

FEBRUARY 2024

# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

## *Everyone Has A Story*

### *In This Issue*

**Black History Month**

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Spotlight**

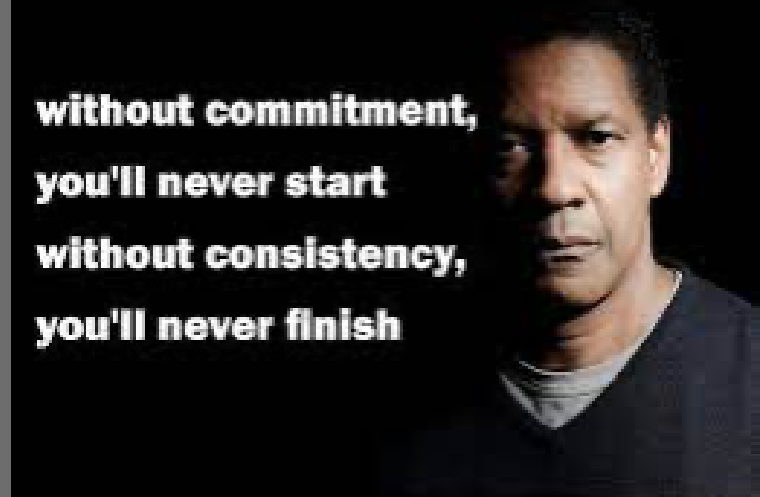
**The negative impacts of  
clutter & disorganization**



**HAPPY**  
**National**  
**School**  
**Counseling**  
**Week**



**without commitment,  
you'll never start  
without consistency,  
you'll never finish**



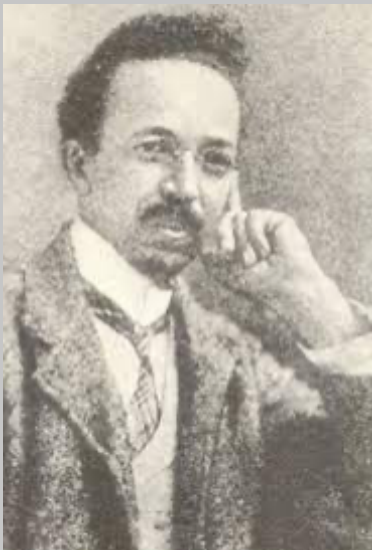
# Celebrate Black History

February is Black History Month. Carter G Woodson, a scholar, established Negro History Week in 1926 to coincide the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas. The vision of Carter G Woodson was to honor the largely overlooked achievements of Black Americans and to show pride for Black American heritage. It was first officially recognized as Black History Month in 1976 by President Gerald Ford, to recognize the history, culture, and contributions of Black Americans. Black History Month is also celebrated in Canada, Ireland, the UK, and the Netherlands.

The 2024 theme for Black History Month is “African Americans and the Arts” focusing on African American influences in the fields of visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expressions.



Henry Ossawa Tanner (June 21, 1959-May 25, 1937) was the first African American painter to gain international acclaim.



Viola Davis is an actress and producer and one of very few who have been awarded an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony (EGOT).

BB King, known as the “The King of the Blues,” (September 16, 1925-May 14, 2016) was a guitarist, singer, songwriter, and record producer. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987 and is one of the most influential musicians of all time.



*Celebrate*

Just 3 miles north of downtown Mobile, AL is the Africatown community. It was formed by a group of 32 West Africans who were smuggled illegally and against their will in 1860 during the last known shipment of slaves to the United States. The Atlantic slave trade had been banned some 52 years prior. In 1992, part of the community's land was appropriated by the government for the development of the western approach of the Cochrane-Africatown USA Bridge.







**Feb 5-9**

*We ♥ our  
school counselors*

## **School Counselor Appreciation Week**

National School Counseling Week is observed annually during the first full week of February to bring awareness and appreciation for the significant impact school counselors have on students throughout the U.S. There are over 80 school counselors in every school throughout Baldwin County. One of the best ways we can observe this special week is to extend gratitude to our school counselors along with their wonderful leader, Ms. Sherry Rainbolt.



According to [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org), school counseling is over 100 years old and has evolved throughout the last century. School counselors help students apply academic achievement strategies, manage emotions and apply interpersonal skills, and plan for postsecondary options including military, further education and workforce.



