

"Learning without wisdom is a load of books on a donkey's back." - Zora Neale Hurston

'No-Brainer' Hands-Free Driving Ordinance Leads 2024

Starting January 1, 2024, the City's new hands-free ordinance will prohibit motorists from holding any wireless telecommunications device while operating a vehicle.

The ordinance, sponsored by Huntsville City Council President David Little with assistance from the Huntsville Police Department (HPD), was voted into law by City Council on Oct. 12, 2023. The goal of the legislation is to enable law enforcement to treat a handheld

wireless communication device violation as a primary instead of a secondary offense.

Under the City's existing no-text ordinance, officers need another reason, such as failing to signal or wear a seatbelt, to stop a driver and issue a citation for distracted driving. Not only will the new ordinance strengthen Huntsville's existing texting-while-driving law, but it will also be easier for HPD to enforce.

HPD Chief Kirk Giles, who began working on the



ordinance with Council President Little in early 2023, fully supports the new law. By reducing the number of distracted driving-related wrecks in Huntsville, Giles said the ordinance will help to protect the health, safety and welfare of the Huntsville community.

Google Donates \$250K to AAMU for STEAM Initiatives

Google donated \$250,000 to Alabama A&M University to support science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEM/STEAM) initiatives.

The donation will impact several academic programs and student organizations to increase opportunities for AAMU students.

"We are committed to leveraging this support



to empower academic discovery and scholarships on our campus," said Vice President Jamal Ali. "We're excited that this particular gift will support all facets of the student experience and bring much needed funding to student groups who represent AAMU."

In 2021, Google made a commitment to invest more than \$50 million in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HB-CUs) to help address the

diversity gap in tech fields.
This donation is part
of ongoing support for
HBCUs from the technology giant.



ACES at AAMU Hosts Farmers Workshop

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Alabama A&M University and USDA-selected vendor The Windsor Group LLC, recently hosted a free USDA Financial Assistance Workshop for Farmers on Friday, December 15, in the James L. Dawson Building Auditorium.

The USDA has set aside \$2.2 billion to help farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination in the USDA farm lending program before 2021.

Potential applicants are encouraged to review the USDA Discrimination Financial Assistance Program or call 800-721-0970 for information and free technical assistance.

For more information, contact Jasmine Grayson at 256-429-8137.



OLLI at UAH to Kick Off 2024

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) will begin the spring 2024 semester with an open house on Friday, January 5, from 10 a.m. to noon in the lobby of Wilson Hall on the campus of UAH, a part of the University of Alabama System. Classes start Jan. 29 and run through the first week of May.

"Spring brings another semester full of fun, fellowship, and the pursuit of wisdom and new skills," says Clay Williams, OLLI at UAH program manager. "There's something for everyone."

Current and prospective OLLI members, family, friends and the community are invited to learn more about the group and register for the spring term. OLLI is open to ages 50 and up.

For more information about OLLI at UAH, visit Osher.uah.edu

alley Weekly

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Valley Weekly Washingt One Minu by Ron Hamm

Here is what's happening in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, this week:

1. CONGRESS. The Senate is in session this week and the House is out.

The Senate postponed its year-end adjournment last week to continue working on a border security package to include in the \$111 billion Ukraine/Israel emergency supplemental appropriations bill, which it will attempt to bring back to the floor this week (which the House must also pass).

It is also expected to take up a House-passed bill to extend the Federal Aviation Administration authorization through March 8, 2024, as well as the confirmations of 11 4-star officer nominations, who are among the residual effects of Sen. Tommy Tuberville's (R-AL) military abortion policy protest hold.

2. THE WHITE HOUSE. On Tuesday morning, President Biden returned to the White House after two (2) days at his beach house in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and delivered remarks at the funeral of former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor at Washington National Cathedral.

Later on Tuesday, he participated in a fundraiser in Bethesda, Maryland. On

Wednesday, he traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he discussed the economy. On Friday, the President and First Lady will make a holiday visit to patients at Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C., and on Saturday will leave for Camp David, where they will spend the Christmas holiday.

3. SUPREME COURT. Retired Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who died on Dec. 1., was in repose in the Great Hall of the Supreme Court starting at 9:30 a.m. Monday until 8 p.m.

Last Monday, the court refused to take up a free speech challenge by a Christian family counselor to a Washington state law that bans gay conversion therapy (thereby leaving the ban in place).

