

# Steppin' out

*News!*

**"Reconnecting the Best of the African American Diaspora of Mobile: PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE"**

VOLUME 23  
ISSUE 10

**ARTS • CULTURE • EDUCATION • COMMUNITY**

MAY  
2024



# Loss of an ICON

**FREE • FREE • FREE • FREE • FREE • FREE • FREE • FREE**

## ABOUT STEPPIN' OUT

STEPPIN' OUT is a subsidiary of LEGACY 166 Inc., a non-profit organization with a Mission to provide Educational, Career, and Economic opportunities for Youth and the Underserved of Diverse Cultures; make available Cultural Activities for community participation; and deliver Quality of Life Skills Training through the Arts and Community Collaborations.

STEPPIN' OUT provides quality of life information to the community in each issue at no cost to the reader. Even though STEPPIN' OUT is not a "hard news" publication, the columns submitted by our contributors touch on subjects that address a wide range of community and cultural issues. Regular features include articles on health, history, entertainment, and finance. Articles on fashion, literature, and technology are some of the subjects that are occasionally featured.

STEPPIN' OUT and LEGACY 166 Inc. will continue to expand their roles in the community by offering internships and career training, and youth development and work opportunities. Volunteers are always needed with this mission.

STEPPIN' OUT Welcomes your comments and suggestions regarding this publication. For information on advertising, to comment on subject matter, or volunteer your services... PLEASE CONTACT US...

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**LIVING IN BLISS**



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**IN THE KITCHEN WITH GRANNA**



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**LOGS OF SOUL**



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**FINANCIAL TIPS**



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**TAKING MOBILE TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

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**MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER...**

Greetings Steppin' Out Readers,

Thank you for continuing to support Steppin' Out over all these Twenty-four plus years. I'd like to welcome our many new readers and would ask that you continue to spread the word that we're here and we're here for you.



We've stayed around all these years because our original goals have not changed; to report positive Black information and news in our community that other media sources ignore, and to be a inexpensive source for small businesses to advertise and promote their services to a key segment of the population.

Over the last eighteen months we have shifted significantly away from the entertainment side of our reporting and have become more Afrocentric with our articles given the contributions that our culture has made since the beginning of this country and, because of the efforts of many to return this country to the Jim Crow Era. It is incumbent for all of us to remain aware and educated on the political and economic moves that are shaping our society and our communities. We must be vigilant about the things going on in our community and who is actually orchestrating what we see. There are many false narratives beginning to manifest themselves.

We will be making a few changes next month to the paper and will be adding additional platforms to keep you better informed. Some of those changes are the results of suggestions made by you, our readers. We encourage you to continue to communicate your thoughts. We promise to treat all of your positive suggestions and criticisms with the respect they deserve.

We'd also like to acknowledge our contributors who work so hard to provide valuable content and opinion that provide opportunities to inform and to give you food for thought. We have a lot of issues, both positive and negative, going on in Mobile and we all need to be aware of the issues going on around us.

Issues like how our neighborhoods are changing and how those changes can and will affect us (Were you informed about the changes coming to your neighborhood during the planning stages or was it already a done deal)? How the political climate is changing and how citizens are expecting more from the folks that they did or did not put in office (Do those elected officials keep you informed about what's going on and are they truly representing you)? How the educational landscape needs to change and what we can do to support our educators to facilitate those changes (Is your child truly learning and have you seen positive changes at your school)? Our contributors will and have touched on a number of subjects and issues based on their fields of expertise. When they are giving opinion, it will clearly be stated as such.

Steppin' Out will make this promise to you; We will always Print only promote The Truth. If we ever print a political ad/endorsement, not that we ever have, it will be clearly shown as that and not an endorsement by Steppin' Out. We will take the same approach with businesses that promote a false or misleading agenda. The Truth Matters and you, our readers, deserve that.

Thank You for Your Support and Continue to be Blessed!

**GREG CYPRIAN**  
 Publisher/Editor  
 STEPPIN' OUT NEWS



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**The NEXT ISSUE of Steppin' Out News Will Drop...**

**JUNE 2024**



**Dr. Major Joe Womack USMCR (ret.)**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AFRICATOWN-CHESS.ORG

# AFRICATOWN/EPA/ADEM/COMMUNITY PARTNERS/EJ Roundtable Discussions

Back in 2010, I joined the ongoing efforts of protecting, preserving and promoting the ENTIRE Africatown Community as a Cultural Heritage Destination. Since that time four things have happened that has propelled Africatown into the world's spotlight:

1. The establishment of The Africatown Historic District and the placement of Africatown on The National Register of Historic Places.
2. The discovery of the slave ship Clotilda, the last known ship to bring enslaved Africans via the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade route to America.
3. The world wide popularity of the Africatown Documentary "Descendant"
4. The recent AFRICATOWN/EPA/ADEM/COMMUNITY PARTNERS EJ Roundtable Discussions conducted the weekend of May 03, 2024.

While I had nothing to do with the first 2 items mentioned above, I did have a small part in the Descendant Documentary and I am proud to say that I was part of the Local, State, Regional and National Team that met over a ten month period and planned this event. This event held the weekend of May placed Africatown at the top of America's Environmental Justice watch list. Something like this has only happened once before back in 2000 in Spartanburg, SC with The ReGenesis Project where the community, business leaders, political leaders and government officials came together and agreed upon ways to improve the environmental conditions in Spartanburg and improve the quality of life for its residents. That project still continues today because something of this magnitude takes time to develop and is not completed overnight.

There were 40 organizations or individuals invited to attend the Friday's roundtable discussions. They were: The Environmental Protection Agency, Alabama Dept. of Environmental Management, Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson, Mobile County Commissioner Merceria Ludgood, State Senator Vivian Figures, State Rep Adline Clark, Mobile City Councilman William Carroll, Africatown-CHESS, Africatown Heritage Preservation Foundation, Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition, Africatown ReDevelopment Corporation, The University of South Alabama, Mobile Bay Keepers, Alabama Coastal Foundation, University of Montevallo, Birmingham Southern College, Local Corps of Engineers, Mobile County FEMA, Mobile Environmental Representative, Mobile Resilience Officer, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Mobile Black Chamber of Commerce, Alabama Dept. of Transportation, Mobile NAACP, Greater Birmingham Alliance to stop Pollution(GASP), Southern Environmental Law Center, Mobile Center for Fair Housing, Mobile Housing Board, Alabama State Docks/Port of Mobile, Clotilda Descendants Assoc.,

Africatown Community Development Corporation, Africatown Business and Community Panel, Yorktown Baptist Church, Hopewell Baptist Church, Union Baptist Church, Pine Grove Church, Green Grove Church, Olivet Baptist Church and Mother of Mercy Catholic Church. It had been estimated that about 50 people would attend the very important Friday's roundtable discussions however, a whopping 75 people showed up to find out what they can do to improve living conditions in Africatown.

A few of the most talked about areas of concern were:

- Finding out what is causing Africatown's Historic Cemetery to collapse and how to fix it.
- A better understanding of how the different watersheds in Mobile affect flooding in Africatown.
- Establishing and funding a Community Land Bank.
- Finding out what land is polluted and how to clean it up.
- Determine who is polluting and how to put a stop to it.
- Establishing a Community Resilience Center in Africatown.
- The placement of air, water & soil monitors in Africatown.
- The construction of a Greenway throughout the entirety of Africatown.
- Ensure that the safety and sustainability of the ENTIRE Africatown Community is considered whenever business plans are made in and around The Africatown Community.

Friday's roundtable discussions and break out sessions were very lively and could have lasted into the night. As the day wore on it became more and more apparent that we needed more than one day to talk about Africatown's needs and concerns. The 3-day schedule was very well organized and planned out. However, it could have easily been a 4 or 5 day event had we known that the level of interest, concern and help would be this high. The schedule was organized in a way that those from out of town could take a tour of Africatown on Thursday so that they would be aware of the layout of the land. All day Friday was reserved for a roundtable discussion and breakout sessions about the wants and needs of Africatown. Saturday was a half day session where the Africatown residents listened to a report to them about what was talked about during Friday's sessions and allowed residents to express themselves about anything they wanted to say about Africatown.

The planners of this historic event all agreed that a follow-up event is needed. The right players were invited to attend and most of them attended with good intentions. Now is the time to capitalize on those good intentions and make something good happen for The ENTIRE Africatown Community today and in years to come.♣



**Greg Cyprian**  
PUBLISHER/EDITOR  
Steppin' Out News

## COVER STORY

# Loss of an Icon

The City of Mobile, the State of Alabama, and these United States has truly lost a legend. Major General Jerome Gary Cooper, USMC Retired, has passed on to Glory. He leaves behind a legacy of accomplishments and first that movies WILL Be made of.

Born in Lafayette, Louisiana, he finished high school in 1954 at Heart of Mary Catholic School in Mobile. He matriculated to the University of Notre Dame. His interest in Notre Dame began in 1948 when he met Archbishop Fulton Sheen of New York who came to his home with a police escort on the dirt road (Delaware St.) in his "Down the Bay" neighborhood just south of where the civic center now sits. The archbishop was accompanied by the wife of the publisher of Time, Life, and Fortune magazines. They visited because Cooper's father, Algernon, raising funds to build a hospital for Blacks, mainly because Black Women were not admitted into city hospitals and were having their babies at home. That hospital was completed in 1950 and was named Blessed Martin De Porres Hospital. Sheen heard about the effort and visited to help raise money for the project. During that visit, the archbishop offered to be a reference for young Gary to attend Notre Dame.

Cooper was admitted and set off for the school in the summer of 1954. He was able to attend through a scholarship that was endorsed by the archbishop, and a fund through the State of Alabama that provided him \$5000 that he secretly invested with Merrill Lynch. He boarded the train, the Hummingbird, and sat in the all Black "Jim Crow" car leaving Mobile for Chicago. The "colored car" as it was known, was the last car on the train. On the way, he ate the fried chicken lunch prepared by his mom, and later, headed to the dining car that had only one table for Blacks. Once seated, a purple curtain was pulled around the table to segregate him from the whites dining in the car.

Once on the campus, he saw no signs that said "colored" or "whites only" on the drinking fountains or bathroom doors that were prominently displayed in his Alabama home. He majored in Finance, and in his freshman class, he was one of three Blacks out of 1500 students. One of the three was his roommate, Mervin "Corky" Parker, who studied Organic Chemistry and spent most of his career working for Gillette. The other student was Aubrey Lewis, who was a star halfback on the football team and a hurdler who became the First Black Captain of a Notre Dame athletic team (Track). He was eventually named Athlete of the Century in New Jersey, and became the first Black FBI agent.

Gary joined the Naval ROTC program which allowed students to choose the Marine Corps for their junior and senior years. Upon his graduation in 1958, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and became the first Black to do so at Notre Dame. His daughter, Joli (1981), and her son, her son, Ashley (2011) also graduated from Notre Dame, making them the first Black family with three generations of graduates from that university. Cooper, with wife Beverly, endow the J. Gary Cooper Scholarship Fund to help Black students who need financial help to attend the University.

After graduation, he reported for duty with the 1st. Marine Brigade in Hawaii. He served on active duty for 12 years including the Marine Detachment aboard the Guided Missile Cruiser Chicago. He became the first Black officer in the Marine Corps to lead an infantry company in combat in 1967 during the Vietnam War. While serving in that war, he earned several decorations including the Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts as a result of wounds obtained during ground action, and three Vietnamese Cross of Galantry Awards, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit. He joined the Ready Reserve in 1970 and commanded the 13th Force Reconnaissance Company in Mobile, the 4th Battalion, 14th Marines, 4th Marine Division and a number of other mobilization assignments including Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C. In 1988, he was promoted to Major General and returned to active duty as Director of Personnel, Headquarters, United States Marine Corps. He retired from the Corps in 1996.

continued on Page 06, see **ICON**



## Truth , Facts & Justice

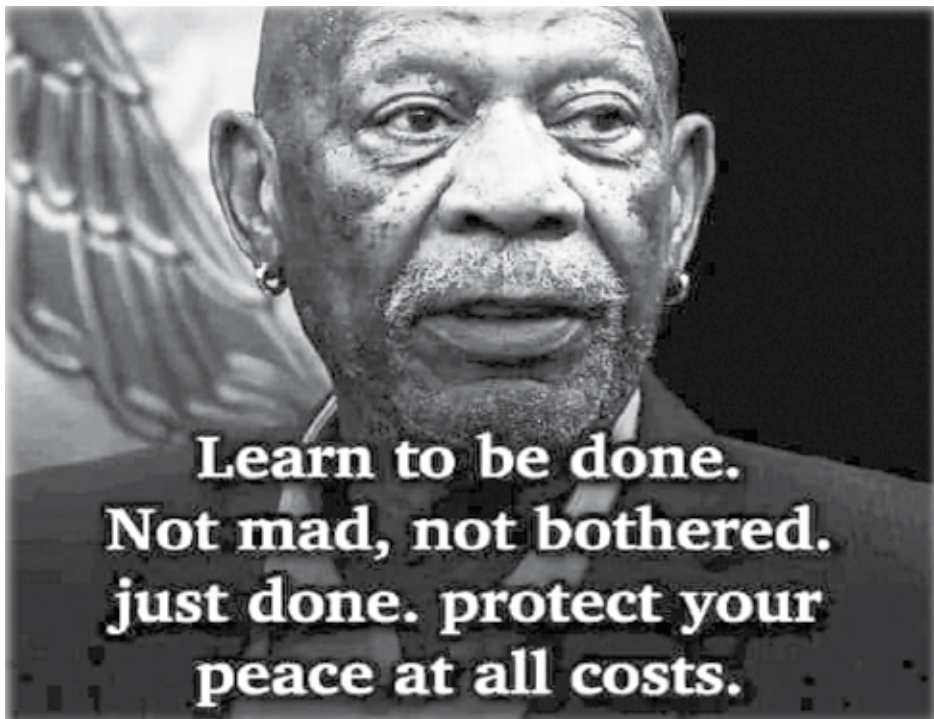
**Sabrina Mass**

RETIRED NURSE • CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZER  
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

### MUCHO CALIENT'E..

The drama in Mobile is a reality show of many characters. The Mayor Stimpson, Chief of Staff Barber, Public Safety Director Lasky and the good old Mobile City Council...oh, and let us never forget the tax payers and citizens of Mobile Alabama. So as the Plaza turns, as has been stated and now called, this from the podium from a citizen, we are in an entire soap opera of truths being exposed inciting alleged corruption, impropriety of funds, non profits attached to citizens, top police officers being asked to do illegal activities to the ousting of Chief of Police Paul Prine, whom has told the community he was targeted, bullied, and harassed for asking questions. Questions about things he found in the administration he serves that he found to be questionable. We as a city have been viewing and listening to local news, social media, and blogs, of the chaos happening even as I type this article. So far as I can hear and see, the only individual showing the public evidence of wrong doing is the Chief of Police Paul Prine. The Mayor and others that are pointing fingers at the Chief have not shown any evidence of his wrong doing, so, WE THE PEOPLE OF MOBILE ALABAMA, are still asking what did the Chief do wrong, WHAT? It is a tragic situation, the city is so divided, it is tragic. The Mobile City Council in the last three years have become a weak council, and a strong Mayor...SAD..will Mobile heal from the trauma and dramatics of this senseless corruption, greed, power and disrespect. I do not know. What I do know is that the citizens of Mobile Alabama better wake the hell up and I mean eyes wide open. The citizens of Mobile, moreover the black communities, surely need to get up, get out, and do something about it. Go to the ballot box and cast your votes in August 2025. WE THE PEOPLE, have the power and the voices to shift and shake the necessary changes needed from the City Council Seats to the Mayor's Office.

WE ARE THE POWER.. Our Black Voices are naturally loud, the question is are our Black Souls strong. Are they bold enough to take the power and orchestrate the narrative of who leads us out of the trenches of poverty and despair..the answer is YES. Where there is life, there is hope, but it takes hard work and courage. No longer will we be called the minority..We are the majority but only slightly, thanks to the change of mind by our three Black City Councilmen (without explanation). So remember to Light the Fire... the Good Fire with your vote in August 2025.♣



## Expressions: Right or Wrong!

**Lisa Johnson**

When in Doubt,  
Tell the TRUTH

—MARK TWAIN—

Some people get so good at lying until it becomes a part of them. As time goes on, they began to believe the lie themselves. What's so concerning to me is the fact they can do it with a straight face and not even flinch. Have you ever tried to catch a person in a lie, and they swear up and down that they're telling you the truth? It's hilarious to me especially when you already know the truth, but you give them an opportunity to be honest and instead they cling to the lie that much harder. Kids are the funniest. You know what they've done and yet they look at you with that confused look like what are you talking about. Kids like some adults are afraid to tell the truth for fear of getting in trouble. How many times have you heard that it's easier to tell the truth because when you lie, it makes it hard for a person to trust you? Do you agree that you can respect a person for telling the truth versus them lying to you? Although hearing the truth might hurt, I'd rather be hurt by the truth than by a lie. Some people figure that if they stick with the lie, they can avoid the consequences from telling the truth. However, sticking with the lie only makes the situation worse because now they've lost the trust of the person that they lied to. When trust is lost, sometimes the relationship is either strained or lost. It takes trust a long time to be built and just one lie to tear it down. The truth eventually comes out so just make it easier on yourself and just tell the truth (Proverbs 12:19).♣

### ICON... continued from Page 05

He was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives in 1974 and as such was one of the first Blacks since Reconstruction elected to the Legislature from South Alabama. He was reelected in 1978 but resigned to serve in the Governor's Cabinet as Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Human Resources. In 1989 he was appointed and confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, Installations and the Environment. He also assisted in the planning of Desert Storm. He was selected to serve as the United States Ambassador to Jamaica in 1994 and returned to Mobile in 1997.

General Cooper was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, 100 Black Men of Greater Mobile, the Montford Point Marine Association, the NAACP-Unit 5044, and the Marine Corps League. He was Chairman of the Board of Commonwealth National Bank, the first minority owned Bank in the State of Alabama. He was a Leader. He was a Legacy. He was and is a Legend. You will be missed Sir!!! He is survived by his wife Beverly Martin Cooper, his adult children, Patrick, Joli, and Shawn, and a host of family and friends. ♣



W @BLACKWEALTH

## Naya Ellis

### 14-YEAR-OLD TEEN CREATES INNOVATIVE WATCH THAT CAN DETECT SIGNS OF A STROKE

Teach Them Who They Are  
Before Society Teaches Them  
Who They're Not!



## DID YOU KNOW...

- In 1987, **DR. DENNIS WEATHERBY** received a US patent for his invention of liquid stain-resistant, lemon-scented dishwashing detergent known today as Cascade.
- **CHARLOTTE E. RAY** graduated from Howard Law School in February 1872, becoming not only the first female African-American lawyer in the United States but also the first practicing female lawyer in Washington, D.C.
- 1944, **HARRY S. McALPIN** was the first African American to be accredited to attend the White House press conference.
- Before he became a world-famous actor, **SAMUEL L. JACKSON** fought tirelessly to improve conditions for Black students on his college campus — even holding Martin Luther King Sr. hostage to draw attention to the issues. Administrators agreed to some much-needed changes, however, Jackson was kicked out of school.

## BLACK MASSACRES

Location	Year
Chicago	1919
Springfield	1908
East St. Louis	1917
Tulsa	1921
Vicksburg	1874
Slocum	1910
Colfax	1873
Opelousas	1868
Thibadaux	1887
Memphis	1866
Elaine	1919
Clinton	1875
Rosewood	1923
St. Bernard Parish	1868
New Orleans	1866
Wilmington	1898
Atlanta	1906
Washington	1919
Philadelphia	1985
Detroit	1943
New York	1863
Charleston	2015
Eufaula	1874
Camila	1868
Ocoee	1920

Pick a Massacre and Research it!



## Thinking Outside of the Box

**Arthur L. Mack**

FREELANCE WRITER

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## GONE BACK HOME

Fifty years ago, I graduated from Bishop State Junior (now Community) College. When I set foot on Bishop State's campus in the fall of 1972, I was a 17-year-old who while still "wet behind the ears," was dealing with enough issues to last three lifetimes.

High school was tough for me, not as much academically as it was socially, for I had to deal with a lot of students (and sometimes teachers) giving me a hard time because I either didn't wear the coolest clothes, wasn't popular with the ladies, didn't think the way they did, or a combination of all three. You could say I was somewhat of an outcast.

It was little wonder that when I graduated from high school... I wanted to get the hell out of Mobile and go out of town to school. I had my heart set on going to Alabama State. Don't ask me why — the thrill of going out of town to school really intrigued me. After all, I was bounced around all over the city because of integration; I wound up going to three schools in four years (Central, Murphy, and Davidson).

In a way, that was good, because I got a chance to see how other people lived. On the other hand, it was bad for several reasons. First, because of court-mandated integration, my peers and I didn't get the opportunity to put down roots at one school. Second, there was all the violence resulting from integration. Third, and perhaps more damning, some of the B.S. I dealt with during my freshman and sophomore high schools followed me, courtesy of individuals who kept a king-size mess going on. And fourth, by the time I graduated, it was tough trying to relate to a particular school because I and others were bounced around from place to place.

Against this backdrop, I figured it was time for me to put all of that in the rear-view mirror and go out of town to school. I applied for Alabama State, and was accepted. That was a great time for me; at least it should have been a great time. I was so happy I was accepted I could've done cartwheels. That is, until certain family members, particularly a favorite aunt, begged and pleaded with me to stay at home and attend Bishop State. I protested big time, because being accepted to Alabama State was an opportunity to spread my wings, so to speak.

Why do I need to go to Bishop State?" I asked my aunt. "I've been wanting to go to Alabama State for the longest!"

"Well, it's not as expensive," she said. "You'll have a chance to get a good education right here at home."

"Yeah, right," I thought, not convinced of her reasoning. To this day, since I was living with my grandparents at the time, she wanted me to hang close in case something happened to either one of them. I was disappointed that my dreams of going to Alabama State was shattered like glass, but to maintain peace in the family, I gave up on those dreams and enrolled at Bishop.

I'm not going to lie — there were issues I had to deal with while I was there. Time nor space will permit me to go into detail. But when my grandfather passed away from brain cancer near the end of my freshman year, it left me and my grandmother, so I stuck it out and graduated.

With very few options available, I transferred to the University of South Alabama and graduated from there as well. After working for the Mobile Beacon for a few months, I enlisted in the Navy. Four years later, I was back home, trying to find a suitable career.

Looking back on those years, I find myself doing a lot of wondering. What if I had stuck to my plans to attend Alabama State? Would I have been able to stay the whole four years after the death of my grandfather? Would I had met my wife? Who knows what would've happened?

But now, by the time this is published, I will be with other members of the Class of '74, being honored and celebrated during Commencement ceremonies. A lot of changes have taken place at Bishop State, and I have to wonder how I'm going to feel. In a way, it'll feel like a homecoming of sorts, so I'll just have to put past disappointments behind me and embrace the moment. ♣





## All Things Natural

**Tanene Jackson**

TRICHOLOGIST;  
OWNER/OPERATOR of LOCS OF SOUL, LLC



## HERBAL REMEDIES

Next to water, plants are the lifeline to everything on earth. In the last two articles, I introduced to you Rosemary and Fenugreek. Herbs, used for culinary are also used as hair, circulation, and beauty solutions. Herbal remedies can be solutions to everyday problems. Herbs can be used for skin, hair, illnesses, aromatherapy, aesthetics, crafts, etc. Herbs are easy to find, buy, and grow. Most herbs can be taken (used) via tincture, tea, diffuser, oil, or capsule. Either way you look at it, it's a win.

Here are a few herbs with their benefits that will invigorate, stimulate, or sooth and calm your everyday state of mind.

- **LAVENDER....** A calming scent that helps enhance your sleep, relieves anxiety and depression, relieves headaches, aids in hair loss, assists with chemotherapy side effects, moodiness, skin issues (eczema/dry skin) and acne.
- **PEPPERMINT....** Usually taken as tea, peppermint oil comes in capsule and liquid as well. Peppermint can be used to soothe upset stomachs in children. It can ease side effects of IBS (irritable bowel syndrome). This potent herb can lessen the pain of migraine/headaches. It contains antimicrobial properties that help fight colds and infected mucus membrane within the sinus. Peppermint contains menthol which helps with breathing. Other benefits include boost energy, fights foodborne bacteria, assist with weight loss, and ease menstrual cramping.
- **SAGE....** An herb known for use in culinary recipes that is loaded with antioxidants. It is also good for reduction of blood sugar levels, reduce menopause symptoms, supports memory and brain health, lowers LDL "bad" cholesterol, fights cancer, and encouraging hair new growth by improving circulation for scalp health.
- **GINGER....** A spice that is also considered "fire" food in Chinese medicine, aids in digestion, and stimulates blood circulation. Other examples of fire foods - chili pepper and other hot peppers, sour fruit, pungent onions and garlic, cayenne, cloves, cumin, and cinnamon.

So next time you're in your garden or shopping, remember health is at your fingertips.

NOTE: This article is for informational purposes only. Please consult a medical and/or mental health professional for assessment(s) or if taking any medications. ❀

## Connect to Success!

**Nathaniel Patterson**

Named to LinkedIn LeadersHum: "Top 200 Biggest Voices in Leadership to Watch For" in 2022 & 2023, Coach, Columnist, Facilitator, Public Speaker and Trainer  
CONNECT on LinkedIn -or- (727) 485.3980



## Quality of Life and Alabama Republican Party Stances

Often you will hear Republican Governors have a Press Conference in which their announcements just do not make sense. In their words they will say, I/We/The State has decided. But the truth is that it is an orchestrated campaign led by the national Republican Party. They are espousing a policy designed to hurt a democratic president, to make the economy worse (so the Democrats will look bad for elections) and/or their anti-welfare policy stand. These policies do not take in consideration the conditions and needs of the state.

In February 2024 Governor Ivey representative said they were rejecting participation in a federal program that would issue EBT cards of forty plus dollars per month for low-income families over the summer months. According to Alabama Governor's office the problem was timing and the availability of (state) funding. Seventeen Republican States have taken similar stances denying a potential 8 million children additional food assistance over the summer months. Alabama.com reported, "Alabama families will miss out on \$65.4 million in federal aid designed to help feed children over the summer break (February 16, 2024)

This is nothing new for Alabama. Do you remember the Republicans resistance to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Obamacare Plan)? The Supreme Court in June 2012 upheld the bulk of Obamacare, but said that the states could opt of the Medicaid Expansion. This provision sought to cover most people under the age of 65, who did not have medical coverage. Ten years after implementation Alabama still stands on opting out of the program, one of ten states nationwide. According to a report by KFF, Status of State Medicaid Expansion Decisions Tracker (February 26, 2024), approximately 174,000 people, disproportionately People of Color and poor are negatively impacted.

Alabama has a history of placing at or near the bottom in quality of life listings. It is because of the lack of empathy and playing politics. I wonder how they would vote if these entitled and affluent elected officials would be impacted by the following of party stances besides looking out for their constituents?

Let your voices be heard!

**As Always... LET'S BE GREATER!❀**

# Literary Corner...

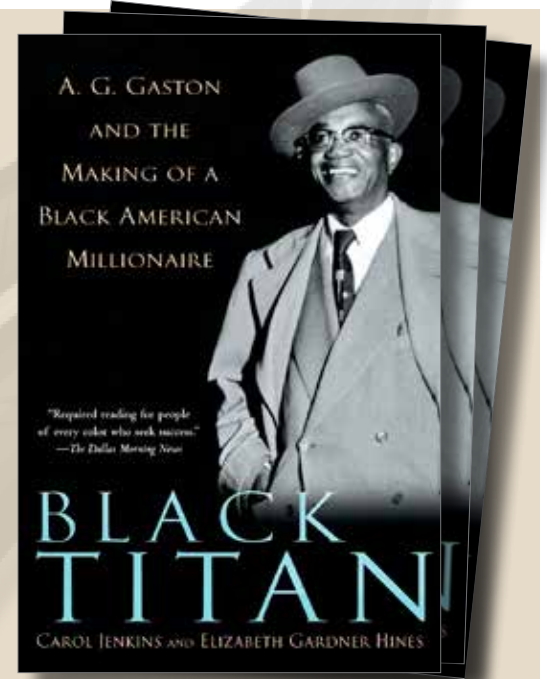


## Carol Jenkins and Elizabeth Gardner Hines

### **BLACK TITAN: A.G. Gaston and The Making of a Black American Millionaire**

The grandson of slaves, born into poverty in 1892 in the deep south, A.G. Gaston died more than a century later with a fortune worth well over \$130 million and a business empire spanning communications, real estate, and insurance. Gaston was a historic figure whose wealth and influence bore comparison to J.P.

Morgan and Andrew Carnegie. His story is told by his niece and grandniece, the award winning television journalist Carol Jenkins and her daughter Elizabeth Gardner Hines. ❖

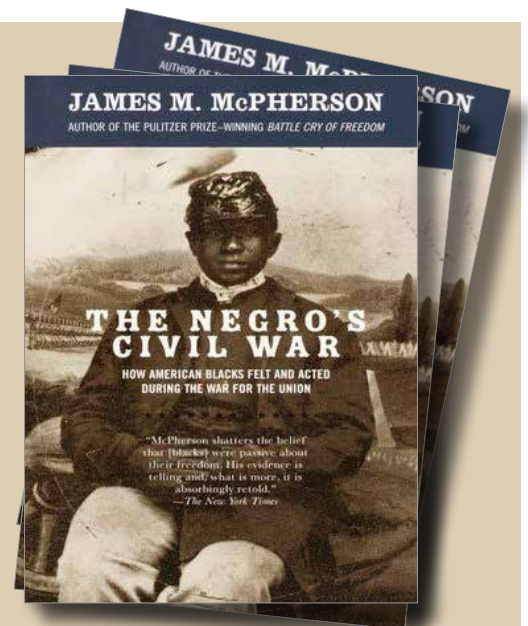


## James M. McPherson

### **THE NEGRO'S CIVIL WAR: How American Negroes Felt and Acted During the War For the Union**

James M. McPherson is a Professor of History at Princeton University and America's leading historian of the Civil War. He won the Pulitzer Prize for Battle Cry of Freedom, which was a New York Times bestseller and he won the Lincoln Prize for his book For Cause and Comrades.

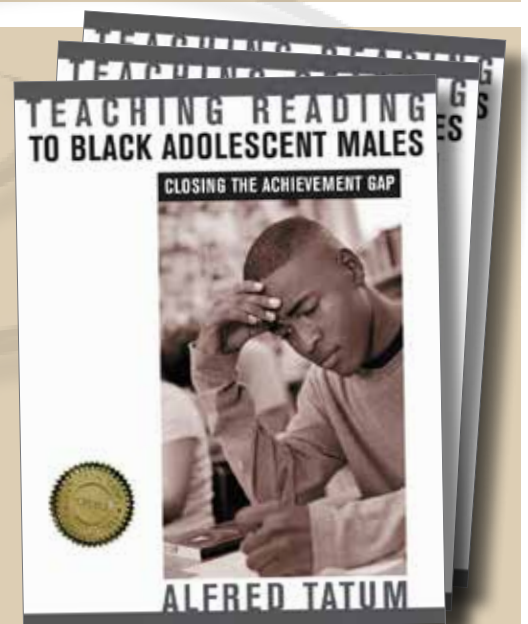
This book narrates the experience of Black former slaves and soldiers, preachers, visionaries, doctors, intellectuals and common people during the Civil War. Drawing on contemporary journalism, speeches, books and letters, and through the words of these extraordinary participants, both northern and southern, McPherson captures African-American responses to emancipation, the shifting attitudes toward Lincoln and the life of Black soldiers in the Union Army. ❖



## Alfred Tatum

### **TEACHING READING TO BLACK ADOLESCENT MALES Closing The Achievement Gap**

The racial achievement gap in literacy is one of the most difficult issues in education today, and nowhere does it manifest itself more perniciously than in the case of Black adolescent males. Approaching the problem from the inside, author Alfred Tatum brings together his various experiences as a Black male student, middle school teacher working with struggling Black male readers, reading specialist in an urban elementary school, and staff developer in classrooms across the nation. His book addresses the adolescent shift Black males face and the societal experiences unique to them that can hinder academic progress. With this book, the author bridges the connection among theory, instruction, and professional development to create a roadmap for better literacy achievement. ❖





## Black American Politics

**JOSEPH MITCHELL PHD**

Citizen Musician & Politician



# The NEXT to the Last GREAT ACT of Defiance

The most potent social and political force among humans is an organized majority. A better organized minority can overcome a lesser organized majority. In the Alabama House of Representatives, of 105 members, the majority is composed of about 78 White Republicans. Among the numerical minority members there are 26 Black members. The Republican majority clearly controls the Alabama House of Representatives. Its leadership controls its members through intimidation and fear they will vote in lockstep. The majority vote wins every time. Every SINGULAR member - Black or White; Republican or Democrat; is trapped by the legislative "clock." The Alabama State Legislature has only so many days in which to complete its business. Major legislation, including bills of appropriation, are all still locked into this Legislative clock. The legislative leadership, i.e., the Republican-lead majority wants things to move as fast as possible. This way "select" and targeted legislation is passed into law. Please do not believe that targeted legislation is aimed at hurting Black people in Alabama. It IS AIMED AT KEEPING POWER, WEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE MATTERS IN THE CONTROL OF SOME few WHITE PEOPLE. Time is money! The longer it takes to get a bill passed that will fund a highway the longer those who benefit from the highway will not receive monetary benefits. The numerical Minority in the Alabama House, does not have the votes to stop the appropriation to build that highway. They do, however, have tactics found in parliamentary procedures to slow down the funding process. Slowing things down hurts singular numerical majority members. The numerical minority may gain leverage to provoke compromises and negotiations on things that the numerical Minority wants. The Mobile County Legislative Delegation got a bill passed in the Senate and passed in the House. It was a Constitutional Amendment (CA) for Prichard. it would have allowed a limited type of gambling ONLY IN PRICHARD.. A single VOTE OF "NO" on this piece of LOCAL LEGISLATION required that the bill appear as a referendum on a statewide ballot. The referendum for Prichard failed on the statewide ballot. The "NO" vote was cast by a single member not from the Mobile Delegation. The numerical Minority could extort compromise and negotiation from the numerical majority by locking up EVERY CA. Singular members of the House and Senate wanting that CA would have to just slow down and wait.

Of course his process is double-edged sword but that's the nature of political extortion.♣



## Moments in Time

**Paulette Horton**



# Mt. Zion Baptist Church

During the early years of Bishop State Community College, students could remember visiting Mount Zion Baptist Church. Many of the student meetings were held in this church because Bishop State didn't have its own auditorium.

All the students gathered one day a week and walked around the corner to Mt. Zion Baptist Church. This church was organized in the Davis Avenue area around 1888 by Rev. John H. Williams.

Every social gathering, including those with guest speakers, along with graduations were held at this church. Bishop State used Mount Zion's facility until the early 1970s, when the Fredrika Evans Auditorium was built on campus.♣



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CELEBRATION**

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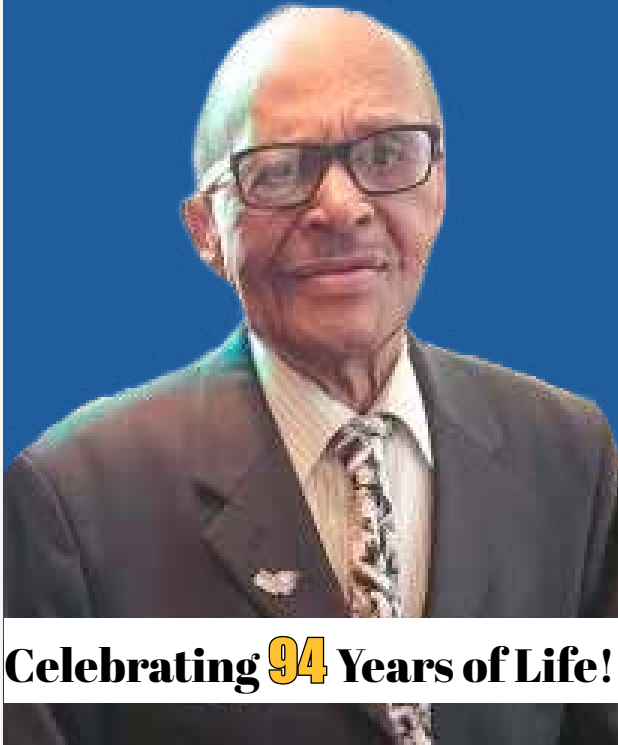
Ben May Main Library | 701 Government Street  
For more information, please call 251-340-1507 or email  
mainyou@mplonline.org

# Hats Off

**Congratulations!**  
**Chandra Brown**  
Received FBI Mobile  
2023 Director's  
Community Leadership  
Award



**Happy Birthday**  
**Deacon Canova**  
**Mitchell Jr.**



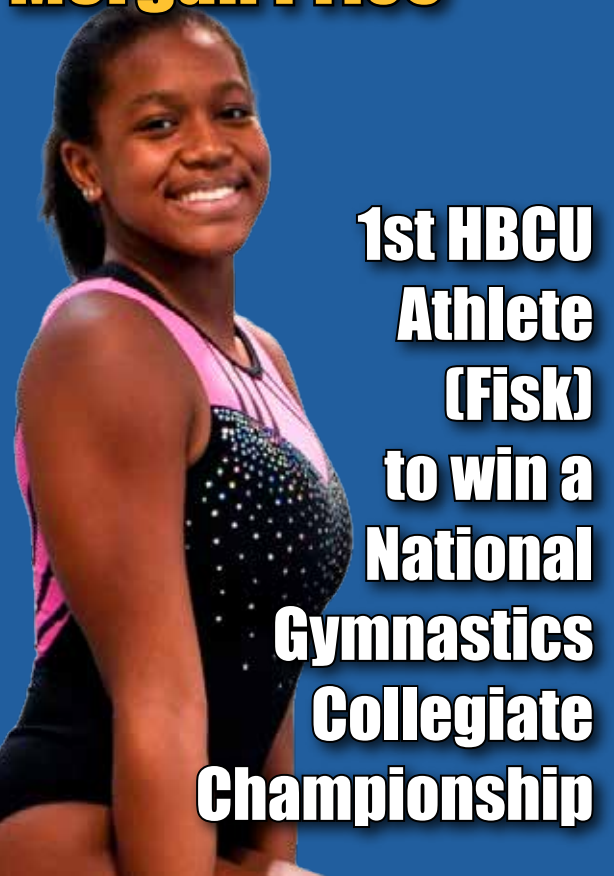
Celebrating **94** Years of Life!

**Congratulations!**  
**Shanita L. Pettaway**  
**JD, PhD**



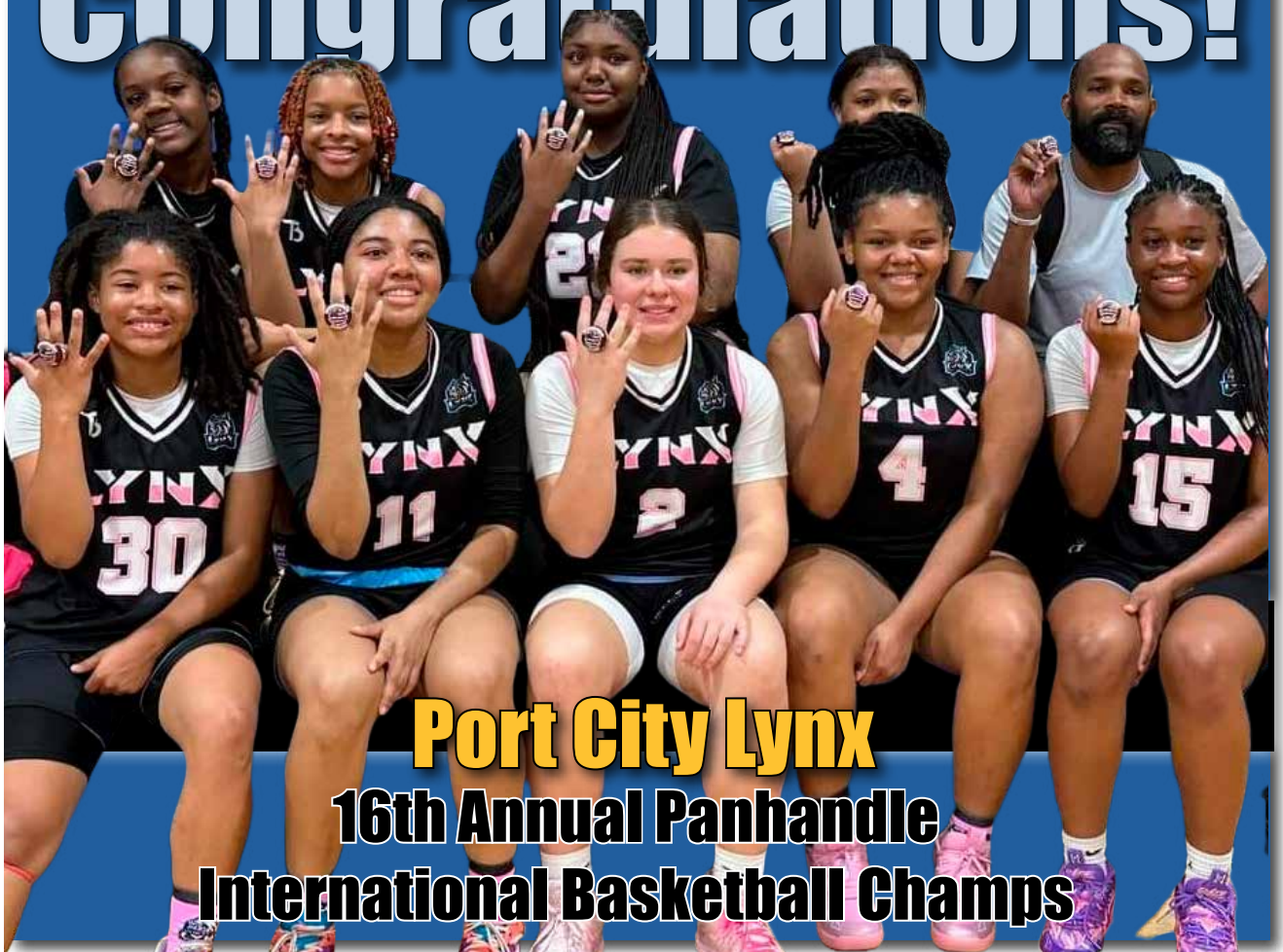
Named 2023-2024  
recipient of the  
Dr. Glenn Sabastian  
Faculty Member  
of the Year

**Congratulations!**  
**Morgan Price**



1st HBCU  
Athlete  
(Fisk)  
to win a  
National  
Gymnastics  
Collegiate  
Championship

**Congratulations!**



**Port City Lynx**  
16th Annual Panhandle  
International Basketball Champs

# Hats Off

**Congratulations!**

**Tiffany Barnes**

Received the Certified Public Finance Officers Program Scholarship



**Congratulations!**

**Dr. Arlene Jones**

Honorary Doctorate in Humanitarianism  
Global International Alliance



**HAPPY 6TH WEDDING Anniversary!**

**Jerry & Relya Gill  
McMILLIAN**



**Congratulations!**

**Rihanna Hunter**

Received 2024 Learning Leading Award



**Congratulations!**

**Zachary Cranford**

**MARCH FIREFIGHTER of the Month**



**Congratulations!**

**Diamond Wright**





**Greg Cyprian**  
PUBLISHER/EDITOR  
Steppin' Out News

# Magic City LETDOWN

Do you go to the Magic City Classic each year? A lot of Mobilians associated with Alabama A&M, Alabama State, fans of HBCU Football, and folks looking to party on that "magical" weekend, make that trip to Birmingham in late October religiously. Well, you better pack more bucks in you park in the designated Tailgate areas.