### ***Ideas of ways to honor and celebrate your school counselor:***

- Decorate a bulletin board.
- Create a social media post honoring your counselor.
- Purchase a book for your counselor's library.
- Make a special school announcement.
- Treat your counselor to his/her favorite treat or coffee.
- Write your counselor a note.
- Place a banner/sign at your school honoring your counselor.



# Kindness Week

February 12-16

Kindness Week gives us the opportunity to be mindful in focusing on the good in others and creating positivity. Research shows that being kind to others reduces our own stress, stabilizes our mood, increases our stamina, and overall brings us joy.



## KINDNESS CALENDAR

MONTH February YEAR 2024

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
|   |  |   |  | 1 <b>LET SOMEONE GO AHEAD OF YOU IN LINE</b>       | 2 Give a compliment to someone                       | 3 Return someone else's shopping cart               |
| 4 Bake someone's favorite treat & surprise them             | 5 Put a kind note in someone's lunch box         | 6 Leave change in the vending machine for the next person | 7 Create an upbeat playlist and share it with a friend | 8 Say "thank you" to your school custodian         | 9 Check on an elderly neighbor or family member      | 10 Give your Mardi Gras throw to another person     |
| 11 TEXT A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER HOW MUCH THEY MEAN TO YOU | 12 Treat a friend to coffee                      | 13 Share an encouraging post on your social media         | 14 Give someone you love a valentine                   | 15 TAKE TREATS TO YOUR LOCAL FIRST RESPONDERS      | 16 Donate food or supplies to a local animal shelter | 17 Make or buy a meal for a friend or family member |
| 18 Volunteer or make a donation to your favorite charity    | 19 Take or send flowers to someone for no reason | 20 Take your neighbor's trash can back from the road      | 21 Offer to babysit for a friend who needs a break     | 22 Thank a teacher who has positively impacted you | 23 Share a snack with someone                        | 24 DONATE FOOD TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK                 |
| 25 Give someone a hug                                       | 26 ATTEND A FRIEND'S SPORTING EVENT              | 27 INVITE A FRIEND TO SIT WITH YOU AT LUNCH               | 28 Give someone a High Five                            | 29 Send a letter of encouragement to a friend      |  |   |



# Prevention & Support Staff Spotlight

Mrs. Brenda Moss is the secretary for Prevention & Support services. She has been with Baldwin County Schools since 2005. She began her #baldwinproud career with the afterschool program at Daphne Elementary School. She served as the site manager for the Pine Grove program for 3 years and the grants facilitator of the after school services for seven years. Brenda joined the Prevention and Support services team five years ago. When asked what she loves most about her job, she stated without hesitation, it is her love of the people she gets to work with each day. Brenda and her husband, Roy, live in Daphne with their 2 year old grandson, Oliver. They have 4 adult children; three sons and one daughter who tragically passed away last year in a car accident. Brenda and her family love football and are huge Alabama and Green Bay Packer fans. She enjoys traveling and visiting the beach with her family. Brenda is strong in her faith and she strives each day to be better than she was the day before.

## ***Mrs. Brenda Moss***



*Brenda with her husband, Roy*

## *Too much stuff: and it's negative impact on our mental well-being*



If your closets are bursting or your desk is covered in piles of disorganized papers, you may want to consider working to declutter and get organized. Research indicates many downsides to messiness and has found it can even be damaging to our physical and mental health. When we are surrounded by mess and disorganization, it creates tension and stress on our bodies. According to WebMD, one study showed that women who viewed their homes as cluttered had high levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. Research also shows that being surrounded by clutter and piles of stuff makes us less satisfied with life. It is difficult to focus when we are surrounded by clutter and disorganization. It can be especially hard for people with ADHD. Having too much stuff also makes it difficult to keep spaces clean. There have been research studies that have linked clutter and disorganization to more serious health factors such as insomnia, weight gain, and memory loss.



If you are struggling with disorganization and too much clutter, there is help! Like most goals that feel overwhelming, it is best to create small goals to work towards the ultimate desired outcome. For example, start with one room at a time, then one space (closet, drawer, cabinets) or one category (clothing, paper, books, shoes, cookware) at a time. Another option is to try discarding 5 things a day for one month and by the end of the month you have discarded 150 items. There are lots of books and online resources available to help with managing clutter and disorganization.

