



THE GROUNDHOG

“Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain”

Serving the Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Cloudland & Menlo Communities since 1982

Mentone Tree Lighting set for Dec. 9

by Stephen V. Smith

The town of Mentone will ring in the yuletide season on December 9 with a treasured tradition.

The annual Mentone Community Tree Lighting ceremony will begin at 5 p.m., capping a day of Christmas festivities.

The Farmers Market at Mentone will open at 10 a.m. that morning, featuring fresh produce and meats from area growers. It will be held on the grounds of the Mentone Inn Bed and Breakfast at the corner of Alabama Highway 117 and Scenic Drive (County Road 89).

In conjunction with the farmers market, the Mini Holiday Market will feature a dozen or more vendors displaying their wares, from woodwork and pottery to paintings and Christmas crafts. “This is the perfect opportunity to find some wonderful Christmas gifts for your friends and family, while also

supporting the many creators in our community,” says Cynthia Stinson, proprietor of the Mentone Inn.

Throughout the day, visitors can enjoy the Christmas Tour of Homes, coordinated by the Little River Arts Council. This is an opportunity to tour several historic and unique homes in the Mentone area, all decked out for the holidays. (For details, see story Page 7.)

The Mentone Ukes will kick off the tree-lighting ceremony with a performance of classic Christmas songs, inviting visitors to sing along. Free cookies and hot chocolate will be available for everyone, and Santa Claus himself will make an appearance.

The highlight of the evening comes when the community Christmas tree is brought to life. Funded by private

(continued on page 2)



The Mentone Ukes led the Christmas caroling during last year’s Mentone Community Tree Lighting ceremony.

The Shigleys’ Special Day

A Reunion at the MERF House and the Dedication of the Shigley Amphitheater

by Kelly Leavitt



Descendants of Frank and Melissa Shigley stand in front of the old Shigley home at their first reunion in almost 10 years

Surely, Frank and Melissa Shigley were smiling in Heaven on Saturday, November 4, when nearly 60 of their descendants and cousins gathered at the old Shigley home in Mentone. Area residents now know the home as the “MERF House,” which the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation purchased from Rudy and Dee Bell in 1996. It is located on Alabama Highway 117, adjacent to Moon Lake Library and the former Moon Lake School.

Frank and Melissa Shigley acquired the home in 1915. They raised 12 children: Elizabeth, Belle, Ernest, Stella, Edna, Ruby, Clarence, Rona, Grace, Nona, Frances, and Margaret. Nona and Rona were twins. Two children died in infancy. The 12 siblings led long and productive lives. Three of the 12—Ethel, Edna and Margaret—lived past 100.

Descendants of Frank and Melissa, plus a few more distant cousins, traveled to Mentone from nine different states, and one couple came from as far as Tokyo.

Henry “Frank” Shigley was born in Indiana on the day President Lincoln died in 1865. When he was 18 and living in Michigan, he entered a burning barn to

save animals. As a result of this daring act, his lungs were damaged and he was advised to move south, as it was thought that he would not survive the harsh northern winter. He traveled with a Dr. Pounds to Fort Payne in 1885. In the town’s building boom at that time, Frank found work as a carpenter and later a contractor. During these days, the streets would get so muddy he needed a four-horse team to pull his wagon of building supplies through town.

Rebecca “Melissa” Keith was born in 1870. Her family were among the earliest settlers of European descent in the area in 1827, prior to the establishment of DeKalb County. There are a couple of horsey stories of how Frank and Melissa connected. One story is that teenage Melissa saw Frank ride by on a horse and declared she was going to marry him. Another story was that he noticed her atop a horse and decided he had found his wife. In any case, they caught each other’s attention and married in 1888.

By this time, Frank’s parents and some of his many siblings had moved to our area, while other siblings stayed in Michigan or migrated westward. Frank and Melissa acquired a 120-acre homestead near

the present location of DeSoto State Park. Several of their 12 children spent their childhoods there, living in a log cabin built by Frank. His parents also homesteaded land nearby. A large, deep swimming hole on West Fork Little River still bears the name “Shigley Hole.”

A man of many skills, Frank helped build the Fort Payne Opera House and a variety of other buildings in early Fort Payne. He built numerous wood truss bridges in DeKalb County, as well as many brow and river homes in the Mentone area. Several of his descendants carried on in the building trade and were known for their exceptional skill. To this day, “Shigley homes” are of special repute. The last of the Shigley builders in Mentone was his grandson, Leonard Shigley, 1920–1999.

Frank and Melissa were dedicated to ensuring that their children were educated beyond what was the norm in their time. Their younger children and several grandchildren attended Moon Lake School. According to *Who Was Who in DeKalb County, Volume I*, Frank

(continued on page 10)

To subscribe to The Groundhog, please use the form on Page 18.



The Groundhog

Published monthly
by the Mentone Educational
Resources Foundation

The Groundhog has been in publication
since 1982. MERF is honored to continue
this community tradition.

MERF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Kathryn Norris – President
Tom MacMichael – Vice President
Marsha Merrell – Treasurer
Kathy McMunn – Secretary
Walt Pullen
Craig Sheldon
Carol Hazell
Brad Scott
Kelly Wright
Joel Leonard
Anna Mae Horn – Executive Director

GROUNDHOG STAFF
Anna Mae Horn, Editor
Michele Smith, Design
Ben Shurett, Advertising
Tabitha Graham, Ad Design

DECEMBER CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Stephen V. Smith, Kelly Leavitt, Rob
Hammond, Anna Mae Horn, Susan Seago,
Alyce Kenney, deJoly LaBrier, Romey
Atchley, Randy Grider, Barry Morton, Karen
Kwiakowski, Anne McLeod, Linda Jones, Clint
Croxtton, and Johnny Mann

Birthday calendar maintained by
Kayla Worthey

Contact The Groundhog
groundhognews@yahoo.com
P.O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984
256-635-8775
merfhouse.com

The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the
various authors in this publication do not necessarily
reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies
of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation.

Groundhog woodcut courtesy of
Meg Justice/Bee Spring Studio

Access The Groundhog online at
ReadTheGroundhog.com

Mentone Matters

by Mayor Rob Hammond

We all should be thankful we live in a community like Mentone. In our country and around the world, people are ignoring the ancient vision of “Peace on earth, goodwill toward men”. The angels heralding the birth of Christ delivered this hopeful message. This Christmas season, it is more important than ever to enjoy our time with our families and friends, and remember those who are less fortunate.

The town Christmas decorations will be put up after Thanksgiving.



Merry Christmas, and best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year! 🍷

From the Editor Moving Into a New Year of Hope

by Anna Mae Horn

This year has flown by, like a hawk swooping in and stealing away with something good and precious – time. As we prepare this combined December/January edition of The Groundhog, my heart is thankful for everything that has fallen into place this year.

One of the many reasons we are thankful is that MERF found a way to keep this beloved newspaper alive as its long-time publisher, MAPA, dissolved. We are grateful for MAPA’s dedication to The Groundhog and the community for so many years. We also appreciate the organization’s commitment to preserving the newspaper for another generation — just as this edition of The Groundhog reflects the ending of one year and the beginning of a new one.

The first half of 2023 was particularly challenging for our community, with the loss of two important structures. Ten days into the year, Miracle Pottery

was destroyed by fire. Less than a month later, fire consumed the iconic Hitching Post. The view topping the mountain will never be the same.

But turn through the pages of this issue, and you will be just as encouraged as I am. Our community continues to come together as a family (see the Shigley family reunion story) and a broader region of friends (see the Christmas tree lighting story). The various articles from our area non-profit groups show people moving forward, undeterred, in their efforts to support and inspire others.

Watch the clock and count down the seconds on New Year’s Eve. Wake up refreshed on New Year’s Day, thankful for a new beginning and another year of living. May you have a blessed holiday and a wonderful start to 2024. 🍷

—Anna Mae Horn



SUNSET SOCIAL

Sunset Social at Brow Park

Gather with us for a Mentone tradition known as the Sunset Social at the Mentone west brow park in front of the fireplace on December 14, January 18, and the third Thursday of each month.



Tree Lighting (continued from page 1)

donations, the tree lights up the corner of Mentone’s main intersection and serves as a welcoming beacon to all who visit the mountain hamlet.

This annual event has special meaning to Stinson, who started the tradition in honor of her mother, Betty Jo Morrison. “Christmas was my mother’s absolute favorite time of year,” Stinson says. “Our

home was always decorated through and through with the magic of the holiday. No matter where life took me, I knew coming home for Christmas meant enjoying the lights and decor that make the season so special. This celebration is for the entire community, but it’s also a very personal celebration for me.” 🍷



Christmastrees from the past two years.



Hot chocolate and Christmas carols kept visitors warm at last year’s tree lighting event.

It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas!

by Susan Seago

Color is everywhere during the holidays! Homes are decked out with bright lights, blowup Santas and Snowmen, nativity scenes, and other decorations. For December, I would like to mention some trees, flowers, and other natural ornaments to make your home and yard festive for the season.

Let’s talk about Christmas trees. Artificial trees are convenient, and many are very attractive, but I like the fresh cut trees. The scent of the branches brings the outside in the house. How many of you smell a tree before you buy it to make sure it is fragrant? Two of my favorite trees are the Fraser fir and the Noble fir, which have strong branches. The Douglas fir is a good choice, too. If you like a softer tree with more floppy branches, you may choose a cedar, Scotch pine, or cypress.

When shopping for a tree, lift it up a foot or so and bounce it a little to see if needles fall off. If it looks like a rain storm happening, the tree is too dry and will drop many more needles during the holiday. After you have found the “perfect” tree, cut off the bottom about two inches and immediately put it in a pail or bucket of water for a while to soak up the water. After putting the tree in the tree holder, and before you decorate, add water, and check it every day to add more water. Never let the tree get dry! Your tree should stay green through the holidays. Don’t worry if your kitty drinks the water. Our furies do it all the time, and it doesn’t hurt them. At least they do not try to climb the tree! One or two of our pets even like to lie underneath the fragrant tree.



Wreaths are a big part of decorations. Again, I prefer those made with fresh greenery. I use those large bottom branches of the tree that get cut off so the tree can go in the tree stand or holder. For decorations, I like to use branches of cryptomeria, pine cones, cedar, holly with berries, red nandina berries, red nandina branches, dried grasses, blue cypress, arborvitae branches, and red sumac. These are all natural and make a beautiful wreath for outside your front and back doors. A freshly bought wreath is just as good to decorate, too. Mist or water it to freshen. Decorate, then add a ribbon or bow, and you have your own personal lovely wreath. Other flowers and shrubs for winter color in the yard are pansies (a popular choice), hellebores, some camellias, junipers, and golden arborvitae. My favorite perennial, hellebores, should be blooming soon and will hold their blooms for many weeks. There are also evergreen azaleas which do not bloom during winter but add the glossy green to your yard. Any of the evergreen trees and shrubs, such as pine, cedar, arborvitae, camellias, or Cyprus, will add that beautiful array of greenery to an otherwise drab winter landscape. Tall billowy grasses also add wonderful texture to the landscape and provide shelter to small animals during the cold weather. Adding winter color and sound to your landscape will make you smile on those cold, maybe snowy, winter days when you just want to be outside or look at them from your window. Happy holidays to all! 🍷



Whiskers ‘n’ Granny have lived in these parts all their precious lives. They are related to almost everybody around here, and they surely do have tales to tell! We will be sharing their stories right here, with a few of the names changed so nobody gets in trouble.

Granny told me another story the other day about Crazy Cousin Ann and one time when she went to get her driver’s license renewed. The little ol’ gal who was workin’ the computer ‘n’ updating Ann’s stuff asked, “What color is your hair?” Cousin Ann, being a mature woman such as she is, made a ‘wah-lah’ motion with her hands towards her head and drawled: “Wh-i-tel!” The computer gal said, “That is not one of the choices ma’am”. Cousin Ann exclaimed, “Oh, I get to choose! Then put down “black”, like it used to be!”

Whiskers told me this story on Granny a long time ago, though she would never admit to it, and I wouldn’t dare to ask her. You know how Granny always dresses up to go to town, and she drives herself. (She’s pretty proud of herself for doing this. Several of her lady friends and women relatives never got their own driver’s license. It wasn’t unusual a generation or two ago for the man of the house to be the only one who drove the car or truck.) Anyway, on this one day, Granny wore her undies that were just about wore slap out. And the longer she shopped, the saggier those undies got. The bag boy was pushing the grocery buggy out to her car, walking right behind Granny, when she felt her undies start to fall. She didn’t think it would look good for ‘em, so as they fell down around her feet, Granny just stepped right out of ‘em without breaking a stride and just kept on walking. She opened the trunk, gave the boy his tip, without ever looking him in the face and without ever looking back. Granny told Whiskers that, with any luck, that boy was followin’ close enough behind her that he didn’t even notice those ol’ undies. 🍷



SOUTHERN PROPERTIES

Agency, Inc.