The Birmingham Parks and Recreation Board announced that the prices for those Tailgate spots will now cost \$400, as compared to the \$140 that was previously charged for the 4-day spot. The Board declared that this jump in price was designed to "improve the "fan experience "at Legion Field.

The last time the stadium received improvements was 2022 before the World Games, and before that in 1996 for the Olympics. The Board said the revenue will be used to improve the sound quality for fans in the stadium, upgrade seating, renovate restrooms, and make the ingress and egress process easier.

So let me say this...as someone who worked in event and facility management for over 42 years. I understand the increase in "certain" fees to better the fan experience, and tailgate fees is one of them. But, lets be honest, the fees collected aren't going to make a dent in the reasons given for the fee increase. Those things cost millions.

And just like the new venue proposal for our new civic center, which we will get into in our June edition, all of the facts and circumstances with cost and fees need to be shared with we, the taxpayers, the things that folks not involved in the business don't think about. I'm more than sure the reason for the increase is associated with and due to security, clean-up, and management of that area...nothing more. A \$260 increase per spot will not pay for the improvements that the Board listed. Just tell us the truth.

With that said, going forward, if you as a fan want the Tailgate privilege, you'll have to dig a little deeper. And when you go into the game or pull away after the experience, recognize that those extra dollars you spent was used to keep you safer, protect your property, and to pick up that ankle deep trash that some of your fellow tailgaters decided to leave on the ground instead of in the trashcans. That's just the way the business works!♣





## Financial Tips Gwedolyn Hall



During this time of the year, we direct our attention to our younger readers. Congratulations to Graduating Seniors as you embark upon a new phase in your life. You have made a great accomplishment so continue to be productive and successful! Just as you have planned to finish high school, get ready for college, work, a military career or whatever your next venture will entail, you need to be prepared to take on financial responsibilities. As you leave the protective care of your parents there are a few financial tips that may assist your decision making.

### 1. Some different accounts that are available to you through financial institutions.

- a. Checking accounts – deposit money, withdraw money, write checks (debit cards).
- b. Savings accounts – deposit money to save for specific goals and emergencies.
- c. Certificates of deposit – larger deposits for specific period.

### 2. Establish a Budget

- a. Determine income and expenses.
- b. Keep track of your income and expenses. It is advisable to record them.
- c. Watch excessive spending and plan for those items and events you may want to do.
- d. If you find yourself needing more income, look at ways of increasing income (part time job).
- e. If you have a checking account monitor it often to assure you stay on track.
- f. Set aside a reasonable amount for saving with any excess you may have.
- g. Grow your savings with any unexpected gifts.

### 3. Credit

- a. Always protect your credit as it will impact your financial future.
- b. Reject credit cards offered to you via mail, phone calls, events on campus, etc. If you need a credit card discuss it with your parents or a responsible adult to assist you.
- c. Keep a watch on your credit by viewing your credit report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)
- d. Cosigning a loan for someone else can negatively affect your credit.

This is an exciting time in your life with new adventures ahead of you. Good financial decisions are important as it is easy to get misled. Remember to ask questions when you are unsure about a financial decision. Being a responsible adult means taking care of your obligations. Make purchases that you can afford and pay your bills. Your decisions now will determine your future financial stability.

**CONGRATULATIONS 2024 GRADUATES!!♣**



## Taking Mobile to the Next Level Memphis Vaughan Jr.

EDITOR OF LITERARY WEBSITE... [TimBookTu.com](http://TimBookTu.com)  
Feedback can be sent to: [mempv57@gmail.com](mailto:mempv57@gmail.com)



# We MUST EXERCISE Our RIGHT to VOTE!

VOTING IS IMPORTANT! There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. I don't care if you don't like the candidates running for office, there is no excuse not to go exercise your right to vote. There is no perfect candidate anyway. Yes, you may get weary from endless political news, rhetoric, lies and misinformation, but we still must vote.

Many will become complacent and frustrated with the process and just give up. But that is what they want you to do. So, non-voters sit on their butts still expecting something to miraculous to happen and the "powers that be" get exactly what they want. They get to put the type of people in office that will slowly take away our voting rights, civil rights, constitutional rights, and any other beneficial laws. Eventually, we end up with our government being led by dictators. You can best believe the MAGA crowd is going to vote. Failure to engage and vote will lead our community into further disarray. So, let's break down the actual act of voting. Is it really that hard? Yes, you have to figure out where your voting place is. Yes, you have to decide which candidate you will vote for.

Yes, you have to take some time from your busy schedule to go do it. Yes, it will require some effort but so does the other things in life that you like to do. As a black American, did it require an effort for those who came before me to fight and die for the opportunity to vote? Yes, it took a monumental effort. And the least you and I can do is exercise that right to vote.

So, let's not waste the opportunity to participate in one of the key principles that this country was built on. Voting is our hard-fought right. If you don't vote, DON'T COMPLAIN!♣



## Creole History Highlights

**Tracy Neely**

PRESIDENT: MOBILE CREOLE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

### THE CHASTANG CHRONICLES: Margaret Chastang (1817-1906)

The Chastangs, like many families, have a few well-used, given names. Two of these are Edward and Margaret. Last month we delved into the life of Edward Chastang, son of Dr. John. This month, we look at Edward's daughter, Margaret Chastang.

Margaret was born August 10, 1817, and baptized on November 10th of that same year. 1817 was also the year that Alabama became a territory, separate from Mississippi. It was a year of hope as 1816 had been a near apocalyptic year for the Northern Hemisphere. 1816 was the year without a summer, following multiple eruptions (the largest volcanic eruption in the last 10,000 years) of Mount Tambora in 1815, in present day Indonesia. Spewing ash which covered hundreds of surrounding square miles, caused the Northern Hemisphere to cool and many crops to fail across Europe and North America.

Margaret was his third child and third daughter. And this may be why her name was Margaret. French naming rules dictate that all infants have a saint name. This rule has only been relaxed in recent years by the French government. But in the early 19th century, when French occupation was still in the memory of living elders, those with French Catholic ancestry would have strictly heeded this rule. There were only a few saints named Margaret at the time, the most well-known being Saint Margaret of Scotland. But there was also Saint Margaret of Cortona, patron saint of third children, and possibly Margaret Chastang's namesake.

She was the only one of Edward and Celeste's children to live into the twentieth century and the only one to not marry the fathers of her children. Her children, Edward, Malvina, and Emilia have no father mentioned in their baptismal records. Malvina and Emilia carried the name Donelson[sic] as adults, despite the only surname on their baptismal records being Chastang. Margaret used the name Chastang all her life and no marriage record has surfaced.

Margaret raised her three children, living at home with her mother. She looked on as her mother's estate dwindled with the advent of the Civil War--their cash money was confederate and worthless after the war. Celeste died in 1863 and the family's privilege slowly eroded into solidly second class. Her son, Edward, married Mary D. Hutchinson. In the tradition, they named two of their five children, Edward and Margaret. The others being Benjamin, Sylvester, and Gertrude. Her daughter, Malvina, married Sosthène Rouville and died during the birth of her second child in 1860. Emilia never married or had children.

Margaret continued to live with her siblings and family until her death at Cottage Hill on July 4, 1906. She is buried in Magnolia Cemetery (Square 8, Lot 10) in the family plot, purchased by her parents, with sixteen other family members. It is as if she opened and closed a chapter in Mobile, Alabama history. Her passing was the loss of a tether to our rich past. Experiences and events were no longer shared as memories, only retold as history. Three days after Margaret's death, in the Down the Bay Community, a new modern chapter of Mobile history would begin, faceted with events and excitement Margaret would never have imagined. A young couple, John and Lula, welcomed their son, Leroy into the world. The world would call him Satchel Paige.♣



## MCHD Weekend "DRIVE THRU" RABIES CLINICS



**MAY 2024**

**05/04 • 10:00AM to NOON**

**LITTLE FLOWER CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

2104 Government Street (Mobile)

**05/11 • 10:00AM TO NOON**

**MOBILE COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER**

7665 Howell's Ferry Road (Mobile)

**05/11 • 1:00PM TO 3:00PM**

**PET SUPPLIES PLUS**

804 Hillcrest Road (Mobile)

**05/18 • 1:00PM TO 3:00PM**

**ST ELMO FEED & SEED STORE**

9001 US Highway 90 W. (Mobile)

**05/25 • 9AM TO NOON**

**PRICHARD ANIMAL SHELTER**

2404 Rebel Road

The clinic will be in the Prichard Municipal Stadium parking lot)

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# PORTRAITS in BLACK

## Marie Laveau 1801-1881

Known as the Voodoo Queen of New Orleans, she was a Creole and a Voodoo Priestess, a herbalist, and a mid-wife. She was a devout Catholic and attended services at New Orleans' St. Louis Cathedral. She was a free woman of Color and nursed the sick through several outbreaks of Yellow Fever.

She practiced her Voodoo in Congo Square, a site today that host concerts and other cultural activities. She constantly provided for those in need including the prison population that was sentenced to death. There were rumors that she would provide poisons or other substances before they met their fate at the gallows but this was never proven.

On her death, she was buried in New Orleans' St. Louis Cemetary. There are many X's marked on her tomb. The rumor was started decades ago that if people wanted the Voodoo Priestess to grant them a wish, they had to draw an X on her tomb, turn around three times, knock on the tomb, yell out their wish, and if it was granted, come back, circle their X, and leave her an offering. The city has now restricted access to her tomb.

There are still descendants of Marie Laveau who have made it their Mission to educate the public on this New Orleans Legend.





## Black Lives Matter

**Tommy Green**

FACEBOOK BLOGGER

FORMER EDITOR FOR MOBILE BEACON

# Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe & Sustainable

On May 04, 2024, Africatown held a forum on Environmental Justice, and the attendees included Ray Richardson, Mobile Environmental Manager; Joe Womack, President, CHES; Sonja Favors, ADEM; (4) Anderson Flen, Africatown Heritage Preservation Foundation; Nato Kamjuma, EPA; and Ramsey Sprague, NAACP & MEJAC.

Also, Sen. Vivian Figures attended the function, but Mayor Sandy Stimpson and Councilor William Carroll showed their concern by not attending at all. I want to thank Sen. Figures for attending and speaking passionately about the needs of Africatown. The following is the contact information is for the following politicians I mentioned...

