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Volume 41, No. 5

“Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain”

May 2022

ART, LIFE, LAND: Coming Full Circle with Deedee Morrison

by Kelly Leavitt

A certain piece of land on Little River has called to Deedee Morrison for decades. After a lifetime of travelling the world, living in such far-flung places as London and Japan, the land has finally called her home to Mentone.

Deedee is an artist who is nationally recognized for her large-scale public art installations. Her interest in sculpture was awakened as a child, when she lived on the East Fork Little River, just below Lake Lahusage. Deedee was in 5th grade when her family moved to the area.

Her great-grandfather, Jacob Allen Gorman, had began summering in Mentone in 1915 with his two daughters, Edith and Bertha. His wife had passed away and Bertha's health was ailing due to the poor air quality in New Orleans, where Dr. Gorman's dental practice was located. (It was the first practice in the south to limit its services to orthodonture and he is considered the “Father of

Orthodonture in the South.”) Bertha's doctor suggested she be taken to the mountains, so Dr. Gorman took the train from New Orleans to Valley Head, its furthest stop. He bought land on the western brow and in 1917 began construction of what is known as the “Hanging Cottage.” While many thought the structure seemed too precarious to survive, it is still standing. It is the only structure in the Mentone area which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, cited an “an excellent interpretation of the bungalow style of architecture within the local context of Mentone.”

Deedee explained that her great-grandfather, who was originally from North Carolina, was the dentist and orthodontist of George and Elizabeth Vanderbilt (“the Biltmore Vanderbilts”). They spent their summers in their Adirondack home in upstate New York, and Dr. Gorham would sometimes travel there by train to render his services to the family. The Adirondack



Deedee Morrison sits by her illuminated sculpture, “A Matter of Fiction” 2010, Fairhope, Alabama

style of architecture appealed to him, with its primitive, rustic appearance and use of native building materials, such as rock and rough-hewn wood. It is perhaps this connection that explains the abundance of bungalows and other structures in our area that favor the Adirondack style.

In the 1920s, Dr. Gorham and his son-in-law, Gray Morrison, who was married to Edith, began dreaming of building a summer camp for boys. “For days, my grandfather rode the mountain on his horse, looking for land,” said Deedee. “He finally settled

on a 250-acre property spanning both sides of the East Fork that was known as ‘Indian Village.’ In 1927 they began building Lookout Mountain Camp for Boys on that land, and it opened in the summer of 1928.

This was around the time that the nearby Lahusage Hotel became insolvent, leaving countless men out of work. Deedee says that Dr. Gorham employed these men to build the camp and provided them with a hot meal, \$1, and a bucket of food each day.

Gray Morrison passed away in 1959
(continued on page 6)

Wildflower Saturday! by Brittney Hughes

Wildflower Saturday is an annual event held in DeSoto State Park held on the first Saturday of May. Springtime at DeSoto State Park is truly beautiful, with wildflowers and trees blooming around every corner. Join DeSoto State Park staff and guest speakers for a wonderful weekend of learning about the many species of blooming plants found on Lookout Mountain.

The weekend includes a welcome social and guest speaker program on Friday night, a day full of hikes on Saturday, and a guest speaker on Saturday night. All events are free and open to everyone, and no pre-

registration is required. We do ask that groups over 10 please RSVP to help us make everyone's wildflower experience better! For full information about the weekend, see alapark.com/DSP-WildflowerSaturday.

DeSoto's trails can vary from fairly flat terrain to slightly steep inclines & rocky ground. Each hike is marked for its difficulty level. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear & bring along water & snacks along on the hikes. Throughout the course of the day you will be able to choose from 3 separate hikes during the day, each hike with different leaders.

Schedule at a glance:

Friday, May 6

6–7:15p.m.

Welcome Social and Presentation at CCC Pavilion in Picnic Area: “Wildflower Trivia Jeopardy,” speaker Mike Ezell

Saturday, May 7

9 a.m. • 1 p.m. • 3 p.m.

Hikes start at DeSoto's Country Store

7:15 p.m.

Presentation at CCC Pavilion in Picnic Area: “Sandstone Glades of Lookout Mountain,” speaker Michelle Reynolds



THE GROUNDHOG

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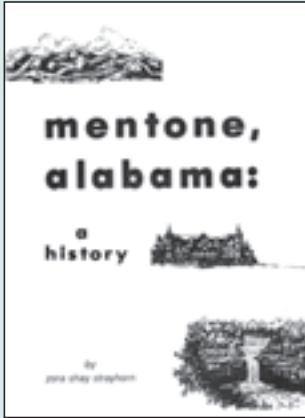
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The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Groundhog woodcut courtesy of Meg Justice

Do you have a story idea?
We welcome contributions!
Email groundhognews@yahoo.com



Learn about the
History of Mentone
Zora Strayhorn's book,
*Mentone, Alabama:
A History*, is for sale
at Mentone Market
and DeSoto State Park.
\$15; proceeds
benefit MAPA.

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond

Emily McCamy from the DeKalb County Council on Aging attended the April council meeting and explained many of their services for people 60 and older. The coordinator of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program can assist seniors in understanding Medicare or Medicare Plans. Seniors can request guidance during open enrollment (October 15–December 7) in choosing the best Part D plan. There is no cost for these services. Other services provided include: SenioRX (this program helps individuals with a doctor-diagnosed chronic disease that cannot afford the medications they need), senior centers offering many different activities, home-delivered meals, legal aid, and rural transportation. We hope to have a time this fall when Elizabeth can be in Mentone to explain these programs in more detail. In the meantime, please call 256-845-8590 if you have questions or need assistance now.



The last of the concrete has been poured for the sidewalk. It should be ready to go in the near future—just in time for the summer influx of visitors.

I was asked the other day had the Town of Mentone recently annexed outlying areas or did the town have any plans to do so. The answer to both questions at this time is no. There is no “secret” way for a municipality to annex. Procedures for annexation are in the Code of Alabama.



From the Editor

May is such a beautiful time of the year, with its vibrant greens and pops of bright colors. As the school year closes, camp season approaches, and outdoor events begin, it's easy to feel the rhythm of the year and its seasons. This year, we have been blessed with an absolute abundance of native columbines on our land. What a complete surprise it's been, as hundreds of delicate flowers sprung from the earth, where only a few had been in the past!

I thoroughly enjoyed writing about Deedee Morrison and her family in this month's feature article. In the course of speaking with Deedee,

compelling anecdotes kept popping up, again and again, and I wish I had much more room to tell more of her family's story, and more about her art. I strongly suggest you visit her website to learn more about her body of work to date.

It was fun to learn that her great-grandfather's “Hanging Cottage” was constructed with lumber from the old Baty sawmill. I had already chosen to reprint an article from 1986 about Glenn Baty, and this synchronistic connection symbolizes so much of what we all love about Mentone.

Be well, everyone. —Kelly



Message from MAPA by Susan Seago

May has arrived and Mentone's beauty is "bustin' out all over." Azaleas, rhododendrons, roses, and so many lovely flowers are in full bloom. It is no wonder so many people visit our quaint little town. There is truly magic on the mountain! I

hope you will take advantage of the beautiful weather and flora as you visit the shops and restaurants.

MAPA has been busy with the Spring Golf Tournament on April 28. As of this writing, we are in full preparation mode for the event. If you haven't visited Lil Mole Run Golf Course, you are missing a treat. I do not play golf, but on my first visit, I truly enjoyed the beauty of the course. The proceeds of the golf tournament help MAPA to be able to award grants to various non-profits and other groups in our area. We are grateful to Lil Mole Run for their assistance in hosting the tournament and to the many sponsors who gave so generously.

Mentone has a great summer ahead. Here's hoping you invite others to visit our lovely town and that you and yours have a wonderful season.

Susan Seago is the vice president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Help us preserve Mentone's history and impact its future.

Join MAPA Today

The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) is dedicated to preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area.

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L to R: Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter, Mayor Rob Hammond, Cynthia Stinson, Sheriff Nick Welden

Annual Mentone Clean-up by Cynthia Stinson & Lyle Nicely

Mentone's annual clean-up was held on Saturday, April 2. Fifty (a record number) volunteers met Lyle Nicely at the Mentone Inn parking lot. They were given trash bags, tongs, and high visibility vests and then were directed to a section of roadway to clean. They picked up over 150 bags of trash along roads (also a record) in and around Mentone. We would like to thank them for their community spirit.

Thank you to the following businesses that contributed:

Mentone Market • Fontastic Foods • Elevation Bistro • Wildflower Café
Rhododendron Garden Club • Boy Scout Troop 106 • Helena's • BJ's #8
Mountain Top Grocery • Little River Hardware • Ecological Designs • Mentone Inn
Sheriff Nick Weldon and the DeKalb County Sheriffs Dept. • The Town of Mentone
Camp Laney • Police Chief McKee and Officer Langston
Joseph Lee for driving his dump truck
Bobby Hamby of DeKalb Computers for the electronic pickup

A community potluck picnic was held in the Mentone Inn Pavilion at noon. Thank you to all who brought the delicious dishes and desserts. Thank you to Larry Joe Hall for providing music, and to David Mays and Josh Porter for smoking the delicious BBQ. A special thank you to AL House Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter for donating \$500 for the purchase of new high visibility vests and garbage tongs. We appreciate the efforts of those who keep sections of our roads clean throughout the year—it does not go unnoticed. We would like to encourage the community to continue keeping Mentone clean all year. It takes a Village.

Dennis Lewis Named Water Operator of the Year

Dennis Lewis, Senior System Operator for the Valley Head Water Works, was recently named Water Operator of the Year by the Alabama Rural Water Association (ARWA) at its 44th Annual Conference held in Mobile from March 20–23, 2022. The Conference was attended by approximately 1,000 water and waste water professionals from across the state. ARWA provides assistance to these systems to comply with state and federal regulations, to help with management and operational problems, and to provide training initiatives which will promote personnel development and efficiency.

The Water Operator of the Year Award recognizes

a State of Alabama Certified Water Treatment Operator for his/her outstanding leadership abilities and accomplishments in water utility operations. Mr. Lewis has been an integral part of the Valley Head Water Works since 1982 when he was hired as that organization's first full-time employee. Under his leadership, the Valley Head Water customer base has grown from 300 households in 1982 to over 1,000 at the present time, and its service area now extends from just north of Fort Payne to the Alabama/Georgia state line at Sulphur Springs. Mr. Lewis will retire on April 30, 2022 concluding a 40-year career of public service.



L to R: Dennis Lewis, his wife Sherryl Lewis, and Rob White, Executive Director of the Alabama Rural Water Association, who presented the award to Mr. Lewis.

A LOOK BACK...

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GROUNDHOG

VOL. 4 - NO. 5 - AUGUST 1986 A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association

Glenn Baty
A Mentone Original
by Doc Long

This year, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA), THE GROUNDHOG will reprint a selection of articles from years past. (Archives of issues are available to read online at mapamentone.com/groundhog-past-issues.) We hope you enjoy this look back in time.

A lot of good men have sat across a checkerboard from Glenn Baty and learned a good deal more than checkers. He teaches humility, respect, a healthy dose of awe, and mixes it all with a keen sense of humor and an unending supply of stories. "It's a deep game, my friend," he'll drawl, "a very deep game. Want to try again?" This writer, who fancies himself a respectable checkers player, played six games with Glenn recently and never even came close to holding his own. Glenn Baty reminds one of a magician who seems to have no end to his supply of tricks, traps, and combinations. He just keeps taking your checkers until they're all gone.

But Glenn Baty is much more than a checkers champion. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, he's a champion, dressed up as a sawmiller, disguised as a storyteller/banjo player, all rolled up into a gentleman. The Mentone area is fortunate to have some of the most interesting characters in the Southeast. And Glenn Baty is the Grand Marshal of the parade of characters. Our local color would indeed pale without him and his family.

The Baty family arrived in Mentone in 1900. "Grandpa Baty brought Grandma Ermine here for her health," Glenn related. "I can't say that the climate here cured her. But she didn't get any worse, that's for sure. Grandpa had been a farmer at Walnut Grove, Alabama. After moving to Mentone, he became involved in the community in any number of ways. He was even the Justice of the Peace. A lot of the old timers here were married by Grandpa."

Glenn was born on the 4th of June, 1917, the first of nine children: "And you know they're all living. Most of them settled in this general area," Glenn stated. He attended Moon Lake School through the ninth grade. "It went up through 9th then," he said. "Then I went down to Valley Head where I graduated from high school. We walked to school every morning, practiced football during the fall, and walked back up the mountain to home. But we were bad to thumb a ride if one came along.

"When we didn't have football practice I usually stopped at the Mentone Store, now the Hitching Post, to play checkers. I learned checkers from my Daddy. At the store we usually played for a nickel a game. I always tried to win enough to pay for my haircuts. Bill Wright used to be the barber then. If he didn't have any customers he'd play with me. I usually made enough to pay for my haircuts. But haircuts were only a quarter then," Glenn added.