256-845-6000

southernpropertiesagency.com • 311 Gault Ave. N., Fort Payne

 MENTONE COTTAGE. Fully furnished. 2 BR/2 BA. Built in 2020. Walk to downtown. \$435,000. #1840387	 HISTORICAL BERRY HOUSE in Mentone; built in 1880's and one of the first homes built in Mentone! \$699,000. #21844470	 DOWNTOWN MENTONE DOLLHOUSE Recently renovated and offers 3 BR, 2 BA & an office space! \$359,000. #21844021	 MENTONE BLUFFS CABIN Under Construction - Check out this cabin located just north of Mentone. 1 BD, 1BA & loft area \$249,900 #21842209
 LEVEL SHADED LOT IN MENTONE! 3 BR 2 BA home. Newer central heat/air & roof. \$329,900. #1836773	 ADORABLE BUNGALOW OFF AL 117. 2 bedrooms, 2 baths. Deck, detached garage. \$279,000. #1834910	 MOUNTAIN BROW HOME WITH A VIEW! 3BR/3½BA. Fresh updates. Partially furnished. \$675,000. #1830251	 BROWZZING FOR SALE on the brow of Mentone atop Lookout Mountain overlooking a panoramic view of the valley! \$1,350,000. #2184407
 BRICK ESTATE ON THE MENTONE BROW! 17 acres w/ fencing & gated entries. 8 bedrooms, 6 baths, 2 half baths & basement. \$899,000. #1837843	 MENTONE BROW VIEWS at its finest! 2 BD, 2 BA wood floors and ceilings and full of Mentone character! \$495,000. #21843628	 WHISPERING PINE TRIPLEX just off of Scenic Hwy 89 for your Dream Family Getaway! Fully furnished & beautiful views \$525,000. #21843409	

LOTS & LAND

MIDDLE FORK of Little River. Approx. 6 acres. \$48,900. #1034997

200 ACRES located near historic Mentone! Mature trees, creek, paved road frontage. \$1,000,000. #1781133

GREAT POSSIBILITIES WITH AN AMAZING VIEW! This 2.3 BROW lot is a great location for your dream home. \$350,000. #21844211

BUILD YOUR NEW HOME with breathtaking views year round. Brow properties in Lake on the Brow on Lookout Mountain \$55,000. #1798542, 1798643, 1798657

BROW LOT W/ A PANORAMIC VIEW Don't hesitate, just move forward with building your dream home! \$195,000. #21844213

152 FEET OF RIVER FRONTAGE in West Fork Subdivision, Mentone! 3.01+/- acre lot (#60) \$89,000. #21845080

BROW LOT in Mentone! Watch the seasons change from your own paradise between DeSoto State Park and DeSoto Falls. \$125,000. #1815139

178 FEET OF RIVER FRONTAGE on the emerald green waters of the West Fork Little River. \$169,900. #1826674

BEAUTIFUL WOODED LOT in Crestline Park Sub in Mentone, 1.19 +/- acre building lot with lots of trees. \$54,900. #1836087

ATTENTION LAND LOVERS! Take a look at this 3 acre lot with gorgeous rock formations, view and a cave! Move fast on this one! Call today for more details! \$59,900. #1837796, #1837795

WOODED HOMESITE on Scenic County Road 89 in Mentone. Imagine your custom cottage nestled in the large shade trees. This lot is a rare find! \$49,900. #1840200

18 ACRES of zoned agricultural farm land, 2 nonoperational chicken houses, along with a 250 gallon tank generator. Call for more info! \$199,000. #21843119

BEAUTIFUL VIEWS FOR MILES & MILES, you've got to see this property, especially at this price! Build your permanent home, 2nd home or investment property. An adjoining lot is available for purchase! \$69,900. #21846269/2184671

150 FEET OF LAKE FONTAGE FOR \$50,000! You will love this little community close to Little River Canyon National Preserve & Little River Falls. Secluded yet only a short drive to town! #21847406

GREAT POSSIBILITIES! This Mentone property offers road frontage on Hwy 117 in the business/alcohol district. A rare opportunity as this is one of very few vacant lots in this area! \$75,000. #1801221

GREAT POSSIBILITIES! This Mentone property offers road frontage on Cove Road in the business/alcohol district. A rare opportunity as this is one of very few available vacant lots in this area. Also adjoins a lot that fronts AL Hwy 117 #1801378

Rhododendron Garden Club News

by Alyce Kenney

A bare tree stands with roots on both ends in December days.”

—Kiran Bantawa, “Bare Tree”



The sun was shining warmly during the Rhododendron Garden Club meeting on November 14, keeping thoughts of winter on the back burner for a while. This was the last formal meeting of the year, and we welcomed two new members and elected a slate of new officers for the 2024-2026 term. Our President will be Rhea Pirch; Vice President Carol Argo; Secretary Julie Cash; Treasurer Pat Parmelee. We are excited to see the future successes and learnings unfold through the many talents and creative energies of these ladies! Congratulations!

After the business meeting, Rhea Pirch presented a program on Floriography, the language of flowers. We learned much about the specific individual meanings and emotions attributed to our favorite flowers from Daisies to Hydrangeas. One of the flowers we learned about was the Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherimma*). This December flower speaks to good cheer and success and is said to bring wishes of mirth and celebration.

We also learned of an ancient legend that tells a story of this beautiful plant. The legend of Pepita and the “Flowers of the Holy Night”.

Pepita was a young Indian girl from a small village. Her parents were poor farmers barely able to feed their family. In the village, a manger was set up in the church for the Christmas celebrations and everyone was expected to bring a special gift to lay before the baby Jesus on Christmas Eve during a special procession with singing and



lighted candles. All Pepita could see were some weedy green shrubs, so she harvested an armful of branches. As she came into the building, where candles blazed and the people sang, the villagers were shocked. “What in the world is she thinking, bringing the baby Jesus an armful of weeds!” they muttered. But Pepita continued and as she did, a hush suddenly fell over the church. Then people began to whisper and then cry out. “It’s a miracle!” they exclaimed. Pepita then looked down. Each weed in her arms was now topped with a brilliant red flower.

Since then, every year in the weeks before Christmas, the hills of Mexico become a blaze of fiery red, symbolizing the blood of Christ. The star-shaped bracts of the shrub we now call the poinsettia are said to symbolize the star of Bethlehem. Throughout Mexico, they are now called flor de la Noche Buena: flower of the good night, the Christmas flower.

Flash forward to 1825 when an accomplished amateur botanist and statesman Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851), who, as the first U.S. Minister to Mexico, found the plant while serving there. The poinsettia is said to have been used by the Aztecs as a red dye and to reduce fevers. Poinsett brought this flower from Mexico, and it was renamed the poinsettia in his honor. He was instrumental in founding the National Institute for the Promotion of Science and the Useful Arts, a precursor of the Smithsonian Institution.

Today, Poinsettias are grown in production greenhouses in each of

the 50 states. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistical Service Census of Horticulture, retail sales of poinsettias reached more than \$215 million in 2019. (Dec 19, 2022)

The flowers of the poinsettia are grouped within the cyathia (small yellow structures found in the center of each leaf bunch, or false flowers). The colored bracts—which are normally flaming red, with cultivars being orange, pale green, cream, pink, white, or marbled—are often mistaken for flower petals because of their groupings and colors but are actually leaves.

There are some simple ways to keep your poinsettia healthy and vibrant. Keep it out of drafts in an area of your home that ideally is around 65-70° Fahrenheit. Water consistently and carefully, being sure to keep water off

the colorful leaves. Water on the leaves causes them to turn black and spoil, so water the soil only. Poinsettias like indirect sunlight. They are not truly “poisonous” to pets, but the latex of the plant can be an irritant to eyes and skin and leaves may cause some gastrointestinal distress if chewed on.

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. CT in the Moon Lake Library. All are welcome to attend.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! 🍷

“One kind word can warm three winter months.” —Japanese Proverb

Alyce Kenney is the outgoing Secretary of the Rhododendron Garden Club.

For more information regarding Poinsettias and other fascinating facts about Joel R. Poinsett:

- www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/a-smithsonian-holiday-story-joel-poinsett-and-the-poinsettia-3081111/
- www.southcarolinaexplorer.com/poinsett-bridge/
- laidbackgardener.blog/2020/12/25/the-legend-of-the-poinsettia/
- **Read:** The Miracle of the First Poinsettia: A Mexican Christmas Story, by Joanna Oppenheim



Fundraising Success!

by Anna Mae Horn

The Valley Head Area Women’s Club November bake sale was a great success! Enough funds were raised to furnish a scholarship to a graduating Valley Head student in the spring. All pecans were sold out. The Women’s Club appreciates each one who supported the bake sale or purchased pecans. Together, we make an impact.

In January, the Women’s Club will have a regular meeting on the third Wednesday. Retired Judge David Rains will be speaking to the group. Last year, Judge Rains brought a homemade quilt which found its way back to his family after a long journey. The quilt had been a fundraiser with names of donors embroidered

around the pieces. Apparently, this was a popular fundraising auction item in days gone by.

The Valley Head Area Women’s Club was organized in 1930 for members who enjoy discussing cultural subjects and desire to be useful to the community. The Women’s Club motto is to be, rather than to seem. We invite other like-minded women to join us for a meeting. Call 256-635-8775 to find out more information. 🍷
Anna Mae Horn is the president of Valley Head Area Women’s Club.

MENTONE, ALABAMA

EST.  2022

MOON LAKE

VILLAGE

5866 East River Road, Mentone, AL 35984

Located on the grounds of an historic 95-year-old schoolhouse

Bee Spring Studio—Meg T. Justice

Cloudland Framing

Coming Up Violets

Delightful Retreats

DeSoto Rescue Squad

Faith & Mustard Seed

The Gallery by Andiamo Lodge

LeonardDesign

Otherworld Gifts

The Sacred Earth Studio

Shigley Amphitheatre

Terrence Hill Basketball

DIXIE SALVAGE

Discount Building Materials

3630 Gault Ave. N.
Fort Payne, AL 35967
Business (256) 845-5475
Fax (256) 845-5475
www.dixiesalvage.com



MERIT BANK

BETTER BUSINESS BANKING.

Member FDIC |  Equal Housing Lender

Navigating the Holiday Emotional Roller Coaster

by deJoly LaBrier

Do you have plans for the holidays? Are you anticipating them with a little excitement mixed with dread? Will you be alone? Will you be traveling?

Sometimes we say yes when we'd rather say no. Are you already regretting saying yes to a family gathering that always ends in feelings being hurt? You may have lost a loved one during the holidays in the past, and now you have a tough time enjoying the season. You are not alone! The holidays often bring a mix of joy and sadness, and all the emotions in between. And they can all exist at one time. It may seem impossible at times to navigate them, but there are ways to do it that will ease your stress and even spark a little joy.

Anxiety and stress are common feelings that appear more during the holidays. They are often associated with spending and saying yes to too many events.

The first step to sanity during these times is to be aware of your body telling you "No, don't do it!" We have a tendency to push past these body messages. Maybe family pressure or societal pressure is telling you that you should want to do a particular thing, but your heart and body are not into it. You'd rather stay home or go somewhere else, but you say yes anyway. So, your job is to listen to your body. "No." is a complete sentence.

Acknowledging your feelings is vital.

There is nothing wrong with feeling sad and grieving losses during this time, when those around you may not be feeling the same. You are an individual with a full range of emotions, and none of them are wrong. Honor yourself by allowing yourself to be authentic, even when the pressure of family and friends may be telling you to smile when you don't feel like it.

You are in charge of your calendar. You may want to put time in it each day to do an activity that's purely for your pleasure, like listening to your favorite music, driving around to see the seasonal lights, or even volunteering at the local food pantry. This is a way to practice good self-care, honoring your feelings and bringing a piece of joy into your life.

Allow yourself some freedom to go in and out of your emotions, as well. Generally, humans aren't consistently happy, or consistently anything. We vacillate, sometimes daily. Is that a bad thing? No. It's normal. So just because it's the holidays, we can't expect ourselves to consistently be in the "holiday spirit". Allow yourself the freedom to change your mind. Be in touch with what will bring you joy and peaceful satisfaction.

Having a budget, for those of you who exchange gifts with families and friends, is vitally important to reduce the amount of stress you may feel in these months of parties and get-togethers.

This is a time when the value you put on personal connections is very apparent. See if you're able to have connections without gifts, or with homemade gifts. Simply be with each other in a deeply meaningful way that nourishes each of your hearts.

Find compassion for others who may be going through the same roller coaster of emotions. They may just need to be seen and heard. They need to experience an open heart and a willingness to be together in a non-judgmental space. If you are the one they turn to, feel honored; they trust you. That's better than any gift you could receive. This trusting, giving, and receiving can lift our spirits.

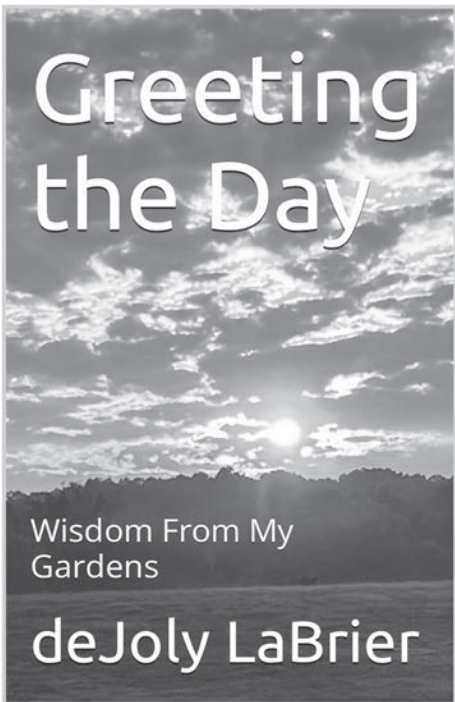
And if you already have healthy habits of self-care, don't abandon them just because it's the holidays. This will help your emotions level out to some extent. Keep meditating, walking in the brisk air, eating healthy meals as much as possible, and avoid overstimulation by media.

We do the best we can at any given moment. If you see you are becoming discontented with the decisions you're making about holiday events and money, make some different choices. The point is you are in charge of you. Having some healthy compassionate guidelines for getting your needs met, while navigating the emotions that come up in this season, can help you find the joy you want in your life, all the time,

not just in these winter holidays.

May you have a wonderful season where you nurture and grow genuine joy in your life. 🍀

deJoly LaBrier is a local author. Her newest book is Greeting the Day: Wisdom From My Gardens. It is a compilation of meaningful stories for self-reflection and mind/body integration, as well as spiritual perspectives. The stories take a look at how we deal with life transitions, growth, death, decisions, acceptance of differences, and much more with simple bits of wisdom gleaned from years of strolling through her gardens. Find her on Facebook or at her website deJoly.com



NACC Named Best Community College in Alabama by Intelligent.com

Northeast Alabama Community College (NACC) has been recognized by Intelligent.com as the best community college in Alabama. NACC was awarded the top ranking after receiving an "Intelligent Score" of 99. This ranking was awarded as part of Intelligent.com's Best Community Colleges in Alabama 2024 report.

Intelligent.com's institutional rankings, which are set apart from other conventional ratings, are deemed the benchmark of academic evaluations for online and hybrid programs. An exclusive methodology is used to rank each institution on a scale from 0 to 100 across six categories. Evaluations are based on quantitative measures such as academic quality, graduation rate, cost and ROI, and student resources. With top picks that are highly-regarded, affordable, and offer the tools and resources students need to successfully graduate and excel in their fields. Intelligent also focused on the quality of programs featured in the report, only recognizing accredited institutions.

"There are many outstanding community colleges in the Alabama Community College System and in the state," said NACC President Dr. David Campbell. "It is quite an honor for our faculty, staff, and students to be recognized for this achievement."

Intelligent.com's 2024 list applauds Alabama's institutions for their dedication to local communities and excellence in foundational education. To access the complete ranking, please visit intelligent.com/best-community-colleges/alabama/#northeast_alabama_community_college.



