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P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984**

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"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

July/August 2022

Change Is in the Air!

by Kelly Leavitt

The Groundhog Is Getting a New Look

The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) began publishing *The Groundhog* 40 years ago. Over the decades, the paper has seen many changes, both in format and leadership. *The Groundhog* began as a two-page photocopied newsletter that was mailed directly to all mailboxes in Mentone. It was a black and white "tabloid" newspaper for 26 years until color was introduced in 2009. Eleven editors have overseen the paper since its inception, along with several associate editors.

Another change is coming soon. Perhaps because of the general demise of tabloid publications, the paper we've been printing on is no longer available. This unfortunate turn of events has led to two options: downsize to an even smaller format, or expand into a full-size "broadsheet" format (similar to Fort Payne's *Times-Journal*). To easily accommodate both content and advertising, the MAPA board has voted to select the broadsheet option. The paper will have a bit less of its current "magazine" feel, but we do hope to retain the general feel that readers are accustomed to.

The current issue combines July and August, and the new design will launch with our September issue. This will give us time to consider the re-design and to work with advertisers on any size changes for their ads.

A few people have asked me if the paper could go to a digital-only format but, through conversations around town, it's become apparent that many people still prefer having a "paper" paper to read.

For any who find themselves missing the paper during the month of August, I suggest you look to the archive of digital issues which can be found online at mapamentone.com. Whenever I peruse issues printed over the past four decades, I tend to find myself getting "lost in time"—both in terms of my enjoyment of reading about Mentone's history, and because I literally get lost in time, often reading for much longer than intended!

While recently looking through past issues, I found a statement former *Groundhog* editor Charlotte Gentry made 10 years ago that still holds true today: "It's nice to know, in this age of on-line publications and high-tech gadgetry, there is still a place for the printed word, for good news, no politics, for simpler things."

It's been my honor and pleasure to have served our community for almost five years as editor of *The Groundhog* and I look forward to carrying it through its newest evolution.



Janie Hale captured this moment of beauty on a late afternoon in June at Mentone's Brow Park.

Colorfest 2022 Changes Venue

MAPA is grateful to our community for helping make Colorfest such a popular annual tradition. The fall festival began 40 years ago, in 1982, and has been held each year since (except in 2020, when the pandemic forced its cancellation). When it began, the festival took place at the "Old Hotel Square" at the corner of AL Highway 117 and CR 89. Mentone was much quieter then—in fact, for many years a parade took place on the state highway.

The festival was eventually moved to Mentone's Brow Park on North Cool Street, where festivalgoers and vendors enjoy taking in the scenery. In recent years, this location has created major challenges for festival organizers and the Town of Mentone. Parking areas near Brow Park became unavailable due to home construction and, with limited parking in downtown Mentone, shuttles have been required for the past several years.

Most importantly, traffic becomes gridlocked at times, and some roads become impassable due to illegal parking. The risk is too great that a rescue squad vehicle,

police car, fire truck, or ambulance might be unable to arrive to a call quickly enough to avoid loss of life or property.

MAPA's board of directors has decided that the festival has regrettably outgrown its venue on North Cool Street. Mentone's mayor, council, and police chief strongly agree.

MAPA is excited for the opportunity to move the venue to the former Moon Lake School, the historic campus in Mentone that is held dearly by former students and their families, and by the community at large.

After the school consolidated with Valley Head School in 2021, the campus was given to the Town of Mentone. In June, Paul Nail was hired as executive director of the campus project and he has been exceptionally helpful during the process of determining if the campus will meet the festival's needs.

Colorfest Organizer Melina Brown and Vendor Coordinator Beverly Haynes are optimistic about the possibilities. Parking will be located in the field owned by the Mentone Arts and Cultural Center on AL Hwy. 117—the same location that's been used for shuttle parking in recent years.

(continued on page 3)



THE GROUNDHOG

Published monthly by the
Mentone Area Preservation Association

MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 40 years.

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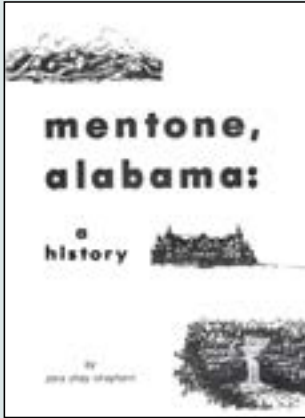
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The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

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

At the June meeting the council voted to apply for a TAP (Transportation Alternative Program) grant through ALDOT to extend the sidewalk on the north side of AL 117 to the Mentone Public Library. A crosswalk would be installed there. The council also voted to apply for a grant to install two charging stations for electric vehicles. The charging station would be located in front of Mason Park.

At the request of Moon Lake Community Library board, the council voted to create the Mentone Public Library. The council appointed members to serve on the Town of Mentone Library Board. Serving staggered terms, the members are: Susan Van Apeldoorn, Jay Robbins, Mary Shurett, Deedee Morrison, and Holley Midgley. The former board of the Moon Lake Community Library will change form and continue to support the operation of the Mentone Public Library.

The town has hired Paul Nail to become the executive director of the Moon Lake Campus. We are fortunate to have Paul on board. Paul



recently retired as manager of Ft. Payne Water. The council also voted to lease the former Head Start Building on the Moon Lake Campus to the DeKalb Ambulance Service (DAS) and the DeSoto Rescue Squad. The building will be renovated so, if necessary, DAS personnel can spend the night there during times when the side of the mountain may become closed due to weather. It will provide space for the rescue squad. During times when there will be many visitors on the mountain, DAS will have the ability to have personnel stationed there.



From the Editor

It is said that around that 500 B.C., the Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "Change is the only constant in life." This adage certainly holds true, some 2,500 years later. Mentone is seeing much transformation. As I write about on page 1, *The Groundhog* will be getting a new look and Colorfest will be moving to a new venue. Moon Lake Community Library will become the Mentone Public Library. The former Moon Lake School campus has a new executive director, Paul Nail, to guide it through its transformation. Sarah Wilcox will no longer be MERF's executive director and chief cheerleader. Pedestrians now have a safe way to cross AL-117 on the crosswalk at the Mentone Market, and a safe way to walk along the highway east of downtown on the new sidewalk.

Many new residents have moved to town, while some others have moved on. One aspect that will, with hope, remain the same is the sense of community that the small towns in our readership area enjoy. The community calendar on page 18 lists a variety of interesting programs for all ages. These events are a great way to make new friends with similar interests. Colorfest will need many volunteers this year. It's really important that the work be spread out and not land on the shoulders of a few. If you enjoy having the festivals in town, and you enjoy meeting new people, please consider volunteering your time. Email Melina at mentonecolorfest@gmail.com to learn more. Be well, everyone. —Kelly



Message from MAPA by Mark Hoffman

I love seeing all of the campers, their families, and a wide assortment of visitors in town enjoying Mentone and surrounding areas. Summer truly is a wonderful time for our community, and the perfect time to remember to support our local businesses, which seem to be growing and getting more diverse as we move forward from Covid.

MAPA would like to give a major shout-out of appreciation to the Town of Mentone and its officials for working with us and allowing us to utilize the Moon Lake School campus for hosting Colorfest this coming October. As you may be aware, holding the festival at Brow Park has become extremely difficult from a logistical perspective and, unfortunately, has created unacceptable safety issues for all concerned. Visitors may go to and enjoy the park, of course, year-round, including the Colorfest weekend.

Mark Hoffman is the 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.

Individuals \$20/year
Couples \$30/year

Your membership includes a complimentary subscription to *The Groundhog*.
JOIN AT mapamentone.com

Or mail your check to MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984.
Be sure to include your name(s), address, phone, and email address.

Mentone Sidewalk and Pedestrian Crossing Officially Opened

On June 14, Will Blackburn cut the ceremonial ribbon to officially open the new sidewalk which runs from downtown Mentone almost a mile east to Dempsey Ave. Will, who was raised in Mentone, is employed by Lambert Contracting and served as the project’s superintendant.



L to R: Tom Emory, Bill Berry, Mayor Rob Hammond, Councilman Ray Padgett, Councilman Gerald Bailey, Lisa Schad, Jay Robbins, Councilman David Allgood, and Deedee Morrison



A new pedestrian crosswalk has been installed in front of the Mentone Market. With the push of a button, solar-powered flashing lights alert drivers to stop. Pictured are Mayor Hammond and Gerald Bailey.

Colorfest 2022 (cont’d from page 1)

Festivalgoers will be able to walk from their cars directly to the campus property on a path behind the MERF House. Handicapped parking will be in the school’s parking lot.

Arts and crafts vendors, as well as food vendors, will be located throughout the campus—on the field in front of the gym, on the grassy area between the library and the greenhouse, in some classrooms, in the courtyard in front of the lunchroom, and the parking area behind the lunchroom. Children may play on the playground equipment, accompanied by parents. A scarecrow contest will once again be held; look for details in the September *Groundhog*.

Musicians will perform throughout the weekend,



Colorfest 2022 will be held at the historic Moon Lake School campus.

either in the grassy amphitheatre behind the school or in one of the classrooms which has a stage (and many memories).

MAPA is grateful for the availability of the campus

and the Town’s encouragement, as it means that the Colorfest tradition will be able to carry on.

Funds generated by sponsorships and vendor fees are traditionally returned to the community in a variety of ways, as MAPA fulfills its mission “to preserve and protect the heritage, natural environment, and other unique qualities of life in the area of Mentone, Alabama.” Utilizing and showcasing the campus will return a vibrancy to the property which has been unused for the past year, and MAPA is dedicated to helping honor its 111-year history.

Mark your calendar for the third weekend in October—the 15th and 16th! The town’s support will mean a lot in making sure we have a fun and successful festival.

A LOOK BACK...

The Groundhog | April 2007 | Page 1

Bailey's Grocery

by Barbara Blalock Bailey

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

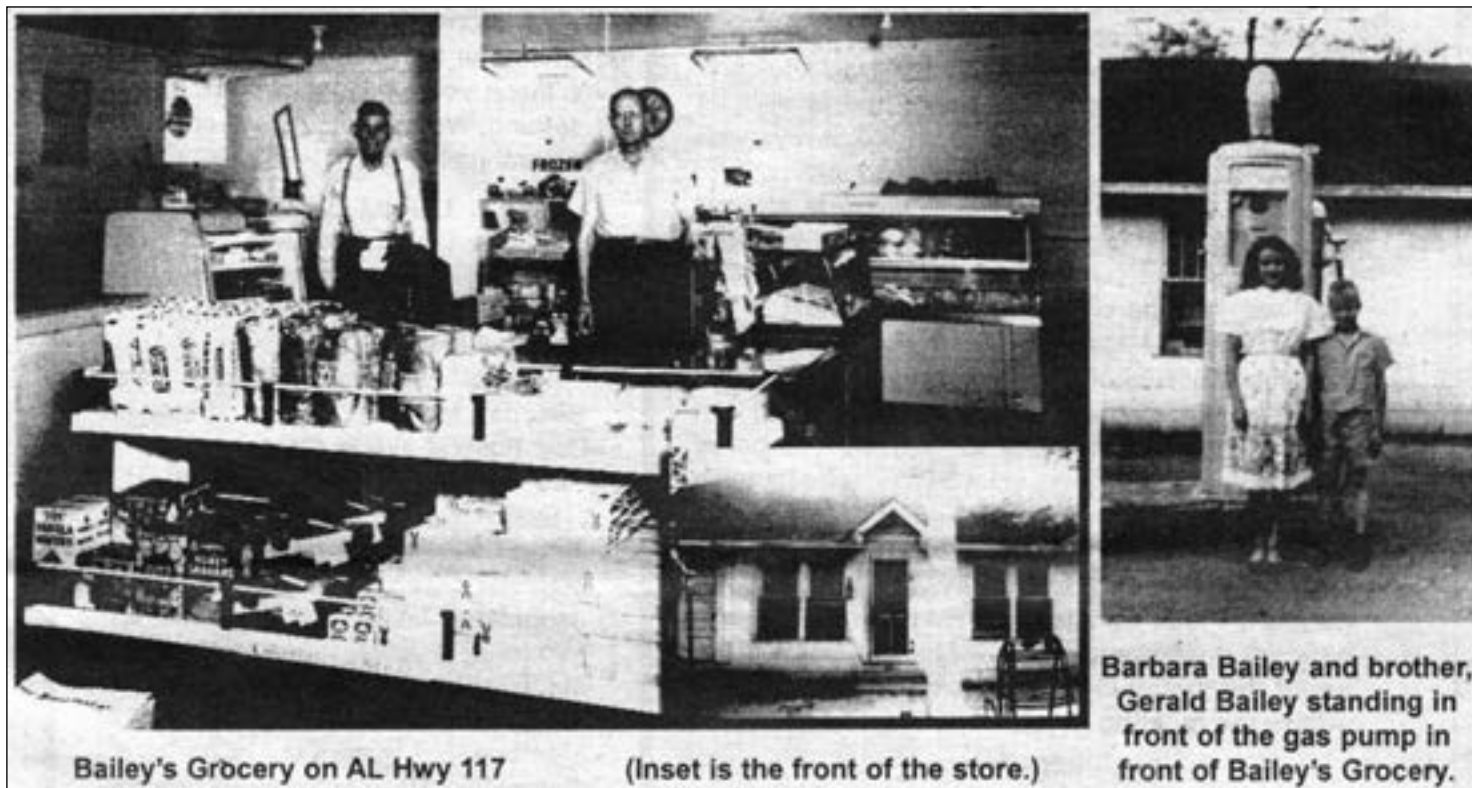
In 1939, Floyd and Catherine Bailey, their small daughter Barbara, and Floyd's father, Charlie "PaPaw" Bailey, were living on a farm known as "The Shigley Farm." When a small store building owned by Henry Miller was available, Floyd bought it and moved his family to a small house next to the store. In 1940, their son Gerald was born. After a period of time, they moved into

the living quarters which they built onto the back of the store. This was their home for thirty years. Over the years, this small business became a wellstocked store where many families bought their groceries. Joe Maxwell, the "Bread Man," delivered bread for the Colonial Bread Company. Milk was delivered by Uncle Ollie Murdock, who owned his own dairy in Fort Payne, and produce was delivered by Lindsey Produce of Fort Payne.