Glenn and Pearl were married in 1940. Sons Robert and Jimmy have added two sons each to the Baty family and two grandchildren each - all boys - and two greatgrandsons. "There's not much chance



Mentone will have a shortage of Batys in the future," Glenn said with one of his special smile/wink/legslap combinations. "My greatgrandfather fought with a Georgia unit during the Civil War. We've always lived in the South."

When the Groundhog asked about his reputation as a storyteller, Glenn shook his head. "I don't know how that got started." Across the table Pearl coughed gently as if to say, "I'd never know," and shook her head. "Did I ever tell you about the time the British checkers, they call it draughts you know, came to challenge us in America?"

And he was off on yet another story.

Asked about his banjo playing, Glenn scurried off into another room and returned soon with his banjo. "Here! You try it. How do you like the ring?" Pretty soon he had it cradled on his lap like a favorite grandchild, playing Darktown Strutters Ball. He moved easily into Sally Goodwin - at the end declaring, "That's one Colquitt likes," referring to Mentone's Police Chief. After that came a banjo solo of Leather Britches. "We used to play all over this mountain! Mack Blalock, Colquitt Jones, James Roe Lyday, Mack Bryan, and several others. Some of us played for dances and all sorts of gatherings. Why I can recall when James Bryan was just a little tow-headed kid — not much bigger than his son Addison

— his daddy would bring him along and let him play with us. That boy can sure play the fiddle today." And that led into yet another story involving Glenn's mother's definition of a proper lady and the difference between a violinist and a fiddle player.

On the subject of occupation: "Sawmilling is all I've done. Grandpa bought the property where the mill is located and I started the mill there in 1948. Before that I worked for the Valley Head Lumber Company - sawmilling for them. Bob runs our mill now. Jimmy and I work the timber.

"Now before you get too deep into this business of checkers - you should get this right. Checkers tournaments are divided into three levels. You have the minors, the majors, and the masters. I play in the majors - the middle level group. Sometimes, in a local tournament, I'll be put in the masters group. But I'm considered an average player in the majors - I win about as many games as I lose. Now let me show you this end game combination." And off he goes with another five or six move combination where the outcome is terminal for his opponent. "I really love the game. But we don't travel to as many tournaments as we used to. It's unusual that we go more than a hundred miles to play."

Regarding the growth of Mentone: "I don't live in the town and I really haven't given a lot of thought to the subject. But I'll say this; I hope it changes for the best. Everyone wants to move to the country - and they're doing it. Country is hard to find these days. We used to be way out in the country. Now it's more like living in a suburb of Mentone. Some folks call this part Batyville. Letters come addressed to Baty Road.

"Why, I remember when we first got electricity- we called it getting lights then - that was about 1950 or '51." And Glenn launched off on another anecdote about getting electricity in the country and the first electric fan he bought for Pearl shortly after they got lights. Seems that Jimmy let the cat out of the bag before the surprise fan could be presented.

"There was a time when we didn't have many jobs. We had no money in our pockets and had to walk where we wanted to go. It's hard to imagine kids today actually walking to Valley Head and back to get an education. Times are better now - well at least they're different - I hope it's better."

At Glenn's table you will find a pouch of Redman chewing tobacco and an empty Folgers can, Pearl's bottomless coffee pot, a checkerboard, a banjo, a sense of family (there are a lot of four-letter Batys in England), and an oral tradition of the stories and anecdotes of the area. If you don't know Glenn Baty—you don't know Mentone.

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Deedee Morrison (cont'd from page 1)

Jacob Gorman and his daughter Edith in front of the Hanging Cottage

and Dr. Gorham passed away in 1964; the camp continued to be directed by Edith and their sons, John and Gray, who spent their summers in Mentone and then returned to their hometown of New Orleans for the school year. In 1974, John, his wife Anne, and their four children permanently moved to the camp property from Rome, GA, where Deedee's 4th grade teacher at Darlington School had been Rob Hammond, currently Mentone's mayor and the owner/director of Camp Laney. "Deedee was an outstanding student with a great personality—very polite and knew how to have fun with her peers," he said. "I remember her well."

Lookout Mountain Camp for Boys ceased operations at this point and John and Anne Morrison founded the Lookout Mountain Christian Conference Center, a year-round retreat center. "In 1972, they become Christians, which was a profound and life-changing experience for them," Deedee said. "They were deeply influenced by the book *L'Abri* by Francis and Edith Schaeffer and they had a vision of the good they could do on the mountain."

Deedee says her parents opened

the first food pantry and clothing cabin on the mountain. They opened a home for unwed mothers, led camps for inner-city children from all over the southeast and started a free day camp for all the mountain kids for one week each summer. "That's how we ended up knowing all the local kids," said Deedee. "My mom would teach Bible classes, and the children were offered art classes, horseback riding, and swimming lessons."

"When my dad moved back to Mentone," said Deedee, "he was changed—by Mentone and by his new-found faith. He became very interested in giving back. Very much so."

This included giving back to the land. In the 1970s, Little River had become severely impacted by strip mining in



Jacob Gorman and a camper

lake, shortly." He became instrumental in crafting the legislation that effectively ended strip mining on Lookout Mountain in the 1980s.

"One night we were all at the dinner table when the phone rang," Deedee recalled. "Someone said, 'Dad, it's for you. It's the president.' Everyone laughed, thinking it was a great joke. But sure enough, it was President Jimmy Carter calling my dad to talk with him about the legislation."

Deedee attended Moon Lake Elementary School before moving on to middle school in Valley Head and high school in Fort Payne. After graduating from the University of the South in Sewanee, TN, with a degree in developmental economics, she began her career as an economist in London.

Although she was never trained as an artist, she found ways to teach herself. Her interest in sculpture was born in the wood shop under the gym on the camp property. "I loved to spend time there," she said. "That's where I would play as a kid. You could build anything in there, and I found I loved to build structures. I can remember thinking then about the power of structure and dimensional shape. Scale doesn't dictate thought; thought dictates scale, when you're thinking about structure. It's a fascinating concept."

While living in London, she began taking a live modeling clay class that was offered in the back of her local post office. Years later, when she moved to Birmingham, AL, she took a welding class with the goal of becoming a monolithic sculptor that had so inspired her during her time in England.

This new ability made it possible for Deedee to artistically express herself on a large scale. Through a fortuitous



Granny Dollar and Edith Gorman

meeting with Robin Wade of Wade Sand & Gravel, she was offered space to create a studio at a Birmingham rock quarry in an area that used to be a steel mill. "I poured a concrete floor at the base of an old coke oven and built walls out of tin," Deedee said. "There was no bathroom, heat, or air conditioning. The rent was \$50 month."

"This gave me access to the quarry's people and resources," she said. "I was able to use their large equipment. I had access to their engineers when I had questions about building my sculptures."

"I started using the stone out of the quarry," said Deedee. "Thursdays were blast days, and I would go with the workmen to find the boulders that hadn't blasted apart. I would build what I called charms that would dangle off the stone. Those rocks weighed 5,000 pounds."

She bought a U-Haul trailer and welded a crane on to the back end of it, allowing her to transport and install

(continued on page 7)



L to R: John, Edith, and Gray Morrison

the area. Rain had washed the silt from abandoned mine sites into the river and its tributaries, and the debris settled in Lake Lahusage. In 1983, John Morrison was quoted in the Atlanta Constitution: "Right now we have an outstanding sediment pond. You can't swim in it. It's killed some of the fish. You'll have a nice potato patch where you had a

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Deedee Morrison (*cont'd from page 6*) her unique creations. She began to get work through requests for proposals soliciting bids, known as RFPs. "I never missed an RFP," said Deedee. "I truly believe I submitted more RFPs than any other artist in America. This was for donor/loaner work. They would give \$1,000 to haul and install your

budget, I didn't earn money, but I didn't lose money," she said. "That became my sweet spot, between \$50,000 and \$100,000. I've done lots of small-town artwork. My largest work to date had a budget of \$1,500,000, but that took me 12 years to build up to.

"Public art is a really great form of art and I think we're just beginning

a 5-foot steel sphere that represents a droplet of water and is encased in 269 sections of hand-cut historic rail steel, weighing over 11,000 pounds.

"The cut steel rail cascades around the sculpture at varying heights," Deedee explained, "replicating a sense of the geology of Jones Valley and honoring the contributions of our natural resources in our built environments. The colors of aged rail—ochre, bright silver—and the glossy blackness of coal speak to Birmingham's industrial heritage.

"The center sphere of the sculpture is the inception or starting point of opportunity for our future—that moment where the act of creation begins. It acknowledges the water from the nearby Avondale Spring which brought the railroad and other industry to the area," she continued. "It

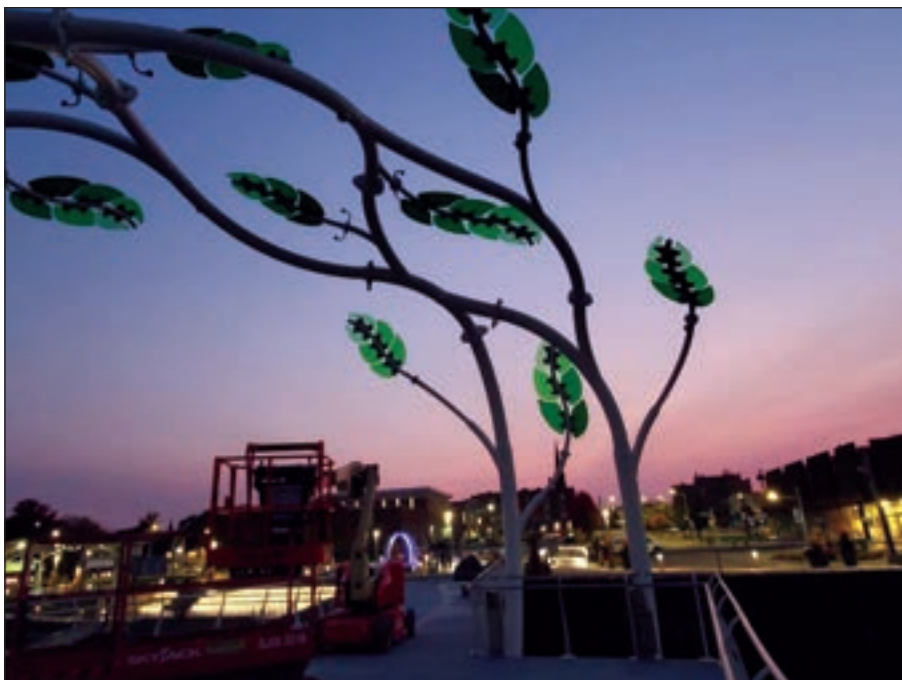
our family, which is a wonderful thing.

"Before becoming a sculptor, Clyde was very active in civil rights, which informed her work to a deep degree," Deedee said. "She was one of the first female Southern artists to be exhibited at a prominent gallery in New York and her work is displayed at the Smithsonian and other museums across the country. Her last exhibit was held under the Eiffel Tower when she was 99 years old. She was a pretty remarkable Southern artist who began sculpting at age 60."

"I was in an environment at my quarry studio where I had access to scrap industrial material, like metal, which really affected the direction of my art," Deedee said. "I have just finished reading a book about Clyde and I learned about how she used her materials. I was struck by the



Charms



"Resilience" 2021, Janesville, Wisconsin

art in a certain location and then leave it there for a year. I did that for a long time. Once you get 10 or 12 of those, then someone might take you on and pay you, because you've proven you can do it. I started getting paid work and eventually moved into the \$50,000 range, then the \$100,000 range.

"I learned that with a \$50,000

to experience the fullness of it," Deedee said.

She has had 11 projects installed within the past 18 months, and two more will soon be installed. One of those, called "Inception," will be installed in Birmingham before the World Games open there in July. Twenty-six-feet tall, it incorporates



"The Architecture of Strength" 2021, Columbia, South Carolina

reiterates the source of life and fosters renewal. Our future is determined by how we honor our past. The reshaping of the environment and the human impact of that reshaping continues in Birmingham to this day.

"'Inception' encourages a relationship between the pedestrian, their interconnected natural environment, and our shared history; honoring the invaluable contributions made by the native abundance of the land and by the iron and steel workers and their families to Birmingham's economic, cultural and industrial development.

Deedee grew up with an awareness of the fame her great-aunt, Clyde Connell, had achieved as a sculptor. "She had a big influence on my family," Deedee said. "All my uncles are doctors and my grandfather was an artist. They're all artists. They have careers, but on the side they make art. Their children are like that, and my own three children have lots of creative talents. We have art as an element of

similarities between us. She had no money, so she started using old boards and timber, found objects from farms, and papier-mâché. She created her own complete style. It's amazingly original. She found her voice through sculpture."