"In our comprehensive 2024 report, we analyzed over 3,000 academic institutions to select the most remarkable. Criteria considered include academic quality, graduation rates, affordability, return on investment, and the breadth of student resources. With both undergraduate and graduate programs in focus, we provide our 750K+ monthly visitors with an extensive range of choices," said Intelligent.com spokesperson Jase Beard.

NACC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a regional organization that evaluates the quality, integrity, mission, and resources of higher education programs in the south. SACSCOC is

also recognized by the United States Department of Education and Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Northeast is one of twenty-four community colleges in the Alabama Community College System (ACCS).

Intelligent.com provides unbiased research to help students make informed decisions about higher education programs. The website offers curated guides that include the best degree programs as well as information about financial aid, internships, and even study strategies. With comprehensive, user-friendly guides and hundreds of program rankings, Intelligent.com is a trusted source among students and prospective students. To learn more, please visit www.intelligent.com. 🍀





First Fidelity

Bank

Fort Payne
256-845-1077

Rainsville
256-638-6342

Idler
256-657-6255

www.bankffb.com

Telephone Banking 800-436-5103

Member
FDIC

"We're more than bankers, we're your neighbors and friends."





Wilson

FUNERAL HOME
CREMATORY



Our staff members will take care of your loved one every step of the way.

CALL TODAY TO DISCUSS YOUR FAMILY'S NEEDS.

(256) 845-9150

3801 Gault Avenue North
Fort Payne, AL 35967

www.wilsonfhinc.com

Mike Leath, Caleb Roberts,
Amy Justice & Ronnie Highfill



Mentone Ukes

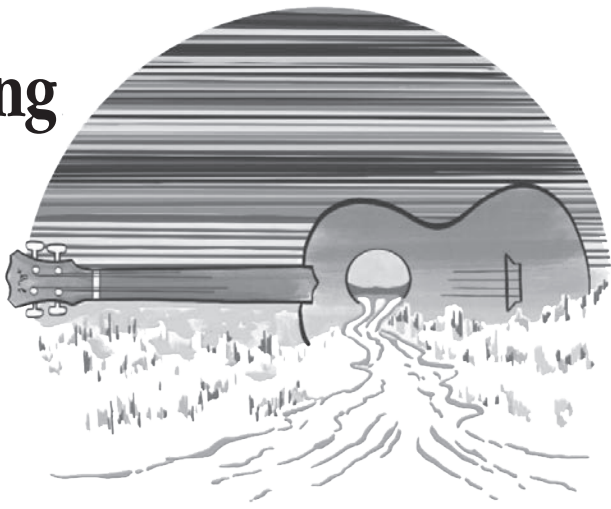
Instruments of Life’s Song

by Romey Atchley

The thing is to be able to enjoy the thought that the whole universe is a musical instrument, a cosmic instrument being played by nature. When we play music, it’s a miniature of what’s happening out there. Music is species specific, and it is species defining. We not only make music because we are human, but we’ve become human because we learned how to make music. It’s about man and the universe. The whole concept is the “how” of our relation to the universe.” --Mickey Hart (Grateful Dead)

Having only played the ukulele for six months, I would sit down to practice with the idea of trying to get better. But recently, a longtime musician, Steve Kimock, (Zero, O’Teil and Friends) told me that when he practices guitar, “It’s not so much that I’m trying to get better as I’m trying to maintain a relationship with my instrument”. His words resonated with me and left a deep impression. I began to explore not only this relationship with my ukulele, but the other relationships that this new companion has opened up for me.

Like any relationship, we get out of it what we bring to it. To develop this connection with my instrument, we must visit each other regularly, hang out, get to know each other better. When we are together, music happens. It is the expression of the time that we spend with one another. The music that arises out of our conversations becomes the journey I take with my instrument in hand. This relationship opens a doorway, and together we walk through it into a musical forest of sound and rhythm. The closer this bond becomes, the more we can explore the musical world.



As I go to my bi-weekly ukulele practices with the Mentone Ukes, I find that my relationship with my instrument is only the beginning of my delve into music. To fully explore the world of music, I seek out other people to learn from. They give me encouragement and inspiration that keeps me in the musical conversation with my instrument. Finding a group like the Mentone Ukes has allowed me to connect with others in the musical forest, to enjoy the fun of our journey together. My relationship with my ukulele illuminates that there is something akin to music that arises out of all these new friendships. Along with the literal music we make, there is also the figurative music we make together as a group, for just as single notes form a chord, the individuals in our group harmonize with each other.

After six months with the Ukes, I have begun to realize that the journey doesn’t end once I have found other playmates. Playing music becomes about sharing our enthusiasm with others, of playing to an audience. Ukes in hand, we step out into the community, connecting with other neighborhood groups. As the house band for the Moon Lake Library, the Mentone Ukes provide a backdrop of music for various community events, performing at

the Farmer’s Market, the Fall Festival, the lighting of the Christmas tree, the Library open house, MERF senior luncheons, or just playing for Rescue Squad donations on the front porch of Little River Hardware on a Friday afternoon.

Mickey Hart believes that since the entire universe is made of vibrations, making our own harmonious vibrations through music is our way of connecting to the divine. Music is also a way for us to connect with each other in our own little corner of the universe. All of our groups and individuals blending and mixing melodies and harmonies in various arrangements form the song of Mentone. Our community is our instrument we play together. Like my relationship with my ukulele, we get out of it what we bring to it and exploring our relationships with one another, is where the music of life happens. 🎵

Join us!

If this article strikes a chord with you, perhaps you’d like to join this community that is the Mentone Ukes and embark on a journey that branches out into multifaceted relationships: learning to play an ukulele, joining an encouraging and supportive group, and having fun along the way. The Mentone Ukes are proud and excited to be performing once again at the Town of Mentone Lighting of the Christmas Tree on December 9th and the Moon Lake Library’s Holiday Social on December 10th. Join us at one of our upcoming FREE sessions on Saturday, December 2nd and 16th and on January 6th and 20th at 1:00 P.m. CST at the Moon Lake Library. An introductory class is always provided at the same time as our regular session, and we have loaner ukes for you to try out. Connect with us on Facebook: MentoneUkes OR on the web: www.mentoneukes.com. Questions? Contact Debra Fey (debrajfe@gmail.com) or Jody Rhodes (jodyrhodes@gmail.com).



Turn Your Resolutions Into Questions

Start 2024 pondering instead of declaring

by Stephen V. Smith

The resolution is a holiday staple. Like turkey at Thanksgiving and wrapped gifts at Christmas, the first day of the year wouldn’t be the same without the New Year’s Resolution.

The problem with resolutions is they are seldom rooted in reality. We fail to account for what it will take to accomplish our lofty goals, and whether we have the capacity to achieve them. They are based on a future version of ourselves we’d like to see without taking into account the effort needed to get there.

As we enter 2024, instead of declaring all we will accomplish, let’s use this as an opportunity for introspection. Some questions to consider:

“How can I be of greater service to my community?”

Whether you’re a resident of Mentone, Menlo, Valley Head, or the greater Lookout Mountain area, your community has a place for you to serve. Also, look beyond your geographic community to the group of people with whom you share a common trait, be that a belief system, physical condition, or life experiences.

“How would I like to be different this time next year?”

Common answers include, “I’d like to weigh less,” and “I’d like to have more money.” Look past the obvious, though, and think about changes that could lead to a better version of yourself — not just how you feel about yourself, but the impact you have on other people in your life.

“What habit or behavior would I be better off erasing from my life?”

We tend to focus on what good habits we want to start at this time of year. But what about those proclivities that, if no longer present, would make us more productive, happier, and more useful to the world around us?

“Am I fulfilled in all domains of my life?”

We are multi-dimensional. We can be happy with our family relationships but miserable at work. Our finances may be in order while our physical health is a wreck. Look at every facet of your life and see where you stand today compared to where you’d like to be.

“What legacy am I building?”

This may be the most difficult question to ponder because it asks us to think beyond the immediate. Typical resolutions tend to focus on areas where we can see short-term improvements. When we think about our legacy, we are challenged to look at the long term and consider how our family, community, and the world around us will be different for us having been here. What will be the impact of our life long after we are gone?

True change starts with assessing the here and now. Spend time as we head into the New Year asking the right questions before you start making action plans. Doing so could help you make 2024 the best New Year you’ve ever experienced. 🎯

Stephen V. Smith writes about discovering and pursuing what a rare life means to you at www.LiveLifeRare.com.





See inside Mentone area homes and attractions during the Mentone Holiday Home Tour

by Stephen V. Smith



The Little River Arts Council is proud to present a rare opportunity for the public to see some of the most unique and historic homes in our community. The Mentone Holiday Home Tour is scheduled for December 9 and promises to be a highlight of this Christmas season.

Tickets will be available on the day of the tour at the Mentone Arts Center on Highway 177. The cost is \$10 per person. You will be given a wristband and a map showing the location of the homes on the tour. Hours are 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Following are the locations that will be featured:

Tall Meadow Rue (Larry & Kathryn Michael)

This beautiful English stone cottage features stained glass windows and upscale decor. The tranquil setting includes a tea house/studio, an outdoor chapel, and a goldfish pond. You will also encounter sculpted European-style gardens with exotic plants and iconic figures, a stone fire pit, a private side porch, and other natural attractions. The Tea House and Chapel were built by Andy Talton, former owner of Mentone Springs Hotel, and were part of the Mentone Springs Hotel Group.

The Chestnut House (Leigh Anne & John Montgomery)

This home is newly restored and constructed from the original Chestnut wood dating to 1910. Featuring original native stone in a contemporary rustic style, this professionally decorated cabin is both architecturally stunning and homey. The home was one of several family homes on its quiet street.

The Berry House (Kathy & John McFarland)

The Berry House is believed to have been built in the 1880s, making it one of the first houses built in Mentone. It was the family retreat of Martha Berry, founder of Berry College in Rome, Ga. Its heart pine construction was visited by such notables as Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and Thomas Edison as Martha Berry sought funding for her college. The Berry House is on the registry of Alabama Historic Places.

The Double B (Mary Gresham and Dr. Rick Barr)

This lovely Mentone home was built in the early 1940s and purchased in 1985 by Dr. Richard and Mrs. Poppy Buchanan (she was a camp nurse at Camp DeSoto) as a second home. The Buchanan’s daughter and her husband, Mary Gresham and Dr. Rick Barr, honeymooned here in 1990, and later bought the home. They began renovations in 2020 with the goal of it becoming their home for retirement. The Barrs also served at Camp DeSoto through the years, grounding the Double B in the community through the family’s camp connections across the years.

The Hummingbird Hotel (Mary Gresham and Dr. Rick Barr)

Next door to The Double B is Hummingbird Hotel. This is the former home of Mrs. Eleanor Morelins. Purchased from her heirs after her death, it was renovated with the addition of two bedrooms and



Unique homes and other spaces will open their doors to patrons for the Mentone Holiday Home Tour, hosted by the Little River Arts Council.

baths. This added modern suites to the existing two bedrooms and one bath of the original structure.

Boxwood (Lesa & David Cummings)

The west windows of this stunning home are 20 feet from the brow of Lookout Mountain, providing a great valley view that faces the sunsets. Finished in 2014, it was designed to blend in with the Mentone Stone Cottage style but with its own unique touches, such as its exterior of Ashlar cut stone. Boxwood’s 25-foot-tall stone fireplace sets the tone in the great room. Another highlight is the washed 1x10 tongue-and-groove pine boards for interior walls and ceilings throughout the home.

Andiamo Lodge (Colleen Duffley and Steve Carpenter)

In 1999, Larry Joe Hall (at the time a Buddhist monk) purchased this 1,200-square-foot home as a retreat center. He later sold it, and the new owners named it Monk’s Cove in Hall’s honor. Purchased and renovated by its current owners in 2021, the lodge is now known as an “experience lodge,” specializing in curated experiences from cheese making to writing, exploring, and more. Born of a love for family and friends, the talented duo bought the lodge and transformed it into the rustic luxe inn that guests experience today. With Duffley’s keen photographer’s eye and Carpenter’s culinary and managerial talent, they created lodging, a menu, creative experiences, and an atmosphere that’s a feast for the senses and so much more than a place to rest your head.

Mentone Inn Bed & Breakfast (Cynthia Stinson)

This historic structure greets visitors as they top the mountain on Alabama Highway 117. Not only is it

central to Mentone, but the Inn is also a central part of the community. A farmers market welcomes visitors on the grounds each weekend, along with numerous art shows and outdoor concerts throughout the year. Built during the height of the roaring twenties, the Inn’s gracious porch beckons visitors to enjoy the natural scenery from its perch atop the mountain. With its 12 comfortable rooms and a home-cooked breakfast that would make any grandma proud, the Inn attracts guests from several states — many of whom return year after year.

St Joseph’s-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church

This one-of-a-kind house of worship is built around a log cabin that dates back to around 1870. Over the years, mainly through building done by volunteers and without financial help from the Diocese, the building was shaped into a church with construction materials that include wood reclaimed from old buildings of the same vintage as the log cabin. St. Joseph’s-on-the-Mountain remains an active church, growing from a small group of parishioners meeting in the tiny cabin to a thriving church known for its ministry to the community through projects such as a food pantry, scholarships for local students, and more.

Sallie Howard Memorial Chapel

Col. Milford Howard built this charming chapel in the 1930s as a tribute to his first wife. It is built around a huge boulder, creating an impressive view from both its exterior and interior. Visitors and worshipers come to Howard’s Chapel throughout the year from many states. They are greeted by the words, “God Has All Ways Been As Good To Me As I Would Let Him Be,” emblazoned on one of the interior beams, a quote from his deceased wife. According to his wishes, Col. Howard was cremated upon his death, and his ashes were placed inside the giant rock within the chapel.

CCC Museum

The Civilian Conservation Corps played a vital role in American history and prosperity. The program put young men to work and helped pull the country out of the Great Depression. It prepared millions of young men for service to their country when the United States was drawn into the Second World War. Further, the CCC built many public projects, DeSoto State Park among them. Housed in a stone building at the original entrance to the park, the CCC Museum tells the story of the CCC, its impact on our nation’s history, and how the program shaped DeSoto State Park and the surrounding area.

Stephen V. Smith is a board member of the Little River Arts Council.



Sallie Howard Memorial Chapel is part of the Mentone Holiday Home Tour.

