

The South Rises Again, p.5

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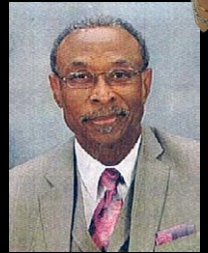


Being Trusted with Trouble, p. 6



Friday
July 23, 2021
Vol. 7, No. 46
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

SALUTE!
Rosetta James Foundation
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Rev. Terrell Harris

"The most fundamental truth to be told in any art form, as far as Blacks are concerned, is that America is killing us." - Sonia Sanchez

Oakwood Holds Ribbon Cutting

Oakwood University held a ribbon cutting in celebration of the reopening of Peterson Hall on Monday, July 19.

Originally constructed in 1955, Peterson Hall is named for Oakwood's second African American president, Elder Frank L. Peterson (1945-1954). One

of the grandest buildings on Oakwood's campus, the design of Peterson Hall is reminiscent of traditional Southern-styled architecture. The large columns and grand staircase at the entry remind visitors of Oakwood's rich history.

Similar its purpose in 1955, the renovated

building is designed to give its residents comfort, modern convenience, and proper study environs. The updated facilities will include: 52 private rooms, four suites, meeting rooms, an auditorium, a business center, laundry and vending areas, a Swedish-style sauna, and exercise room.

New Airline Starts at HIA

New "low fare, high-flex" Breeze Airways has launched non-stop service from Huntsville International Airport (HSV) to Charleston, S.C. (CHS), New Orleans, La. (MSY), and on Thursday, July 22, to Tampa, Fla. (TPA) as part of its initial air service launch.

"Huntsville's dramatic



growth and recurring designation as one of the best places to live in the country positions us to attract more residents and visitors. With

this exciting investment from Breeze Airways, we can expand our airline capacity to reach even more destinations," stated Mayor Tommy Battle.

Streaming inflight entertainment to personal devices is available on each flight.

Huntsville Still on Track for No. 1

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates indicate that Huntsville may become the most populated Alabama city in 2021.

While Huntsville is growing, other major

Alabama cities experienced a decrease, likely due to people deciding to move out to the surrounding, smaller areas.

For instance, the city of Madison, right outside of

Huntsville, added nearly 10,000 people since 2010.

Because of the city's rapid growth, Mayor Toommy Battle said road infrastructure will be a top priority.

Union Hill Hosts PB Convention

Representing Primitive Baptist churches in 18 states, the National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., will convene its week-long Modified 114th Hybrid Annual Session in Huntsville, Ala., at Union Hill Primitive Baptist Church, 2115 Winchester Road, Huntsville, Ala., through Friday night, July 23, 2021. Elder Dr. Kenneth A. Duke, pastor of New Jerusalem Primitive Baptist Church, Miami, Fla., is the General President. To name a few, guest preachers are Reverend Bryan Carter (Dallas, Tex.), Reverend Breonus Mitchell, Sr. (Nashville, Tenn.), Reverend E. Dewey Smith (Atlanta, Ga.), Reverend Jeffrey Johnson, Sr. (Indianapolis, Ind.), and Reverend Jasper Williams (Atlanta, Ga.).

Representing national officers, auxiliaries, regional vice presidents, state presidents, moderators, pastors, elders, laity, and friends, the organization will assemble in Huntsville to: 1) conduct business on behalf of the national body; (2) participate in Church School Training Sessions, Lectures, and Workshops; (3) hear the Word of the Lord from the elders and guest preachers, share in joyous worship experi-



PICTURED (l-r): Elder Oscar Montgomery, pastor, Union Hill P B Church; Dr. Kenneth A. Duke, President, National Primitive Baptism Convention, Inc., and Senior Pastor New Jerusalem Primitive Baptist Church, Miami, Fla.; Mother Josephine Robinson, St. Bartley P.B. Church; Cedric Etheridge; Peggy Etheridge; and Pastor Jaymes Robert Mooney, St. Bartley P.B. Church.

ences, inspirational singing from the National Choir and Chosen Generation Congress Choir; 4) hear daily Bible

Expositions from the national Bible Expositor; (5) promote evangelism and mission; and, 6) fellowship with each other.



