

Valley Weekly

FREE

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Friday, December 25, 2015

"When I dare to be powerful – to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."

- Audre Lorde



Alabama Metro Least Pretentious

The St. Louis-based Café Valet recently analyzed the top 50 U.S. metro areas, each with populations of 1,000,000 or more utilizing its Pretension Index.

Honing in on such niceties as macchiato swirls, poetry readings, Moleskines and animal acupuncture, Café Valet dubbed San Francisco as America's Most Pretentious City in its first annual Pretension Index, a quantitative analysis of pretension levels in America.

The data team pulled information for the Pretension Index from the U.S. Census Bureau, Facebook, local business data and other materials for the 50 most populous U.S. metro areas.

San Francisco received a Pretension Index score of 85 out of a potential 100, far surpassing

other "out West" metros of San Jose (64), San Diego (59), Denver (56) and Portland (56).

The Index not only delved into the nation's most pretentious metropolitan areas, but it also acknowledged the *least* pretentious ones, noting major U.S. cities that avoid "the trappings of the cultural elite (such as art galleries on every block downtown, Whole Foods that are leading the way to gentrifying neighborhoods and the struggling poets who are just a little bit better than you and me)."

Toward that end, Birmingham, Ala., (above) and Riverside, Calif., led the list of the least pretentious cities with a score of 18, followed by Detroit (20), Dallas (20) and St. Louis (22).

Yuletide Not All Smiles for Some

The most wonderful time of the year ain't necessarily so for some people. In fact, it makes them downright sad.

According to the Mayo Clinic, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons. SAD starts and ends at about the same times each year.

For many, the symptoms of SAD start in the fall and continue into the winter months, draining energy and causing moodiness. Rarer cases experience SAD in the spring or early summer.

Recognized treatment for SAD has included light therapy, psy-



chotherapy and medications.

It could be more than a case of the "winter blues" or a seasonal downturn that must be ironed out. The Mayo Clinic

urged SAD victims to take steps to keep their mood and motivation steady throughout the year.

- The Mayo Clinic

Warm, Wet Christmas Anticipated

Christmas 2015 in the Tennessee Valley could be among the warmest, if national weather predictions hold true to form.

According to NOAA, a white Christmas is definitely out, but a very rainy one will likely be experienced by a large portion

of Alabamians. Forecasters are predicting 2 to 4 inches in the course of a week.

And, just depending on how weather patterns play out, many Southern cities could break records for having the warmest Christmas ever.



Happy Holidays to You and Yours!

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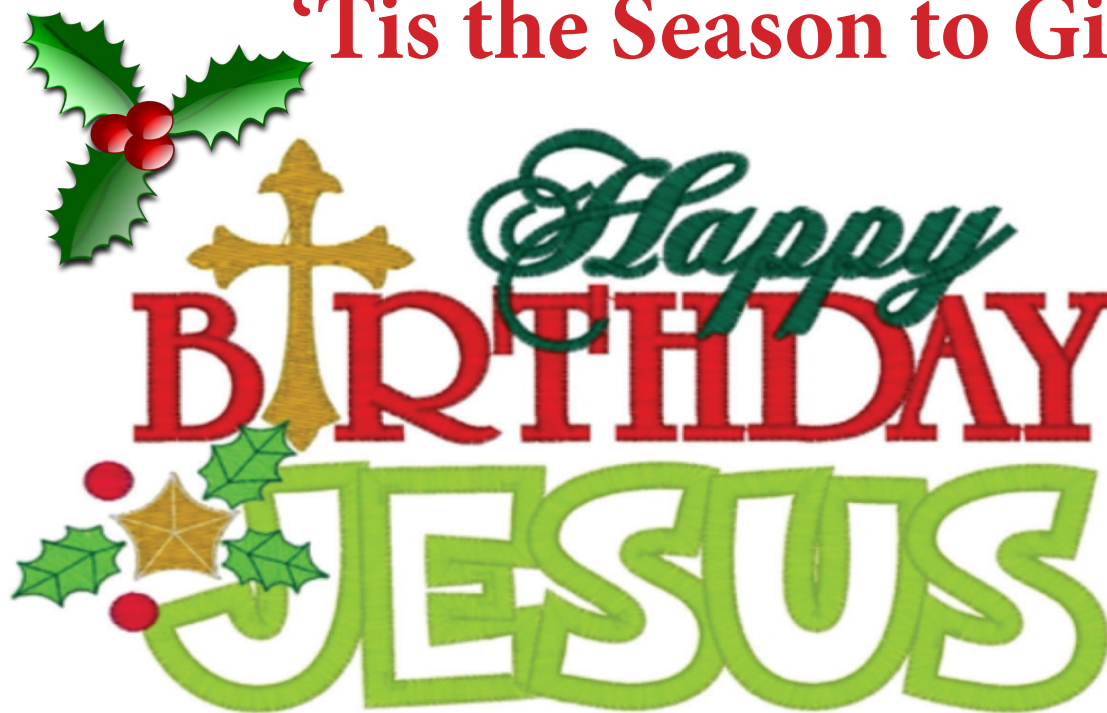
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'Tis the Season to Give!