Deedee is known for lighting her sculptures with solar LED lights. "I learned how to create my own solar panels by reading the 'Solar Power Your Home for Dummies' book." She has worked with glass, steel, tile, wood, resin, and more. "I love that I'm not defined by a certain material," she said. "I've worked with it all. I can create anything three-dimensionally, but I can't draw at all."

It was through another fortuitous encounter that Deedee returned to Mentone in March, 2021. "A friend sent me a listing of some property on the river. It was, literally, the property I have dreamt of for decades. I used to kayak with my kids and I'd point to the property and jokingly say, 'See that

(continued on page 8)



Deedee Morrison welding a charm which is located on Main St. in Gadsden

Happy Mother's Day!



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

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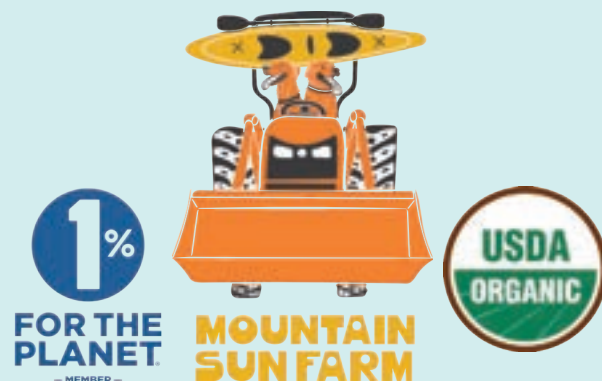
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Deedee Morrison (cont'd from page 7)

lot? That lot is the one thing that could get me back to Mentone.' As it turned out, the property had been for sale for seven years—almost as if it was waiting for her. She bought it as soon as she heard about it.



*Deedee Morrison kayaking past
her beloved land on Little River*

"I didn't know how much I loved Mentone until I came back," Deedee said. "I have been all around the world and created some sort of bucket list in my head of everything I ever loved and the things that meant something to me internally—a sense of place and a home and a way to rest and a way to have community...all the ways that nurture me personally. Remarkably, when I came back to Mentone, so many of those things that I had yearned for are here. When I first drove down the ¼-mile road to the river property, I realized it's what I had pictured my whole life. To be back is like somebody heard me. I don't know how else to say it."

"The Mentone I've gotten to know is the Mentone of my dreams," she continued. "A place that has a sense of community is a lost art. That's the fabric of Mentone, and that's the way people want it to be. You feel that when you're here. To me, that feels like home. It makes me want to dig in, too. It makes me want to find companionship in that environment. It makes me want to create my home here."

You can learn more about Deedee and her remarkable artwork at deedemorrisonsculpture.com.

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SENIOR SERVICES

Medicare Covers Over-the-Counter Covid-19 Tests
by Lynn Hixon

Medicare has a new initiative that will cover up to eight over-the-counter Covid-19 tests each calendar month, at no cost to you. All you need to be eligible is Medicare Part B, including those enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan. If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, the tests covered under this initiative will be covered outside of your existing plan's coverage, and in addition to any over-the-counter tests that may be covered under the plan as a supplemental benefit.

Medicare won't cover over-the-counter Covid-19 tests if you only have only Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) coverage, but you may be able to get free test through other programs. This program started on April 4, 2022 and continues until the Covid-19 public health emergency (PHE) ends. People with Medicare Part B can get up to eight free over-the-counter tests for the month of May any time before May 31, and can then get another set of eight free over-the-counter tests during each subsequent calendar month through the end of the Covid-19 PHE.

To take advantage of this initiative, you can get over-the-counter Covid-19 tests at any pharmacy or health care provider that participates in this initiative. Check with your pharmacy or health care provider to see if they are participating. If so, they can provide your tests and will bill Medicare on your behalf. You can get your free over-the-counter Covid-19 tests from any eligible pharmacy or health care provider that voluntarily participates in this initiative, even if you aren't a current customer or patient. Getting your tests won't impact any prescription you have in place. Just remember that you won't have to pay as long as you go to an eligible pharmacy or health care provider that participates in this initiative. However, if you get more than eight covered over-the-counter Covid-19 tests in any calendar month, Medicare will not pay for additional over-the-counter tests in that month. For additional information, call 256-845-8590 and ask to speak to SHIP Coordinator, Lynn Hixon at the Dekalb County Council on Aging.

Lynn Hixon is the SHIP coordinator for the DeKalb County Council on Aging.

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Ongoing Community Calendar

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

Mentone Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm at Mentone Town Hall.

Valley Head Town Council meets monthly on the 1st Monday at 6pm at Valley Head Town Hall.

Hammondville Town Council meets monthly on the 1st Tuesday at 6pm at Hammondville Town Hall.

DeSoto Rescue Squad meets the 1st Saturday of the month at 9am at the MERF house in Mentone.

The North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District Board meets the 3rd Monday of every month at 7pm.

Mentone Farmers Market is open year-round on Saturdays from 10am-1pm in the Town Square.

FREE FOOD for eligible persons and families. Wednesdays, 9-11am. New applicants are welcome. Joint effort between St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church (Community Outreach Ministry) and the Food Bank of North AL.

The Lookout Mountain Knitters meet each Tuesday at 3pm at the MERF House. All are welcome.

Ryleigh's Closet is a clothing closet that provides men's, women's, and children's clothing to those in need on May 14 & 28 (2nd and 4th Mondays of each month) from 4-6pm. Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd. 256-364-0150.

Moon Lake Community Library is open on Saturdays from 10am-1pm, and Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12-4:30pm. Visit moonlakelibrary.org.

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets each month on the 2nd Tuesday at 10am. 'Green thumbs' and 'brown thumbs' are welcome! 256-634-4403.

Ukulele Sessions Continue. Bring your uke to the Moon Lake Community Library at 1 pm on May 7 and 23. Follow on Facebook (Mentone Ukes) or contact Debra Fey (debrajfe@gmail.com) for more info. Beginners of all ages are invited to join in. Strum and be happy!

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Plan for an Artful Weekend in Mentone

May 20–22: Friday Night Concert, Big Art Pop-Up, and a Weekend with Dr. E
by Anne McLeod

If you're in Mentone the weekend of May 20th through the 21st, you'll find plenty to do. Little River Arts Council is sponsoring a Friday evening concert with local favorites Will Dooley and Company and its first ever Big Art Pop-Up on the grounds of the Mentone Inn on Saturday. We are also co-sponsoring Moon Lake Community Library's visit with children's book author/illustrator Elizabeth Dulemba (*see the library's article on page 21*).

Here's a game plan to make the most of what will be a very full weekend on the mountain:

First, hit the Friday evening concert at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the Mentone Inn. Enjoy an evening of Americana classics and some original songs by Will Dooley and Company. Fontana Stinson's Fontastic Foods truck will be set up, or you can bring in a picnic of your own. This concert, sponsored by Little River Arts Council and Cynthia Stinson of the Mentone Inn, is a preview of what to expect over the months to come. LRAC's Music for the People Summer Concert Series officially kicks off in June and runs through September with some of the most talented artists in the region. Watch *The Groundhog* and the LRAC newsletter for details.

Next, decide whether your first Saturday morning stop will be the Big Art Pop-Up or the library activities. Pro tip: If you have children between the ages of 3 and 10, go to the library at 10 a.m. so the kids can listen to Elizabeth Dulemba read aloud *Crow Not Crow*, a picture book written by Jane Yolen and Adam Stemple, which she illustrated. She'll talk with kids about drawing birds and how books are made. There will be books for sale, and Dr. E will be happy to autograph them. See moonlakelibrary.org for more information.

While you've got the family at the library, check out the walking track next door at the MERF House. There are outdoor musical instruments for children of all ages to play, plus the whimsical picket fence created by locals and visitors two years ago. The kids can also run off some energy at the Moon Lake

playground which fronts on East River Road behind the library and is open to the public. Then head over to the Mentone Inn for the Big Art Pop-Up which will be going on until 3.

If you don't have children with you, we suggest going to the Pop-Up Art Market in the morning. The Little River Arts Council membership requested more art markets, and the board listened. Photography, quilts, paintings, jewelry, macrame, woodburning, and soft sculpture will be among the media for sale at the show. There will be 20 vendors set up behind the pavilion and in the pavilion itself. Again, Fontana's food truck will be set up. The Mentone Farmers' Market will run until 1, and the Pop-Up will be 10–3. Thanks for supporting our area's hardworking artists. This market promises to be something really special that could become an annual event.

After leaving the Pop-Up, go to Moon Lake Library for Dr. E's 1 p.m. Saturday session for adults on "Creating Children's Books." She'll share a slideshow about her stories and art and will have activities aimed at inspiring participants to tell their own stories. This will be a lot of fun, so we hope some of the parents who caught the first session with their children will be able to come back after lunch for this one too.

Elizabeth Dulemba's final presentation will be Sunday at 2 p.m. at the library. This one's for adults and the topic is "Is Your Stuff Stopping You? The Art of Letting Go." This session is an elaboration on Elizabeth's TEDx Talk, "Is Your Stuff Stopping You," and will include time for questions, comments, and discussion.

Your membership in the Little River Arts Council helps make all these activities possible. Promoting art for everyone is our mission, and we believe programs like these inspire us and make our community more vibrant. The LRAC tent will be set up at the pavilion Friday evening and during the day on Saturday with memberships and T-shirts for sale. Stop by and say hello. And join us.

Anne McLeod serves as the vice president of the Little River Arts Council.

Little River Arts Council is excited about our upcoming events. We hope you can get in on at least some of the fun in the next few weeks.

In addition to the Big Art Pop-Up on the 21st, we'll be popping up at Paradise Garden in Summerville, GA, at their event on Saturday, May 14, from 11–4 EDT with art from several of our artists. Stop by our booth and find out more about LRAC.

The third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. is our Art Discussion and Critique get-together at Moon Lake Library. Our next meeting is May 18. Bring a piece or two of art to share with the group!

We are in search of a graphic design for Follow Your Art 2022. Submit your design by June 15th via email at info@littleriverartscouncil.org and your work may be featured on our T-shirts and posters for the Follow Your Art market on September 3.

You can join Little River Arts Council by going to our website at littleriverartscouncil.org and clicking on the membership tab. Or stop by the tent at one of the events. Your membership goes toward funding more opportunities for artists and community events that draw locals and visitors to the area. We can't do it without you.

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**Are you a musician interested in playing
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to schedule.**

MAY 20-22

Little River Arts Council



Artist Lisa Sulkosky will be the Pop-Up May 21.

Friday, May 20 7-10PM
Will Dooley and Company Concert
Linger Longer Pavilion

Saturday, May 21 10-3
Big Art Pop-Up
20 artists will be set up on the
grounds of the Mentone Inn and
Linger Longer Pavilion

Saturday-Sunday, May 21-22
A Weekend with Dr. E
Author/illustrator Elizabeth Dulemba
will present 3 sessions
at Moon Lake Community Library

Mentone American Legion Starts Its Refurbishment

by Barry Morton

In April, we started our Mentone American Legion (MAL) Post refurbishment. Our bathrooms, which were built 74 years ago, were begging for an upgrade. Thanks to obtaining enough donations, we've converted two very old bathrooms into two new bathrooms—one being handicapped accessible. The bathrooms were ready by our April 20 meeting. Caleb O'Malia did a fine job, under budget and earlier than projected. We don't yet have all the funds necessary to do it all...but at least we've got enough to get started.

A bit of our history: One hundred three years ago, the American Legion was founded in Paris, France, the "City of Lights," by a group of committed U.S. veterans of the Great War. It has been a shining light for communities around the world ever since.

The American Legion was a figurative light for the Unknown Soldier who was given a prominent tomb in 1921 thanks to the tireless efforts of Representative Hamilton Fish, Jr., an American Legion founder. Congressman Fish understood that for America to remain free, it must honor and remember the brave.

The American Legion became a literal light for the Tomb in 1969, when it gifted \$200,000 for the monument to be permanently illuminated.

That's who the American Legion is—an organization of wartime veterans that understands the darkness of combat, while providing light to the communities and country that we love and pledge to defend.

For more information, please contact Barry Morton either by text or voice at 334-202-8396 or email at barrymorton74@gmail.com.

Barry Morton serves as the post commander for the Mentone American Legion (MAL) Post 215.



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LOTS & LAND

#1034997—Approx. 6 acres on Middle Fork of Little River. \$48,900.
#1781133—200 acres located near historic Mentone! Mature trees, creek, paved road frontage, minutes from Interstate 59. Land like this doesn't become available very often. \$1,000,000.

#1788540—40 acres of prime Mentone land. Beautiful tract with about a 5-acre lake. Flat open land with an old well on the property. Mostly fenced all the way around. good road through it. Over a half of a mile of county road frontage with power and water available. \$400,000.