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The Valley Weekly

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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 in session this week. The Senate was expected to hold a preliminary vote as soon as Wednesday on the still unfinished \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill. The House will vote on, among other items, a bill to provide special expedited immigrant status for 8,000 Afghan translators and other allies who played a crucial role helping U.S. forces during the War in Afghanistan. The House will also take up a bill to expand the authority of the Federal Trade Commission to seek monetary and other equitable relief in view of an April 2021 Supreme Court decision in which the court found that the FTC could not seek to recover \$1.27 billion in deceptive and unlawful fees charged by a payday loan company because it lacked the power to do so.

2. THE WHITE HOUSE. On Tuesday, President Biden welcomed the 2021 Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay Buc-

caneers to the White House. On Wednesday, he traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio, to participate in a CNN Town Hall at 8 p.m. EDT. On Friday, he will participate in a fundraising event with Virginia Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry McAuliffe in Arlington, Va. First Lady Dr. Jill Biden will attend the Opening Ceremonies for the Tokyo Olympic Games on Friday in her first solo trip overseas this year.

3. FY2022 BUDGET RESOLUTION. Last week, top Senate Democrats reached agreement on the parameters of a \$3.5 trillion budget resolution, which would allow congressional Democrats the ability to pursue, via the expedited Budget Reconciliation Process that requires only a simple majority vote, many of the social spending programs that President Biden outlined earlier this year in his \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan, such as universal pre-K, paid family and medical leave, and nutrition assistance. The measure also would allow Democrats to seek exten-

sions of tax-credit expansions established by the \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief law enacted in March. Lastly, it would include funding for clean-energy tax incentives, federal procurement of clean energy technologies, a clean-energy accelerator, and the establishment of a Civilian Climate Corps.

4. FY2022 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS. Last Friday, with the full committee markup of the FY2022 Transportation/HUD Appropriations bill, the House Appropriations Committee completed work on approving all 12 annual appropriations, a feat of marking all 12 bills in subcommittee and full committee in only 10 days. There is now a rumor that the Senate Appropriations Committee may begin markups of its version of the FY22 appropriations bills this month. Last week, Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced a \$3.7 billion emergency supplemental spending bill to reimburse the National Guard for the cost of guarding the U.S. Capitol after the January 6 attack, but the Ranking Republican on the committee, Sen. Richard Shelby (R-AL), countered the proposal with his own \$633 million bill (the House passed its \$1.9 billion version earlier this year).

5. HIGHER EDUCATION. The Biden administration has tapped California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley to temporarily advise the Education Department on higher education policy.

Mr. Oakley, who has overseen one of the largest community college systems in the country since 2016, will step into the special advising role on July 26.

6. AIRLINE PROBLEMS. Last Friday, Senate Commerce Committee Chair Maria Cantwell (D-WA) transmitted letters to 6 airlines (American, Delta, JetBlue, Southwest, Allegiant and Republic) demanding answers to why apparent staffing shortages are causing flight delays and cancellations even though the airlines received billions of dollars in pandemic aid designed to keep workers on the payroll. The passenger airline industry received \$54 billion in pan-

demic aid, but the 6 airlines that received the letter have cut 43,000 jobs since March 2020.

7. CANADA TO REOPEN. The Canadian government announced today (Monday) that it will begin allowing fully-vaccinated Americans and permanent residents currently residing in the U.S. to enter the country for non-essential travel starting on August 9.

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THE VALLEY WEEKLY

VALLEY DEATHS

NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

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Funeral service for MS. EMELDA DOUGLAS (b. 1969) was held Saturday, July 17, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Bishop Theophilus Knowles officiating.