MENTONE

Holiday

HOME TOUR

Saturday, Dec. 9

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 and will be available to purchase the day of the event at the Mentone Arts Center.

Sponsored by
Little River Arts Council





Mentone Educational Resources Foundation

A Fun Fall

by Anna Mae Horn

What a fabulous fall lunch season! St. Joseph's really wrapped it up in style with a fabulous Thanksgiving meal, music, and activities. Each week there was something special happening at senior lunch. MERF is very grateful to each business, organization, and individual who make these lunches a success. It truly is a community project for other community members. Local seniors are always looking forward to what is scheduled for the next week. For some of these seniors, lunch is the highlight of their week. It is truly a joy to see community members coming together and socializing.

If you are an area senior, be sure to join us on December 6 at 11:30 in the fellowship hall of Moon Lake Baptist Church for our Christmas luncheon. Camp Skyline will be providing lunch, and who knows what else we will do or who might show up. If you or your business would like to sponsor, or co-sponsor, a luncheon for spring, just reach out. We will be getting those organized soon.

Camp Skyline will also be supporting MERF by hosting our annual Taste of the Mountain Art Auction once again. Save the date! April 6 will be filled with great food and beautiful art. You don't want to miss it.

MERF's biggest program is the Fine Arts Program for local elementary students at Valley Head School.

Ms. Paula Easter does a fabulous job with the students. Their artwork will be the highlight of the auction in April. Ms. Paula directed several grades at the Valley Head School Veterans' Day program in November. Waves of patriotism filled the gymnasium as she led all the elementary students to sing in unison "We are one Nation". Local Veterans were in awe.

Valley Head High School students are now becoming a more focused part of MERF's outreach. The board excitedly approved partial funding for the FBLA, along with football players and cheerleaders, to visit the Tennessee Titan NFL stadium on an educational field trip. The board is honored to support hands-on learning and introductions to new experiences.

Our annual fundraising drive is currently happening. If you'd like to give in some way, please see the details on this page. Your tax-deductible donations benefit many programs, all of which support lifelong learning and the enrichment of the community. We appreciate all those who give in any way, whether through funds or volunteering. MERF simply coordinates the resources. Thank you and Happy Holidays. 🍁

Anna Mae Horn is the executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation.





Dear Friends and Supporters of MERF,

For over 30 years, MERF has partnered with generous donors who enable us to broaden the educational enrichment of our rural community. MERF's commitment and steadfast support of Arts & Culture, Education, Community Health, and Senior Citizen Activity in the underserved communities of Mentone, Valley Head, and Hammondville continues to evolve and grow. Recently, MERF has expanded its role in the community by becoming the publisher of the beloved local newspaper, The Groundhog, and administering a two-year scholarship. We ask that you join the effort to fortify our foundation and further propel MERF forward as we support and encourage lifelong education in our community.

We invite you to join us in our effort to offer high-impact educational support in our rural area.

With best wishes for a happy holiday season,
Mentone Educational Resources Foundation Board



MERF supports:



► **SENIOR CITIZEN LUNCH PROGRAM**
Serve a hot lunch in the spring and fall months with educational components, games, and social time.

► **VALLEY HEAD SCHOOL STUDENTS K-12**

- Carter Holland scholarships for graduating seniors
- Sue Henry Scholarships for current college students
- Three Mountain Spirit Awards
- Arts Program funding that provides an art teacher, art supplies, music, and field trips
- Family Art Night event
- Professional Theater Performances
- Educational field trips: Space Camp, Titans Learning Lab, etc.
- K-12 reading books for library and hallway
- STEM at VHS library
- NYLF Explore STEM

► **INTERACTIVE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

- Meeting space for Mah-Jong
- Outdoor walking path with musical instruments
- Host festival on our Pathway to Community

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE (TAX DEDUCTIBLE):

- » Send a check to MERF: P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984
- » Donate online: MERFhouse.org with this QR code
- » Questions? Email MERF.mentone@gmail.com or call Anna Mae at 256-635-8775



Thanks for your support!

283 South Brow Dr.
Cloudland



Perched atop the Cloudland, Ga East Brow of Lookout Mountain sits a stunning 1927 vintage rock/reclaimed pine siding home that has been totally remodeled within the last year. This charming cottage boasts of 335' of unparalleled views of Shinbone Valley below and mountains as far as one can see. **The home is selling completely furnished and is move in ready.** The original property has incorporated into a total redesign of the house adding a large den/sunroom, master bed, bath and laundry room, and a comfortable and tastefully large dining room with cathedral ceiling and massive beams throughout. From the slate tile foyer with massive double front doors, you step through an elegant home filled with countless treasures of today and yesteryear.

Specializing in Mountain & Lakefront Homes

Becky Woodard REALTOR®
becky@hardyrealty.com
706-291-4321 | 706-506-0777







ON-FARM MARKET CLOSED FOR THE WINTER SEASON

Our On-farm market is now closed for the winter season and will re-open in the spring of 2024. We invite our customers to reach out if you are interested in purchasing our products.

(256)-674-3639 or info@thefarmatwindyhill.com

WE WILL HAVE A POP-UP CHRISTMAS MARKET ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH!

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook for our most up-to-date information.

445 ROAD 942, MENTONE, AL





Mentone Arts Center

Artists social, linocut class and Anya Hinkle highlight next two months of fun at the arts center
by Randy Grider

First and foremost, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
We have several events planned for December and January including an artists' social, classes, and music.

On Tuesday, Dec. 5, the monthly Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series will feature past singer/songwriters, who have been a part of the previous rounds, performing original Christmas songs. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. and is free to the public. The organizers of the event, Craig Hendricks and Dee Dee Cooper, welcome performing artists and attendees to bring non-perishable items to be donated to the local food pantry.

"This is a way we can give back a little to our folks in need in the community," Cooper said. "Thank you all again for a great 2023. We will not be meeting in January 2024 and plan to do a writer workshop in February. We will have a special guest as part of our March event. If you would like to be a part of our songwriter series in 2024, please call 256-884-1101."

Our final Artists of the Month recognition social of the year will be Thursday, Dec. 14 from 5:30-7 p.m. We will honor (October) Melinda Whitt, (November) Meg Justice and (December) Jay Clark. Everyone is invited to attend. Refreshments will be available.

As for the December Artist of the Month, Jay Clark is a multi-talented wood artist, book author, educator, and outdoor enthusiast. The arts center features several of his turned bowls, platters, tables, and his book on area wildflowers.

Clark's interest in woodworking started early, watching his father carve, whittle, and create things from wood. After attending craft fairs and observing wood turners, he bought a lathe and started creating.

He is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC), where he was a member of Delta Tau Omega and Beta Beta Beta (TriBeta) honor societies. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in geology and a Master of Education degree in combined sciences with teacher certification in physics, chemistry, biology, geology, and mathematics. Clark taught geology laboratory at UTC. He was a Distinguished Military Graduate and was commissioned as an officer in the United States Army. He is a retired science teacher having taught life science, biology, geology, and physical sciences for 30 years in Catoosa County, Georgia.

Clark has been employed with several universities working on archeology projects. He is also a volunteer with Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) working on various wildlife habitat management projects and tracking protected plants in the area. He is the author of "Wildflowers of Pigeon Mountain: Including Lookout Mountain, Cloudland Canyon State Park, and Chickamauga National Military Park in Northwest Georgia."



Saturday, Jan. 27 will be a busy and fun day as we will host two special events.

From 9 a.m.-3 p.m., we welcome linocut artist/instructor Meg Justice of Bee Spring Studio for an exciting printmaking workshop. The tuition is \$100 per person plus a \$35 printmaking kit fee paid directly to the instructor. The class is limited to 10 students. As students will be handling sharp tools, the class is for teens to adults.

Justice is a painter, illustrator, and printmaker. She has specialized in linocut printmaking for the past six years. In this introductory workshop, students will learn the basics of block printing. Justice will guide the students through the process of designing, carving and printing their very own linocut printmaking block. The printmaking kit includes all materials needed to take home five of your handprinted cards with envelopes and all the tools necessary to carve at home. Students may bring their own design to work from, however plenty of inspiration will be on hand to help you decide.

Then from 7-9 p.m., award-winning singer-songwriter Anya Hinkle and renowned fiddler/violinist Andrew Finn Magill will bring the sounds of Appalachia to the stage. Admission is \$25 and seating is limited.

Hinkle is an Asheville, NC-based songwriter whose music is steeped in the tones of Appalachian roots and folk music and seasoned by travels across the world. PopMatters describes Hinkle as "a burgeoning force behind the Appalachian roots revival." She won the 2019 Merlefest Chris Austin song contest, a finalist in the Hazel Dickens songwriting competition in 2019 for her song "Ballad of Zona Abston," and runner-up in the International Acoustic Music Awards in 2022 for "Hills of Swannanoa." Hinkle tours nationally in the US as well as extensively in Japan and Europe.

Finn Magill has been featured on PBS, NPR, TEDx and MTV-U. Finn is a Fulbright fellow, North Carolina Arts Council fellow, and South Arts Emerging Traditional Artist. He has performed with John Doyle, Rising Appalachia, Charm City Junction, Open the Door for Threese, Greg Ruby, The Paul McKenna Band, and Peter Mawanga among others. Finn grew up studying Irish, old-time, and bluegrass music with dozens of the best fiddlers in the world every summer at The Swannanoa Gathering in Asheville, North Carolina. Finn has performed at venues which include Milwaukee Irish Fest, Celtic Connections, Olympia Hall in Paris, France, Disney World, and Malawi's Lake of Stars Festival.

For reservations to any of the events or for more information, contact Randy Grider.

Randy Grider is executive director of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center. He can be reached by email at mentoneartcenter@gmail.com or phone at 256-674-3366.



Anya Kinkle and Finn Magill



December Artist of the Month Jay Clark



Meg Justice of Bee Spring Studio will lead a printmaking workshop in January.

TRY OUR FAMOUS TOMATO PIE & HOMEMADE DESSERTS!



Scan our QR code for Hours & Menus



WILDFLOWER CAFÉ

HISTORIC MENTONE, ALABAMA
607 AL HIGHWAY 117 | MENTONE, AL

Call 256-634-0066 for Dinner Reservations today!



Visit Mentone Market

SALADS, SANDWICHES & PIZZA

PREPARED FOODS • LOCAL ART & GIFTS • CRAFT BEER • WINE

5872 AL HIGHWAY 117 PH. 256-634-4686



Gift a Senior

We have about 50 elderly that we would like to celebrate this christmas with our 2nd Annual Gift A Senior Citizen. We are wanting to give them a little gift bag when MERF has their senior christmas lunch.

If you would like to help us, we need:
lotion • blankets • socks • chapstick • gift bags

Drop off locations

- Mentone & Valley Head Town Hall
- Moon Lake Library
- Valley Head Doctor's Office
- MERF house (256-635-8775)

Call Bailey Jane's at 256-844-5191 with any questions.

Last day for drop off is Dec. 5



Sherry Schoenheit

Whether you are thinking about buying or selling...

I will get you the
"Results That Will Move You"

Over 20 years experience buying and selling real estate

256.212.0252

Licensed in Alabama and Florida

LOKATION REAL ESTATE **YourAgentSherry.com**



**UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®**
APPROVED SHIPPER

FedEx.
Authorized ShipCenter

DHL
Express Global Service

Fort Payne

601 Gault Avenue North
Fort Payne, AL 35967
Phone: 256-845-7225
Fax: 256-845-7796

Rainsville

122 Main Street East
Rainsville, AL 35986
Phone: 256-638-7225
Fax: 256-638-7225

packagestore601@gmail.com

Hours: Monday - Friday: 9am-5pm | Saturday: 9am-1pm

<u>Copies</u> <u>Business Cards</u> <u>Photos</u> <u>Banners</u> <u>Large Format</u> <u>Binding</u>	<u>Shipping Supplies</u> <u>Stamps & Postage</u> <u>Shipping Experts</u> <u>International Shipping</u> <u>Next Day Delivery</u> <u>Postal Services</u>	<u>Notary</u> <u>Faxing</u> <u>Passport Photo</u> <u>Shredding</u> <u>Lamination</u> <u>Mailbox Rental</u>
--	---	---



Shigley Family (continued from page 10)



Ken Shigley and his cousin Kristine Shigley, who traveled to the reunion from Oregon.

donors for the project, the venue is named the “Shigley Amphitheater.” The stage will undoubtedly be well used in the future for a variety of events. Earlier this year, the World Day of Prayer service was held there, which would likely please Frank and Melissa. The original Wesleyan Methodist Church can be seen from the stage through the trees to the southeast.

The Shigley Amphitheater was officially dedicated during the reunion. Great-granddaughter Beth Shigley Perkinson and her husband, Rev. John Perkinson, led the attendees in singing old hymns. Another great-granddaughter, Sue Johnson Rickman (raised in Mentone and a retired professor at Southern Wesleyan University), accompanied on the keyboard. Henry Shigley (another great-grandson) spoke to his gathering of cousins about retiring to Mentone from Florida with his wife Shirley in 2003. (Perhaps he was trying to convince some of them to do the same.)

Ken Shigley then detailed some of the family’s history and jokingly explained a claim of royal lineage of the Keith ancestors that appears on a gravestone in South Carolina. “Do we have the ‘royal lineage’ referred to on the gravestone of Cornelius Keith,” said Ken, “or are we just poor relations? That’s one of history’s mysteries. My bet is on wishful thinking. Even if true, that and \$5 would get you a regular cup of coffee at Starbucks. In any event, we have a great family heritage to celebrate.”

This theme resonated throughout the morning and into lunch. Shigley family members show a humble pride for their ancestors and a healthy appreciation for their good fortune in having been well educated and influenced by a strong moral code.

Frank Shigley passed away in 1954. At the time of



Phillip Jordan, great-grandson of Ernest and his mother, Darlene Sprueill Jordan, granddaughter of Ernest.



L to R Shirley Crocker Shigley (wife of Henry), Leigh Shigley Daniels (daughter of Henry and Shirley), Henry Shigley (grandson of Ernest), Gage Anderson (son of Leigh Shigley Daniels), Sue Johnson Rickman (granddaughter of Grace), Mickey Rickman (husband of Sue, professor emeritus, Southern Wesleyan University), Fred Johnson (grandson of Grace).

Melissa Shigley’s death in 1963, the couple had 134 direct descendants. “Now there are probably a thousand more, though no one has undertaken a full count,” said Ken Shigley.

