



VIRGINIA CAPLES  
LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

# Bloom!

**DON'T WITHER**

*Aging Means Living*

*Spring*

**2026**

**Courses  
& Activities**



*Bloom!* **DON'T WITHER** *Aging Means Living*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VCLLI Spring 2026 Courses & Activities

About the VCLLI	4
About Dr. Virginia Caples	5
Meaningful Mondays: Estate Planning	6
Wellness Starts Here: A Diabetes Prevention Journey	6
Fitness for Seniors with Eric	6
Grounds & Garden: The Home & Gardens Series	7
Social Security Administration Benefits Updates	7
Crafty Creation: Greeting Cardmaking	7
The Doctor Said...	8
Dementia Memory Café	8
Meaningful Monday: Focus on Caregiving	8
Picture This & Write Your Legacy	9
Crafty Creation: Kirigami	9
Pathways to a Lead-Safe Home	9
2026 Medicare Updates	10
The Clotilda: Africatown Heritage House Talk	10
Spring Planting with Seniors	10
<b>DIGITAL EXPERIENCES</b>	
North Alabama State Parks	11
The Clotilda: Last American Slave Ship	11
<b>SAVE THE DATES</b>	12
Heirs' Property & Estate Planning Info Sessions	14
VCLLI Membership Form	17
Share Your Knowledge & Talents	18

## About the VCLLI

The Virginia Caples Lifelong Learning Institute (VCLLI) is housed on the campus of Alabama A&M University (AAMU). The VCLLI operates under the direction of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Alabama A&M University. With rapid and swift changes occurring in the ways in which “we do things” in society, there has never been a more relevant time to become a promoter, advocator, and deliverer of lifelong-learning opportunities. Thus, the mission of the VCLLI is to create and sustain a stimulating, state-of-the-art educational, social, and life-enhancing environment for senior adults. This mission is fulfilled through innovative curricula, experiential learning, and intergenerational activities. Further, the Institute engages in research and advocacy that advance its defining theme of “successful aging.”

Noted for its multidimensional platform, the VCLLI has quickly become a highly acclaimed resource for senior adults in Alabama. Led by its Advisory Council, members drive the programs and activities and are the lifeblood of the Institute. The success and growth of the VCLLI is highly dependent on active involvement of its members by serving as volunteers in various capacities.

**VCLLI MEMBERSHIP IS FREE AND IT'S EASY TO JOIN.**

**To request information on becoming a member:**

Visit us online:  
[www.aces.edu/go/VCLLI](http://www.aces.edu/go/VCLLI)

We hope this catalog captures your mind and prompts you to become involved with the VCLLI at Alabama A&M University. Please go to page 17 for registration information.



## About Dr. Virginia Caples

The Virginia Caples Lifelong Learning Institute (VCLLI) is named in honor of the late 1890 Extension Administrator Dr. Virginia Caples, who had a vision to develop a lifelong learning center for older adults. With the opening of the VCLLI, AAMU joined the ranks of its sister Institution, Hampton University, to become only the second Historically Black College and University (HBCU) and the first 1890 land-grant institution, in the nation to address learning and advanced quality of life for the older adult population.

Dr. Caples' tenacity in service and scholarship, advanced her from a plantation in Doddsville, Mississippi to twice fulfilling the role of interim president of Alabama A&M University, in Huntsville, Alabama. Her commitment and devotion to Alabama A&M University was evident over her 38-year career on "The Hill." Oh, the hats she wore... Dr. Caples served in capacities as provost and vice president for academic affairs, associate dean, distinguished university professor, and 1890 administrator. She left an indelible mark in each role.

As a scholar, Dr. Caples had numerous presentations, articles, and other publications to her credit on such topics as: nutrition education for underserved populations, leadership skills for the twenty-first century, parental guidance and career choices of youth, competencies needed by home health aides, and workplace and professional challenges for women of color, the future of 1890 Extension. In addition to her publications, Dr. Caples conducted workshops and training sessions on developing the quality enhancement plan, meeting and exceeding accreditation standards, leadership, curriculum and program development, strategic planning, and the freshman-year experience. She participated in training sessions and research in Germany, Australia, Tanzania and Sudan in eastern Africa, South Africa, and St. Kitts and Belize in the Caribbean.