Funeral service for MS. CONSTANCE JOYCE FORD was held Thursday, July 15, at Douglas Tabernacle Primitive Baptist Church with the Reverend Michael Hartwell officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

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

Graveside service for MR. KENTONIO JAKEVIAN KONTA "SIMBA" PERKINS (b. 1998) will be held Saturday, July 24, at the Oakwood Memorial Gardens (1 HL Cleveland Way, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Troy Garner officiating.

Funeral service for MS. DEBRA FAYE WHITE (b. 1958) was held Sunday, July 18, at Keilah Primitive Baptist Church (213 Winchester Road NE, Huntsville, Ala.).

A memorial service for MR. CHRISTOPHER LACEY, SR., was held Sunday, July 18, at the Royal Funeral Home Chapel of Memories with Dr. Floyd Rodgers officiating.

Graveside service for MRS. GAIL WOODS LESLIE (b. 1958) was held Saturday, July 17, at Thatch-Mann Cemetery (1801 West Hobbs Street, Athens, Ala.) with Minister Anthony Bledsoe officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. CLATY LEE BOWENS CLARK (b. 1933) was held Saturday, July 17, 2021 at Saint Mark Baptist Church (6475 Moores Mill Road, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Jeremiah Chester officiating.

Funeral service for MS. GAIL FOSTER SALES was held Saturday, July 17, at the House of Hope and Restoration (2525 Aspen Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Elder Dr. Mylon Burwell officiating.

Funeral service for ELDER JAMES LANE, SR., was held Thursday, July 15, at Taylor's Chapel Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Timothy Mark Rainey officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

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

Funeral service for MS. DONNA MARIE MOORE (b. 1964) was not available at press time.

THE VALLEY WEEKLY

CHAMPION GAME PLAN

PRESTON BROWN

"HOW TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE"

Matthew 6:33 says, *But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

You know, it is amazing to me that, depending on what "season" you are in, as it pertains to your spiritual life, how this scripture will affect you.

In other words, you can read something one year and then the next year it seems to take on a different meaning. This year this scripture speaks to me a message of "more than enough." When we seek God first in our lives, we will realize that we have

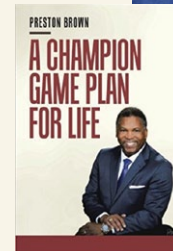
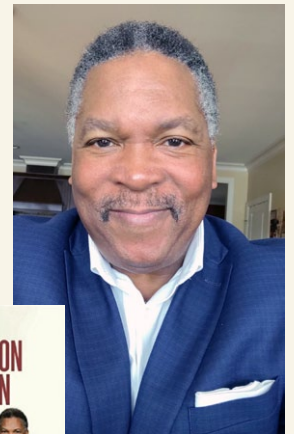
more than enough. This is when we will begin to take control of our lives.

Today, we seem to live in a time when there is never enough. There is always the need for more, never less. For example, many people's jobs require more effort, more production, and more time. Let's face it, we live in a time of never enough.

Many times when we wake up in the morning we say, "I didn't get enough sleep." Or, when we go to bed at night, we say we "didn't get enough done" in the day. It's always never enough. And, then, so often we may have enough money, but not enough time to enjoy

it, or we have time but not enough money. That's why Ecclesiastes says: "Whoever loves money, never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income." So, what is the answer?

I believe that until we seek God first in our lives, we will always feel like we don't have enough. There will always be this insatiable appetite that cannot be filled. That's why we all need to be looking for that well that want run dry and we can only find it when we partner with Jesus and let him take control of our lives. Also, let him take control of your finances. And, we do it by asking God to supply us with the discerning wisdom to take control of what really matters,



and that comes when we seek first His kingdom and his righteousness, because His

promise to us is that all other things, significant things, will be added to our lives. Having this mindset will help you take control of your life. Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters, and make sure you purchase a copy of "A Champion Game Plan for Life" at amazon.com. This book is a "life changer."