What began as a miracle when young Frank escaped the burning barn near the shores of Lake Michigan has evolved into a family deeply rooted in Christian faith and education, spreading across the country and to other countries the foundation set by Frank and Melissa in Mentone over 100 years ago.

It seems providential that their home has served as MERF’s headquarters for the past 25 years, with a path that will lead forward in service for many decades to come. 🐾



Debbie Crowe Duffy (granddaughter of Frank’s sister, Malissa Anabelle Shigley) and her husband, Tom Duffy.



First Cousins—L to R Marie Shigley Thrasher (Clarence’s daughter); Robert Green (Beth’s son); Marie Crowe Waters-Noah (Margaret’s daughter)

The Shigleys of America

Marie Crowe Waters-Noah (daughter of Margaret) extensively researched the family and created a 471-page book, *The Shigleys of America*. It is an exhaustive exploration of the descendants of the first Shigleys to emigrate to America—Johann Georg Schickle and Anna Maria Mueller Schickle, from a village near Stuttgart, Germany. It is thought they sailed on “Two Brothers,” a ship carrying passengers from Rotterdam. Simplified ancestry charts are at the MERF House.



Moon Lake Village (256) 634-0406
cloudlandframing@gmail.com
Facebook/Instagram: @cloudlandframing
Place your order by November 30th and give the perfect holiday gift!



advertise in the groundhog

email: groundhogads@yahoo.com

It’s a great way to affordably reach thousands of readers who are interested in local businesses, services & events!



**LAW OFFICES OF
THOMAS J. SKINNER, IV, LLC**

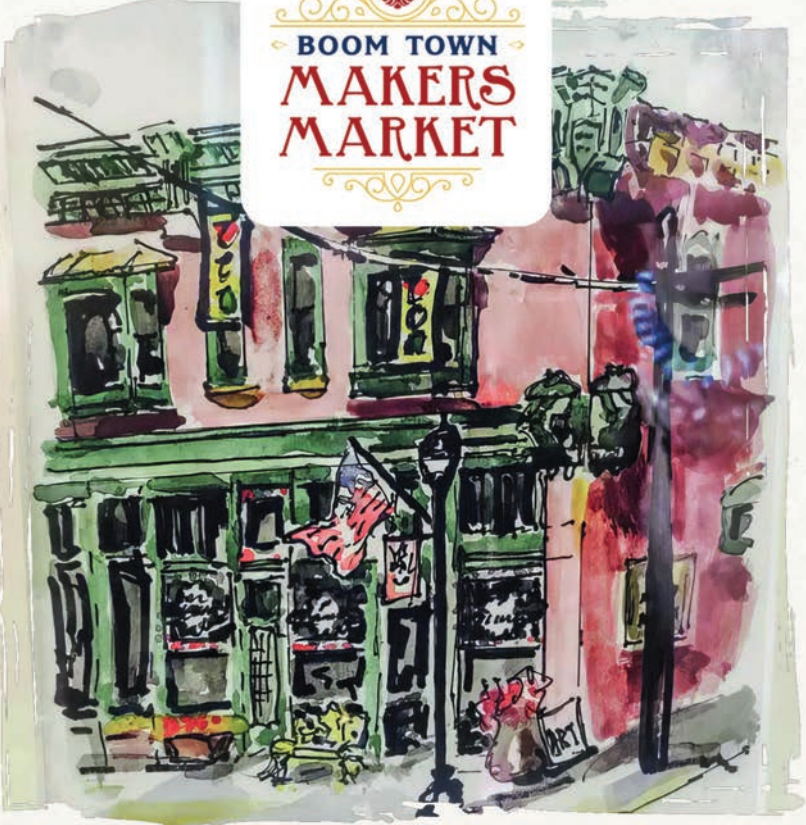
- Estate Planning, Wills, Trusts, & Probate Matters
- Business Law
- Real Estate Law
- Real Estate Tax Sales and Redemptions
- General Civil Litigation



**Open most
Wednesdays
from 9am to 4pm,
or by appointment.**

No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

Valley Head 166 Commerce Avenue | 256-674-1111
lawtjs.com



CHRISTMAS HOURS
Open daily during December
10 AM–5 PM • Sunday 11 AM–4 PM
Late on Thursday’s ’til 8 PM
Local Art, Gifts & Decor
Free Gift Wrap • Gift Cards

Save the Date
Thursday, February 8 • 5-8 PM
—ARTIST RECEPTION—
Kay Sasser Jacoby

www.BoomTownMakersMarket.org | 256-273-6929 | 324 Gault Avenue N in the Historic Sawyer Building



American Legion Post 215 Veterans Day at the Post Was a Complete Success!

by Barry Morton

I measure success two ways: how much fun everyone had and how much service we gave our Veterans. We fed over 50 people, veterans and the public, made \$270, and signed up 4 new members to the Post. At noon, I rang the bell, gave the speech recommended by the Alabama American Legion, and asked Camille Marie Morton (yes, my granddaughter) to draw the winner of the \$20 50/50 raffle.

Thanks to all who helped, especially Mike Norris and the folks at the Mentone Market who made the wonderful BBQ, Greg Brown who made plates of food, Jane Arnett who managed the Donation Bucket, and Legionnaires Dr. Carter Morris, Sandra Plummer, Jim Rogers, and Paul J. Vishaway for a successful picnic.

Barry Morton is Commander of the American Legion Post 215.



Camille Marie Morton draws the raffle winner.

*A Magical Gathering Place
with a Twist of Southern Charm*

The Hatter Café & Country Inn

4277 AL Highway 117
Mentone, Alabama

*Call today for New Year's
Dinner Reservations!*

(256) 634-2018

*New Winter Hours starts
January to March 31*

Breakfast / Lunch
Thursday–Monday 8AM–2PM

Dinner
Friday–Saturday 4–8PM

thehattercafe.com

Moon Lake Library

Celebrate the Season: Library's Holiday Social

December 10 by Karen Kwiatkowski

Save the date! The community is invited to the Mentone Public Library's annual holiday social Dec. 10 starting at 2 p.m.

Guests will join library staff and volunteers in old and new traditions. The model train and holiday village will once again be displayed. The village scene was built by Mentone resident Mickey Luck. Luck served for 15 years as a professor of sculpture at Mississippi State and continues to work in metal and wood.

The library will be festive with holiday music and food. The Mentone Ukes, the library's house band, will perform. Guests also will be able to join in a silent auction for a chance to win children's books to be given as holiday gifts. Another item to be auctioned off: a caroling session by The Moon Lake Library Carolers, complete with Christmas cookies and champagne or sparkling grape juice at the home of the high bidder (or the home of a friend chosen by the high bidder to receive the caroling session and goodies).



Librarian C. Anne McLeod will talk about progress made during the first year as Alabama's newest public library and plans for the future. Celebrate the season and look ahead to the new year with Moon Lake Library.

Karen Kwiatkowski is the Library Assistant at Moon Lake Library.

Winter Reads by Anne McLeod

With the leaves falling and our hours of daylight decreasing, we turn to winter, the season of cold and dark. I suspect it has fewer fans than the other three seasons. The older I get, the more I appreciate, as my grandmother did, the new growth of spring. Summer is a favorite for many in part because of nostalgic memories of summer vacation, popsicles, swimming, and perhaps a trip to the beach. Fall is rich with color, an enthusiastic quilt of a landscape up and down the mountain.

But winter? Who loves winter?

Plenty of people. Some because of winter sports like skiing or snowboarding or simply enjoying all the football playoffs and bowl games. Others because of holidays spent with loved ones, enjoying a special meal. Some enjoy winter's quiet and peace, having time to cozy up under the covers with a good book or a scarf to knit while watching a favorite movie.

I may never love winter, but I'm trying hard to come to peace with it. Before it sets in, I plan for small treats for the cold months, like a pine-scented calendar or a new board game. A recipe for some comfort food like apple crisp, mac and cheese, or a stovetop braise. I try to clear the decks of as much responsibility as possible. And, of course, I read, so here are some top picks for winter reads, all of which are available for check out from Moon Lake Library.

The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year by Margaret Renkl

Margaret Renkl is a native of Lower Alabama, now living in Nashville. She writes contributing opinions for the New York Times, and The Comfort of Crows is her third book. It's composed of 52 short sketches, one for

each week of the year. Written during the pandemic, when travel and social activities were curtailed, the book focuses on the natural world, drawing connections between the small creatures making their way in Renkl's backyard and family and social issues. It's been described as a sort of "literary devotional," intended to be read and savored.

Like her book Late Migrations, The Comfort of Crows contains extraordinary original artwork by her brother Billy, a professional artist, making it another strong collaboration between the siblings.

The Little Book of Hygge: Danish Secrets to Happy Living and My Hygge Home: How to Make Home Your Happy

Place, both by Meik Wiking

Lean into cold weather coziness with these two short volumes about creating warmth and community. Denmark has been named the happiest country in the world multiple times, despite its climate and high taxes. Learn the secrets of not just coping but making the most of opportunities to cocoon at home or in nature, even during the winter months.

Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times by Katherine May

In Wintering, May makes the case for taking a step back and reflecting, rather than merely powering through. As she and her family confronted illness and other setbacks, she realized that a period of quiet and rest would help them heal. She maintains that maximizing spare time and focusing on getting sleep problems resolved helps the body and mind recover from stress.

(continued on Page 15)



Bruce's FOODLAND

Home Owned and Operated Since 1979
Fort Payne • Rainsville • Section • Ider • Fyffe • Scottsboro

202 Greenhill Blvd., Fort Payne, AL 35967

We're Open 7 Days A Week
7am-10pm

256-845-1970

WIC Vouchers Quantity Rights Reserved Snap Benefits None Sold to Dealers

We Feature All This and More!

- Gift Cards
- Incoming & Outgoing Fax Service
- Postage Stamps
- Copies
- Deli/Bakery
- "Choice" Grade Beef
- Fresh Seafood
- Extended Lines of Gourmet, Specialty and Diet Food

We Accept

There's no reason to drive for miles to

Improve Your Health

shop at the *Horn of Plenty* Health Store, just east of Mentone!

We provide a selection of health products, including: supplements such as Vitamin C, Elderberry, Barberry and up to 40 others along with a large variety of health foods, including snacks, nuts, rice,

huge selection of spices, all baking supplies for healthy cooking, pastas, chocolates, desserts and many teas.

3808 AL Hwy. 117, (next to Deez Cutz Barber Shop and across from Bankhead Road) phone 256-634-2090.



The plight of leaves

Understanding the role of leaves and how to use them to your advantage

by Clint Croxton

The changing leaves gave us beautiful fall colors this year. Inevitably, this was followed by the falling of the season’s bounty of leaves. People with many trees in their yards may view this time of year as a sign that the fall/winter outdoor chores have begun and that they must be diligent in the removal of these leaves from every corner of their property. They must keep nature at bay. This is a futile effort and can also be destructive to wildlife. Further, it can cause erosion that leads to depletion of valuable topsoil.

For others, they view the falling leaves as a sign that the time for rest is approaching fast. They understand that the leaves have a purpose, even after their main job of soaking up energy from sunlight has been fulfilled. They realize that after the amazing color changes take place and the leaves begin to fall, their next job begins once they hit the ground.

Fallen leaves act as a mulch layer for the trees from which they fell. They work together to cover the soil and help retain water from the welcomed rains ahead. This also keeps winter winds and snowfall from washing away the very valuable topsoil as the leaves interlock and form a protective layer, like a winter coat.

While these important duties are being silently performed, other creatures take notice. They also welcome the falling of the leaves, as they provide both a source of food and a perfect place to overwinter. Some spend the cold months under the leaves, nestled in the soil, while others huddle in or attached to the leaves. These creatures include lizards, salamanders, frogs, toads, worms, pill bugs, caterpillars, beetles, ground-nesting bees, snails, spiders, chipmunks, and more. Some are in a larval stage and depend on these natural environments to survive the winter, awaiting the spring when they can emerge as beautiful moths or butterflies, fireflies, dragonflies, and more.

As winter comes to an end, these same leaves will begin to decompose into the soil, feeding the very trees from which they fell a few months prior. This process is very complex and involves fungi, bacteria, and insects that work together to turn the leaves into soil, all the while releasing nutrients that are absorbed by the plants around them. This is how nature fertilizes itself, long before humans sought our own expensive ways.

With the arrival of spring, leaves from the oak, hickory, sycamore, magnolia, and such begin their next job. These leaves help retain moisture in the soil as the days get longer and the temperatures begin to rise. In times of drought, the leaves prove invaluable to the livelihood of trees as well as the shrubs and perennial/annual plants below their branches. This leaf layer protects the soil and the surface roots from drying out, increasing the likelihood that these plants will survive inclement weather.

Armed with the knowledge of the many important roles leaves play, you can better manage leaves in your yard and also use them to your advantage. Following are some tips:

1. Gently rake leaves from walkways and patios. There is no need to remove every last leaf from your yard. They blow around, and most eventually find their way to nearby woods.
2. Take collected leaves to nearby woods to dispose of them. If you live in a city with no woods nearby, consider making a leaf pile in your backyard. This can be a simple pile or a cage structure to contain the leaves. They will decompose in time and turn into leaf mold compost you can add to your garden beds or use as a soil amendment when planting in both sandy and clay soils.
3. Rake the leaves and put them under trees and shrubs in your yard.



4. Leave the leaves! I maintain several properties, and I do not remove leaves from any of them. In fact, I actually bring in more leaves for my own properties — leaves that are bagged by unknowing homeowners and set out on curbs around town. I use these collected leaves to build compost piles and as mulch. I also make potting soil for my nursery plants using the aged leaf mold along with other natural and sustainable ingredients like bark and pine needles.

5. Mulch the leaves. This is a tender subject. I usually wait to do this until spring, after all the overwintering creatures have emerged and vacated their winter homes. I use a push mower with a bag attachment or just mulch them in place in an area where I want to start a new garden bed. Mulch them into your grass and it will feed and help retain water in your yard. The mulching process takes otherwise large leaves that slowly decompose and turns them into finer pieces that will break down much faster and can be used in your garden beds immediately as a top dressing around all of your plants.

6. Share with neighbors and family. If you have more than you need or that you can handle, consider offering them to a neighbor or family member who understands the benefits. Please don’t bag them up and set them out for the trash, unless your city has a collection and



composting plan — then, by all means, participate in that plan. I encourage you to contact your local municipality and help them understand the benefits of fall leaves and to find ways to use them as a resource for both the city and the people who live in it. 🍁

Clint Croxton specializes in native plants and encourages and promotes eco-friendly landscaping and land management practices. He can be found on Facebook at Soil N’ Green.



Brown's Cleaning & Laundry

“Continuous service by the same family since 1933”

FULL LAUNDRY SERVICE

817 Gault Ave. N.,
Fort Payne, AL 35967
(256) 845-3241

Open Monday through Friday, 7:30–5:30

- Suede, Leather & Fur Cleaning
- Fire Restoration & Odor Removal
- Wedding Gown Preservation
- Feather Pillow Cleaning & Re-ticking
- Bedding & Household Items



Drive happier.

Mark Mitchell, Agent
17174 Broad Street
Henagar, AL 35978
Bus: 256-657-6252
mark.mitchell.b2g1@statefarm.com

Join the millions who protect their cars with us. It's one more way I'm here to help life go right.™
CALL ME TODAY FOR A QUOTE.



State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
State Farm Indemnity Company
Bloomington, IL

Texas County Mutual
Dallas, TX

1601561



Rocky Top Pottery

Belinda Watrous
Potter/Owner

5895 AL-Hwy. 117
Mentone, AL 35984
Across from Mentone Market

256-630-4165
rockytoppottery@gmail.com
Rocky Top Pottery on Facebook

Handmade Pottery
from the Heart
of Mentone



HWA: Honoring Service to Our Country

by Linda Jones

Wreaths Across America (WAA) coordinates wreath-laying ceremonies every December to “Remember, Honor, and Teach” about the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families. Wreaths Across America Day 2023 is Saturday, December 16, beginning at 11:30 a.m. with a wreath ceremony at Patriots Memorial Park in Fort Payne. This ceremony honors all branches of military service, fire department, police department, and POW/MIAs. Volunteers will then proceed to the city’s Glenwood Cemetery to lay remembrance wreaths on the markers of over 600 veterans buried there. You are invited to be involved by sponsoring wreaths and/or by joining other volunteers for this patriotic event!

Tara Allgood, LT, Retired, NC, USN, presented the program at the November meeting of the Hannah

White Arnett (HWA) Chapter, NSDAR, at St. Philip’s Church in Fort Payne. Her program was titled “The Journey of a Navy Nurse”. All in attendance were inspired by her journey of service to the USA! Tara is also a member of Hannah White Arnett Chapter and is a resident of Mentone.

Tara’s service included the following:

- Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth
- US Naval Hospital, Okinawa, Japan
- National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda
- Deployments to Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- Civilian Service

Linda Jones is the HWA Public Relations Chair and WAA Location Coordinator. Wreaths can be sponsored online at WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/AL0115P.



HWA Regent Lynn Hixon, Veteran Tara Allgood, and HWA Vice Regent Jessica Reed

Join Us in Our Mission

Remember ★ Honor ★ Teach

★ **December 16, 2023** ★

National Wreaths Across America Day

Help Hannah White Arnett Chapter NSDAR & DeKalb County VFW Post 3128 honor local heroes!

Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a veteran's grave this December at Glenwood Cemetery.

Scan the QR code to make a donation online or visit www.wreathsafteramerica.org/AL0115P

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

SERVE ★ SUCCEED

#ServeAndSucceed



Tara Allgood with members of the HWA Chapter waving flags in honor of Veterans Day

Heather Nicely
REALTOR
256.276.8422

I love matching people to the property of their dreams!

CENTURY 21 BELLORA
256.999.0318 | 706.657.3000

RIVER RIDGE ESCAPE
Delivering Custom Tiny Homes Nationwide or to Our Communities

After Little River Escape Tiny Home Community was named one of the top six communities to downsize in by *U.S. News & World Report*, our community has become fully occupied and folks have come from 12 different states to live within our community.

With a successful year, Little River Escape has decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership. At the dealership, tiny homes are available to tour and purchase. RRE is now delivering across the nation and also developing other communities to bring more folks to Lookout Mountain.

River Ridge Escapes now has five tiny home communities and one down County Road 641 in Mentone, AL. There are several Airbnb Tiny Homes in our various locations to come experience a tiny home, downsizing, the community, and explore the surrounding areas.

Come Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

Tours of River Ridge Escape's Tiny Homes — Mon-Fri 10-5 ET or by appointment
8021 Highway 48, Menlo, GA 30731 RiverRidgeEscape.com (706) 936-0007

“Hidden Mentone” is a new book featuring photographs of Mentone’s architectural and natural beauty — scenes often overlooked by the casual traveler. The book is available for purchase at the Mentone Art Center, Mentone Market and The Hatter Cafe.

“Quality & Service You Can Build With !”

BUILDERS SUPPLY CO, INC.

ANDERSEN
WINDOWS & DOORS

Fort Payne

611 Godfrey Ave. S.
Ph: (256) 845-1451
Fax: (256) 845-5692

Scottsboro

615 East Willow St.
Ph: (256) 259-2211
Fax: (256) 259-0159

Sylvania

22916 Sylvania Ave. S.
Ph: (256) 638-2244
Fax: (256) 638-9706



Winter Reads (continued from page 12)

Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton

Had I realized how much of a suspense novel Ethan Frome was, I'd have read it long ago. Instead, I picked it up during my short-lived drive to read only classics and was blown away by the foreshadowing of disaster as well as the unexpected turn it took. Ethan is a stolid farmer, living in New England and married to Zeena, a difficult older woman whose light-hearted cousin Mattie is coming to stay to help Zeena who's often ill. Ethan and Mattie are almost immediately drawn to one another, and all the reader knows going in is that this will end badly, but how?

The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah

From the author of The Nightingale comes a riveting family drama set in Alaska where Ernt Allbright, a Vietnam vet with PTSD, sets up a homestead with his wife and teen daughter. As the light fades and the cold winter sets in, Ernt's mental condition worsens, so much so that his family begin to wonder if leaving is their least worst option.

Whisper to the Blood by Dana Stabenow

Or read any other book by Stabenow whose mystery novels are set in Alaska. The main character and detective in most of her books is Kate Shugak, a native Alaskan, along with state trooper Jim Chopin. In Whisper to the Blood, a gold mining company is purchasing land around Alaska's largest national park, and murder soon follows. Dana Stabenow does an excellent job of creating memorable characters and making the geographic setting in Alaska a major part of each book.

The Worst Journey in the World: With Scott in Antarctica 1910-1913 by Apsley Cherry-Garrard and Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage by Alfred Lansing
Before Apollo 13, there were the expeditions to Antarctica gone horribly wrong. The Worst Journey in the World is a first-person account by the Scott expedition's youngest member, who managed to survive the hardships that doomed others in his group. Just a few years later, Shackleton's trip in which he planned to cross the continent of Antarctica ended too soon. His ship, the Endurance, became trapped in ice and ultimately broke into pieces. The journey back home for the 28 men took years and remains one of the most incredible stories of survival ever.

Madhouse at the End of the World by Julian Sancton
Madhouse at the End of the World is a more recent telling of a little-known Belgian expedition to the Antarctic. Published in 2021, it tells the story of the young explorer Adrien de Gerlache who, in 1897, headed to the South Pole, only to be waylaid by the usual hazards, made worse by the frightening medical and mental symptoms experienced by much of his crew. Roald Amundsen was a young crew member whose passion for the South Pole was somehow whetted by this journey. He would go on to become the first to reach the South Pole in 1911.
Moon Lake Library is open from 12-4:30 Tuesday through Friday and 10-1 on Saturday. ☘
Anne McLeod is the Librarian at Moon Lake Library.

Dear Friends:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness..." Those opening words to Charles Dickens's 1859 classic A Tale of Two Cities suggest a polarized age not unlike today.
Among many positives for Moon Lake Library: As our first year as an official public library draws to a close, we're excited to look back over some major developments in 2023:

- Fiber optic internet, thanks to the Alabama Supercomputer Consortium
- Expanded hours of operation to include Friday afternoons
- The addition of Karen Kwiatkowski, an experienced librarian, to the staff

However, efforts by a few groups to decide what's appropriate for library shelves has been a hot topic lately. We hope that never happens here at Moon Lake but invite anyone with concerns to come by to see for themselves what we're doing. We are in the business of ideas and believe that folks ought to be able to determine for themselves and their children what material they read without restricting the choices available to others.

The focus of Friends of Moon Lake Library is to provide volunteers and to raise funds to maintain the library. We depend on the support of the Town of Mentone and on the people who live here and in the surrounding area to step up each year, checkbook in hand, and donate what they can to help us keep making the dream of a modern library for our town a reality. We are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Your contributions are deductible to the limit of the law. **Mail checks to Moon Lake Library, P.O. Box 481, Mentone, AL 35984, or click on the donate button on www.moonlakelibrary.org.** Donations made via our website are through PayPal and can be scheduled monthly if you like.
See the accompanying boxed text to find out what your donation to Moon Lake Library can do. Thanks in advance for any help you can give. We are grateful for the part you play in making this the best of times!
*Holley Midgley, Chair
Friends of the Moon Lake Library*

Your Donations Help Moon Lake Library Purchase Books and Supplies

- \$5 – A children's paperback book
- \$10 – A new adult paperback book
- \$15 – Label protectors for book and patron barcodes
- \$25 – A new hardcover book
- \$50 – Monthly phone or cleaning bill
- \$75 – A new frame for local art donated to the library
- \$100 – A roll of plastic book covers

- \$125 – Monthly power bill
- \$150 – First year's start-up cost for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
- \$200 – New printing of library T-shirts
- \$300-500 – New furniture for the library's community room/computer lab
- \$1000 – A 3-year movie license
- \$1500 – A one-year subscription to Camellia Net, Alabama libraries' source of eBooks and digital audiobooks

December 2023 & January 2024 at Moon Lake Library

Weekly Meet-Ups: CHESS on Tuesdays at 1; KNITTING and CROCHET Tuesdays at 2; SCRABBLE Wednesday at noon

December 1, January 5, January 19 – 6 p.m. Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share and we'll enjoy board games and cards at the library.

December 2, January 6, January 20 – 10:30 a.m. Little Library Learners, children ages 3-7, In Dec. will read holiday books and enjoy a craft activity in which they help Santa grow his beard out in time for Christmas!

December 2 & January 6 – 1 p.m. Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

December 8 & January 12 – 6:30 p.m. Movie Night: Dec.-Christmas Story; Jan.-Barbie (PG 13, 2023)

December 10 – 2 p.m. The public is invited to our holiday social for refreshments, Christmas music from the Mentone Ukes, and updates about plans for 2024.

December 15 – 6:30 p.m. - Christmas Classic: Christmas in Connecticut

December 16 – 10:30 a.m. - Saturday Morning at the Movies: The Muppets Christmas Carol (G). Little Library Learners, their families, and friends are invited to watch this retelling of the Charles Dickens classic at the library.

December 16 & January 20 – 1 p.m. Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

December 23-25 – CLOSED for Christmas

December 26 – Regular hours resume. The library will be open Friday afternoon and Saturday morning as usual.

December 29 – 6 p.m. Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share and we'll enjoy board games and cards at the library.

January 11 – 3 p.m. Friends of Moon Lake Library Board meeting; 4 p.m. Municipal Library board meeting

January 13 – 10:30 a.m. Book Club - Any book by Erik Larson, including The Devil in the White City

January 22 – 6:30 p.m. Herbalist Darryl Patton will speak on Traditional Southern Folk Medicine.

January 25 – 1 p.m. Technology for Newbies: Managing Email. Are you an absolute beginner when it comes to technology? Let us help. Call or email the library to sign up for tech pointers in a small group situation

Moon Lake Library
4607 Hwy 117 • Mentone, AL
256-634-2127

Tuesday-Friday 12-4:30 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.
moonlakelibrary.org
books@moonlakelibrary.org

Quality Jewelry AFFORDABLE PRICES

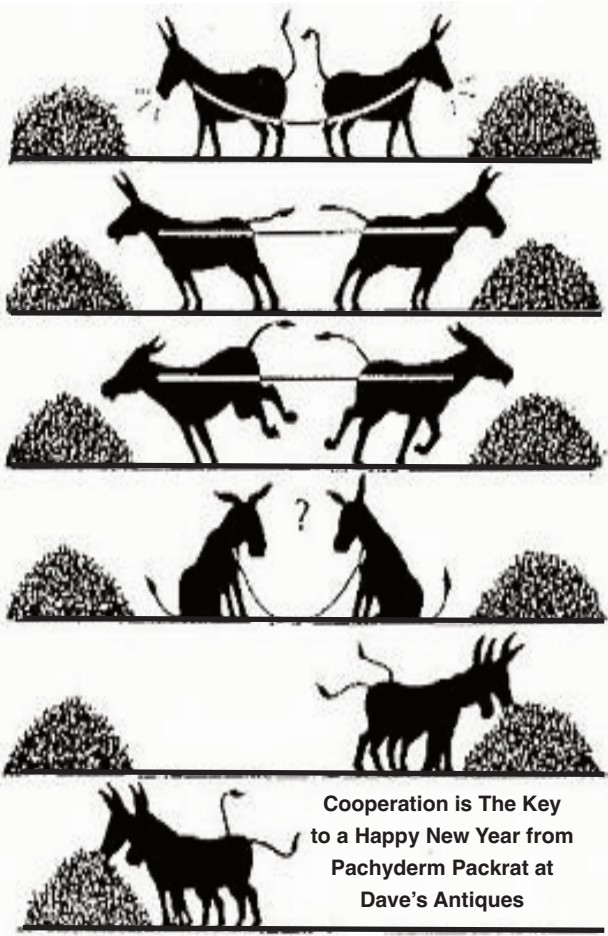
Engagement Rings, Wedding Sets, Diamond Pendants & Earrings, Fashion Rings



WE BUY DIAMONDS!

PLUS EXPERT JEWELRY REPAIR

SOUTHERN GOLD & SILVER
1706 Glenn Blvd SW, Fort Payne
(256) 997-7591



Cooperation is The Key to a Happy New Year from Pachyderm Packrat at Dave's Antiques

FURNITURE OUTLET



Located in Collinsville, Alabama

CEDAR

The beauty of Hand Crafted Cedar Traditional or Rustic Styles

POLYWOOD

Weather Resistant • Maintenance Free High Durability • Stainless Steel Hardware

WALL BEDS ALSO!

alabamaoutdoorfurnitureoutlet.com

256-490-4025



December/January Community Events

All times are central unless otherwise noted.
Calendar entries are subject to change.