Dr. Caples was a member of the Epsilon Gamma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and the Greater Huntsville Chapter of The Links Incorporated. She was married to Hundley Batts, Sr., and together they owned and operated "Your Community Station" WEUP 103.1 FM; WEUZ 92.1 FM (Hip Hop, Rhythm, and Blues); and "Huntsville's Heritage Station" WEUP 1700 and 94.5 FM (Gospel, Inspiration and Talk); WEUP 1600 and WHIY 1190 AM (Delta Blues).

Dr. Virginia Caples' earthly journey ended on February 19, 2018. However, her legacy continues—forward-reaching and everlasting.



# COURSES & ACTIVITIES



## Meaningful Mondays: Estate Planning

This weekly series is hosted by Alabama Extension at AAMU and Faulkner University Jones School of Law. These sessions provide insight on preparation for organization and advanced planning.

**Mondays** | February 2, 2026 | February 9, 2026 | February 16, 2026 | February 23, 2026

**4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Presenter(s): Atty. John Craft & Atty. Will Breland

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5785](http://www.aces.edu/go/5785)**



## Wellness Starts Here: A Diabetes Prevention Journey

This virtual series is a motivating, health-focused program designed to help people build sustainable habits that reduce their risk of developing diabetes. It emphasizes practical lifestyle changes, such as balanced nutrition, regular movement, stress management, and mindful daily choices. While empowering participants to take control of their long-term well-being, weekly reporting is required.



**Tuesdays** | February 3 thru May 26, 2026

**2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Dr. Kristen Campbell, AAMU

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5838](http://www.aces.edu/go/5838)**

## Fitness for Seniors with Eric

In your small floor space, let's move to better health. Each exercise routine will include fitness boxing (a combination of body exercises and boxing techniques) and will accommodate all physical capabilities. Benefits of fitness boxing includes (but not limited to) increased hand-eye coordination, improved balance & flexibility, strengthening of the heart/cardiovascular system, and stronger muscles.

**Fridays** | February 6 thru April 24, 2026

*\*No session on March 20, 2026*

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Eric Martin, *Emotion Fitness*

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5843](http://www.aces.edu/go/5843)**





# COURSES & ACTIVITIES



## Grounds & Gardens: The Home & Gardens Series

Learn easy-to-understand practices for your home and home gardening as you plan to deter pests and prepare for spring gardening projects and yard maintenance.

**Thursdays** | February 12, 2026 | February 26, 2026 | March 12, 2026 |  
March 26, 2026 | April 2, 2026 | April 16, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Marcus Garner, UREA, ACES,

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5842](http://www.aces.edu/go/5842)**



## Social Security Administration Benefits Updates

An informative session with the latest updates from the Social Security Administration, including important changes to benefits, eligibility, and services that help individuals plan and manage their financial well-being.

**Tuesday** | February 17, 2026

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Khyllie McKinney, *Social Security Administration*

**Virtual via Teams**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5855](http://www.aces.edu/go/5855)**



## Crafty Creation: Greeting Cardmaking

This course presents hands-on classes to introduce easy crafting projects that encourage creativity, social connection, and stress-free enjoyment. Each session features step-by-step guidance, simple low-cost materials, and plenty of time to create at your own pace.



