



The Tuskegee News

'Tis better to light a candle than to curse the darkness'

150 YEARS

1865 - 2015

VOLUME 151, NUMBER 36 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2015 75 CENTS



Photo by Scott Richardson

Bobby Davis talks about his 38-year-banking career at his office in PNC Bank. His last day at work will be Friday, Sept. 4 before he retires.

Local banking institution

Bobby Davis retiring

By GUY RHODES
Editor/Publisher

Robert L. "Bobby" Davis and banking have been synonymous in Tuskegee and Macon County for nearly four decades. That's about to change when Davis retires after 38 years with the bank located on the Square across from the Macon



County Courthouse in Tuskegee.

Davis is retiring from PNC Bank with Friday, Sept. 4 being his last day with the institution that acquired RBC Bank in 2012. RBC purchased Alabama Exchange Bank (AEB) where Davis had worked full-time since 1978 and the place he was first employed in 1971 while still in high school.

He served as president and CEO of AEB beginning in 1986 and will retire from PNC Bank as a vice president.

A pillar in the community, Davis impacted the Tuskegee area through the years.

"I put people in houses who otherwise would not have had them. I also put people in business. Our customers became very loyal to the bank and to me, as a result," Davis said. "I always thought working at the bank was a highly regarded and esteemed position."

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Amelia Boynton Robinson's death brings reaction from across country

Amelia Boynton Robinson, a civil rights activist who helped lead the 1965 "Bloody Sunday" voting rights march, died early Wednesday, Aug. 18 at age 104, her son Bruce Boynton said.

She had been a resident of Tuskegee since 1976.

Boynton Robinson was among those beaten during the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965 that became known as "Bloody Sunday." State troopers teargassed and clubbed marchers as they tried crossing



Mrs. Robinson

the bridge. A newspaper photo featuring an unconscious Boynton Robinson drew wide attention to the movement.

"The truth of it is is that was her entire life. That's what she was completely taken with," Bruce Boynton said of his mother's role

in shaping the civil rights movement. "She was a loving person, very supportive — but civil rights was her life."

Fifty years after "Bloody Sunday," Barack Obama, the first black president of



Photo courtesy Terri Sewell

Amelia Boynton Robinson is greeted by President Barack Obama at the president's 2015 State of the Union address earlier this year. At the left is Congresswoman Terri Sewell of Selma who invited Mrs. Robinson to hear the address.

the United States, held her hand as she was pushed across the bridge in a wheelchair during a commemoration.

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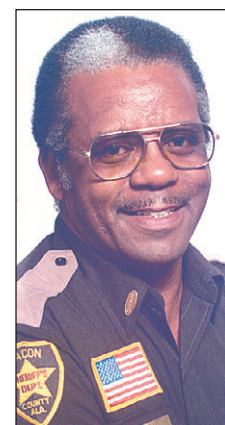
Former Sheriff Elbert Dawson dies

The first black State Trooper of Alabama and former Macon County Sheriff Elbert Dawson died on Monday, Aug. 31, 2015 at the age of 68.

Dawson was elected sheriff of Macon County in 1986, after Lucius Amerson decided not to run again after 20 years in office. Sheriff Dawson served two terms from 1987-95 and was defeated in the 1994 election by David Warren.

As the first black trooper in Alabama, Dawson succeeded Amerson as the first black sheriff in the Deep South since Reconstruction.

Dawson was a State Trooper for 14 years, starting his career in 1972. He was honored in 1992 by the Alabama Department of Public Safety for being one of the first



Dawson

black State Troopers in Alabama. (Others joined after Dawson joined the State Troopers). He was also featured on the cover of Sheriff Star Magazine in July 1993 and named to the Who's Who in Law Enforcement.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by McKenzie's Funeral Home in Tuskegee. Check the website at www.mckenziefuneralhomeinc.com for arrangements. A member of Sweet Pilgrim Baptist

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TU to get \$400,000 as part of major grant

TU News Bureau

Tuskegee University researchers and students will reap the benefits of a newly approved \$20 million grant with the National Science Foundation.

The University is part of a multi-university collaborative research project, the Center for Sustainable Nanotechnology (CSN). The grant will be funded for over a five-year period and Tuskegee will receive more than \$400,000 in faculty and student support for research and travel. Increasing Tuskegee's STEM research capacity and support of comprehensively developed students are among the priorities outlined on the university's vision document.

"Tuskegee University faculty members are indeed a great source of pride for this great university. Our faculty researchers are amongst the nation's best and this award is a testament to research," said Tuskegee University president, Dr. Brian L. Johnson.

Dr. Michael L. Curry, associate professor of chemistry and adjunct professor of materials science and engineering, has been selected as one of the senior investigators to serve in center.

Curry said he and his research group will collaborate with other researchers to attempt to synthesize

(See GRANT, P. 9)

Omari Neal Distinguished Young Woman



Photo courtesy Mary Hooks

Omari Neal is Macon County's Distinguished Young Woman for 2015-16 after the competition on Saturday, Aug. 29. Neal, right, is a senior at Booker T. Washington High School. Runner-up was Maris Griffin, left, also of BTW High School. With the two contestants is the 2014-15 Macon County Distinguished Young Woman Jessica Freeman of Notasulga.

Two teenage girls from Booker T. Washington High School competed for a share of college scholarship money the evening of Saturday, Aug. 29 at George Washington Carver Elementary School.

Omari Neal was awarded the title of Distinguished Young Woman of Macon County and \$1,400 in scholarship money to the college or university of her choice.

In addition to the title, Neal won the fitness, and scholastic categories. Both girls were awarded the Spirit Award. She will go on to compete in the Distinguished Young Women of Alabama program in January 2016. Omari is the daughter of Omar and Debbie Neal of Tuskegee. Omar is former Mayor of Tuskegee.

First runner-up Maris Griffin will receive \$1,200 in college scholarship money. In addition to first runner-up, Maris captured the talent, interview and self expression categories. Maris is the daughter of Harold and Arnetta Diane White of Tuskegee.

Founded in 1958 in Mobile, Distinguished Young Women is the largest and oldest national scholarship program for high school girls. During its 58 years of operation, the program has provided life-changing experiences for more than 730,000 young women. Last year, Distinguished Young Women provided more than \$367 million in cash and college scholarship opportunities to program participants at the local, state and national level.

Previously known as America's Junior Miss, the

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