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THE GROUNDHOG

“Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain”

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

Join us for the first annual mentone Fall Festival



by Jody Rhodes

Every year, visitors flock to Mentone to take in the breathtaking fall foliage on the mountain. This year, a group of dedicated Mentone residents are planning to kick off the fall season with Mentone’s first ever Mentone Fall Festival to continue the tradition of MAPA’s Colorfest. While there will be events across town over the third weekend, the festival

itself will be Saturday, Oct. 21, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Moon Lake Village campus. According to the Mentone Fall Festival Planning Committee, the mission of this festival will be threefold: (1) provide much-needed financial support to Mentone for renovations of one of its historic and central landmarks –historic Moon Lake School

building; (2) to economically support the town and its businesses, including Moon Lake Village tenants who may be affected by ongoing renovation work; and (3) to celebrate Mentone’s cultural heritage and community and to pull all stakeholders together as one town.

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See pages 8-9 for Mentone Fall Festival information, including maps, vendors, music schedule, and more.

Chimney Swifts Connecting Mentone to the Amazon Basin

by Kelly Leavitt

My friend Bill recently called me and said, “I’ve got a story idea for you. I think you should write about chimney swifts.” Hmm. I knew nothing about chimney swifts. As he told me a little about them, I became curious. He suggested I drop by his Mentone brow home in the golden hour, right before sunset, and experience these unique birds. Now I find myself wishing we had a stone or brick chimney!

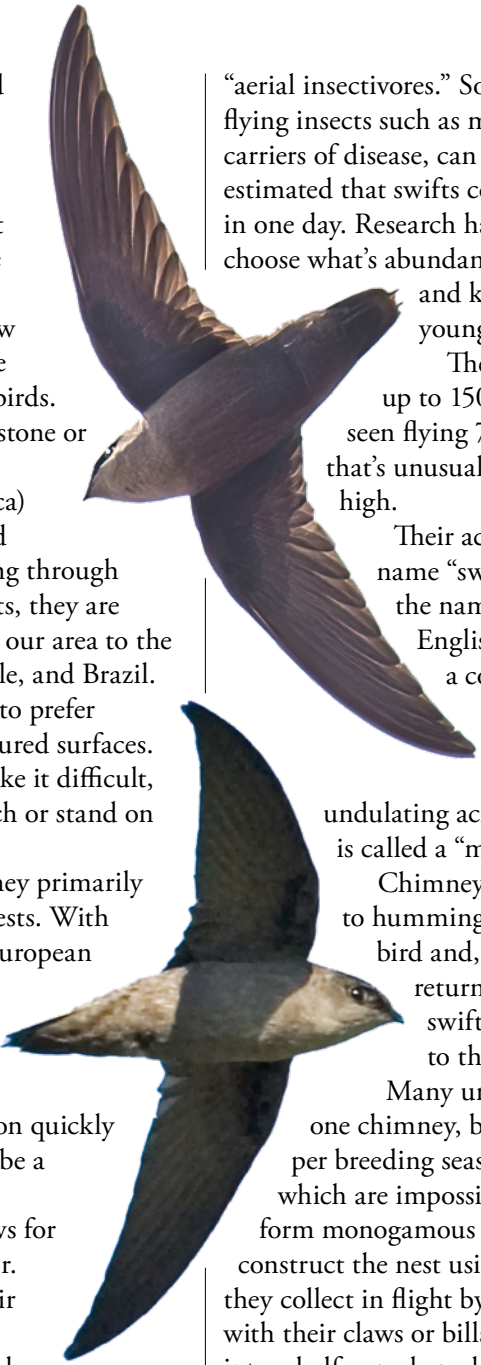
Chimney swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) live and breed in the eastern U.S. and southeastern Canada from early spring through late summer. As neo-tropical migrants, they are beginning their annual journey from our area to the Amazon basin of Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and Brazil.

These unusual birds have evolved to prefer roosting and nesting on vertical, textured surfaces. In fact, their unusually small feet make it difficult, if not impossible, to perch on a branch or stand on the ground.

In pre-colonial North America, they primarily roosted in hollow trees of mature forests. With the extensive logging that followed European immigration, their habitat was drastically reduced. When settlers began constructing chimneys of stone and brick, the swifts adapted and adopted. Their population quickly increased as they found chimneys to be a suitable habitat for roosting.

Their aerodynamic structure allows for most of their life to be spent in the air. They fly from the time they leave their roost at daybreak until they return at dusk. They eat and mate in flight, and even drink while flying over bodies of water with open bills.

Of the four swift families found in North America, chimney swifts are the only one that occurs with regularity east of the Rockies. Swifts are called



“aerial insectivores.” Some of their favorite prey are flying insects such as mosquitoes and flies which, as carriers of disease, can be harmful to humans. It is estimated that swifts consume up to 12,000 insects in one day. Research has shown that they don’t just choose what’s abundant; they have a preferred diet and know what’s best for their young.

They have been recorded flying at up to 150 miles an hour and have been seen flying 7,000 feet in the air, although that’s unusual. They usually fly about a mile high.

Their acrobatic abilities give them the name “swift.” While they do fly swiftly, the name actually refers to the Old English word swifan—“to move in a course, sweep, or revolve.”

Swifts often fly in large groups, swooping and soaring in unison, undulating across the sky. A group of swifts is called a “murder.”

Chimney swifts are more closely related to hummingbirds than any other group of bird and, just as hummingbirds often return to the same feeder, chimney swifts have been known to return to the same chimney.

Many unmated birds may live in one chimney, but only one nest is present per breeding season. Males and females, which are impossible to visually distinguish, form monogamous pairs. They work together to construct the nest using small broken twigs which they collect in flight by swiping the tips of branches with their claws or bills. The twigs are loosely formed into a half-cup-shaped shelf and adhered to the chimney wall with the birds’ saliva, which becomes glue-like as it solidifies. Females lay three to five pure white eggs which hatch in about 19 days. Nestlings are fed by both parents, who are occasionally helped by an unmated bird. They fledge after about a

(continued on page 5)

The Groundhog is Digging Its New Home with MERF

by Kathryn Norris

With the October 2023 issue, Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF) wholeheartedly embraces its newfound role as publisher of *The Groundhog* newspaper.



Integrity, history, and community are a few words that come to mind when I think of *The Groundhog*. For 41 years, *The Groundhog* has steadily developed into a solid, cherished local paper with loyal followers both near and far. MERF is eager to continue to foster a variety of stories rooted in local culture, history, people, and events.

Throughout its history, *The Groundhog* has evoked a lightheartedness in its articles, all the while informing and educating our rural community. The Mentone area has a seemingly endless treasure trove of stories worth telling, and its history is rich with those still untold. New stories are actively developing all around us that call out to be told as well. We hope to capture and share many of these stories in the coming months and years. It is through these stories that we remain connected. And through these connections, we retain our strength as a community. MERF fully recognizes the value and impact *The Groundhog* has in our community and plans to carry it forward with genuine enthusiasm. Thirty years ago, MERF embarked on a journey to identify and coordinate educational enrichment resources for all ages in our community.

(continued on page 2)

MERF is proud to continue the tradition of The Groundhog with our inaugural issue.



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.

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- Jody Rhodes, Kelly Leavitt, Kathryn Tortorici, Kathryn Norris, Randy Grider, Rob Hammond, Lynn Hixon, Karen Vest, Mary Gresham Barr, Debra Fey, Alyce Kenney, Stephen V. Smith, Anne McLeod, Barry Morton, Nathan Austin

Birthday calendar maintained by
Kayla Worthey

Contact The Groundhog

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

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Groundhog woodcut courtesy of
Meg Justice/Bee Spring Studio

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Festival Traffic Tips

Mentone neighbors,

Mentone is hosting a Fall Festival on Oct. 21, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Festival's proceeds will be used to make essential repairs to the old Moon Lake School building, now known as Moon Lake Village.

Many of you have graciously volunteered your time to help make the Festival a success. Hopefully, you will also attend and enjoy the Festival. If you are not working at or attending the Festival, you probably want to avoid the busy traffic. We wanted to share some tips to help you.

The chief parking venues will be the Mentone Art Center field east of town and the Mentone Community Church parking field. Roads near Moon Lake Village, particularly East River Road, will be extremely congested. Traveling north on DeKalb County Roads 177 and 165 near the Community Church will be time consuming. You may even want to stay away from Alabama Highway 117 entirely.

Hopefully, these tips will save you a good deal of time and frustration and keep traffic flowing smoothly. Thank you for your understanding and helpfulness during this fundraising event.

Happy Fall, Neighbors!

Mentone Matters

by Mayor Rob Hammond

Excitement is building for the Mentone Fall Festival. The festival is important to our local businesses. The festival provides our non-profits an opportunity to fund raise for their many programs that benefit the community year round. Thanks to the many volunteers on the various committees for their hard work and enthusiasm! Putting on a festival requires teamwork. It is gratifying to watch the community come together to make the Mentone Fall Festival a success!

On Oct. 3, Mentone police officers Gene McKee and Mike Langston will meet with officials from ALDOT, DeKalb EMA, Joseph Lee NLMFPD, and festival planners to discuss traffic



management for the upcoming festival. Once a detailed plan is in place, it will be publicized before Saturday, Oct. 21.



From the Editor

by Anna Mae Horn

Editing this month's paper has been like reuniting with an old friend. Receiving articles from our monthly authors feels familiar and enlightening. Many of the articles are from the same groups that contributed when I edited *The Groundhog* prior to Kelly Leavitt. Yet, they are from new contributors and hold new information highlighting current events. Our community continues tradition through these longstanding organizations and embraces new adventures through new groups like the Mentone Ukes.

As I communicate with our treasured writers, I become conscious of how I have become interlaced with Mentone over the years through volunteering, serving, and collaborating with local nonprofits. The first interaction I recall was submitting monthly articles on behalf of the Tiger CHAMPS at Valley Head School. This was my introduction to MAPA. Of course, I had already been an avid reader of *The Groundhog*, but now, I was becoming a part of this culture of service and this legacy..

I learned about all the great gifts MAPA has given, and continues to give, to the community. The gifts are too numerous to count in financial aspects and in cultural aspects. For example, the community board built at the post office in 1982 is still an important checkpoint for all things Mentone. *The*

Groundhog is another fine example that continues to give to the community.