Last Wednesday, the court announced that it will weigh in on the use of a federal law – also at issue in former President Trump's criminal case - that makes it a crime to corruptly obstruct congressional inquiries and investigations to prosecute participants in the January 6 attacks on the U.S. Capitol.

Also on Wednesday, the court agreed to review a ruling by a federal appeals court that would significantly restrict access to the abortion drug mifepristone, the decision on which will likely happen in summer 2024 in

the middle of the presidential election campaign and would be the first significant abortion case decided by the court since June 2022's decision to eliminate the constitutional right to an abortion in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization.

- 4. APPRENTICESHIPS. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is proposing new regulations for its registered apprenticeship program, including improving connections with postsecondary education and better data. According to a DOL release, the proposed rule would:
- Strengthen labor standards, quality, and worker protections by making occupational skills and training more portable, enhancing alignment with postsecondary education,

and providing better performance data.

- Better define roles for state apprenticeship agencies and other stakeholders within the National Apprenticeship System.
- Codify DOL Office of Apprenticeship's role for national leadership, promotion, and standards.
- Promote apprenticeship pathways, including preapprenticeship and apprenticeship readiness programs, by expanding performance and data requirements to improve accountability, transparency, and program outcomes.
- Create a student-centric model of registered apprenticeship, called Registered Career and Technical Education Ap-

prenticeship, designed to make it more seamless for full-time high school and community college students to enroll in apprenticeships.

Upon publication in the Federal Register, the notice of proposed rulemaking will be open for public comment for 60 days. DOL will hold a webinar on January 11 to review the proposed changes and how to submit public comments.

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VALLEY **DEATHS**



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Funeral services for MR. ALVIN HOPKINS (b. 1948) will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, December 22, at First Missionary Baptist Church with Pastor Don Darius Butler officiating.

Funeral services for MRS. LAURA H. DANIELS (b. 1936) were held Wednesday, December 20, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel.

Graveside services for MS. ALICE J. FORD (b. 1958) were held on Saturday, December 16, from Valley View Memorial Gardens with Pastor Patrick Arrington officiating.

Funeral services for MRS. CORA GURLEY (b. 1931) were held on Friday, December 15, from Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Larry Petty officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481- www.royalfh.com

Funeral service for MR. JACOLBY MARQUIS MOORE (b.1992) will be 12:30 p.m., Saturday, December 23, at the Royal Chapel of Memories (4315 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Damien Turner officiating.

Funeral service for MR. BRUCE TYRONE MAXWELL, JR.(b. 1965) was Sunday, December 17, at the Royal Chapel of Memories (4315 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.).

Funeral service for MRS. MATTIE LEE MOSLEY MCKINNEY (b. 1935) was held Saturday, December 16, at the Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church (229 Church Street NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Dr. Maurice Wright, II officiating.

Funeral service for DEACON ELIGAH BAILEY, JR., was held Friday, December 15, at the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church (380 Indian Creek Road NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Timothy Rainey officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

2505 University Drive NW Huntsville, AL 35816 (256) 539-9693 - www.serenityfuneralhm.com

Funeral service for MR. SOL ANDERSON (b. 1941) was Saturday, December 16, at New Hopewell MB Church, 11479 Dogwood Flats Road, Tanner, Ala.



"Holding on to Your Faith at Christmas"

Job 2:9 says, "His wife said to him, are you still holding on to your integrity?"

We all have challenging times in our lives, times when it seems as though our faith is being challenged. With all the tragedies going on around the country, it can be hard to maintain your faith in God.

I believe that there are certain things that your faith has to survive in order to grow. We first have to survive the reaction phase. This is where our emotions are on full display--emotions of anger, sadness, and frustration.

But we have to remember it's only a reaction, a temporary emotion that will pass. Many people lose their

faith in the reaction phase and say things like Job's wife, when she said 'Why don't you curse God and die?' But Job replied, 'You talk like a foolish woman, should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?'

We've all had good days and bad days, but if we look around and think things over, all of our good days usually outweigh our bad days, so there is no need to complain.

Let us not allow the reaction phase to get us off track. Remember Philippians 1:6: "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion."

Prayer: Most gracious and loving Father, help us to hold on to our faith during our challenging times.



Question: Have you ever had a tragedy in your life that challenged your faith in God?

What did you do?

Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters, and make sure you purchase a copy of my books, Spiritual Game Plans For A Successful Life and A Champion Game Plan for Life at amazon. com, Westbow Books or, if you have a PayPal account, e-mail me at prestonbrown81@gmail. com, and I will send you an autographed copy.

NEXT WEEK:

"Providing Comfort for Others"



Meetings

Huntsville Council

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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A New Generation Of Service

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.

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

December 22 & 23

Comedy - Rickey Smiley Stand Up Live Huntsville 8 p.m.

December 23

Relentless Positivity Party PaPPo's Pizzeria & Pub Memorial Parkway Huntsville, Ala. 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Concert Jim Brickman "A Joyful Christmas" Mars Music Hall Huntsville, Ala. 7:30 p.m.

December 30

The Whole Me Gala The Overlook Redstone Arsenal 6:30-10:10 p.m.

January 1

Wim Hof Method Fundamentals Workshop by

Certified Instructor Paul Stoneking Movement Massage & Breathwork Link

January 4-6

Comedy Mark Curry Stand Up Live Huntsville 7 p.m.

January 10

Huntsville Winter Event Kona Grill Huntsville, Ala. 6:30 p.m.

January 12

Jordan Rainer: Straight Shot Tour Mars Music Hall Huntsville, Ala. 8 p.m.

January 14

"Calling All Titans" Huntsville Titans Champion Force Athletics erp.championforce.com

January 26

Concert
American Spiritual Ensemble
Host:
Huntsville Chamber Music
Guild

March 9

Rosetta James Foundation "Honoring Our Elders" Celebration/Day Gala 12 noon

Concert

Lawrence Brownlee

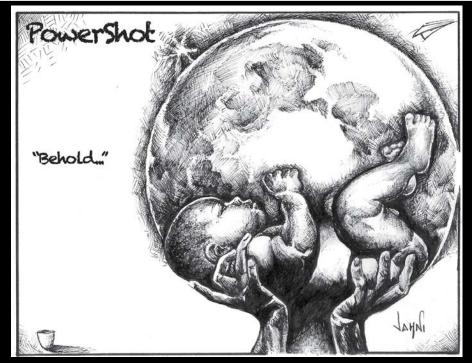
Host:
Huntsville Chamber Music
Guild

May 18-19

Rocket City BBQ & Soul Fest National Speleological Society

DECEMBER 22 - UNCLE LUKE - Luther Roderick Campbell aka Luke Skyywalker, Uncle Luke and simply Luke, is an American rapper, promoter, record executive, and actor. He was the leader of rap group 2 Live Crew, and starred in a short-lived show on VH1, Luke's Parental Advisory. One of his songs, which used a parody of Roy Orbison's "Oh, Pretty Woman", was the subject of Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc., which was argued in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. As a result, the Miami New Times described Campbell as "the man whose booty-shaking madness once made the U.S. Supreme Court stand up for free speech".

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org







"The reason for living was to get ready
to stay dead a long time."

- William Faulkner

Think BIG Thoughts ...



Even the Bible tells

us about dreaming. God

wants you to dream. He

gives you the ability to,

bring those dreams into

reality. He can help you

Where is that childlike

to do that, as well. But

mentality? The innova-

tive one? The one that

comes up with the bright

you dare to dream!

through much effort,

What consumes your thoughts? Is it anything of great value, or is it just nonsense? What do you spend the majority of your day mulling over? You are choosing to put your efforts there. You do know that. Even if it's nothing, within nothing lies all of your effort. How does that make you feel?

You have been created to do significant things. Yet, here you are. Idle time is taking over the use all of your gifts and talents. Come on. We can do better than that.

> **ON THIS** DAY



Joseph H. Rainey, from South Carolina, took his seat on December 12, 1870, becoming the first African-American to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

ideas? Those seemingly unattainable (yet they are) far-fetched visions that keep you exhilarated and driven, where are they?

What will it take to get you back to that spot where possibilities have no bounds? You could paint, write, be curious, take risks with your imagination. Permit yourself to do so. You know you can retrain yourself to do that. Start jotting stuff down daily. Open your mind back up!

Unlock your creativity and dream big, immerse yourself in inspiring activities, embrace

experimentation and failure, seek support from like-minded individuals, and give yourself the freedom to imagine beyond boundaries. Think Big Thoughts, then take action! You'll thank yourself later.

> adapting to it. It's scary."