#1791030—13 acres on East Fork Little River in Mentone. Privacy awaits you on this heavily wooded lot. \$175,000.
#1792283—Beautiful brow property located in Lake of the Brow. Just minutes from Little River Canyon and the falls. Enjoy beautiful views of Shinnel Valley below. \$79,900.
#1796363—Beautiful building site on Libby Lane in Mentone. Seller has all the groundwork ready, septic installed, water and power on the property! Bring your house plans to this level lot and let the dreams begin!! This 1.47 acre parcel is located near the end of a dead-end street inside Mentone city limits!! No mobile homes, no campers, and no tiny homes allowed. \$79,900.

#1798542, #1798643, #1798655, #1798657—Build your new home with BREATHTAKING VIEWS year round! Brow property located in Lake on the Brow on Lookout Mountain near Little River Canyon and the falls. \$55,000.
#1798938—10+ acre parcel of mostly wooded acreage! Great location just minutes from downtown, but with a country vibe. Owner has surveyed into 3 lots, but is selling as a whole. You can build and subdivide if you desire or simply hold onto this beautiful property as an investment. City water and electricity available on CR 106. \$91,500.
#1801221—This Mentone property offers road frontage on Hwy 117 in the business/alcohol district. One of very few available vacant lots in this area! \$75,000.

#1801378—Mentone property offers road frontage on Cove Road in the business/alcohol district. One of very few available vacant lots in this area! Adjoins a lot that fronts AL Hwy 117. \$75,000.
#1805521—Rare opportunity! 5 wooded acres on Lookout Mountain in the outskirts of Mentone on County Road 106. This land is unrestricted and outside the city limits. Offering mature trees, level, public water available at the road. The road frontage is just enough for a driveway while the majority of the land is tucked back for privacy. \$37,500.



May

Birthdays

- 1

Junior Bell
Riley Owen
Kathleen Johnson
Jennifer Owen
Michael Stone
Sue Anderson
Beckie Crider Hughes
Michelle Mancuso
Jennifer Owen
- 2

Morgan Blalock
Ella Voils
Cory Dobbins
Isaac Vaughan
Emerson Jean Bell
LuLu Langston
Destiny Hatfield
- 3

Abel James Baggett
Paula Coots
Steven Barkley
Annabelle Gifford
Henlee Langston
Bret Hulgán
- 4

Mollie Sanderson
Kathy Clure
Cathy White
Jody Nance
Russell Bone
- 5

Alex Dupree
Bobby Browder
Emily Hilliard
Jeffrey Bain
Patrick Kyle Miller
Charley Vest
Karen Vest
- 6

LA Smith
Lee Worthey
Phil Harris
Carlie Heard
Cody Hodge
Taylor Williams
Dewayne Grisham
Avaleigh Hawkins
Jessica Clardy
Mattie Durham
- 7

John Johnson
Tracy Coots
Jessie Baggett
Carl Griffith
Kelly Blansit
Tony Garner
Maddie Gilbert
- 8

Connie Clark
Ella Kate Wagner
Sherry Durham
Camdyn Goza
Pippa Daspit
- 9

Shaunathan Bell
Megan Miller
Ryker Shankles
- 10

Gail Jones
Angela Flanagan
Jacob Hawkins
Barry Morton
Scott Gilbert
- 11

Jessie Coots
Ricky Barkley
Merle Stokes
Gerald Biddle
Tanner Meadows
Sierra Crider
Imogene Thomas
- 12

Hubert Blalock
Allison Kirby
Chris Davis
Alyssa Cooper
Tristan Miller
- 13

Andrea Kirby
Hayden Kirby
Linda Hawthorne
Irelynn Walsh
Maddox Jones
- 14

Ann Nelson
Madi Gregory
Logan McGee
Raymond Evans
Christy Miller
Lonny Pendergrass

- 15

Shirley Zange
Emma Kate McDonald
- 16

Amy Kirby
Riley Mae Owen
Kaylynn Hulgán
Harli Burton
- 17

Jennifer Goggans
Melinda Miller
Owen Crouse
Tommy Johnson
Samuel Windom
Lydia Hulgán
- 18

Chad Smith
Nelson Kerby
Traci Hulgán
Mary Jo Yarbrough
- 19

Dillon Brown
LeAnn Underwood
Megan Smith Brown
Herbert Poe
- 20

Alexis Manifold
Jessica McKenzie
Susan Elliott
Elli Stone
Joyce Tate
Kenzlee Callahan
- 21

Lisa Crow
Katie Villarreal
Desiree Cash
Jackson Mann
- 22

Sandy Blalock
Caitlin Kirby
Ryan Pridmore
Heather Cyrus
Kathy Pritchett
- 23

Terry Pangle
Adrienne Guice
Nathan Baggett
Ronald Baggett
Jackson Mann
Amelia Stott
Chrissie Baker Holder

- 24

Joe Elrod
Amber Parker
Adam Miller
Sadie Durham
Misty Wilson
- 25

Tristan Smith
Gracelia Dickson
Faye Bone
- 26

Paige Norsworthy
Rodney Mitchell
Jackson Jones
- 27

Keila Daniell
Amanda Smith
Christy VanPelt
Hunter Villarreal
Crystal Bettis
Lebron Poe
Matthew Wilson
Cherylyn Whited Rhodes
- 28

James Cox
Mikayla Owen
Sophie Hulgán
- 29

Mackenzie Willingham
Justin Blansit
James Bennett Smothers
Glenda Kirby
Warren Baggett
Debra Cash
Barbie Red
- 30

Patti Carden
James Tubberville
Ethan Webb
Ava Tate
Nolan Tate
- 31

Richard Barkley
Tracy Cartwright
Joey Smith

Anniversaries

- 1

Chris & LeAnn Underwood
- 3

Thomas & Ginger Kearney
- 4

Donnie & Carlotta Sharpton
- 5

Charlie & Pam Harwell
John & Dowe Foreman
- 6

Craig & Katie Smith
Bret & Taylor Johnson
- 7

Emily and Jonathan Miller
- 8

Wayne & Angie Miller
Chris Carmichael &
Pat Parmelee
- 10

Alan & Beth Hawkins
Leanna & Storm Kurts
- 15

Doug & Karen Powell
Keith & Dawn Langston
Shane & Valerie Burt
- 16

Preston & Amy Kirby
- 17

Casey & Jessica Battles
- 18

Chad & Amber Smith
- 20

Jeremy & Lindsay Webb
- 24

Wesley & Tammy Frost
Stacy & Karen Smith
- 26

Soni & Sheila Larock
Ray & Bobbie Zachary
- 28

Adam & Wendy Haynes
Easton & Anna Bailey
- 29

Johnny & JoAnn Bain
- 30

Tommy & Cindy Harrison
- 31

Jimmy & Adele Phillips
Kyle & Hannah Carden



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Rhododendron Garden Club by Alyce Kenney

"Nobody sees a flower really; it is so small. We haven't time, and to see takes time—like to have a friend takes time." —Georgia O'Keefe



Take time to see is a good message for this time of year. We've completed the first quarter of 2022 and are looking ahead towards longer days of light. The season of spring is evolving as pollen coats everything and tender shoots can be found peering out from their hiding places in the soil. Dogwoods, redbuds, and crabapples are all vying for our attention with their glorious colored blossoms.

The Rhododendron Garden

Club members have been very visible in our community lately participating in Mentone's clean-up day, local plant sales in Fort Payne and Henegar, and an Earth Day celebration in Valley Head. Planting a new tree in honor of Arbor Day near the Secret Garden at the MERF House is next on our schedule. It feels fantastic to be contributing to the beautification and sustainability of our community. Here on the mountain are cues all around us calling us to be good stewards of the earth.

Fourteen of us got together on April 12 to slow down and *take time to see* and explore the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail at Pigeon Mountain, GA. Also known as "The Pocket," the trail was bursting with numerous beautiful wildflowers including White trilliums, Virginia blue bells, wild hyacinth, may apple, and star chickweed, to name just a few. The Pocket is a place that evolves with the seasons and always has something new to discover. It is a perfect place to sit still and just be in the moment to truly "see."

We are so blessed to live in an area that is abundant with energy from the natural (green) world. In the buzz of our lives, do we stop to reflect on the *life* we receive from plants every single day?



Thanks to the Garden Club for participating in Mentone's annual clean-up. Each year, they take responsibility for the area from the post office to the eastern town limit on Hwy. 117.



Garden Club members enjoyed an April trip to the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail

The survival of every species living on earth depends on plants. A single tree can provide food and shelter to countless living organisms including microbes, insects, birds, reptiles, and mankind. Without plants, our water cycle would be disrupted and our oxygen supply would diminish by the excess of carbon dioxide in the air we breathe. Plants protect and maintain the balance in our ecosystem as they buffer global warming, saving us from scorching heat and cooling the air around us. The importance of plants is not just limited to being a source of food or oxygen. Plants have long been used for various medicinal



Garden Club members helped children learn about the life cycle of a butterfly at the Earth Day Celebration at Valley Head Park on April 21.

purposes. Our ancestors learned the individual healing properties of plants found on the lands of their homesteads and forests to create tinctures, salves, and teas to treat many different maladies. Today, this practice continues as people are learning to live in a more harmonious way with the natural environment.

The future of our planet and our plant life is now being enhanced by the research of scientists in the study of plant

genomics. The sequencing of plant genomes has led to wide-ranging breakthroughs across the fields of medicine, farming, and energy production. Stability and sustainability in relation to life-giving plants is our next chapter and it's being written right now.

Want to know more? Here are just a few of many resources available:

- *The Deep Sea's Medicinal Secrets* – TED Talk by Sam Afoullous
- *My Life in Plants* – Katie Vaz
- Arborday.org
- UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences – Robin Buell

Join the Rhododendron Garden Club on May 10 as we gather for a working meeting to enhance the flower beds and gardens around the MERF House.

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. CT in the MERF House. We welcome everyone who has an interest in all things gardening. Come join us to learn, participate, and enjoy! Follow us on Facebook or send any questions to rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Alyce Kenney is the secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.

It's Patio Season!

Enjoy a beverage or snack on our deck, surrounded by lovely views of downtown, the parks, and Lookout Mountain!

We have craft beer, a curated wine selection, smoothies, teas, goodies from the Butter Snob kitchen, and of course, WATER!



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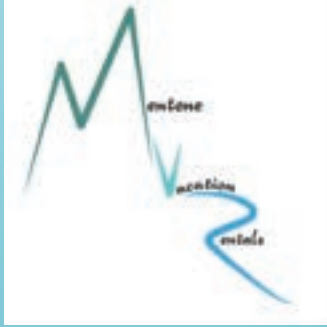
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10 Private Hot Tubs with Stunning Views



9 Weddings, event spaces, retreats, reunion spaces



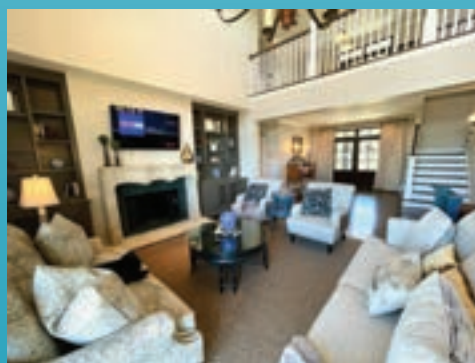
8 You're just minutes away from Mentone, waterfalls, state parks

7 Gourmet-equipped kitchens with a goody bag we leave for you

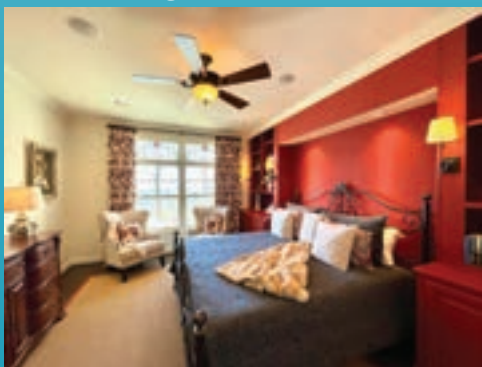


6 Enjoy hiking and nature right outside of all our doors

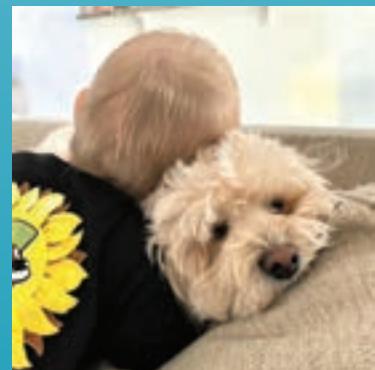
5 There is space for everyone in your family/group to spread out



3 5-Star Customer Service & Cleaning Standards

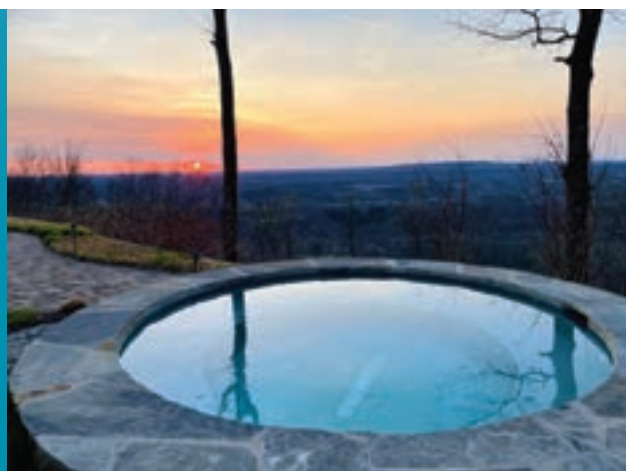


4 Fur babies (dogs) are welcome



2 Our guest ambassador awaits to help you plan your stay and our unique digital vacation guide navigates your every step of the way!