Vivian Figures: [vivian.figures@alsenate.gov](mailto:vivian.figures@alsenate.gov) • (334) 261-0871  
Sandy Stimpson: [mayorstimpson@cityofmobile.org](mailto:mayorstimpson@cityofmobile.org) • (251) 208-7395  
William Carroll: [council2@cityofmobile.org](mailto:council2@cityofmobile.org) • (251) 208-7441

The citizens that have a connection with Africatown were allowed to speak, and someone mentioned that Spartanburg, SC had similar issues that Africatown is facing. I googled that city and received the information below. I will wager that every city with a large Black population is dealing with white racism.

On May 21, 2000, Andrew Gutlowsk, American History wrote, "The Evolution of Environmental (In) Justice in Spartanburg 1900–2000. On that same date, Harold Mitchell, the founder of ReGenesis, an Environmental Justice (EJ) organization headquartered in Spartanburg, welcomed a delegation of South African EJ activists to the city's south side. The leader of the delegation, Thabo Madihlaba, a member of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, was visiting to discuss strategies for confronting international polluters and addressing environmental inequality across national boundaries. He saw ReGenesis

as an invaluable model for community revitalization. Since 1994, Mitchell had been crusading to convince South Carolina state officials to investigate several toxic waste sites in his neighborhood, reaching out to activists across the nation for support and filing lawsuits against local industries.

Standing along Sims Chapel Road, which runs adjacent to two Superfund sites, Mitchell described to the delegation how decades of unrestrained growth, industrial pollution, and unequal waste management practices had transformed his neighborhood — Arkwright — into a toxic community.

"Neighborhoods can become what we call environmental or toxic ghettos," he warned, pointing to cascades of decaying steel drums, junk cars, and concrete slabs that littered the former city dump — a mere fifty feet from his home. "Since January of this year," he stated, "twenty four people have died in this community. We have had a funeral every week, some weeks two funerals" highlighting the public health toll that inequality exacted on his neighbors and family.

Although brief, Mitchell's retelling of the neighborhood's decline offered the delegation a local, distinctly southern version of a much larger, global story: How environmental hazards become disproportionately concentrated in communities of color. The delegation's visit was a testament to ReGenesis's success as an experiment in environmental justice — one that Mitchell hoped could be replicated far beyond Spartanburg County.

Brothers and sisters, it is our responsibility to organize and challenge racism when it challenges our survival. Let's fight for justice in Africatown.

**"BLACK LIVE MATTER!" ❖**

## Living In Bliss

Debra Braggs

VETERAN FASHION COLUMNIST  
AND LIFESTYLE REPORTER



## Just breathe

How many times in stressful situations have you been told to “just breathe?” In frustrating, frightening or confusing situations, it is a natural reaction for the body to tense up. If you’re getting agitated and upset and notice that your breathing is shallow, your shoulders are tense and your tummy is doing flip-flops. You’ve activated your SNS - the sympathetic nervous system. It determines how you will respond to a situation.

In my quest for more blissful living, I’ve learned that any time we can control a situation rather than let the situation control us, the less detrimental to our health the incident will be. Whether you’re at work, dealing with your kids or in a stressful; social situation, you might just want to turn that SNS off. And the good news is that YOU CAN. With a little mindfulness and breathing, you can activate your (PNS) parasympathetic nervous system and place your body in a state of calm.

Since last month was National Stress Awareness Month, I decided to experiment with some techniques that most doctors say anyone can do, anywhere. First lets talk about “breath work.” You may have heard the term a lot in recent months as it is one of the self care tools that seem to be a hot topic today. After a little research, it seems that a few breathing exercises a day can do us all a little good and even have long lasting health benefits. Breath work is defined as New Age term for various breathing practices in which the conscious control of breathing is said to influence a person's mental, emotional, or physical state.

According to several Journals of Medicine, breath work can reduce stress and aid in stress-related medical illnesses, anxiety, depression, and substance abuse; decrease hypertension in adults, improve the quality of life in people with cardiovascular disease and cancer, and even improve your immune system’s response to certain illness. So how does it work? Here’s a simple technique and any beginner can try, even if you’re in the shopping center parking lot and someone has hit a nerve.

Start by moving your breath to your belly- Place a hand on your belly and practice pushing it in and out. Feel your abdomen filling and emptying as you inhale and exhale deeply. According to Everyday Health.com, beginners should try this for one minute. Concentrate just on your breathing, not on the issue at hand. At its most basic level, this breath work will flood the brain with oxygen and removes larger amounts of carbon dioxide, which is basically what a sigh of relief does. After a minute of focusing on your breath, your frustrating should calm and you can rationally deal with your situation.

One other technique I’d like to share is called “mindfulness.”  
TRY THIS TWO-MINUTE BREATHING EXERCISE:

Begin by taking a moment to settle in a comfortable position. You can close your eyes or look down to limit visual distractions. Relax. See if you can notice any areas of physical tightness or tension. That might mean dropping your shoulders, wiggling your fingers, loosening your jaw, softening the muscles around the eyes, or relaxing the belly.

CHECK-IN. Noticing where your body touches the ground or the chair. What does it feel like to have the weight of gravity pulling you down?

BREATHE. Inhale through the nose, and exhale through the mouth.

NOTICE. Observe the pause in between each inhalation and exhalation. Notice the sensation of the air as it passes through the nostrils and mouth. You might even notice the belly rising and falling with each inhale and each exhale.

continued in next column... see **BREATHE**

**BREATHE**... continuation of Living In Bliss

This short mindful practice is great to recharge in the middle of a busy day, or in the evening to help you relax.

Remember that happiness is the new rich and health is wealth. If you don’t pause during your day to ‘just breathe’ it could be detrimental to your health.

**UNTIL NEXT MONTH... KEEP IT BLISSFUL!❖**

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# From Underdog to Top Dog



With the 2024 NFL draft recently ending, Colette Huff reflected on the 2020 process and how it developed for her and her son, Bryce. Bryce, a former defensive end for the University of Memphis, and his family watched the three-day event while waiting for his name to be called. It never was.

The mother of three said she doesn't watch the draft (of any sport) because she knows some families will cheer and rejoice while others are disappointed. "During the draft process, there are so many hopeful young men and women going into that phase of their athletic career, and we all know that not everybody is going to be selected," she said. "As a parent, I feel deeply for those young people when things don't go their way."

Although Bryce's name wasn't called during the draft, his mother said he did receive a call that would give him a chance to showcase his talents. "He told me that the Jets were going to select him after the draft as an undrafted free agent," she recalled. "It was disappointing, but I was thankful he would get the opportunity to pursue his dream."

Bryce packaged that opportunity with faith, determination, hard work, and belief in himself, rising from underdog to top-dog status. After signing with the New York Jets in 2020, Huff quickly caught the eye of quarterback coaches and offensive coordinators around the league. In 2023, he led his team with a career-high ten sacks, 21 quarterback hits, and 67 quarterback pressures. Huff said that once he got his chance with the Jets, he knew his hard work and work ethic would help him make a name for himself in the league. "I was extremely confident that I would stick (in the league)," he said. "I was able to elevate my game by watching the guys around me on a daily basis."

According to ESPN's Adam Schefter, the 6-3, 255-pound defensive end inked a three-year \$51.1 million contract with the Philadelphia Eagles in March, making him the highest-paid non-quarterback undrafted free agent in NFL history.

As with so many other things, COVID-19 affected Huff's fate. Because of the pandemic, he didn't have an NFL Pro Day, where he could showcase his skills in the preseason, nor was he invited to participate in the NFL combine.

His mother said teams were interested but reluctant, and things became a roller coaster ride. "As his mom, it was hard watching him go through all the ups and downs," she said. "I saw opportunity after opportunity disappear, but I never lost faith, nor did he. I tried to stay positive, keep a level head, and encourage him. I knew he was doing big things for his university and the region, but he wasn't a big name. When COVID-19 hit, I knew things were changing, but I didn't know how they would progress," she continued. "All he needed was an opportunity to show a team what he was capable of."

Huff said going into training camp as a rookie without a minicamp or organized team activity was challenging. "I was back at home training with Coach Bryant Elmore every day at the D1 training facility on Old Shell Road," he told Stepping Out. "I remained consistent and prepared for whatever opportunity presented itself next." The Eagles finished the 2023 season 11-6 and were second in the NFC East.

"My journey started as an undrafted free agent grinding to make a roster," he said. Now, I'm a fifth-year vet grinding to be known as one of the best, if not the best, defensive players in the league. ❀

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MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
PRESENT

## A Birthday Salute to John L. LeFlore



Screening of the film: *A Quiet Revolution:  
The Story of John L. LeFlore*

Reflections by Ken Robinson, Author of *Port City Crusader:  
John L. LeFlore and the Non-Partisan Voters League in Mobile, AL*

**Sunday, May 19, 2024**  
2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

**Bernheim Hall at  
Ben May Library**  
700 Government Street  
Mobile, AL 36602

Special thanks for our cosponsors:  
Association for the Study of African  
American Life and History, Mobile  
County Chapter and Alabama  
Contemporary Arts Center.



# CLASSIFIEDS

## LEGAL/PUBLIC NOTICE

Do you have a Legal or Public Notice that you're required to run? A Legal Notice is an ad that has been Court ordered or Judge mandated to run in a publication certified affidavit as proof of publishing. A Public Notice is one that is not Court ordered or Judge mandated but is required to be run. Send your notices to Steppin' Out and we will typeset your ad and send you the cost and the soonest date that we can run. For more information on notices, please contact us at [info@steppinoutmobile.com](mailto:info@steppinoutmobile.com) or at (251) 217-1220.

## OBITUARIES

Steppin' Out has now started an Obituary Section to honor our Loved Ones who have passed on to Glory. Packages (3) are priced from Basic to Premium and each package can be customized based on client need. For more information, contact us at [info@steppinoutmobile.com](mailto:info@steppinoutmobile.com) or (251) 217-1220.

## CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Valid Driver's License, Transportation; Some Construction Experience; Ability to Work Some Weekend Days.  
**PAY SCALE:** \$12-15 per hour depending on skill set. Will be able to work up. Examples of work include Sheetrock Hanging & Finishing • Painting • Exterior And Interior Renovation Construction Framing • Metal Buildings • Woodwork/Millwork; Misc. Plumbing and Electrical • Bathrooms/Tile Work • Flooring.  
Email [crconstruction.mobile@gmail.com](mailto:crconstruction.mobile@gmail.com) or Phone: 251-751-6545

# Mark Your Calendar...

# May 2024

## MOBILE/BALDWIN

### COMMUNITY ACTIVITY & EVENTS

**Ms. B's Production Artist Southern Soul Showcase Hosted by Ms. Mary**

Rascals Lounge, Every 1st Sunday @6pm

**LODA ArtWalk**, Downtown Mobile, Every 2nd Friday

**Spoken Word of Mobile Open Mic Night**, Toulminville Branch Library, every 3rd Monday @6pm

**New To Medicare Free Monthly Educational Seminar**, Area Agency on Aging,

GM&O Building First Floor Conference Room, 1st Tuesday Monthly

**2nd. Annual Jazz Brunch and Wine Tasting Fundraiser** feat. Chef Jim Smith

with music by The Jazz Studio-Family Promise of Coastal Alabama,

The Hummingbird Way Oyster Bar, 5/11 @11am

**Down the Bay: Archeology and Oral History Panel Discussion**, Ben May Main Library, 5/16 @6pm

**Mobile County Civil Rights and Cultural Heritage District Visioning Workshop**,

Dearborn YMCA, 5/16, 5/20 @6pm

**John L. LeFlore Birthday Salute** presented by the Historic Avenue Cultural Center and Mobile Public Library, Ben May Main Library, 5/19 @pm



### CONCERTS/MUSIC

**Celebrity Southern Soul Showcase**, Elk's Club on State Street, Every 1st Sunday @7pm

**Joe Lewis**, Renaissance Hotel, Every Friday - Sunday @8pm

**Thirsty Thursdays Live jazz Jam Sessions**, Kazoola's, Every Thursday @8pm

**Symons French Brown Bag By The Bay At May Day Park**, Daphne, 5/9 @1:3am

**Bill Bellamy**, Tony Roberts, Civic Center Theater, 5/10

**Symone French, Dority's**, Dauphin Island, 5/10 @ 7 pm

**Symone French-EcoWild Expo**, Exploreum Science Center, 5/11 @12:30pm

**Keith Sweat** Wind Creek Casino and Hotel, Atmore, 5/17

**Symone French-Twist**, Spanish Fort, 5/17 @9pm

**Symone French-Wingman Brewing**, 5/24 @6pm

**Symone French-Bluegill Restaurant**, Spanish Fort, 5/25 @6pm

**Symone French-Dauphin Island Sunset Series**, Fort Gaines, 5/26 @5:30pm

**Glenn Miller Orchestra**, Saenger Theatre, 5/30

**Symone French-Greer's St. Louis Market**, 5/31 @6pm

### FESTIVALS

**JAWS FEST, Jazz, Stories, and Poetry**, USA Marx Library-Rm 181; 5/7, 5/21, @6:30pm

**Jazzy Lunch with Steven Christopher Johnson**, USA Marx Library-Rm. 181;

5/8, 5/15, 5/22, 5/29 @Noon

**Opening Ceremony with Excelsior Band and JAWS Youth Awards Ceremony**,

Marx Library Auditorium, 5/16 @6pm

### LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

**Shake, Rattle, & Read Storytime**, West Regional Library, 5/1-2, 5/8-9, 5/15-16,

5/22-23, 5/29-30 @10am

**Wonderful Wednesday Storytime**, Theodore Oaks Branch Library, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15,

5/22, 5/29 @10am

**Wonderful Wednesday at West**, West Regional Library, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22, 5/29

@3:30 pm

**Good Listener Storytime** at Moorer/Spring Hill Branch Library, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22,

5/29 @10:30am & 11:30am

**Good Listener Storytime** at Semmes Regional Library, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22, 5/29

@10:30am

**Listen & Learn Storytime**, West Regional Library, 5/1-2, 5/8-9, 5/15-16, 5/22-23,

5/29-30 @11am

**Rock n' Storytime**, West Regional Library, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23, 5/30 @4pm

**Read & Sign Adaptive Storytime (ASL)** at West, 5/6-7, 5/13-14, 5/20-21, 5/27-28 @3:30pm

**Book-Worm Book Club**, Ben May Main Library, 5/6, 5/13 @4pm

**Read & Play Storytime** at Main, Ben May Main Library, 5/7, 5/13, 5/20, 5/28 @1am

**Tuesday Time Out** at Grand Bay, Grand Bay Library, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 @11am

**A Page in Time Book Club**, West Regional Library, 5/7 @ 2 pm

**Good Listener Storytime** at Parkway, Parkway Branch Library, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 @10am

**Ebony Moments Book Club**, West Regional Library, 5/9 @ pm

**By the "Book" Book Club**, Grand Bay Library, 5/20 @11am

**The Readers Choice Book Club**, West Regional Library, 5/21 @1pm

### MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

**Africatown Redevelopment Corporation Monthly Meeting**, Robert Hope Community

Center, 2nd. Tuesday Monthly

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Connection Group**, Spring Hill Baptist

Church Activity Center Room 236, 3rd. Monday Monthly

**Wade In The Water Monthly Meeting**, All Saints Episcopal Church, last Monday

every month @6pm

**YP of MOB May Lunch and Learn**, Mobile Chamber, 5/1 @11:30am

**Mobile City Council Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/7 @10:30am

**Mobile Chamber Growth Alliance Task Force**, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, 5/7 @Noon

**Coffee with the Chamber**, the Continental Commissary Kitchen-HABAGO, 5/8 @8am

**Mobile Chamber of Commerce 187th Annual Meeting**, Mobile Cruise Terminal, 5/9 @5pm

**Mobile County Commission Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/13 @ 10:30 am

**Mobile City Council Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/14 @10:30am

**Executive Roundtable**, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, 5/21 @8am

**Mobile City Council Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/21 @10:30am

**Mobile Area Black Chamber of Commerce General Body Meeting** with Speaker Jackie

Woodward Barnett, CDP, Volunteer Coordinator Gentiva Hospice, Spring Hill

College Byrne Hall, 5/22 @11:30am

**Mobile County Commission Conference Meeting**, Government Plaza Assembly

Room, 5/23 @10am

**Mobile County Commission Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/28 @10:30am

**Mobile City Council Meeting**, Government Plaza Auditorium, 5/29 @10:30am

### MUSEUMS

**Africatown Heritage House Museum-Clotilda: The Exhibition**, Tues-Sat, 10am-5pm

**Exploreum Science Center, Now Playing: Tiny Giants and Backyard Wilderness**,

PGI Digital Dome, Ongoing

**Gulfquest National Maritime Museum, United States Coast Guard Art**, Ongoing

**Historic Avenue Cultural Center: Remember The Avenue**, through 12/31

**History Museum of Mobile, Hubble Space Telescope: New Views from the Universe Exhibit**, Until

**History Museum of Mobile, The Global Language of Headware: Cultural Identity,**

**Rites of Passage, and Spirituality**, through 6/7

**Mobile Museum of Art's "Art In Foc. us"**, Katharine C. Cochrane Gallery, Dusti Bonge;

**The Creative Life, Pets; Loyal and True Companions, American Still Life, American**

**Prints, American Glass, and Childhood**, Ongoing

**Mobile Museum of Art, Contemporary Alabama**, Ongoing

**FEAR-An Immersive Exhibit**, Exploreum Science Center, Until 10/31

**USA Archaeology Museum-Growing Up Down The Bay**, Ben May Main Library, Thru 5/31

**Artist Dinner + Exhibition Preview-Threads of (Dis)Integration, Work by Pinky/MM Bass + Friends**, Alabama Contemporary Arts Center, 5/9 @6pm

### SPORTS

#### CORNHOLE

**2024 American Cornhole Mobile Major Tournament**, Mobile Convention Center, 5/3-4

#### GOLF

**Par 3 Tournament-USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute**, Magnolia Grove, 5/2 @11:30am

### STAGEPLAYS

**13: The Musical Jr.**, The PACT Theatre Company, Arlene Mitchell Theatre, 5/9-19

## BILOXI

### CONCERTS

**Chapel Hart**, Ground Zero Blues Club, 5/10

**Rick Springfield, Richard Marx**, IP Casino Resort and Spa, 5/11

**Scott Stapp**, Beau Rivage Theatre, 5/11

**Ludacris**, Beau Rivage Theatre, 5/17

**Kountry Wayne**, Beau Rivage Theatre, 5/18

**Travis Tritt**, IP Casino Resort and Spa, 5/24-25

**The Front Men with Tim Rushlow, Richie McDonald, Larry Stewart**, Hard Rock Live, 5/31

\*\*\*\*\* **NEW FEATURE** \*\*\*\*\*

Based on several request for us to better serve Our Community with a much needed service, Steppin' Out will start an OBITUARY SECTION to honor our loved ones who have moved on to Glory. We thank the Family of Frances Lee Jernigan Torrence for allowing us to Honor their Family Matriarch and show the community an example of our Premium Obituary Package. We have several options ranging from Basic to Premium Package. For More Information about this New Feature, Please Contact Us at (251) 217-1220.

**– REST IN PEACE FRANCES "MOM" TORRENCE... YOU WILL BE MISSED! –**

**– OBITUARY –**



# Frances Lee Jernigan Torrence

**AUGUST 25, 1936 – JANUARY 13, 2024**

A native of Marshall, Texas, Frances was a longtime resident of Mobile. After graduating high school, she attended Bishop College and moved to Dallas, Texas. She was employed for many years by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. She met, dated, and fell in love with Fred Lee Torrence, Sr. They married in 1968 and moved to Mobile, sharing an intense love for the Lord. They were married for forty-seven years. They joined the Emmanuel Seventh-Day Adventist Church. As a loyal, faithful, and devoted member of the church, she served in many capacities; Publicity Committee Member, Alter Guild, Senior Usher Board, and Youth Usher Board Leader.

