



THE GROUNDHOG

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Volume 40, No. 8

“Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain”

August 2021

The Berry Family Celebrates Its Legacy at a Centennial Reunion

by Kelly Leavitt

Sometime before the Civil War, a simple log cabin was built near the West Fork of Little River, on what is now known as East River Road in Mentone. It sat on 40 acres that were originally homesteaded by Billy and Nan Jones. Each of the two rooms, which were separated by an open dog trot in the middle, had a fireplace used for cooking and heating.

Through the years, the property made its way through different owners and was eventually

purchased by the Cosby family, who lived in Birmingham. During a winter visit in 1919 or 1920, the son was skating on Little River when he fell through the ice and drowned. The boy's distraught father told his doctor, William Thompson Berry, that he never wanted to return to Mentone and had decided to sell his property.

The Berrys were raising their nine children in Birmingham, and Mrs. Berry had dreamed of a place where they could experience life on more simple terms.



Cousins pose with Aunt Teeny by the old well before swimming at the “Big Rock”—1948



First, second, third, and fourth cousins enjoy time together beside “The Cottage” at the Berry Patch—July 2021

Recognizing that the property had no electricity or indoor plumbing, Dr. Berry thought the property sounded ideal and he bought it, sight unseen.

The family drove to Mentone each summer. The roads were so bad that it tended to be an all-day trip, because they would have to stop so many times to fix flat tires. The children were each allowed to bring one friend and they were accompanied by several house servants. In 1921, the Berrys felled trees behind the cabin and used the lumber to build a new structure to accommodate the large family. It is called “The Cottage.”

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Art by Lacy Hope Dobbs

Follow Your Art by Rhea Pirch

The Little River Arts Council, in collaboration with the Mentone Educational Resource Foundation (MERF) presents “Follow Your Art,” an event for artists, musicians and the community to gather for a day of fun, talent and inspiration. It will be held Saturday, September 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pathway to Community walking trail, next to the Moon Lake Community Library. The event is free of charge to the public. Local non-profit organizations are invited to set up a booth, also free of charge, to hand out information, or sell merchandise.

There will be an ample mix of artists and crafters at this small but impressive affair, offering everything from native rock and wood paintings, macramé goods, handmade jewelry, fabric art, woodcarving, photography, collage, ceramic arts, and folk art. Local singer/songwriters will provide entertainment

throughout the day including The Vegetaters, Judy-Nicole Kirby, Larry Joe Hall, and Lynne Welden.

The day will start at 9 a.m. for those who want to participate in our second annual chalk-art contest. Children and adults, either individuals or groups, are invited to express their creative side using the walking trail as their canvas. We provide the chalk, so we encourage budding chalk-artists to pick their spot and design their masterpiece! Visitors throughout the day will vote for their favorites in several different categories, with winners announced after 3 p.m. It's a fun way to express imaginations, share hidden skills, and possibly win a prize at the end. Pre-registration is not required, but is available on our website, social media pages, or by emailing info@littleriverartscouncil.org.

One of the special aspects of Follow Your Art is the venue, the Pathway to Community walking

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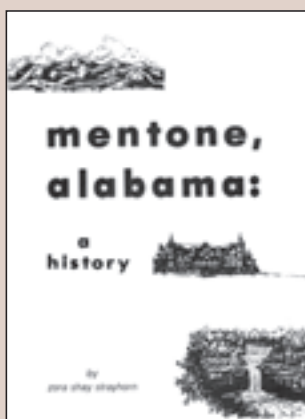
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Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice

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

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond



Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Commissioner Chris Blankenship was in Mentone to hold a press conference to announce the purchase of 157 acres of land for DeSoto State Park. This land is located upstream from the falls on the west side of the West Fork of Little River. This purchase will allow over 1,000 feet of shoreline to remain in its natural state, as well as preserving the 157 acres. This is a win for the Town of Mentone, DeSoto State Park, tourism in DeKalb County, the State of Alabama, and especially Little River.

Commissioner Blankenship commended the Sargents (landowners) for working with him to make the purchase possible.

Our engineer has submitted to ALDOT all plans and documents on the sidewalk project. Hopefully the next stage will soon be a solicitation of bids.

As I have said many times in this column, the only way to end this pandemic is to vaccinate. Before this variant sweeps the state, I urge all unvaccinated people to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Letter from the Editor



Each year in Mentone, August means that camp season has ended and shoppers from all over come through town for the World's Longest Yard Sale. We have certainly enjoyed a lovely summer, with not too much heat and plenty of rain. With the rain have come numerous rainbows and an unusual amount of mushrooms, particularly chanterelles, prompting many to try out new recipes with this popular food. This summer has also brought a dramatic increase in black bear sightings, thrilling some and concerning others. It's going to take some adjustment as we learn to live most responsibly with the bears, who thankfully are more gentle and shy than they are threatening. The article

on page 3 offers important information for area residents and visitors alike.

Of course, one thing that will be very different this month is that Moon Lake School students will not be returning to the historic school house on East River Road, but will instead begin attending other schools due to the consolidation of Moon Lake with Valley Head School. We wish them all well as they adjust to their new schools and as they make new friends.

As Mayor Rob Hammond mentions in his monthly note, DeSoto State Park has expanded its footprint, with 157 acres being added to the park. We will report in the future as decisions are made about how this land will be used. —*Kelly*



MAPA News by Mark Hoffman

I recently got back from visiting my daughter and her husband, who live just outside of Asheville, North Carolina. The comparisons to that area and the Mentone area are both abundant and compelling, the biggest difference of course being size. Asheville has seen explosive growth over the past decade or so. Mentone also seems to be in the process of a growth spurt, albeit it on a much smaller scale. Let's hope that future growth and the

attendant issues that naturally accompany it remain manageable, and that housing continues to be affordable to our residents. We should all be conscious of the need for controlled, well-planned, and orderly growth so that we can maintain our unique cultural and historical heritage AND small town vibe. Meanwhile, we hope you enjoy these last wonderful days of summer in a safe, healthy and responsible manner. And please try to support our local businesses while you're at it!

Mark Hoffman is the president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

BE BEAR AWARE by Kelly Leavitt

Hannah Leeper is an articulate young scientist who has been studying the population of black bears in DeKalb and Cherokee counties for the past two years. She recently earned her master's degree in wildlife sciences from Auburn University. Her thesis title is "Resource Selection at Different Spatial Scales by Black Bears in Alabama" (etd.auburn.edu/handle/10415/7641).

Hannah's research for her thesis focused on how bears are using locations which she has identified by GPS collar data or reported sightings in order to predict the probability of use of other locations in the future. "Predictive models help us know when and where we might see bears in other locations," Hannah said, "and give us a better idea of where the bear population might be in, say, 10 years."

For now, we know that bears live among us here in the Mentone area. Sightings are increasing on a regular basis.

Black bears are native to Alabama, but overdevelopment and habitat manipulation eventually caused them to move further east. Now, though, they are making a return to their homelands.

Reports of their presence in Little River Canyon began in 2012 and by 2015, 34 bears had been identified in the area. Since 2019, Hannah has personally tagged 46 bears, but she won't know how quickly the population is actually growing until more research has been compiled and analyzed over the course of a few years.

"At this time," Hannah said, "it seems like exponential growth, based on the number of cubs I've seen this year and last year."

Hannah is employed as a research assistant by Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences for a project funded by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. During the spring, she sets up cameras and bait stations in preparation for breeding season, which generally extends from mid-May to the beginning of July. The bait stations are designed to trap bears, and the cameras allow Hannah to remotely view the cage to determine if a bear or other animal has been caught. Once a bear is trapped, Hannah administers an anesthetic shot and then weighs and measures its body before affixing a collar with an attached GPS device. The GPS data allows Hannah to monitor the range that the bears are traveling. The collars are designed to grow with the bear, particularly helpful when she tags cubs. She will continue to trap bears this year for as long as they're active—generally through September or October.

One thing Hannah has learned is that bears use habitats differently. "One bear might prefer locations in close proximity to water and another bear never gets within 100 yards of water," she said. "There's a lot of variation in how bears are selecting resources,



Hannah Leeper holds cubs she is now tracking.

so it's hard to make a blanket statement and say bears prefer one habitat over another."

The largest bear Hannah has trapped weighed 491 pounds. "But his whole body wasn't even on the scale," she said, "so we don't really know how heavy he actually was."

Hannah has seen location data from GPS collars that indicate that bears pass through downtown Mentone. "They're starting to spread into more developed areas," she said. "So now it's a matter of people learning to live with bears and preventing them from becoming habituated to human-provided resources."

This is Hannah's most important message. As excited as we might feel by seeing a bear, the goal is to not see one, because that means they are relying on natural food sources rather than those provided by humans. The goal is to keep bears wild.

Hannah offers some tips to make that happen.

- Secure trash cans inside a shed or enclosure, if possible. Even if a trash can is empty, the lingering odor might attract a bear. If a bear is hungry enough, straps such as bungee cords or ratcheting straps will not keep them from getting the lid off a can to investigate. Take the trash can out to the road right before your scheduled trash pick-up.
- Secure grills and smokers in a shed, if possible, and be sure they are cleaned after every use.
- Take bird feeders in at night, or hang them high enough to be out of a bear's reach, 10' feet high and 4' away from a structure.
- Do not store livestock or pet feed outside.
- Pick ripe fruits from trees and the surrounding ground.
- Use an electric fence to keep bears away from beehives, chicken coops, compost piles, gardens, and orchards.

- Never feed wildlife.

A bear that is rewarded with food will continue to return to that food source. The goal is to prevent the reward. We are fortunate to be surrounded by enough undeveloped land that bears can find sufficient food in the wild, where we ideally want them to stay.

A popular saying is, "A fed bear is a dead bear." This refers to the fact that if a bear becomes comfortable in his search for human-provided food, he may eventually become a "nuisance" and ultimately have to be destroyed.

Populated areas such as Gatlinburg regularly contend with issues such as bears opening car doors, or even doors to homes, in their search for food. While our local bear population is growing, the best preventative measures we can offer are to eliminate food rewards.

Hannah mentioned a yearling (approximately 1-1/2 years old) that was evidently born in the area of County Road 89, along the western brow. Because it has easily found nearby food sources, it has never made its way into the wild. If the food sources were eliminated, he would by necessity travel further into the wild to find food.

"Bears will by nature discover and investigate new areas, but if there's not a substantial food source, they generally won't spend much time there," Hannah said.

By nature, black bears tend to be shy and elusive, so when walking in the woods be sure to make some noise so they don't become startled by your presence. Chances are they will disappear before you've even known they were there.

When letting your dog out at night, Hannah suggests first flipping on an exterior light to make sure there's nothing in the yard. "If a bear knows a dog is approaching," Hannah said, "it is going to be cautious and skeptical and will try to avoid it. They don't have intentions of making friends with a dog. If anything, a dog is going to be more curious and want to go smell the bear. That's when things might get a bit hairy because the bear might become aggressive."