"It's the most wonderful time of the year!"

Christmas is definitely one joyous holiday. People tend to be in the best spirits and tend to spread lots of love and lots of happiness.

We are also constantly reminded the "reason for the season," which is the birthday of Jesus Christ Our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ was by far one of the best workers to ever walk this Earth. He is the best example of someone who lived in purpose.

Whether he was healing, like the doctors of our day, preaching like the pastors of our day, or teaching like the professors of our day, His life was dedicated

to making others lives better and brighter.

All workers, entrepreneurs, executives, professionals, or those focused on their careers can learn from Jesus Christ. People didn't make it easy for Him to live out His purpose; however, this never kept Him from losing sight of His mission. What I admire so much about Jesus Christ is His missionary mind. He traveled all across the world helping those in need. I wouldn't even equate His work to modern day charity because even with charitable contributions, there is a tax write-off to benefit those giving. Jesus, however, gave without looking for any returns. This is *exactly* why He is the rea-

son for the season: because

Christmas is the season of giving. People are blessing each other with gifts and presents and aren't looking for anything out of it but to simply show their love

and care.

In my household, Santa was always described to me as a spirit who gives. To help me make logical sense of how one man could get presents to all the children in the world in one night, my dad would always tell me Santa is a spirit of giving. It made more sense that a spirit could do that as oppose to a big man in a beard coming down a chimney.

As we celebrate Christmas, be mindful to exercise the spirit of giving more than just this time of year. Look to Christ's example year round by being purposeful, joyous, and merry. Have a happy holiday, and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

(Photo cred: www.risingchurch.org)

All the best,

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The Valley Weekly

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Ah, "Positive" *does* sell!

This Friday's edition of *The Valley Weekly* is actually on Christmas Day. The staff, contributors and advertisers would like to wish each of our readers a blessed Christmas season and a happy and healthy New Year in 2016. Pharrell Williams' song "Happy" encourages us to "Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth." I love the lyrics to that song. Join me and clap along if you "feel like that's what you wanna do" even if you think it's "crazy."

We would like to thank Guest Editor David Person for his column last week. We congratulate him on his new projects for next year and celebrate the many contributions he has made in the local community, not to mention his broader scale accomplishments. Thanks, David. We hope there is more to come, so keep reading.

As we write each week, we keep reminding ourselves that positive does sell. Our readers, week after week, have demonstrated that by the growing number of requests we are getting for our website at www.valleyweeklyllc.com. This growth tells us that you are interested in the positive, inspirational and educational material. Thank you Jerome Saintjones, Georgia Valrie, Linda Burruss, Gary Whitley, Eugene Dickerson, Dave Herron, Amoi Savage, Ron Hamm and John Moore. Your ongoing support and inputs into our efforts are the reason why we are effective with this product. Your age, experience, background, interest and contributions are diverse and captivating. Without our ongoing sponsors, namely, New York Life-Ivory Reedus, Womack and Associates-Lori Womack, Albert's Flowers-Albert Morris, State Farm Insurance-Marshall England, Janet Melton-Good Samaritan Hospice, George Johnson-Oakwood University, Ben Boles-Jerry Damson Honda/Acura, Leslie Ecklund-Burritt on the Mountain, Ken Watson-Bryant Bank, Bart Williams-Early Works Family of Museums, Joc Simmons-Huntsville Tennis Club and Dr. John Stallens- Sunny Smiles Dental Center, we would not be able to publish the printed copies for our readers who do not or cannot access us online. So, please say 'thanks' to them when you see them around town.

Finally, our end of year message is from the HEART. For Christians, today is an annual celebration that commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Billions of people around the world are celebrating today, December 25th. For me, it is a celebration of love, and love originates within the heart. The birth of Jesus was an awesome celebration of God's love for us! We plan to enjoy our families, and we hope you will enjoy yours--those families we are born into, those we marry into and those we choose. It's your decision how you define it.

