

# The Valley Weekly

Volume 5, No. 10

www.valleyweeklyllc.com

Friday, November 16, 2018

## Governor Ivey Announces New Alabama HBCU Co-Op Pilot Program

Governor Kay Ivey announced the creation of the Alabama HBCU Co-Op Pilot Program while at the inaugural Alabama HBCU Competitiveness Convening recently at the Regions-Harbert Plaza. Hosted by the Alabama Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) and the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the inaugural event featured remarks from Ivey and other local politicians and officials.

The Alabama HBCU Co-Op Pilot Program was created under the umbrella of the Alabama HBCU

Initiative and is incorporated into Governor Ivey's Strong Start, Strong Finish education initiative, as part of the governor's focus on apprenticeships and work-based learning programs.

Students must be at least 18 years of age, enrolled at an Alabama HBCU and have 3.0 GPA in a STEM field of study. Students enrolled at a four-year-institution must have already completed one year of school. Students enrolled at a two-year junior college must complete one 15-week term. Those selected will be required to complete three co-op



semesters. Students that complete the program will be awarded a certificate of completion.

The Governor's Office of Minority Affairs will distribute applications for the pilot program to each Alabama HBCU in early 2019. More information about the program and the application process can be found at [goma.alabama.gov](http://goma.alabama.gov). - Reginald Allen



Commissioner Malone (c) accepts award from (l-r) AAMU Professor of Military Science George Bolton and Dr. Gary Crosby, vice president for student affairs. (Photo by J. Saintjones)

## Commissioner Addresses AAMU Veterans Program

Madison County Commissioner JesHenry Malone delivered the address as part of Alabama A&M University's 13th Annual Veterans Day Program on Thursday, November 8.

Commissioner Malone is a native of Monroeville, Ala., who joined the U.S. Marine Corps following high school, rising to the rank of Sergeant before separation.

Malone is a veteran of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, for which he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and several

other honors.

Malone joined the Huntsville Police Department in November 1997. He is currently West Precinct

Commander for an area comprised of some 80 square miles and a population of 83,000.



**LUNCH AND THANKS!** Nearly every seat was filled and thrilled at the Annual Thanksgiving Lunch. The popular District VI event was held at the Bob Harrison Senior Center on Thursday, November 8, 2018.

The Valley Weekly

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE!**

Millennial Thought, Page 2

From the Editor, Page 3

Valley Events, Page 4

Talking Turkey, Page 5

Called 2 Preach, Page 6

Washington Update, Page 7

Why Not Have a Valley-bration? Page 8



## Millennial Thought

by Josh Alex Baker

### Worry about What It Is!

Confession.

When I was younger, I assumed every eye was on me. It's okay. You can be honest. I know I wasn't the only one. I'm pretty sure the whole question-everything-you-do-everybody-is-probably-judging-me-insecurity phase was a natural right of passage for which we all waded through.

If I can be so brave and go a little further (whispering now), I'd say some of us still revisit that mindset from time to time.

In retrospect, what I

find most interesting is that we were so concerned with appearance that we gave little attention to reality. Unconcerned with actual brokenness, we only paid mind to how it would be received.

Many of us are still practicing this behavior. Sure, the stakes might have been different for the younger versions of ourselves, but the principle is the same.

It might have been an outfit choice back then, but it might be masking depression today.

It might have been fitting

into the clique you were a part of back then, but now it might be deep-seated insecurity and validation issues you fight arduously to cover up.

It's okay to not have every aspect of your life impeccably figured out.

None of us do.

In accepting that, receive yourself honestly. Deeply reflect on who you truly are and what you truly need. Give no attention to who might be watching.

This is about you.

*Josh Alex Baker is a very active senior majoring in social work at historic Alabama A&M University, where he has also served as president of the AAMU Poetry Club.*

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Enjoy a presentation by one of our expert guest speakers, followed by a delicious catered box lunch from The Chef Next Door. Tickets are \$25 in advance.

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Join us at our table for an exclusive evening of exquisite dining and wine pairings under the stars. Reservations are limited and prices vary depending on menu.