NAAACC Meetings

The North Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce (Huntsville) meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 12 noon.

The meeting location varies. Call (256) 564-7574.

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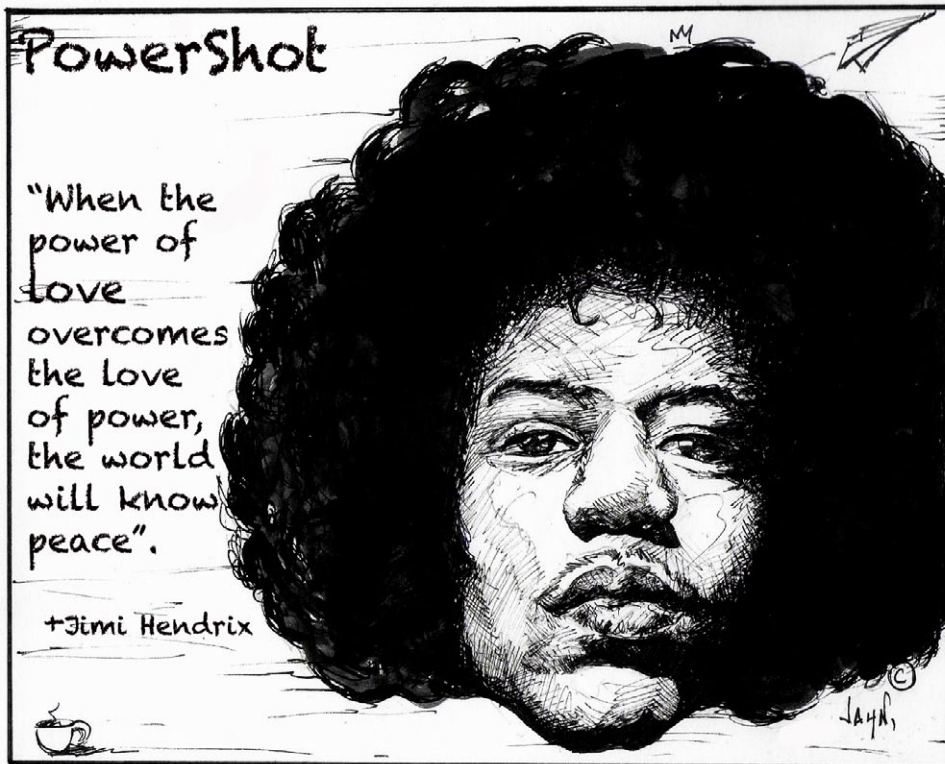


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"Sometimes you have to plow under one thing in order for something else to grow."

- Ernest J. Gaines



City's Animal Unit Works to Clear Kennels

The Shelter has taken in over 100 animals in two days, and to save their lives, new homes need to be found quickly.

To that end, adult cat adoption fees have been lowered from \$35 to \$10, while kitten fees are reduced from \$50 to \$35. Most adult dog adoption fees are now \$10, though some exclusions apply.

Click [HERE](#) to see photos, ages and descriptions of available animals.

The adoption package includes vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, microchip, a City license and a free bag of dog food.



If you're unable to adopt a pet, consider fostering an animal through the Shelter's foster program.

HAS is located at 4950 Triana Boulevard in Huntsville. The Shelter's hours are Monday through

Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Tuesday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Call (256) 883-3783, visit HuntsvilleAL.gov/Animal or check us out on Facebook to learn more.



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"We have a right to be angry."

- Vinie Burrows

South Accounts for 9 Out of 10 of High HIV Cities

Around 1.1 million people are living with HIV in the United States of America (USA). Nearly one in seven of these people are unaware they have HIV.

The USA is the greatest funder of the global response to HIV, but also has an ongoing HIV epidemic itself, with around 37,600 new infections a year. HIV affects locations differently as well, so we've compiled the cities with highest rates in the nation.*

10. Baltimore, Maryland – 24.3

According to GetTested.com, HIV infection rates in Baltimore are on the rise due to a lack of education.