There was a large "feed room" because most people had horses, cows, and chickens to feed. The feed came in fifty- and one-hundred-pound bags, which was hard on the backs of those doing the lifting.

Back then, people had large families and did a lot of cooking. Flour was bought in twenty-five-pound cotton sacks, which were often pretty prints that could be used for sewing. Mother often traded with customers to get enough of one print to make a dress. Most of my dresses were made from these pretty flour sacks.

This store was also a Texaco Service Station. I say "service" station because that is what it was; we pumped your gas, checked the oil, checked the air in the tires, and cleaned the windshield. Gas



was delivered by a Fort Payne distributor, Clifford Durham. PaPaw helped with the gas station as long as he was able. The first gas pumps were not electric; you had to hand pump the gas into a large glass container on top of the pump, there were lines on the glass to indicate how many gallons you had pumped.

During World War II, certain items such as gas, coffee, and sugar were rationed. Families received books of stamps to get these items. Families without cars would trade gas stamps for sugar or coffee stamps. There was a lot of trading and making do with what we had.

In the late forties and early fifties, we had bus service across the mountain. It ran from Fort Payne to Summerville, Georgia, several times a day. On Saturday mornings, we would ride the bus to Valley Head, meet with friends and spend the day. We could eat a hamburger at Uncle Paul Hamman's café, go to the movies, browse around in the Ellis Five and Ten Cent Store, visit with Miss Jessie Phillips at Bell's store, and go to Coleman's Drug Store for a cherry coke at the soda fountain. After a long day of fun, we caught the last bus of the day back home.

Mentone was such a safe place when we were

growing up that we were allowed to roam freely. We walked or rode bikes to Sunset Rock, Eagles Nest, The Old Covered Bridge, and our favorite place, Riverside, where we spent many hours swimming and dropping from an old rope swing into the river. The phrase, "It takes a Village to Raise a Child," is the way it was in Mentone. Everyone watched over us, and we knew that if we

misbehaved our parents would know it before we got home.

Looking back, I realize what a wonderful, blessed childhood we had. Bailey's Grocery was not just a store, it was a place to visit with neighbors and exchange news. One of the first telephones was at the store and many neighbors made and received calls there. Often Gerald and I were sent to tell someone that they had a call. The store was also the school bus stop. Many students in the community walked to the store to catch the bus to Valley Head High School. If you went to Moon Lake Elementary School, you were considered too close to ride the bus, so we walked. I am sure that all of that walking was good for us and we had many new adventures walking to school and back every day.

The old store building still stands on the south side of Alabama Highway 117 about one half mile from downtown Mentone, traveling east. It is being lovingly restored as a dwelling by the new owners. I have many wonderful memories of a fun-filled, worry-free childhood centered around that building and the community. This is the way I remember things and may not be the way someone else remembers it.

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

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

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

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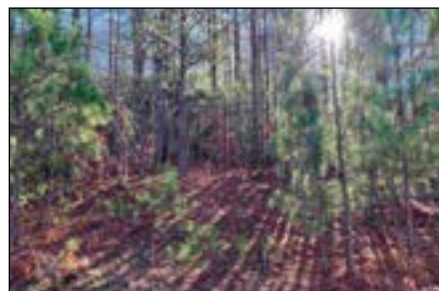
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July 9
Black Sedan Band
70s–90s Covers

August 20
Natti Love Joys
Traditional Reggae
& Bob Marley Covers

September 10
Lon Eldridge
Ragtime, Blues & Swing

Music for the People by Alyce Kenney

Little River Arts Council is very excited to keep the summer feelings going with our Music for the People series! Bands will play from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Mentone Inn's Linger Longer Pavilion. All concerts are free and open to the public. Fantastic Foods, Fontana Stinson's food truck, will be serving.



The Black Sedan Band

On Saturday, July 9, we will feature the Black Sedan Band from Birmingham, AL. This very talented group of artists call themselves a party/dance band with a mission to have fun! We all could use some fun right about now! If you like to laugh, smile, and dance, this is the band for you.

On Saturday, August 20, we welcome back Natti Love Joys. With a serious following, this roots rock reggae band plays all over the south. They are the founders of CAMP REGGAE, a reggae musical festival deep in the Tennessee



Natti Love Joys

mountains that celebrates the outdoors and promotes the importance of family. We are fortunate to have them again.

Listening to music under the stars, while gathered on the lawn, is the ultimate summer fun experience. It is one of those times that memories are made of. So bring your lawn chairs and your friends and become a part of the magic. You will keep coming back.

LRAC's Music for the People series is made possible by LRAC membership and a grant from Alabama State Council on the Arts and National Endowment for the Arts.

Alyce Kenney is a member of the board of directors of the Little River Arts Council.



The 2022 Follow Your Art graphic is by artist Alexia Day and features her original characters Drift the Labrador and Thrift the Bear as they take a walk towards art in a knick knack collecting adventure. The piece is watercolor and gouache.

September 3 will be the second year of Follow Your Art, the artist market that debuted last year on Labor Day weekend. Last year's festival brought folks to Mentone from many neighboring areas to see the talents and beauty of the place a lot of us call home, Mentone. Follow Your Art will again be held at the Pathway to Community walking track at Mentone's MERF House, 4561 AL Highway 117, just east of town. Hours are 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

The festival will feature over 20 local artists and the return of the popular sidewalk chalk art contest. The contest is open to all ages, individuals or groups, who are interested in creating works of art along the track. Little River Arts Council will provide the chalk or participants can bring their own. Chalk artists should arrive at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning, so that their creations are completed or nearly completed when visitors start to arrive at 10 a.m.

Something new in 2022: Follow Your Art will be a juried show judged by artist Trés Taylor, with cash prizes for the winners. Watch the Little River Arts Council site, littleriverartscouncil.org, as more details will be posted there in the coming weeks. The deadline for artist applications is August 15, but please apply early, as space is limited.

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Includes BarBQ Plate + Drink | Additional Plate \$12 Adults \$8 Children

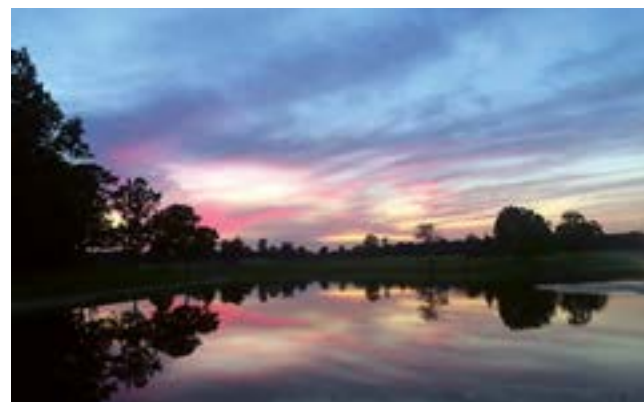
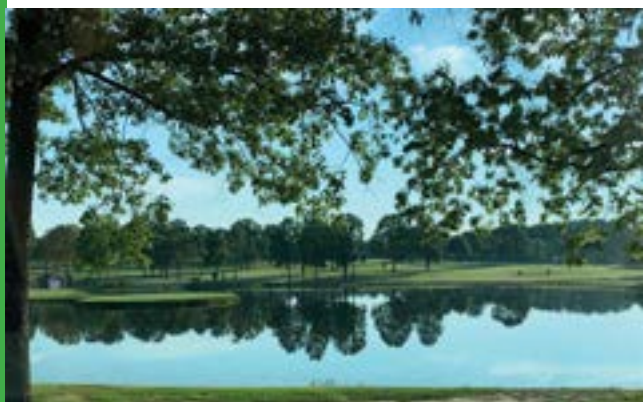
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River Voice by Angie Shugart

Since early 2019, Little River Waterkeeper and our Wild and Scenic Campaign partners at Alabama Rivers Alliance have been working steadily to gain support that will lead to a river study and consider Little River for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Inventory. Little River is the crown

jewel of Alabama and deserves to not only be recognized as such but protected as well, so future generations can enjoy the same river that we do today.

Some have asked, "Why are you seeking Wild and Scenic designation if Little River is protected through its ONRW [Outstanding National Resource Water] status?" Our answer to that question is that Alabama has a general antidegradation policy that is set forth in the Code of Alabama, Title 22. The State articulates that policy in their Water Quality Criteria document as, "Waters of high quality located within national and state parks and other areas which constitute an ONRW shall be maintained at such high quality." However, no water use classification or water quality standards were created for these ONRWs. This allows for continuous degradation of the resource over time and Little River has definitely seen the effects since the status was implemented during the 1990s and the landscape continues to change. A Wild & Scenic river study will allow for a partnership between the National Park Service, local governments, conservation organizations, key state agencies, and river stakeholders to create a Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) that will be implemented if Little River is deemed eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Inventory. In addition to maintaining Little River through a CRMP, the current ONRW status would receive water quality thresholds to keep Little River, in its entirety, truly pristine.

Our W&S campaign began in 2019 by creating a beautiful short film, "Something About Little River," to share the story of why we are taking on a feat that could take several years to accomplish. We created a website to host an online petition which people from all over signed to support a river dear to their hearts. Letters of support have been gathered by dozens of local, regional, and state leaders from municipalities, civic organizations, and businesses who understand the benefits of such a prestigious title. Hours of correspondence through email, phone calls, and Zoom meetings with congressional leaders have taken place because a river study and designation will literally take an act of Congress and will be funded through federal appropriations in place for Wild and Scenic legislation.

Regardless of how fast we would like to see legislation introduced and supported, we still have a lot of awareness to raise and support to gain. Just as many stand in objection as they do in support. Even though we try to spread a positive message about the benefits of a Wild and Scenic designation, there will always be opposition. It is our hope that we can address valid concerns and gain support from everyone in the communities surrounding Little River.

Partnership Wild & Scenic model features include:

- No reliance on federal land ownership or management
- Reliance on local and state regulations and management as before designation
- Administration and implementation of a locally led Management Plan facilitated by a locally appointed, broadly participatory Wild and Scenic Committee

- Responsibility for management of river resources shared between the local, state, and federal partners on the Committee
- Does not require purchase or transfer of lands to the NPS
- Succeeds through voluntary education, outreach, management efforts and local support

Positive effects of Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers

- Promotes outreach and education
- Improves Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Supports Community/Citizen Science
- Creates Climate Resiliency
- Protects Lands
- Restores Rivers and Water Quality
- Enhances Recreation

The Little River Waterkeeper and Alabama Rivers Alliance have been in several meetings with staff at each of the following offices. You can write to our leaders also and ask them to support legislation to study Little River.

Congressman Robert Aderholt
266 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Mike Rogers
2469 Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC 20515

Senator Richard Shelby
304 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

Congresswoman Terri Sewell (bipartisan support)
2201 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Senator Steve Livingston
P.O. Box 8, Scottsboro, AL 35768

Senator Andrew Jones
11 South Union Street, Suite 737, Montgomery, AL 35960

Representative Nathaniel Ledbetter
P.O. Box 8, Scottsboro, AL 35768

Representative Ginny Shaver
PO Box 348, Leesburg, AL 35983

Summer SwimGuide Season is going strong! Keep up with weekly water quality test results on social media, theSwimGuide.org or littleriverwaterkeeper.org.

Angie Shugart is a co-founder of Little River Waterkeeper.



Scan this code to go to theswimguide.org.



Save the Date!

October 15 & 16

Little River
Arts Council
invites you to our
Membership Social

August 13, 2022

5:00 - 7:30 PM

The Mentone Inn

Linger Longer Pavilion

art - door prizes - music - fun
fellowship - hors d'oeuvres

RSVP to
info@littleriverartscouncil.org

Mentone American Legion Thanks Mentone for Its Support by Barry Morton

I want to personally thank the town of Mentone for supporting the Mentone American Legion (MAL) during the June 4th fundraiser bbq lunch. We earned \$1,175 to pay for such things as next year's liability insurance. Liability insurance is important to us because we want to open the Post up for more public activity. I've heard so many people say they used to play games at the Post when they were kids...we want the same thing again.

I also want to thank Bruce and Misty Van Apledoorn. Bruce is the vice commander and Misty is the auxiliary president of the Post. Misty's aunt Marilyn McNichols and Kathryn Wheeler must have wrapped 100 homemade brownies baked by Misty and Marsha (Cox) Merrell. Bruce and Misty's planning and execution made the whole event flawless. We had help from many Mentonians, such as Jim Bozek, Donna Arnett, Jane Arnett, and Kathryn Wheeler.

Of course, we wouldn't have the wonderful meal if it weren't for Mike and Kathryn Norris of the Mentone Market, who donated all the delicious food, paper products, utensils and drinks. They would magically



The Lambert Contracting crew who worked on Mentone's new sidewalk enjoyed a barbecue lunch at the Mentone American Legion's fundraiser.

appear with more food about every half hour. For entertainment, we had the Vegetaters play during the event...they were excellent.

Boy Scout and Cub Scout Pack 106 were represented by David Jackson, Eli Carreker, Troop Leader Greg Carreker, and his wife Stephanie. They earned their \$244 pay by running food and drink to the customers who drove up to the front of the Post.

At around 11 a.m., when we opened, the men from Lambert Contracting, LLC, all sat down and ate. These men built our most beautiful sidewalk from the Mentone Market to Little River Hardware.

Now that we have our nearly flawless process and great help from some of the greatest Mentonians, we are really looking forward to our next fundraiser and membership drive this September. Follow our happenings at our Mentone American Legion Facebook group. 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.



The Vegetaters: David Mays on washtub bass and Chris Hale on banjo

Mentone Ukes by Halee O'Dell



I really don't know exactly what drew me to the ukulele. All I know is that one day I became interested in it. I told my husband, who plays guitar, that I wanted to learn the ukulele and he bought me my first uke. I began to learn by watching YouTube tutorials and have enjoyed playing ever since. I can't seem to put it down when I pick it up.

