

Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year!

We will resume publication on January 5, 2018. Meanwhile, join us on Facebook at The Valley Weekly.

The Valley Weekly

"Peace. It's wonderful."

- Father Divine

FREE

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Friday, December 22/29, 2017

Council Discusses New City Hall Structure

A comprehensive case for a new, efficient and cost-saving City Hall building was presented recently to the Huntsville City Council in a public work session.

The Council members were presented data

on extending the life of the current eight-story Administration Building compared to the potential of a \$48 million, six-story City Hall that would be erected by winter 2021 on the site of the current parking garage.

The current Administration Building was built in 1963 and as Mayor Tommy Battle said, "We've outgrown it. It's no longer efficient."

The decision on a new building will be made by the Council.



AAMU Will Hold Black Male Summit

The three-day Alabama A&M University 4th Black Male Summit is scheduled for January 31-February 2. The theme is: "Reclaiming Our Black Males."

The first day of the summit will focus on "Beating the Odds as a Black Male" with a presentation by the non-profit organization B3ATING THE ODDZ. The activity is slated for the Clyde Foster auditorium at 6 p.m.

On Thursday, February

1, summit organizers will address "Black Males and Mental Health" a two-part program at 6 p.m. in the Ernest L. Knight Complex VIP Room. The speakers are Dr. All-wyn Graham, #BlackMindsMatter, and David Brent, who will discuss Etiquette.

The culminating event will be held Friday, February 2, with the 2018 Black Male Summit Gala, at 6 p.m. in the Knight Center with William Gregg, Jr..

Female Black Voters Secure Jones' Win

by Reggie D. Allen

According to the polls, black votes matter. *Female* black votes matter, that is. On Tuesday Dec. 12, Doug Jones won the special US senate election, defeating Republican candidate Roy Moore. Shortly after his victory, it was announced that a staggering 98 percent of Jones' votes came from African American women, followed by 93 percent from African American men.

Jones, who is most notable for prosecuting the Ku Klux Klan members involved in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing, made history as

the first Alabama Democrat elected into the Senate in 25 years.

Prominent black voices, such as Keegan Michael Key (Key& Peele), Uzo Aduba (Orange is the New Black), Angela Bassett (American Horror Story: Coven), New Jersey Senator Cory Booker, former pro baller Charles Barkley and newly-elected Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin, were some of the myriad influencers that endorsed Jones.

Shortly after his momentous win, celebrities across the world flooded social media, not only congratulating

Jones on his victory, but paying homage to the voters that put him in office. Best-selling author J.K Rowling, who penned the Harry Potter novels, took to twitter, stating "Narrator's Voice: Roy was right. God was in control. What he didn't realize was, She's Black."

However, the battle isn't over just yet. Despite losing the special election, Moore refuses to concede, demanding a recount. Even with Jones as the declared victor, his win cannot officially be confirmed until all absentee ballots are counted, however data



shows it wouldn't make a difference.

The Black Congressional Black Caucus, specifically 20 female members, are requesting Republican leaders to let the new Alabama Senate take office posthaste or delay votes on major legislation. According to the Associated Press, incumbent Luther Strange will remain in office until January.

The Valley Weekly
INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

Washington in a Minute, Page 2
3rd Grader Writes Book, Page 4
The Harrises Celebrate 50th, Page 5
BMOA Gala, Page 6
Valley Happenings, Page 7
UAH Sets King Commemoration, Page 7

Washington in a Minute



Here is the update on what's happening in Washington, D.C., this week.

1. The House and Senate are in session this week. The big items on the agenda will be the passage of the final version of the \$1.5 trillion comprehensive tax reform bill, known as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and a stopgap spending bill to keep the federal government open through January 19, 2018 (the current measure expires on December 22). The Senate GOP will be down to 51 Members this week, because Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) – who is fighting brain cancer – has already left town to stay in Arizona

Senate.

The House has decided to include the full year's spending for the Department of Defense in its temporary funding bill – but not the rest of the government – as well as language to continue the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The Senate is expected to strip out the full year funding for defense and set it back to January 19 with the other funding. According to The Hill newspaper, the Senate parliamentarian last week blocked language in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that would have repealed the Johnson Amendment, allowing churches and 501(c)3

neyn Davis (R-IL) on Monday won their fight to preserve education tax benefits in the final tax reform bill.

Both the graduate tuition waiver (Section 117(d)) and employer tuition assistance benefits (Section 127) were maintained in the tax reform conference report agreed upon by House and Senate negotiators.

3. President Trump returned to the White House last night after spending the weekend at Camp David and gave a speech Monday on national security at the Ronald Reagan Building. According to

CNN, the President's lawyers will meet with special counsel Robert Mueller this week for what the President's team considers an opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of the next steps in the Mueller probe.

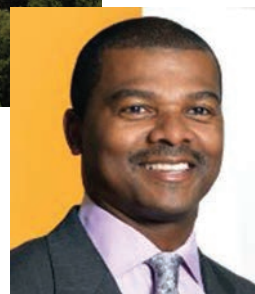
According to an article in Saturday's Washington

Post, President Trump has told advisers that he wants to travel extensively and hold rallies and that he is looking forward to spending much of 2018 campaigning for candidates in next year's midterm elections.

4. Vice President Mike Pence was scheduled to visit Egypt and Israel this week, which included a meeting in Cairo on Wednesday, December 20, with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, an address to the Israeli parliament on Thursday, December 21,

and an official stop at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

A planned visit to Bethlehem in the West Bank was cancelled due to tensions with the Palestinian government over the



Trump Administration's announcement on December 6 to formally recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Vice President Pence postponed his trip by a few days to be present in the Senate for the final vote on the tax bill set held on Tuesday, December 19.

5. According to The Hill newspaper, last week the White House withdrew the federal judgeship nominations of Brett Talley and Jeff Mateer pursuant to a request from Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Charles Grassley (R-IA).

Talley, who was tapped to be a federal judge in Alabama, had never tried a case before in court and was rated by the American Bar Association as unqualified.

Mateer, who was nominated for a seat on a federal district court in Texas, had caused controversy in Washington by past speeches in which he

compared homosexuality to bestiality and described transgender children as a part of "Satan's plan."

A third federal judge nominee, Matthew Petersen, who is a nominee for the District Court for the District of Columbia, failed to answer questions on basic principles of law put to him at hearing last week by Senator John Kennedy (R-LA).

Nonetheless, The Hill noted that President Trump has nominated judges at a record pace and has to date seen 6 nominees confirmed to district court slots and 12 nominees confirmed to circuit courts.

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Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

Matthew 14:29-30 says, Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord save me!"

You know, I believe that our faith is powered by our focus. If we can focus on the right things, I believe that our faith can allow us to move mountains and defeat any giants in our lives.

It will also motivate us to stay focused. In this scripture, we see that Peter was motivated to walk on water when he remained focused



on Jesus. But he began to sink when he focused on all the distractions around him.

Many times, when we take our eyes off Jesus, we lose our focus, as well. And, that's when our faith

is challenged. Any time we take Jesus out of the equation, it will equal disaster, destruction and failure.

So how do we stay focused in a world full of distractions? First, we have to determine, what is the most important thing, which is our relationship with Jesus.

When we do this, it will motivate us and drive our faith to do amazing things ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters.

The House has decided to include the full year's spending for the Department of Defense in its temporary funding bill – but not the rest of the government ...

for the holidays and, therefore, Vice President Mike Pence has postponed his trip to the Middle East until Wednesday to be present to break any tie votes in the

nonprofits to endorse candidates and engage in partisan politics.

2. Congressmen Mike Turner (R-OH) and Rod-

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100 BMOA Honors Elder Rosetta James



From the Editor

In recognition of her dedicated support to the local community, the 100 Black Men of America, Greater Huntsville Chapter, honored 92-year-old Rosetta James with the 2017 Mentor of the Year Award.

The honor was presented on December 16 at the Von Braun Center's North Hall. President of the Greater Huntsville Chapter, Curtis Ellington, Jr., and Thomas Dortch, Jr, chairman of the 100 BMOA World Headquarters, presented the award. Men of Tomorrow (MOT) Mentees Terrion Fields and Travion Crutcher shared their mentoring experiences, along with MOT Parent Tracy Crutcher.



Three new members were pinned, including Christopher Lewis, Don Swain and Rev. Maurice Wright II. Additionally, Fallen Member, Rev. Robert Joseph Brown, Jr., was memorialized. Congratulations to the members of the 100 Black Men of the Greater Huntsville Chapter on a successful Holiday Gala Program. The theme, "Developing Future Leaders Today," is exactly what we should be working to accomplish in the community. One of my take-aways was, "it's not what you got, it's what you give."

We will not publish next Friday, December 29, so that we, too, can spend quality time with our family and friends. We will

return with the Friday, January 5, 2018, issue. Last week, I encouraged each person to begin to think about what and how we will give. So, please join me in giving what you can! It matters not the amount but the spirit in which it is given. If Mrs. James can remain impactful after 92 years, what's our delay?

So many messages abound to constantly remind us to always give back, from Shel Silverstein's "The Giving Tree" to Mahalia Jackson's "If I Can Help Somebody" to John 3:16. Thank you, Mrs. James, for showing us how to live to give. *Happy Holidays to all!*



Dorothy

3rd Grader Bases Book on Downtown Huntsville

Mason Balbo, age 9 and a student at Holy Spirit Regional School in Huntsville, Ala., co-authored a children's book with his mother based in downtown Huntsville, Ala., titled "Date Night With Mom."

The book is a true story told by a then 7-year old student about how his Mom surprised him after school and took him on a "date." In the midst of the spontaneous fun, they are able to spend quality time together eating chicken wings and playing video games.

The simple story from a child's perspective promotes a powerful message. What children crave most from parents is their time. The book includes interactive suggestions to schedule one's own date night. Also, a contest involving social media is included to get

free swag.

Scenes in the book are based in downtown Huntsville, Ala.

They include Holy Spirit Regional School, Harrison Brothers Hardware, UG White, Pints and Pixels, Green Street Market, Court House and the parking garage.

The book encourages readers to take the time to walk around their local community and observe the beauty in their backyard with their children.

"The very buildings and scenes we drive by everyday but don't always have the time to admire or appreciate," commented co-author Maryann Balbo, "give us an excuse to start a dialogue with our children and bring us closer."

Illustrations were done by local artist Heather

Legg-Click. Co-authoring the book with her son, Mason, is Maryann Balbo- General Manager of The Valley's CW broadcast station.

"To have this experience with my son has been immeasurable. The impact of spending 90 minutes with him with my phone off and attention dedicated to him has made such a difference in our lives. We chose to write this book together to share our story and encourage others," said co-author Maryann Balbo.



Among local stores, the book can be also be purchased on Amazon. For more information, visit "Date Night With Mom" website at <http://date-nightwithmom.com/>

'Hudson Valley School' Exhibit Ends at HMA

"Painting a Nation: Hudson Valley School" Highlight Tour - Higdon Collection - Sunday, January 7 2 p.m.

Natives of New York, Ann and Lee Higdon developed an interest in art during their teenage years and often visited museums and found themselves drawn to paintings of the Hudson River School.

In the late 18th and 19th centuries, American artists looked to Europe for both aesthetic themes

and painterly methods of depicting the world around them. This began to change in the early decades of the nineteenth century as artists adapted European aesthetics to develop a distinctly American landscape narrative.

"Painting a Nation: Hudson River School Landscapes" from the Higdon Collection features significant American artists from the Hudson River School, including Albert Bierstadt, William Bradford, Jasper Francis Cropsey, William Hart, William Trost Richards and many others.

The majority of the works depict scenes of New York State and include paintings of the Hudson River, Lake George and the Adirondack Mountains region.

However, the second generation of Hudson River School painters extended their visual reach into areas along the Atlantic Coast and Far West, reflecting the expansion of the United States during the mid-nineteenth century. Together, these paintings celebrate the picturesque beauty of the nation.

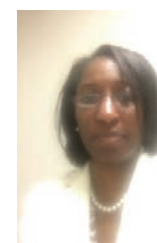
"When you raise a god instead of a child, you're bound to be serving him for the rest of your days. Same thing holds when you marry a god."

- Gloria Naylor

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December 22 - ARTHUR W. MITCHELL - The first African American to be elected to Congress as a Democrat. He was born in Lafayette, Ala. - BlackinTime.info

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Valley Deaths

- Nelms Memorial Funeral Home -

Funeral service for MRS. ROSETTA SIMPSON NICKLES (B. 1942) was held on Saturday, December 16, at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church (292 Cemetery Road - New Market, AL 35761) with The Reverend Dr. Larry Davidson, Jr. officiating.