**Tuesdays & Thursdays** | February 19, 2026 | March 3, 2026 |  
April 2, 2026

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Janet Burgess

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5851](http://www.aces.edu/go/5851)**



# COURSES & ACTIVITIES



## The Doctor Said...

Monthly Virtual Health Information Series

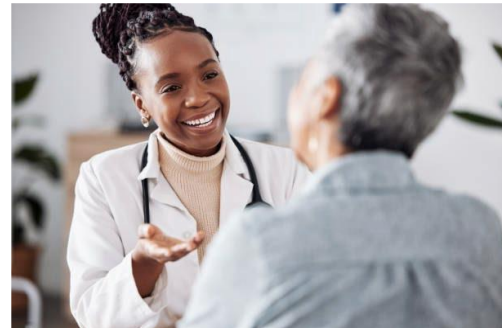
**Mondays** | February 23, 2026 | March 23, 2026 |  
April 27, 2026 | May 18, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Varied

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5856](http://www.aces.edu/go/5856)**



## Dementia Memory Café

Memory Cafés are social outings for individuals living with dementia or experiencing cognitive declines. A memory café provides respite for caregivers and an engaging activity for care-recipients. You are sure to have fun as you join in one of the hands-on, sensory stimulating activities planned this semester.



**Tuesdays** | February 24, 2026 | March 24, 2026 | May 26, 2026

**11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Delane Richardson, *Dementia Friendly Alabama*

**In-Person** | AAMU Agribition Center

4925 Moores Mill Road, Huntsville, AL 35811

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5849](http://www.aces.edu/go/5849)**



## Meaningful Mondays: Focus on Caregiving

This virtual series is dedicated to supporting and uplifting caregivers. It offers practical insights, emotional encouragement, and simple strategies to help caregivers navigate their responsibilities with confidence, balance, and a sense of community.

**Mondays** | March 2, 2026 | March 9, 2026

March 23, 2026 | March 30, 2026

**4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Presenter(s): Varied

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5857](http://www.aces.edu/go/5857)**



(See page12 for more details.)

# COURSES & ACTIVITIES



## Picture This & Write Your Legacy

This session is a creative, reflective activity that blends visual imagery of family history and personal storytelling. Through writing and painting, the session sparks meaningful conversations about creating a family tree and building a legacy for families and communities.



**Thursdays** | March 5, 2026 | April 9, 2026  
**10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Presenter(s): Cándra DeBose & Darrell Hill, ACES  
**In-Person**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5841](http://www.aces.edu/go/5841)**

## Crafty Creation: Kirigami

Let's learn new skills with simple creations. Kirigami is a paper-craft tradition closely related to origami, but with one major difference: while origami focuses entirely on folding paper, kirigami combines folding and cutting to form intricate shapes and patterns.

**Tuesday** | March 10, 2026

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Janet Burgess

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5839](http://www.aces.edu/go/5839)**



## Pathways to a Lead-Safe Home

This five-session series shows homeowners how to spot lead hazards and use lead-safe practices to keep their homes healthy and long-lasting.

**Wednesdays** | March 11, 2026: Lead 101: What Every Family Needs to Know

March 25, 2026: Is My Home Safe? Understanding Lead Risks in Older Housing

April 8, 2026: Lead Testing Matters-When, Why and How to Get Tested

April 22, 2026: Safe Renovations & Repairs (Lead-Safe Practices/RRP)

May 6, 2026: From Awareness to Action (How the HUD program supports families and next steps).

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Clancy

*Alabama Life Research Institute*

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5794](http://www.aces.edu/go/5794)**



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®



# COURSES & ACTIVITIES



## 2026 Medicare Updates

Get the latest information on Medicare for 2026, including important updates to help participants stay informed and prepared for the year ahead.

**Monday** | April 6, 2026

**10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Presenter: Teresa Hazzard, *Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG)*

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5844](http://www.aces.edu/go/5844)**



## The Clotilda: Africatown Heritage House Talk

This session is an engaging presentation that explores the history of the Clotilda, the last known ship to bring enslaved Africans to the United States. This session also highlights the resilient community of Africatown founded by its survivors. The talk highlights the ship's discovery, the preservation of descendant stories, and the ongoing cultural significance of Africatown's heritage.



**Friday** | April 10, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Presenter: Jessica Fairley, History Museum of Mobile  
Heritage House Manager

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5836](http://www.aces.edu/go/5836)**

## Spring Planting with Seniors

Prepare to learn what and how to plant spring-blooming bulbs, cool-season annuals and vegetables, as well as many trees, shrubs, and perennials.