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### Lowes Chapel United Methodist Church

Lowes Chapel United Methodist Church is seeking to fill the position of Full-Time Church Musician/Choir Director. The successful candidate must be able to read music as well as "play by ear" and direct all types of Church music. All interested candidates should submit a resume to: Pastor/Parish Relations Committee, [loweschapel@yahoo.com](mailto:loweschapel@yahoo.com), Lowes Chapel United Methodist Church, 460 Sanderson Street, Huntsville, AL 35805 - CLOSING DATE FOR RESUMES IS NOVEMBER 30, 2018 - For more information please contact the church at 256-895-9104



**BIRTHDAY** - November 16 - WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER "W.C." HANDY - Musician, composer William Christopher Handy was born in Florence, Ala. He was also band director at Alabama A&M University. He is often cited as the "Father of the Blues." - [BlackinTime.info](http://BlackinTime.info)

# The Valley Weekly

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## The Valley Weekly

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# From the Editor

*Elections, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and More!*

More and more, we are getting the message out that people who are eligible and able should get out to vote. Reports around the United States indicate that the turn-out for the mid-term election last week boasted the strongest numbers ever. Now, that's a "Hallelujah" good thing. As we move forward, we hope the trend of higher and higher turnout continues with impactful results. If we participate and engage in a different way, we are destined to make a difference--each, separate, individual, unique and *different* one of us.

Sunday was Veterans Day. We actually observed it on the calendar on Monday. This is an important week on our calendar. Unfortunately, due to the weather, the local Veterans Day parade was cancelled. Veterans are unique individuals. I saw a Facebook post that said in essence Christ

gave his life so we could live, and like Him, veterans are willing to sacrifice their lives so we can live and enjoy the many freedoms we have as Americans. So, it's never too late to thank a veteran. If you haven't had the chance, forgot or just didn't get around to it, take time to thank a veteran this week. My business partner, Dan Farmer, is an Army veteran. He served around the world with the support of his wife, Dana. I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am to work with him each day. Thanks for your service, Dan.

Thanksgiving is one of the most travelled holidays on the calendar. For some reason, we want to be with our family for Thanksgiving. As parents, we want our children home and near to us. Thus, it creates chaos in the skies, but warmth in the hearts of many families.

Thanksgiving is not only a time of reflection of how blessed we are, but a time to give thanks to our Heavenly Father for His protection and provisions. Even when our children grow up and become adults, we still want to be close to them and hold them tight, with Thanksgiving in our hearts and spirits. Many of us have slowed down at the table, because we have slowed down at the gym. I'm included in that group.

Although I thought at one time we had to have a turkey roasting in the oven on Thanksgiving morning, I know now that the warmth of family and friends yields wonderfully great benefits. Fall is definitely in the air, creating a cozy opportunity for us to bundle up, build a fire or flip the gas logs on ... and give Him thanks! Thanks for your service, veterans! Enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving season with family and friends. Whatever you do, give thanks.

Typically in November I put my Christmas tree up--even before Thanksgiving. To my friends and family ... After you finish eating Thanksgiving turkey, stop by our home. We'd love to play some board games or bid whist. And, we might just have something under the Christmas tree!



*Dorothy*

# The Valley Weekly Calendar of Events

## November 16

AAAA Aircraft Survivability Equipment Symposium  
Von Braun Center North Hall (Last Day)  
7 a.m.-12 noon

Margarita Ball

Von Braun Center  
South Hall 2  
7:30-11:30 p.m.  
<https://www.huntsvillemargaritaball.com/>

## November 17

National Coalition of 100 Black Women - Greater Huntsville Area Chapter Induction Ceremony and Dinner

Tickets: \$25  
The Jackson Center  
6001 Moquin Drive NW  
Huntsville, Ala.  
(256) 394-1045

Ability Craft Fair  
Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind  
Lowe Mill  
12-4 p.m.

Beautillion Ball  
Funset Social & Charity Club  
Von Braun Center North Hall  
4:30-11:59 p.m.

## November 20

Huntsville Rotary Luncheon  
Von Braun Center  
11:45 a.m.

## November 23-December 31

Galaxy of Lights  
Huntsville Botanical Garden (\$25/car up to 10)  
4747 Bob Wallace Avenue  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5:30-9 p.m.