When asked about her favorite part of her experience as a bear researcher, Hannah paused and said it would be hard to pick just one thing. "Overall, it's been interesting to actually have a hand in seeing how black bears are recovering and coming back to their native range. I love my work."

For more information about black bears and Hannah's research, see the July 2019 Groundhog article, "Black Bears Are Coming Home," at mapamentone.com/groundhog-archives.

For more information about bear awareness, see bebearaware.org.



The original two-room cabin, built before the Civil War on property originally homesteaded by Billy and Nan Jones. Until the Cottage was built in 1921, only this house and a hilltop barn stood on the property. This turn-of-the-century picture features (L to R): William Taylor Jones, Emma Tabitha Jones, Nettie Jones Green, and Leonard Matheny.



Cousins and their aunt Cecile playing together next to "The Cottage" in the Berry Patch backyard—1955



Marjorie and Jimmy Berry—1955

Berry Reunion (continued from page 1)

Chickens ran loose on the property, which became known as the "Berry Patch," and family members walked through the woods to get milk from Joe and Foye Jones. Each morning, tasks were designated for the children, including caring for the chickens, collecting their eggs, and picking up rocks. In the afternoons, the children were free to play, ride horses, and swim in the river.

The youngest of the Berry children was James ("Jimmy"). In 1949, after graduating from college, he made the decision to live on the family's property. Mrs. Berry also decided to move to Mentone that year. She and Jimmy lived in the original cabin, which had been renovated and expanded. Dr. Berry remained in Birmingham to continue his medical practice, but each weekend he took the train from Birmingham to Mentone by way of Valley Head.

Once settled in Mentone, Jimmy met Marjorie Jones and the two married in 1951. As luck, or fate, would have it, it was Marjorie's ancestors who had originally homesteaded the property. "Mom always jokingly said she married Dad to get the property back into her family," said their son, Bill, who many know as the beloved former teacher and principal of Moon Lake School.



"Grandmother Berry" and "Big Daddy"—1950
Rebecca Cecil and William "Thompson" Berry, Sr.

Marjorie, the youngest of 11 children, had grown up in Mentone in the home that is now the Moonglow Alpaca Farm on Cutler Avenue. Many of the Jones family's descendants still live in the area.

As adults, Jimmy's many siblings regularly visited the family compound, but he was the only one who lived there full-time. "Dad and all of his siblings loved Mentone," said Bill. "When they'd come here they felt like they were going back to their childhood. My cousins who have come here over the years feel the same way. This is their haven, so to speak."

Summer reunions became the norm; while Bill was growing up, reunions were held each year. "We had horses and a boat on the river," he said. "Growing up here was like growing up at a summer camp."

In fact, the Berry Patch offered many of the benefits of summer camp, including picnics, rope swings, shuffleboard, ping pong, a sandbox, a slide, volleyball, and croquet. And, of course, there was always the river.

"In the summers when I was growing up," said Bill, "my aunts and uncles would sit on the porch of the Cottage and tell old stories. Every summer, I heard the old stories, over and over. We would laugh so hard." It's a tradition that has endured.

During the last 20 years, reunions have been held every five years, because the family has become so spread out across the country.

This year, the Berry family celebrated the centennial anniversary of the Berry Patch, and around 100 descendants of Dr. Thompson and Rebecca Berry travelled to Mentone from across the country. They enjoyed reconnecting with each other and meeting the youngest family members who have been born since the last reunion in 2015.

A large fire pit was built for this special reunion, and the family enjoyed a display of fireworks, particularly appropriate since the reunion was held on the weekend of July 1–4. Meals were prepared and served in the compound's Outside Kitchen, built in the 1940s to replace the small kitchen in the Cottage. "In the summers, people traditionally gathered there for meals," said Bill. "Now that the family's so big,

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Big Daddy and Grandmother Berry with
(L to R) Rebecca, Everett, Thompson, and Cecile in 1909.
The four children were born during the first 75 months of the Berrys' 1902 marriage.

Berry Reunion

(continued from page 4)

we use it for serving and then everyone eats in the yard.” One of the reunions’ traditions is a PowerPoint presentation that details the family’s history so the younger generations will feel connected to their rich legacy. This year, on the evening of July 4, the family gathered in the Moon Lake Baptist Church sanctuary to watch this year’s version of the program, which was presented and narrated by Bill.

Sylvia Wolcott played the piano and sang a song she composed for the reunion (see sidebar). Sylvia is married to Robert, one of the first cousins descended from the original Berry siblings. “I’m an only child,” Sylvia said to the audience. “I have no earthly idea where my first cousins are. I look out at you all and I feel so very blessed to have been married into this awesome family and be a twig on the Berry tree.” After Marjorie Berry’s death in 2020, she and Robert purchased the Berry home, which had been begun as the humble log cabin.

Levi Chavaree, a third cousin who recently turned 18 and lives in Colorado, said that his first reunion was in 2005, when he was two years old. “I know a lot of these people,” he said, “but it’s interesting to look back and see who they were and what they looked like in other times. It’s definitely been a little eye-opening.” His cousin, Simone Beauchamp, 17 and also from Colorado, said, “It’s interesting to hear about the legacy and the family history that we have. I know a lot of people don’t have family reunions. Some don’t even know who their great-grandparents were. It’s really interesting to have that knowledge and know where you came from.”

The family hopes this interest will endure with the younger generations and that reunions will continue to be held at the Berry Patch. First cousin Mary Jensen, who grew up and still lives in California, reflected on how she feels each time she returns to the compound. “When we pull into the driveway, ahhh...everything else falls away and I feel like back at home.” Second cousin Amy Stewart, also a Californian, concurs: “Everything here is pristine. Life is slower.” Her fiancé,



The Berry family, shortly after Big Daddy’s death—1952. L to R: Mary (1914–1993); Thompson (1908–1990); Cecile (1905–1993); Jimmy (1925–1998); Grandmother Berry (1881–1954); Gordon (1919–2011); Rebecca (1907–2002); Robert (1911–1994); Corrine (1915–1998); and Everett (1903–1985). An infant, John Franklin (Jimmy’s twin), died soon after birth in 1925.

Devin Manix, said, “A large family is like a home. The projects and learning never end. You always have something to work on and always something to learn.” To return back for a moment to the property’s early days—Mr. Jones, the original homesteader, was killed during the Civil War by soldiers in front of the cabin. “We’ve heard he was shot,” said Bill, “and we’ve heard he was hanged. We don’t know which was true.” To think that this tragedy, along with the tragedy of the boy who drowned in the river, has evolved into such a celebration of love and connection on the Berry Patch property, is heartwarming indeed. Mentone has long been known as a place of refuge and healing, and this family has certainly used this energy well. Here’s to many more years of happy reunions of the Berry family, as they move from this centennial celebration into future years of reconnection amongst the beauty of Mentone’s Berry Patch.



The “Outside Kitchen”—1961

Legacy of Love

A hundred years have come and gone,
And here we are to sing this song...
A song of loss, a song of gain,
A song of joy and love and pain.
Our hearts are filled with gratitude
For the strong foundation on which they stood.
They left us land with strong tall trees;
They filled our lives with memories.
To those who follow in our steps...
May we leave a legacy of love.

So we join each heart, each hand, each voice,
And in God’s love we all rejoice!
May the Berry Patch always be
A place of peace and harmony,
As we share our legacy of love.

Two generations come and gone,
But here we are to share their song...
A song of strength, a song of grace,
A song of those who ran this race,
They stood firm in God’s great love,
Led with guidance from above.
May we walk faithfully each day,
Show Christ in all we do and say.
To those who follow in our steps...
May we leave a legacy of love.

Composed by Sylvia Wolcott
In commemoration of the
Berry Patch Centennial Celebration



Come enjoy
our new deck,
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Valley Head's Rich History of Educating Children

In recent issues, *The Groundhog* has reported on the history of Mentone's 110-year-old Moon Lake School, which was ordered earlier this year to consolidate with Valley Head School. The following article which details the history of Valley Head School was written by Brownie A. Tuttle in the 1970s and is reprinted from *History of DeKalb County Schools: A Pictorial and Script History of Schools of DeKalb County, Alabama*, published by the DeKalb County Retired Teachers Association. The book is currently out-of-print but may be perused at Moon Lake Community Library in Mentone.



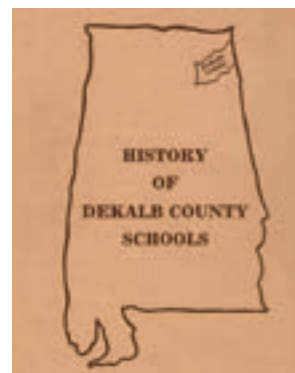
Valley Head School and Lodge, 1893

Valley Head was one of the earliest settled communities in DeKalb County. Its history dates back to the early 1830s. Education in the area got off to a good start when Sequoyah taught his alphabet to Cherokee Indians under a spreading oak tree in the heart of the town. A historical marker commemorates the spot of this first school room. There is no written record and only scant pieces of information handed down to establish that a school existed in this area of the early

settlement. This school was conducted in an unpainted building on the ridge back of the present home of E.N. Jones, Jr. A very old cemetery, serving both blacks and whites, occupies a part of this same area. The building itself served as a Baptist Church until 1920 when the local congregation built a beautiful brick structure in another part of the town.[...]

Valley Head has had three public school buildings. The two earlier buildings were located on approximately the same site. They stood on the foothills of Lookout Mountain with the beauty of the mountain serving as a backdrop. Destructive fires completely destroyed each. The present home of Buddy Burnett now stands on the location which is shaded by the beautiful water oak trees planted by students who attended the school around the year 1914–1916. Mr. “Ci” Hall was principal at that time.

No exact date has been found as to when the first of these three buildings was erected, but we know that it was some time before the turn of the century—perhaps the 1880s. It was a large two-story white building trimmed with red paint. The downstairs was divided into two large rooms with a stage running across the end of one room. The rooms could be made one. The entire upper floor, except for one very small classroom below the belfry, was used by the local lodges.



**History of DeKalb County Schools:
A Pictorial and Script History of
Schools in DeKalb County, Alabama
by DeKalb County Retired Teachers
Association**

Second Printing, 1980

*Available at Moon Lake Library
in Mentone*

The second floor of this building was off limits to the students. The rule was easily enforced because there was a widely-whispered rumor constantly being circulated that there was a skeleton in a coffin and a love goat “up there.” It was always an eventful and awesome day for the pupils and a disruptive one for the teachers when “lodge” met once a month at ten in the morning and members began marching and blowing their bugles. At each blast of the bugler much giggling on the part of the students ensued, accompanied by the frown of the teacher, her voice being almost drowned by the thump of feet overhead. One thought the walls of Jerico might fall.