Personal to me is the fact that MAPA introduced me not only to new friends, but also to other organizations that help me fulfill my longing to serve, to give purpose to my actions. Tutoring students, volunteering at the library, helping with festivals, working on the paper, and now serving as executive director at MERF would not have happened if not for those first articles that MAPA let me share about the school. I am thankful for the growth I have had the opportunity to experience.

As this month's paper comes together, ever present is the lingering reminder of the honor bestowed upon MERF and me. As the new publisher of *The Groundhog*, MERF realizes the impact of what this paper means to those who read it – some who devour every word, some who find their passion or solace in those words, and some whose very souls are exposed in black and white.

MERF treasures the honor of continuing *The Groundhog* and looks forward to carrying this legacy onward as a community collaboration reflecting the spirit of the mountain with the familiarity readers immerse themselves in while reading *The Groundhog*.

Your friend and editor, *Anna Mae*

The Groundhog's New Home (continued from page 1)

With its own history of successfully serving and enriching our community, MERF is eager to strengthen its educational purpose and reinforce the integrity and sense of community that our small-town newspaper has provided for decades.

We hope you will help us keep *The Groundhog* thriving by contributing stories, offering donations, or simply by continuing to read *The Groundhog*. In

a digital world, printed newspapers are becoming less and less common. MERF aims to keep *The Groundhog* old-school and yet relevant in modern times by remaining in print and online. Together, let's carry on the tradition and joy of reading and supporting our beloved Groundhog.

Kathryn Norris is the President of MERF (Mentone Educational Resources Foundation)



Our Sweet Domicile

by Kathryn Tortorici

Come to Me all you who are weary, and I will give you rest. —Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

My husband, Sam Tortorici, and I hail from Birmingham, as do our families for a few generations before us. While Birmingham is our home, the Mentone area has been our domicile for nearly five decades. A wise long-time attorney friend once said the legal definition of domicile is, “The place to which you return”. If that’s the case, Mentone is no doubt our family’s domicile.

Our love for Lookout Mountain and the Mentone area began in 1971 when Sam’s uncle, Leo Karpeles, bought a brow home on Cool Street with the famous Sunset Rock. We loved the old yellow board and batten home, beautiful westerly brow view, the large stone woodburning fireplace and outdoor grill opposite the fireplace. Entertaining extended family and friends on the mountain during the summer months was always a highlight. Sam caught the ‘mountain fever’ at a very early age, and I caught it from him when we began dating in 1981.

Sam’s family sold the property in 1991, despite our selfish pleas to keep it in the family. As newlyweds in our early 20’s, we did not have two pennies to rub together, so there was no way we could purchase the property. The sale of the property left Sam and me sad and distraught. Looking back, we should have eaten peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and Ramen noodles for a few years to buy this special place.

Years later when our boys began to attend Alpine Camp for Boys and our daughter would soon head to Camp DeSoto, we revisited the dream to have a mountain home in our ‘happy place’. We were fortunate to find the perfect spot for us in 2006 on Citadel Rock Road near DeSoto State Park. For eighteen years, the Tortorici family has sought refuge and renewal in our wonderful mountain home. We enjoy hiking, riding in the car,

reading, watching beautiful sunsets, and enjoying the beauty of God’s creation. Whether enjoying family reunions, recuperating from a surgery, or an extended COVID quarantine, the mountain house has provided a shelter for fun, joy, healing, and comfort.

A few years after purchasing the cabin, my mother spent the morning in prayer on the back deck, diagnosed with ALS just days before. While she was not miraculously healed from the monster of a disease, she did receive a message in her heart about how to face fear. She wrote a beautiful story called “The Train” that was featured in the September 2008 edition of *The Groundhog*. The story reminds us to evaluate our circumstances and to look to the Lord to conquer our fear. My mother’s secret dream of having a story published became a reality with the help of friends.

Fast forward to 2018, and the unexpected occurs. I get a call from the doctor’s nurse telling me I have breast cancer. Through the days, months, and years since that diagnosis, I have spent many hours looking out to the valley below and to the vast blue sky where I feel the closest to my Heavenly Father. I am thankful I have received great medical care that has my cancer in full remission. But I am also thankful for this wonderful mountain respite that continues to bring rest to my bones and mind as I sit and wait for the next sweet whisper from my Lord and Savior.

Many days at the cabin, I found myself making bracelets from blue jade stone beads. My friend who lives in Houston taught me this craft and together we would compare our designs. My sweet friend and I have a lot in common, but the fact that we were diagnosed with breast

cancer at the exact same time became the sweetest gift from the Lord. There are times when you are going through a difficult time that you feel alone. Having a cancer diagnosis may be one of those times. I learned that relationships are key when facing adversity – relationships with others and a relationship with your Father in Heaven.

During radiation treatments, I would put a few of these bracelets on my wrist. I would pick out a fellow waiting room friend, and give away a handmade bracelet. I would tell them, “The blue bead reminds me of the blue sky. The blue sky reminds me of being in God’s presence.” I added a bead from Israel that was a cross. I would continue sharing that it is only through the death of Jesus on the cross that made it possible for us to be in the presence of God. Sharing bracelets and my faith became the distraction through my illness.

My friend from Houston, Nancy, shared bracelets and her faith during her cancer treatments too. What are the chances that two best friends would receive the same diagnosis at the same time even when they lived states away? We would call each other daily to ask how many bracelets to wear that day. We had to call each other after our treatments to report how giving away the bracelets was received. Having my friend, Nancy, was the best gift during our cancer journey. Our conversations helped both of us as we navigated how to carry on.

Sitting on the back deck with a lovely brow view, the whispers of the Lord continued to echo in my ears. Radiation and chemotherapy were behind us. We

were doing well and were striving to make the best of each God given day. During one of our conversations checking on how the other was doing, the thought about sharing our stories in a book was approached, and then became our new project. The dream of being a friend to others with cancer or someone facing a difficult time was planned out.

For the next almost two years, the back deck of our little mountain home became my writing nook. When it was too cold, the day bed on the sun porch was my place to be still and write.

Nancy’s mountain getaway and place to write is in Telluride, Colorado. She invited me to visit for a couple of days so we could talk, hike, plan, hike some more and pray about this new desire that God put on our hearts. Going to the mountain is significant to being still and knowing God.

Just like Jesus sent His disciples out two by two, Nancy and I wrote a book to help anyone who feels alone during a tough diagnosis or trial. I am so excited to announce that our book, *Two by Two – Conversations Between Friends Navigating Breast Cancer*, will be released this October. God is the great teacher and healer – the most important relationship one can have. Relationships with others, such as my friend Nancy, is the second most important key. The gift He gave me through this cabin here on Lookout Mountain, has provided me the perfect corner, my refuge, of the world to share my faith and journey in words that could have stayed inside my heart.

Mentone, which means mind-atonement, is a place of healing, a place to rest when weary, a place to gather and increase your circle of relationships, and a place to focus on what is truly important. This special place is our sweet domicile.

P.S. – I added the story, *The Train*, written by my mother, in the book!



Nancy Bynon (Left) and Kathryn Tortorici



The book will be available October 24, 2023 on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Customer-Service@SWpublishinghouse.com. You can follow Nancy and Kathryn: @TWOBYTWOcancer Instagram, Facebook, and Linktree.

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Valley Head Happenings

An Interview With Town Clerk Lora Wooten

by Karen Vest

If you have visited Valley Head Town Hall recently, you could not help but notice the smiling face of Valley Head’s new town clerk, Lora Wooten.

Ms. Wooten was chosen from a pool of 28 candidates after former town clerk, Debra Rhodes resigned in April 2023. After narrowing the search down to five candidates for interviews, a committee of four selected Lora and two other candidates to present to the City Council for a vote. Lora won the council’s vote, and she began her duties the first week of May.

Lora came to Valley Head Town Hall after a very successful 23-year career in the banking industry, mostly in Fort Payne, Alabama. After being in the same business for so long, Lora said she was looking for a change when she heard that Mrs. Rhodes had resigned, so she decided to apply for the clerk’s position. Lora loves small towns and looks forward to being a part of the Valley Head community.

When asked what her biggest challenge has been so far in her new career, she replied, “it is not any one task, but it is learning all that is required of a town clerk”. During my interview with her, a call came in from a Valley Head citizen who was having a plumbing issue and needed a reference for a plumber. Lora quickly went about trying to find a solution to the woman’s problem. Every day is different and there are always challenges when you are the face of city hall, and I got to witness that firsthand.

Recently, Lora attended the Alabama Association of Municipal Clerks Fall Institute, a three-day training class hosted by the University of Alabama on the Alabama campus. I asked her what her favorite topic and/or speaker was during the conference. Lora told me a wonderful story of how the speaker, a professor at

UA, went from being a millionaire to filing bankruptcy and how his life was changed forever. It was a life lesson in humility, courage, perseverance, and most of all, investing in yourself. She said it really made an impact on her. She noted that all the speakers had something for her and the other attendees to learn and take away from the conference.



When asked what she loved to do on her days off and in her spare time, a giant smile came over Lora’s face. She has five children and five beautiful grandchildren. She loves spending time with all of them, especially her grandchildren. Lora also loves to cook and bake. Mexican food is her favorite meal to prepare. She also loves to attend church and visits several area churches.

An avid hiker, Lora shared several stories with me, including her first solo hike where she was very nervous and fearful. She said she closed her eyes and asked God to lead her and away she went into the woods. “It was the best thing I have ever done for myself”. She has taken many solo hikes in

the past. One of her many trips was one with a friend to the Walls of Jericho in Northern Jackson County, Alabama. It is a strenuous eleven-mile hike and not for beginners. Once the hike was over, Lora’s friend asked her to please never invite her along again!

Lora also loves to travel. Among her favorite cities are Charleston and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. When I asked her what her choice would be if she were offered a free trip anywhere she wanted to go, Lora quickly replied, “Jackson Hole, Wyoming”. She has seen many photos from a friend who visits the area and would love to go out West to see the wide-open spaces and the beautiful mountain ranges.

If you are in the Valley Head area, please stop by and visit with Lora. I can guarantee that she will greet you with a smile and a willingness to help.