As time passed, I started seeing posts on Facebook about ukulele sessions at the Mentone library. I was highly interested, so I had to check it out, and that is where I met some really great people! I love the atmosphere and how well we all get along, and can laugh and have fun while we're learning. Mickey is our great and fearless leader, and he's great at teaching and showing us how to play the chords. We've learned lots of good songs. I love how we've even gotten to take turns at teaching the class and learning even more songs. I've connected with great people who have helped me to improve a lot along the way, and my husband is also proud of me for sticking with it.

Strum and Be Happy!

Join the Mentone Ukes at Moon Lake Community Library on Saturdays, July 9 and 23 and August 6 and 20, at 1 p.m. for free ukulele lessons. Players of all levels of experience are welcome—even beginners. Bring your own uke or borrow a loaner uke. Contact Debra Fey (debrafey@gmail.com) for more information.

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cell: 256-997-8138

Chelsea Carrier Manning
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cell: 706-859-1227



Charlotte Gentry
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Assoc. BROKER®
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Melody Sellers
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256-996-7624



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Office: (256) 634-4767



OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM YOUR OWN SPECIAL PLACE ON LOOKOUT MTN in this Charming little Bungalow in the heart of Historic Old Cloudland. 2BR/2BA; one-level; with warm, heart pine floors in much of the home; stone fireplace (gas logs); original bead board walls & ceilings in BRs; all wood interior; bright, efficient kitchen; front & back sunporches; back deck. 2-car carport w/10x20 storage room attached. Cute little red shed at the edge of the small woodland that is a part of the property. Furnishings & decor stay; just bring the groceries & start enjoying your mountain retreat. Easy access (10 min) to Mentone; less than 10 to Menlo. Co-brokered w/GA-licensed Lookout Mtn Preferred Realty. \$235,000 (1807522)



PLANTED AMONGST BOULDERS & TREES, just a block from Mentone's Brow Park, this spacious, cedar-sided cabin offers a feeling of seclusion in town & seasonal views of sunsets. There's even a garage apartment to accommodate guests who need their privacy (or for rental income), which makes for a total of 2800+ sq ft; 3BR/3.5BA; plus a loft for add'l BR or studio. Wood-burning fpclce in vaulted living area; pine floors throughout; DR (used as a den by owners); b'fast nook; partially-finished basement storage area; att 2-car garage. Lush natural landscaping, accented by beautiful boulder outcroppings; paved circle drive; private, pergola-covered back deck; winding pathway to stone firepit. \$425,000 (1812247)



..... LOTS and LAND

TALL HARDWOODS & PEACEFUL BROW SUNSETS. Build your special mountain dream home on one of these beautiful lots along the DeSoto Parkway. Property lines extend over the brow so that trees may be removed for a clear view; good setback from the road for quiet privacy. Three lots available @ \$175,000 each. (1811069)

1.47 ACRES, ON LIBBY LANE. Inside Mentone Town Limits, off E River Road. Mostly hardwood, just enough clearing to get out the undergrowth & 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). \$64,900 (1795866)

LAKEFRONT LOT offers 150' waterfront! There's 3+ acres of beautiful woods, w/approx 1.5 acres on one side of the paved road on which to build your riverfront home, approx 1.5 acres on the other side of the road so that you can be sure it will stay natural & wooded! This area of the lake has deep water & would be perfect for a dock. Enjoy your time on the mountain fishing, swimming, paddling or motoring on Mentone's Little River gem, Lake Lahusage. \$200,000 (1810186)

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. \$55,000. (1795866)

NEW LISTING! BEAUTIFUL HOMESITE IN A PEACEFUL VALLEY! Situated in a valley farm setting that has a large portion of the farmland in a permanent conservancy. This tract is not under the conservancy and is a home site that has beautiful sunset views across the valley. \$72,000 (1809242)

COME BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME IN A PEACEFUL VALLEY! Here are 19+ acres of beautiful vistas that would be perfect for a home. The property is a permanent farmland in a permanent farmland conservancy. The interstate is 5 minutes away, convenient to Chattanooga, Fort Payne and Mentone. \$164,050 (1790823)



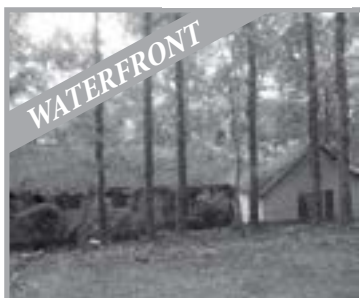
HOUSE & 2.5-ACRES DOWNTOWN MENTONE. This is one of those places with almost unlimited possibilities! Almost as many uses as duct tape! This simple little house would be a great start to even greater things! 2BR/1BA (space for 2nd bath). High-speed internet available. The land is level, features 2 small streams. \$300,000 (1804144)



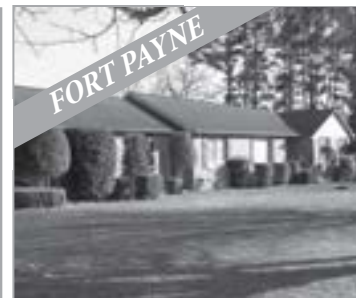
RARE FIND IN MENTONE: 3BR/2BA, RANCH-STYLE HOME, 56X40 SHOP & 22 ACRES W/SMALL POND. Home was built for current owner, has been immaculately kept, & is only 5 years old. Land is beautifully wooded, with a gracefully-curving, nearly 1/4 mile driveway, lined w/dogwoods, leading up to the picturesque pond, 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. \$525,000 (1806766)



WHIMSICAL, TINY, & TRULY SPECIAL GETAWAY. Cabin was built w/an artist's eye, great imagination, & surprising economy of space. Wood-burning fpclce, glass w/obs, open w/loft BR; shed, bath. Then there are the HUGE boulders; the flower beds; the fanciful garden art. It is quite magical, really. \$278,300 (1807189)



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)



ONE-LEVEL, IMMACULATELY-KEPT, brick rancher; on 0.89 acre in historic district of Forest Ave NW; corner property; walking distance to downtown/city park. 3BR/2BA; den w/fireplace; HW floors; formal LR; DR; spacious country kitchen w/tons of cabinets; multiple pantry areas; 2-car, 24x24 attached garage; large, floored, attic storage; garden shed; concrete parking area & driveway. Park-like yard w/mature, bearing fig bush; room for a garden spot. \$280,000 (1802373)



4.74 BEAUTIFUL, UNRESTRICTED ACRES w/septic tank; underground power; public water; 16x24 metal building! A place where you can choose to build a new home, bring in a manufactured home, or bring your camper when the urge strikes to visit the mountains of NE Alabama. Convenient to I-59, so getting here is easy from Chattanooga, Birmingham, or wherever! Perfect spot for a mini-farm; make a garden spot; raise some animals. \$54,900 (1812118)

Moon Lake Community Library:

What does it mean to be a public library?

by Anne McLeod

Changes are coming to Moon Lake Community Library, as we begin the process of becoming a public library. At the Mentone Town Council meeting on June 14, the council approved a resolution forming a public library in Mentone. On Tuesday, June 21 at a special called meeting, the Town Council officially appointed its new library board of trustees: Holley Midgley, Deedee Morrison, Jay Robbins, Mary Shurett, and Susan Van Apeldoorn.

In this article, I answer some questions about this change and how it will affect Moon Lake Community Library.

Why did the library’s board decide to change to a public library?

The short answer is money. There are significant benefits to being a public library. Until 2021, the library was a rare dual-use facility—a school library associated with Moon Lake Elementary and also a community library, open to the public after school hours and on Saturdays. Costs were shared between the school system and the non-profit library board.

With the closing of the school, the library board was solely responsible for expenses. Moon Lake Library was fortunate to obtain two significant grants in 2021, one from the Alabama Humanities Council that could be used for the librarian’s salary and the other from the Tillotson Foundation for equipment and materials. These, along with generous donations, have helped considerably over the last few months. But board members knew that they couldn’t rely on windfalls like these post-pandemic. In order to assure the long term viability of the library, the board would need regular sources of funds.

Since the town was given the Moon Lake campus by the DeKalb Board of Education last winter, they have committed to maintaining the library building as part of the campus. This in-kind support for the library has been a big help—and it made the library eligible to begin the application process to become a public library.

What kinds of financial support do public libraries receive in DeKalb County?

The libraries in Fort Payne, Henagar, Ider, Rainsville, Collinsville, Geraldine, and Crossville are members of the DeKalb Library System, which is based in Fort Payne. They receive state aid, based on the population of their town. They also receive free or low cost internet through the Alabama Supercomputer



Wild about Reading!

Moon Lake Community Library

Summer Reading Program

Visitors welcome

7/9	Turtle Tales 10:30 Ages 3-7 11:30 Ages 8-13	On land, river or ocean, turtles have adapted to live all around us. Come meet a very special turtle, Bella.
7/16	Home, Sweet Home (Alabama habitats) 10:30 Ages 3-7 11:30 Ages 8-13	Why particular habitats are critical for each animal
7/23	What's All The BUZZ About?- 10:30 Ages 3-7 11:30 Ages 8-13	Bees provide us with fruits, vegetables and honey! Find out how they help us.
July 30	Summer Reading Celebration 10:30 All ages	Come to the library for treats and games! Free T-shirts for all who attended 4 or more summer sessions.

MOON LAKE LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 12–4:30 • Saturday 10–1

moonlakelibrary.org

Authority and federal programs like E-Rate. The DeKalb Library System pays for libraries’ automation software, using federal funds. And the DeKalb County Commission awards \$3,000 to \$4,000 to each municipal library per year to help with expenses.

Moon Lake would be a part of this system, eligible for similar financial support. Moon Lake won’t receive much state aid because of Mentone’s tiny population within the city limits, but it’s our eligibility for state aid that will bring other funding our way. Fun fact: Mentone is the smallest town in the entire state of Alabama to establish a public library!

What’s the downside of being a public library?

Paperwork. But if all the other libraries can do it, we can too.

What is required to become a public library?

In addition to the Town Council’s passing the resolution creating the library and naming a board, the library has to have written policies, procedures, a budget, a disaster-preparedness plan, bylaws, and a long-range strategic plan for five years. Alabama Public Library Services (APLS) has a minimum number of hours per week the library must be open, based on the town’s population. In December of last year, Moon Lake increased its hours from 11 per week to 16.5 to meet the 16-

hour minimum. Libraries must have a well balanced collection of print and non-print materials, with the number based on population. The board must employ a qualified librarian. Documentation of all these requirements is due at APLS July 1.

What is a qualified librarian? What if there’s no one closeby with a library degree?

I think there will always be plenty of librarians who are, like me, happy to retire to Mentone. However, the library board sets the qualifications, not APLS. Local boards may specify, for example, that a four-year degree is preferred but not required, depending on the applicant’s experience. This allows small libraries in rural areas to employ people who may not have professional training, but who have a passion for libraries and will do an excellent job.

If the Town Council is appointing a new board, what happens to the old board that has run the library all these years?

They will transition into a Friends of the Library group focused on fundraising, while the new board will be more administrative in nature. The original board is a non-profit 501(c)(3), so donations are tax deductible. Some grants are available for municipal organizations like the new board, and others are for non-profits. This maximizes the library’s potential sources of funds.

We might be the smallest town with a public library, but we’re far from the smallest library. There’s something for everyone in the Moon Lake Community Library collection.

If you haven’t visited the library lately, please check us out. We’re open 12-4:30 Tuesday-Thursday and Saturday 10-1. If you have more questions, call the library at 256-634-2127 or email books@moonlakelibrary.org.

Mentone Mountain Getaways



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Mentone Arts & Cultural Center Update by Randy Grider

Special exhibit coming to arts center; new songwriters workshop

We are excited to host “Portraits of Hope,” a special exhibition to be held July 7 through 11 in the gallery of Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts, located at 5951 AL Highway 117 in Mentone.

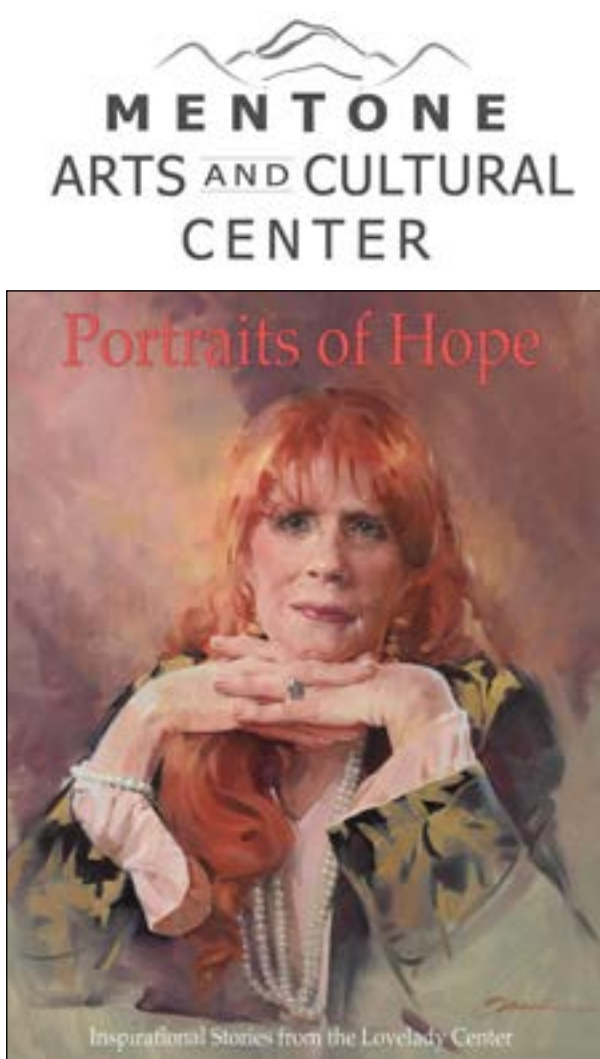
The exhibition was most recently at the Salmagundi Club on 5th Avenue in New York City. It features original portraits of women who have graduated from the Lovelady Center in Birmingham and turned their lives around.