This structure burned one Saturday night during the fall of 1911. Mrs. Cleo Green and Miss Ida Moore were the teachers at that particular time. School was not out of session long before the house, occupied by Mr. Lewis White, was rented and the 3 R's were being taught again. There were no frills, just good teaching, and students were required to bring their own chairs. Later in the year the school moved from this house to a location on the Old Valley Head road near where the Jim Gifford home now stands.

The new building was ready for occupancy the next year. It was a white one-story structure but not as large or rambling as the first. It was strictly a school building and had the added feature — provision for a music teacher, who could do some supplemental teaching. Soon an upper story was added. Except for a pine or two, plus a few scrubby bushes, neither of the buildings had the distinction of landscaped grounds until the trees were planted in 1915.

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Valley Head School *(continued from page 6)*

Never had a school had more fascinating school grounds. Deeply eroded and red clay ditches bounded its borders on the north and south. They served many purposes. One part of the ditch on the south served as the hide-a-way for the big boys who smoked. The smaller boys ran and jumped from one protrusion to another, with the agility of a goat. The steep ditch banks on the north offered the girls more fun than any commercial slide ever invented. The red clay on the seat of panties caused more anguish to Mothers who bent over the washboard on Monday morning than the dirt on Pap's overalls. A caucus among the Mothers solved the problem. Each girl was sent to school with a tow sack with instructions to use it as a toboggan.

The ditches served as septic tanks and garbage disposals. Perched precariously on the north and south ditches were at least "4 holers" for the boys and girls. Before the end of each school year the boy's house mysteriously disappeared in the ditch. Each fall a new one appeared in its place.

A common sight on the school grounds was the hogs that ran free and wild. They rooted and grunted during the day and then at lunch time squealed and fought for the scraps of lunch thrown to them.

On a cold spring morning in 1924, disaster again struck. The second school building went up in flames. A Mr. Thompson was principal at the time.

No provision was made for the next school year, but those who could went to Moon Lake, Ft. Payne, Flat Rock, or some outlying school. A private elementary and junior high school was opened by Brownie Alexander and Ruth Holleman. Mary Frances Holleman taught a smaller school in her parents' home for the younger members of the family plus some cousins and a neighbor.

In the meantime under the leadership of capable trustees, Tom Davenport, Nick Davenport, and Ernest Jones with the enthusiastic support of many citizens, a new building site was chosen, and work was begun on the on the present fine new brick building which is located on School Street.

The building as first erected consisted of an auditorium and four rooms across the front and side wings on the north and south. Part of the north wing was occupied by the home economics department and the south wing housed the elementary grades.

The people of the community are proud of the fact that the financial burden of the original part of the school was in large part borne by them either in work or money. The minute book in the County Superintendent's office reveals under heading of April 25, 1924, that "\$600 of state money was approved for the erection of a new brick building at Valley Head." This sum was not enough. Various organizations had numerous money making projects. Ten plays were directed by Mrs. Maria Davenport Ellis. The plays were presented under a large tent and proved very profitable. Mrs. W.B. Thompson sponsored a Girls' Club and Mrs. Fred Huron sponsored a Boys' Club. Friendly rivalry existed to see who could make the most money. Dinners and other money making projects were sponsored by adult groups.

The new school opened in the fall of 1925, and the first class consisting of 10 members was presented for graduation by the principal, A.B. Hall, in the spring of 1926.

Editor's Note: *In our September issue, we will explore the modern history of Valley Head School.*

Valley Head School Days 1901–1913

The first school I attended was in 1901. Miss Gertie Puckett was my teacher. She was regarded as a very good teacher, demanding and very strict. I was seated up front near her desk. One day I took a swat at a fly with a book, or maybe my cap. She called me to her desk, banged my head with a big club-shaped pencil half a dozen times and sent me back to my seat. That afternoon when school turned out, I started out with the other pupils when she took me by the arm and said, "You're staying." It was four o'clock and winter. She kept me an hour. It was dark and I remember I cried all the way home.

For the three years following I can remember only two women teachers—a Miss Edna Sells and Miss Edna Allen. I have only a hazy recollection of those years.

Mr. Josiah Calvin (Si) Hall began his three-year tenure in 1906. He was very popular with the student body, a good instructor, and his discipline neither lax nor harsh. Doubtless he is responsible in a large measure for sending to higher institutions of learning a number of students who became very successful business and professional men—doctors and preachers. They too attributed much of their success to "Si Hall."

Following Mr. Hall was N.B. Jones from near Collinsville. He was a good man, a fine instructor but probably weak on discipline.

After Mr. Jones came Mr. Will Elrod. He was thorough, demanding, and ruled with an "iron hand." I was afraid of him as were most of the students. I remember his bringing John Lyday to the front and making it known to him in no uncertain language that he would whip him (John's) britches off. Incidentally, John was a very fine person.

The Scott girls, Emma and Gene, came next. They were among the loveliest, most cultured and

most refined women I ever knew. Miss Emma died not too long after leaving Valley Head and Miss Gene, who no longer lives, went to Birmingham and was principal of one of the large schools there. One day during their school, my beloved friend, Harry Davenport, and I were making our way to the "big ditch" to smoke and whatever. A slight spring shower had just fallen. Going down into the ditch was a sort of "backbone" protuberance we used as a walkway. It was very slick at this particular time. Harry landed on it without caution. His feet slipped and he slid astride the narrow walk to the bottom, ripping a trouser leg from crotch to cuff. I never saw a boy take it so hard. He kept crying, "What'll I do? What'll I do?" I told him to stop worrying, I would go over to Aunt Pallie Ellis who lived across from the school house and get a needle and some thread and repair the damage. That I did, not an elegant job, but sufficient until his mother that night, with the expertise of a French tailor, skillfully plied the needle and thread and restored the trouser leg to its original status.

Following the Scott girls was Mrs. Cleo Green, a very proficient and learned teacher. She was very strict, permitted no nonsense whatever and would settle for nothing less than our best. After her second school, I went away to college and it seemed strange to leave a school of less than a hundred and enter another of near nine hundred, a large enrollment in that day. However the Valley Head School has an enrollment today of something over five hundred and the college I attended has a student body exceeding eighteen thousand. "Time and Change."

—Robert N. White, *History of DeKalb County Schools: A Pictorial and Script History of Schools of DeKalb County, Alabama*

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Meet the Leaders of Mentone's Colorfest 2021

The Mentone Area Preservation Association's board of directors began a search for new festival leadership when Sharon Habin stepped down from her role as Festival Coordinator earlier this year. MAPA is very grateful to Sharon for her notable dedication to presenting our festivals since 2018. Thankfully, Sharon plans to continue to coordinate our charity golf tournament and the Miss Rhododendron Pageant, both of which are planned for next spring.

We are pleased to announce that planning for Colorfest has begun, thanks to two young women, Jessica Henderson Boman and Mariah Emmett, who have volunteered to coordinate the festival. The two are good friends and co-workers, and we feel confident that their combined skills will ensure a successful fall festival.

All proceeds from MAPA's festivals go towards supporting our community and local non-profit organizations. With the loss of our Rhododendron Festival in May of 2020 and 2021, and Colorfest in 2020, we are thrilled to be able to offer arts and crafts festivals once again.

Mark your calendars for the weekend of October 16–17. We would love to see you at Colorfest!

Jessica Henderson Boman will serve as Festival Coordinator. Jessica was raised in Mentone during her early childhood and moved at age 4 with her family to the Five Points area on Lookout Mountain.

When she was 14, she began working at the Blackburn Nursery and Country Store in Mentone, and helped out at the Mentone Superette (the current Mentone Market.) Jessica worked for the Blackburn family for four years while also working for Nancy Smith at Holly Springs Stables. This led to her working during camp season at Camp Skyline and at



Mariah Emmett and Jessica Henderson Boman

Riverview Camp for Girls, teaching horsemanship and horseback riding. Several years ago, she worked at the Wildflower Café before assuming a position at Akins Furniture in Dogtown, where she currently lives.

"Mentone has always held a special place in my heart," says Jessica. "It's my 'Happy Place' and I make it a point to visit as often as I can. The energy of Mentone is soul-filling and magical and I'm incredibly drawn here. It's more than the natural beauty—it's a feeling that I can't begin to describe."

Jessica has always enjoyed attending the Colorfest and Rhododendron festivals. "Art and music are my life!" she said. "I could not imagine doing this thing called life without them. I'm beyond excited to be able to take on this challenge and work with a very special friend. It's truly a dream come true."

Jessica says that she and Mariah "are looking forward to creating a wonderful festival and serving the community of Mentone to the best of our ability. It is truly an honor to be even a small part of such a wonderful event."

Mariah Emmett will serve as Vendor Coordinator for this year's festival.

"I am most passionate about art, music, and food, which are the roots of Colorfest," she says. "My main goals in life are to go on more adventures, connect with people, and learn new things. I'm a thinker, creator, leader, and collaborator. I love to be outside, attend concerts of my favorite musicians, and travel to new places. I have two part-time jobs—at Akins Furniture and bartending at a local restaurant."

As a hobby, Mariah runs a business called Funky MAE. "I salvage discontinued fabric samples at Akins Furniture and use them to create one-of-a-kind hip-bags and wallets," she explains. "The slow process of cutting, sewing, and stamping gives me time to reflect on life, serving as my own personal form of meditation. I am inspired by each piece that brings someone joy."

In 2022, Mariah plans to graduate with a degree in marketing from UAB Collat School of Business. Her career plan is to become a promotions manager for an art- or music-related company, or to start her own.

Her connection to Mentone began more than five years ago when she started working at the Wildflower Café. "Since then," she says, "the scenic views and magical ambience of Mentone, along with the people I have met, have made an unforgettable impact on my life. Without a doubt, Mentone's beautiful landscape is unmatched. I have participated in the Rhododendron and Colorfest festivals as an artist vendor a couple of times, as well as countless other art festivals in the southeast, and I am grateful for this opportunity to team with Jessica to coordinate Colorfest 2021. To say I'm excited is an understatement!"