9. Jacksonville, Florida – 25.1

Although Jacksonville isn't thought of as a "party city" like other destinations on GetTested.com's list, the site suggests that "The number of business people and tourists who travel to Jacksonville," might contribute to the high rates of HIV diagnoses and prevalence there.

8. Columbia, South Carolina – 25.6

South Carolina's Channel 10 WISTV.com reports that poverty, rural geography, lack of affordable healthcare and social stigma all contribute to the prevalence of HIV in the South.

7. Atlanta, Georgia - 25.9

Moving down the list from number 4 last year to number seven this year, more than 1,000 people are diagnosed with HIV each year in Atlanta. What's even more interesting is that 50 percent of those people aren't diagnosed until they already have AIDS.

6. Memphis, Tennessee – 27.6

"A particularly concerning statistic from 2014 shows that about 2,000 people in Mem-

phis who have the disease are not aware of it," GetTested.com reports. "So they may continue to spread the infection."

5. Orlando, Florida – 28.8

According to the CDC, the rate of HIV diagnoses in Orlando decreased slightly (0.9 percent) from 2013-2015. New HIV infections appear to be declining globally as well. December 1 marked the 28th World AIDS Day, and according to AIDS.gov, "the vast majority of people living with HIV are in low- and middle-income countries."

4. Jackson, Mississippi – 32.2

GetTested.com reports that in Jackson, there is "a concerted effort to inform the public about the PrEP pill." Did you know there's a pill out there

that can actually prevent you from becoming infected with HIV even if you have sex with someone who is HIV-positive?

3. New Orleans, Louisiana – 36.9

An excess of 19,000 people in Louisiana are living with HIV. More than half of those people have AIDS. Although African-Americans make up only 32 percent of the state population, they represented 73 percent of the state's new cases in 2011, according to the Louisiana Department of Health.

2. Miami, Florida – 42.8

In 2015, Miami had the highest rate of HIV diagnoses in the country. It also had the highest prevalence of the disease at the end of 2014, according to the CDC. It

speculates that the city's high HIV rates may be due to its culture.

So which city is number one? It may come as a surprise to some, but the number one city in the United States is...

1. Baton Rouge, Louisiana – 44.7

Baton Rouge claimed the No. 1 spot. It's reported that many of the infections there "are due to shared needles since the city is the center of a massive opiate addiction issue."

The CDC provides a list of steps you can take to protect yourself and your loved ones from HIV. Educate yourself by visiting the CDC website, talk about what you learn with friends and loved ones.

- BlackDoctor.org

Project Issues Call for Local Artists

Arts Huntsville has announced a national Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for two large-scale public art installations to be included in the new Huntsville City Hall complex scheduled for completion in August 2023. The two public art installations will be viewed as visitors enter City Hall and include an Entry Lobby Wall Art installation and a Suspended Artwork installation above the grand staircase between the first and second floor public entry areas.

The selected artist(s) will create an entrance experience for City Hall designed to draw people through the space. The art installations will also have a strong visual presence both day and night and generate a memorable sense of place authentic to Huntsville. The City Hall public art projects are also intended to inspire a sense of

reflection, community and/or civic engagement.

"Based on extensive community input, the Huntsville Public Art Master Plan prioritizes public art in the City's capital projects," says Mayor Tommy Battle. "These art installations help fulfill the vision to integrate more art into our public spaces and our shared community experience."

The artist award for the Entry Lobby Wall art installation is \$245,000, and the Suspended Artwork installation offers an artist award of \$550,000. An additional City Hall Public Art RFQ with artist awards totaling \$150,000 will be released in early 2022 and will be exclusive to local artists for up to five public art installations in publicly accessible spaces throughout the City Hall complex. Local artists, Alabama artists and artists

across the United States are invited to submit their qualifications for Entry Lobby and Suspended Artwork projects as part of the current RFQ.