> > - Kendrick Lamar

"The worst part of success is, to me,

named Sports Illustrated's 2023 Sportsper-Call it the "Prime Effect Show," starring "In less than a year, Coach Prime has not

Perspectives on

God Views

Current News

fresh life into the campus and transformed a community," the magazine cited. His combination of past athletic accolades, mediagenic swag, and

How can a first-year college football

coach who tallied a 4-8 season record

Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders.

- whose team lost its last six games - be

only transformed a moribund Colorado

football program, ... He's also breathed

megawatt smile make him a rock star.

In my view, however, SI's highest honor was granted Sanders due to his right-now touchdowns of fanfare, family, and faith.

"Prayin' Coach Prime": SI's 2023 Sportsperson of the Year - but Why?

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings" - Proverbs 22:29

son of the Year?

Known previously as "Neon Deion," Sanders became a Pro Football Hall of Famer and Super Bowl champion; he also played in the 1992 World Series, hitting .533 with five stolen bases.

With 2023 as his first season coaching the Colorado Buffaloes, the university reported:

- Deion Sanders, Colorado Have Drawn Estimated \$90.55M in Media Coverage, School Says;
- A 2,544% jump in sales at its online team store; and
- Every home game in 50,183-seat Folsom Field was sold out for the first time in school history.

And these Prime kudos were gained without fumbling family face time.

Most fathers leave their families when they go to work, but Sanders brought his to Colorado: a daughter, three sons, a sister, his mother, and even Gunner, his Belgian Malinois dog. For this, he's thankful and appreciative.

"How in the world can I not be thankful and appreciative of where I am? They have afforded us the luxury of calling this place home, and we've absolutely loved it," SI quoted.

Coach Prime's spirit of appreciation and thankfulness flows from his faith walk. "I don't believe you can be at your optimum without your faith. Sports is sports, it's a game. My faith is everything. It's the gas that propels the courage, the truth, keeps me going. It's the wind, it's the wings, it's the air that pumps into my lungs that provokes me to live. Faith is everything, "Deion Sanders Vocal About His Christian Faith As He Seeks Success at

When you and I mix our faith, family, and fans all together, like Prime we will become someone's Person of the Year.

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Sunday, December 24, 2023 Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 Second Lesson: Romans 16:25-27 GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

"The white man's happiness cannot be purchased by the black man's misery."

- Frederick Douglass



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

Mr. William Davis

William James Davis, Jr., was born to the late William and Nora Davis in Gadsden, Ala. Thanks to his musical family, Davis was formally introduced to the world of music through classes and encouragement at Alabama A&M University, where he developed an equal love and proficiency for vocal and instrumental music. Among his mentors were Dr. and Mrs. Henry Bradford, Jr., Dr. Malcolm Breda and Mr. Thomas Dawson.

While at AAMU, Davis was recruited by Dr. Barbara Anthony to sing in the adult choir at Fellowship Presbyterian Church, an honor that also entailed picking up others for practice. After graduating from AAMU, he entered the graduate music program at Dillard University in New Orleans, La., which was directed by the famed Dr. Frederick Hall.

Davis' first teaching position was at Councill Training School, where he taught band and social studies under the late A.G. Adams. The band program engaged in many activities, including football games, parades, local and state contests, regular school activities and communitysponsored programs. Councill Training School opened in 1948 as the first public school for African Americans in Madison County.

When Councill closed, Davis began a journey of several schools, still acquiring commendations from



such notables as Congressman Bob Iones and former U.S. President Richard Nixon. While at Bob Jones High School, the band was involved in many historic events, including writing the school hymn and even playing for former First Lady Rosalyn Carter and former Senator Walter Mondale. After leaving Bob Jones High School, Davis was given the opportunity to start from scratch a band program at Liberty Middle School. In a very short period of time, the enrollment in band exploded in numbers to over 300 students. This was the largest middle school band in the state of Alabama. He also started the first middle school jazz band in Madison County and within two years began receiving superior ratings in concert and jazz competitions.