We will NOT publish a printed paper on January 1, 2016, because we believe that rest, reflection and relaxation are important for loving hearts. Therefore, you can follow us online. Otherwise, we will see you on January 8th.

Our blessings to each of you. Until next week ...

When you can't find a printed copy of The Valley Weekly around town, follow us on-line at www.valleyweeklyllc.com.

Dorothy

Redstone Arsenal's Home for the Holidays Gala

U.S. Space and Rocket Center
December 18, 2015



Art-N-Soul Holiday Social

The Art-N-Soul Holiday Social set a new attendance record. Organizers partnered with The Huntsville Revolution and Envy Entertainment Center to produce six (6) HUGE boxes filled with toys for the Huntsville Boys & Girls Club. The audience received a welcome visit from "SAM-MY CLAUS," and there was a good time had by all!!

Photos courtesy of ZAMZAM Sight & Sound



A&M Alum is 'Father of Environmental Justice,' Integral Force in Paris Climate Change Gathering

Alabama A&M University students and alumni have been among a group of HBCU advocates playing a key role in securing an international agreement during the recent climate conference in Paris.

Djuan Coleon, right, a member of AAMU's Class of 1995, has not only been working to establish a sustainability program at his alma mater, but he is executive director of the Atlanta-based PURE. The organization has sponsored students from AAMU and Alabama State University to train



in New Orleans for the best year under the wing of Dr. Robert Bullard, head of the public affairs program at Texas Southern University and noted internationally as "The Father of Environmental Justice." Bullard is a graduate of AAMU's Class of 1966.

Dr. Bullard, far right, also leads the The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Climate Change Consortium, which sent a delegation of 50 student leaders and faculty mentors to the United Nations Framework Climate Change Convention Conference of the Parties 21st Summit (COP21) in Paris,

France, ended December 11. The COP21 Climate Summit brought together, says Coleon, more than 125 world leaders, international organizations and civil society to discuss plans to achieve a new international agreement on the climate.

Among the distinguished group was AAMU student An-tonette Fowlkes, right, along with Dr. Elicia Moss, professor and environmental scientist. The HBCU COP21 delegation included 15 schools in states stretching from Texas to Pennsylvania: Alabama

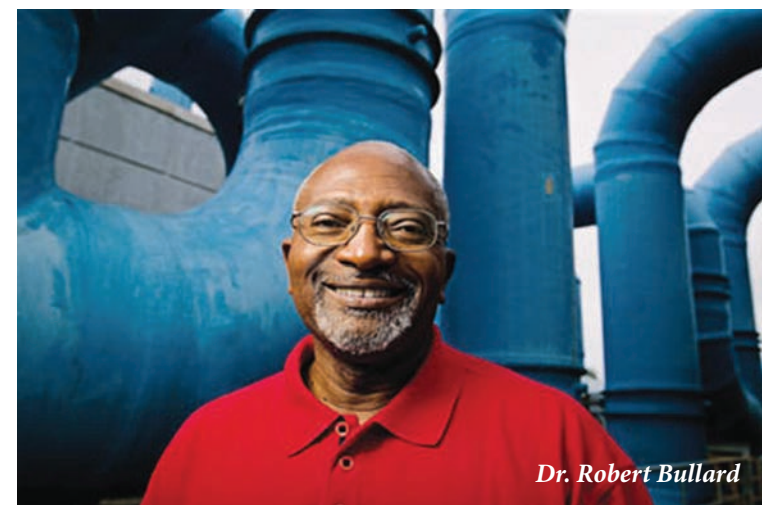
A&M University, (Huntsville, Ala.), Alabama State University, (Montgomery, Ala.), Claflin University (Orangeburg, S.C.), Dillard University (New Orleans, La.), Florida A&M University (Tallahassee, Fla.), Grambling State University (Grambling, La.), Howard University (Washington, D.C.), Huston-Tillotson University (Austin, Tex.), Lincoln University (Lincoln University, Pa.), Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.), North Carolina A&T State University (Greensboro, N.C.), Southern A&M University (Baton Rouge, La.), Spelman College (Atlanta, Ga.), Tennessee State

University (Nashville, Tenn.) and Texas Southern University (Houston, Tex.).