Senior Health

Medicare Open Enrollment for 2024

by Lynn Hixon

Medicare Open Enrollment is upon us again. Every year from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7, Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to make changes to their Medicare Part D Prescription Drug plan or Medicare Advantage Plan.

As the Medicare Open Enrollment approaches, you will notice an increase in mail from insurance companies offering a variety of plans. Beware of possible scams. It is important to remember the following facts:

1. No one should knock on your door to sell you a policy. They should only come to your home if you have made an appointment.
2. Never sign paperwork unless you are 100% sure that is the plan you want.
3. Never give out your Medicare number unless it is a Medicare provider. Protect your Medicare number as you protect your Visa, Mastercard, Debit, and/or Social Security cards.
4. Medicare will NEVER call you on the phone. They will always send a letter requesting that you call them.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding open enrollment and would like to make an appointment for open enrollment or other Medicare related issues, please contact us at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590 and ask for Lynn for assistance. We are making appointments now for Oct. 15 through Dec. 7.



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Chimney Swifts (continued from page 1)

month, when they climb out of the roost and take flight.

They are mid-sized birds—just about five inches long. Their tail feathers are short, but their long, swept-back wings (reminiscent of a boomerang) reach about 12 and a half inches. Each of the ten tail feathers has a central shaft with a bristly point which extends about a quarter inch beyond the feather, helping to stabilize their bodies while clinging with their claws to vertical surfaces. Chimney swifts are sooty brown or black with a paler throat area. They are very vocal birds, emitting a high-pitched chittering sound.

As modern-day chimneys are often lined or capped with metal, the birds’ habitat is once again shrinking and their population is declining. They are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, so it is illegal to remove nests until after the nestlings have fledged.

Their conservation status is threatened to the point that preservation societies and individuals alike are constructing artificial chimneys, especially along the edge of wooded areas, to provide additional nesting spots.

Conservationists urge homeowners to clean masonry chimneys in early March so the walls will be clean and free of creosote. If the chimney has a spark-resistant cap, it is recommended to remove it for the spring and summer months to allow the birds access. It is wise to close the flue so they cannot fly into the home, and if the bird song is annoying, insulation can be placed below the flue while the birds are present. (Another friend I spoke with said he actually enjoys the “company.”)

Scientists discourage the use of insecticides, which can have an impact beyond their target species. The reduction of insects available as food is another cause for the current decline in the chimney swift population.

During migration, chimney swifts gather in groups which get larger and larger as they move further south. It’s estimated that over 10,000 swifts might spend the



This swift made its way into Bill's home, so he took a photo of it before releasing it outside.



Chimney swifts returning to Bill's stone chimney at dusk

night in a single roost. As they descend into a chimney in a tornado-like vortex, they can give the appearance of actually being sucked in.

Their aerial life makes them difficult to study. It’s been reported that scientists were uncertain about where the birds overwinter until 1944, when an indigenous Peruvian was seen wearing a necklace strung with bands that had been attached to birds in the United States.

Chimney swifts tend to fly over the Gulf of Mexico on their way south, but on their northward journey they more often follow the coast, roosting along the way.

As I watched these fascinating birds at Bill’s house when they gathered to roost for the coming night, I couldn’t help but envy them just a bit, as I know it’s unlikely I will ever travel to Amazonia. It’s fun to know that Mentone has that connection.

Blessing of the Animals

by Mary Gresham Barr

In a world often filled with hustle and bustle, where the natural world can sometimes be forgotten in the rush of daily life, there is a timeless tradition that reminds us of our interconnectedness with all living creatures. The Episcopal Blessing of the Animals, held in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, serves as a heartwarming reminder of our responsibility to care for the Earth and its diverse inhabitants.

St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology, is celebrated on Oct. 4, to recognize his deep love and respect for all forms of life. Born in the late 12th century, St. Francis was known for his simplicity and humility. He saw God’s presence in everything around him, from the birds in the sky to the smallest of insects. His profound spiritual connection with nature led to the development of this beautiful tradition.

St. Joseph’s on-the-Mountain Episcopal church invites you and your pet to celebrate the Blessing of the Animals with us on Saturday, Oct. 7, at 2 p.m. at the church in Mentone.

While dogs and cats are the most common attendees, animals of all kinds, from rabbits to horses, are welcome with open arms. Father

Ethan Ferguson will offer prayers and blessings for each individual animal in gratitude for the animal’s companionship and acknowledgement of the Divine presence in all living beings.

Lemonade and water will be offered along with treats for both animals and humans. We invite you to also visit the Sacred Garden at St. Joseph’s. The garden is a member of the Open Spaces, Sacred Places network of gardens. You are welcome to stroll through the garden and walk the labyrinth remembering St. Francis and his deep reverence for God’s world.

We look forward to seeing you at 2 p.m. on Oct. 7, to celebrate our animals and to honor the wisdom of St. Francis in loving all God’s creatures and the world in which we all live.

Blessing of the Animals

Saint Joseph’s on-the-Mountain

October 7, 2023
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

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are welcome!

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Mentone Ukes

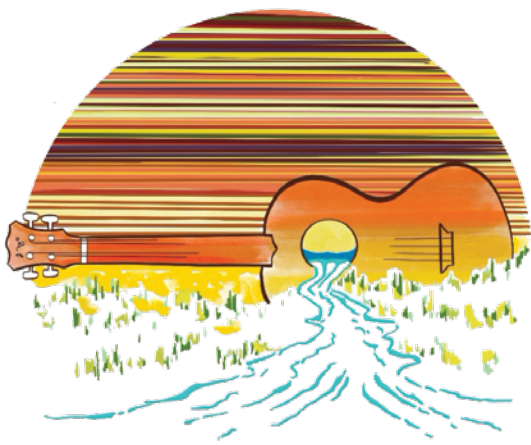
Who Knew...

by Debra Fey

... that at this year's Mentone Fall Festival your local Mentone Ukes will have the distinct honor of performing as the opening musical act on the Moon Lake Village's Shigley Amphitheater stage?

It has been quite a journey for us, as we head into our fifth year. Each performance brings its own excitement, challenges, and opportunities for our members. And while it's true that over the years some have come and gone through the group, what's more important is that many people have come and stayed. We love newcomers and beginners, and this year's performance on the Shigley Amphitheater stage will include some of our newer members, who are just getting their feet on the ground, along with other members, some of whom have been with the group since the very beginning. That's what makes the Mentone Ukes so unique. The dynamics of the Mentone Ukes are fluid, ever changing and growing, but always positive and permanent.

When you enter the Moon Lake Library at the beginning of our sessions, you hear the buzz of conversation between friends happy to see each other again, instruments being tuned, a few questions being asked and answered, and the projector getting set up and brought into focus revealing the day's program of songs and announcements. New faces are arriving for their free beginner's session, maybe a little hesitant, but with anticipation of what the next hour may



reveal. For the last several sessions our focus has been on our upcoming performance at the Mentone Fall Festival from 10 to 11 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 21. A part of that focus has been creating a song set that will fill the hour with familiar songs from many musical genres. A couple of new songs have been thrown in for good measure. Learning these has created a fun challenge for the group; hearing them should prove entertaining for the guests.

Our group members have worked hard preparing for this important performance. And after our performance, the Mentone Ukes will be volunteering for the rest of the afternoon at the festival. Learning to play the ukulele and honing our skills together, encouraging each other as we grow, showing community spirit, and volunteering are what we are all about. Oh, and did we mention HAVING FUN? Who knew that when we started this group over four years ago, we would have enjoyed this level of success?

So, put it on your calendar, and come support your Mentone Ukes and your Mentone Fall Festival!

Ouzo and Opa,

Why the Greek Language Lesson?

by Barry Morton

Our good friends, and fellow Mentonians, Dee and Bill Kelly (who live on Cutler Avenue) have bought a house in Greece and are leaving soon to spend time living ... there and here.

Opa is a Greek word meaning joy, hooray, or cheers! Ouzo is an anisette flavored alcohol well known in Greece — both were flowing at the “going away” candle-lite, alfresco dinner party for them at the house of Jay and Mary Ann Robbins. Since there was no ouzo anywhere in Fort Payne, they had to go to Chattanooga to buy ouzo.

Everyone handmade a Greek dish to share like spanakopita (a kind of cheese pie), souvlaki (grilled meat, a.k.a. gyros), moussaka (similar to lasagna), tzatziki, Greek salad, Greek beef, chicken and lamb kebabs on the charcoal grill, and baklava and melomakarona (honey biscuits) for dessert. Even the music was Greek; a few of us were tempted to start dancing on the tables with scarfs. Many toasts were made. Four people were recognized for birthdays.

Bill and Dee and their dogs (Bailey and Charley) will be back before Christmas.

In attendance were Misty and Alex Watters; Lynna Meadows Morton; Kathryn Wheeler; Victoria and Jim Gaston; Jim Bozek; Paula McDougall; Dee Kelly; Ray and Sandra Padgett; Leland and Brenda Cox; Deidra and Greg Brown; Barry Morton and Bill Kelly. Jay and Mary Ann Robbins are standing at the back of the table. Donna Arnett, Photographer.



Consider becoming a part of this incredible journey that is the Mentone Ukes. If you're curious about how easy and satisfying playing the ukulele can be, join us at an upcoming session on Oct. 14 or 28 at 1:00 p.m. CST at the Moon Lake Library. Beginners and newcomers are always welcome! You can take a free beginner's lesson using one of our loaner ukes, or you can just sit and listen to the group play. Connect with us on Facebook: Mentone Ukes OR on the web: www.mentoneukes.com. Questions? Contact Debra Fey (DebraFey@gmail.com) or Jody Rhodes (JodyRhodesy@gmail.com).



See you at the Mentone Fall Festival!