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MERF News

[Mentone Educational Resources Foundation]

by Sarah Wilcox



If you could fly anywhere, where would it be? Artist and author Faith Ringgold wrote *Tar Beach*, a children's book based on her dreams from her tar rooftop in New York City where she laid upon her mattress dreaming of where she would go if she could fly and created memory quilts capturing these images. Students at Valley Head School are creating their own memory quilts in Ms. Paula's Art class and being introduced to many artists. The K-6th graders are

produced by the K-6th graders this year in Paula Easter's art class funded by MERF. The artwork will be up on display from 5-7 p.m. There will also be musical performances by the students, a fun photo booth, and art activities for the family. Come celebrate our budding artists and musicians.

On Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., see Paula and me at the Memories of Mayberry Festival in Valley Head. MERF's booth will have "Leave

Me in Mentone" items, children's artwork, and a fun art activity. Stop by to support MERF and hear about all that is going on at Valley Head School with Arts Education.

Wednesday, May 4, brings an end to this season's weekly senior lunches hosted by MERF with a fabulous cookout provided by the local Boy Scout troop 106, with troop leaders David Gilbreath, Bill Berry and Charlie Runnels manning the grill and serving plates. Thanks

to the wonderful kitchen elves who enabled us to serve our wonderful group this spring: Carolyn Nail, Bonita Gaston, Rachel Lee, Kathy McMunn, Carol Hanley, Deedee Morrison, Susan Noel, Kathy and Doug Schuldt, Hazel Bickerstaff, and DeeDee Dunkerley. Thanks to Moon Lake Baptist Church for allowing MERF to use the fellowship hall for meals. MERF is grateful for everyone who provided the meals: Camp DeSoto, Mentone Market, Camp Laney, Skyline Camp, Tiger's Inn, Rhododendron Garden Club, St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, Alpine Camp, Mentone Community Church, the Boy Scouts, and MERF donors.

May also means graduation and awards. MERF will present two \$750 Carter Holland Memorial Scholarships to Mentone or Valley Head students chosen by the committee based on an essay, a 2.8 grade point average, and financial need headed to college or a technical school. Deadline for applications is May 2, 2022. At Valley Head's awards day, a 6th grader, 8th grader, and 12th grader will be recognized with the Mountain Spirit Award. These awards will be voted on by the teachers to the students that most represent Carter Holland's strong character, leadership skills, and faithful friendship. Carter Holland was a 24-year-old who suddenly lost his life. He and his family have a great appreciation and love for this community, so they established the Carter Holland Memorial scholarships and the Mountain Spirit Award in his memory. MERF appreciates that the Holland family and friends desire to make a difference in the lives of our local students. May we all live each day fully as Carter did.



Lila and JC proudly display their Kandinsky-inspired artwork.

also learning about the style of abstract artist, Wassily Kandinsky. One of his favorite ways to paint was with orchestral music playing in the background. Paula plays music while the students paint in this abstract style. She often has them collaborate on pieces. When she stopped the music, they moved to their neighbor's drawing and began there.

On Monday, May 9, come to Family Art night at the Valley Head Elementary Gym to see the artwork



MERF Moms enjoy gathering together weekly for play and companionship. Contact Sarah to join a text group for meeting days and times. Pictured are Joy and Ozzy.



Selah and Naomi, clover queens, at MERF Moms playdate

Sarah Wilcox is the executive director of MERF, the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is "To enrich the learning and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources." If you would like to support MERF's programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984 or contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193.



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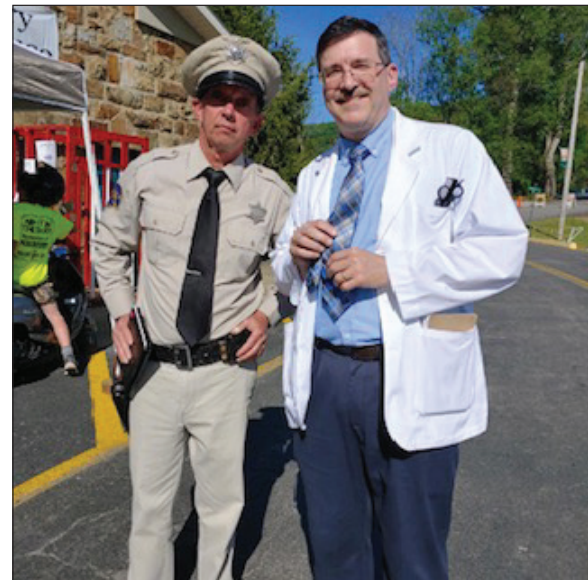
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Valley Head Happenings

by Karen Vest

Welcome to Valley Head Happenings. Here is what is taking place in and around our beautiful town.

The 5th Annual Mayberry Days Festival will be held on Saturday, May 7. Numerous events will take place beginning at 9 a.m. and continuing all afternoon around Valley Head Town square and on the field adjacent to the square. There will be pony rides, a children's train ride, blow up slides and a



Come meet "Barney" and "Floyd" at Memories of Mayberry

Susie Q from Chattanooga radio station WUUQ-FM 97.3, will be broadcasting live during the all-day festival. You know her from the *Susie Q in the Morning* radio show on the classic country station. In addition to playing today's country hits, Susie will be giving out prizes to some lucky winners, so be sure you stop by and visit her booth.

We will have 2022 Mayberry Days t-shirts, past years' t-shirts, and coffee mugs with your favorite Mayberry characters for sale at various locations

bouncy house, food vendors, and numerous craft vendors. Volunteers from the Valley Head Fire Department will be selling hamburgers, chips, and a drink for \$6 beside the fire station.

Returning this year on our main stage will be the Cloggers, The Sharps Quartet, and other musical groups. Floyd the Barber (Allen Newsome), Barney Fife (Anthony Woods), and other beloved Mayberry characters will be strolling around during the festival.



Karen Vest with Anthony "Barney" Woods

throughout the festival. With several colors and designs to choose from, you will be sure to find a favorite t-shirt to call your own. Many items have been generously donated to our live auction and we hope to raise even more money than last year's proceeds of over \$1200.

An annual favorite, the classic car cruise-in will take place once again around the town square, so be sure to walk around and see all the beautiful cars and trucks. Plan to bring the entire family for a day of fun, good music, and plenty of good food. Remember, proceeds from this annual festival go to our volunteer fire department.

In other news, Valley Head

City Park's pavilion is now open. During the October 4, 2021, City Council meeting, the Council voted to proceed with much-needed renovations to the City Park Pavilion and picnic areas. Using the allocated funds from the American Rescue Fund, I am pleased to report that all renovation work has now been completed. Many updates were performed in both the men's and women's restrooms, a



new roof has been placed on the main pavilion and both small pavilions, and the building has been

Painted a beautiful forest green. The Woodmen of the World held a workday at the park and volunteers, including our City Council and their families, gave all of the wooden picnic tables a fresh coat of paint. Also, the concrete picnic tables were recently pressure washed. Another workday is being planned to paint the concrete tables and benches in order to maintain their finish for years to come. We are also working with Play Core to replace the playground equipment in the near future.

The restrooms are open and maintained on an as-needed basis. If you notice a problem or would like to report an issue with the park's facilities, please call City Hall and let us know. If you would like to reserve the pavilion for a meeting or party, please call City Hall at (256) 635-6814. Our City Clerk, Debra, will be happy to take your reservation. Please remember to utilize the numerous trash cans located within the park including the basketball court.

You can reach our town's website at valleyheadalabama.com. We would love to hear from our citizens as to what information you would like to see posted.

Valley Head holds their City Council meeting the first Monday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. The public is always welcome to attend.

Memories
of
Mayberry
Downtown Valley Head
Saturday, May 7
Starts at 9 a.m.



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Broker/Owner
256-996-5995



Holly Watson-Houston
Assoc. BROKER®
256-996-0552



Melody Sellers
Assoc. REALTOR®
256-996-5297



Steve Manning
Assoc. REALTOR®
256-996-7624



Ben Johnston
Assoc. BROKER
256-996-1774

Office: (256) 634-4767



RARE FIND IN MENTONE: 3BR/2BA, RANCH-STYLE HOME, 56X40 SHOP & 22 ACRES W/SMALL POND. Home was built for current owner, has been immaculately kept, & is only 5 years old. Land is beautifully wooded, with a gracefully-curving, nearly 1/4 mile driveway, lined w/dogwoods, leading up to the picturesque pond, shop & residence. Young fruit trees, including apple, pear, peach & fig. 3BR/2BA; one-level home w/rocking-chair front porch; hardwood floors; free-standing, wood-burning fireplace in LR; spacious kitchen with oak cabinetry & hardwood floor; large MABR suite; dining area leading out to covered back grilling porch & fenced back yard. Attached 2-car garage. 4-door workshop w/storage. \$545,000 (1806766)



LOOKING TO SIMPLIFY & OWN SOME WOODED LAND? This little ranch-style home doesn't look very pretty on the outside, that's true. But it has 10 acres of gorgeous woods. You're looking for a place to escape to? This is it while you wait for the woodland cabin of your dreams (or several of them) on the rest of the land. 2BR/1BA house needs work, but the price is hard to beat. \$150,000 (agent owned) (1804122)



HOUSE & 2.5-ACRES DOWNTOWN MENTONE. This is one of those places with almost unlimited possibilities! Almost as many uses as duct tape! This simple little house could open the door to BIG things! Spacious front sunporch built in 2012; house was pretty much completely gutted & rebuilt in 2014. It's a great start to even greater things! 2BR/1BA (space for 2nd bath). High-speed internet available. The land is level, features 2 small streams. \$300,000 (1804144)

.....
LOTS and LAND

1.47 ACRES, ON LIBBY LANE. Inside Mentone Town Limits, off East River Road. Trees are mostly hardwood, just enough clearing to get out the undergrowth and to create a circle drive, as well as a proposed building area. Quiet dead-end paved road, with river-front homes across the road from this property. Public water, power and septic tank in place (installed July 2021). If you've been considering a cabin getaway in Mentone, and you're finding not much is available, why not build the one you want? \$64,900 (1795866)

GORGEOUS VIEWS & 2.2 ACRES, on the brow with sunrise & sunset views possible. All the site prep has been done for you: cleared & leveled, for a personal getaway cabin or residence, and for you to build a detached workshop when you're ready! There is even a septic tank already in place! The best price for a brow-front property in the Mentone area, and the only one on the market with all this prep work already done. \$80,000 (1804042)

3.18 WOODED ACRES, JUST ABOUT A MILE FROM DOWNTOWN MENTONE. This is a hardwood forest with a pond and power. Light is perfect. Perfectly-sized lot of land for your own private cabin in the woods! \$27,000 (1801518)

2 ACRES IN MENTONE, on East River Road, where property seldom comes up for sale. Beautifully-wooded land is level, unrestricted (zoned Rural Farm), paved road frontage, power and water available at the road. High-speed internet available. Just listed for \$55,000.