**Monday** | April 13, 2026

**8:00 a.m.**

Presenter:

**In-Person** | AAMU Agribition Center

4925 Moores Mill Road, Huntsville, AL 35811

**Register: [www.aces.edu/go/5840](http://www.aces.edu/go/5840)**



# DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

 VIRGINIA CAPLES  
LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE



## North Alabama State Parks

Explore the highlights of North Alabama's scenic state parks including waterfalls, caves, forests, and lakes through a brief virtual journey showcasing the region's natural beauty.

**Friday** | February 13, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Amber Cogger

Northwest District Naturalist

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register:** [www.aces.edu/go/5837](http://www.aces.edu/go/5837)



## The Clotilda: Last American Slave Ship

This National Geographic documentary explores the story of the Clotilda, the last U.S. slave ship, which illegally carried 110 kidnapped Africans to Alabama in 1860. The film follows archaeologists as they investigate the remarkably preserved wreck and uncovers the human stories of the ship's survivors and their descendants.

**Friday** | March 6, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Presenter: Jessica Fairly

**Hybrid** | AAMU Campus | Dawson Building  
Auditorium- 4900 Meridian St., Huntsville, AL

**Register:** [www.aces.edu/go/5835](http://www.aces.edu/go/5835)



## Cathedral Cavern & Rickwood Caverns State Park

Explore the highlights of North Alabama's scenic state parks including waterfalls, caves, forests, and lakes through a brief virtual journey showcasing the region's natural beauty.

**Friday** | March 27, 2026

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Presenter: Hannah Hembree

Cave Park Naturalists

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Register:** [www.aces.edu/go/5869](http://www.aces.edu/go/5869)





# SAVE THE DATES

## **Meaningful Monday** FOCUS ON CAREGIVING *Estate Planning Series*

- 4/2: Productive Communication for Family Caregiving  
**Ms. Lydia Weeks**, Coordinator, Alabama Cares Program, TARCOG, Area Agency on Aging
  
  - 4/9: Managing Someone Else’s Money as an Agent on a POA  
**Professor John Craft**, Faulkner University Jones School of Law
  
  - 4/16: Managing the Stress of Caregiving  
**Ms. DeLane Poague**, State Coordinator for Dementia Friendly Alabama
  
  - 4/23: Caregiving Tip for the Sandwich Generation  
**Dr. Maya Martin**, Alabama A&M University, Department of Social Work
  
  - 4/30: Understanding Guardianship and Conservatorship in Alabama  
**Professor John Craft**, Faulkner University Jones School of Law
- 



**Extension Week**  
**April 12-18, 2026**

# HEIRS' PROPERTY INFO SESSION(S)

 VIRGINIA CAPLES  
LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE



# Heirs' Property & Estate Planning Community Education



**Do you have questions about heirs' property or estate planning?**

**Join this community event to learn more on how to resolve issues with heirs property and estate planning.**

**Open to adults of all ages.**

Madison County Extension Office

819 Cook Ave NW #106 | Huntsville, AL 35801

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 | 5:00 p.m.– 7:00 p.m.

---

Bethel Pine Outreach Center

796 Sumter 22, Livingston, AL 35470

Friday, March 13, 2026 | 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

---

Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce

300 Gault Ave. North | Fort Payne, AL 35967

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.