Davis and his wife Brenda have been married for over 40 years and have two wonderful and loving daughters—Diedre Danielle and Stefanie Lo'Nore—and one amazing grandson,

music, Davis and his wife founded the Huntsville Spiritual Chorale in 2002 and have been co-directors of the non-profit organization since its inception. The Chorale was created to preserve and perform the original art form called the Negro Spiritual. Davis has often been in demand for his gifts as a tenor soloist, and he performed for numerous balls, meetings, weddings, funerals, church services and other special occasions. Additionally, as a member of Fellowship Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Ala., Davis has served as an Elder and Deacon, and currently sings in the Chancel Choir, Unity Choir and Men's Chorus. He has also conducted workshops for the Presbyterian Women Alabama/Mississippi Conference.

Demetrius DeShae. With

their shared appreciation for

Moreover, Davis has volunteered for the church's Food Distribution Program and the Community Crop Drop, a mission project based on local farmers' vegetables that require sorting and bagging at various preparation sites. Davis and his wife Brenda were honored by RiahRose Home for Children and Pregnant Teens on Grandparents Day in 2016. He is a volunteer with the Neighborhood Community Watch Program and is a member of the Golden Charmers--an older adult volunteer group.



"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.

Host a Smithsonian Exhibit

Want to host a Smithsonian traveling exhibit in your community? Apply by January 31, 2024, to host "Spark! Places of Innovation." Spark! will tour Alabama from June 2025 through March 2026. Selected communities will get a year of training and capacity-building sessions before the exhibit opens.

Inspired by a Smithsonian National Museum of American History exhibition, Spark! features stories gathered from diverse communities across the nation. Photographs, objects, videos, and augmented reality bring a multilayered experience to reveal the challenges, successes, and future of innovation

in rural America. This exhibit offers Alabama communities a chance to bring residents together for new conversations and to present complementary programming that showcases local innovation.

Apply today! or visit alabamahumanities.org

- Alabama Humanities Alliancee

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Scenes from The Legacy Center's Annual Holiday Open House































AAMU Faculty Collaborate to Bring New Summer Institute for Teachers, K-12 Students

A new National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) program at Alabama A&M University will offer summer professional development institutes for teachers and summer programs for K-12 students.

Earlier this year, the NEH announced that AAMU was among awardees of over \$41 million in grant funding to support projects nationwide. The grants target history and English teachers who are looking for ways to contextualize the social and political climate in educating students. Dr. Nathan Blom, Dr. Stacy Carter, and Veronica D. Henderson are leading the AAMU project - From Alabama to New York: How the Great Migration Shaped the Harlem Renaissance.

Carter, interim chair of the Department of Social Sciences, has extensively studied the connections of The Great Migration and The Harlem Renaissance. "This is a story that was told but can be written in a different light," says Carter. "The connection of The Great Migration and The Harlem Renaissance have not been explored deeply, which historically is very



important, leaving room to connect these stories through this institute as well."

"If we trace our history or heritage we can find somewhere in there that our family was affected by The Great Migration in some way. Also, there are several people in Alabama who were part of the Harlem Renaissance or of the period immediately after that. In 1900, W.C. Handy

became the band director at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical College in Normal, Alabama (present-day Alabama A&M University). He later went on to become a famous American blues composer and musician who was later affected by the Harlem Renaissance."

Veronica Henderson, director of the Alabama State Black Archives and the interim director of the LRC.

partner in bringing the institute to life. Carter and Henderson serve as content experts while Blom's expertise is in Pedagogy, taking texts and making the teaching of texts more engaging.

"Our goal is for participants of the

"Our goal is for participants of the Institute to leave with some type of curriculum that goes back to the schools, school districts, and classrooms to educate the young adults," says Carter. "This is a good institute to help us control the narrative along with telling the story of African

was also an equal

American people and their successes. Students should gain the knowledge and they deserve to know more about who they are as a person."

Blom says the Institute also aims to empower teachers to engage students through the subject.

"I hope the teachers that come to our institute will leave it in a way that will allow them to go into their classrooms not only with an understanding of these historical facts but with the tools they need to teach the students engagingly," he says.

The institute will be accepting 25 qualified participants nationwide starting in June of 2024. And is arranged in three components. An online compo-

nent will allow participants to receive the literature and the topics for the background of The Great Migration and The Harlem Renaissance. The second phase will take place on campus at the State Black Archives along with some of the historical black features of Huntsville. Next, the committee will travel to the cities of Birmingham and Montgomery to explore more of African American History. The last component of the institute will be to fly to Columbia University to get a more in-depth point-of-view of the locations of the Harlem Renaissance. The NEH Grant allows the selected candidates free travel and admissions expenses along with a stipend.