The Lovelady Center’s mission is to “help women rebuild their lives and walk forward with faith-driven hope for the future. The Lovelady Center ensures that each woman is taught how to overcome barriers to success by providing not only much-needed services, but also life skills and spiritual guidance. We can give a woman shelter, food, and clothing, but if she cannot support herself and parent her children, the cycle of poverty and incarceration will not be broken.” Two Lovelady Center thrift stores in the Birmingham area help financially support the center’s mission.

Beverly McNeil, owner of Beverly McNeil Gallery in Montgomery, started the “Portraits of Hope” project. Some of the world’s most renowned portrait artists completed the works of the featured women. Their portraits are compiled into a beautiful coffee table book, *Portraits of Hope – The Inspirational Stories of the Lovelady Center*, which is available in the Arts Center’s gift shop. Proceeds from the sales of the book help support the Lovelady Center.

Our monthly Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series on Tuesday, July 5—as well as the September 6 event—is changing things up a bit. Both nights will feature a songwriter workshop instead of the normal songwriter rounds.

This is open to all of you who have previously attended an event, as well as anyone who has thought about songwriting and just has not ventured out to try it and would like to come join. Participants will



be divided into groups to write original songs. Bring a pencil and paper, an idea that you’d like to work on, and let’s have fun writing. It’s a great way to network with experienced and novice songwriters alike.

On August 2, we will host our regular songwriter round with Skip Cochran, Cliff Abbott, and Troy Dewberry. The featured artist will be announced at a later date. The songwriters workshops and rounds

are from 6:30–8:30 p.m. on each respective date. The workshop and round are led by award-winning singer-songwriter Craig Hendricks.

Due to its popularity, we have scheduled another Paint Like Bob Ross class for Saturday, August 13. The class runs from 9 a.m.–1:30 p.m. It is taught by Certified Bob Ross Instructor Gary Grider. The tuition is \$100 and all supplies are included. Classes fill up quickly and are limited to the first 12 paid students.

We are also working on adding additional events—including a private after-hours shopping experience for groups of any size—that were still in the works at press time. Please check our Facebook and Instagram pages for updates.

For more information on any of these events or to register for a class, please see contact information below.

Randy Grider is the 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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After serving our community for more than two decades, Sarah Wilcox marked her last day as the executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF) on June 10, 2022. Sarah has worked tirelessly for our children and seniors, first as a member of MERF's board and eventually as its executive director.

What's next for Sarah? A vacation that's well-deserved. In mid-June, Sarah embarked on a two-week river cruise from Portugal to Spain with Jan Wilkinson, Jan's son and his wife, and two other couples. It's only the first of many more adventures that Sarah sees in her future.

Born and raised in Atlanta, GA, Sarah began attending Mentone's Camp DeSoto as a 5th grader in 1970. She returned as a camper every summer until she was 16, and when she was a sophomore at Vanderbilt University she began working as a Camp DeSoto counselor. She continued working at the camp for a total of 18 years, both as a summer counselor and part-time bookkeeper.

Relationships born at summer camps are often deeply bonding. Sarah remains close to many women she met as a camper and counselor, and the leadership skills she learned at camp have deeply benefitted people in the Mentone area.

After earning her degree in 1982 at Vanderbilt University, she taught mathematics for 10 years at Athens Academy, a private college preparatory school in Athens, GA, where she also started a program focused on outdoor skills for adolescents. Sarah continues to work with this program, which includes a three-day retreat at Camp DeSoto each April.

Sarah's love for outdoor adventure was instilled at summer camp and then broadened during her early adult years. She first learned how to rock climb while enrolled in a wilderness class during college. After graduating, she attended the National Outdoor Leadership School in Wyoming's Wind River wilderness and learned how to teach rock climbing skills to others.

In the late 1980s, Camp DeSoto installed a ropes course for outdoor recreation, personal development, and team building. Zip lines are perhaps the most popularly-known element of a ropes course, which also includes a variety of other activities, some low off the ground and some high in the air.

Sarah said the most gratifying aspect of teaching ropes courses is "helping people overcome their fears. I enjoy being able to encourage them and give them a quiet confidence. We talk about healthy fears,

Sarah Wilcox Is off to Find New Adventures by Kelly Leavitt



encouraging each other, and strengths and weaknesses in different people. A ropes course acts an equalizer. Sometimes football players aren't very good at climbing because of their body weight, while smaller boys tend to excel. It develops a sense of community, if it's done well."

All of the camps in the Mentone area have ropes courses, and Sarah works at Camp Laney, Camp Alpine, and Camp DeSoto at retreats during the school year. For many years, she has been employed by Higher Ground, a company in Rome, GA, that offers adventure-based experiences.

Sarah's own quest for adventure has taken her across the globe. She has bungee jumped in New Zealand, zip lined through a Costa Rican rain forest (with a close-up view of a volcano), and enjoyed extensive bicycle tours in New Zealand, Nova Scotia, Vermont, and Alaska. One of her favorite activities is skiing in Colorado's Rocky Mountains.

"Since bungee jumping started in New Zealand, I thought I should try it," Sarah said. "But I'll never do that again. It was too scary. I didn't like all my blood rushing to my head, and I didn't like having my legs tied together. New Zealand was gorgeous, though. I was 30 years old and ready to move there!"

Plans haven't always worked out as Sarah

thought they would. After leaving Athens Academy, she earned her Master of Business Administration degree at the University of Georgia, with a concentration in risk management/insurance and entrepreneurship. "After business school, I thought I was going to move back to Atlanta and work, but that's not what happened. God had different plans for me. I went to live with a friend and her children when her husband went in for a bone marrow transplant. Sadly, he passed away, and while I was helping care for the family, my friend Milly called me up out of the blue and said, 'Let's start a B & B in Mentone.' I told her she was crazy. But a week later, I agreed to it."

Milly ended up changing her mind, but Sarah was committed. In 1996, she bought the former Blossom Hill Bed and Breakfast, a river property near DeSoto Falls. She renamed the business Mountain Laurel Bed and Breakfast and quickly understood the challenges of hosting guests. "I moved in on a Wednesday and had guests on Friday. I had no clue what I was doing. I didn't know how to do it, and I didn't have the skills. But I learned!" Sarah credits her experience with ropes courses and other challenging outdoor activities for helping her successfully run the business for 20 years.

When asked how else her adventure experiences have shaped her life, she said, "I think they've helped me to develop an inner push to do things that are uncomfortable. I've been exposed to different cultures and different people. Growing up, I was surrounded by people just like me, like most people are. Going on adventures made it possible to meet interesting and different people. They've also allowed me to understand people's fears. I stood on that platform for the bungee jump for a long time before I could push off. So I have a certain empathy for other people's fears. There are some people who are fearless, but I'm not one of them."

MERF began in 1993, when Sue Henry, who owned Camp DeSoto at the time, joined with Moon Lake School Principal Bill Berry, Marsha and Phil Hurt (current owners of Camp DeSoto), and Jean and John Cory (former owners of Little River Hardware) to create the non-profit organization with the intent to support the school and the community. One of the organization's first accomplishments was buying a 2.1-acre property adjacent to the school. The property includes the historic Shigley home that now serves as the MERF Community House, where MERF began providing volunteer after-school tutoring for Moon Lake students. This service continued until the closure of the school in 2021.

(continued on page 15)



A farewell celebration for Sarah Wilcox was held on June 6. Many people gathered in the MERF House, where board president Bill Berry honored Sarah with these words:

The Mentone Area Resources Foundation started more than 29 years ago with the mission of enriching the community's living and learning, allowing dreams and possibilities to become realities.

And during most of those years, Sarah Wilcox played a vital role in MERF's successes...first as board member and later as the board's chairman.

As the foundation's work expanded, she became its first executive director, tasked with coordinating programs ranging from scholarships to senior lunches, and from tutoring to Taste of the Mountain.

Sarah truly has a heart for Mentone and for its people, and her presence here has been an blessing to us all. Her absence will definitely leave a void for all of us—and for the ongoing work of MERF—but we are grateful for the time and talent she has so generously shared with us, and we are all thankful for the exciting new opportunities that that lie just ahead for her.

We wish you all the best, Sarah...and we will be with you in spirit, just as you have been with us in support.

—Bill Berry



Sarah on one of her many bike-riding adventures



Sarah with some of her Camp DeSoto friends.



Sarah and Santa brought Christmas joy to countless seniors over the years at MERF's Christmas luncheons.

Sarah Wilcox (cont'd from page 14)

In 1997, MERF began its popular arts education programming. Two years later, Sue met fine arts teacher Paula Easter while tutoring at their church in Summerville, GA. That year, Paula began teaching art, music, and Spanish to Moon Lake students. Her salary was provided by funds donated to MERF from within the community. When Moon Lake students were moved to Valley Head School, Paula went with them. She has enjoyed a gratifying year, as many of the Valley Head students had never been offered arts programming. Sarah and Paula developed the annual "Family Arts Night," held on a May evening when families gather to see the artwork created by all students throughout the year.

MERF is also well-known for its seasonal weekly senior lunches, when Mentone's elders gather at the MERF House to enjoy a meal provided by local businesses and organizations, as well as camaraderie and, often, music. In years past, Jill Whitten took a selection of Moon Lake Library books to the lunches so the seniors could easily check them out. While Moon Lake School was open, Paula Easter would accompany students to the MERF House, where they would sing for the seniors. Most recently, the group

has particularly enjoyed exciting games of bingo. Sadly, many of Mentone's seniors passed away during Sarah's tenure. "I've had to say goodbye to many people over the years," she said. "There are a lot of angels watching over us."

Sarah's leadership as executive director took MERF to new heights. About 10 years ago, she began writing grants for Moon Lake students to attend arts-oriented performances at Atlanta's Alliance Theatre and the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. During the most recent school year, MERF funded a performance by Birmingham Children's Theatre at Valley Head School. Sarah also instituted an annual series of talks by local artists, when each April three artists would rotate throughout the classrooms and speak to each grade.

In 2018, Sarah began to notice photos on Facebook of young moms doing things alone with their toddlers. "Two of MERF's tutors had young children," she said, "and I knew of a few other young families who didn't know each other." Sarah invited them to the MERF House so the toddlers could have the chance to play together and develop social skills, and so the young mothers could spend time with other mothers. The group, known as MERF Moms, now meets weekly;

MERF provides the space to meet, snacks, Legos, balls, and other toys. Six families currently participate, and others are welcome to join.

"Megan Haldeman has been the spearheader with me," said Sarah. "They're kind of outgrowing the MERF House. We've been doing this for four years, so the oldest children are now 5 and there are 12 children. That's a lot of little bodies. When the weather's good, they play on the Pathway walking trail and at the playground on the Moon Lake School campus. Sometimes they meet at the state park and go hiking, or they meet down at the splash pad in Fort Payne."

The Pathway to Community walking trail on the MERF property came to fruition after MERF won a \$20,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama for its "Big Idea" competition in December, 2019. The project centered around the ¼-mile walking track that was designed and built by Mentone Boy Scout Jake Pinholster for his Eagle Scout project in 1998. The funds allowed for a mural of native flowers to be painted on an outbuilding by Mentone artist Lydia Randolph, and for outdoor musical instruments to be installed along the trail, which is open to everyone during daylight hours.

(continued on page 27)

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Valley Head resident Cat Findley is about to embark on an international adventure...without leaving the comfort of her own home. In August, she will begin hosting two foreign exchange students—Malu from Brazil and Carla from Italy. The high school seniors will attend Valley Head High School for the 2022–2023 school year. Thanks to social media, email, and WhatsApp, the girls and their

hostess are already beginning to know each other. Cat hopes the local community gets to know the girls, as well. Carla and Malu have spoken English since they were young girls and they are excited about sharing their respective cultures with new school friends and others. Cat will be sharing her adventure with the girls with Groundhog readers in a monthly column. We hope you enjoy this first installment. —Kelly

My journey began when I happened to see a post in a local Mentone Facebook group about hosting exchange students. I was mildly curious, so I clicked on the link and was taken to the ASSE exchange student site. As I began to explore, my interest and excitement quickly grew. The site features profiles which include students' age, gender, country, interests, languages they speak, and, most importantly, a letter from each student to potential host families. Since I love cooking, I thought it would be fun to have a student who also loves to cook. I put in a search for those who enjoy cooking and who are "foodies" and got many hits. I began to make a list of students who especially caught my attention, and it was a long list!

I am new to the area, having moved here a year and a half ago from Birmingham. As a recent empty nester, I have a roomy house that is often empty except when my now-grown kids visit. I love young people and had hosted a young woman this past year who lived with me while she learned organic farming at Windy Hill Farm in Mentone. I'm a homebody and enjoy my own company but I realized I missed having a young housemate. Living and coexisting in the same household is different than entertaining guests, which I also love to do. Participating in each other's lives under the same roof has a natural and comfortable rhythm for me.

I called the ASSE local coordinator to learn more. I had imagined having one exchange student but was told if you were a single person, they want you to have two! When I thought about it, it made perfect sense. The agency wants them to have a family environment that includes more than two people. It occurred to me two students would also have each other and in some ways it would be less pressure on me. The three of us



by Cat Findley

would all share in this adventure together.

I know myself and what kind of parent I am. I like my kids to have some independence and their own lives, although I want to share in them. I shared this with the coordinator and she suggested certain countries and cultures where kids tend to be more independent. The two students are not allowed to be from the same country or speak the same language. I was also told that some countries and cultures are not a good fit together. I discovered that students from Italy and Brazil, among a list of other countries, were a good fit together and by at least late teens, they are pretty much considered adults. I was sold. Now if you happen to be a more protective-type parent, there are plenty of cultures and countries with students who fit that bill as well!

I was drawn to two particular profiles when I searched for students who enjoyed cooking. I reviewed many student profiles but kept coming back to them. There were so many wonderful students hoping for the opportunity to come here, but these two had letters to their potential host families that really spoke to me. I filled out the online application and told the coordinator I was interested in hosting Carla from Italy and Malu from Brazil. I worried a bit that they would prefer to be placed with a larger family or in a bigger town or city, but the coordinator continued to be encouraging.