## November 24-25

Sesame Street Live! Make Your Magic  
Von Braun Center Mark C. Smith Concert Hall

## November 29

Basketball  
Alabama A&M University vs. University of Alabama

at Birmingham (UAB)  
Von Braun Center  
Propst Arena, 7 p.m.

## December 1

Deltas Meals on Wheels Effort  
Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center  
2200 Drake Avenue, SW,  
Huntsville, Ala.  
11 a.m.-1 p.m.

## December 2

Annual Christmas Musicales Featuring the Alabama A&M University Choir  
T.M. Elmore Building  
5:30 p.m.

## December 4

2018 State of the City Address Featuring Mayor Tommy Battle  
[www.hsvchamber.org](http://www.hsvchamber.org)  
Von Braun Center North Hall  
12 p.m.

## December 8

The First Annual Celebration of Caretakers  
Host: Jamal's Helping Hand Valeria McConnell, Executive Director  
DoubleTree Suites by Hilton  
6000 Memorial Parkway, S  
Huntsville, Ala.

# Commemorating (and Continuing) the 1968 Olympic Black Power Salute-ing

by tim allston

"But these things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!" Habakkuk 2:3, The Living Bible

October 16, 1968: Unexpectedly, worldwide sports fans viewed Olympians Tommie Smith and John Carlos receive their gold and bronze medals, respectively, and then raise their clenched black leather-gloved fists in protest.

Their Olympic Project for Human Rights demanded: nixing apartheid South Africa's and Rhodesia's Olympic participation; firing International Olympic Committee president Avery Brundage; hiring more black collegiate coaches; and restoring Muhammad Ali's heavyweight title - a 75% success rate.

Since that Smith-Carlos gesture 50 years ago, black athletes have challenged US racism - e.g., Colin Kaepernick's kneeling and NBA players' decrying the murders and by wearing the 2014 Eric

Garner "I Can't Breathe" warm-up jerseys and 2012 Trayvon Martin hoodies, respectively.

Since we allow celebrity athletes to tell us what to drink, drive and dream, then let them continue to show us how to protest, by:

1. Keep on fighting; your personal sacrifices will reap larger societal rewards. Although Muhammad Ali's 1967 draft-induction refusal costs him four prime boxing, earning years, his "No Viet Cong ever called me 'nigger'" stance led to similar escalated worldwide protests, President Lyndon Johnson's declining a 1968 re-election bid and ultimately 1974 US' Vietnam War withdrawal; and

2. "Honor thy father . . . that thy days may be long . . ." Exodus 20:12, King James Version. In a 2017 New York City restaurant meeting, Smith counseled Kaepernick to ". . . find new avenues for his life . . . need a second



plan." The 21st-century successor listened. In September 2018, Nike made Kaepernick one of the faces of its 30th anniversary campaign, declaring "The current 'Just Do It' campaign celebrates some of the most inspirational athletes today, who have chased dreams no matter the obstacle or outcome."

Q: Doesn't Kaepernick's Nike ad slogan--"Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything"--sound similar to *Lift Every Voice and Sing's* "... Let us march on, 'til victory is won"?

-----  
tim allston is the author of the free book, *7 Steps to Manage Ego Problems: The How-to Guide for "Someone Else,"* free and downloadable now at [www.GetEgoHelpNow.org](http://www.GetEgoHelpNow.org).

# The Greatest Love of All

The song "The Greatest Love of All" began with beautiful encouraging guidance for our children - Love them; Teach them; and Give them.

When the blanks are filled in with love, hope, and dignity, we have a formula for self-awareness and independent thinking harvesting a sense of pride that must

develop into the greatest love inside. This is what we must do with all the children in "the village" be-



cause they are our future.

On November 6, 2018 voting age students across the nation, walked out of class to march and encourage one another all the way to the polls to cast their first votes.

Remember "how we used to be" when we sported our perfectly shaped Afros and sat at forbidden dining counters and took



to the streets for voting rights and to protest civil

injustice.

Fortunately for me,

I had an opportunity to witness students of Prairie View A&M University in Cypress, TX during their "Go Vote" rally and parade. Their exuberance for their first-time voting opportunity was spirited and infectious.