COME BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME IN A PEACEFUL VALLEY! Here are 19+ acres of beautiful vistas that would be perfect for horses. Makes you feel like you're part of a peaceful world. Has a mountain in a permanent farm and conservancy. The interstate is 5 minutes away, convenient to Chattanooga, Fort Payne and Mentone. \$164,050 (1790823)



SOMETHING SPECIAL IN MENTONE! Home & 19 acres; old barn; smokehouse; poultry barn; garden shed; 52'x5' fenced garden w/raised beds, water & power. Plus 2nd home built circa 1915 in the woods. 3BR/2BA; detached kitchen w/ granite, off kitchen w/ grape vines; figs, blueberries; chestnut. This property has been in the same family since the Crowes came to Mentone in the 1800s. \$499,900 (1801038)



WHIMSICAL, TINY, & TRULY SPECIAL GETAWAY. This place speaks the language of Mentone: artsy, woodsy, boulder-strewn, and unforgettable. Not quite "on" the brow, but situated strategically to enjoy it from the "rocking deck" with its tiny "serving shed" (that looks like a dollhouse & where one would keep sunset-viewing sustenance) The woodland cottage was built with an artist's eye, great imagination, & surprising economy of space. Wood-burning, stone fplice; stained glass windows; nooks for books & objets d'art; compact kitchen w/ingenious pullouts; loft bedroom; shower bath; vaulted ceiling w/sunlit cupola. Then there are the HUGE boulders; the flower beds; the fanciful garden art. It is quite magical, really. Lovingly built & enjoyed. Offered for \$295,000



BEAUTIFUL CEDAR-SIDED CABIN WITH FRONT & BACK PORCHES; 2.91 acres, Huge, screened back porch set up for relaxing & pretty much living "almost outdoors!" 3 if you want. Loft w/ walk-in closet. Hardwood floors throughout. Vaulted living w/ gas-log fireplace & built-in bookshelves. Spacious kitchen w/fab storage. Large laundry w/ sewing or office space. \$375,000



LOOKOUT MTN LOG CABIN ON 9.25 ACRES WITH SUNSET BROW VIEWS; lovely woodlands; unrestricted, mostly-level land behind existing cabin on which to build whatever suits your fancy (underground power & water already present). This one-owner cabin was built utilizing native woods, milled by the builder himself. Stone from the property was used to build the fireplace. Wraparound porch includes a screened section with all the comforts you'd want for a lazy afternoon; a swing, and views galore! Ruggedly-handsome interior is mostly poplar; handy kitchen w/large window over the sink to enjoy sunsets; vaulted LR accented by beams & mtn stone, gas-log fireplace. Now \$365,000 (1802206)



MEMORIES OF LAZY DAYS FULL OF FUN ON THE LAKE permeate this one-owner property located on the private side of Mentone's Lake Lahusage. Filled with one family's nostalgia, waiting for the next family to bring it back to life & fill it with their own memories of good times on the lake. One of those rare places with easy walk down to the water; swim & fish from your dock; put in a boat at the public ramp just a short distance away. 4BR/2BA; wood floors; wood beams; mtn stone fireplace; vaulted LR/KI/DR. Screened porch on back leading to huge deck overlooking the lake. Yes, it needs A LOT of work, but it is a rare gem awaiting the right person to make it shine! \$375,000 (1786628)



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May Events at DeSoto State Park

May 14—Serious Skills Series: The Art of Woodburning: Make Your Own Souvenir. The Serious Skills series is a variety of classes and workshops that provide opportunities to discover a hidden talent or learn a new skill for personal enrichment. Classes are open to local residents, overnight guests, and park visitors. Pyrography or woodburning is the art of decorating wood or other materials, the term meaning "writing with fire" dating back to the 17th century. Participants in this class will learn the basic techniques of decorative wood burning from artist April Blanks, and will work on their own souvenir magnet designs featuring several waterfalls & scenes in DeSoto State Park. Practice basic techniques using a pen-like burning tool and paint. This class is for ages 14 to adult. Two class times available: 9–11am OR 12–2pm. \$25 includes all supplies. Class space is limited, pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov to sign up or for more info.

May 14—Meandering Moonlight Paddle Trip. Enjoy a relaxing guided moonlight flatwater paddle trip on scenic Little River as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up. Experience the peace & quiet of the gloaming-time! Trip is approx. 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 3- to 3- 1/2-hour period and includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device. Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles & 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult. Wear appropriate clothing for weather (you may get wet), and bring a headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water. 7–10pm. Meet at DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack. \$30 for single kayak rental (2 person-tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50). Pre-registration closes May 10 at 5pm. Visit alapark.com/kayak-little-river to register.

May 21—Serious Skills Series: Leaf Pounding Class. Leaf pounding is a simple, stunning

technique, historically used by Cherokee women to decorate fabric. Pounding with a rock or a hammer transfers the natural dyes of a leaf to fabric while retaining the design of the original leaf. In this class, join DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes on a quick walk to ID leaves that can be used for leaf pounding, then get a chance to unleash your creativity to make a beautiful and unique piece of fabric to take home. Participants can also bring their own fabric like t-shirts, handkerchiefs, pillowcases, etc. as long as it is 100% cotton. This class is for ages 8 to adult. 1–3pm. \$10 fee includes all supplies. Class space is limited, so pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov to sign up or for more info. This class will be held outside under a covered pavilion, be prepared for whatever weather conditions are present.

May 21—Yoga Hike Along Little River. Experience yoga while enjoying the beauty that is DeSoto State Park! Join instructor Destin Padgett for a great outdoor experience of strengthening yoga poses AND hiking along beautiful trails. This hike will be a mix of trail hiking with an outdoor yoga session. Combining hiking and yoga practice in the great outdoors confers benefits unmatched in any other setting. You get the light cardio and strength-building that hiking offers, the toning, flexibility, and relaxation that yoga offers, and the powerful connection to Mother Nature that being outdoors offers. Yoga poses are alignment based which makes them perfect for those beginning or continuing their yoga practice. Wear closed-toe shoes & weather appropriate clothes; bring a hike-friendly yoga mat or towel if you wish (most poses will be standing poses), water and a snack. Hike is approximately 1-1/2 miles round trip, moderate. Trail starts at Indian Falls & weaves

**May 6 & 7
30th Annual
Wildflower Saturday**
See page 1 for info

along the West Fork of Little River through hardwood/pine mix forest with rhododendron and mountain laurel. 4pm. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on Co. Rd. 89. \$5 fee per participant per class (cash or checks). Bring mat or towel.

May 27—Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The CCC Quarry. The Civilian Conservation Corps was one of the better known and most successful of the New Deal programs following the Great Depression; one that did a lot of good for forests, recreation, and the men for whom it provided short-term jobs. Between 1933 and 1942, an average of 30 camps operated across Alabama. CCC boys helped fight fires, reforest lands, protect the state's then newly acquired national forests and build roads and recreational facilities in Alabama State Parks. Join DSP staff and volunteers on a moderate hike to the CCC Quarry. Learn how the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the original structures that you can still see in the park today. Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, some rocky terrain. Approx. 2 miles round trip. 1–3pm. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store. Free. Pre-registration is required. Hike is open to ages 8 to adult. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more info or to preregister. Bring plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Trail may be wet. Dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Well-behaved dogs are allowed on a leash at all times. If the weather is questionable, please call the Park Lodge before leaving home (256-845-5380).

May 28—Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The 'Unfinished Bridge'. Join DSP Staff on a moderate hike to the Civilian Conservation Corp's 'unfinished' Bridge. Learn

the history of why the CCC left it standing and see several original structures. Moderate hike on Gilliam Loop Trail & old CCC roadbed. Approx. 4 miles round trip. 1–4:30 pm. Meet at DeSoto State Park's Gilliam Loop Trailhead (Just past DeSoto's Lodge on Blalock Drive). Free. Pre-registration is required so to know how many to expect. Hike is open to ages 8 to adult. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more info or to preregister. Bring plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Trail may be wet. Dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Well-behaved dogs are allowed on a leash at all times. If the weather is questionable, please call the Park Lodge before leaving home (256-845-5380).

May 29—Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: Trail Shelter along Little River. Join DSP Staff & volunteers on a moderate hike to the trailside shelter located on Little River. Learn how the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the original structures that you can still see in the park today. Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, mildly strenuous due to rocky terrain. Approx. 1.10 miles round trip. 9–11am. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store & Information Center on County Road 89. Free, pre-registration is required so to know how many to expect. Hike is open to ages 8 to adult. Email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for more info or to pre-register. Bring plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Trail may be wet. Dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Well-behaved dogs are allowed on a leash at all times. If the weather is questionable, please call the Park Lodge before leaving home (256-845-5380).

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Mentone Arts & Cultural Center Update by Randy Grider

Debbie Bond Among May Highlights at Art Center

May is shaping up to be a busy month with programs at the Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts, including the return of a fan-favorite blues act. All events listed are Central time.

It kicks off with our rescheduled Songwriters Round on Tuesday, May 3, at 6:30 p.m. The round will spotlight Jason Adams as the feature and include additional songwriters Megan Kuehner, Troy Dewberry, and Roger Moore. Award-winning songwriter and Mentone resident Craig Hendricks serves as the round's host.

Adams is a traditional country music singer/songwriter who recently signed to Atlas Star Records. He won the Horizon Male Vocalist and Rising Star Entertainer of the Year both in Traditional Country Music for the North American Country Music Association International in March of 2013. His first single "Can't Get No Ease" was released December 10, 2021 to all downloadable platforms. He has sung with legends like Ronnie McDowell, Dan Seals, and Lynn Anderson, and twice been the opening act for Bill Haley and the Comets.

We are hosting Paint Like Bob Ross workshops on Saturday, May 7 and another on Saturday, June 4. The workshops are taught by visiting Certified Bob Ross Instructor (CRI) Gary Grider and takes about four hours. It is limited to 10 people (ages 13 and up) and costs \$100. All supplies are included to create your own 16" x 20" Bob Ross technique painting.

The late Bob Ross was the creator and host of "The Joy of Painting," a PBS instructional television program that aired from 1983 to 1994. Thanks to the internet, there has been a renewed interest in Ross and his painting technique among younger generations. Artist/instructor Gary Grider completed his CRI in 2019 and began his Happy Little Paint Brushes classes at his studio in Chattanooga, TN. He currently teaches at 12 venues across Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

MENTONE ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTER



Jason Adams



Debbie Bond & Radiator Rick

Debbie Bond and Radiator Rick will perform live Friday, May 13 (7-9 p.m.) at the Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts, just weeks before embarking on their European tour. Admission is \$25 plus tax.

American singer, guitar player, and songwriter Debbie Bond has been performing for decades in the Alabama backwoods and is now a regular on the southern U.S. and European club and festival circuit.

Influenced by raw juke joint blues and the famed sounds of Muscle Shoals, Debbie's impressive story includes years of performing with traditional Alabama blues musicians such as Johnny Shines, Eddie Kirkland, Willie King, Shar Baby, Little Jimmy Reed, and more. Immersion in Alabama roots music has deeply flavored her guitar playing, soulful voice, and original song writing, giving her a contemporary and original sound with soul, blues, and jazz influences.

Debbie's collaboration with British-born keyboard and harmonica player "Radiator" Rick has added a swampy New Orleans edge to her sound.

Debbie is a blues activist and founder of the award-winning Alabama Blues Project, a non-profit dedicated to promoting and preserving the state's blues heritage. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including a "Keeping the Blues Alive Award" from the Blues Foundation, and a prestigious "Coming Up Taller Award" for her blues education work with the Alabama Blues Project. She has been recognized by the Alabama Music Hall of Fame as a "Blues Achiever" and the national Blues Hall of Fame as a "Great Blues Artist."

To register for workshops or purchase tickets for the Debbie Bond performance, please see contact information below.

Randy Grider is executive director of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center, Inc. He can be reached at mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or 256-674-3366.



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The Mentone Ukes will play at the Mentone Farmers Market on Saturday, May 14.



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Mentone Ukes by Debra Fey

An Interview with Mickey Luck

Debra Fey (DF): When my husband Jerry Megli and I thought we might like to start a ukulele group in Mentone, I asked Kelly Leavitt what individual would bring credibility and also be a good leader/teacher for the group. Almost without hesitation she suggested you. What a great idea that was! So as we have started our group twice now (pre- and post-pandemic), with a 14-month gap between those start-ups, I think we can say with assurance that we've come a very long way. Many in the group were total beginners to the instrument and we have learned a lot together.

Mickey Luck (ML): Thanks for the nice compliment, Debra, what would you like to know?

DF: First, what is your music background?

ML: I came to music late in life. Other than playing a little folk music in the late 50s, I left music behind to live, work, raise a family, etc. But when I was 45 my wife surprised me with a guitar for Christmas and got the whole thing started.

DF: Well, what about the uke? How did you start with it?

ML: The first uke we got was at an antique store. We bought it because we liked the Art Deco design on it. Of course, after we got it, I had to learn to play it! After that I began to collect more and more, mostly older ones and then newer playable ones also. Now I have about 35 or so, so far.

DF: Who taught you how to read music?

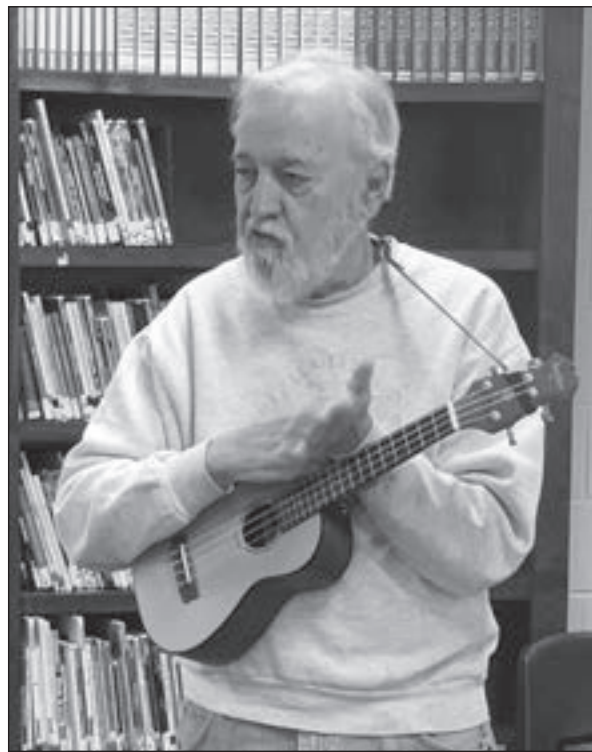
ML: I never learned to read music until I got serious about the fiddle and found that there were songs that were much easier to learn if I knew the notes, so I taught myself to read music.