The HBCU Climate Change Consortium is co-facilitated by Dillard University Deep South Center for Environmental Justice



(DSCEJ) in New Orleans and the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University in Houston. The consortium was conceived to train a new generation of climate leaders and to help raise awareness about the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable and marginalized communities. The Consortium also supports capacity building and collaborations related to environmental and climate justice, community resilience, adaptation and other major climate change topics (transportation fuels, energy sources, carbon emissions, green jobs-green economy, just transition, and community economic development). It sponsors activities that provide opportunities for HBCU students to learn about climate change science, policy and advocacy and to present their research projects on topics relative to climate change issues.



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with gardenias in your hair and no sugar cane for miles,
but you can still be working on a plantation.*

- Billie Holiday

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Huntsville Happenings

Christmas 2015! Last week, Huntsville held the annual Christmas Parade in Downtown Huntsville, sponsored by local radio station, Mix 96.9. This year the parade was held at night to support its theme - Festival of Lights. Many local organizations participated in the parade as local citizens lined the downtown parade route to see all of the lights on various floats.

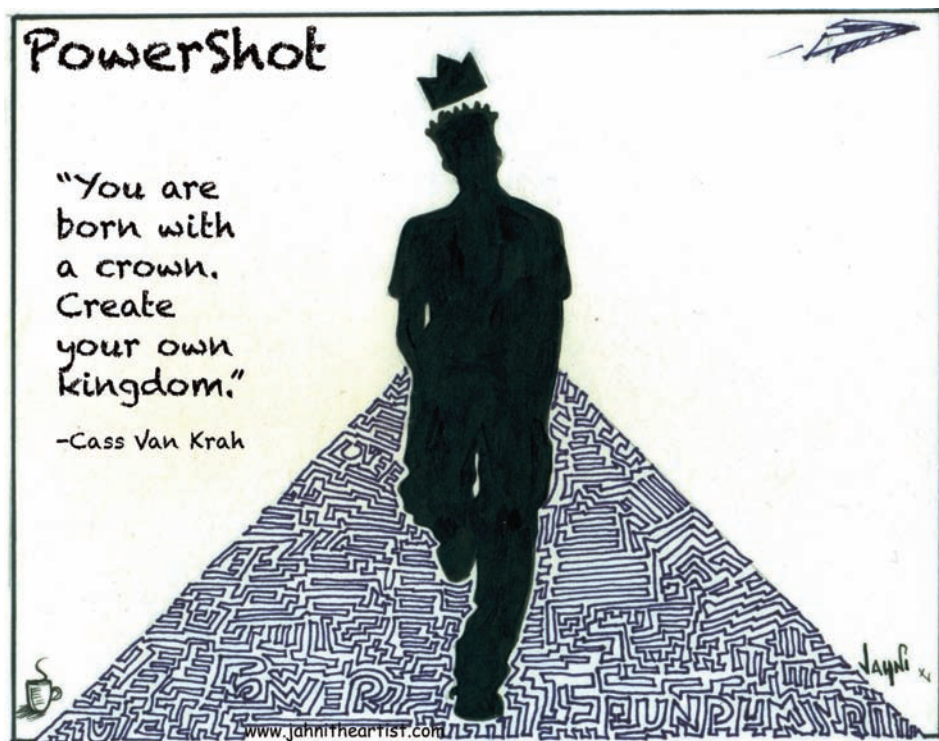
Huntsville Utilities featured their new Hybrid-powered



by Gary T. Whitley, Jr.

bucket truck covered in LED Lights with the "Misfit Toys" and elves. Huntsville Utilities' float won the 3rd place award. Also in the

parade were the members of the Delta Theta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.



Analysis of Faith

Faith is a word that gets tossed around much too easily. Everybody wants to claim faith, but few actually walk by it. To look forward to something you expect to get on a regular basis, like your biweekly paycheck, is not the type of faith that's going to create miracles. I'm talking about a faith that moves you to

move on something that would be impossible to the average person. I'm talking about stepping out onto miracle territory, taking the risk against the odds.

When you claim the light when all you see is darkness. The point where something is so rooted in your gut that you activate the Divine

Force in the universe and at that juncture, with that faith formula, waters part, mountains move, enemies bow down, and giants must fall.

That's the faith factor in action...

- John "Jahni" Moore



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On This Day - December 25

Cab Calloway - Noted entertainer, bandleader and credited as being the first jazz singer to sell a million records. He was born in Rochester, N.Y. One of his popular tunes was "Minnie the Moocher".

- BlackInTime.info



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