"The new Huntsville City Hall is, at its heart, a public space. The addition of public art at City Hall will serve to welcome, inspire and reflect the community the city serves each day," said Allison Dillon-Jauken, Arts Huntsville executive director.

Selected semi-finalists will be invited to propose artwork based on the project criteria. Up to five semi-finalist artists or artistic teams for each project will receive \$3,000 honorariums to create and present a design proposal. The deadline to submit artist qualifications is Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

Interested artists can learn more and apply at <http://www.artshuntsville.org/>



My Birthday Gifts to You: SOAK, Then ESCAPE!

"Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness." - Isaiah 43:19

Here, the prophet Isaiah announces God's willingness to take our deserted wilderness lives and blaze upon them brand-new pathways.

New pathways to do new things can occur at milestones such as a new day or a birthday celebration. Each such milestone offers a renewed opportunity to refresh, revive and recommit.

Celebrating my 67th birthday last week made me refresh, revive and recommit to SOAK and then ESCAPE.

SOAK. Soak means either "to boil an object more slowly" or "to submerge an item more deeply." By merging the two definitions into one acronym, SOAK challenges me in this new birth year to:

Stew Over information, conversations and people more deeply and with greater patience, in order to

Add more Knowledge through better active listening, reading, writing and speaking.

For me the greatest, most portable and most practical role model of SOAKing remains Jesus Christ. And following his teachings, I will now recommit to

ESCAPE. Ordinarily, "to escape" means to get away from the norm. A mentor once shared with me a very do-able acronym for ESCAPE in my quest to follow Jesus more closely:

Examples of Christ I can follow;

Sins to avoid or confess;

Commands I should obey;

Admonitions I should remember;

Promises I can claim; and

Encouragements I can share.



What about your SOAK and your ESCAPE? From now on, let each new day become your "new thing" milestone to refresh, revive and recommit.

tim allston is the two-time Amazon best-selling author of U.S. Politics The Rise of Silver-Mettle Leaders (now on Amazon), and the author-narrator of The U.S. Coronavirus Crisis and the Rise of the "Silver-Mettle" Leaders audiobook, with a free sample chapter, when you click on <https://bit.ly/3xiZhP9>.

THE VALLEY WEEKLY

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

July 25

The Market at MidCity
The Camp
University Drive
1-5 p.m.

5-6:30 p.m.

July 30-August 1

D.L. Hughley
Stand Up Live
Huntsville, Ala.

July 31

The Providence Market
Artisans and Farmers
Market
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Outdoor Market

Lowe Mill Arts & Enter-
tainment
11 a.m.-4 p.m.

July 26-August 19

LearningQuest
Downtown Huntsville
Library

July 26-September 14

Free Computer Refresher
Course
Huntsville Bible College
906 Oakwood Avenue NW
Huntsville, Ala.

August 6

Oakwood Farmers Market
5001-A Adventist Boule-
vard
Huntsville, Ala..
12 noon

Uncaged Birds

Huntsville Botanical
Garden
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue
Huntsville, Ala.

August 8

Move-In Days Begin
Alabama A&M University

August 14

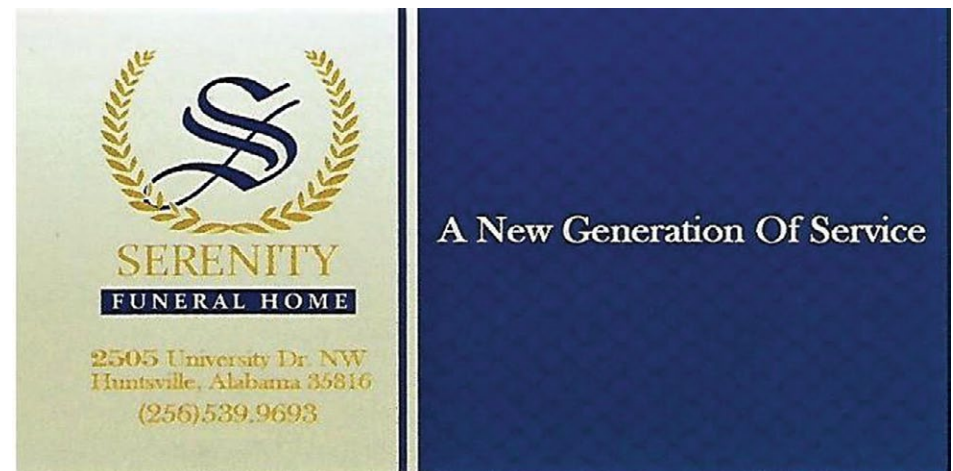
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September 30