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CHOICE OF 2 MENTONE BROW LOTS, offering a rare opportunity because there just aren't many left between Mentone & DeSoto St Park. Beautiful mountaintop views & spectacular sunsets. 2 lots from which to choose, or buy them both to create a spectacular personal getaway! Each offers approx. 1.8 acres. \$225,000 per lot. (1770794)

GORGEOUS VIEWS & 2.2 ACRES. This Mentone East-brow-front property already has the major prep work done for you to begin building your dream getaway cabin or residence. Septic tank in place, driveway in place, building sites for a cab-in & for a shop cleared & leveled. Incredibly priced at only \$89,000. (1775068)



IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE ALL THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A BUILDING LIKE THIS! Good ceiling height combined with the wide open interior, plus a rear-entry, roll-up bay door, makes for a very adaptive space. Convenient to a down-town that is being revitalized, across the street from the Fort Payne post office, & pretty much move-in ready! Just listed for \$107,500 (1786006)



SIMPLE OUTSIDE, SIMPLY PERFECT INSIDE. This board-n-batten cabin, on 7 acres of lovely woods, has been a haven & a home for many years. Great room w/beautiful fireplace, kitchen w/beautiful granite counters; guest bath w/clawfoot tub; enclosed porch w/offices or extra sleeping qtrs. Master suite w/private deck. Det 3-car carport w/workshop. \$259,900 (1777118)



NOT ONE, BUT TWO! YES, 2 LOG CABINS! SITUATED ON 6.6 BEAUTIFULLY-WOODED ACRES, interspersed with awesome rock formations & boulders. Perfect location just off the DeSoto Pkwy; near skiing at Cloudmont, fishing & swimming at DeSoto Falls, Comer Scout Camp & all the Mentone area has to offer. Both cabins are fully furnished, nicely decorated, include all appliances, stone gas log fireplaces & 3/4 wraparound porches. Just bring the groceries and start enjoying the mtn. "Up in the Clouds" is 2BR/1BA, open floor plan, & partial unf basement for storage. "The Hideout" is 2BR/1.5BA w/small sleeping loft area. All this & 6.6 beautiful acres adjoining Camp Riverview property for only \$297,500!



REDUCED! BUNGALOW-STYLE HOME gives you room for many possibilities! A spacious home, a gathering place for families, retreats, possible B&B, multi-family home with 3 separate living areas...imagine it! 6BR/2 baths (plus half bath in lower level). Enormous front porch. New ext pain, new windows & roof 2019. Interior needs some upgrading & TLC. Beautiful yard w/seasonal sunset views. Hi-speed internet avail! Agent owned. \$300,000 (1780870)



REDUCED! RARE 2.5-ACRE DOWNTOWN MENTONE PROPERTY. This is one of those places with almost unlimited possibilities! With its flexible zoning, frontage on 3 city streets (Douglas, Cutler Ave & Shady Ave), this simple little house could open the door to BIG things! Spacious front sunporch built in 2012; house was pretty much completely gutted & rebuilt in 2014. It's a great start to even greater things! Property once had at least 3 other tiny cabins on it, believed to have been part of a motor court back in the 1930s. Future for Rental cabins? Restaurant? Shopping plaza? Offices? Dream! The land is level, features 2 small streams, nice woods w/ huge white oaks & other hardwoods. \$325,000 (1779531)



THE BEAR'S DEN LOG CABIN, nestled into 6.39 acres of woods, only a mile from downtown Mentone. 3BR/2.5BA; furnished. Vaulted living w/timber beams; mtn stone fireplace (gas); stunning mtn views; open floor plan; full kitchen; full bath; offering plenty of room for gatherings of a few, or a bunch of folks. Fire-pit area w/several swings for good times around the fire. High-performing rental. \$375,000 (1777616)



BEAUTIFUL LOG CABIN ON 2 ACRES, private & wooded. Stunning, vaulted great room with dramatic beams; mountain stone fireplace; granite kitchen w/island; possibilities for MABR on either level plus bonus loft area for add'l sleeping area or study. Approx 1934 sq ft. Full, walkout unf. basement with gorgeous antique bar, plenty of room for family game room & a separate workshop area w/bath stubbed out & ready to finish. 3/4 wraparound porch to enjoy the sound of the wet-weather stream. \$375,000



13.34 ACRES, PONDS, OLD FARM HOUSE, SHOP & VARIOUS OUTBUILDINGS. The old house needs a good bit of TLC. We're not kidding. Whether or not it is a judgment call; old house has a decent little porch, too. Ponds are thought to offer good fishing. Three wells on the property, one of which is clear, freestone water. Not perfect, tons of work needed, and priced accordingly. \$129,900 (1155211)



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 that allows for an 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; open LR/KI/DR for gatherings large & small. 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)



HERE IS THE PLACE FOR A FAMILY COMPOUND! The perfect location: almost downtown, along the Scenic Pkwy, with 2 gated entries. Several buildings already on the premises including a 2-level main cabin; plus 3 other buildings (one formerly used as a workshop) that could readily be turned into additional cabins for guests. 4-bay garage with storage areas. Property consists of approx. 2.25 acres, fenced, private and brimming over with potential! Call Charlotte for details!

August Community Calendar

August 5–8—World's Longest Yard Sale. Running from Gadsden, Alabama to West Unity, Ohio, this event allows you to travel more than 690-miles of scenic beauty and see tons of yard sales. Locally, the yard sale travels along Lookout Mountain Parkway from Gadsden to Chattanooga. More info at visitlookoutmountain.com/worlds-longest-yard-sale & 127yardsale.com.

August 7—Mentone Fire Dept. BBQ Fundraiser. The Fire Department will be selling Pork Butts (\$50), BBQ sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, & drinks at Mentone Station 1 on AL Hwy. 117. Please support our fundraiser by enjoying some very tasty food.

August 6–8, 13–15, 20–22, 27–29—Miller's Bend Paddle Shack Miller's Bend Paddle Shack. Rent sit-on-top kayaks to enjoy a peaceful flatwater paddle on the West Fork of Little River. Your adventure can be up to 4 miles round trip, or as long as you want to make it! Paddle trips are perfect for individuals or groups. Life vests and paddles are provided. Boat Shack hours: Saturday & Sunday 10am–6pm. DeSoto Falls Picnic Area. Single sit-on-top kayak: \$15/hour. Tandem sit-on-top kayak: \$25/hour. Corcl's: \$10/hour. Kayaks are also available by reservation Monday–Thursday 10am–6pm, \$50 minimum. Call DeSoto State Park's Lodge for info-256-845-5380. alapark.com/kayak-little-river.

August 7—Pete the Cat Day. James Dean, author and creator of Pete the Cat and Fort Payne native, will be joining will be joining us from 9am–12pm to sign books and artwork! Limited tickets are available. 100 tickets will be available at Katherine's Gallery and Custom Framing through August 6 while they last. No purchase necessary. Katherine's Gallery and Custom Framing will also be at the event with Pete the Cat books, t-shirts, and other items for sale. Story time 9:30, 10:30 & 11:30am. Coal and Iron Building. 256-996-2131.

August 7—Ukulele Class. Free class for beginners. Bring a ukulele and a fun desie to learn! 1pm. Moon Lake Library, 4607 AL Hwy. 117, Mentone. For more info or to RESVP: Debra, 404-630-2918.

August 7—Summer Music Series. Featuring Jess Goggans Band. Sponsored by Little River Arts Council, made possible in part by the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. 7–10pm. Free & open to everyone. Mentone Inn's Linger Longer Pavilion. For details, email: info@littleriverartscouncil.org.

August 9—Monthly Songwriters Round. Spotlights acclaimed singer-songwriter Ryan Robertson and others.. Hosted by Craig Hendricks. 6pm. \$15 suggested donation. Mentone Arts Center, 4651 AL Hwy. 117, Mentone. For more info, email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

August 11—Senior Bingo at the MERF House. 10am, flollowed by lunch at 11:30.

August 14—Little River Arts Council Membership Social. The Little River Arts Council board of directors invites you to attend our annual Membership Social at the DeSoto State Park Lodge. We look forward to socializing with our members, as well as those interested in joining Little River Arts Council. 5–7:30pm. DeSoto State Park Lodge. To join the Arts Council or renew your membership before the social, visit littleriverartscouncil.org/membership-form.

August 21—Official Bob Ross Workshop. Co-hosted by

Mentone Arts & Cultural Center & The workshop is being taught by visiting Certified Bob Ross Instructor (CRI) Gary Grider and takes about four hours. Limited to 10 people (ages 13 and up) \$100/person. All supplies included to create your own 16x20" Bob Ross Technique painting. A light lunc will be provided. Class will be held at Mountain Framing, 1714 AL Hwy. 117, Mentone. 10am–2pm. To register, email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

August 21—Longleaf Pine Needle Basketry Class. Learn the basics of pine needle basketry, an old craft with a long history. Join artist Brittney Hughes to learn the basic steps to making a coiled basket from longleaf pine needles. Each participant will learn the basic skills of pine needle basketry and take home their very own creation. The art of coiling baskets is universally common to indigenous peoples. Coiling is the technique of creating baskets and art from pine needles and was a part of pre-Columbian Native American crafts. Today, pine needle baskets and art are made primarily for decorative purposes. All materials (pine needles, thread, and small center for basket) will be furnished. Class is limited in size. Ages 10 and up. JSU's Little River Canyon Center, Fort Payne. 10am–3pm. \$30 supply fee due day of class. Pre-registration required. For details and to register, call 256-997-5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

August 21—Night Zipline Tour. Taking the fun to a whole new level-soar through the tree canopy in DeSoto State Park with the moon light guiding your way! Are you brave enough to explore the dark forest with us? Enjoy six ziplines that range from 100 ft to 350 ft in length and six sky bridges that range from 50 to 150 ft. in length. A spiral staircase tower begins the trek and allows for a bird's eye view from up to 55 ft. in the air. The full moon is sure to make your tour even more exciting with suspension bridges and zip lines to discover as you traverse the tree canopy and explore with your guide. Tour times: 7, 8, 9, and 10pm. DeSoto State Park Country Store & Information Center on County Road 89. Tickets \$49 per person. Spaces are limited. Booking at desotozipline.com. More info at alapark.com/DSP-aerial-adventure.

August 21—Third Saturday Sunset. A family fun event featuring a cruise-in, children's activities, food, art show, and live entertainment! Gault Avenue in Downtown Fort Payne is closed from 1st--5th Streets for the event. A car cruise-in, music and other entertainment will take place throughout the event as well. 5–9pm. Contact Amelia - 256-996-3857 or Terry- 256-996-2668.

August 22—Meandering Moonlight Paddle Trip. DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided moonlight paddle trip on scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the 'coke bottle clear' waters of the West Fork of Little River. Enjoy this flatwater paddle as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up. Experience the peace & quiet of the gloaming-time! This trip is approximately 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 3-to 3½-hour period and includes kayak, paddle, and personal flotation device. Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles & 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult. Bring appropriate clothing, headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water. 7–10pm. DeSoto Falls Picnic Area—Miller's Bend Paddle Shack. \$30 for single kayak rental (2 person-tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50) Pre-registration required. To register, email Paige.Norsworthy@dcnr.alabama.gov. **Please provide date of paddle, a phone number;

indicate number of boats and what type (single/tandem) requested for the trip. Payment will be required at time of registration.**

August 27—Mayors Cup. Join the Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce as we host our 15th Annual Mayor's Cup Golf Tournament at Terrapin Hills. Lunch included. Beer Cart. Cash Prizes. Door Prizes. Goody Bags. Terrapin Hills Country Club, 5501 Club Drive NW, Fort Payne. 9am–1pm.

August 28—Farm-fresh Flower Bouquet Making Class. Instruction, farm tour, and farm-to-table refreshments. The Farm at Windy Hill. 9am–12pm. RSVP: thefarmatwindyhill.com.