In order to be approved, hosts must pass an extensive background check and home visit, and submit multiple references. In addition, the local school must agree to take them. This program is for the entire school year.

A week or two later, my application was approved, Valley Head High School agreed to enroll them and I was officially matched with Carla and Malu. I first heard from Carla by email then Malu. I was crazy about them from the start. Carla taught me how to use WhatsApp to communicate by message or by phone. In no time at all, I began chatting and getting to know the girls and their moms. The girls started chatting together and even the moms have gotten to know each other. I'm grateful for technology and our ability to instantly communicate on a daily basis.

Since we've connected, we've learned so much about our individual personalities and preferences. I think this advance connection will greatly ease their adjustment and, while I know it will be overwhelming at first, we are building a solid relationship and the three of us will work through any challenges together. I'm looking forward to "officially" meeting the girls when they arrive in August.

Remembering Our First Community Librarian

by Dianne Kuehl



Beverly Ashley (10/22/40 – 6/7/22) moved to Mentone around 2004 from Ohio. She thought this would be her home base when she was not traveling in her motorhome. She ended up loaning her motorhome to a family who needed a place to stay while their residence was being fumigated

for brown recluse spiders. After it was returned to her, a man stopped by the house she was sharing with a friend and asked if she would be willing to sell it to him and she did. It didn't take her long to decide that Mentone was her home and she eventually bought a house.

When the Moon Lake Community Library was established in 2002, there were only board members and volunteers working in the library with the guidance of the school librarian. After operating in this manner for several years, the board decided we needed to be more cohesive and that is when Beverly was hired to be the face of the library. At that time the library didn't have a lot of money and they joined a program provided by TARCOG [Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments] to pay Beverly's salary. This was a program for senior citizens to learn a skill in order to find a job with the library paying a fee

and TARCOG paying her directly for one year. Of course, we never intended for Beverly to leave the library. Once TARCOG's funding ceased, the library had to look for another way to pay her. That's when we went to the town for help and it was decided that if Beverly worked at Town Hall, the Water Department, and the library, she could continue to receive the same salary as TARCOG had provided. That's when Beverly became the face of Mentone.

Beverly was a tremendous asset to the library. She connected with patrons in knowing what they were interested in reading and helped the acquisitions committee in purchasing books. Keep in mind the library started with donated books from the community, a couple of bookstores, and books we traded-in at McKay Used Books in Chattanooga for credit to purchase other books. So, it was important that we knew what our patrons wanted to

read. At that time there weren't funds to purchase new books.

Beverly only left the library when her health took a bad turn in 2016 and she had to go into a nursing home. When anyone ask her how she was, she would say "not too bad for an old lady." To me, she was a great lady and friend, and I was sorry to see her leave the community. She was always willing to help people in any way she could. She was a great seamstress, a pet sitter, and even worked at Camp Skyline for several years on closing days. She said that was the highlight of her summers. I'm just glad she was able to spend the last five years of her life in a facility in Indiana close to her family. She will always be remembered fondly by me and many more in Mentone. Rest in peace my dear friend.

Dianne Kuehl served as treasurer of the Moon Lake Community Library from 2003 to 2021.

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#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

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#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.

#1807457—AMAZING VIEWS! YES, VIEWS!!! Enjoy the scenery that ONLY Mother Nature provides! Live in

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July/August Community Events

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

July 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31—Kayaking on Little River. Sit-on-top kayaks can be rented at Miller’s Bend Paddle Shack in the DeSoto Falls picnic area for a scenic flatwater paddle up the West Fork of Little River. Life vests & paddles provided. 10am–6pm. Details at alapark.com/kayak-little-river.

July 7–11—“Portraits of Hope.” Art exhibition in the gallery of Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts, 5951 AL 117, Mentone.

July 9—Nature Scavenger Hunt for Kids. Guided 1-mile hike on the Path to Learning while we search for natural items. Program is designed for children ages 3–8; however, all are welcome. 10–11am. For details, visit CanyonCenter.org or call 256-845-3548.

July 9—Wild About Reading Summer Program: “Turtle Tales.” On land or in rivers or oceans, turtles have adapted to live all around us. Come meet a very special turtle named Bella. Ages 3–7 at 10:30am; ages 8–12 at 11:30am. Moon Lake Library, Mentone.

July 9—Mentone Ukes. Free ukulele lessons at 1pm at Moon Lake Library in Mentone. Beginners welcome!

July 9—Free Concert: Black Sedan Band. Little River Arts Council’s Music for the People Summer Concert Series continues with Black Sedan Band out of Birmingham at the Mentone Inn’s Linger Longer Pavilion. Open to everyone! 7–10pm.

July 11—“Wild about Bears.” Hannah Leeper, the Auburn researcher studying our local bears, will do a presentation about her work. Free for all ages. Doors open at 6:15pm with Hannah’s talk beginning at 6:30pm. Moon Lake Community Library, Mentone.

July 12–15—Canyon Camp. Hands-on environmental education, outdoor fun, arts, and the exploration of the natural world for grades 5 & 6. JSU Canyon Center in Fort Payne, the day-long camp is from 9am–3pm. Drop off begins at 8:30am. Registration is \$150 and limited to 12 participants. For more information, call 256-845-3548.

July 16—Wild About Reading Summer Program: “Home, Sweet Home.” Why particular habitats in Alabama are critical for each animal. Ages 3–7 at 10:30am; ages 8–12 at 11:30am. Moon Lake Library, Mentone.

July 16—Third Saturday Sunset Cruise. Car show featuring over 200+ classic vehicles on display in Fort Payne’s historic downtown district. Music across the street from DeKalb Theatre and food vendors. 5–9pm. Free & open to everyone. For current info, see facebook.com/3rdSaturdayFortPayneAL.

July 20—An Evening for Art Discussion and Critique. Hosted by Little River Arts Council. Artists are invited to bring a piece or two to share with the group for feedback. Everyone is welcome. Moon Lake Library, Mentone. 6pm.

July 23—Wild About Reading Summer Program: “What’s All the Bzzz About?” Bees provide us with fruits, vegetables, and

honey! Find out about how they help us. Ages 3–7 at 10:30am; ages 8–12 at 11:30am. Moon Lake Library, Mentone.

July 23—Mentone Ukes. Free ukulele lessons at 1pm at Moon Lake Library in Mentone. Beginners welcome!

July 23—Hike with a Naturalist on Little Falls Trail. Two-mile hike is a moderate-to-hard journey with varying terrain and over 100 stone steps to traverse into the canyon. Wear footwear suitable for hiking, and bring water, sun protection and a snack. 10am–12 pm. Meet at the Little River Falls parking area on Hwy. 35. Free event. No registration required. Visit CanyonCenter.org or call 256-845-3548.

July 23—Sunset Simmer-Down Paddle Trip. Relaxing guided sunset paddle trip on the scenic Little River. 4–8pm. Meet at Miller’s Bend Paddle Shack at DeSoto Falls Picnic Area. \$30/ single kayak rental (tandem kayaks available on limited basis for \$50). Pre-registration is required and closes July 19 at 5pm. To register, visit alapark.com/kayak-little-river.

DeSoto State Park Summer Events

See alapark.com/parks/desoto-state-park/park-events for details about the following events.

July 8—Campfire Talk: A Crash Course in Alabama Botany

July 9—Campfire Talk: The Wonders of Carnivorous Plants in the Southeast

July 15—Park After Dark—Night Walk

July 16—“Creek Kids” Watershed Workshop

July 16—Campfire Talk: Turtles of Alabama

July 17—Birding Hike 101

July 22—Campfire Talk: Scales and Tails

July 23—YES, I CAN! Canning Fruits & Vegetables Workshop

July 24—YES, I CAN! Pressure Canning Workshop

July 30—Campfire Talk: Black Bears in Alabama

July 26—Storytime at the Canyon Center. Nature-based story time and more! Program is designed for children ages 3- 8; however, all are welcome. Little River Canyon Center. 10–11am. For details, visit CanyonCenter.org or call 256-845-3548.

July 30—Summer Reading Celebration. Moon Lake Library in Mentone hosts a summer reading wrap-up. Enjoy treats, rock out with the Mentone Ukes, and decorate T-shirts. 11am–12:30pm.

August 2—Songwriter round with Skip Cochran, Cliff Abbott, and Troy Dewberry. The featured artist will be announced at a later date. Led by award-winning singer-songwriter Craig Hendricks. Hosted by the Mentone Arts and Cultural Center, 5951 AL 117, Mentone. 6:30–8:30pm.

August 6—Mentone Ukes. Free ukulele lessons at 1pm at Moon Lake Library in Mentone. Beginners welcome!

August 6—Mentone Fire Dept. BBQ Fundraiser. Pork butts, BBQ sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, drinks. Mentone Fire Station, 5907 AL Hwy. 117, Mentone.

August 8—Little River Waterkeeper Talk. Angie Shugart will discuss efforts to preserve and protect Little River. Doors open at 6:15pm with Angie’s talk beginning at 6:30pm. Moon Lake Library, Mentone.

August 13—Little River Arts Council’s Membership Social. Music, food, door prizes, and a silent auction at the Mentone Inn and Linger Longer Pavilion. 5–7:30pm.

August 13—Paint Like Bob Ross Class. Taught by Certified Bob Ross Instructor Gary Grider. \$100 includes supplies. Classes fill up quickly and are limited to the first 12 paid students. Hosted by Mentone Arts Center, 5951 AL 117, Mentone. 9am–1:30pm.

August 17—An Evening for Art Discussion and Critique. Hosted by Little River Arts Council. Artists are invited to bring a piece or two to share with the group for feedback. Everyone is welcome. Moon Lake Library, Mentone. 6pm.

August 20—Mentone Ukes. Free ukulele lessons at 1pm at Moon Lake Library in Mentone. Beginners welcome!

August 20—Moon Lake Library Book Club. Bring a book you’ve read lately to recommend to the group. September’s book will be Wild Card Quilt by Janisse Ray. 10:30pm. Moon Lake Library, Mentone.

August 20—Free Concert: Natti Love Joys. Little River Arts Council’s Music for the People Summer Concert Series continues with Natti Love Joys, a reggae band from Turtletown, TN, at the Mentone Inn’s Linger Longer Pavilion. Open to everyone. 7–10pm.

August 20—Third Saturday Sunset Cruise. Car show featuring over 200+ classic vehicles on display in Fort Payne’s historic downtown district. Music across the street from DeKalb Theatre and food vendors. 5–9pm. Free & open to everyone. For current info, see facebook.com/3rdSaturdayFortPayneAL.

Ongoing Community Calendar

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 in Mentone. 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 the 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. Scrabble players meet and compete on Wednesdays at 12pm. Crochet Group for all experience levels on Thursdays at 3pm. 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.

Al-Anon meets at St. Joseph’s Church on Saturdays at 4pm. 21145 Scenic Drive, Mentone.

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How Old Is That Tree?



Judge Rains captured this photo of Jim Rotch standing by a mighty white oak.



In recent *Groundhog* articles, we have invited readers to estimate the age of large trees and submit photographs. In June, Judge David Rains submitted the following:

Jim Rotch and I accepted your *Groundhog* invitation to submit photos of large trees in this area. Pictured here is Jim standing by a mighty white oak which is located in the backyard of the Fort Payne home which he and Darlene call The Oaks because of this and other magnificent trees on their grounds. Using the equation in your June issue, we have determined that this tree is approximately 262 years old.

For many years before Jim and Darlene Rotch bought this historic property, it was the home of DeKalb County Circuit Judge and Mrs. W. J. Haralson. Their son, Wallace Haralson, became a Circuit Judge in Jackson County. Judge Wallace Haralson is the father of Kathryn Norris. Kathryn and her husband, Mike, own and operate the Mentone Market. Thanks for including the Rotch-Haralson tree in *The Groundhog*.

If any of our readers know of a local tree that's very old, we'd love to hear about it. Please email groundhognews@yahoo.com.

An Easy (Unscientific) Way to Estimate the Age of a Tree

To estimate a tree's estimated age, measure the circumference at a height of 45". To find the diameter, divide the circumference (in inches) by π (3.14) and then multiply that number by the species' growth factor.

- Growth Factors of Some Local Tree Species**
- Tulip Tree 3 • Sycamore 4 • Red Oak 4 • Sweet Gum 4
 - Black Walnut 4.5 • Red Maple 4.5 • White Oak 5 • Red Pine 5.5
 - Redbud 7 • Dogwood 7 • Shagbark Hickory 7.5



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Paradise Garden

Rhododendron Garden Club

by Alyce Kenney

Summer is “a time to feel the heavenly warmth on our faces and revel in the beauty that surrounds us. Relax, have fun, celebrate, and abide in gratitude for the blessings that surround. Fall and winter will come, but don’t let thoughts of the unknown rob you of the joy of the moment.” The Rhododendron Garden Club began the June meeting with these words as a part of the meditation. The author is unknown, but the meaning still very notable. Summer is here and there are so many different things to see and do in our region. Get out and explore for a couple of hours or a day. It will change your perspective on life.

Speaking of perspective, we’ve all heard “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Several of our members were reminded of this as they were awarded ribbons for their entries of horticulture and design in the flower show at Paradise Gardens in Summerville, Georgia on June 10 and 11. Paradise Gardens is the place that honors artist Howard Finster and his visionary artistic style. Considered the grandfather of Southern folk art,



Mellanie Tuttle won a 1st place blue ribbon at Paradise Garden's flower show for her educational display titled "Upcycling."

Howard's faith driven creativity resulted in a collection of art unlike any other you've seen. Add Paradise Gardens to your summertime list of places to visit.

The theme of our June meeting focused mainly on conservation and creativity. We as a group would like to be a voice



in preserving natural habitats in our region. Every blade of grass, every shrub and tree hold the life of myriad creatures that pollinate, prevent erosion, and provide beauty. We encourage our community members to think differently about how they treat our natural environment

here on our mountain. Stay tuned for how you can join us in this important mission.