Memorial service for MR. ERNEST R. "COCHISE" JUMPER (b. 1942) was held on Friday, December 15, at the St. John Missionary Baptist Church (530 East Main Street - Hartsville, Tenn.).

Funeral service for MRS. MARTHA A. JACKSON (b. 1959) was scheduled for Friday, December 22/29, at 1 p.m. at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Elder Dennis L. Green officiating.

Funeral service for MR. CURTIS JONES (b. 1955) was held Wednesday, December 13, at New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (28520 Wall Street SW - Madison, Ala.).

Funeral service for MR. VERNON L. MITCHELL (b. 1943) was held Saturday, December 9, at The Rock Family Worship Center - Main Sanctuary (200 Memorial Parkway South - Huntsville, AL) with Pastor Rusty Nelson officiating.

- Royal Funeral Home -

Funeral service for DEACON EARL SCRUGGS, JR., (b. 1935) was held Thursday, December 21, 2017 at the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church (710 Dan Crutcher Road Toney, AL 35773) with Dr. Ernest Williams officiating.

Funeral service for MR. OLIVER JEFFERSON, JR., (b. 1948) was held Wednesday, December 20, at the Springhill United Methodist Church (1605 Zeirdt Road Madison, AL 35758) with Pastor Clauzell Williams officiating.

Funeral service MR. GEORGE ARTHUR HEREFORD, SR., (b. 1945) was held Saturday, December 16, at the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church (4640 Meridian Street N, Huntsville, AL 35811) with Pastor Wallace Steele officiating.

Funeral service for ELDER WILLIS GRAHAM, JR. (b. 1932) was held Saturday, December 16, at the Pentecostal Lighthouse Church (6107 Blue Spring Road, Huntsville, AL 35810) with Bishop Johnny Burrell officiating.

Graveside service was held Friday, December 15, For BABIES TIANA DARIA & TAYLOR DASHAY HESTER at the Meadowlawn Garden of Peace (450 Mt. Lebanon Road, Toney, AL 35773) with Elder Gary Matthews officiating.

Greater Huntsville Chapter of 100 Black Men of America, Inc. Annual Gala

Honoring Community Activist Rosetta James

Saturday, December 16, 2017



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Sneed's Cleaners

Starbucks (Governors Drive, N. Parkway at

Mastin Lake Road/University Drive)

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

King Commemoration Program Set at UAH

The Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at the University of Alabama in Huntsville will hold its annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Program on Thursday, January 11.

The event will be held at 4 p.m. in the UAH Conference Training Center Exhibit Hall. The theme is: "The Urgency of Now: Advancing the Dream of Unity, Justice and Peace."

Co-sponsors of the activity include the Minority Graduate Student Association, and various UAH clubs and organizations.

To celebrate the 50th commemoration of the death of the slain



civil rights leader, special performances will be presented by the Alabama A&M University Choir, The Aeolians of Oakwood University, UAH Baptist Campus Ministry Praise Team and Saxophonist Alex Banks II.

For additional information, contact (256) 824-2332.

An Unlikely Gift

Millennial Thought

by Josh Alex Baker

As a new year teeming with excitement and opportunity awaits, the holiday season presents an unlikely gift.

As school lets out and work demands lighten up, we finally have the needed time to reflect on our year's journey. We are able to ponder on what we have given to the year and what the year has given to us.

We tend to develop a win-to-loss ratio as we consider all that "could have" and "should have" been done differently. At times during the holiday season, we become so enthralled in such regret that we overlook a sizeable gift:

the gift of *survival*.

We often take for granted that we are here, but your ability to read these words in this very moment indicates something. You have survived.

No matter how hard it might have been to get to this moment, you have survived.

From personal experience, this has been the hardest year of my life. At times, the future was utterly unfathomable. I literally could not conceptually perceive the idea of going on past the pain endured. Despite this, I'm here.

The worst thing that could have happened to

you up until this point has happened, and you're still here.

Do not underestimate your capacity for resilience. Acknowledge your losses for what they are. Reflect. Recover. Resume.

Remember: you are a survivor. Allow this holiday season to be different. Fully embrace all of the constituent parts that have yielded to the fullness of who you are.

As you continue your holiday season, take a moment to commemorate your journey.

All survivors deserve an opportunity to bask in the victory of the battle they have overcome.

Josh Alex Baker is a social work major at Alabama A&M University.

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