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Moon Lake Library

Author Talk October 30: Sally Bethea

Will Discuss Keeping the Chattahoochee

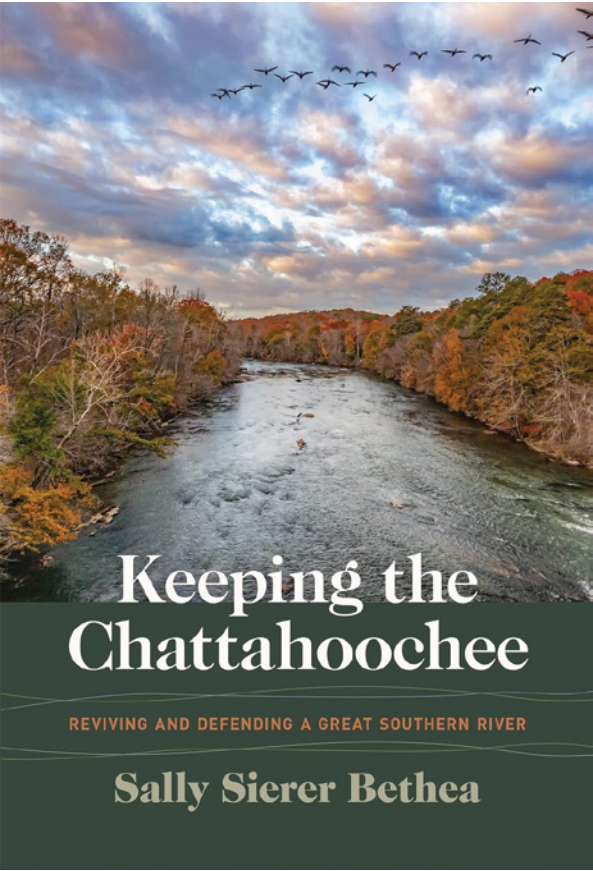
by Anne McLeod

The Moon Lake Library’s featured speaker for October is Sally Bethea, author of *Keeping the Chattahoochee: Reviving and Defending a Great Southern River*, published by the University of Georgia Press in July 2023. She will have copies of her book available for sale and autographs after her presentation on Monday, Oct. 30, at 6:30 p.m. at the library.

Sally is the retired founding director of Chattahoochee Riverkeeper. Her work as the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper spanned two decades, and she continues to serve as a senior advisor. She lives in Atlanta where she writes a monthly column “Above the Waterline” for Atlanta Intown.

We are delighted to have Sally Bethea visit Mentone where our own Little River serves as a natural backyard playground for so many in the Lookout Mountain community. We look forward to hearing about the work she and so many others have done to preserve Atlanta’s backyard river during a time when the city has seen so much growth. The program is free and open to all.

Anne McLeod is the librarian at Moon Lake Library.



Moon Lake Library
Book Club

October 14
10:30 AM

Read the DuMaurier gothic of your choice.
Discuss.

MOON LAKE LIBRARY

MENTONE FALL FESTIVAL

ROCK PAINTING FOR KIDS

October 21, 2023
10 AM - 4 PM

Karen Kwiatkowski Hired as New Library Assistant; Expanded Hours at Moon Lake Library

by Anne McLeod

The municipal library board of Moon Lake Library has hired Karen Kwiatkowski as its new library assistant. Karen comes to this position with a wealth of professional experience. She holds a Master of Library and Information Sciences from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Karen has worked at Georgia Northwestern Technical College Library, the Nashville Public Library, the Sara Hightower Regional Library in Rome, Georgia, as well as others.

In addition to her work as a librarian, Karen has experience as an editor and environmental, legal, and governmental reporter for newspapers in Florida and Georgia, including the Orlando Sentinel, Rome News Tribune, Walker County Messenger, and the Daytona Beach News Journal. She won the Florida Chapter Sierra Club Environmental Journalism Award for service and support of the environment in Florida.

The library board is thrilled to have Karen on staff at the library, and we know patrons will enjoy getting to know her too.

Fridays at the Library

With the development of Moon Lake Village on the old school campus adjacent to the library, the library’s board of trustees realized that it would benefit both the library and the shops to have similar hours. The town council agreed and approved funding for 4.5 additional hours for the library, bringing us to a total of 21 hours a week, up from the 16.5 hours the library has been open weekly since December of 2021.

The library will be open on Fridays beginning on Oct. 6. The hours on Friday will be the same as our hours from Tuesday through Thursday, 12-4:30 PM.

Visitors often arrive in town on Friday afternoons and visit local shops and restaurants. Now they can visit the library as well, peruse the used book sale, and pick up information about activities in the area. If folks have not found Moon Lake Village yet, the library staff can direct them to the shops nearby.

Look for more updates on what’s happening on our Facebook page and our website at www.moonlakelibrary.org.

Anne McLeod is the librarian at Moon Lake Library.

October 2023 at Moon Lake Library

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

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

October 12 – 4 p.m. Public meeting of municipal library board of trustees, followed by Friends of Moon Lake Library at 5.

October 14 – 10:30 a.m. Book Club: Let's go gothic with your choice of one of two Daphne DuMaurier novels - Rebecca or My Cousin Rachel. Multiple copies of each book are available for check-out.

October 14 – 1 p.m. Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

October 18 – 6-8 p.m. Art Critique and Discussion Group with Mikel Yeakle, sponsored by Little River Arts Council. Artists, please bring a piece or two to share.

October 28 – 1 p.m. Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

October 30 – 6:30 p.m. Featured speaker Sally Sierer Bethea will discuss her book *Keeping the Chattahoochee: Reviving and Defending a Great Southern River*. She will have books for sale and signing. This program is free and open to the public.

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mentone
Fall Festival
OCT 21 10-4 at Moon Lake Village

**Friday night
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Linger Longer Pavilion at the Mentone Inn
Concert is FREE and Open to Everyone!

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*Bring a chair or blanket and
enjoy a night under the stars!*

Fall Festival (continued from page 1)

“Mentone has a huge opportunity to redefine and secure a lasting legacy at Moon Lake Village”, says Rob Hammond, Mentone Town Mayor. The original Moon Lake Elementary School opened in 1911 in the heart of Mentone and the current school building has been in use since 1928. After Moon Lake Elementary School closed its doors in 2021, the Board of Education deeded this property to the Town of Mentone. The town has undertaken a major renovation and reimagining of the historic school building and campus as an artisan village and event space—Moon Lake Village. Spaces have been rented out to local artists, craftsmen and businesses who have invested their futures in Mentone. The Bill Berry Community Room provides a space for cultural events, and significant funds have been invested in building the Shigley Amphitheater to support other large events.

As with any historic building, Moon Lake Village requires additional renovations. It is the goal of the festival to raise both funds and awareness for these renovations. In addition to supporting Moon Lake Village renovations, the festival organizers hope to showcase local artists, engage community

members, promote tourism and economic growth, and strengthen our community’s pride and identity.

Events will kick off Friday, October 20, with live music by Will Dooley and Friends at the Mentone Inn pavilion. On Saturday, October 21, more than 60 arts, crafts, and food vendors will be set up for the Mentone Fall Festival at the Moon Lake Village campus with live music scheduled for the Shigley Amphitheater and the Moon Lake porch.

Local businesses, including the Mentone Inn, Moon Lake Trading Company, and the Log Cabin Village, will host additional events on Friday night and throughout the day on Saturday, promising a festive atmosphere throughout the community.

The Mentone Fall Festival is a celebration of Mentone’s unique culture and natural beauty. We can’t wait to welcome you to Mentone, whether it’s to escape to one of the area’s summer camps, vacation rental homes, or inns, dine at one of our local restaurants, enjoy our beautiful parks, gaze at brow sunsets, or shop at local businesses supporting Mentone’s vibrant arts and crafts community!

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21
October

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Music lineup & more

SHIGLEY AMPHITHEATER MUSIC

- 10 a.m. Mentone Ukes
- 11:15 a.m. Steel City Jug Slammers
- 1 p.m. Cottonmouth Creek
- 2:45 p.m. Still Kickin’

MOON LAKE PAVILION MUSIC

- 10 a.m. Aaron Shavers
- 11 a.m. Stuart Douglas Stanley
- 12 p.m. Lisa Crow & Jim Wallis
- 1 p.m. Vegetaters
- 2 p.m. Judy-Nicole Kirby
- 3 p.m. Jonah Drake

FONTASTIC FOODS STAGE

Jay Chadwick Music – 12-3 p.m.

FARMERS MARKET AT MENTONE

Next to Mentone Inn – 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Music entertainment TBD – 10-11 a.m.

LOG CABIN VILLAGE GAZEBO

Back Wood Revival Music 12 p.m.
Back Wood Revival Music 2 p.m.

THE GROOVY GOAT

Maven Table Mixers – 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Meet the Artist- LacyHopeArt
10 a.m.- 4 p.m. (street level)

HUMMINGBIRD AT LOOM

Jerry and Pixie Bloom Music – 1 p.m.
Jerry and Pixie Bloom Music – 3 p.m.

Nonprofit Organizations

- American Legion
- DeKalb Rescue Squad
- Friends of DeKalb Animal Adoption Center
- Little River Arts Council
- Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (at MERF house)
- Moon Lake Library (open)
- Rhododendron Garden Club

Children's Activities

- Arts & Crafts
- Ball Pit
- Face Painting
- Games
- & More

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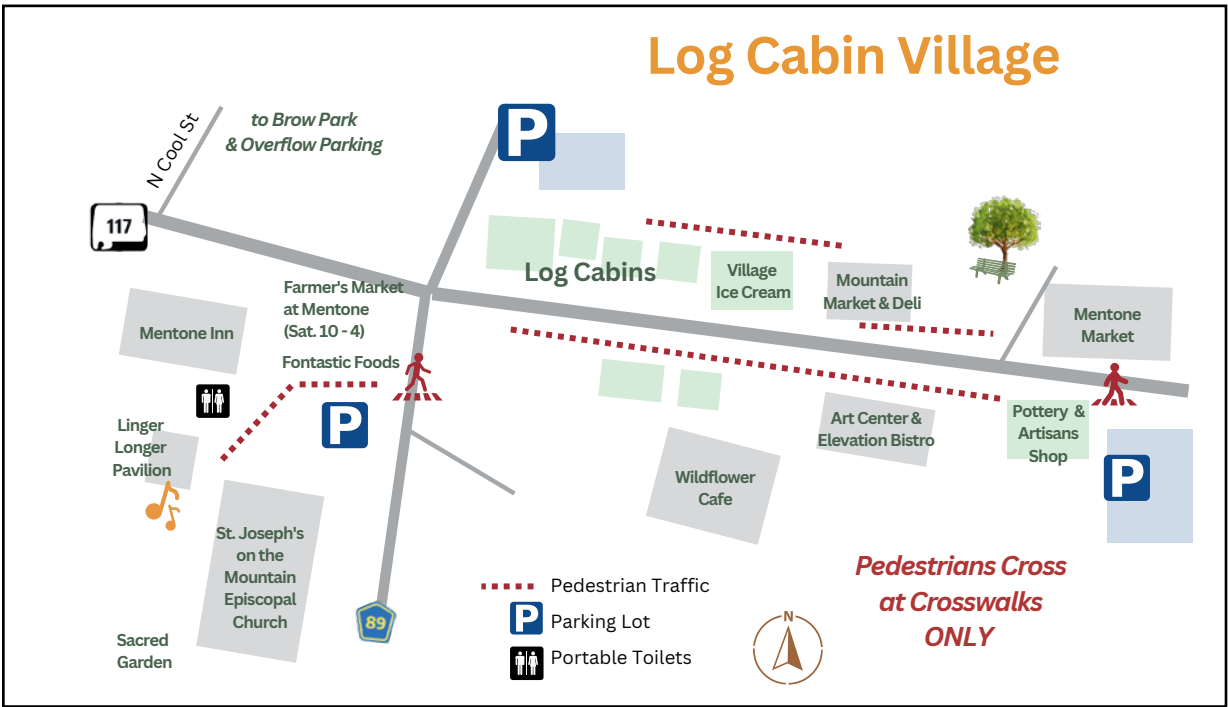