We should have Peace regarding our future knowing that the Almighty is still in control and knowing the children of the world are being prepared to take the reigns as our future leaders.

# Community Faith Partners Observe World AIDS Day

**Bishop Yvette Flunder joins CFP in observing 30th World AIDS Day**

World AIDS Day is observed on December 1 each year, providing an opportunity for global communities to raise greater awareness about HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS has chosen the timely theme "Know Your Status" to commemorate the 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day 2018.

Community Faith Partners, a group of volunteers and community and faith-based organizations that work together to address HIV/AIDS in North Alabama, will officially observe World AIDS Day on Friday, December 7, 2018, with the annual Red Ribbon Awards Breakfast from 7-8:30 a.m. in the Boone-Lacy Fellowship Hall at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 315 Winchester Road in Huntsville. While honoring AIDS activism, participants will have an opportunity



to enjoy a hearty breakfast, inspirational music, and hear Rev. Dr. Yvette Flunder, a noted gospel singer and the presiding Bishop of The Fellowship and Senior Pastor of City of Refuge United Church of Christ in Oakland, Calif. Bishop Flunder has been a national and international leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS since 1986.

World AIDS Day partners include Alabama State Representative Laura Hall, Center Grove United Methodist Church, City of Huntsville-Office of Multicultural Affairs, DavidPersonMedia, LLC, Diverse Educational Life Training Activities, Inc.,

First Missionary Baptist Church, Huntsville-Madison County Rescue Squad, Inc., Thrive Alabama, and WJAB (90.9FM).

The Red Ribbon Awards Breakfast is free and open to the public. In keeping with the theme "Know Your Status," Thrive Alabama will be on-site to offer free HIV testing to the public. Today, 1 in 7 people

in the United States with HIV do not know they have the virus, and the only way to know your HIV status is to get tested.

As of September 2018, an estimated 21,556 cases of HIV have been confirmed in Alabama and 1,608 of those cases were reported in the Northern Public Health District, which includes Madison

County. African Americans continue to be disproportionately infected with HIV in Alabama, particularly young black males between the ages of 15-29.

For more information about the Breakfast or Community Faith Partners, contact Judy Edmond at (256) 509-4252, Wendi Williams at (256) 372-4953, or e-mail comfaith-

## Nothing Shady about Talking Turkey

(BPT) Where does your holiday turkey come from?

With sustainability and farm-to-table becoming the norm in the food industry, it's a question more and more people are asking.

Whether it's grass-fed beef, antibiotic-free chicken or organic produce,

people are increasingly aware of the food they put on their family's dinner table.

They want to know how and where the animals were raised and how the vegetables were grown, because knowing what goes into the food you eat — and what doesn't — brings

peace of mind.

There are many healthy sources nowadays. At Shady Brook Farms, for instance, turkeys are raised with care on family farms.

The farmers, some of whom have been raising turkeys for generations, are the company's heart and soul.

## A&M Annual Christmas Musicale Opens Season

The 84th Annual Christmas Musicale, featuring the world-renowned Alabama A&M University Choir, will be held Sunday, December 2, at 5:30 p.m. in

the T.M. Elmore Building on the AAMU campus.

The public is invited to this free, festive musical event, directed by award-winning conductor Horace

Carney.

AAMU's Christmas Musicale is regarded as the official opening of the Holiday Season in the Tennessee Valley.

### NATIONAL COALITION OF 100 BLACK WOMEN



Greater Hsv Area Chapter

"Partnering With A Purpose"

On November 17, 2018 The National Coalition of 100 Black Women Greater Hsv Area Chapter will be honoring their 2018 inductees. The theme is "Partnering with a Purpose." The guest speaker is Judge Sybil Cleveland who is a Municipal Court Judge for the City of Huntsville and also serves as President of the Alabama Municipal Judges Association as President-Elect, University of North Alabama Foundation Board of Directors, and the Greater Alabama Council of the Boy Scouts of America Executive Board. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Downtown Rotary Club Member and Subject Matter Expert for the Diversity Leadership Colloquium.

The dinner will be held at the Jackson Center (6001 Moquin Drive, NW, Huntsville, Alabama 35806). Tickets are \$25.00 per person. For additional information please contact, NCBW Greater Hsv Area Chapter member Clarissa Tibbs at 256-394-1045.

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Mastin Lake Road/University Drive)

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

# Valley Deaths

## - Nelms Memorial Funeral Home -

Funeral service for MR. WILLIE LAMAR SALES was held Saturday, November 10, at the Consolidated Flint River and Running Water Primitive Baptist Memorial Tabernacle with Elder Dennis Green officiating.

Funeral service for MR. RONNIE LEE CAWTHORN, SR., (b. 1961) was held Saturday, November 10, at 12:00 noon at Syler Tabernacle.

Funeral service for MRS. SHIRLEY DERRICK JEFFERSON (b. 1957) was held Saturday, November 3, at the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Reverend Jeffery Jefferson officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. MATTIE CHUNN (b. 1916) was held Saturday, November 3, at St. Luke Christian Church with Pastor T. C. Johnson officiating.

Funeral service for MR. J. C. MOORE (b. 1944) was held Saturday, November 3, at Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church with Elder Larry Smith officiating.

## - Royal Funeral Home -

Funeral service for MS. SADIE MARIE GREEN (b. 1960) will be 11 a.m., Saturday, November 17, at the Fellowship of Faith Church with Reverend Travis Acklin officiating.

Funeral service for MASTER MALIK JEVON MILLER (b. 2007) will be 12 p.m., Saturday, November 17, at Blackburn Chapel CPCA (507 Plummer Road Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Tramaine D. Snodgrass officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. MARY A. ANDERSON (b. 1921) will be held Thursday, November 15, at the C.T. Richards Chapel in the Mosley Complex on the campus of Oakwood University (7000 Adventist Boulevard, Huntsville, Ala.) with Dr. Carlton P. Byrd officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. SARAH FRANCES HORTON (b. 1926) was held Saturday, November 10, at Union Chapel M.B. Church (315 Winchester Road Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor O. Wendell Davis officiating.

Funeral service for MR. JAMES THOMPSON (b. 1958) was held Monday, November 12, at Consolidated Flint River & Running Water Primitive Baptist Memorial Tabernacle (2131 Highway 72 East, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Bobby Battle, Sr. officiating.

## - Serenity Funeral Home -

Funeral service to be announced at a later date for MR. DARRIUS N. MOORE (b. 1990).

# Called Preach

by Pastor/Founder Michael D. Rice  
Grace Gethsemane Mission Church

## Anticipated Anxiety and a Powerful Promise

### Joshua 1:9

With and wherever are the two words that jump out in jack-in-the-box fashion from this verse spoken by God to Joshua as His Omniscience produced the powerful promise of His permanent presence. This promise came, not after Joshua got to where he was going, instead God anticipated Joshua's anxiety about stepping into the shoes of Moses. While God did acknowledge Joshua's anxiety, He did not allow it to stand in the way or stop His plans and purpose for His people. He did not coddle Joshua, He commanded him: *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of a good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever*

*you go* (My emphasis).

This powerful promise was made both palatable and portable by the fact that it not only considered God's Omniscience, but also His Omnipresence.

Only God can say *wherever* and mean it. It was not a tongue-in-cheek statement. It came from the lips of the LORD; the Covenant-Keeping One. Joshua knew Him as such; therefore, that strong courage that he was commanded to have was found in the very words spoken to him as he



caught the mantle of leadership that was passed to him.

This was not just for Joshua. This is for everyone who is stepping to the drumbeat of purpose, be it parent, pastor, potentate, or president. Anyone who takes leadership seriously needs and welcomes these words; *with and wherever.*

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## Huntsville City Council Meetings

Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held



in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. Council work sessions are also held in the Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

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



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## Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

In Luke 15:17-20, it reads: "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my fathers hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death? I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants. So he got up and went to his father.'"

Have you ever come to a place in your life where you say to yourself: "This is not working anymore and it's time for me to make a change"--just like we find here with the Prodigal Son. But the good news for all of us is that you can come back home again and restore the life you once



knew, because we serve a God that will never leave us or forsake us. We serve a God that will wait for us to come to our senses.