DECEMBER

December 1 • Family Game Night. Come play with us at Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share if you can, and we'll enjoy Hearts, Rummikub, Mentone Train Dominoes, or whatever you like to play. Bring your own game and you may find you can introduce it to new fans. The library also has a collection of board games for people to try. The fun begins at 6 p.m. Moon Lake Library.

December 1 • A Vintage Country Christmas. Landmarks of DeKalb County, Alabama Inc. is excited to announce Rose Colored Glasses at Fort Payne Opera House. A Vintage Country Christmas features Birmingham's Rose-Colored Glasses playing country favorites and Christmas classics from your favorite Grand Ole Opry stars as well as original music. Find out more on our Facebook page. Tickets go on sale Friday, October 27 at 10 a.m. through Eventbrite! Fort Payne Opera House. 7 p.m.

December 1 • Melody and a Meal. Events on Gault is hosting a Melody and a Meal. Limited seating. Tickets are \$45 each. Held at The Warehouse on Gault. 6 p.m. 256-996-9063. Meal is provided by LouAnn Hastings, and the melody will be by Chad.

December 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 • Blow an Ornament. Design and literally "blow" your own ornament with the help of a glass artist and literally "blow" your own ornament with the help of a glass artist at Orbix Hot Glass. Check out even more classes and info at www.orbixhotglass.com. Call 256-523-3188 or email info@orbixhotglass.com for details.

December 1 • Serious Skills Series: The Art of Woodburning. Make Your Own Souvenir Ornaments. Participants in this class will learn the basic techniques of decorative wood burning from artist April Blanks and will work on their own souvenir ornament designs of scenes in DeSoto State Park and different Christmas designs. Practice basic techniques using a pen-like burning tool and paint. This class is for ages 14 to adults. 2 class times available: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. or 1-3 p.m. (CST) DeSoto State Park. \$25 includes supplies. Pre-registration required. Contact Brittney Hughes at DSP.

December 2 • Christmas in the Park. We're so excited to announce the date and time for our 4th annual Christmas in the Park in Fyffe! We will have vendors including crafts, direct sales, and local businesses as well as food vendors dishing out some of your holiday favorites such as hot cocoa, warm apple cider and gingerbread men. It is rumored the Jolly Big Man may stop by. Come out and join us to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season with the whole family. If you would like more information on becoming a vendor contact Amanda McCutchen @ 256-601-6095. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

December 2 • Volunteer Day: CCC Bridge Trail Work. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

December 3 • Pictures with Santa. The Garage on Gault.

December 7 • Canyon Kids – Decomposers. Join us for a hands-on adventure for children 3 years-3rd graders. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Little River Canyon Center. What to Bring: Please wear footwear suitable for hiking, bring water, and sun protection. Free event. Registration strongly suggested. Limit 15 students. For more details and for pre-registration, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548. Or Facebook at JSUFieldSchools.

December 8 • Christmas with The Isaacs. NACC is proud to welcome The Isaacs back to our campus for Christmas. Tickets are \$20. Purchase tickets by calling 256-638-4418 ext. 2248.

December 8 • Christmas in the Park. Fort Payne. Come join us for the 38th annual Christmas in the Park! Visit with Santa, enjoy some popcorn, peanuts, hot chocolate and more! Starts at 4:30 p.m. and the Fort Payne Christmas Parade will start at 6 p.m.

December 8 – 10 • Walk Through Bethlehem. Broadway Baptist Church in Rainsville has constructed the city of Bethlehem for you to experience what life would have been like the week of Jesus' birth. The event is open December 8 & 9 (6-9:30 p.m.), 10 (4:30-8 p.m.). The estimated walk-through time is 45 minutes. Admission is free.

December 9 • Moon Lake Library Book Club. Let's talk about books! Sometimes we read and discuss the same book. Other months, we share book recommendations. This is a great way to meet new friends and get some good ideas about what to read next. 10:30 a.m.

December 9 • Holiday Home Tour. From Brow to Hollow, this year's homes will delight you. 10 a.m. -4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 & will be on sale the day of the event. More information in the Little River Arts Council article.

December 9 • Christmas Tree Lighting at Mentone Inn. 5 p.m. Artists will be set up on grounds of Mentone Inn from 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

December 9 • Yoga Class. Join us for yoga with Soul Shine Yoga & Wellness Studio at 10 a.m. in Hunt Hall.

December 9 • Canyon Christmas. Join us for Canyon Christmas at the Little River Canyon Center, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. The fun begins with Story Time at 11. Santa arrives at 11:15. Get your free picture made with Santa for the entire family. Pets are welcome on a leash. Join That Puppet Guy's Christmas puppet show at 11:30 and 1:00. Meet the Canyon Center's "Teacher Creatures" and see what each animal will be getting for Christmas at 12:15. Join us anytime from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to hike the story book trail. Create special holiday crafts, enjoy a sweet treat and more throughout the event. You don't want to miss this special day! All times are Central Time. All activities are free and open to the public. Call the Little River Canyon Center, 256-845-3548, for more information.

December 9 • Christmas on Main in Fyffe. Market on Main will be open til 8 with amazing doorbusters and sales all day! We plan on having food trucks set up beside us to enjoy before the parade and during the day while you shop. You can shop our local stores all day. Our old building is going to be a Holiday Pop-Up Shop.

December 9 • Santa on the Stage. Santa is Coming! Have a photo

AREA CHRISTMAS PARADES

December 2 • Ider Christmas Parade. 1 p.m.

December 2 • Christmas Parade and Christmas at the Cabin in Henagar. The night will begin with our annual lighted Christmas parade at 5:00 p.m. and will finish with entertainment, pictures with Santa, train rides, and delicious food from Crossover Cowboy Church at the Henagar Park as the parade ends. Be sure to visit Henagar Park throughout the month of December to see all the beautiful Christmas Trees sponsored and decorated by members of our community. See you at the Cabin! Parade starts at 5 p.m.

December 3 • A Valley Head Christmas • Parade and More. Vendors, Food, Pie Contest, Christmas Tree Lighting and more. 2-6 p.m. Parade line up at 4:30, starting at 5 p.m.

December 8 • Fort Payne Christmas Parade. Join us in beautiful downtown Fort Payne on Friday, December 8th at

6 p.m. as our Fort Payne Boys Soccer team leads our parade as the Grand Marshals. They are this year's 6A Boys State Soccer Champs! We encourage businesses, church organizations, civic organizations, clubs, and community members to sign-up and participate. There is no charge for floats. We do have a \$25 fee for beauty pageant participants and those who are not a member of the Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce. Members may have one car at no cost, but signup is required.

December 9 • Fyffe Christmas Parade. 12 p.m.

December 9 • Collinsville Christmas Parade. 6 pm.

December 9 • Geraldine Christmas Parade & More. Come enjoy Geraldine Christmas Parade, and then enjoy Christmas in the Park to follow. 6 p.m.

December 16 • Sylvania Christmas Parade. 1 p.m.

made with Santa. Photos will be available for purchase and all proceeds go to benefit Landmarks of DeKalb County. \$12 for an 8x10 that will be mailed to you. Please contact Landmarks via Facebook Messenger or our email: landmarksdekalb@bellsouth.net with your name, address, phone number/email to reserve a photo order. You can also provide that info the day of the event. 12-3 p.m. Happy Holidays!

December 9 • Serious Skills Series: Nature's Elements in Metal Art Workshop. Join artist Kevin Watson from Tintations for a fun workshop that utilizes reclaimed tin and barn wood. Make your own piece of art to hang at home or give to someone special. This class is for ages 14 to adults. What to Bring: Enthusiasm (all materials and tools needed to complete this project will be provided). Wear comfortable, casual clothing and bring drinks/snacks if you wish. This workshop emphasizes the use of hand tools, students should have moderate hand strength. 1-3 p.m. (CST) DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama-Location disclosed at time of registration. \$40 includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class.

December 15 • Hike with a Naturalist. We will be hiking Powell Trail in the Little River Canyon National Preserve. This hike is a strenuous 2-mile journey with varying and steep terrain into the canyon. Cell phones may have little to no reception. Please wear footwear suitable for hiking, dress in layers, bring water, hiking poles, sun protection and a snack! WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with the Canyon Center. Meet at the Little River Canyon Center: 10:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m. Free and open to everyone! For details, call 256-845-3548.

December 15 • Family Game Night. Come play with us at Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share if you can, and we'll enjoy Hearts, Rummikub, Mentone Train Dominoes, or whatever you like to play. Bring your own game and you may find you can introduce

it to new fans. The library also has a collection of board games for people to try. The fun begins at 6 p.m. Moon Lake Library.

December 17 • Christmas Cantata. All are welcome to Moon Lake Baptist Church Christmas Cantata entitled "By Heaven's Light" at 6 p.m.

December 25 • MERRY CHRISTMAS!

December 28 – 31 • Honey Pot Barrel Racing. A 4-day barrel racing event with prizes and awards. Open/youth/futurity races and an adult and senior side pot.

JANUARY

January 1 • HAPPY NEW YEAR!

January 1 • First Day Hike. Neverland Trail New Year's Day, 2024. Start the New Year with a first day hike at DeSoto State Park! About the hike: We will hike on the Never-neverland/Vizneyland trails, as well as the Dark Side trail for a longer hike which will be approximately 7 miles round trip, moderate. Trail weaves through hardwood forest with sandstone outcroppings, streams, wetlands, and an old homelace along the trail. to ages 10 to adult. 9:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m. Meet at DSP Country Store & Information Center on County Road 89 (will caravan to Lost Falls trailhead). Pre-registration is appreciated. WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please call the Park Lodge before leaving home. 256-845-5380.

January 5, 19 • Family Game Night. Come play with us at Family Game Night! Bring a snack to share if you can, and we'll enjoy Hearts, Rummikub, Mentone Train Dominoes, or whatever you like to play. Bring your own game and you may find you can introduce it to new fans. The library also has a collection of board games for people to try. The fun begins at 6 p.m. Moon Lake Library.

Menlo Restaurant

American Family Style

Friday Night Special \$9.99
Hamburger Steak w/ 2 sides, Texas Toast & Drink

Saturday Night Special \$18.99
Ribeye Steak w/ 2 Sides, Texas Toast & Drink

Choose from these sides:
tossed salad • slaw • baked potato • baked sweet potato • okra
tater tots • french fries • onion rings • pintos • corn nuggets
onion strings with jalapeno buttons • fried or grilled squash

Featuring delicious homemade desserts including
pecan pie, chocolate chess pie, and the Menlo Brownie.

"Best Burgers Around"
Monday through Saturday 7am – 8pm EST
7807 Hwy. 48, Menlo, GA 30731
706/862-2281

Dine-in & Carry-out

Gift & Wine Shop

Log Cabin Village • Downtown Mentone

Find us on Facebook
[@thegroovygoatmentone](https://www.facebook.com/thegroovygoatmentone)



December Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Gayla Blalock Mark Hatfield Morgan Crane Marcia Tucker Christine Brooks Megan Kelley Ivey Leigh Hall Alice Dutton																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



In Memoriam

Please email your loved ones Memoriam information to GroundhogNews@yahoo.com. They will be printed as space allows.

Mrs. Ella Elizabeth (Walker) Bowman

January 15, 1933 – October 20, 2023 (age 90)

Mrs. Ella Elizabeth Bowman, age 90, of Cloudland, passed away Friday, October 20, 2023 at a local healthcare facility.

Mrs. Bowman was born January 15, 1933, to the late Obie and Nellie Kirkland Walker. She was a homemaker and of the Church of God faith.

Survivors include her children: Frank (Carol) Bowman, Jr., William Bowman, and Susan Rogers; siblings Obie (Carol) Walker Jr. and Celia (Harold) Fussell; 6 grandchildren; several great-grandchildren; along with numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

Along with her parents she is preceded in death by her husband, Frank Bowman, Sr.; and brothers: Willie, Wilson, and Milton Walker.

Tommy Wayne Benefield

March 6, 1971 - October 24, 2023

Tommy Wayne Benefield age 52 of Valley Head died October 24, 2023 at his residence.

Survivors include wife, Mary Benefield; daughter, BriAnn Hass(Heath); sons: Stephen Benefield(Hannah Goodwin), Sam Benefield, Dwayne Summers; mother, Linda Benefield; grandson, Gunner Hass; brother, Robbie Benefield(Deana); sister-in-law, Lisa Edmonds; nieces, Stephanie Hudson(Cody) and Melanie Benefield; and several great-nieces, great-nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Tommy had worked construction and was preceded in death by his father, Robert Carlton Benefield.

Brandon Keith White

April 1, 1980 - November 4, 2023

Brandon Keith White age 43 of Menlo, GA died Saturday, November 4.

Survivors include son, Hunter Keith White, mother, Synthia Rose White; father, Charles “Buster” Hester; special family friends: Marsha Brown, John A. Hilliard, Bobby Blevins; and several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Brandon was born in Fort Payne, AL and attended Valley Head School. He worked construction and attended Oak Bowery Holiness Church. He was pre-

ceded in death by his grandparents, Sylvia Cleo and Grady White and uncle, Harold White.

In-lieu-of flowers contributions may be made for funeral expenses.



Dana Hugh Traylor

Jan 18, 1989 – Nov 14, 2023

Dana Hugh Traylor, age 34 of Rockford, Tennessee, formerly of Mentone, passed away Tuesday, November 14, 2023. He was born in Fort Payne, a 2007 graduate of Fort Payne High

School, an Eagle Scout, a veteran of the United States Air Force and a member of First Presbyterian Church of Fort Payne.

He is survived by his parents, Dennis and Shelia Helton Traylor; sister Kelly Traylor; grandmothers: Nancy Tcherneshoff and Dorothy Traylor; aunts & uncles: Karen (Brian) Barnett, Brenda (Terry) Haynes, Shirley (Eddy) Lawhorn, and Lee Traylor; and beloved German Shepherd, Harley.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents: Billy Helton, Dorothy Kilgore, and Clyde Traylor; and uncles: Rickey Helton and Michael Traylor.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to any Veteran’s non-profit organization or any local Boy Scout troop.

Mr. John Baxter

October 21, 1987 – November 15, 2023

Mr. John Harrison Baxter, age 36, of Mentone, passed away at Erlanger Hospital on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

He is survived by his parents, Warren Baxter and Amelia Caldwell Baxter and aunts: Jackie Baxter, Veta Blackstone, and Belinda Logan.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Burt Funeral.