Creativity is our middle name with our members caring for the Secret Garden on the MERF House property, the Mentone Post Office garden space, and now, a new space around the Mentone sign on AL Highway 117 on the eastern edge of town. If you have perennial plants you need to find homes for, just let us know.

More creativity will be shown at the flower show at Minvale Baptist Church in Fort Payne, Alabama on August 18 and 19. We will turn their gymnasium into an art museum to match the theme of the show “Brush Strokes.” There will be a youth division where children can enter their own creations. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents and grandparents to be a part of encouraging creativity in a child. Never been to a flower show? Don’t really know much about garden clubs? Now is the time to become a part of us. There’s a lot of fun and learning happening. Keep checking our Facebook page for details and information.

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. CT in the MERF house. Come join us to learn, participate, and enjoy! Follow us on Facebook or send any questions to rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Alyce Kenney serves as secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.



Martha Wood won a 2nd place red ribbon for her bicycle tire design at the Paradise Garden flower show.

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Ruby O'Rear's Days Come to Life

JULY & AUGUST, 1937

July 1, Thursday, 1937

Temp 46 this morn. Went to about 70. Mother rested fine all day. I finished pajamas except buttons. J.B. & Jack C. went berry picking. Paul went to Menlo. My pkg. from Sears came. Jack ironed some. I washed Mother's things. This p.m. I went to Nettie's, Kate's, Thelma's, Aunt Mag's & Mrs. Brown's. Came back by garden at spring.

July 2, Friday, 1937

Temp 47 last nite but warmer to-day than yesterday. Planted potatoes. Made 6 pts. of jam from berries J.B. picked. Mother slept most of day. Picked enough huckleberries for pie. Ward came over.

July 3, Saturday, 1937

Temp 58 last nite. Fairly. Wore my new overalls & went to field & picked 4 qts. blueberries. Paul picked 3 qts. huckleberries. Jessie ironed some. Mother up quite a bit in p.m. Canned berries. Paul, J.B., Billy E. went fishing. Went by & took Ward with them.

July 4, Sunday, 1937

Fair. Pleasant. Didn't go to S.S. [Sunday School]. Billy & Scudder Smith came over. A.J. & boys went to V.H. for ice to make cream, etc. I made sandwiches & ice tea for dinner. Made 2 freezers of cream. Mother rested well. I went to Culbertsons. A.J. at home for day.

July 5, Monday, 1937

Cooler. Good rain this morn. Cleared off in p.m. A.J. took me to Mrs. Nail's. Mary Alice, Simon, Jr., Ruth, Penelope, Perkins, Mr. Brand & his brother & nephew all there. Mother slept quite a bit to-day. But took on quite a bit when awake. A.J. & Paul went riding at 3:00. Jack & J.B. played in mud. Paul picked 9 qts. berries.

July 6, Tuesday, 1937

Cool & pleasant. Eula & Jodie came by. Jodie went on to mill. Eula & baby stayed here. I washed out Mother some clothes. Paul & J.B. went to Lahusage this morn & picked enough berries for 13 qts. Canned them in p.m. Paul, Jack & J.B. went to river. Eula stayed with us.

July 7, Wednesday, 1937

Still moderately cool. Pleasant. Jessie washed. Mother rested well in morn. Paul picked a few blackberries & we cooked them to get juice for jelly. Paul went for mail. A.J. went later.

July 8, Thursday, 1937

Fair & warm. Temp about 87. Paul, J.B. & I went in car to Lahusage to pick blackberries. Picked over 5 gal.



Mother nervous & restless all morn. Jessie didn't get any work done. A.J. not feeling well, but Mother rested fine in p.m. We canned 21 qts. blackberries. I washed some of Mother's things & made some jelly. Makes me 71 qts. berries.

July 9, Friday, 1937

Fair & warmer. Temp nearly 90. Mother rested fairly well. Eula & Jodie came over & canned 24 qts. of huckleberries on furnace. Paul picked nearly 2 gal. huckleberries. A.J. sick last nite. Paul took her to Trion to see doctor. Monroe Ellis came out to see Paul. Jack & J.B. went for mail.

July 10, Saturday, 1937

Warm. Fair. Gave Mother black draught last nite & salts this morn. Jessie ironed. I sewed a little. Paul picked few huckleberries. A.J. over at Paul's. Dewey brot 2 cords of wood.

July 11, Sunday, 1937

Warm. Temp about 90. Mother not up a time last nite & rested fine to-day. Paul brot A.J. over about noon. Hope, Faye & Ethel came about 2:00. Had dinner. A.J. sick after dinner. Hope, Faye, Paul, Jack, & J.B. went to river. Ethel going to stay to-nite.

July 12, Monday, 1937

Temp 90. Fair. A.J. went to see Dr. Floyd last nite. He gave her some medicine. Paul picked some huckleberries. Mother rested fine last nite. Not up a time. Aileen Florine & Irene Pullen came over. Irene going to stay a few days. Paul brot Ethel B. and Mason over & then they took Ethel & A.J. to Trion. I looked over the huckleberry situation & picked qt.

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 months of July and August, 1937.

been awake all time I was gone & Jessie had not been able to do any work. We looked over huckleberries & canned 13 qts. on new cannery Paul had fixed. It works fine. A.J. feeling better. Irene went home at 6:00.

July 15, Thursday, 1937

Temp 93. A.J. feeling worse. Had Paul come & take her to her mother. I peeled apples enough for 2 qts. sauce. Paul picked some blackberries. Canned 5 qts. which makes me 100 qts. berries. Cooked rest & strained off for jelly. Also cooked apple peeling for jelly & butter. Jack ironed. Paul washed & pressed his brown pants.

July 16, Friday, 1937

Paul says he's thru picking berries. I made 7 qts. jelly & apple butter. Put cherry leaves in some apple. Colored it. Also made some of apple juice & blackberry juice. Paul gone this p.m. J.B. helped Jack clean up back of house so she could read to him. I cleaned up & read & rested some. Eula came by. Up a lot with Mother last nite.

July 13, Tuesday, 1937

Temp 93. Fair. Jessie washed. June got dinner. Paul picked gal. nice huckleberries. J.B. left before 6:00 to go to Bill Smith's & go to Mentone with him to rent horses. I canned 1 pt. apple jelly, 1 pt. apple butter & qt. apple sauce. Paul & I went to Mentone & got groceries. I wanted to get hair cut but barber wasn't there.

July 14, Wednesday, 1937

Temp 94. Right after breakfast I went to pick huckleberries. Got 5 qts. Came in before 11:00. Mother had

July 17, Saturday, 1937

Temp little above 94 then shower in p.m. Jessie washed again. Had 111 pieces. I cleaned up Mother. Washed dishes. Peeled enough horse apples for 1 qt. sauce, 1 pt. apple butter & 1 pt. jelly. Paul & J.B. went fishing. Jessie cleaned up kitchen, ironed some. I had to stay with Mother. Took nap. Knitted a little to-day.

July 18, Sunday, 1937

Warm in morn but nice shower in p.m. Mother awake all morn but slept lots this p.m. Paul & J.B. went to Mentone. J.B. stayed over with Bill Smith then they came over here about 2:00. Paul took them to the river. A.J. still in Trion. W. Paul spent weekend over there.

July 19, Monday, 1937

Cool. Rained another good rain. Mother restless this morn. Paul worked on car. I went for mail. Got some cucumbers & some potatoes that Hope had left at Dan's for me for feeding pigs. Hope sold his to Ethel Brown & Raymond & Gerald came for them. Paul gone to Gadsden to veterans meeting. Jack & I peeled apples. Canned 4 qts. J.B. went to Billy Smith's.

July 20, Tuesday, 1937

Clear but much cooler. J.B. sick last nite from eating too many peaches. Mother restless last nite & to-day too. I went for mail. We canned 5½ qts. apples to-day. I made some jelly. Knitted some.

July 21, Wednesday, 1937

Temp to 60 last nite. Clear to-day & went a little above 80. Mother rested better last nite & to-day. Peeled rest of apples. Canned 5-1/2 qts. of sauce, juice, etc. as had no sugar. J.B. went for mail. Also canned 1 qt. cucumber pickles.

July 22, Thursday, 1937

Fair. Temp about 82. Temp 58 last nite. Mother slept long time this morn. I strained up apple juice & squeezed out pulp. Jessie cleaned up house, then she washed. J.B. went for mail then to Billy Smith's. Mother awake from 12:45 to 5:45. Jessie scrubbed. Made 2 pts. jelly cooked with cherry leaves in it. Thelma came down to telephone. Cow got out last nite. Calf got milk.

July 23, Friday, 1937

Got up early & went to garden at Bankhead & got 1 gal. cucumbers. Cow got out again last nite. I nearly finished blue dress. Mother slept most of day. Eula & Jodie came by. J.B. went for mail. Then I went to store this p.m. for some things. Jessie washed out some things for Mother.

(continued on page 23)

Ruby O'Rear (cont'd from page 22)**July 24, Saturday, 1937***Fair & pleasant*

Paul came home this morn. Mother's kidneys have been bothering her week but she's better now. She was up quite a bit. J.B. & I went to Nettie's & got apples & on to Kate's & got beans & back by store. Paul & J.B. went fishing.

July 25, Sunday, 1937*Cool. Pleasant. Cloudy in p.m.*

Paul & J.B. went to Mentone. Billy Smith wanted J.B. to come over & go fishing on creek but J.B. said his mother wouldn't let him fish on Sun. & didn't go. Cleaned up Mother. She is wearing her outing gowns. I started to Eula's but met her & Jodie coming for water. Paul went to Dan's but no one there.

July 26, Monday, 1937*Fair & warm in morn. Stormy looking in p.m. & windy for a while.*

Maxine Baty came this morn to stay a few days with us. Eula & Jodie came over. Paul, Jodie, J.B. & I went to Menlo to get some peaches. I got bu. of Bill's from Mr. Laster. Paul, Jodie & J.B. went on to fruit farm & Paul got another bu. I went over to house. Mrs. Vaughan said one of girls could come stay with us. I had hair cut. Stopped to see Dan. Went to see Mrs. Kling. Jessie washed in p.m. Talked to Dr Platt. Got some medicine.

July 27, Tuesday, 1937*Cool last nite but pretty warm to-day.*

Eula & Mrs. Smith came over & canned Eula's peaches. She canned 20½ gals. Then they helped me peel. I canned 18 qts. Saved some for preserves. Paul & J.B. went to Valley Head in morn. Mother slept lots to-day but got

nervous hearing so much talking as Eula's children came over & Mrs. Butler came too for little while. Paul & J.B. went fishing but no luck. I picked a few huckleberries. I canned 3 qts. cucumber pickles.

July 28, Wednesday, 1937*Temp 58 this morn.*

Paul left this morn. Jessie cleaned up around house & garage. Maxine ironed. Mother slept quite a bit. Only up a few min. at a time. Jack & J.B. went for mail & gathered cucumbers. I washed my hair. Picked a few huckleberries & ½ gal. blackberries. Maxine homesick. Went to Wallaces to spend nite with Pauline. Calf got milk this p.m.

July 29, Thursday, 1937*Pleasant.*

I washed Mother's things. Had quite a good washing. Ground up huckleberries & made jam. Also 2 pts. peach butter. Milked cow & found she had been holding up above ½ gal. of the riches [sic] milk. Reason there was no more cream on milk. Knitted some.

July 30, Friday, 1937*Warm in morn, then had nice shower*

Mother restless to-day. I washed her things. Jessie churned. First time in over wk. Calf been getting the milk about every other day. I canned 2 pts. small cucumber pickles. Made 2 pts. peach preserves & some blackberry & grape jelly. Cut out dress Jessie gave me for birthday. Paul came home. J.B. spent day with Billy E. They slept in garage on cots.

July 31, Saturday, 1937*Fair & warm. Temp nearly 90.*

Mother was up quite a bit to-day. Billy E. came over & he & J.B. went to F.P.

with Paul. I nearly finished dress. Jessie washed out few things for Paul. Calf got to cow. Either jumped fence or crawled under. I went to garden & got greens, squash & a few tomatoes.

August 1, Sunday, 1937*Fair, warm*

Paul & J.B. went to Mentone. Then J.B. went to Emerson's for dinner. After dinner when Mother went to sleep I went to Bankhead & gathered cucumbers to give to Hope but he didn't go by. Started to Aunt Mag's but met Thelma. She said Aunt Mag was at Mrs. Brown's. Went on to Culbersons & Mrs. Brown's. Gave cucumbers to Thelma. Calf got to cow. Jumped fence. Met Mrs. Dug Hammit & children.

August 2, Monday, 1937*Fair. Temp little above 90*

Jessie washed. Didn't get thru till after 2:00. I got up a little dinner but never had time to wash dishes as Mother was awake so much in p.m. Paul & J.B. & Jack went fishing. I raised fence around calf pasture so calf could not jump out. J.B. tried his new fishing outfit. Telephone out of order.

August 3, Tuesday, 1937*Quite warm*

I got up early & went to store & got grapes. Ethel had left there. Picked peck cucumbers. Paul left early. We ironed some. Jessie canned 4 pts. dill pickles. Picked off grapes and put them on to cook. Not ripe enough for juice

to drink. Put cucumber in salt water to soak.

August 4, Wednesday, 1937*Warmest day we've had for some time. Temp above 90.*

Eula came over & stayed while I went to garden & got cucumber, greens, & squash. Then while Mother slept I canned 3 qts. & 4 pts. cucumber pickles. I got grape pulp & 1 qt. & 1 pt. grape juice for jelly. Cut out princess slip by new pattern. When I bathed Mother put on thinner gown. She's been wearing outing clothes for some time. Billy Smith came over in p.m. to study with J.B. Telephone fixed.

August 5, Thursday, 1937*Cooler. Had a good rain in p.m.*

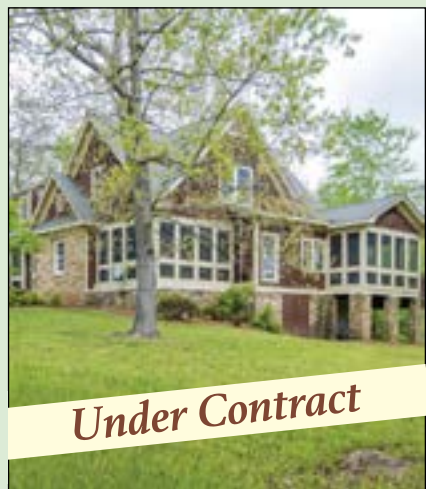
Jessie got up early & ironed. I canned pt. okra & put cucumber in brine to soak. I went for mail & got pkg. Had corn Billy brot yesterday & squash pie. Billy came over about 1:30 for lessons. Jack borrowed hoe. Rained so hard Billy had to stay. Calf got to cow.

August 6, Friday, 1937*Fair & warm*

Got up early. J.B. went home with Bill. Left about 5:30 & then to Mentone with him to take the horses. Mother up for most of the day. J.B. & Bill came back about 1:30 for lessons. I sewed some on slip. Eula stayed while I went to garden. Divided beans. Washed Mother's things. Paul came home.

(continued on page 25)

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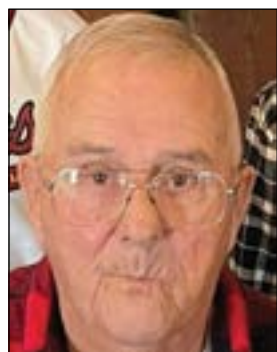
In Memoriam



MARGIE LEE FOSTER
March 12, 1931—May 29, 2022

Margie Lee Foster, age 91, of Mentone, passed away on Sunday, May 29, 2022 at Collinsville Healthcare & Rehab. Mrs. Foster is survived by her son, Rodney Foster (Carolyn), Mentone; grandchildren, Ashley Goniea (Shannon), Cohutta, GA and Zachary Foster-Mentone; step-grandchildren, Samantha Larson, Lehi, UT and Daniel Larson (Kim), Enterprise, AL; great-grandchildren, Alex and Catelin Goniea, Cohutta, GA; step-great-grandchildren, Cassidy Grille (Dustin, Enterprise, AL and

Landon Larson, Enterprise, AL; and step-great great-grandchildren, Aspen, Payzlee, and Keith Grille, Enterprise, AL. She was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel Smith and Lela Mae Matthews Smith; sister, Aubie Smith; and brother, Delmas "Dickie" Smith.



GRADY FARRILL ALLEN, JR.
March 8, 1942—May 31, 2022

Grady Farrill Allen, Jr., age 80, of Mentone, died Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at his residence. Mr. Allen was born March 8, 1942, in Rome, GA, son of the late Grady and Pauline Hix Allen. He was retired from Inland Container. Mr. Allen loved going to cruise-ins and to sit and talk with his old hot rod buddies. He enjoyed watching his grandkids play ball and taking them hunting and fishing. In addition to his parents,

he was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce Allen, and sister, Paula (Doug) McFalls. Survivors include his sons, Tad (Brandi) Allen, Kip (Donna) Allen, and Race (Paige) Allen; 10 grandchildren; and 3 great-grandchildren.



SHEILA CASH BOWMAN

Sheila Cash Bowman, age 63, of Cloudland, GA, passed away on Saturday, June 4, 2022 at her residence. Mrs. Bowman is survived by her husband: Billy Bowman; son, Colton Bowman; siblings, Sammy Cash (Sharon), Dewey Ray Cash (Debra), Kim Manning (Jeff), and Kevin Cash (Mandy); and several nieces and nephews.



LEN "LIGHTFOOT" RATLIFF, SR.
August 21, 1955—June 6, 2022

Michael Len "Lightfoot" Ratliff, Sr., age 66, of Mentone, died Monday, June 6, 2022, at Advent Health Redmond. Mr. Ratliff was born August 21, 1955, in Summerville, GA, son of the late William D. Ratliff, Sr. and Betty Kiker Ratliff. He was a member of Silver Hill Baptist Church and, prior to his retirement, was employed as a truck driver with Dunagan Logging. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by brother, William Danny Ratliff, Jr.; granddaughter, Khloeigh Ratliff; and brother-in-law, Doyle Evans.

Survivors include his wife, Regena Duke Ratliff; son, Michael Len Ratliff, Jr.; daughter, Molly (Mack) Burke; sisters, Elaine Evans, Gretna (Junior) Bandy, Kathy (Gary) Snead; grandchildren, Daniel Burke, Ethan Burke, Hartleigh Ratliff, and Tripp Ratliff; aunt, Lorene Cummings; and numerous nieces and nephews.



SAMMY FLOYD GOODRIDGE
March 13, 1961—June 9, 2022

Samuel Floyd "Sammy" Goodridge, age 61, of Menlo, GA, died Thursday, June 9, 2022, at his residence. Mr. Goodridge was born March 13, 1961, in Farmville, NC, son of the late James Samuel and Shirley Jo Pritchett Goodridge. He was a member of Menlo First Baptist Church and was a self-employed carpenter. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Patty Sneed, and grandparents, Floyd and Lora Pritchett. Survivors include his children, Justin Samuel (Mallori Lane) Goodridge, Amber Star (Michael

Lance) Brown, Hannah Goodridge, and Jessica Goodridge Keith (Dustin Ivey); sisters, Lori Patterson, Beverly Wilson, and Angie Benton; grandchildren, Kotah Keith, Emma Witt, Dawson Keith, Evan Witt, Riley Manscill, Ryder Samuel Goodridge, Karsen Keith, Jordyn Manscill, Karlee Keith, Olive Mann, Raegan Goodridge; and aunt and uncle, Joyce and Doyle Brown.

AVA CATHERINE HAWKINS
November 5, 1934—June 10, 2022

Ava Catherine Hawkins, age 87, of Cloudland, GA, passed away June 10, 2022, in a Marietta hospital. Mrs. Hawkins was born on November 5, 1934 in Sylvania, Alabama, to the late William McKinley Gorham and Ida Wisner Gorham. She was retired from Best Mfg. Company, sewing department, and was a member of Menlo First Baptist Church. In addition to her parents, Mrs. Hawkins was preceded in death by her husband, the late Robert Hugh Hawkins, on February 11, 2014, and siblings Talmadge Gorham, John Dewey Gorham, Bethel Gorham, Ethel Kirby, Linda Burkhalter, and Edna Pursley.

She is survived by her daughter, Kathy (Tim) Sims; son, Michael (Tracy) Hawkins; grandsons, James Alexander Sims and Andrew Robert Sims; great grandson, Colton Tanner Sims; sister, Estelle Johnson; brother, Garvin Gorham; special friends, Jensen Brink and Ashlyn Walker; and several nieces and nephews.



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Ruby O’Rear *(cont’d from page 23)*

August 7, Saturday, 1937
Pleasant. Shower in p.m.
Mother has rested well to-day. Finished slip cut by new pattern. I met mail man & sent to Menlo for Mother some medicine. Came back by garden & got beans, squash, tomatoes & cucumber. Bill E. came over. Bill E. & Dickies came down. They all went to store. J.B came home. He & Paul went fishing. I made another slip out of the scraps. Washed hair. James B. ordered bicycle.

August 8, Sunday, 1937
Fairly warm. Showers.
Got up early. Paul has terrible cold. Churned. Washed most of the dishes. Mother up quite a bit in a.m. so didn’t get started till late. Had first mess of beans. Jessie made 5 squash pies. One apiece but J.B got most of all except Mother’s. Something broke guinea nest yet found new ones today. 4 eggs. Went to Eula’s. Home by Emersons.

August 9, Monday, 1937
Warm. Looked like it was going to storm but only sprinkled.
Mother rested well to-day. I didn’t feel so well & didn’t do anything much except try to fix pasture fence so calf couldn’t get to cow. I went for mail. Got some tomatoes & squash. Bill Smith came. Mr. Wilks fixed telephone line. Washed Mother’s clothes.

August 10, Tuesday, 1937
Fair in morn but very stormy looking in p.m. Rained some.
Eula came over early & Paul, J.B & I went to Menlo for Mother some medicine & to see if Vaughan girl was coming. But he was taking a big part in the Holiness meeting. I didn’t want to leave. Then while Eula was still here we went to V.H. & gathered about a bu. & half of grapes & I picked a few of them off in p.m. Calf got milk this morn. Paul tore up car battery.

August 11, Wednesday, 1937
Fair most of day
Mr. Yarbrough came to see if I wanted to sell some beans this weekend. Then I went to garden & got some cucumbers & tomatoes. Mr. Y. fixing to plant some more turnips. Cleaned up Mother. We finished picking off grapes & I canned 5½ qts. juice.

August 12, Thursday, 1937
Fair & warm.
Tried to get Eula to come wash but she was not at home. Then Lilly called & said Helen Smith was coming to stay with us. I finished canning grape juice & pulp. Then about 3:30 Helen & I went to garden & picked about 2 bu. of beans. Went on to store but no one was there so went on to Mrs. Cash’s. Paul feeling better. Calf tore the fence down & got to cow. Eula’s cow sick.

August 13, Friday, 1937
Real warm first part of last nite then it rained a little so it’s pleasant to-day.
Jessie washed. Helen & I got dinner. Helen helped Jessie some. Mother rested fine to-day. I had to go to Mentone to see about tax reduction. Rode over with Harry Cash & back with Dan. Went on out to Nettie’s & got white grapes & fixed vegetables for pickles.

August 14, Saturday, 1937
Partially cloudy.
Made 4 pts. mustard pickles & canned qt. squash. Washed Mother’s clothes. Mr. Laster, Miss Evaku & Mr. & Mrs. Buyers & children came out & stayed and hour or so. Helen went to Lila’s for a while. Killed & dressed chicken. Shelled peas for tomorrow.

August 15, Sunday, 1937
Fair & warm.
Went to S.S. & church. Had S.S. at tent where they are holding a meeting. Mr. David French been preaching but he had gone back for weekend & Frank preached. Rode back with Clara. Heard that Gracie & Oscar got married yesterday. Helen went to Dan’s in p.m.

August 16, Monday, 1937
Warm & fair.
Went to garden & picked beans. Paul & J.B. went to Sand Mt. Picked nearly bu. beans & some tomatoes. Fixed tomatoes for Ethel Brown & A.J. took them to store but they came on to patch. Mother rested extra well. We canned 19 qts. beans & 1 qt. squash & 5 pts. tomatoes. Eula & Jodie came over. Paul & Jack & J.B. went to Wallaces for me.

August 17, Tuesday, 1937
Warm. Shower in p.m.
Mother rested well. Paul went out to work. Cleaned Mother up. Helen & J.B went for mail. Then I went to store, on to Kate’s & got some flowers to send to Faye. Back to store, rode over with A.J. & Paul. Went to Grace Jones. Got some grapes. Came back by Ethel’s & Nettie’s. On home.

August 18, Wednesday, 1937
Warm. Showered some.
Canned 3 qts. grape juice with whole grapes in jars. Canned some tomatoes & made little mixed pickles. Eula & her mother came by & we went to garden & picked nearly 3½ bu. of beans & gathered some tomatoes. Louis going to bring beans down in morn.

August 19, Thursday, 1937
Fair & warm
Didn’t get started to work on beans till about 10:00. Fixed 8 half gals & 1 qt. squash but sealed some airtight & 2 blew up. Eula canned 24 qts. James B’s bicycle came. Louis Cash went to V.H. & got it & Jodie helped him put it together. Eula & Jodie stayed late canning beans & J.B. & Jack rode wheel.

August 20, Friday, 1937
Fair & warm. Temp above 90.
J.B. got up early to ride bicycle. Went to Dan’s before breakfast then went to Bill E’s & Bill S’s. 3 bikes here nearly all day. Also 3 Bills. Mr. Kirby came over in morn to see about renting some patches. Then Mrs. Kirby, Frances, Mary & Sara Bell Brown came to see Mother. I didn’t can a thing to-day. Paul came and took Bill, J.B. & me to meeting. First night I’ve gone. Mother didn’t rest much to-day.

August 21, Saturday, 1937
Cloudy early. Cleared off. Temp above 90.
Paul went to F.P. I rode to Bankhead. Gathered tomatoes, cucumbers, squash & first small mess green butter beans. Fixed some tomatoes & cucumbers for W. Paul & some for Mrs. Shigley to help feed preachers. Peeled some tomatoes & put on to cook & Jessie canned 2 qts. & 1 pt. Gang of boys here all day. Mother walked to door to see them ride their bicycles. Eula washed at spring. Ralph Emerson came over. Helen went home to spend nite.

August 22, Sunday, 1937
Warm. Threatened rain but none came tho a good rain would help things.
Mother rested well last nite. Went to door to see Paul ride bicycle. I took 5 pictures of her. Paul took 1 of me & we made 2 of J.B. & bike. I walked to church. Rode back with Horace & Grace. Paul met us. Paul started to Montgomery. Going to drive part way. Jodie rode to V.H. Boys got in from church at 2:30.

August 23, Monday, 1937
Cloudy part of day.
Jessie took some pictures of James B. I took one of Mother in rocking chair. Jessie took one of us both. Mother went in living room 5 times to-day. I went to garden. Took wagon. Gathered up tomatoes, some beans, butter beans, cucumbers & etc. Went to Ethel Green’s for carrots & grapes.

August 24, Tuesday, 1937
Cloudy & showers
Went to garden early. Ethel & A.J. came over for some vegetables. Came back thru field & got corn. Jessie cleaned yard around house. We processed 15 qts. of soup mixture & ½ gal & qt. of beans. Wanted to go to church but it was too rainy looking. Mother went in living room.

August 25, Wednesday, 1937
Cloudy & rainy most all day.
Mother had me order harmonica for J.B. to play. Helen & I washed out clothes. I went to church. Back home by garden. About 4:00 Mother seemed to have chill & was very feverish & couldn’t talk plain. Gave her kidney medicine & laxative. Fixed vegetables for pickles. Helen & J.B. went for tomatoes. Mother went in living room.