August 28—Fyffe UFO Day. Hot Air Balloon Rides showcase this unique family outing! Arts and crafts, children's games, food vendors, antique tractors, live entertainment, street dance and much more make this event fun for the whole family. Gates open at 9am and music starts at 10am. 256-623-2222.

August 28—Sunset Simmer-Down Paddle Trip. DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided sunset paddle trip on the scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the 'coke bottle clear' waters of the West Fork of Little River. Learn about this outstanding water source with its clear water, plant and animal life, and about the history of the area around DeSoto Falls in Dekalb County, Alabama. This trip is approximately 4 miles round trip on flatwater, spans a 4-hour period and includes kayak & personal flotation device. Bring appropriate clothing, headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water. 4–8pm. Meet at DeSoto Falls Picnic Area—Miller's Bend Paddle Shack. Fee: \$30 for single kayak rental (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for \$50) Pre-registration closes August 25 at 5pm. To register, email Paige.Norsworthy@dcnr.alabama.gov. **Please provide date of paddle, a phone number; indicate number of boats and what type (single/tandem) requested for the trip. Payment will be required at time of registration**

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MOUNTAIN LAUREL INN is nestled in the woods above Little River. Main residence w/ BR/BA, living, kitchen, utility & sunroom. Guest house w/ 4BR, each w/private entrance & bath AND a 2-room studio apartment w/ kitchenette. Also included is a Gathering house with living and kitchenette. Approx. 7 acres borders DeSoto State Park. \$379,000. MLS #1153859



STORYBOOK HOME built with the mountain's views in mind. 3 BR, 3 BA home with artistic touches throughout. Relaxing large deck, screen porch & sunroom or by the stone fireplace in the cozy living room. Attached garage, attic/storage space, gorgeous siding/stone exterior, full basement and 1 acre +/- lot. Oversized kitchen w/ seating options at bar or breakfast nook, walk-in pantry, and amazing counter space. \$550,000. MLS #1779265



ON THE BROW, facing East to the Georgia Mountains, and looking into Shinbone Valley, this large cabin features 4 BR, 3 BA, great room w/ wooden beams, fireplace, tin ceilings, gathering areas, multiple decks, all new windows & appliances. A perfect family retreat, the cabin also has possibilities as a weekend rental! \$425,000. MLS# 1780743



KNOWN AS HIGHPOINT AND ONE OF THE MOST CELESTIAL AREAS FOR STAR GAZING... This 7 BR, 6 BA manor boasts onyx porcelain & tile baths, walk-in showers, granite & marble counter tops/vanities. Attached private living quarters with full amenities PLUS detached guest cabin. \$729,000. MLS #1119192



THIS 2 BR/2 BA HOME ON 2.3 ACRES is ready for Mentone living. The outdoor kitchen, large front deck and screened back porch are perfect for summer entertaining. Begin your next hobby in the multiuse storage shed or work space. The beautiful wood interior and three fireplaces will keep you warm on those cool nights in the North Alabama mountains. \$179,000. MLS# 1779284



THIS DUPLEX OFFERS paved driveway, metal roof, gutters, county water, and well with filtration system. "Big Bear" is 2 BR 2 Bath, central heat and air open kitchen, dining and living room, rock fireplace w/ gas logs, hardwood floors. "Little Bear" is 1 BR 1 BA, recessed lighting, ceiling fans, central heat/air, hardwood floors, smooth ceilings. \$319,900. MLS #1778704



THIS TASTEFULLY DESIGNED CABIN offers a main living area with open floor plan making it easy to entertain guests, main level master, wood flooring, loft bedroom with bathroom, separate utility room and half bath, screened porch and a real wood burning fireplace! This beautiful home is currently offered as a weekend rental on Airbnb and VRBO! Enjoy the elegance of the cabin along with the serenity of Lookout Mountain. \$290,000. MLS # 1782724



LOTS & LAND



#1034997—Approx. 6 acres on Middle Fork of Little River. \$48,900

#1076286— Beautiful Building Spot in Mentone! Perfectly located 1.75 acre building lot in West Fork Subdivision with over 400 feet of river frontage! \$39,900.

#1092235—Building lot in Laurel Creek Lakes. \$19,900

#1111628—AMAZING VIEWS! YES, VIEWS!!! REDUCED TO \$79,900.

#1149803—GORGEOUS LOT IN MENTONE with .81+/- acres in Hunter's Ridge Subdivision. \$15,000

#1150871—WHAT AN ADDRESS FOR YOUR NEXT HOME! Enjoy peace and quiet and the sound of rushing waters on this 3-acre lot on West Fork of Little River in Mentone. Bring your plans and move to Mentone today! \$48,500

#1150850—BEAUTIFUL BROW PROPERTY on County Road 103. You are within 5 minutes of Little River Falls! This is a great opportunity to purchase land and build that mountain cabin or dream home you desire! Seller will consider owner finance at full ask price with 20% down at 5.5% interest rate! Priced at \$52,900

#1150900—ATTENTION LAND LOVERS... For those of you seeking peace and quiet surroundings on West Fork Little River here's your chance to build the home of your dreams. This 2-acre tract is too wonderful to pass you by. \$48,500

#1150911— PANAROMIC VIEWS FOR MILES & MILES! Along with views of Battelle below in the valley. Bring your home plans and enjoy nature on this 8.9 tract of land. \$199,500

#1150912—WOW! What Amazing VIEWS you have for miles and miles! Beautiful views of Battelle below. Great place to build your forever home on this 8.8 acres of prime brow property. \$195,000

#1776065—Lot 59 in Crestline Park Subdivision in Mentone. This location is just off of the scenic County Road 89. This subdivision offers light restrictions including no mobile homes, no commercial buildings or temporary structures. Insuring permanent or vacation living only for you and your neighboring properties. Property is owned by a licensed home builder offering "will build to suit". Call us today and start picking out a house plan! \$39,900

#1777646—BEAUTIFUL LOT on Scenic Rd. 89 across from the Brow. Owner is a licensed contractor, and willing to build to suit. The driveway is already in place. Trees are in the process of being cleared for a building spot. \$45,000

#1779301—Enjoy the natural beauty of Brush Creek from your building site on this wooded property. Located on a private road just minutes from downtown Mentone. \$19,900



Southern Properties Agency, Inc., has been serving DeKalb County and surrounding areas in residential, land and commercial real estate sales since 1992. The Southern Properties team is made up of 15 REALTORS®, 2 full-time Licensed Real Estate Assistants, and a Marketing Manager. Together, we strive to deliver superior results for our clients while maintaining a level of integrity and professionalism that sets us apart.

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JUST BETWEEN US

A Curious Q & A by Rebecca Henderson

Recently I had a few moments to chat with Mentone resident Sarah Wilcox. Sarah serves as executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF). She's also an avid outdoors enthusiast. There were things we needed to know...

Q *Where were you born?*

A Atlanta.

Q *How did you get to Mentone?*

A I first came as a 10-year-old camper at Camp DeSoto.

Q *Who was your first friend here, and how did you meet?*

A I had built-in friends when I moved here in 1996 to open my B&B [the former Mountain Laurel Inn] with the Coreys, Hurts, Sue Henry and Bill Berry. I think Jan Wilkinson was my first new friend that I made!

Q *What's the best TV show you've watched recently?*

A "The Carol Burnett Show" — always funny!

Q *If you could give your 20-year-old self a good piece of advice, what would that be?*

A Go be a ski bum for a year.

Q *If we were to walk in and find you listening to music, what would we hear?*

A 70s rock.

Q *Favorite actor/actress?*

A Robert Redford — oo-la-la!

Q *If you could add one new activity to Mentone, what would that be?*

A Pickle ball. But I don't know how to play.

Q *Name a place you've wanted to visit but haven't yet.*

A The Canadian Rockies.

Q *What's a food you love but try not to eat?*

A Carrot cake.

Q *When did you last eat it?*

A Last Monday, when someone gifted it to me from Tip Top Bake Shop.

Q *What's a food you feel no one should want to eat?*

A Scorpions.

Q *What's the first historic event you remember and where you when it happened?*

A I was at the beach watching on a black-and-white TV — the first landing on the moon.

Q *Favorite way to spend a Saturday night?*

A A good meal with good friends after a bike ride or a paddle board trip.

Q *Build your perfect burger.*

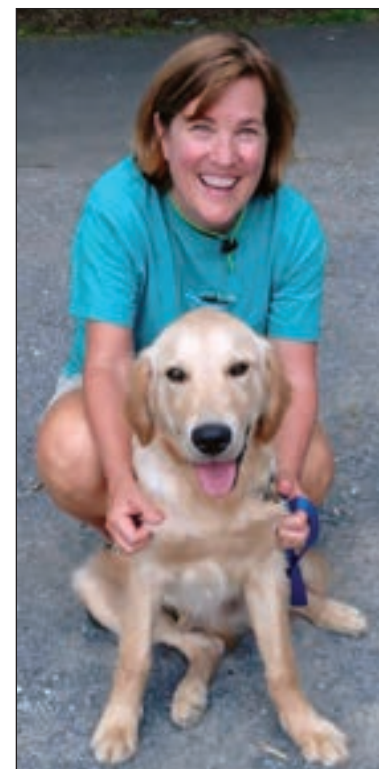
A Cheese, cheese, cheese and pickles.

Q *Would your mother say you're a good dancer?*

A No, but she was and even competed some in ballroom dancing!

Q *Your most exciting wildlife sighting in this area?*

A The buffalo that ran in front of my windows as I served breakfast to B&B guests. We all jumped out of our seats because we were so surprised.



Sarah Wilcox and her dog, George

Q *Describe Mentone in three words.*

A Beautiful. Peaceful. Like-no-other [we'll pretend that last one was one word].

Thank you, Sarah!

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*Mike Leath, Caleb Roberts,
Amy Justice & Ronnie Highfield*

The World's Longest Yard Sale will take place on the roads in and around Mentone on August 5-8. Please drive carefully, as shoppers can sometimes be distracted. If you go shopping, we hope you find some great deals!



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N•E•W•S

by Anne McLeod

**Music for the People
Concert Series:
Jess Goggans Band
Performs August 7**

Take a break from the World's Longest Yard Sale on Saturday, August 7, from 7-10 PM, when the Jess Goggans Band performs as part of Little River Arts Council's Music for the People Summer Concert Series. Born and raised in northeast Alabama, Jess Goggans has performed all around the South, including at Chattanooga's Riverbend Festival. Her sultry voice and high energy style, backed by an outstanding band, promise an unforgettable evening. The concert is free, family-friendly, and open to the public. Fontana Stinson's Fontastic Foods truck will be on hand for dinner orders. Stop by the Little River Arts Council tent to say hello, sign up for our newsletter, or to purchase a T-shirt or membership. The Music for the People Concert series receives additional funding from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Anne McLeod serves as secretary for the Little River Arts Council.