Anita Keef Shirley

October 16, 1951 – November 20, 2023

Anita Keef Shirley, age 72 of Valley Head, passed away Monday, November 20, 2023. She was born in Fort Payne

to the late Charles and Verdine Ree Plemmons Keef.

She is survived by her children: Dawn & Jason McCord and Brandi & Farley Green; sister, Monia Smith; grandchildren, Luke (Kelsey) Posey, Jessica (Alex) Parham, Will Green, and Baylee Green; great-grandchildren: Kase Parham, Finley Parham and Ridge Posey; along with several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Terry Shirley; daughter, Nichole Shirley; and parents.



Benjamin Stephen Booth

September 4, 1934 – November 21, 2023

Benjamin Stephen “Ben” Booth, LL.D., D. Min., age 89, of Mentone, passed peacefully on November 21,

2023, surrounded by family and caregivers at his home in Mentone.

Rev. Booth is survived by his wife Susan, of almost 50 years; daughters, Susan Anne Booth, Megan (Jay) Finkelstein and Rebecca (Mike) DeVasher; grandsons, Zachary, Seth and Taylor Finkelstein and Benjamin and Jack DeVasher; sister Mary Booth McDowell; nieces: Terri McDowell and Vivian; brother-in-law “like a brother to him” John B. (Peggy); sister-in-law Michelle (Steven) Franklin; and many beloved cousins.

Ben had a strong interest in and connection to aviation which began in his childhood. He truly enjoyed flying and sharing the joy of flight in his role as flight instructor at Fort Payne airport. As a Presbyterian Minister PC(U-SA), he served pastorates in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Dewey Stephen Booth and Mary Josephine Evans Booth and his uncle, Hunter (Eleanor) Evans.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the charity of your choice. Wilson Funeral Home and Crematory in Fort Payne, Alabama will be handling the arrangements. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at a later date.

Mr. Jimmie E. Phillips

April 16, 1938 – November 23, 2023 (age 85)

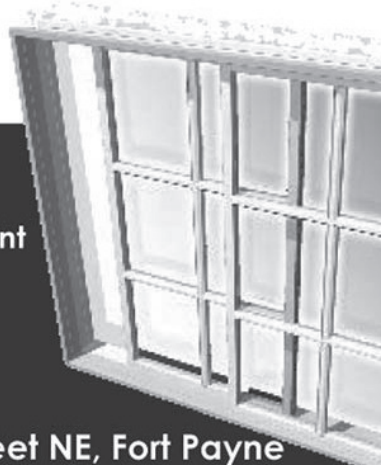
Mr. Jimmie Edward Phillips, age 85, of Menlo, died Thursday, November 23, 2023, at his residence.

Mr. Phillips was born April 16, 1938, in Trion, GA, son of the late Charlie Edward Phillips and Ethleen Rich Phillips. He was a member of Teloga Baptist Church and, prior to his retirement, was employed with Mount Vernon Mills. He was also previously employed with the Chattooga County Sanitation Department. Mr. Phillips was a veteran of the United States Army and an avid farmer.

Survivors include his wife, Dorthene Brown Phillips; sons, Eddie (Ginger) Phillips and Rickey (Lisa) Phillips; daughters: Karen (Robert) Garrett, Barbie (Tommy) Strawn, and Sandy Phillips; 12 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Kathleen Wooten, and 5 grandchildren.

1	William Blackburn Alexis Reed Brittany Harrison Harold Carden Kathy Carson April Pierce David Tucker Andrew Campbell Abby Mitchell Jeannie Woods Cynthia O'Daniel	1	Jack Carden Hoyt Ashley Ronnie Hulgán Lolah Claire Coots Gina Martinm	1	Alvin Durham Flor Chasity Pulido	2	Jim & Cynthia Connor
2	Donnie Bell Kristen Adams Amber Wilson Rickey Williams Thomas Worthey Gideon Grisham Kelly Floyd Jennifer Stephens	8	Tyler Carden Fowler Posey Zachary Wallace Emily Stallings Jerry Boatwright Ryker Abernathy Jessica Chester	15	Anna Bailey Alice Shanklin Cody Smith Fawn Kitchens Tim Bryan Mickey Luck Amanda McDonald Alex Stutts	23	Jaden Turner Bence Chambers Scott Gifford Melissa Carden Dowe Forman Kent Kerby Anita Hester
3	Stacy Howard Aiden Chappell Owen Izell Lance Elkins Cameron Hunt Tressie Thomas Trey O'Daniel	9	Lucas Howell Dallas Lee Ellie Shugart Kristy Sweatman Ashley Jones Bryan McAdams	16	Wynston Keith Trent Smith Sarah Chastain Tyler Godwin Geiger Guin Jerry Floyd	24	Sandy Sharp Marysa Wigley Darrin Smith Tommy Harrison Jr. Lucas Elkins Grayson Booker Zakk Johnson Giovanni Nasoni DeLeslyn Stephens
4	Emma Goggans Tyler Blansit Ed Ringer Kaleb Underwood Aiden, Brynna & Cooper Justice	10	Neal Whitt Stacey Painter Nancy Frost Heath Miller Eli Durham Layton Williams Kayla Stutts	17	Olivia Bowman Jim Poe Joseph Brown Michael Owen Caiden West Naomi Chandler Shaun Wheat Margie Collins Carla Dutton Ainsley & Addison Wright Carol Ann Wester	25	Shannon Tolbert Sarah Wilcox Larry Sonsil Hudson Grider Dennis Lewis
5	Aidan Dupree Angela Chambers Tiffany Wallace Gage Gelfenstein Steve Sharp Hayden Williams Kay Bryan Edward "Mickey" Lands	11	Josh Shoults Robert Green Kandis Lawton Preston Owen Allen Powell Freda Pike Ryan Wooten Avah Poe Annabelle Ferguson Shawn Bullock Brett Justice	18	Nicole Goldsmith Bobby Blalock Linda Miller Barbara Blalock	26	Shirley Burton Seth Norman Shane Grider Brandi Justice Kimberly Kinney
6	Sharron Hatfield Laiton Keith Amanda Dyar Emily Guin Ryker Chester Bush Kerby James Hayes Jr.	12	Beverly Henry Aaron McKenzie Thad Heinrich Christina Wise Chris Collins Isaiah Avila Nola Kay Pilotte Sarah Lynn Thompson	19	Lennan Phillips Candace Perkins Jacie O'Tinger Olivia Elkins	27	Kaie Facteau Jessica Heinrich Lindsey Frazier
7	Kristen Emory Madisen Smith	13	Paulette Manning Anita Johnson Erin Dean Alayna Wright Tyler Stalvey	20	Calee Ann Owen Denise Carden Spencer Smith	28	Ruth Battles
		14	Haleigh Battles	21	Ryley Smith Tiffany Gatlin Justin Smith Eric King	29	Allie Baker Lacey Byrum Ellison Hester
				22	Kyle Carden Anna Garrett Rosetta McGee	30	Stephanie Roberts Gunner McGinnis Morgan Hill Olivia Bolton
						31	Tyler Cooper Bill Battles Ashton Carpenter Nate Bain Axel Clark Brook Dutton





Recipes from “Around the Table with the Shigleys, October 2004”

Contributed by Kelly Leavitt



Chocolate Truffles

by Bobbie Daniel Hilderbrand, Ruby's daughter

- 3 – 1 oz. squares unsweetened chocolate
- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 1-1/4 cup sifted powdered sugar
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Chopped nuts

Melt chocolate over hot water. Combine butter and powdered sugar; mix until smooth. Beat egg yolks one at a time. Stir in chocolate and vanilla. Chill until mixture is stiff. Shape into 1-inch balls and roll each in chopped nuts. Store in a cool place. Makes 2 dozen.

Old Fashioned Egg Pie

by Eva Green Clark, Ethel's daughter

- 3 eggs, well beaten
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 pt. milk
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 unbaked pie crust (9-inch)
- 1 egg white, slightly beaten

Mix eggs, sugar, milk and nutmeg. Pour into pie crust which has been brushed with egg white. (This keeps crust from becoming soggy.) Bake at 350° until custard is firm and slightly brown, about 30 minutes.

Orange-glazed Sweet Potatoes

by Linda Pullen Burns, Ethel's granddaughter

- 4 medium sweet potatoes
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. corn starch
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 Tbsp. chopped walnuts
- 3 Tbsp. dry sherry

Cook sweet potatoes in boiling water until tender. Let cool to touch, peel, and quarter. Arrange sweet potatoes in lightly greased 13x9x2" baking dish. Sprinkle with salt. Combine brown sugar and cornstarch in a small saucepan; stir in orange juice and raisins. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Cook, stirring constantly until thickened. Add butter, walnuts, and sherry. Stir until melted. Pour glaze over sweet potatoes. Bake uncovered at 350° for 20 minutes.

"Around the Table with the Shigley's, October 2004" is available for purchase at Mentone Market.

Potato Soup

by Margaret Shigley Crowe

- 4 cups water
- 6 cups diced potatoes
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 tsp. parsley flakes
- 5 Tbsp. flour
- 4 cups milk
- 1/2 pound cheese, cubed
- 3 chicken bouillon cubes
- Salt and pepper to taste

Put potatoes, celery, parsley and bouillon cubes in water and cook until tender. Blend flour with small amount of milk. Mix well and stir into veggies. Add remainder of milk, heat but do not boil. Add cheese and remove from heat, stir to blend. Serve hot. (Be sure not to overcook potatoes or they will be mushy and ruin texture of soup.)

Raisin Pie

by Grace Pullen, Ethel's daughter

- 2 cups raisins
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. corn starch
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. vinegar
- Pastry for double crust

Boil raisins in water 5 minutes. Combine sugar, corn starch, cinnamon and salt with a little water. Add to raisins, stirring until thickened. Add butter and vinegar. Pour in crust and top with remaining crust. Bake 25 minutes at 425° or until lightly browned.



A Valley Head Christmas

SUNDAY | 2 – 6 P.M.
DECEMBER 3

- VENDORS
- REINDEER GAMES AND ACTIVITIES
- MUSIC
- PICTURES WITH SANTA
- PIE & GINGERBREAD CONTEST
- TREE LIGHTING
- CAROLING
- AND MORE

Parade Lineup at 4:30 p.m.

For information, contact 256-635-9814 or email VHtownhall@farmerstel.com



Rising Fawn Studio Tour

Painting
Pottery
Textiles
Metal Work
Silk Painting
Jewelry
Wood Carvings
Photography

We're Back!

December 9 & 10
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Located on Lookout Mountain in the New Salem Community.

Visit 6 studio stops with over 10 artists, all within 3 miles.

Claire Vassort
clairevassort@yahoo.com
423-243-7699







Mentone American Legion Well Represented at the Valley Head School

by Barry Morton

On Wednesday, November 8, Mentone American Legion (MAL) members were invited to attend the celebration of Veterans Day given by the Valley Head School. All K-12th graders were in attendance to honor the local Veterans. MAL had four Legionnaires there. Besides me, we had Paul J Vishaway, Dr. Carter Morris, and past Commander John O’Rear. Our cub scouts in the audience at the celebration were Larkin, twins Hawkins and Sawyer Brown, and Cutter Battles. Grades 1, 2, and 3 all performed musical acts instructed by Ms. Paula Easter, MERF’s Fine Arts Teacher. Nine years ago, she organized a similar celebration at the Moon Lake School when Nolan Stinson invited me to attend. Here he is now, boy he’s certainly grown, hasn’t he? 🐾

Barry Morton is Commander of the American Legion Post 215.



Nolan Stinson, nine years ago at Moon Lake School Veterans Day program.



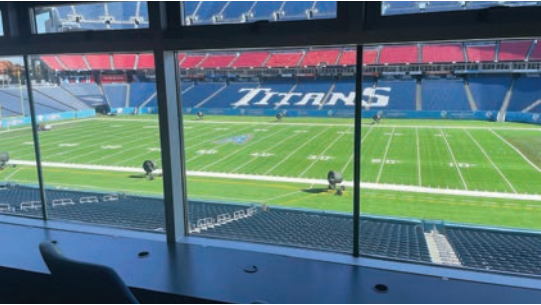
Nolan Stinson, now, serving the local community.

Tennessee Titan Learning Lab Field Trip

by Johnny Mann



Valley Head School students are learning about NFL team management.



Nissan Stadium, home of the Tennessee Titans.



Titan Learning Lab instructor with students.

The Valley Head FBLA Club, cheerleaders, and the football team went to Nashville, Tennessee to tour the Nissan Stadium. Over the course of the day, we were walked through a learning lab by some of the Tennessee Titan staff. These events create lasting memories for the students. Field trips are a wonderful educational experience for students. The Tennessee Titan Learning lab is held multiple times each year to teach students about the diverse careers in the NFL. Some of these careers include finance, marketing, production/media, and community impact. The labs provide hands-on

learning opportunities that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. After the tour, the Valley Head students went to eat at Buffalo Wild Wings. We were very grateful, as a portion of the expense for this trip was covered by MERF: Mentone Educational Resources Foundation. This was truly a great experience, and we learned a lot. Football is not just the coach and the team but an even larger team that works together as one to keep everything running smoothly. 🐾

Johnny Mann is a junior at Valley Head School.

REAL ESTATE • VACATION RENTALS

DELIGHTFUL
RETREATS

Lookout Mountain

HOLLY
HOUSTON
Owner/Broker
(256)465-1258

ELIZABETH
WAY THORNELL
Realtor
205.792.3580

WWW.DELIGHTFULRETREATS.COM

For Sale

Recently Renovated Mentone Log Cabin

2 Bed/2 Bath Log Cabin, located on a corner lot, between Mentone and DeSoto State Park. Features a new kitchen, stainless appliances, stone fireplace and wooden countertops. Beyond the new back deck is a 1 Bed/1 Bath guest house/ studio. Location and easy accessibility make it a great option for investment too!

35 Road 9081, Mentone, AL

New Construction Mentone Mtn Brow Cabin

3 Bed/2 Bath with an open concept kitchen and great room with reclaimed beams. Features wood ceilings, walls and floors throughout, indoor and outdoor fireplaces, and private decks. Hurry and you can pick out your own finishing touches and appliances!

19087 Scenic Highway 89, Mentone, AL

CALL FOR MORE INFO
ON THESE PROPERTIES

Vacation Rentals Cabins, Cottages, Tiny Homes, Lofts & more!
We have what you are looking for!



Call or email for info on our rentals: bookings@delightfulretreats.com • (256)465-1258