DF: Have you played in other groups?

ML: I have. In addition to ukulele, I have played with dulcimer groups here and in Tuscaloosa. Also, I have had the opportunity to participate in weekly jams and play in bands mostly playing dobro or fiddle in bluegrass-type bands. In addition, I have been singing with the Silvertones in Fort Payne for about 15 years. We mostly sing at nursing homes.

DF: How many instruments do you actually play and what are they?

ML: I guess "play at" would be more accurate. I can get by on several instruments but I'm not that



accomplished on any of them. Let's see, guitar, but nothing fancy. I played dobro for a number of years until I fell for the fiddle. I have considered that my primary instrument for the past 15 years or so. I've kept up with my dulcimer playing, too. The mandolin is similar enough to the fiddle that I can pick tunes out on it also. That's about it.

DF: Do you come from a musical family or is this an interest you generated on your own?

ML: My immediate family was not musical. No instrumentalists, no singers, so no help there. My wife Cynthia says I have an insatiable curiosity, so I credit that with my desire to learn things.

DF: Incorporating music theory is an important component of your teaching. Why is that? How did you come to your understanding of theory in your playing and interpreting music? Why do you like teaching?

ML: Most of what I know I learned the hard way. I have never taken formal music lessons but I read a lot and I asked questions if I didn't know something. I have attended a number of music camps, so I have learned things that way. Other things I just figured out on my own. I also team taught a humanities class in college and picked up a lot from the music portion

of the class. I guess you can be a pretty good musician without knowing theory, but I think it adds to your ability if you know the why as well as the how. As to the question about teaching, I was lucky in that I really like to teach and was able to do that for a living. I taught art at the college level for 27 years.

DF: Have you lived in this area all your life? How has this geographic area influenced your own musicality or interpretation of music?

ML: I found Mentone because Cynthia was a camper for many years at Camp DeSoto. When we moved to Tuscaloosa in 1987, we decided to buy property up here. When we retired in 2004, Cynthia from University of Alabama and me from Mississippi State, we built our house on the brow and settled in. My interests in types of music were pretty well established before we moved up here.

DF: At the end of one of our recent sessions I asked you if you were enjoying yourself. You said "I'm having a blast." Why?

ML: I really am having a great time as a member of this group. The uke is a fun instrument and not that hard to learn to play. It's so neat to see the group get more comfortable with it and attempt more difficult music and be willing to teach some of the sessions.

DF: As we are practicing now for our second performance (at the Mentone Farmers Market on May 14), what do you think about how far the group has come and your role in that?

ML: The fact that we are so willing and excited about playing for others says a lot about how much progress has been made. This says more about our players than it does about me. I just pointed the way to go, it was up to them to do the work and practice to get there. I think we have come pretty far in a relatively short time, so congrats to all of our players.

DF: How do you see the group progressing down the road?

ML: I hope that we will continue to get together to play and learn new music. And we need to keep encouraging new people to join us. I would like to say that you, Debra, and your husband Jerry as co-directors and teachers are the ones responsible for any success we have had. So, thanks to you both.

DF: It has been our pleasure, and a lot of fun!



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Coming Home to the Mountain: A Weekend with Dr. E by Anne McLeod

Roasting marshmallows around the campfire, splashing in Little River, singing troop songs, giggling after lights-out. Elizabeth Oberholtzer and her sister Jennifer were among the campers returning every year to the Mentone area for summer camp in the late '70s and early '80s. Elizabeth was a proud Trooper and even the song leader one year. Those memories would last throughout her life, bringing her back to the mountain every now and then for a nostalgic look around Camp Skyline Ranch.

Fast forward to 2022, when Moon Lake Community Library and Little River Arts Council invited Dr. Elizabeth Dulemba, college professor, children's book illustrator, blogger, and TEDx Talk presenter to spend a weekend

in May in Mentone where she would present a series of special programs. Now imagine Elizabeth Oberholtzer Dulemba's delight at the invitation and the surprise of the library board when they learned of her special connection to Mentone and to Skyline.

I had met Elizabeth Dulemba ("Dr. E") at a conference in Athens, GA, several years ago, just after the publication of her middle grade novel, *A Bird on Water Street*, for which she



Dr. Elizabeth Dulemba

won Georgia Author of the Year. After I moved to Mentone, I checked out her website, dulemba.com, and discovered she had illustrated three books written by children's literature icon Jane Yolen: *Crow Not Crow* (co-authored by Yolen and her son Adam Stemple), *On Eagle Cove* and *Merbaby's Lullaby*. "The bird books were published by the Cornell Lab Publishing Group, which

is connected to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, a premier research lab dedicated to the study and conservation of birds. Elizabeth had also presented a TEDx Talk called "Is Your Stuff Stopping You?" In the talk, she described how she and her husband had sold their Atlanta home and most of her possessions so that she could follow her dream of going to graduate school in Scotland.

Children's books, art, birds,

downsizing, following your dreams. It was hard to imagine a better fit for an author/illustrator visit for Moon Lake Library. And then I discovered she had been a Skyline camper. Dr. E checked all the boxes and then some!

Moon Lake Library and Little River Arts Council will bring Elizabeth Dulemba to Mentone the weekend of May 21–22. We will be accepting pre-registration for the children's program

only. (See note below.) All three programs are free and open to the public.

- **Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m.**

This program for children ages 3–10 focuses on *Crow Not Crow*. Kids will enjoy hearing the story of a father introducing his young daughter to the hobby of birding. Then we'll draw birds with Dr. E. Finally, the older kids will have the chance to see a slideshow about how picture books are made.

NOTE: While pre-registration for this session is not required, it is strongly encouraged, and the first 10 families to pre-register will receive a special gift. Pre-register by filling out the form on the homepage of moonlakelibrary.org.

- **Saturday, May 21, 1 p.m.**

"Creating Children's Books" is a session for adults about the process of children's book illustration.

Elizabeth will share her perspective as an artist and academic and will explain how you can develop your own ideas for stories. Are you a parent, teacher, artist, or a fan of picture books and creativity? This is a session for you.

- **Sunday, May 22, 2 p.m.**

"Is Your Stuff Stopping You? The Art of Letting Go," a session based on Elizabeth's TEDx Talk about downsizing and the freedom that followed. This discussion will interest downsizers, tiny house inhabitants, and anyone contemplating the role possessions play in our lives.

Elizabeth Dulemba is an Associate Professor and Program Director of Illustration at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

During the summers, she serves as Visiting Associate Professor in the MFA in Children's Book Writing and Illustrating programs at Hollins University. Her Ph.D. is from the University of Glasgow School of Education in Children's Literature, and she has an MFA in Illustration (with Distinction) from the University of Edinburgh, and a BFA in Graphic Design from the University of Georgia.

We appreciate Little River Arts Council's support of this celebration of art and creativity. Thanks as well to the Library Angels whose contributions have assisted with expenses. We know everyone will enjoy this amazing Weekend with Dr. E, May 21 and 22, at Moon Lake Community Library.



We look forward to learning with you!

Under the Sea Saturday, May 14

There's more than fish in the deep blue sea! We'll be exploring the wonderful creatures that live below the waves. (This program was originally scheduled in March but had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.)

Extra Special Saturday Program: "Crow, Not Crow" Saturday, May 21 • 10 am

Come hear the book's illustrator read her latest publication about a young girl learning how to identify birds. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged, and the first 10 families to pre-register will receive a special gift. Pre-register by filling out the form on the homepage of moonlakelibrary.org or email the library at books@moonlakelibrary.org.

Memorial Day Weekend May 26 We'll take this Saturday off due to the holiday weekend. But you can get ready for our summer program, "Wild About Reading!" which runs June 4–July 30. We can't wait to go WILD, can you?



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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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Moon Lake Campus Update

by Bill Berry



• moonlakecampus.us •

The Moon Lake School Adaptive Reuse Committee reconvened on the afternoon of April 19 following a seven-week period of collecting public input regarding possible future uses of the landmark campus. An impressive 251 survey responses have provided excellent insight into the community’s active interest and anticipated involvement as Moon Lake advances toward its new beginning.

Each of the four advisory committees—community involvement, facility use, financial management and accountability, and maintenance and improvement—had spent the weeks researching its specific area of focus and preparing a presentation of its findings.

The presentations inspired and informed a wide-ranging conversation considering buildings and

grounds, policies and procedures, and resources and revenues. The discussion centered around three key elements that will shape Moon Lake’s future ... to respect and preserve its historical and educational impact on Mentone, to protect and promote its legacy as a beacon of instructional and experiential opportunities, and to nurture and ensure its future role as a vibrant part of the community.

The online survey remains open for anyone who has not yet submitted personal ideas and opinions. You may visit moonlakecampus.us to signify your interest in potential classes and activities on campus and ideas about how to make the project financially viable. Moon Lake School symbolized the excellence of its local community for 110 years, and everyone is invited to play a role in the exciting new chapter of its rich legacy.



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In Memoriam



ALAN MCLEOD MANNING July 6, 1958 – March 29, 2022

Alan McLeod Manning was born July 6, 1958, in Valley Head. He was the fourth of six children born to Fred and Rachel Manning. He spent his childhood on the family farm getting into lots of good trouble with his siblings while exploring the area and working the farm. These adventures would later be some of his children's favorite bedtime stories, which Alan would take pride in embellishing when necessary.

Alan married his high school sweetheart, Susan (Jones) Manning, on May 9, 1981. Alan and Susan have a son, Dallas, and a daughter, Elizabeth.

Though his battle with Parkinson's has been long and difficult, his family chooses to remember the beloved man he was and not his illness. Alan

had a quick wit and a good heart. His children were his pride and joy. He was quick to delight in their successes—and tell anyone who would listen—and never hesitated to offer his aid in the midst of a challenge.

He loved to build things, and his list of ongoing projects was never-ending. His artistic talent is evident in many of his works—from furniture he built by hand to his many beautiful paintings to the cartoons he would draw for his children. He loved to make his wife laugh and he was the master of an impromptu, acapella performance whenever the moment was right. He never met a tool, toy or tractor he didn't like. He also never missed the chance to explain how something worked or share an obsolete fact concerning the topic at any given time. Suffice to say—he was loved dearly and will be missed incomprehensibly.

Alan spent his final days on that same family farm, and his final moments surrounded by his loving family. He is survived by his wife, Susan; his two

children, Dallas and Elizabeth; his siblings Richard (Paulette), Steve (Jeanne), Paula, Angela, and Jeff (Kim); and numerous nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, Fred and Rachel, and his brother-in-law, John.

The family would like to thank his caregiver, Kara Elkins, the team at Encompass Health – Hospice, and the team at the Department of Neurology, Division of Movement Disorders, at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations are made to the Parkinson's Association of Alabama (parkinsonalabama.com) or Encompass Health – Hospice (encompasscares.org).



DEMPSEY LAWSON June 25, 1942 ~ April 2, 2022

Dempsey Lawson, age 79, of Menlo, GA, passed away Saturday, April 2, 2022.

Mr. Lawson was born June 25, 1942, to the late Roy "Shorty" Lawson and Dorothy Dempsey Lawson.

Mr. Lawson graduated from Trion High School in 1960. Upon graduation, he joined the United States Navy and served his country for four years aboard the U.S.S. Taconic. After his service, he

was an architect in the Atlanta area, and later retired to Menlo. Dempsey was loved by so many. He was kind and caring to all who knew him. He was the best of men and will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

In addition to his parents, Mr. Lawson was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 45 years, Sonja Bragg Lawson; and a sister, Sara Lawson Head.

Survivors include his son, Brad Lawson; grandsons, Ben Lawson and Luke Lawson; nieces, Karen Head and Diana Head Ferrell; and many great-nieces and nephews.

JOHN TALMADGE HAIRSTON 1962 - 2022

John Talmadge Hairston, 59, of Valley Head, passed away Wednesday, April 6, 2022. Mr. Hairston is survived by his wife, Donna Carol Bailey Hairston; daughter, Christina (Kevin) Jeffery; sons, John "J.J." (Cassey) Hairston, Jr. and Marvin (Jessica) Hairston; father, Talmadge Hairston, grandchildren, Hannah Hairston, Cheyanne Frazier, Elizabeth Jeffery, Kaylin Hairston, Dakota Hairston, Teaghan Hairston, and Braxson Hairston. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ruby Hairell Hairston, and sister, Debra Allen.