---

Madison County District 6 Office

3210 NE S HI-LO Circle | Huntsville, AL 35811

Monday, April 14, 2026 | 12:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

**Contact: Darrell Hill, Heirs Property Program Coordinator**

**dsh0048@aces.edu | (938) 259-6866**





# Meaningful Monday

Estate Planning Series

Online



**Mondays in February | 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.**

**Register with QR code** or at [www.aces.edu/go/5785](http://www.aces.edu/go/5785)



### Webinar Presentation Topics:

February 2: **Estate Planning Overview**

February 9: **Last Will and Testament**

February 16: **Power of Attorney for Finances**

February 23: **Advance Directive for Healthcare**

**Contact:** Darrell Hill, *Heirs Property Program Coordinator*  
[dsh0048@aces.edu](mailto:dsh0048@aces.edu) | (938) 259-6866



# UESEP Eco-Friendly Fridays

Environmental Education Series

Available online with  
 zoom



*Eco-Friendly Fridays* is a free environmental education webinar series that offers effective best management practices for safeguarding human, animal, and environmental health and practical solutions to help reduce your ecological footprint. Join the Alabama Extension team for training sessions on traditional conservation topics, as well as new and emerging issues in environmental education. Whether you are an educator, an environmental professional, or a nature lover, tune in to discover how you can become a better steward of the environment and its precious resources.

## Tune in on Fridays

**When:** The second Friday of each month from 11 a.m. until Noon CT.

**Where:** Online

**Zoom Registration**

[www.aces.edu/go/EcoFriendlyFridays](http://www.aces.edu/go/EcoFriendlyFridays)

## Dates and Topics

- February 13—**Phones, E-waste, and Climate: The Hidden System Accelerating Planetary Change** with Chris Burns, Urban Resilient Rooted Program Coordinator, Alabama Extension at Alabama A&M University
- March 13—**Hedgerows and Bioswales** with Bronson Lubresky; Urban Regional Agent; Home Horticulture and Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources; Alabama Extension at Alabama A&M University
- April 10—**Ten Tough Urban Trees** with Allyson Shabel; Urban Regional Agent; Home Horticulture and Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources; Alabama Extension at Alabama A&M University
- May 8—**Edible Native Plants** with Nikki Cobb; Urban Regional Agent; Home Horticulture and Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources; Alabama Extension at Alabama A&M University
- June 12—**Alabama Year of Invasive Plants Project** with Kerry Steedley; Extension Agent, Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resources; Alabama Extension at Auburn University

# VIRGINIA CAPLES LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE VCLLI: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Member's photos may be used periodically to promote the VCLLI.*

### Member Profile

Your response to the following questions will help us better serve you and other members of the VCLLI.

**Age Range** \_\_\_ Under 50 \_\_\_ 50-59 \_\_\_ 60-69 \_\_\_ 70-79 \_\_\_ Over 80

**How did you hear about the VCLLI?**

\_\_\_ Radio \_\_\_ Internet \_\_\_ Printed Publication \_\_\_ TV/News \_\_\_ Church \_\_\_ Word of Mouth \_\_\_ Other

**Gender** \_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female **Are you retired?** \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**Occupation** (current or before retirement) \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnicity:** African American \_\_\_ Caucasian \_\_\_ Hispanic \_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

### ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES (Check all that apply)

- \_\_\_ Developing Courses
- \_\_\_ Assisting a facilitator in a class
- \_\_\_ Helping with recruitment efforts
- \_\_\_ Serving on the VCLLI board/committees
- \_\_\_ Providing assistance at special events
- \_\_\_ Helping with mailings
- \_\_\_ Helping with fundraising
- \_\_\_ Volunteering with VCLLI



Would you be interested in facilitating a course? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, what topic(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to: **VCLLI, c/o Cándra Johnson DeBose**

**P.O. Box 967, Normal, AL 35762**

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Membership Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## **Share Your Knowledge and Talents through the VCLLI**

With the vibrant, dynamic, skilled, and talented senior adult population in the state of Alabama, we know some of you are just waiting to be asked, “Why not share what you know?”

This is our invitation or bidding for you to be a VCLLI course leader. There are no papers or tests to grade. Just come and share your knowledge with people who have a true “love for learning.”

For more information on how to be added to the VCLLI roster of course leaders, contact us at:

**Go to our website at:**  
**[www.aces.edu/urban/VCLLI](http://www.aces.edu/urban/VCLLI)**  
**or call 256.372.7022**





 **VIRGINIA CAPLES**  
LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

Spring 2026 Courses & Activities



The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider.