. Jackson State

Ladd-Peebles Stadium

Mobile, Ala.

**November 19**

Bulldog Football vs. Texas Southern

Louis Crews Stadium

Alabama A&amp;M University 1 p.m.

**JULY 8 - ROCKY CARROLL**

- Roscoe "Rocky" Carroll is an American actor and director. He is known for his roles as Joey Emerson on the FOX comedy-drama *Roc* (1991-94); as Dr. Keith Wilkes on the CBS medical drama *Chicago Hope*, and as NCIS Director Leon Vance on the CBS drama *NCIS*. He also played a supporting role in the 1995 thriller film *Crimson Tide*. - [BlackCelebrityBirthdays.com](http://BlackCelebrityBirthdays.com)



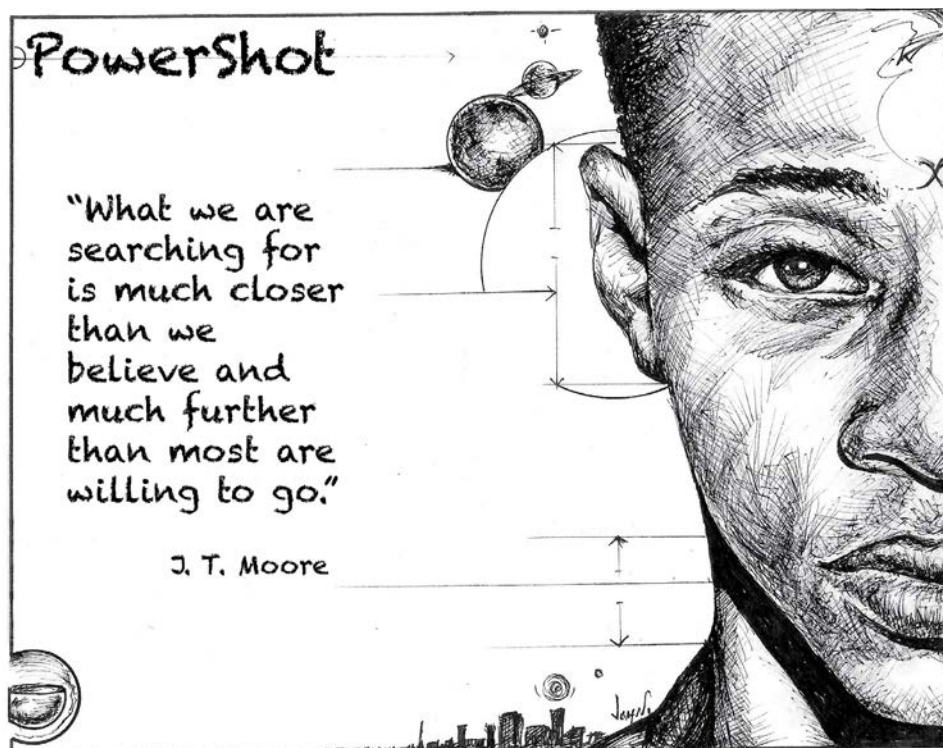
## Councilman's Forum Addresses "Roads"

"Your Life, Your Huntsville," the monthly Public Forum facilitated by Huntsville City Councilman John Meredith, was held Tuesday, July 5, on the first floor chambers of City Hall at 4 p.m.

The recent forum dealt with the topic "roads" and included Kathy Martin, director of engineering; Dennis Madsen, manager of urban and long-range planning; and Chris McNeese, director of public works.

The monthly forum is designed to generate discussion and inform the community about important City topics.

The next forum will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, August 2.



*"We love because it's the only true adventure."*

—Nikki Giovanni

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# Top Ways to Save Money on Groceries

(BPT) - With rising prices of food and other essential household items, it can feel like every trip to the grocery store costs more than the last one.

Fortunately, there are smart ways to approach grocery shopping that can help you save money, while also making sure that your family is eating nutritious - and delicious - meals every day.

Here are five ideas to help you save money on food with a little planning ahead, and by shopping smarter.

## 1. Make a plan

Weekly meal planning is a simple yet effective way to save time and money on groceries. By planning ahead, you can also make sure you're making the best use of leftovers, and that you're not overlooking items you already have in your pantry.

First, do an inventory of your pantry and fridge for items you already have that can be used for this week's meal plan. Pay special attention to any perishable items like fresh produce that may need to be used up more quickly.

Next, list meals you plan to make each day with an eye toward saving time - such as cooking a larger batch of meatloaf, a whole chicken or a casserole your family loves so you'll have leftovers for lunch or dinner the next day.

Tricks that save time - like double batch cooking you can do on weekends - will almost always save money too, as you're using bulk ingredients and reducing food waste.

If you know your leftovers won't be used right away, freeze the extra amount. Be sure to label and date your freezer bag or container so you'll know what's in there.

By planning for the whole week, you'll make fewer trips to the store, so you'll be less likely to impulsively buy items you don't need. Planning



ahead also means you know exactly how you'll use the ingredients you're buying.

## 2. Find a grocery store offering the best value

Where you shop can make a huge difference. If you're looking to save money on everyday groceries, stores like Save A Lot have your back.

A Save A Lot, for instance, can be your go-to hometown value grocer, and the ultimate destination to fuel your family on a budget, offering quality ingredients and value every day.

## 3. Choose meals based around low-cost ingredients

You can feed even a large family well if your meals center on ingredients that offer more bang for your buck. Here are some meal ideas you can make with items from Save A Lot's private label brands for under ten dollars (less than two tanks of gas):

- \* *Sloppy Joes*: ground beef, sloppy Joe sauce and hamburger buns
- \* *Loaded baked potatoes*: baked potatoes, shredded cheddar cheese and bacon bits
- \* *Grilled cheese and tomato*

- soup*: bread, American cheese and canned tomato soup
- \* *Spaghetti and garlic bread*: pasta, jarred tomato sauce and bread sticks
- \* *Hot dogs*: hot dogs, buns, baked beans and chips

## 4. Be flexible

Within your weekly meal plan, be ready to swap out an ingredient or two (or an entire meal) if you see items on sale, find online or store coupons that will save you money - and keep an eye out for in-season produce that looks really good.

## 5. Shop alone or order online

To avoid other family members (especially little ones) persuading you to pick up impulse buys, try to shop alone if you can, or order your grocery items online. That way you'll know exactly how much you're spending, with no last-minute surprises.

Using some of these tips, you can help feed your family better each week - without breaking the bank.



## The January 6th Committee's Cassidy Hutchinson: The Poster Child for "Leaders from the Middle"

*"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over."*  
- Psalms 23:5

David testified here that God gave him a platform amongst his detractors. Additionally, his mind overflowed with wisdom and truth that subsequently benefited many people.

On June 28, Cassidy Hutchinson updated David's psalm: The televised January 6 Select Committee hearing was her "prepared table";



Her knowledge ("anointed head") came from being the former senior aide to Trump Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, one of her detractors ("enemies"); and

Thus, her insider first-hand knowledge ("cup runneth over") has become the Committee's most eye-opening interview.

Hutchinson's testimony underscores how below-the-radar "leaders from the middle" are integral to every organization's success.

In U.S. Politics The Rise of Silver-Mettle Leaders, <https://amzn.to/3AhwUF9>, I defined silver-mettle leaders as the leaders from the middle that report to someone in their organizations (silver); possess know-how and expertise, albeit below the radar (mettle); and succeed through their influence and relationships (leaders).

Hutchinson's fellow former White House staff colleague and friend Alyssa Farah Griffin tweeted, "I knew her testimony would be damning. . . I had no idea it'd be THIS damning. I am so grateful for her courage and integrity."

U.S. Politics also identified such leaders from the middle as their organization's most loyal workers. Hutchinson once said her goal in entering public service was to "maintain American prosperity and excellence"; but her loyalty was tested on January 6, as she watched "the Capitol building get defaced over a lie."

In my May 27th column, "With apologies to Gil Scott-Heron, 'The Revolution WILL be Televised' - but now from the middle!," <https://bit.ly/3uff8i9>, I forecasted that January 6 "revelations won't come from top Trump or Congressional leaders like former Trump chief strategist Steve Bannon, Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, or House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

"Instead their aides and deputies - their 'silver-mettle leaders' from the middle - will reveal how and what happened before and during the Capitol Hill riot."

You want to live your life so that when your revolution and revelations are made public, you would want them to be televised in a positive light.

- tim allston

# Huntsville Boosts Visitors Count

In spite of the continued threat of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the Huntsville-Madison County vicinity accepted nearly 4 million people in 2021, according to the Alabama Tourism Department.

So, what does the data show? Here's a by-the-numbers look at Huntsville and Madison County's tourism totals in 2021 from [huntsvilleal.com](https://huntsvilleal.com):

**3,708,695**

Estimated number of visitors to Madison County in 2021

**\$1.7 billion**

Total economic impact from tourism

**21,000**

Direct and indirect jobs attributed to travel, tourism and hospitality

**\$1,000**

Amount of taxes saved by each Madison County household because of travel expenditures

According to Charles Winters, executive vice president of marketing for the Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau, when you're talking about it

comes down to the most-visited counties in Alabama, Madison County is now only second to Baldwin County - home to Gulf Shores and Orange Beach. He notes, however, that 2022 could top 2021, especially if pandemic restrictions continue to fade away.

"We're not to the point yet where government and corporate travel has come back, so we anticipate another big bump-up when that happens," Winters reported to [huntsvilleal.com](https://huntsvilleal.com)'s Adam Smith, a communication specialist for the City of Huntsville.



THE VALLEY WEEKLY

# CALLLED 2 PREACH

REV. MICHAEL RICE

## They Make Their Voices Heard

### Psalm 104:12

In what was no doubt a moment of reflection and meditation, the Psalmist made a list of both animate and inanimate objects that have been created by God. Things like clouds, wind, mountains, water, and fire paraded through the writer's mind like participants in a Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

The Psalmist's description of each paints a



portrait of demonstrative detail and exquisite exactness that leaves no doubt in the reader's mind about their function. Included in that same list were birds about which the Psalmist noted that *they make their voices heard* (CSB). The fact that they *make their voices heard* shows *intentionality, intensity, and intelligence*. They were *intentional* because they made their own voices heard. They were not in need of outside prompting. *They were intense, meaning* they could be heard. They are intelligent *because*, as one translation states, they were singing, and that is what birds do. The Psalmist was giving humanity a cue from the



pixabay.com

birds as it relates to our response to God, especially the saints of God. There are times when we, as the people of God, need to do just as the birds in the text.

During times of praise and worship, *we need to make our voices heard*. When those with no voice are being abused and oppressed, that is an excellent time

*to make our voices heard*. Like the birds, let us be intentional, intense, and intelligent. After all, that is why we were created.

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## This Sunday's Lectionary



Sunday, July 10, 2022

Fifth Sunday

After Pentecost

(Track 2 - Year C)

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

Colossians 1:1-14

Luke 10:25-37

Psalm 25:1-9



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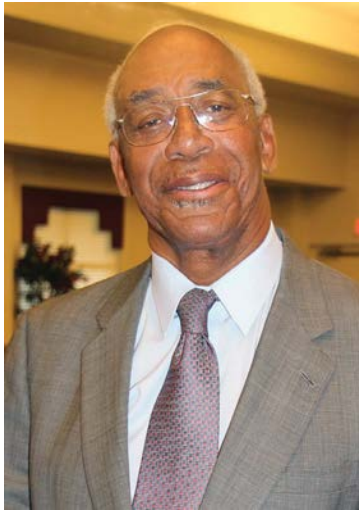
Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

## Mr. Bobby Petty

Mr. Bob Petty has served in some capacity as an education professional for well over 45 years, utilizing his extensive experience in teaching, training and supervision in various settings to impact the lives of hundreds of young men and women.

Petty earned the Bachelor of Science degree in engineering technology and the M.Ed. degree in industrial technology education from historic Alabama A&M University. He went on to pursue additional studies at Athens State University, Mississippi State University and Winston-Salem State University (N.C.). These institutions equipped Petty with a proven ability to teach electricity, electronics and applied physics, as well as to serve as an able supervisor of both students and other teachers.

The educator traces his long length of service back to his nearly 30-year affiliation with J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College where, from 1972-2000, he ably taught in and ultimately led the Department of Electronics/Electricity, providing able guidance to instructors, supervising the



total operations of the unit, counseling and interviewing students for enrollment, coordinating and spurring job placement for graduating students, serving on boards and committees, and even networking with high schools and technology centers.

From 2000-2010, Petty served as an education service provider for AWS Limited, where he served as a liaison between the firm and various area colleges, in addition to securing tutoring, transportation and housing for international students. During the period, he primarily served as an education service provider for the National Training Board (NTB)-Bermuda, operating as liaison between NTB and Tennessee

Valley area colleges and universities.

Further, Petty maintains a nearly 20-year affiliation with the North Alabama Center for Educational Excellence (NACEE), providing tutorial services to high school students, developing partnerships with community industries and agencies, counseling and interviewing students for mentoring program, and serving as the industry liaison for Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math & Science programs.

Petty enjoys a continuing affiliation with the Alabama Education Association, the Alabama Vocational Association, J.F. Drake Education Association, the National Education Association, Alabama VICA Association, and the National VICA Association. Among his most recent honors are the William Hooper Council Distinguished Alumni Award from Alabama A&M University, Alumni Association, Inc., and the Benjamin Banneker Friends in Planning Award presented by Alabama A&M University's Department of Community and Regional Planning.

*"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](http://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@valley-weeklyllc.com](mailto:info@valley-weeklyllc.com).*



## Huntsville Site of State's First Trans Pride Day

TransFamily Support Services (TSS) sponsored Trans Pride Day in Brahan Springs Park on Sunday, June 26, and activity that lured community organi-

zations that support and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community in Alabama.

In the wake of the Supreme Court's ruling on Roe v. Wade, many LG-

BTQ+ leaders fear future rulings may further endanger personal freedoms beyond abortion rights, noted Kathie Moehlig, TSS founder and director.

## Huntsville City Council Meetings

Huntsville 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 5:30 p.m., Downtown Huntsville. Watch the meetings live via [HuntsvilleAL.gov/HS-VTV](http://HuntsvilleAL.gov/HS-VTV) or on the City of Huntsville Facebook page (@huntsvillecity).

For more information, call (256) 427-5011.





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- Malcolm X



# A&M Forestry Alum Becoming New TikTok Sensation

Kyle Lybarger has a passion for forest and grassland ecosystems that is gaining a lot of attention. The Alabama A&M University forestry alum's love for native plants and landscapes has captured the attention of Departures, an American Express-affiliated digital magazine with over 1 million readers.

In "How to Identify Plants," writer-photographer Joshua Sanchez describes Lybarger's "refreshing wholesomeness" as the characteristic that made the lybarger4forester stand out from the fierce TikTok competition. Although Lybarger has quite a noble mission—using native plants to conserve ecosystems—the 2017 forestry alum's draw on TikTok

audiences has expanded to a quarter-million followers (269,000 and 4.2M likes, to be exact).

Another labor of love is Lybarger's communication through social media. After college, the Morgan County native developed an interest in the overlooked grasslands of North Alabama that stirred him toward educating through social media platforms and eventually to starting the Native Habitat Project.

"I had him as a senior, and he was an excellent student in classes," commented Dr. Troy Bowman, assistant professor of forest economics and policy at AAMU. "He was a great competitor for us during the Southern Forestry Conclave. He also took



home second place in log birling (logrolling) in 2017."

- Jerome Saintjones

## Kids' Space Getting Redesign

Kids' Space at John Hunt Park is scheduled to close for renovation, part of a \$6.8 million, year-long contract that includes a previously announced skatepark.

The new Kids' Space will offer three themed areas. "Early Huntsville" will include plaza seating, a poured blue rubber surface that mimics Big Spring, and a John Hunt cabin play structure. A train will provide even more opportunities for pretend play, as children take a trip back to the 1800s. "Space Race" will feature a large rocket play structure, sky bridge and sky cabins, while mountain-themed plaza seating and stepped seats will offer plenty of room to spread out in the "Future Exploration" area.



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- C.L.R. James

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## Wastewater Analysis Could Show Rising Infections

Through the simple act of flushing a toilet, scientists at the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology have learned about the spread of COVID-19 through wastewater analysis. Their findings are designed to help local health care providers better

understand current infection rates while also detecting potential surges.

Their research was made possible through a grant from the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), which allowed HudsonAlpha to purchase new scientific equipment.

The City provided the specimens, in the form of biweekly deliveries of untreated wastewater.

"Gauging our community infection rate helps our health care providers prepare for a potential surge," Mayor Tommy Battle said.

- [huntsville.al.gov](http://huntsville.al.gov)



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