Follow Your Art (continued from page 1)

trail. Once a virtually ignored quarter-mile stretch of pavement, it received new life last year through another joint effort between MERF and LRAC and a grant provided by the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama. Over the summer months, community members took turns to safely gather at the MERF House to paint the pickets that now line the border of the walking trail along Highway 117.

In our effort to offer a greater recognition of the trail and share the stories behind the pickets, we invite people who painted pickets for the fence to serve as "picket docents" during the Follow Your Art event. These will be informal tour guides who would hang out at the fence for a 30-minute shift during the day. We are seeking friendly, chatty picket painters to explain to visitors how the fence came together but focuses on your own part in painting one of the pickets, as well as stories of any of the other pickets you may be familiar with. We will provide picket docents with information to share about the Pathway to Community project. For more information on this volunteer opportunity, send an e-mail to info@littleriverartscouncil.org, or to sign up, use the online scheduling form at bit.ly/picketpainter. We appreciate your help in sharing this project with the public!

We have a few more ideas in mind to add to this first-time event and are fine-tuning the details. Keep watch for updates about Follow Your Art on our Facebook page, Instagram, or on our website at littleriverartscouncil.org.

Rhea Pirch serves as treasurer for the Little River Arts Council.

Join up!

Little River Arts Council Membership Social

August 14, 2021
5:00 - 7:30 PM
DeSoto State Park Lodge

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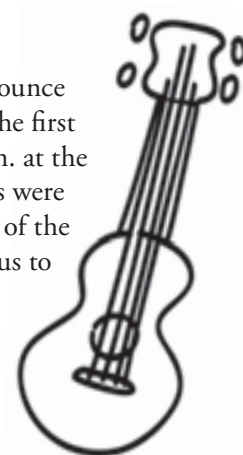
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Ukulele Sessions Resume!

by Debra Fey

Mickey Luck, Jerry Megli, and I are pleased to announce that free ukulele sessions will be resuming with the first session to be held on Saturday, August 7, at 1 p.m. at the Moon Lake Community Library. Since the popular sessions were interrupted due to the pandemic, there will be some review of the chords learned thus far, then future sessions will introduce us to new chords and tunes.

Unfortunately there will be no loaner instruments available, since those were the property of Moon Lake School, so plan to bring your own uke (or go buy one right now!), practice the chords you know, and get ready to STRUM AND BE HAPPY! For more information, feel free to call/text to my phone at 404-630-2918, or follow us on the Mentone Ukes Facebook page.



Ruby O'Rear's Days Come to Life

August, 1936

August 2, 1936, Sunday

Sun shone part of day then we had a hard rain in P.M.

A.J. & J.B. went to Mentone for paper. We helped Mother up & put her on my bed. Then at nite put her back on her bed. I let the little guineas out this P.M. for first time. W. Paul & A.J. went to S'ville. One guinea died last nite.

August 3, 1936, Monday

Clear. Pleasant.

Mother stayed on her bed until 12:00. I think she's better but she doesn't seem to think so. Willie & Gleny Boty came & cut 2 cords of stove wood. Pick off rest of grapes for grape juice. Jessie washed. I strained up juice & canned 6 qts. Peeled some peaches for preserves. Crocheted a little. Put stick on soles on shoes.

August 7, 1936, Friday

Jessie ironed this morn. Mother rested fine last nite. Taking more nourishment. We had fried chicken & she broth off where the bony pieces were stewed. Frank & Lonnie dug the potatoes. Got 17 bu in all. Nice large potatoes. Rainy in morn but cleared off. Made gown for Mother.

August 12, 1936, Wednesday

Cool at nite. Warm all day.

Mother didn't rest at all well last nite. I washed out a few clothes. Jessie's cold still bad. Mother got up 4 times & back as hurt so bad now but she doesn't eat well & doesn't gain any strength. Put feather bed under mattress. Paul went to Cloudland.

August 13, 1936, Thursday

Not quite warm.

Have to build fire every morn its so cold. Mother rested better last nite & slept a good deal to-day but doesn't seem to be any better. Gains no strength & eats less. Mrs. Neda called. Said she & Nettie had been to see Aunt Rena. She was weakest to-day she had been. Paul



went to Cloudland again. A.J. & Paul went to see Ethel.

August 14, 1936, Friday

Clear. Cool in morn.

Built fire. Mother didn't rest so well last nite. I had to get up at 7:30 A.M. She rested better to-day & ate more & I was able to be out of the room more. Didn't crochet any to-day but read quite a bit. Jessie's cold still going strong. A.J. went to Valley Head.

August 17, 1936, Monday

Temp went to 90 degrees to-day but then had shower in P.M.

Mother still feeling miserable. Paul & J.B. went to V.H. to get car fixed. Wvlyen called. Said Aunt Rena was real bad. Eyes swollen shut. Heard later in day she had only spoke 2 words. Asked for water. We sent for Rickey to-day. He prescribed a tonic & advised rubbing with olive oil. Said her blood pressure & heart were O.K.

Editor's Note:

In last month's 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*.

Feedback from our community has been positive, and people are enjoying reading about Miss Ruby's days in simpler times. We hope you will enjoy reading these selected entries of her daily diary for the month of August, 1936.

—Kelly

August 18, 1936, Tuesday

Temp 92. Hot.

Mother didn't like her medicine so vowed she was well & wouldn't take any more tho it had really helped her. Eula came by. Mother didn't rest well last nite. I ask Eula if she would come over & sit with her if she needed her to. She said she would. Sammie came by. Paul & A.J. went to V.H. had car worked on. W. Paul brot Mother some ice cream which she ate & enjoys & Ethel Brown sent some lemon pie. Ethel & Hope came out. Hope brot pig back.

August 20, 1936, Thursday

Another hot day.

Heard this morn that Aunt Rena was dead.

Mrs. Emerson came over to borrow Kodak. Mother rested fairly well last nite. Hazel called & said she could come to-morrow.

August 25, 1936, Tuesday

Warm again. Temp above 90.

Mother is better today. Stayed up more but has eaten very little. Hazel beat up her bed real good so hope she will sleep well tonite. Cash's cows came over. Were fighting our cow so Jessie went over there. They gave her some okra and 2 mushmellons for Mother. She & Hazel washed this P.M. A.J. washed dishes first time since she's been here. Paul came home.

August 29, 1936, Saturday

Rained real hard last nite. Hardest rain that had fall in Valley Head in over 40 years some said.

Mother didn't rest at all last night. Neither did I so I went to pieces this morn. Had only been off place 2 times in 4 weeks so I went to V.H. with A.J. Rained hard again then cleared off nicely. Mrs. Moorman was buried to-day. Rained hard again this P.M.

August 30, 1936, Sunday

Fair & cooler.

Mother rested well last nite & I got some sleep. A.J. & Paul took Hazel & J.B. to S.S. Had dinner then Jack & Paul went to see the Emersons. They were all better. Then Paul & I went to Cloudland to dedication of the church there. Ran out of gas on the way back. Paul White came along & pushed Paul to top of hill & I came on with him. Real cool to-nite. Pres church dedicated.

August 31, 1936, Monday

Fair. Temp down in 50 last nite. Had to have fire in nite & little fire all day.

Mother didn't rest well last nite & restless & weaker to-day. Jessie stayed with her this P.M. & Hazel & I built gate to hog lot. Jack & J.B. went for mail. Paul, A.J. & J.B. fixed telephone line. It was burnt in two by lightening & hole knocked in ground. Jack rubbed Mother good & she took some of Dr. Floyd's medicine.

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Birthdays

1

Chelsey Owen

2

Logan Goza
George Raley
Ginger Busby
Heather Dutton
Ashley Simpson
Ella Kay Bell

3

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

4

Henry Phillips
Phyllis Stephens
Savanna Goza

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

8

Alex Gifford

9

Martha Browder
Carolyn Martin
Brayden Hughes
Cynthia Connor
Decker Jones

10

Alex Whatley

11

Dianna Carden
Lila Jane McElhaney
Harlee Wooten
Tim Cowart

12

Kinsley Worthey
Amber Smith
Frances McNutt

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

19

Ray Beeson
Michael Flannigan
Lee Pierce
Blake Villarreal

20

Carla Warren
Shane Ingram
Joseph Goza
Jesse Jones

21

Chloe Bell
Eddie Langston
Emma Crawford
Christina Watson
Michele Black
Hannah Neel

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

25

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

26

Brantley Hughes
Tom Shanklin, Jr.

27

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

28

Larry Gray
Hunter Izell
Courtney Gregory
Jase Gregory

29

Kayla Worthey
Donna Willingham
Susan Cheronas
Isaac Browder
Armen Case

30

Wesley Rhodes
L.C. Bone

31

Mark Battles
Ian Norman

Anniversaries

1

Harold & Diana Carden
Kirk & Mikhaila Watkis

6

John & Amy Kirby

7

Eric & Miranda Chambers

10

Andrew & Jessi Hairston

11

Rayford & Cindy Bethune

13

Rodney & Kayla Mitchell

15

Desmon & Carrie Turner
David & Dorothy Horton

17

Bobby & Sandy Blalock

24

Dwayne & Laura McKenzie
Matthew & Taylor Smothers

25

Mike & Stephanie Potts

26

Will & Lori Blackburn
Coleton & Sammie Reed

28

Joseph & Mandi Goza

29

John & Kim Johnson

30

Richard & Christy Harrison
Kenneth & Ginger Busby

Happy Day!

Support Your Local Fire Department!

Saturday, August 7

BBQ Fundraiser

at the Mentone Fire Station, 5907 AL Hwy. 117

Pork butts, BBQ sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, drinks

Ongoing Community Calendar

Mentone Town Council

meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm at 5607 AL Hwy 117, across from 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.

Ryleigh's Closet

is a clothing closet that provides men's, women's, and children's clothing to those in need on 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 4-7pm. Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

Moon Lake Community Library

is open on Saturdays from 10am-12pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-6pm. 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.

The Lookout Mountain Knitters

meet each Tuesday at 3pm at the MERF House. All are welcome.

All times are Central unless otherwise noted.

Calendar entries are subject to change.

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DeSoto Rescue Squad News by Kelly Leavitt

Congratulations to Mike Stone, captain of DeSoto Rescue Squad, who earned his nursing degree earlier this year. In July, he passed the NCLEX-RN exam, making him eligible to apply for his Registered Nurse license in Georgia. Mike currently works as a paramedic at DeKalb Ambulance Service. His passion is the DeSoto Rescue Squad, an all-volunteer non-profit organization which serves the Mentone, Valley Head, and Hammondville areas.

The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) has committed to match any amount up to \$1,500 that the squad raises until August 31, so now is a great time to send a donation to the team. Contributions can be mailed to DeSoto Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 517, Mentone, AL 35984.

Stop by the Mentone firehouse during the Yard Sale on Saturday, August 7, to meet Mike and other squad

members. They'll be selling sno-cones, soft drinks, and water as a fundraiser. One of their main fundraisers is the Willie Underwood Family Concert, so save the date of October 2 for their performance.

On August 21, the squad will host the quarterly meeting of the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads. They'll share the beauty of Mentone while also bringing tourism dollars to the area.

DeSoto Rescue Squad members answer an average of three to five emergency calls each week. They freely share their expertise, which is often life-saving. "We appreciate everyone's continued support" Mike said, "because without the community we wouldn't be able to run."

You can learn more about the squad at desotorescue.com.



Captain Mike Stone proudly displays his nursing degree

Family Life of a Volunteer Firefighter by Vicky Patrick

So, you have a volunteer firefighter in your family. You are proud and supportive when your loved one makes this commitment. Little did you know the changes that will occur in your family life when this happens.

The two events that you can count on are the nightly pager test from 911 Dispatch for volunteer fire departments and forestry and the weekly meetings/training sessions each Monday night, except holidays. This happens at 6 p.m., so supper on Mondays is either earlier or saved for later. The kids typically won't see their parent until later in the evening and you can count on dirty clothes from that evening. Don't be surprised if clothes taken off from the day are laid out

in case of a call that may occur at night. Mealtimes and restful sleep will be interrupted. The typical calls about downed trees, a need for traffic control, and assistance for car accidents come at all hours of the day and night. When there is a brush or structure fire (not frequently) at mealtime, you might as well wrap the plate in foil and set it back for later. It's all hands on deck with fires. The volunteers race out of their homes, headed for the appropriate station. This is when your stomach is in your throat. Somehow your appetite disappears or the need to sleep isn't a priority. You are praying at that time that your loved one comes home safe and uninjured. Interestingly enough, you will find that your prayer time increases.

Even the most innocuous task of traffic control can be dangerous, especially with the careless drivers. It is amazing how many drivers are oblivious to the flashing lights and directions at an accident scene. The weather is another factor that is unpredictable. Cutting down trees in the pouring rain or cold is no picnic and neither is dealing with the heat, humidity, and bugs in the summer. Yep, more dirty clothes and a pooped loved one! Fund raisers are essential for the fire department. This is truly a family affair. Manpower is necessary to make the BBQ sale a success. Spouses and kids help with the setting up and selling of the BBQ, as well as the take-down and clean-up. If it weren't for the families' participation, the fire department wouldn't be able to have fund raisers.

With all of these changes, family life isn't the same but it's worth the sacrifice to be a part of the volunteer fire department. Vicky Patrick serves as treasurer for the North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District, Mentone's volunteer fire department.



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FREE FOOD FOR EVERYONE!

Thanks to JD Trammell and the North AL Food Bank, 400 free boxes of food will be given away on Tuesday, August 10, between 1 and 1:30 p.m. at Mentone Community Church and Valley Head Town Hall.

SENIOR SERVICES

Free Legal Services
by Emily McCamy

If you are poverty stricken and under age 60, you can contact Legal Services Corporation of Alabama at 866-456-4995 to see if you qualify for free legal assistance. To learn more about this program or to gain access to free do-it-yourself legal forms, go to AlabamaLegalHelp.org.

DeKalb County residents age 60 and OLDER can make an appointment to meet with the TARCOG attorney over the phone or at the Council on Aging for information, referral, and representation. The attorney comes one Monday each month. Representation is for court cases that are non-criminal and non-fee generating. There is no charge for the services, but each person is given the opportunity to make a donation to the program. Some of the types of problems handled through this program are Wills, Estate Planning, Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, Health Care Directives, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, SSI, Consumer Problems, Grandparent Visitation, Nursing Home Issues, Insurance, and Landlord/Tenant issues.

Living Wills and other advance directives are written legal instructions regarding your preferences for Medical care. By planning ahead, you can get the care you want, avoid unnecessary suffering, and relieve caregivers of decision-making burdens during moments of crisis or grief. You can also reduce confusion or disagreement about the choices you would want people to make on your behalf.

An advance directive is a written statement that explains how you want medical decisions to be made if you are unable to make them for yourself. It is important to think about who should be responsible and what choices they should make on your behalf. Some states have a standardized or statutory form, while other states allow you to draft your own document.

A **Health Care Proxy** is a document which allows you to appoint another person (called a proxy or agent) to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to do so. Your proxy should make health care decisions for you according to your wishes or according to his/her assessment of your wishes, including your religious or moral beliefs. There are two circumstances where a health care agent will be needed.

The first is temporary inability to make health care decisions. For example, if something unexpected happens while you are having a surgical procedure and are under general anesthesia, and you are temporarily unable to make your own decisions but a health care decision needs to be made, your health care agent may make the decision.

The second circumstance is permanent inability to make health care decisions. For example, if you are in a persistent vegetative state or suffer from an illness that leaves you unable to communicate, your health care agent can be your voice and make your health care decisions.

A **Power of Attorney** is a document that allows you to appoint another person (your agent or attorney) to make health, financial, and other legal decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so. For example, your power of attorney can deal with issues of medical insurance such as choosing health insurance policies for you (selecting you Medicare health or drug plan), paying for health care, and appealing coverage denials, when applicable.

A **Living Will** describes the type of care you'd like to receive in specific situations if you are incapacitated. The living will provide information directly for your physician and does not appoint an agent to make decisions for you. For example, you can express your desire to not be resuscitated if your illness or injury progresses to a certain stage, or you can state that all viable medical options are to be used as aggressively as possible in all situations, or that certain treatments should not be administered under any circumstances.

If you are age 60 or older and have a need for legal services, call the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590 to make a phone appointment or an in-person appointment with the TARCOG Attorney.

“Library Learners”
Children’s Program
by Lynn Vanderhoff

Want to learn more about the world around you? The Moon Lake Library is a great place to start! Children’s programs will be presented on the second and fourth Saturday of the month for two different age groups. Please plan to attend at the appropriate time for your child’s age, as activities will be tailored to their abilities. Accompanying adults are welcome to learn too, or they can just hang out in the Adult section!

★ Stars Above! ★
Saturday, August 14
Ages 3–5: 10 a.m.

Stars make pictures in the sky. Can you find them? We will read some stories and then draw some so you can look for them when it gets dark.

Ages 6–8: 11 a.m.

We’ll look at some constellations and how to view them. What are shooting stars? The Perseids meteor showers are putting on nightly displays right now!

Frogs, Toads and Tadpoles
Saturday, August 28
Ages 3–5: 10 a.m.

Stories about our hoppy friends will be read, we’ll sing a song, and play a leap-frog game. You’ll get a life cycle coloring sheet to take home.

Ages 6–8: 11 a.m.

We will explore our amphibian neighbors and what makes them so special to us. You will make a paper frog to take home.



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MERF News

[Mentone Educational Resources Foundation]

by Sarah Wilcox



Bingo and Brunch was a blast! On Thursday, July 15, the senior lunch bunch crew gathered for Bingo at 10 a.m., emceed by the MERF lady. Despite being heckled by the crowd and put straight quickly when she called out “I72” out of delirium, Bingo was fun and a big hit! And Brunch was, too, with delicious heart-shaped biscuits and decadent banana bread from Roger Wald at The Hatter Café. Check them out for breakfast and lunch! Kay Cole graciously added lip-smacking zucchini bread and scones to our meal! The kitchen elves (Paula Tally, Paula Easter, Carolyn Nail, Kathy McMunn, Donna Arnett, DeeDee Dunkerley, and Hazel Bickerstaff) prepped, cooked, and served a yummy brunch of hot apple fruit, watermelon, cantaloupe, blueberries, Cheesy Egg Puff, Country Grits and Sausage. Recipes were from the breakfast table of Mountain Laurel Inn B&B (MERF lady’s former gig). There was a demand for another bingo date, so on Wednesday, August 11, Bingo will be happening at the MERF house at 10 a.m., followed by lunch at 11:30 a.m. Assuming that it will be advisable to do so, MERF will begin regular weekly senior lunches on Wednesday, September 22, through November 17, with a Christmas party on December 8. Any businesses, organizations, or individuals interested in providing the meal, contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com.

For these 25 years of serving senior lunches, MERF has had spectacular guests—always full of spunk with smiles on their faces and appreciation of time with new and old friends. In July, MERF said goodbye to Dallyne Jones, one of our spirited, graceful southern ladies, and quick-witted friend. We will miss her smile, friendship, and stories but know that she is happy to be back to keeping her sweet Jim in line.

I cannot believe that school is about to be back in session. Lots of new experiences and places for our community. I hope you picked up one of the fabulous Moon Lake School’s final yearbooks by Lea Long and Dr. Bill Berry. The library may still have some for sale. The new DeKalb County

(continued on page 21)



Shep, the drummer, is leading the MERF moms band with great rhythm and focus.



Thanks to American Legion members Terry Hutcheson and Jesse Crabtree, a flag is gracing MERF’s lawn again. Thanks to Kevin Worthey for getting the rope back up there, too.



Lifelong friendships and fun are developing with these boys at the weekly MERF moms adventures. L to R: Shep, Forrest, Hiland, Coleman, and CG

Just a little side thought in relation to having a grits dish at the MERF house and I am thinking of ways to enrich our local school children’s educational experience. My nephew wrote this when he was 12 or 13 and was asked to write about where he finds beauty in his life! You need to know that my sister and I grew up in Atlanta and my nephew was born in Michigan and raised in the Northeast, but he is a southern gentleman at heart. “I’m not willing to say I find beauty in grits themselves, but I do find beauty in what they mean to me. Grits are a big part of the place and time each year where I am most content. Every time I have them, they bring back memories of the very best times I have had with my family. They represent time-honored traditions like quail hunting with my dad, uncle, and grandfather at our favorite place in south Georgia. At every meal there

are grits on the menu. When I come back from the woods and the sounds and smell of shotguns and dogs, grits are always waiting for me. At Christmas in Atlanta after all the presents are unwrapped, my family has a big sit-down breakfast, and my mom makes her famous blue cheese grits. While I still eat grits at every meal, none are better than my mom’s. My whole “southern” family seems to have grits for every family event. They are the substance that bonds all the memories and experiences that I have had with my “southern” family. Grits represent simpler times in life. They are so simple. These memories and traditions wouldn’t be the same without them. They actually taste pretty good too.” I totally agree with the beauty of grits and I always smile when I am enjoying them. Where do you find beauty in your life?

Honey’s Blue Cheese Grits

- 1/2 cups quick grits
- 1 Tablespoon butter
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 pound of Saga blue cheese, crumbled
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup milk

Follow directions on the package to prepare grits, but use chicken stock instead of water. Add butter, cheese, eggs, and milk to grits. Put in a casserole dish and bake at 425° for 45 minutes.



Bingo was a blast with new and long-time friends.

MERF News (continued from page 20)

Superintendent, Wayne Lyles, was named. Looking forward to the DeKalb County School system focusing on the growth of the students and their learning. MERF hopes to provide some experiential education to the students at Valley Head High School.