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JULY 23 - HELEN MARTIN was an American actress of stage and television. Martin's career spanned over 60 years, appearing first on stage and later in film and television. Martin is best known for her role as Pearl Shay on the NBC sitcom 227 (1985-1990).
- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.com



THE VALLEY WEEKLY

CALLED 2 PREACH

REV. MICHAEL RICE

Being Trusted with Trouble

John 16:33; Job 1:7-8

There are many things that people are trusted with. Parents, babysitters, teachers, older siblings are all trusted with children. Bank tellers with thousands of dollars daily. Financial advisors are trusted with their clients' finances. But have you ever thought

about the idea of being trusted with trouble? That is certainly not a normal thought process when it comes to the subject of trouble. Most of the time one is either trying to avoid it or get out of it. Jesus taught and teaches that trouble is inevitable. We learn from Jesus about the hard reality of trouble and



from Job how to handle responsibly, trouble when it comes. In a conversation with the devil God informed him that Job could be trusted with trouble. Satan believed that trouble would traumatize Job to the point of cursing God

to His face. God allowed Satan to inflict him with a series of troublesome events that included the loss of his health, wealth, and children. Job's response was The LORD gives and the LORD takes... BLESSED be the name of

the LORD. Interestingly enough, both the word 'curse' and 'blessed' is translated from the same Hebrew word, 'barak,' which means to kneel in adoration. It also can mean "speaking ill of or against someone;" in this case it



would have been God. Job chose adoration over accusation, which proved that he could be trusted with trouble. Imagine God saying to Satan, "Told you." How about us?



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

Rev. Terrell Harris

Dr. Terrell Harris, Jr. is the senior pastor and founder of the True Light Church of God In Christ. He was appointed District Superintendent of the Huntsville, Ala., Church of God In Christ.

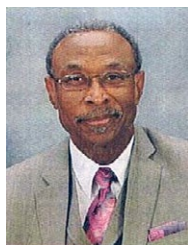
Pastor Harris is the oldest son born to the union of the late Mr. Terrell Harris, Sr., and the late Mrs. Unareed Burton Harris. He is happily married to Dr. Hattie Jones Harris, and they will soon celebrate 55 years of marriage in December 2022. To this union three children were born; Apostle Derek Terrell Harris, Trudy Harris Moore, and Mark Christopher Harris.

Superintendent Harris is saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Spirit. He loves the Lord and the Lord's people. He received his Doctorate and Master

of Divinity from the International Seminary, Orlando, Fla.

Rev. Harris earned his Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics, with emphasis in computer science from Jackson State University in Mississippi. He also received a diploma in pastoral theology from the C.H. Mason System of Bible College, Huntsville campus.

Dr. Harris has been a faithful worker in the Church since accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal savior. He began his walk with God by faithfully attending the Sunday School where he was later appointed as Sunday School Superintendent. He was a faithful deacon, minister, and Ordained Elder.



He retired from the Computer Science Corporation (CSC) as a computer Scientist on January 2, 2003, and he now enjoys employment for the

Lord.

Dr. Harris' character is one of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. His sound and wise godly counseling brings forth deliverance to people from their everyday issues of life. His more recent work has included a local cable television ministry entitled, "The Blessed Hope Ministry", by which the congregation, community and city are blessed.

Superintendent Harris is a great man and is an example of the Gospel that he preaches.

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



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The Valley Weekly

This is to give you a BIG SHOUT OUT for continuing an outstanding local Newspaper with photos large enough to tell who it is focused on. Thanks for all that you do for our community and the Tennessee Valley. Please give a BIG SHOUT OUT to Brother Saintjones, as well.

Warm Regards,
Sister (Katie) Byrd

ACCOLADES
from Our Readers

"Out of the bosom of the Common People rise the sources of our literature and art, and the real, living virile society is the genuine life they live."

-Henry Hubert Harrison

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TRAVEL - Preparing to Hit the Road ... Again

(BPT) - Not surprisingly, Americans sharply reduced the overall number of trips they took in 2020, according to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. While a certain level of travel has been necessary throughout the pandemic, many travel vendors are seeing increased reservations going into the spring and summer and are expecting business to continue to rise in the second half of 2021 as the COVID-19 vaccine becomes widely administered.

Are you among those considering or planning a trip in the coming months? If so, here are six key tips for making it a safer and cleaner experience.

Research your destination ahead of time. Since travel restrictions can be put in place by jurisdictional leaders, different destinations can have different policies in terms of quarantine requirements, the wearing of masks in public, maximum allowable gathering sizes and the categories of businesses that may remain open to the public. On top of that, your travel destination may quickly change its restrictions in response to prevailing fluctuations in COVID-19 levels. CNN's compilation of pandemic-related restrictions by state may help keep you informed.

Book reservations with cleanliness and flexibility in mind. As you make your transportation and lodging selections, prioritize companies that offer flexibility



and prioritize cleanliness. Many car rental and hotel companies have adjusted policies to enhance their cleaning procedures and allow customers to change their plans if required due to the pandemic.

Pack cleaning/sanitizing products in your luggage. Keep disinfecting wipes close at hand to help clean surrounding surfaces during your journey. And, while there is typically hand sanitizer in most public places now, it's a good idea to pack travel size sanitizer for immediate needs. If you're traveling with others, encourage them to also use hand sanitizer along the way. Also remember to pack extra masks to replace those that may get dirty or be misplaced.

Wipe down hard surfaces along the way. When possible, disinfect hard surfaces throughout your trip to limit the spread of germs.

Some travel companies have made this easier. Enterprise Rent-A-Car, for example, has teamed up with Clorox to add a one-count disinfecting wipe to every vehicle rented throughout the U.S. and Canada. The program is partly in response to a survey showing 80% of Enterprise customers feel more comfortable renting when they're able to use the disinfecting cloths on their vehicles themselves. Clorox's in-house scientist Mary Gagliardi recommends disinfecting all the hard, nonporous surfaces in any car - cup holders, the steering wheel, door handles, seat buckles, radio knobs, etc. on a regular basis.

Select low-touch options. Most attractions, restaurants as well as some car rental companies and hotels allow you to make reservations or check in, in advance online so you can avoid lines or crowds. This

of time, avoiding crowded areas.

Choose socially distant activities. Seek out dining, lodging and other activities that allow for social distancing. The CDC also recommends choosing outdoor activities, when possible, avoiding common areas and ensuring staff wear masks. According to Cleveland Clinic experts, when you apply everyday COVID-19 precautions to your travels, the risks can be minimized significantly.

more activities outside our homes, it will remain vital even after vaccination for us all to wear masks that properly fit, maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others, avoid crowded areas and get tested if you have symptoms," said Judy Monroe, MD, president and CEO of the CDC Foundation. In fact, just recently, the CDC updated its guidelines recommending that fully vaccinated people can travel within the U.S. at low risk to themselves.

Travel can be safer and more comfortable for you and your family if you pack wisely, plan ahead and take time to scout out the most viable accommodations.

also allows the businesses to keep a lower number of people to a certain window

"As we eventually return to

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