Today, so many people get tempted by the ways of this world and are led astray and forget where they come from. They forget the peace and security of home. Not just our physical home, but our spiritual home, as well. You see, God is our home in the spiritual sense when we make Him lord and savior of our lives. And whenever we get off track, hopefully we will sober up, come to our senses and go back home. I believe that sometimes God will allow us to get to a place where we say, "This isn't working anymore." So, if you are dealing with any kind of

turmoil or sin in your life, Jesus is waiting for you to come back home. He is asking us to come back to the abundant life that He desires for us to have--which is a life of love, joy and peace.

You see, whenever we decide to go back home, God will be filled with compassion and forgiveness, just like the father of the Prodigal Son. God is always waiting to restore our relationship with Him. So when you find yourself not satisfied with what this world has to offer, it's time to go back home to a God that loves and cares for you ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters.

Remember, this holiday season to purchase your copy of "A Champion Game Plan For Life" at amazon.com or BarnesandNobles.com or contact me at pbrown@damson.com. It will make a great "stocking stuffer" for Christmas.

## Spotlight on Our Elders ... Featuring

# Janie Holifield

Janie Adams Holifield is a retired educator, the daughter of the late Clarence and Jennie M. Adams. Born in the small cotton hamlet of Leighton, Ala., as one of eight children, she spent her formative years in Leighton, where she received her early education in a white framed, one-room church that also served as the schoolhouse in Colbert County, Ala.

Upon graduating from Alabama A&M College in 1958 with a B.S. degree in the field of education, she was hired by the late Welton Reynolds as a first grade teacher at W. C. Handy Elementary School in Florence, Ala.

However, Mrs. Holifield, the eternal optimist, believing that every child could be taught and being armed with nothing more than a chalkboard, a box of chalk and a dust rag, taught the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. In addition to being a first grade teacher,

she also served as the school's librarian from 1963-65. She spent nearly a decade there, only to leave W. C. Handy to marry Freeman Holifield, Sr., in 1965 and returning to Huntsville, Ala.

Her educational career has been filled with many "firsts", including being one of the first African-American principals at Elkmont Elementary School in Limestone County from 1967-68. She was also one of the very first African-American teachers to integrate the teaching ranks at Riverton Middle School in Madison County, Ala. In 1977, she became the first African-American assistant principal at Gurley High School in Madison County, Ala.

She has been a life long supporter of AAMU. She has also been an avid supporter of the Huntsville Alumnae

Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; the Harris Home for Children; First Missionary Baptist Church (FMBC); the Daughters (AEAONMS), where she is a Past Illustrious Commandress and Past Imperial Deputy of



Egyptian Parade of Stars as well a past member of the Order of Eastern Star, Mizpah Chapter #37 and the Golden Circle.

She is happily married to Freeman Holifield, Sr., and is the mother of a daughter, Dr. Quintaniay Holifield of Baltimore, Md., and a son LTC Freeman Holifield, Jr., USAF.

## United Way of Madison County Leads the Charge

For the 10th year in a row, United Way of Madison County has brought the community together to break a reading record: 4,075 3-8 year-old children and 737 adults heard one story in one day as part of a national effort with millions of others.

This annual event is a natural fit for United Way's local focus on families and young children. Beyond breaking a record, in one day, United Way of Madison County and its friends and supporters raised awareness, engaged nearly 200 volunteers, and promoted the essential practice of reading aloud to children.

That one day also highlights the local United Way's work in education year-round. United Way provides grants totaling more than

\$500,000 annually to expert nonprofits benefiting high quality pre-schools, excellent, enriching out-of-school time grams and niche programs to help students with disabilities and foster kids reach their potential. Those dollars come from local businesses and individuals and provide vital local services.

Not only was a reading record shattered but a record number of community collaborators joined in to share this year's nationally chosen picture book, *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell. The breadth of outreach was made possible thanks to United Way and its key support from the Junior League of Huntsville, Huntsville City Schools Pre-K, and Hexigon plus a team of eight dedicat-

ed community volunteers.

This allowed United Way guest readers to leave a book and participation certificate at every site and classroom visited. Since 2008, more than 5,000 books entered area classrooms and libraries through this initiative.

Nearly 200 local public school classrooms participated and at least a dozen private schools and childcares. Volunteers from community organizations and businesses adopted schools or grades within the local public school systems.