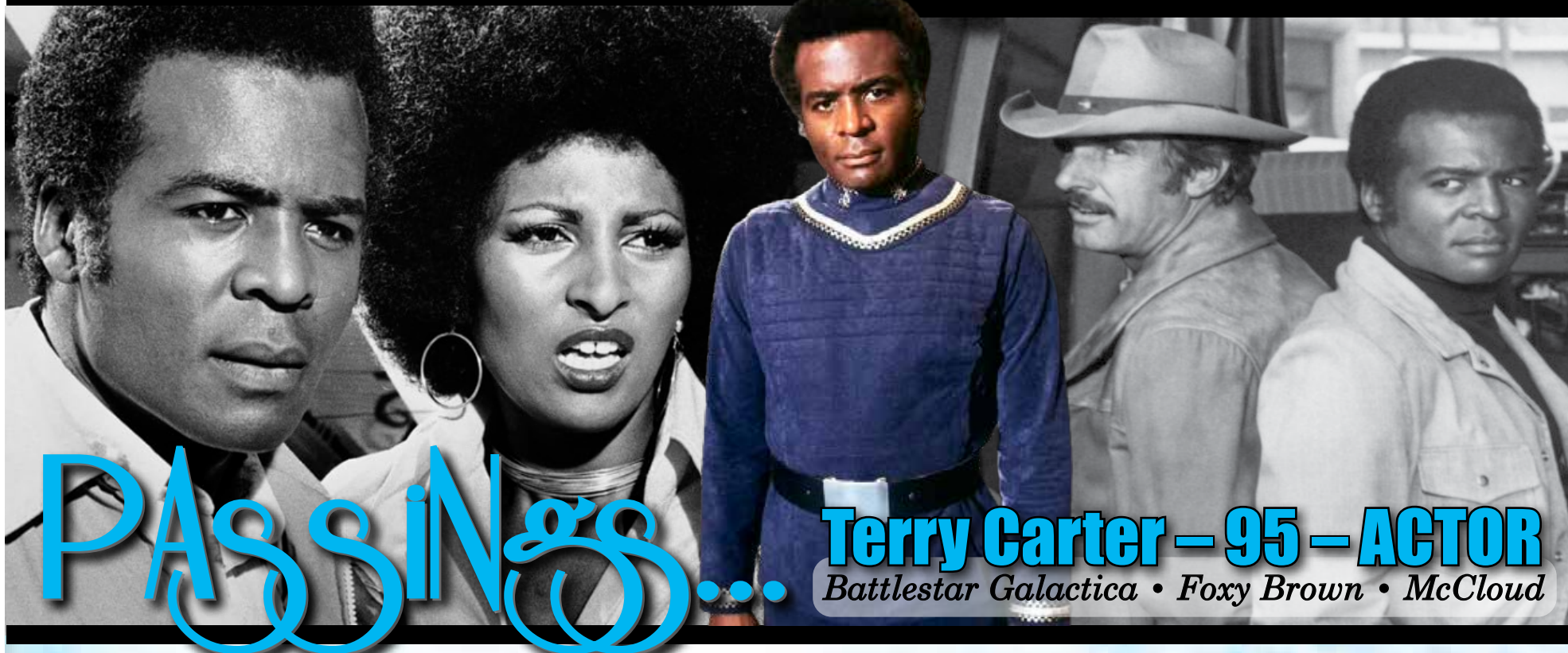
After moving to Mobile, Frances was hired as secretary of the Newsroom at WKRG-TV5 on September 11, 1972. Over the years, she and the newsroom became a family and she was known as "Mom". She managed all the needs of the newsroom with brilliance, enthusiasm, and kindness. Frances was also known for her organizational skills. Before the computer, she was responsible for typing the names and details of all stories covered by the station on index cards along with creating a filing system that she maintained. She retired from WKRG-TV5 on September 29, 2009, after thirty-seven years of dedicated service.

Frances enjoyed cooking and having family and friends over for dinner after church for her "Zucchini Squash Casserole". She enjoyed traveling, shopping, and spending time with her family and grandchildren. She loved music, especially the Gaither Homecoming and Gaither Band. She was the President of the Gaither Club and attended several Gaither concerts. She was beloved by all and will remain in Blessed memory.

She was preceded in death by her PARENTS Jimmie and Minnie Bell Jernigan; HUSBAND Fred L. Torrence, Sr.; BROTHERS: Reverend James Jernigan and Willie Dee Jernigan; FATHER and MOTHER-IN-LAW Cornelius Sr. and Matilda Torrence; GRANDSON-IN-LAW James Demetric Hutchins; SPECIAL NIECE Little Sandra Jernigan; STEP-MOTHER, Thelma Jernigan; sisters-in-law: Henrietta Torrence-Broom, Betty Torrence-Huey, Ella Louise Hogan, Kathryn Torrence, and Linda Torrence; BROTHERS-IN-LAW: Cornelius Torrence, Bobbie Torrence and Henry Austin; AUNT Lessie Torrence; UNCLE Robert Torrence; GODMOTHER, Catherine Altice; DEAR FRIENDS: Ollie Smith, Ann Parker, Lula Florence and Ethel Ray.

Frances leaves to cherish her precious legacy and loving memories, her CHILDREN: loving and devoted daughter LaTrenda Torrence-Salter, Fred (Sandra) L. Torrence, Jr., Sheloundus (Samuel) Torrence -Hale, Vanessa D. Hill, Dexter (Helaine) Stallion; GRANDCHILDREN: Brittany Torrence, Samuel (Christal) Hale, II, Stephen Hale, LaTiah Stallion, Antoine Stallion, and her devoted "twins"...Amber Darnelle Torrence and Ashley Frances Torrence-Hutchins; her loving GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN: Twanda Lee Nobles, Katilyn Jahleah Nobles, Jackson Miles Hutchins, Antoine Stallion, Jr., and Lijah Stallion; SISTERS: Jessie Helen Jernigan, Adell Sellers, Lillie Hawkins and Alice (Henry) Gaines; SISTERS-IN-LAW: Linda Torrence, Louise Torrence, and Esther Austin; two BROTHERS: Elder Herman (Iris) Taylor and Elder Charles Sellers; AUNTS: Lettie Harris, Florence Waller, Grace Torrence and Betsy Barleston; and a host of NIECES, NEPHEWS, COUSINS, OTHER RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, DEAR FRIENDS: Jean Dukes, Lillie Minor, Dorothy Harris, Catherine Jackson and Shirley Snell.





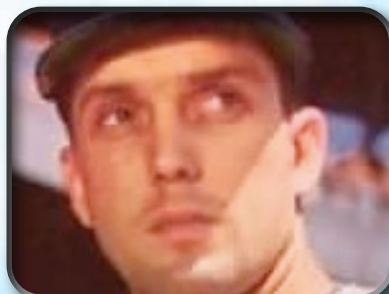
**Terry Carter – 95 – ACTOR**  
*Battlestar Galactica • Foxy Brown • McCloud*



**DICKIE BETTS – 80**  
 MUSICIAN  
 Allman Brothers Band  
 Ramblin Man



**ARCHIE COOLEY – 85**  
 HBCU FOOTBALL COACH  
 Mississippi Valley State  
 Arkansas-Pine Bluff  
 Paul Quinn College



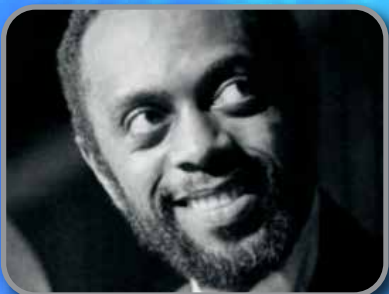
**CARL ERSKINE – 97**  
 MLB PLAYER  
 Brooklyn Dodgers  
**Pneumonia**



**ROMAN GABRIEL – 83**  
 NFL QUARTERBACK  
 Los Angeles Rams



**DR. WILLIAM H. HARRIS – 79**  
 PRESIDENT  
 Alabama State University



**ALBERT HEATH – 88**  
 JAZZ DRUMMER  
 The Heath Brothers  
**Leukemia**



**CLARENCE "FROGMAN" HENRY – 87**  
 SINGER



**WHITEY HERZOG – 92**  
 MLB PLAYER  
 Senators • Mets • Cardinals



**MANDISA – 47**  
 GOSPEL SINGER



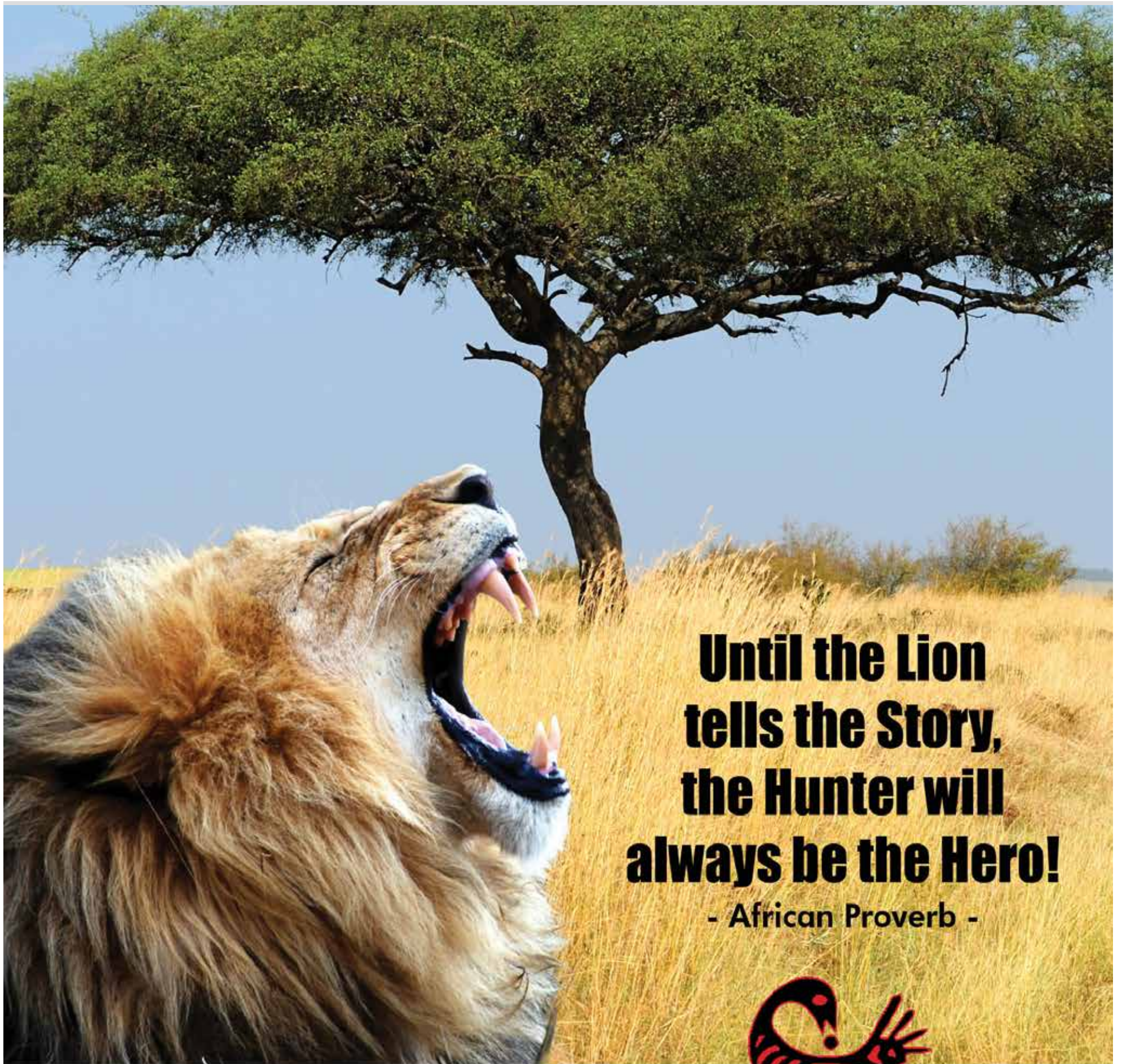
**O.J. SIMPSON – 76**  
 NFL PLAYER  
 Buffalo Bills  
 ACTOR  
 The Naked Gun  
**Prostate Cancer**



**STEVE SLOAN – 79**  
 NFL PLAYER  
 Atlanta Falcons  
 Alabama Football Player



**POOCH TAVARES – 81**  
 SINGER  
 Tavares



**Until the Lion  
tells the Story,  
the Hunter will  
always be the Hero!**

- African Proverb -



**It is Our Duty  
to Share the Stories  
About Our Ancestors!**

**SANKOFA**  
**MEDIA GROUP**  
ALABAMA