DEWAYNE GREEN August 17, 1967 ~ April 9, 2022

John Dewayne Green, age 54, of Cloudland, GA, died Saturday, April 9, 2022, at Advent Health Redmond.

Mr. Green was born August 17, 1967, in Summerville, GA, son of the late Jerry Wayne Green and Juanita Barksdale Green Farmer. He had attended Berryton Baptist Church and was employed with Mohawk Industries.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his stepfather, Harrison Pete Farmer, and a granddaughter, Remington Cate Green.

Survivors include his wife, Robye Denise Green; sons, Jason Dewayne (Lindsey Faith) Green, Justin Green (Valeri Leyva); brothers, Jerry Richard Green, Christopher Chad Green, Pete Farmer, Jr., and Randy Green; sister, Penny (Mark) Elkins; and grandchildren, Madison Green, Rylan Green, Jaylee Cleveland, Braelyn Cleveland, and Addison Cleveland.



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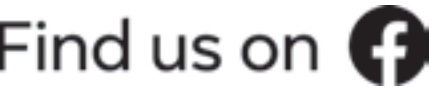
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Ruby O'Rear's Days Come to Life

MAY, 1937

May 1, Saturday, 1937

Still cool & cloudy

Mother still resting well. Eats, sleeps & gets up then right back to bed, rolls over to sleep again. Wanted milk last night and has drank several small glasses of it. I finished sleeves for dress & sewed them in. Jessie washed in house. First time this winter. Hazel scrubbed. I killed rooster. Clyde Rose came down. Rented Christopher place to Ras Perkins for 2.00.

May 2, Sunday, 1937

Temp in 50s all day. Rained almost all day.

Mother rested extra well last nite, also to-day. Ate a lot of the congealed chicken broth. Thelma Culberson came down for few min. We all bathed to-day. Cleaned up Mother (much against her wishes) & changed her bed. I scratched Hazel's head and she scratched mine. I'm planning to go to bed as Mother is asleep.

May 3, Monday, 1937

Sun shone some & it warmed up a little. Mother didn't rest well last nite & restless to-day. Went in to living room twice. I cut out pongee blouse & basted it up. Hazel cut out her blouse too. A.J. stayed at Paul's last night. Roads too bad to go home. Took off 3 chick.

May 4, Tuesday, 1937

Sun shone in morn & it was pleasant. Cool in nite tho. Rained in p.m. Mother restless again. Said she was burning up tho her feet and hands were cold. Been out in living room twice to-day and laid on cot. A.J. came home this P.M. J.B. spent day with Billy Smith.

May 5, Wednesday, 1937

Sunshine & showers. Warmer Mother slept quite a bit. Eats hearty tho wanted something cold. Paul took Billy Smith to Fort Payne. A.J. went to Paul's. I sewed on pongee blouse—nearly finished it. Jack started Margie's dress. Billy's chickens came. Paul had severe headache.

May 6, Thursday, 1937

Fair & warm Jack washed. Mother rested extra well last nite & slept good deal to-day but was very restless when awake. Jack finished Margie's dress & nearly finished blouse. Paul & J.B. cleaned off lot at cemetery. A.J. didn't come home last night.

May 7, Friday, 1937

Decoration Day at Bankhead
Fair & pleasant. Temp 42 to 70 Hazel stayed at home. Jessie, Paul, A.J. & J.B. went to Decoration in morn. Took flowers & dinner but came home



right after dinner. Brod our dinner to us. Aunt Kate, Frances, Merlin & Joseph came down for few min. Paul went to Mentone. Took A.J. to Paul's. I went to church. I stayed a while. Mother didn't rest well last nite or this morn, but rested this P.M.

May 8, Saturday, 1937

Temp 42. Fair. Mother up several times during nite. I finished blouse to-day except buttons and button holes. I white outted my blue dress and it came out good and white but thread and binding didn't change color a bit! Hazel tried to dye dress black but it would not dye except dirty brown. She ironed starched clothes.

May 9, Sunday, 1937

Mother's Day
Fair & pleasant. Temp 70 I stayed home all day. Hazel went to Wallace's in P.M. Rode horseback some. Paul came for A.J. & they went to Trion to see Ethel. Jack and Paul had company from Rainsville. People who used to live in Winfield. Hope & Fay came by. Sow had 5 pigs. Mother slept in morn but very restless in P.M.

May 10, Monday, 1937

Fair. Temp to 78 Mother rested well till 1:00 o'clock last nite so I got good rest. Rested well most of day. Had us take her in to yard. Carried her out in chair. First time she's been out in over a year. I started to put up screen door to our room. Cut out yellow dress. Paul, Jamie & J.B. went fishing, caught 12 fish. Hazel & Jack worked some in yard.

May 11, Tuesday, 1937

Fair. Temp 80 Mother didn't sleep much to-day. I worked some on yellow dress. Paul gone to-day. First time in weeks. I

Editor's Note:

In our July 2021 issue, we introduced the diary entries of Miss Ruby O'Rear, granddaughter of John Mason, (the founder of Mentone) and daughter of Alice Mason (who named the town). You can read more about Ruby O'Rear at mapamentone.com/groundhog-archives (July 2021).

In 2015, the University of Alabama acquired her diaries from the years 1936 and 1937 from a bookseller in Brooklyn, NY. They are part of the University Libraries Special Collections (MSS4133). Many thanks to Chris Carmichael for sharing his copy of the diaries with *The Groundhog*.

We hope you will enjoy reading these entries of her daily diary for the month of May, 1937.

planted some squash and zinnia seed & started fixing place for cucumbers. Jack raked. Paul & J.B. set out tomatoes. A.J. churned. Got nice lot of butter. 1 chick died & 2 drowned.

May 12, Wednesday, 1937

Clouding up, then cleared off Paul and I went to Miss Lottie Rice's to see about buying wheelchair for Mother. It was at Mrs. Ellie Brown's. We came by and got it today. Paul went off again. Jessie washed. I sewed on dress. Bathed Mother off & changed clothes & bed clothes. I milked.

May 13, Thursday, 1937

Clear in morn, rainy in P.M. Mother rested fairly well last nite. Still eating hearty. Crackers & cream mainly but gave her some cream of wheat to-day. I finished Hazel's blouse all except buttons. Took Mother in living room in wheelchair. Jessie started fixing front porch with flag stone.

May 14, Friday, 1937

Fair & cool Mother didn't rest so well last nite. Ate hearty tho to-day. Hungry most of time. Went into living room in wheelchair & seemed to enjoy it. I nearly finished Hazel's blouse. Knitted some. Went to Mrs. Emerson's this P.M. & borrowed a rake. Heard to-day that Mrs. Grace Ackley was dead. Died April 8. Hazel & Jessie raked this P.M. So cool had to wear coats.

May 15, Saturday, 1937

Some warmer Gave Mother black draught last nite. Didn't rest so well last nite. Finished Hazel's blouse & nearly finished my yellow dress. Paul, J.B. & Bill went fishing. Hazel ironed & scrubbed. Jack finished raking yard & finished fixing front porch with flag stone. Looks nice.

I took long nap. Nearly had head ache.

May 16, Sunday, 1937

Fair & cool in morn, warm in P.M. Mother rested well last nite. We cleaned her up this morn. I went to S.S. She slept most of time I was gone. Pretty restless in P.M. Ate a lot. About 9 crackers in chicken broth, also broth & rice. Miss Pearl Hudson came over in P.M. John Lawrence came over this morn before breakfast. Mother went into living room in wheelchair while they were here.

May 17, Monday, 1937

Fair & warm Mother rested fairly well last nite. Paul & James B. went off for day, over in Ga. I finished yellow dress. Jack cleaned out cellar. I started a new hog lot. Nettie came to see Mother. Walked down. A.J. & Paul took her back. Jack washed out some things & Hazel ironed them.

May 18, Tuesday, 1937

Fair, warm. Temp above 80. Gave Mother black draught last nite. She's slept very little to-day. I cut out Hazel's green dress & sewed it up. Paul went off to work this morn. Guess will be gone rest of week. J.B. & I planned to go to play at V.H. but he was nearly sick. I rode to store with Paul & A.J. I walked back.

May 19, Wednesday, 1937

Fair. Temp nearly 85 Eleanor Graham Glover brot a buyer of old scrap gold over. Jack sold bridge for \$1.25. Mother restless in morn but slept in P.M. I finished Hazel's dress. Thelma Culberson came over.

May 20, Thursday, 1937

Fair. Temp 81 Jessie washed. Mother rested well last nite & she's slept all P.M. I got dinner & put up quilt & quilted nearly 2 shells. Hazel spending nite with cousin Minnie who came up to-day. Jack Cash & J.B. spending nite in tent.

May 21, Friday, 1937

Fair & warm Mother slept quite a bit to-day. I worked a little on hog lot to-day. Finished first row of quilt and rolled it. Hazel washed curtains of Mother's room. Found guinea nest with 22 eggs in it.

May 22, Saturday, 1937

Fair & warm. Rained hard last nite. Finished hog lot & turned hog in. Jack & Hazel washed windows in Mother's room. Eula came by & we put Mother in wheelchair & took her in living room. Jack & Eula beat her bed good. Hazel mopped & I put up curtains. Billy & J.B. are going to sleep in tent to-nite.

(continued on page 27)

Ruby O'Rear (cont'd from page 26)**May 23, Sunday, 1937***Fair, mostly warm*

Mother slept all morn. Called up from Wallaces & said Lark Cook & Roy Cook & familys were there so Hazel went down for dinner. Ethel, Hope & Fay came about 1:30. Paul & A.J. took me to Cloudland to church. Had communion service then young peoples meeting. Hope & Fay came for me. Hope & Paul put Mother in chair & took her into yard. John D. Rockefeller died this morn.

May 24, Monday, 1937*Fair, moderately warm.*

Mother rested pretty good last nite but I felt bad to-day. Eula came over to sweep upstairs but it was too warm. Mother wanted her to stay right with her. I took 2 good naps. Feel better this P.M. Jack & J.B. went for mail then Jack had to go back for cow. We changed Mother's clothes & bed. I went to well to see rhododendron. Hazel going to stay with cousin Minnie. Last day Hazel was here.

May 25, Tuesday, 1937*Fair, warm. Temp above 80.*

Jessie washed. We were up with Mother a lot last nite but she's slept nearly all day. I quilted quite a bit. Set out a few tomato plants. Eula came over late. My Paul's Scarlet rose I ordered from Wards has turned into a Talisman. Paul & J.B. went fishing.

May 26, Wednesday, 1937*Temp 88. Fair*

Mother rested well last nite. Jessie cleaned out little room to-day. Paul & J.B. went fishing. Caught 10. Snake got some. I quilted. Am ½ thru. Turned quilt around so can quilt other half. Hazel still with cousin Minnie. Wallace stuck saw tooth in leg. A pig died this morning. Don't know cause. Mother ate more to-day.

May 27, Thursday, 1937*Temp about 88. Fair*

Mother didn't rest well last nite tho she didn't get up much & restless this morn. Said arms & legs hurt. I didn't feel so well & slept some this morn. Quilted some. Eula came by. Jack & J.B. washed rug that's in living room & also all the dirty clothes. I planted 2 rows pole beans & some okra. Paul gone.

May 28, Friday, 1937*Fair, temp 86 or more*

I milked. Then after breakfast J.B. & I went to Lilly Smith's. Got gal. of cherries & some turnips. Jessie started cleaning up living room so I had to take down quilt. Hazel called & said she is going to B'ham next week. A.J. pitted the cherries & I canned 4 pts. Ethel came out with Paul when he came. Eula came over.

May 29, Saturday, 1937*Fair, warm. Temp about 90*

Mother didn't rest so well last nite.

Ethel slept in room with me. Pauline Baty came to iron. Eula came over to scrub living room. Ethel & I cut the curtains. Ethel hemmed most of them. Eula & Jessie worked in living room cleaning it up. A.J. took Ethel to valley. Paul, J.B. & Bill went fishing. Ralph came over to see Mother.

May 30, Sunday, 1937*Fair, temp above 90*

Mother rested well last nite. I was only up once. She slept from 12:00 till 8:00 this morn. Cleaned Mother up. Ethel swept room. I cleaned up & put on new yellow house dress. A.J. & Paul took Ethel to V.H. J.B. went to sermon

at Valley Head High School. Paul took him & Bill to river in P.M. Hope & Faye came by. Hope has sore finger.

May 31, Monday, 1937*Fair mostly, temp above 90. Shower in P.M.*

Eula came over & swept over back part of house. She & Jessie cleaned up their bedroom and kitchen. Mother slept from 9:00 till 4:00 last nite. I was only up once between times. Paul gone to Gadsden. Paul came for A.J. & she & Ethel Brown took flowers to cemetery. Miss Pearl & Mr. Thompson & another preacher came over.

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