Says United Way of Madison County Community Impact Director Cathy Miller: "Our community truly came together and did something none of us could do alone. That's the power of LIVING UNITED."

## Taste and Sound of Africa for the Holidays

As millions of people around the world prepare to celebrate the holiday season, there are numerous foods and musical items from the African continent that could find themselves in common households. Here are just a few (alphabetically):

- African Rice
- Banjo (West Africa)
- Black-Eyed Peas
- Coffee (Ethiopia)
- Drum
- Guineafowl
- Guitar (Ethiopia Krar Harp)
- Kola Nuts (Original formula for Coca-Cola)
- Okra
- Palm Oil (West Africa)
- Piano (Dulcimer), Rooibos Tea (South Africa), Violin (Goje), Watermelons (Egypt), Yams (West Africa)



# Five Ways to a No-Hassle Holiday Valley-bration This Season

(BPT) - The holidays are supposed to be a joyous occasion, filled with warm memories of family and friends. When it's your turn to host in the Valley, however, the holidays can quickly turn into a stressful blur that involves cleaning, decorating and cooking all before the guests even arrive! Hosting loved ones doesn't have to be this way. Try these five tips for a no-hassle holiday celebration and enjoy being fully present for the fun this season.

## 1. Cater in or stock up on pre-cooked holiday favorites.

Kick back and relax with the rest of your guests while you enjoy a hot and ready-to-eat delicious catered meal. Or, for those who are looking for a little holiday dinner help but prefer to have a hand in the process, order a pre-cooked mouthwatering meal and accompaniments that you can simply heat up, add any desired spices and serve in no time. Companies like Boston Market specialize in preparing complete holiday spreads with classics that belong on every holiday table such as roasted turkey, stuffing

and mashed potatoes with gravy and can even deliver delectable desserts right to your door. You don't have to sacrifice a quality, delicious meal to gain sanity this holiday season.

## 2. Host a potluck-style dinner.

If you're in charge of getting your house ready for guests, then turn your celebration into a potluck so that family and friends can help provide the food. If you want to be a stand-out guest, offer to pick up an extra entree, side, appetizer or dessert prior to Thanksgiving or even swing by restaurants that are open on Thanksgiving to grab and go in time for your celebration. It's the season of giving, after all, and loved ones will be more than happy to pitch in to help make the gathering great.

## 3. Make a statement with a few decorative touches

You don't have to deco-

rate every corner of your home to create a festive space. Instead, focus on a few style touches that make

a big impact. Wrap a strand of twinkle lights into garland or place the lights into glass vases to create a cozy look

in any room. Place ornaments into a large vase for a pop of color at the dining table. A holiday wreath hung on the front door is a simple way to welcome guests into your home as the festivities begin.

## 4. Give your guests a memorable time with games.

Games are an easy way to enjoy a comforting afternoon with guests. Brainstorm lighthearted games that large groups can play, such as charades. If you don't own many games yourself, ask around to see what your friends and family can bring. Just make sure you have a designated space where people can play so that the games don't interfere with your dinner

table display.

## 5. Take some time for yourself.

Amidst the hustle and bustle during the holidays, it's important not to neglect your self-care. Whether you need some downtime to enjoy a good book or if you like to re-energize

through activities like yoga, make sure you schedule time to take care of yourself this holiday season. A little self-care goes a long way in ensuring you stay calm during the celebrations.

From serving pre-cooked or delicious hot catered meals to dialing back

on decor, there are a variety of ways you can strategically host a no-stress festive holiday celebration. Try incorporating these five tips into your party plan this year so that you can spend more time enjoying the company of loved ones and less time getting ready for the occasion.



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## DLC Accepting Applications for 11th Cohort

Applications are being accepted for Cohort XI of the Diversity Leadership Colloquium until February 26.

Classes will begin March 5 and end April 23, running 6-9 p.m. every Tuesday evening. Graduation will be held on

# DLC



April 30.

Applications are available online at [www.diversityleadershipcolloquium.com](http://www.diversityleadershipcolloquium.com). Questions should be emailed to Mrs. Georgia Valrie at [gvalrie1971@gmail.com](mailto:gvalrie1971@gmail.com) or call (256) 656-4698.

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