Vendors

- 270 Degrees Designs
- AmyBlueKat
- AnimalHouse Pottery & Crafts
- Anna Scott Silks
- Artjewelz
- B&R Yates
- Barefoot Blessings Co.
- Barnyard Pics
- Bow Ties by Emily
- Eastaboga Bee Company
- EclectArt studios
- Erika Prater Ceramics
- Gert Wands
- Grace’s Daughter
- Grand Oaks Farm
- HeartstringsNStitches
- Homestead Heirlooms
- Lookout Mountain Goat Ranch Originals
- Maddie’s Monsters
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- Mike’s Unique Silverware Jewelry
- Moon Phase Jewelry Co.
- Mountain Flower Jam
- N.O. Soap Co. (Nature’s Offerings)
- Nancy M. Elliott Studios
- Nona’s Barn Quilts and More
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- Pam’s Craftings
- Rezin Kreation
- The Sacred Earth Studio
- Sam Cordle Pottery
- Serenity Gourds
- Shannon MacMichael Pottery
- Shugs Pottery
- Simple Creations
- Slightly Different Jewelry
- Smokehouse Foods LLC
- Sweet Tea Pottery
- The Woodshop
- Vikki J
- Ziwi Glass

FOOD & DRINKS

- All Things Sweet by LT Creations
- Dina’s Shaved Ice and Snacks
- Java Gypsy & Tropical Sno
- Lemon Shakers
- Little River Orchard
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Art is For Everyone ... and That is Good

by Stephen V. Smith

The mission of the Little River Arts Council is a broad one. It begins, “To enrich the quality of life for people in Mentone and neighboring communities ...” How does an organization, a group of citizens and creative souls, go about enriching an entire region?

The answer can be found emblazoned across one of our most popular T-shirts: “We believe art is for everyone.”

This truth was on full display last month at the Follow Your Art event. People of all ages learned about chalk art and then created inspiring works along the walking path near the MERF House. Vendors from across the region discussed their work with hundreds of visitors, sharing their passion for everything from painting and photography to printmaking and cigar box guitars.

The day was filled with food, storytelling, live music, and a general sense of community — the kind that goes beyond a physical place and encompasses a true shared spirit. And at the heart of that spirit was art.

As our T-shirt declares, art is not something reserved for a select few. Art is not a trivial distraction of the elite. Art is truly for everyone.

When we open the scriptures, we are introduced to our maker with these words: “In the beginning, God created ...” Our story begins with art, and with the Creator stepping back from his work and declaring that “it is good.”

If you attended Follow You Art, you no doubt had a similar impression as you walked among the many tents filled with works of various artists, and marveled at the chalk images along the paved walkway. It was good indeed.

A special thanks to the Alabama State Council on the Arts for its past and continuing support of this and many other LRAC events. And we certainly could not bring such programming to the community without the tireless efforts of so many wonderful volunteers. Thank you all!

You will also declare “this is good!” in October when you attend the Mentone Fall Festival. This



is shaping up to be the biggest event of the year for Mentone, showcasing artists of all types and promising an enriching experience for people of all ages.

It’s fitting that the event will take place on the grounds of Moon Lake Village, the site of the former school where so many lives were enriched across so many years. The festival will raise funds to improve the facilities, providing more space and opportunities to bring even more exposure to the arts to citizens and visitors alike.

Clear your calendar for Friday and Saturday, Oct. 20 and 21, for a weekend of immersion in the arts. The Mentone Fall Festival kicks off Friday night with a free concert at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the historic Mentone Inn Bed and Breakfast. Will Dooley & Company will entertain the crowds from 7-10 p.m., with Fantastic Foods serving delicious Southern fare from 6 p.m. until the last bite is gone. Saturday’s events run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free, with a \$5 donation requested for parking. Look for the Little River Arts Council tent — and stop by to tell us why you believe art is for everyone.

Stephen V. Smith is an LRAC board member.



Grants to bring public art to Mentone

Two significant public art projects are coming to Mentone, thanks to grants that were recently awarded to the Little River Arts Council.

The Lyndhurst Foundation awarded a \$30,000 grant to LRAC for a program entitled “Firmly Planted, Moving Forward.” The Chattanooga-based foundation focuses on the enhancement and enrichment of the natural, educational, cultural, and urban environment of Chattanooga and the surrounding 16-county region.

The public art project will be installed at the Moon Lake Village campus. More information about the project will be featured in a future issue of *The Groundhog*, including artist renderings of the large piece of public art to be installed and the themes it will represent.

The Alabama State Council on the Arts has awarded LRAC a \$5,100 grant to help fund the “Make Your Mark on Mentone” public art project. This community chalkboard project will engage six area artists to create a mural on a particular theme relating to Mentone, and will include an area for community response. Again, details about the project will be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Groundhog*.

These projects will elevate many aspects of life for area residents and travelers alike by:

- engaging local artists and community members with one another, and with their town;
- preserving Mentone’s heritage and natural beauty;
- promoting tourism and economic growth; and
- strengthening community pride and identity.

LRAC also received a \$2,700 grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts to support the Creative Spirit Market, an open-air showcase featuring artist demonstrations, locally & regionally created fine & folk art, premium hand-crafted goods, & live acoustic music. Held at DeSoto State Park, this art fair is set for Nov. 11 and 12.



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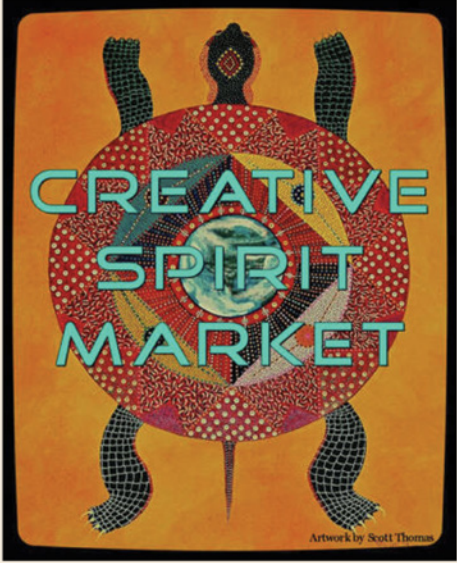
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Arts, Crafts, Music & More

Hosted by DeSoto State Park & Little River Arts Council

Made possible in part by the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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Rhododendron Garden Club News

by Alyce Kenney



“If words are seeds, let flowers grow from your mouth, not weeds. If hearts are gardens, plant those flowers in the chest of the ones who are growing around you.” –R.H. Swaney

The thoughtful poem above was read by Carol Argo as our meditation at the start of the September meeting in Mentone’s Moon Lake Library. We send a grateful “thank you” to Librarian Anne McLeod for allowing us to gather there. We delightedly added a new member and welcomed back some faces not seen in a bit. The cooler weather had everyone feeling lighter, for sure. The meeting was full of the business of “upcoming business” and events we will participate in as this year draws to its end. Some of these include the DeKalb County VFW Fair, MERF Senior Luncheon, and the ongoing creation and beautification of the former butterfly garden on the Moon Lake Village property. Take a stroll near the back of the Shigley amphitheater and walk the fresh path. A new footbridge and plantings are next on the “to-do” list. Do you have an abundance of shade loving hosta, fern, or others? We would love to take them to enrich this natural space. We congratulated ourselves on the success of our participation at Follow Your Art on September 2nd. We came away from that event knowing how to provide even more education and sharing with the community at the upcoming Mentone Fall Festival on October 21st. Look for us there!

October seems like the natural time to repose from toiling in the garden. The light is changing, the heat of summer has softened, most blossoms are spent. The birds and insects will find treats in the leftover seedheads, so don’t prune them. And don’t be too meticulous with blowing and raking leaves away. Mulching leaves with the mower leaves nutrients in place providing conservation of soil and turf. Leaf

“litter” offers safe places for beneficial insects and microorganisms to rest. You can now plant bulbs of all varieties for showy spring colors. Or if vegetables and herbs are your favorite, plant greens like chard, spinach, and kale for end of year meals. Check the health of your soil and amend it now for improved



growing next year (see the video link below). October is a time to reflect on the success of the past gardening season and to begin thinking of new ideas and revisions for the future. Put on your sweatshirt, find a comfortable chair, and watch the leaves fall.

Alyce Kenney serves as secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.

*“The mug of cider simmered slow,
the apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
with nuts from brown October’s wood.”*
–John Greenleaf Whittier

Here are some websites to view for inspiration:

- ▶ simplysmartgardening.com/october-gardening
- ▶ www.groworganic.com/blogs/videos/soil-tests
- ▶ happygardens.com/collections/best-sellers

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. C.T. October’s meeting will be at the Moon Lake Library. See you there!