August 26, Thursday, 1937
Cloudy in morn. Cleared up in p.m. Rained some last nite.
Mother up every ½ hour till midnight then she slept all nite & almost all day. Didn’t eat much until in p.m. Eula & Jodie came by. Eula fixed vegetables for mustard pickles. Went on to Aunt Mag’s for grapes. J.B. went home with Bill for supper. Helen went to Dan’s to get pictures of Mother. Paul left before breakfast. Canned 8 qts. tomatoes & 8 pts. pickles.

August 27, Friday, 1937
Fair in morn. Rainy in p.m.
Mother rested well last nite. Jessie washed. Helen & I got dinner. She didn’t get thru till late. I canned some chili sauce & 2 qts. tomatoes. Mr. Thompson came over to see Mother. Eula & Jodie came by. Jack spent day with J.B. Paul came home.

August 28, Saturday, 1937
Mostly fair & pleasant in p.m.
Paul, J.B., Bill E & I all went to V.H. Had my hair cut. Bought 3 dozen fruit jars. Stopped by to see Paul & A.J. Came by garden & got bu. & pk. of tomatoes. Brot home ½ bu. apples Grace Jones had left at Dan’s for me. Washed out some things for Mother. Thelma came down twice to telephone. Mother went into living room. Thelma & I sang.

August 29, Sunday, 1937
Cloudy & cool then cleared up
Paul & J.B. went to Mentone. I went to S.S. & on to church at Mentone. Finn Jr. preached his first sermon. Came back with Clara. April Smith came this morn & brot Helen's slippers. James B. got hurt trying to keep up with car on bicycle. Skinned his arm & leg. Helen went to Doris & they all went to see Alice.

August 30, Monday, 1937
Cloudy rainy & cool most of day.
Jessie & Paul took J.B. to school. I went on to F.P. Helen cleaned up kitchen & then we fixed soup mixture. Canned 19 qts. I went to field this morn & got corn & Paul got butter beans & many tomatoes. Mother walked into living room several times. Tried to talk over telephone. Eula & Jodie went.

August 31, Monday, 1937
Day of showers & sunshine.
Paul left & took J.B. to school. Jessie cut out dress for Mary Joe. Mr. Yates came by to see about cutting wood. I went to garden & picked butter beans & tomatoes & went to field & got corn. Helen killed & picked chicken. Jessie went to Mentone. Washed Mother.

July

Birthdays

- 1 JohnTyler Lawton
Marilyn Slaton
Patrick Coots
August Shanklin
Patrick Long
Nicholas King
Allie Cowart
Terry Hutcheson
- 2 Karen Potts
Byrum Emory
Virgil Battles
Corey Wilbanks
- 3 Nick Black
Jared Webb
Allison Powell
Josh Rosson
Craig Hughes
Mason Tubberville
Reba Coleman
Johnnie Lewchuk
Randy Fowler
Luke Milford
Kobe Hill
Jerry Lewis
- 4 Jack Carden
Bennett (BJ) Browder
Deb Smith
Ashley Hulkan
Lana Miller
Corey Dupree
- 5 Steven McElhaney
Chris Underwood
Seth Williams
Donna Smith
Harper Brownfield
Thomas Wright
- 6 Dawson Crow
Dustin Burt
Corey Powell
Nikki Wheat
- 7 Jim Blalock
Marcus Crider
LaShae Jones
Zoe Moon
Cassie Battles

- 8 Daniel Phillips
Kathy Gray
Eian Bain
Doug Kiker
Donna Bailey
Sheila Smith
- 9 KayLee Kilgore
Skylor Dutton
Mia Woods
Braylie Callahan
Eli Goggans
Mike Goggans
- 10 Steve Lanier
Addison McClure
Ryan Tramel
Caroline Baty
- 11 Kanissa Smith
Brooklyn Carroll
Lacie Keith
Kori Willingham
Dylan Carter
Garrett Collins
Moses Sharp
- 12 Charles Gray
Cindy Harrison
Juliegh McKenzie
John Walters
Abby Boatwright
- 13 Jordan Goza
Sissy Crider
Brody Battles
Myles Battles
Tracie Totherow
Ronnetta Bullington
- 14 Will Blackburn
Dave Vest
Jeffrey Hopper
Park Nelson
Paul Crawford
Teena Bain
Michele Walsh
Ava Harrison
Bella Harrison
Dylan Flannigan
Sheila Meadows
Courtney Stone
Johnny Yarbrough

- 15 Jason Dean
Tatum Lanier
Paul Zulker
Will Battles
Chelsea Stephenson
Lexi West
Chasity Williams
Lana Harris
- 16 Nathan Hargrove
Margie Daniel
Tricia Shankles
Kendall Shankles
Johnny Lewchuk
- 17 Christopher Black
Valerie Burt
Justin Battles
Waylon Burton
Nolan Stinson
Kristen Wilborn
Hannah Carden
Donna Spears
Elijah Collins
Ruby Stalvey
Annabelle Shankles
- 18 Loy Langston
Lily Cash
Kaye Kiker
Stone Cross
Laura Catherine Moon
Nicki Barksdale
- 19 Danny Cross
Anna Bush
Avery May Kilgore
- 20 Becky Langston
Lindsay Black
Bailee Carter
Jeff Clure
Craig Hulkan
Paul Whittle
Jason Cyrus
James Rhodes
Judy Dowiat
- 21 Tonya Hilyer
Paxton Harper
Brianna Powell
Peggy Johnston
Tony Hammonds

- Gwen White
Randy Mitchell
- 22 Linda Clark
Ian Hilyer
Emily Norman
Charlie Runnels
Jordan McGinnis
- 23 Amanda Smith
Taylor Blalock
Logan Chambers
Emmie Chambers
Reid Davis
Marc Pardue
Chris McMahan
Sandra Ward
Jim Pullen
Bayle Money
Jack Goss
Emma Spraggins
Marian Owen
- 24 Phyllis Bailey
- 25 Rylee Vest
Bill Berry
Jeremy Webb
Kali Haynes
Austin Cuzzort
Jenny Lewchuk
Taylor Filmore
Martha Harris
Lane Owen
Josephine Blalock
- 26 Claire Wilkinson
Pam Dean
Gracie Carol Butler
Megan Smith
Maggie Chaney
- 27 Dexter Smith
Kelley Hughes
John David Nelson
Johnny Eberhart
Kailey Cameron
- 28 Debbie Flannigan
Kelly Owen
Sam Shanklin

- 29 Eli Shanklin
Trip Battles
Kayla Hamilton
Regina Boatwright
- 30 Zack Dean
Zach Bain
Rachel Collins
- 31 Hunter Battles
Matt Lee
Paige Hill
Gunnar Elkins
Koopar Elkins
Bella Smith
Ed Porter

Anniversaries

- 1 Casey & Tracy Cartwright
- 2 Ladon & Donna Willingham
- 3 Brooks & Haley Moore
- 7 Justin & Jamie Shankles
Charles Robert & Angie Hammon
- 9 Al & Vickie Blackburn
Tim & Kay Bryan
- 10 Corey & Brandy Dupree
- 11 Leon & Cheryl Crane
- 13 John Paul & Teresa Verdon
- 14 Ryan & Kristy Pridmore
- 15 Nick & Kelly Floyd
- 18 Zach & Tamara Bain
- 20 Charles & Amanda Gray
- 21 Cleve & Ann Chisenhall
- 23 John & Alisha Lawton
Craig & Greta Hall
- 24 Jamie & Gequetta Darwin
Don & Yvonne Brock
- 25 Donald & Karen Saferite
- 27 Trey & Allison Kincer
- 29 Heath & Amy Jones



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Sarah Wilcox (cont'd from page 15)

The grant project also features a colorful fence along AL Highway 117 which is made up of 440 wooden pickets painted by community members. This aspect of the project created a particular challenge for Sarah, who had planned for the pickets to be painted in the school gym in the spring of 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic forced Sarah to pivot, and she maintained a schedule during the spring and summer months when a few groups would meet at one time and paint outside the MERF House, with masks and social distancing. Many people were involved in the implementation of the project, but as we drive by the community's picket fence, we will always owe a special thanks to Sarah.

Thanks are also due to Sue Henry, who passed away in 2010. "At her passing, she had designated MERF as one of three places to send memorials. We received such gracious gifts in her memory and due to Sue's belief in education of the mountain children, MERF created the Sue McLaurin Henry Memorial Scholarship fund which gives financial scholarships to local full-time college and technical school students." In the spring of 2021, MERF established another scholarship fund, the Carter Holland Memorial Scholarship, funded by Carter's parents after he lost his life to cardiac arrest at age 24 in 2020. MERF



Sarah and George pose beside the picket that Jan Wilkinson painted in Sarah's honor. It depicts the MERF house and Sarah wearing one of MERF's popular "Leave Me in Mentone" t-shirts.

also awards the Mountain Spirit Award in Carter's memory to exceptional Valley Head School students. Another of MERF's programs offers funding to teachers for continuing education in the summer.

MERF's popular "Taste of the Mountain" was developed in 2012 to serve as its main fundraiser. The food tasting and art auction was cancelled in 2020 and 2021, again due to the pandemic. Sarah hopes it will be able to resume next year under the guidance of a new executive director.

"The community has been very generous in donating to MERF through the years," said Sarah. "I think it's because a lot of our services are for the children, and the community can see what we're doing. It's a community that understands the value of experiential education."

Sarah has sold her B & B and property, and looks forward to travel adventures with her beloved 5-year-old Golden Retriever, George. "I'll keep working with Higher Ground, so I'll probably be back in Mentone in the fall, climbing trees. My plan is to be able to keep climbing until I'm 70. Even 65 would be good."

She looks forward to spending more time kayaking and paddleboarding. "One of the things I didn't do after college was be a ski bum. So maybe that's what's next on my agenda," she mused.

Sarah considers herself a "simple girl." But the effect she has had on countless youth and seniors in the Mentone community has been far from simple; it has been profound.

Birthdays

1 Chelsey Owen

2 Logan Goza
Ginger Busby
Heather Dutton
Ashley Simpson
Ella Kay Bell
Courtney Durham

3 Halle Hilyer
Adriana Grace Hall
Wendy Haynes
Chance Pearson
Mary Frances Battles
Daniel Vest
Chet Perky

4 Henry Phillips
Phyllis Stephens
Savanna Goza
Chris Russell

5 Hope Martin
Amanda Pilotte
Elizabeth Meadows
Amy Jones
Laura Stout
Matt Hilliard
Creed Smith

6 Casey Stott
Dallas Bowman
Chris Collins
Josey Noles

7 Samantha Reed
Destiny Watters
Collin Bowman
Charles Mitchell

8 Alex Gifford

9 Martha Browder
Carolyn Martin

Brayden Hughes
Cynthia Connor
Decker Jones
Leslie Bunch

10 Alex Whatley
Sharon Doviet
Eddie Sue Winter

11 Dianna Carden
Lila Jane McElhaney
Harlee Wooten
Tim Cowart

12 Kinsley Worthey
Amber Smith
Brant Smith
Lawrence Harrison
Frances McNutt
Sharon Doviet

13 Stephanie Potts
Brittney Barkley
Cindy Tipton

14 Jennifer Ferguson
Alan Black
Hannah Meadows
Ryan Hicks
Matthew Sword
Emilia Shores

15 Michael Langston
Dallas Gregory

16 Brandy Dupree
Ashton Jones

17 Sandra Pruitt
Mattie Belle McGee
Jacob Bain
Theresa Case

18 Kinsley Mitchell
Tucker Watkins

Dawn Holloway

19 Ray Beeson
Michael Flannigan
Lee Pierce
Blake Villarreal
Luella Mae Gregory

20 Carla Warren
Shane Ingram
Joseph Goza
Jesse Jones
Brian Carden

21 Chloe Bell
Eddie Langston
Emma Crawford
Christina Watson
Michele Black
Hannah Neel Boni
Bryson Richey

22 Casey Gregory
Haven Downer
Keith Langston
Anthony McKenzie
Hazel Hilliard
Sinjhin Smith
Candice Wilbanks
Mae Hairston
Heather Williamson

23 Slade Carden
Lukas Boehringer
Phillip Pannell
Bandy Johnson

24 Dana Pangle
Tammy Larock
Nicole Callahan
Stephen Robeck
Tiffany Graben

25 Brenda Hall
Carolyn Coots
Jason Gregory
Aubrey Baker
Georgia Mae Baker
Kelly Johnson
Crystal Durham

26 Brantley Hughes
Tom Shanklin, Jr.
Amelia Bowman
Jane Kerby

27 Sadie Carden
Howard Hilyer
Howard Hilyer
Crystal Lee
Tamara Hawkins
Luke Durham
Jack Chambers
Charlotte McGee
Jaymie Ballard
Todd Godwin
Donna Johnson
TP Pilotte

28 Larry Gray
Hunter Izell
Courtney Gregory
Jase Gregory

29 Kayla Worthey
Donna Willingham
Susan Cherones
Isaac Browder
Armen Case

30 Wink Painter

31 Wesley Rhodes
L.C. Bone
Mark Battles
Ian Norman

Anniversaries

1 Harold & Diana Carden
Kirk & Mikhaila Watkis

6 John & Amy Kirby

7 Eric & Miranda Chambers
Chris & Tiffany Graben

8 Park & Anna Nelson

10 Andrew & Jessi Hairston

11 Rayford & Cindy Bethune

12 Terri & Tony Wilborn

13 Rodney & Kayla Mitchell

15 Desmon & Carrie Turner
David & Dorothy Horton

17 Bobby & Sandy Blalock

22 Bennett & Cyndle Browder

24 Dwayne & Laura McKenzie
Matthew & Taylor Smothers

25 Mike & Stephanie Potts

26 Will & Lori Blackburn
Coleton & Sammie Reed

27 Kim & Lonnie Novak

28 Joseph & Mandi Goza

29 John & Kim Johnson

30 Richard & Christy Harrison
Kenneth & Ginger Busby

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