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Mentone Arts Center

Music and art highlight October; saluting Artist of the Month Melinda Whitt

by Randy Grider

The monthly Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series returns on Tuesday, Oct. 3, at 6:30 p.m. on the stage inside the Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts. The Nashville-style songwriters round spotlights three area songwriters performing their original music followed by a featured singer-songwriter guest. Among the songwriters confirmed this month are Brett Sennett and Cliff Abbott. Organizers of the event were still waiting to hear back from other songwriters at press time.

Brett recently had a 10-song acoustic release and Cliff is well known across North Alabama as a songwriter, performer, and old-time storyteller. The songwriters' round is both educational and entertaining, and it is free to the public.

For the first time in four years, we have the Watters/Felts Trio returning to Mentone on Friday, Oct. 27, from 7 to 9 p.m. The show features a night of smooth jazz with the talented Ingrid Felts on vocals accompanied by Ken Watters on trumpet. Seating is limited, so reserve your spot early. Admission is \$25 per person.

The weekend continues with two art workshops led by artist/instructor Lisa Opielinski. Each workshop is \$100 per student plus a \$30 supply fee paid directly to the instructor, is limited to 10 students, and runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On Saturday, Oct. 28, Lisa's watercolor workshop students will learn a quick and simple image transfer technique and color harmony as they work on a museum-quality Ampersand panel. They'll also experience how forgiving the surface is as they add, subtract, multiply, and blend colors to create "Trois Fleur-de-lis".

On Sunday, Oct. 29, "Aunt Louise's Corner" will be the subject of Lisa's acrylic workshop. The painting is inspired by lively colors, patterns, textures, and her love of collected eclectic design. Students will collage and add texture with gel medium. Students will learn dragging techniques and apply vibrant colors with acrylic paints as impressionism meets abstract composition. The paintings will also be on a museum-quality Ampersand panel.

To reserve a spot in any of the events or workshops, please see contact information at the bottom of the article.

Our October Artist of the Month is Melinda Whitt. Melinda was one of the first artists to display her work in Kamama Gallery, and now, it is displayed at the Mentone Arts Center. She began her artistic endeavors in fused glass and lampworking but found a new interest in enamels over a decade ago after participating in workshops at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, N.C. and the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Since that time, Melinda has focused on making enamel-on-copper jewelry. Each of her pieces is cut from a sheet of copper about notebook size and undergoes a process which includes an acid bath and three firings in a kiln to about 1,400 degrees. Along the way, acrylic enamels are used to decorate each piece.

Melinda is the daughter of a high school art teacher (also a watercolor artist) and an engineer. As a result, she often struggles between the precise symmetrical world of an engineer and an artist's desire to produce freer, less precise work. Melinda divides her time between the mountains of Birmingham, Alabama, and the sandy white beaches of Santa Rosa Beach, Florida, stopping along the way to cheer Auburn University sports at every venue she can reach.

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



Artist of the month, Melinda Whitt



Melinda Whitt's jewelry



Opielinski will hold a watercolor workshop Oct. 28 and an acrylic workshop Oct. 29.

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to
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Mountain Aire Yoga, 330 CR-519, Mentone, AL

Lunch is provided. Space is limited, and registration is required.
To register or for more information, please contact us at:

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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.

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October Community Events

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

Oct. 5 • Canyon Kids - Nature Art. Ages 3 years to 3rd grade will creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Little River Canyon Center. Wear footwear suitable for hiking, bring water, and sun protection. Email rmtaylor@jsu.edu 256-845-3548. https://www.facebook.com/JSUFieldSchools

Oct 5 • Fore the Kids Golf Tournament. DeKalb County Children's Advocacy Center's 18th Annual Fore the Kids Golf Tournament at Lil Mole Run Golf Course. 11 a.m. lunch. Shotgun start at noon.

Oct. 7 • Cruising for the Kids. Car Show Fundraiser Awards, Door Prizes, Food, Vendors and more. CASA of North Sand Mountain 10 a.m.

Oct. 7 - 8, 14 - 15, 21 - 22, 28 – 29 • Little River Kayak Rentals. Miller's Bend Paddle Shack at DeSoto Falls will help you begin your scenic kayak trip up the West Fork of Little River. Rent sit-on-top kayaks to enjoy a peaceful flatwater paddle on Little River overlooking beautiful DeSoto Falls. Life vests & paddles are provided. Call DeSoto State Park's Lodge for info-256-845-5380 or www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river. Boat Shack Hours: 10-6 p.m.

Oct. 12 • Courtyard Concerts: Songwriters Night. Courtyard Concerts take place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday beside DeKalb Theatre. Featuring local and regional artists. Admission is free. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. Music begins just after 6 p.m. A cash bar is available, as well as food, drink, and merchandise.

Oct. 13 • Hike with a Naturalist. Beaver Pond Trail in the Little River Canyon National Preserve. Join JSU Field School staff on a 1.25-mile, beautiful outdoor adventure hike. This is a moderate hike perfect for all ages. Dogs are welcome on a leash. Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Meet at the Little River Canyon Center at 10:30 a.m. and caravan to the trailhead. Free and open to everyone! For details, contact 256-845-3548.

Oct. 13 • Campfire Talk: Stone Structures of NE Alabama & the Southeast US. Join us for a fun campfire talk in the Great Outdoors! Talks are for all ages, & open to everyone! Seating is limited, so bring your own chair if you wish. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. Free & open to everyone, no pre-registration required. For details email Brittney. Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Oct. 14 • Canyon Half Marathon. This year's race will be chip timed and feature a long sleeve race day shirt. Possibly one of the most scenic half marathons in the country. Starting at 8:00 a.m. Awards ceremony to follow. Event details and schedule Registration is set at: (active.com) \$75 after August 1st; \$85 day of race. Park in the event parking lot.

Oct. 14 Salamander Sprint - 1K Fun Run for Kids. This is the perfect event for a kid's first race! This is not a mile race, but one kilometer race; it is just a little more than half a mile. Registration: \$25 after September 1st. Register now! https://secure.touchnet.net/C20.../web/product_detail.jsp...

Oct. 14 • 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 also get some good ideas about what to read next. 10:30 a.m.

Oct. 14 • The Pickin' Post Presents The Country Legend John Conlee. 6 p.m. Tickets \$40. For info, call 256-657-3817.

Oct. 14 • Discover Archeology: Bain's Gap Native American Village Site. JSU archaeologist, Dr. Kathryn Catlin to give an interesting campfire talk about the fieldwork at the Woodland/Mississippian site at Bains' Gap near Anniston. Info about this site gleaned from multiple field seasons reveals numerous storage pits, hearths, and post patterns dating from the Early Archaic up through the early Mississippian time periods. Bring your own chair if you wish. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (picnic area if bad weather) Free & open to everyone, no pre-registration required. For details, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Oct. 14 -15 • Christmas at Eddie's Florist. See the Christmas magic! Open House is scheduled for Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1-4 p.m. 9112 AL-40, Henagar. 256-657-3841

Oct. 18 • Art Talk. When artists gather to talk about what moves them to create art, what is really created in that moment is community. A community of like-minded people who speak the same language. A community of people who are genuinely interested in learning and supporting each other. If this sounds like your kind of gathering, please join us. Bring your art and share your process. Moon Lake Library 6-8 p.m.

Oct. 20 • Festival Kickoff Concert with Will Dooley & Company. Will be at the Linger Longer Pavilion at the Mentone Inn. Music, food by Fontastic Foods and more. Bring your chairs and enjoy! 7-10 p.m.

Oct. 21 • Mentone to host first annual Mentone Fall Festival. The first annual Mentone Fall Festival at the historic campus of Moon Lake Elementary School, now known as Moon Lake Village. Admission to the festival is free, but there is a \$5 per vehicle parking fee. More information will be available at https://mentonefallfestival.godaddysites.com.

Oct. • 21 The Great Pumpkin Run. ALL proceeds from the 5K will go to the DeKalb Country Children's Advocacy Center to help abused children in DeKalb County. Dress up in your Halloween Costume and come run or walk our 5K. Pre-Registration is \$30.00. Race Day Registration is \$35.00 - will be available from 7-7:30 a.m. Cash prized! Costume Contest begins at 7:40 a.m. Race Begins at 8:00 a.m. Fun Run for ages 9 and under around our Spooktacular wellness trail at 9 a.m. https://runsignup.com/.../Rainsville/RT15KTheGreatPumpkinRun

Oct. 21 • Boo-Bash: Bats & More. Learn about misunderstood animals of Halloween. All events are at the Little River Canyon Center. 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Not-So-Spooky Halloween Story Time 10:45–11:30 a.m. Not So Haunted Herpetology - Snake Program 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Come and Go Crafts 1–2 p.m. Batty About Bats - with LIVE bats! 2 p.m. – Bat House Give Away. Costumes welcome! All events are free and open to the public. Come and go as you please throughout the day. Please call the Little River Canyon Center for more information.

Oct. 21 • Chili and Rib Cook Off Fundraiser. Henagar is hosting their 1st Annual Chili and Rib Cook Off Fundraiser. Participants may enter the Chili Cookoff (bring your own ingredients) for \$25 or the Rib

Cookoff (ribs provided) for \$50 or both Cookoff Challenges for \$75. All food must be cooked at Henagar City Park from 6:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Spectators are welcome to purchase a \$10 ticket to try all entries and vote for their favorite between 4-6 p.m.! To enter, call City Hall at 256-657-6282 or come by and ask to speak with Sherry!

Oct. 21 • Campfire Talk: Turtles of Alabama. Learn how some studies of turtles have contributed to modern medicine and even space exploration. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground (picnic area in bad weather). Free and open to everyone, no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Oct. 26 • Courtyard Concerts: MTV Unplugged. Courtyard Concerts takes place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday at The Courtyard (Located beside DeKalb Theatre). Featuring local and regional artists performing a variety of themes, styles, and genres. Admission is free. Gates open at 5:30 p.m., music begins just after 6 p.m. A cash bar is available, as well as food, drink, and merchandise.

Oct. 27 – 29 • AL Quarter Horse Show. Agri Business Center in Rainsville

Oct. 28 • Watercolor Workshop with Lisa Opielinski. Learn a quick and simple image transfer technique and color harmony as we work in watercolors on a museum-quality Ampersand panel. Learn just how forgiving the surface is as we add, subtract, multiply, and blend colors to create "Trois Fleur-de-lis". Tuition is \$100 plus a \$30 supply fee paid directly to the instructor. The workshop is limited to 10 students. To register, please email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

Oct. 28 • May Gulf Music Fest at the Canyon Center Amphitheater. Doors open at 5 p.m. with music at 6 pm. Featuring Will Stewart, Janet Simpson, and their Band, Midnight Special: CCR Tribute Band. Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 the day of the show. Rain or shine event. No refunds or exchanges

Oct. 28 – 29 • SPOOKAPALOOZA Weekend at DeSoto State Park

Oct. 28 • Halloween in Henagar. Come on out to the Henagar Park for a Trunk-or-Treat and stop by City Hall to pick up a map of other activities throughout the city! City of Henagar

Oct. 29 • Acrylic Workshop with Lisa Opielinski. Impressionism meets abstract composition in this class being taught by renowned artist/ instructor Lisa Opielinski. In the workshop, "Aunt Louise's Corner" will be the subject. Students will collage and add texture with gel medium. You will learn dragging techniques and apply vibrant colors with acrylic paints. The tuition for the workshop is \$100 plus a \$30 supply fee paid directly to the instructor. The workshop is limited to 10 students. To register, please email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

Oct. 31 • Halloween at the Opera House. Please join us for a spooky evening of trick or treating at the Fort Payne Opera House. You may even catch a glimpse of the Phantom. Enter if you dare! 5-8 p.m.

Oct. 31 • Valley Head Halloween in Downtown Valley Head will begin at 5:00 p.m. Tables will be set up in front of town hall.

Oct. 31 • Trunk or Treat in Collinsville 5-7 p.m. Downtown Collinsville.

Oct. 31 • Trunk a Treat in Geraldine Candy, food, and fun. Geraldine High School Gym. Call for more info 256-659-2122.

In Memoriam



MRS. JUDITH HUNNICUTT LEWIS
September 27, 1946 – August 21, 2023

Heaven gained a precious saint when Judy Lewis, age 76, was called to a glorious Homecoming to her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Born in Macon, GA, to Dewey and Mary Carter Hunnicutt, she was one of their five children.

Judy became a Christian at age 9. She was on the yearbook staff at Opelika High School, where she graduated with honors. She was an active member of Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA), Fort Payne, from 1987 until her passing. She served God and Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) as treasurer of Women in the Church and as a meal coordinator for families in need. Her favorite pastime was taking care of everyone else. Her spirit and beautiful, positive outlook on life continued throughout her illness with her desire to honor God in and through the challenges.

Judy is survived by her husband Robert, whom she met in storybook fashion, married six months later, and remained married to for 52 years. Other survivors include children: Duncan Ward “Bubba” Lewis (Karen) of Valley, Mandy Lewis Cash (Kevin) of Mentone, Jessica Lewis Cash (Dewayne) of Rising Fawn, GA; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; siblings Gary Hunnicutt (Liz), Dane Hunnicutt, Lynn Hunnicutt (Margie), and Beth Blankenship.

She is preceded in death by parents, Dewey and Mary Carter Hunnicutt and brother-in-law, Donnie Blankenship. The family suggested donations to the National Breast Cancer Foundation Inc., 7460 Warren Parkway, Suite 150, Frisco, TX 75034 or (nationalbreastcancer.org)



JIMMY VAN LINDSEY
March 7, 1942 - September 4, 2023

Jimmy Van Lindsey was a proud graduate of DeKalb High School (1960) and Jacksonville State University (1965). He worked with his father at A.J. Lindsey and Son Produce before beginning his 28-year career in public service as Circuit Clerk in 1977. Mr. Lindsey was a lifetime member of Highland Baptist Church where he faithfully served as a deacon until the time of his death. He enjoyed gardening and fishing, and it was often said of him “he was always smiling”.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years Treva Cox Lindsey; children Jay (Kelli); three great-grandchildren; and sister Jane Lindsey Bailey.

He was preceded in death by his parents A.J. and Lila Lindsey and sisters Lynette Tolbert and JayDell Johnson.



JAMES “JIMMY” RICHARD MCCULLOUGH
August 31, 1948 - September 7, 2023

Mr. James “Jimmy” Richard McCullough age 75 of Menlo, GA passed away Thursday, September 7, 2023, at his residence. Mr. McCullough was born August 30, 1948, in Summerville, GA to the late Doyle and Lorene Watson McCullough. He was retired from Heil Industries. He was a Veteran of the United States Army having served in Vietnam, and a retired Chief of the Rinehart Fire Department.

Survivors include his longtime companion, Karen Howard; children, Casandra (Jerry) Cole, Christy (Zac) Valentine, Amelia (Shannon) Chesser, and Scott (Angie) Howard; sister, June Ferry; 8 grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren.

Along with his parents he is preceded in death by siblings, Nelly Jones, Patsy Graves, and Johnny McCullough. Interment with military honors at Mt. Zion Cemetery.



MR. LARKIN JUNIOR BELL
May 1, 1926 – September 9, 2023

Mr. Larkin Junior Bell, age 97, of Mentone, Alabama, passed away on Saturday, September 9, 2023, at his residence. Mr. Bell was born in Mentone, Alabama on May 1, 1926, to Joseph Oscar Bell & Cora Lee Hall Bell. He was a veteran of the United States Army serving in WWII and later was self-employed as a farmer for many years.

He is survived by his children: Donnie Bell (Connie), Glenda Bell Ingram (Don), and Debra Bell Cash (Dewey); 14 Grandchildren; 16 Great-Grandchildren; 8 Great Great-Grandchildren; sisters: Mary Ruth Battles and Rose Yates; several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Betty Sue Goss Bell; daughter, Ginger Myers; son, Timothy Alan Bell; two brothers and five sisters. Pallbearers were Gavin Myers, Shane Ingram, Corey Ingram, Newley Ingram, Dustin Cash, and Kevin Worthey. Burial was at Little River Cemetery with Military Honors.



MRS. CAROL ANN BLALOCK SMITH
February 19, 1951 – September 10, 2023

Mrs. Carol Ann Blalock Smith, age 72, of Mentone, Alabama, passed away on Sunday, September 10, 2023. Carol was born in Mentone, Alabama on February 19, 1951. She worked in the

glove and sock mill industry and retired from the Renfro Corporation.

She is survived by Jackie L. Smith, her husband of 50 years and 8 months, her sister, Mickie Blalock Lemaster, several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Bill and Dot Blalock.

The family requests no food or flowers, instead please donate to your favorite charity.



WILLIAM A. WISE
August 1, 1935 – September 14, 2023

William A. Wise was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He started walking at 9 months old, and he never slowed down. He became one of the first Eagle Scouts in DeKalb County and earned three master's degrees.

After retiring from a distinguished Army career, Bill worked as project manager on several military bases. His second retirement was from Bevil Agua Research and Development Company in Huntsville, Alabama. He spent his remaining years perfecting Bill's Bunker, which houses his military memorabilia.

William had three children with his first wife, Mary: William Abernathy Wise, Jr., Theresa Virginia Wise, and James Armony Wise IV. He is also survived by 6 grandchildren and his second wife Christina, who has enjoyed retirement with him in Mentone.

Memorial services are planned for 2 p.m. Sunday, October 15, 2023, at Wilson Funeral Home in Fort Payne with military honors. The family will receive friends from 1 p.m. until the 2 p.m. hour of service. The family is accepting flowers but suggests memorial contributions be made to the St. Joseph's Indian School, PO Box 326, Chamberlain, SD 57326.

THOMAS MELVIN “TOMMY” SCHRADER
March 15, 1945- September 15, 2023

Mr. Thomas Melvin “Tommy” Schrader, age 78, of Cloudland, GA, died at his residence.

Mr. Schrader was born in Sylva, NC, son of the late George William and Minnie Frances Creasman Schrader. He was a member of Chelsea Baptist Church and prior to his retirement, was employed with Bigelow-Sanford Rug Mill.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Lou Smith Schrader; sons, Michael (Starla) Schrader, Timothy Schrader; daughter, Charlotte (Rusty) Gill; brother, Mark Schrader; 6 grandchildren; and 1 great-grandchild.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by brothers, Larry Schrader, Terrell Schrader, and David Schrader. Interment in New Home Cemetery in Henagar, AL. Active pallbearers were Rusty Gill, Zachary Gill, Greg Smith, and Mark Schrader. Christopher Walsh served as honorary pallbearer.



October Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Brian Baine Kerry Breithaupt Greyson Collins Tate Langston		Gayla Smith Allie Rhodes Charles Hammonds Scott Thomas Leslie Bowman		Alisha Lawton Katie Poe Tommy Battles Eddie Coots Andrue Smith Aryan Wallace Andrea Calvert Megan O'Shields Bill Shugart III		Lorri Steinemann		3	Jim & Kelley Money Chase & Julie Byrum	
2	Kevin Gifford Ben Kirby Avery Burke Brian Brandon Tim Ledford Liam Crawford Dia White	11	Michele Wooden Amanda Brown Rhett Freeman Sam Harrison Abigail Wallace Caison Allen Houston Spillman Bethany Whittle Kelley Frazier		18	Zoey Kate Baggett Ken Busby Stacy Smith Terry Manning Hollie Dean Alisha McElhaney Ethan Wilborn Harper Gregory	25	Piper Kate Reed Jordan Bain Ethan Smith Nicole Wolf Deb Givens Tytan Blevins Marshall Durham		5	Donnie & Connie Bell Jason & Karmen Smith
3	Jeff Boatwright Angie Shugart Ansley Blalock Elizabeth Gentry	12	Amanda Wright Ariana Jenkins Leslie Beason Craig Smith Cheryl King Nicholas Senicz Brent Highfield Tina Stokes Allie New		19	Isaac Underwood Charles Robert Hammon Matt Tillman Chris Porter Terry Bain	26	Jeff Harrison Cindy Butler Cheri Thacker Jacob Garner Liam Williams Logan Totherow		7	Eddie & Ashley Manning
4	Casey Cox Mandy Williams Reegan Shankles Jensen Hawkins Katelyn Brown	13	Sadie Stone JayDan Haynes Dusty Smith John Foreman Nick Price		20	Joseph Lee Lana Baker Jamie Shankles Koralyn Parker Khloe Totherow Brittany Bryant	27	Catrina Dodd Teresa Verdon Charity Garcia Johnny Wynn Ava Blevins Ella Holloway		8	Casey & Madie Gregory Craig & DeeDee Hendricks Steve & Carry Pope
5	Grace Wright Mack Flannigan Sadler Emory Starla Cash Donald Daniel Kathy Peterson Lynn Headrick Lily Jane Turlington Savannah Shannon	14	Martha Kirby Tina Langston Olen Crowe Ashley Phillips Russell Wright Judy Carolyn Rathell		21	Darius Turner Ross Van Pelt Donna McClure Joan Harrison Alex Garrett Bradyn Jenkins Alyssa Poe Emily Stone Sally Johnson Sydney Crow Jace Dutton	28	Judah Grisham Allie Pritchett Robert Worthey Meagan Sutton Matthew Patterson Roger Brownfield Rayford Bethune Wesley Frost Kristi Nance Monroe Byrum Diana Philip		9	Philip & Rhonda Cash Nelson & Brenda Kerby
6	Tylor Harrison Breanna Blalock Katy Tubberville Casey Hellums Tanya Thomas Adyson Hughes Timdavid Wheat Jannie McElhaney Lee Anne Hulkan Megan Crowder	15	Lanita Allen David "Tater" Hopper Pam Manning Casey Cartwright Bryce Rowan Tucker Langston Livvy Chambers Joann Fife		22	Kendra Cartwright Wanda Lewis	29	Jessica McGinnis Blake Blevins Dylan Newberry Grady Gilbert Tucker Gregory		10	George & Sandra Boehringer Jim Bozek & Donna Arnett
7	Christian Henry Maggie Coots Macy Smith	16	Sarah Blalock Tina Carden Jacey Traffanstedt Glenda Turlington Barry Sadowski		23	Levi McClure Sandra Padgett Roberta Kirby Rhonda Cash Edith Dean Joe Piscatelli	30	Shannon Wagner Jennifer Collins Emmy Smith Karen Prestwood Elisabeth Womack		14	Chris & Alisha Busby
8	Allie Williams Allen Ballinger	17	Renae Langston Rose Cox		24	Kyle Rape Marlie Spencer	31	Ashley Sanderson Charlotte Gentry Andrea Frazier John Dersham Wayne Miller Paul Blalock		15	Nathan & Holly Owen Amanda & Nakita Prestwood
9	Donna Hallahan Audie Beason Alaina McElhaneyn									16	Dusty & Lily Smith
10	Sally Muschamp									17	Adam & Alex Dupree
										18	Lee & Tina Carden Kevin & Angela Akins
										20	Bret & Taylor Johnson
										21	Tim & Jennifer Ledford
										22	Larry & Faye Bone Cody & Kaitlyn Tedder Austin & Jaymie Potts
										25	Josh & Holly Burt Josh & Hope Deal
										27	Coby & Brittany Harrison
										30	Jeremy & Kanissa Young
										31	Ricky & Jennifer Linn Colby Baty & Nickie Swanger

Happy Day!

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

Happy Day!



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

Classified Ads

- PACHYDERM PACKRAT** and 38 other vendors invite you to our booths at Dave's Antiques in Hammondville on the corner of Hwy. 117 & 11. We are open everyday from 10 'til 4, Sun. 12 'til 4 CDT.
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Mentone American Legion Officers Get Sworn In

by Barry Morton, Commander Post 215



“Raise your right hand, say ‘I’ and give your names, and repeat after me. I, (here give your name) do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties on the office of the American Legion I am about to assume, and I further pledge I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government” said Richard Pope, the County Commander to the three Mentonians, Barry Morton, Alan Lawson and Mike Norris.

With a patriotic video playing in the background, Richard started the ceremony at the Sept. 19 meeting with “Commander Barry Morton, you have completed a year of service to the American Legion and to Mentone Post 215. The records of the post indicate the quality of your service. To you, Commander Barry Morton, are entrusted very important duties. You must teach and protect the cardinal principles of the American Legion throughout your post. You are entrusted with the supervision of the duties of all officers of your post. The poor and troubled will come to you, and you must see no veteran is turned away without full justice. Loyalty to your post – to its membership – to the state and National organization are obligation which you now assume. You are more than the presiding officer for meetings; you are guided by the constitution and the decisions of the post body. Yet the responsibility of the year’s programs is on your shoulders. You must familiarize yourself with the traditions of your post and The American Legion. By your sincere acceptance and earnest performance of these duties, may the trust your fellow Legionnaires have reposed in you be justified. I extend to you the congratulations of the Department of State of Alabama, and I wish you well as you assume the responsibilities of your office”.



- Also at this meeting, members discussed the following topics:
- I bought a new table and 6 chairs and will slowly replace all the old. We will use the table and chairs at our fund raiser and membership drive booths.
 - A large screen presentation included
 - » Details of an update to Mentone Town Council on their American Legion
 - » Grant request update
 - » Sandra Plummer and Barry Morton attended grant training presented by County Commander, Richard Pope.
 - There was discussion of the need for an Auxiliary. Executive Committee Member Sandra Plummer has been asked to stand one up.
 - The Post will have a booth at the Mentone Fall Festival.
 - We are having a 50/50 raffle for Veteran’s Day.

- Patriotic video while we gather for the swearing in ceremony.
- County Commander, Richard Pope, swearing in ceremony.
 - Commander - Barry Morton
 - Vice Commander - Alan Lawson
 - Sgt of Arms - Larry Brewer
 - Chaplain - Carter Morris
 - Finance - Mike Norris

Please check out the “Mentone American Legion” Facebook Group.

Scouts Call Mentone Home

by Nathan Austin



Mentone has been a home to scouting for many years. Camp Comer is situated just down the road and the natural wonders of Lookout Mountain provide endless options for outdoor recreation. So, when the leaders of Cub Scout Pack learned that the Cub Scout Pack we belonged to and Troop 106 were relocating to Fort Payne. we felt it was not the right choice for our family.

My son, Baxter, joined Pack 106 in 2020 and soon I found myself wanting to be involved. The scouts gave us an opportunity to bond more, learn new skills, get outside, and a sense of accomplishment. Baxter loved wearing his uniform, earning patches and belt loops and meeting new friends. I began training to become a Den Leader and felt I was reliving a part of my childhood that I had missed out on.

Our pack was small and close-knit, making campouts, council events and service projects memorable. Fundraisers were always successful because Mentone is such a supportive community. When the decision was made to move, several families in our pack felt the same so we decided to stay and return to where it all began – at St. Joseph’s on the Mountain Episcopal Church.

We sought SJOM as our Charter due to their history with scouting in Mentone, commitment to service in the community, and the fellowship that goes hand in hand with the mission of scouting. With help from our Sequoyah District Executive Alex Casey, and a lot of encouragement from my wife, Jessica, we began the process of forming a new cub scout family pack.

Family packs are co-ed so boys and girls in kindergarten through grade five are welcome. There will be many fun and exciting adventures taking place this year! Fishing Derby, Cub Haunted, campouts, hikes, service projects, field trips, Highland Games & Camporee, and Pinewood Derby are just a few.

Our first meeting will take place on Sunday, Sept. 24 at 2 p.m. at St. Joseph’s. Please join us or contact Nathan Austin at 256-997-7888.

Scouting builds character, teaches teamwork and skills, provides a positive environment and above all is fun. We are so happy to continue the tradition of scouting in Mentone and are grateful for the support from the church and the community.



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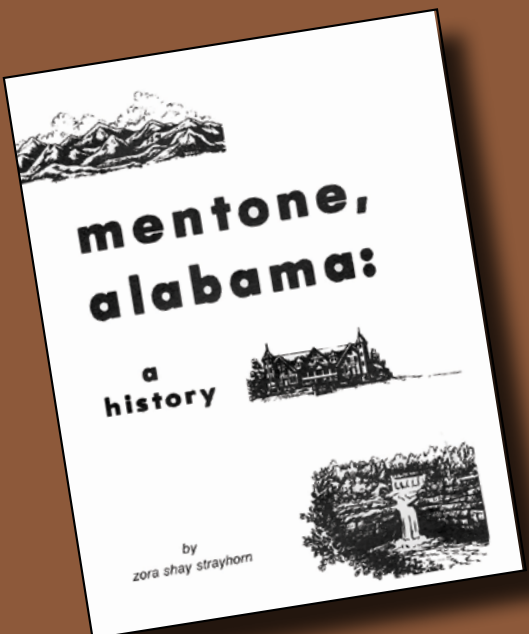
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Zora Strayhorn's book, *Mentone, Alabama: A History*, is for sale (\$15) at the Mentone Market and the Wildflower Café in Mentone.





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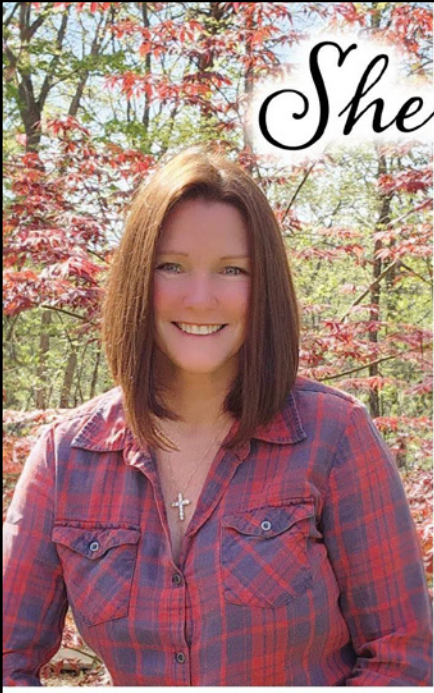
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Friday, October 20

Festival Kickoff
Concert at the
Mentone Inn

- Will Dooley & Company 7-10 p.m. at Linger Longer Pavilion (Fontastic Foods, 6 p.m.-'til ?)
- Plus! Mentone restaurants, shops (including Moon Lake Village & Log Cabin Village) & businesses open to festivalgoers—ALL WEEKEND!

Saturday, October 21

Mentone Fall
Festival at Moon
Lake Village

- Festival Info & Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$5 parking fee
- Plus! An expanded Farmer's Market will be happening at the Mentone Inn, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

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