Our up-and-coming students have had a great summer, meeting weekly at the MERF house for MERF moms. Ms. Paula comes once a month for an art/music class. The July music class brought out a lot of percussion instruments! We have a future drummer and some regular rhythm sections. I also told the kids that Tinkerbelle had landed in the secret garden, and they couldn't wait to find her. This group is growing, as three of the moms will give birth in the next few months. So grateful for these sweet moms and kids that enjoy time with each other. If you have a preschooler and want to join, just contact me.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 4, for a fun event, Follow Your Art, envisioned by the

Little River Arts Council on the MERF Pathway to Community. From 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., there will be artist vendors, sidewalk chalk art, Something Extra Special Ice Cream truck, the fun and interactive pathway, time outdoors with the community, and more. See LRAC at littleriverartscouncil.org for more information. MERF will be selling Leave Me in Mentone items at this fun event.

I enjoyed meeting Principal Corey Dupree when I popped into the school to say hello. He's excited to work with MERF and to provide some valuable experiences such as field trips and art with the magnificent Ms. Paula. School needs to get into its rhythm and then you'll hear about Paula's work with the students. In the meantime, I'll be writing some grants to raise some of the funds needed for art and field trips.

Sarah Wilcox is the executive director of MERF, the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is "To enrich the



Dallyne Jones' smile and humor will be missed.

learning and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources." If you would like to support MERF's programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984 or contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193.

The Musings of a Wannabe Farm Girl

by Martha Ooten

I have been a city girl most of my life. I married my high school sweetheart and stayed home to raise my three children, a few dogs, cats, and an occasional bunny. When I realized that my children were quickly approaching the age of leaving the nest, I decided that I needed to make some life changes to head off an approaching mid-life crisis. I realized that I had a few choices to make. It was time for either plastic surgery, a sports car, or becoming vegan. Or I could pack up, move to Alabama, and start a farm. Knowing what I know now, I should have chosen the first choice. It would've been a lot less expensive.

But, off to the bookstore I went to purchase farming books and then I spent weeks reading and planning my new life adventure.

I had to convince my husband that this new life decision just made a lot of sense and after cooking many of his favorite meals and using other methods of convincing that I will not write about in this article because this is a family paper, he agreed.

So, seven years ago we packed our bags and moved from our cute little subdivision to the most wonderful little ridge in a place called Valley Head. And this is where my adventure began. After all, I had read all the books and I had a plan. How hard could this be?

The first thing I learned in the first year of farming was to throw out all the farming books. None of the information or advice seems to work on my farm. For instance, chickens. Every book, as well as a few friends, had convinced me that I should raise chickens. Chickens should be easy to raise, so my husband built a chicken tractor and we purchased a little over 100 meat birds plus a dozen or so hens. After all, how hard could it be? None of the books warned me of the mama fox that lived on the neighbor's property and regularly came over to jump the fence

and have breakfast every morning on my dime. Also, the books never prepared me for the black-headed vultures that lived on the other side of our property. So, when I came out one Sunday morning and found headless meat birds all in the front yard, I decided that maybe raising meat birds was just not my thing. When it was time to process our meat birds, we had 30 out of 100. But that was not going to discourage me, because I still had a plan. It just didn't include chickens or at least not meat birds. My husband had fallen in love with our hens and rooster and had convinced me to not give up on our little flock of hens. So up until this year, the battle has raged on at Alabama Grumpy Goat Farm. I have battled it out with vultures, foxes, raccoons, possums, and every other varmint you could think of. They won. After building multiple hen houses and spending millions of dollars on replacing hens, housing, and fences, I've given up.

But don't worry, I have a plan. I got rid of all of my chickens and replaced them with quail.

So, now that I have introduced myself and decided to share my adventure with my neighbors and friends as a warning of what can happen when trying to head off a midlife crisis, I'm hoping that this as well as other musings that I plan on sharing will help you to not only save money but also spare your sanity and possibly rethink any extreme life changes before approaching a midlife crisis.

Until next time, see you all in town. Love from my farm to yours.



Mentone Arts & Cultural Center Update by Randy Grider

Bob Ross painting class and songwriters round featuring Ryan Robertson

We have two great events planned for August, including a painting class in the style of an American icon. Partnering with Mountain Framing, we are sponsoring an Official Bob Ross Workshop at the frame shop on August 21 starting at 10 a.m.

The workshop is being taught by visiting Certified Bob Ross Instructor (CRI) Gary Grider and takes about four hours. It is limited to 10 people (ages 13 and up) and costs \$100. All supplies are included to create your own 16x20" Bob Ross Technique painting. We will also provide a light lunch. To register, please see contact information at the bottom of this column.

The late Bob Ross was the creator and host of The Joy of Painting, a PBS instructional television program that aired from 1983 to 1994. Thanks to the internet, there has been a renewed interest in Ross and his painting technique among younger generations.

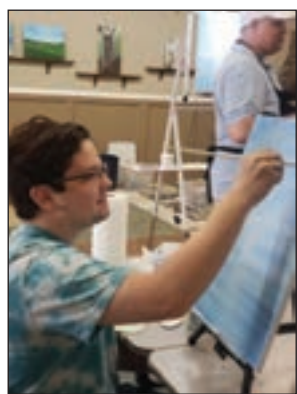
Artist/instructor Gary Grider completed his CRI in 2019 and began teaching his "Happy Little Paint Brushes" classes at his studio in Chattanooga. He currently teaches at 12 venues across Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

We also have our monthly songwriters round scheduled for Monday, August 9, from 7-9 p.m., at the Center (5951 AL 117, Mentone). This month's feature is Cleburne County, AL, native Ryan Robertson.

Robertson gained attention in the music industry in the 1990s when a talent scout noticed him, resulting in a six-season performance stint at Six Flags Over Georgia, and later when courted by RCA executives while a regular favorite at the famed Bluebird Café in Nashville.

Ryan's initial audition for the Bluebird Café resulted in many invitations to perform in the round with other great songwriters. He was honored in 1996 as one of "The Best of the Nest" songwriters for the Bluebird Café and interviewed on TNN's country music entertainment news show, "Music City Tonight."

In 1997, Ryan signed with management team Robert Cunningham and Mike



Create your own Bob Ross Technique painting.



Ryan Robertson and wife Missie

Hyland. This team was successful in getting him in-house auditions for several major music labels. RCA began to keep a watch on any performances that Robertson was making in the Nashville area. After one performance, RCA approached him and asked him to start working with a producer. After a year or more of working and writing with the producer Robert Byrne, RCA requested a showcase.

Ultimately, a record deal didn't pan out and Robertson returned to teaching school in the Heflin, AL area, playing events on the weekends, and helping with music at his church. In 2000, Ryan was elected as the Cleburne County probate judge.

In 2016, he co-wrote a No. 1 charted song in Country Gospel called "God Against the Law." In 2017, he was successful in charting a No. 2 in Country Gospel with a song he wrote called "Little Yellow Seeds." Ryan recently wrote a children's book with the same title, based on his song.

For the past five years, Ryan has been the lead singer for the "Lard Bucket Band." The popular band plays nearly each weekend at venues in east Alabama and Georgia.

The songwriters round, hosted by Mentone singer-songwriter Craig Hendricks, will spotlight three other songwriters, including Phillip David Harris, a Nashville-published songwriter living in north Alabama. He is a southern storyteller and acoustic musician who specializes in harrowing tales of the deep south.

A suggested \$15 donation for admission is requested to help pay the travel expenses of the songwriters, who volunteer their

time to take part in the round.

For more information about these events and updates about any upcoming educational classes, please visit the Events section of our Facebook page or contact us via information listed below.

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

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Rhododendron Garden Club by Rhea Pirch



The Rhododendron Garden Club met for their monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 13, at the MERF House. We had nearly a full house with 17 of our 22 members present (including five new members)! The meeting started with a demonstration on how to build a miniature garden, given by Misty Watters of Moon Lake Trading Co., here in Mentone.

Misty introduced herself, then gave us a bit of her background.

Originally from Oklahoma, she and her husband Alex moved to North Carolina after earning degrees in graphic arts and spent 10 years there working as printers. They moved to Valley Head in 1995, then to Mentone in 2000. Their dream to own and run their own garden and antique shop became a reality when they opened Moon Lake Trading Co. in 2010. Alex operates Watters Excavating and Misty manages the garden and gift shop. Recently, their son Noah opened Seabolt's Taco food truck on the same property.

Misty continued with her presentation, giving us step-by-step instructions on how to build a miniature garden.

She started with a container with holes in the bottom, approximately 6" deep and 14" wide to accommodate the features she had in mind and to allow for root growth of her chosen plants. A container of any size can be used for a miniature garden, from flowerpots to washing tubs, or even a wheelbarrow, which she once used for a design.

She filled the bottom of the container with packing peanuts, then topped it with a 50/50 mix of worm castings and well-draining grow mix. Then she started on the design. The first plant she used was a creeping wire vine (*Muehlenbeckia axillaris*). She wrapped part of it around a miniature trellis and let the rest flow over the edge of the container. She then made a path leading to the trellis, first by lining it with small pebbles, then filling it in with pea gravel. She added a hens and chicks plant (*Sempervivum tectorum*) to the landscape, a table and chairs, a little critter, a topiary, and even a chandelier. Voila, her design was finished! She assured us that all the materials she used are available for sale at Moon Lake Trading Co., and she is willing to give advice on the sort of plants and decorations we can use in our own miniature gardens.

The business part of the meeting started after Misty's presentation. Dianne Kuehl brought refreshments, then presented the treasurer's report. Last month's minutes were duly accepted into the record. I gave the meditation, a poem by Gerald Stern called "Dubuque Street." It is the final line of this poem that speaks to the gardener in me: "My hands all black from dreaming and digging and praying in the soft dirt."

During roll call we were asked to name any pollinator flowers growing in our gardens. Judging from the variety mentioned, I would say the pollinators are busy in Mentone! Our selection included bee balm, coneflowers, crocosmia, abelia, salvia, zinnia, black-eyed Susans, fleabane, sunflowers and Shasta daisies.

In line with the pollinator theme, horticulture chair Martha Wood gave her report on what flowers attract what type of pollinators.

All bees (around 20,000 known distinct species) are attracted to yellow, blue, and ultra-violet colors. They eat pollen and sugary nectar, have a strong sense of smell, and land on the flowers they pollinate. Therefore, they are attracted to flowers designed for landing, including bell- or bowl-shaped flowers such as poppies, buttercups, or bellflowers. They also like the flat heads of sunflowers and the wide tubes of snapdragons.

Hummingbirds are the most specialized bird pollinators on the planet. Red and orange flowers offer big nectar rewards to them. They hover instead of land on flowers and lack a sense of smell. To attract hummingbirds, consider planting

trumpet creeper, red bee balm, salvia, zinnias, and fuchsia.

Butterflies are almost as numerous as bees, with 17,500 different species. They have a sense of smell and sharp color vision. They must perch to feed with their long, curled tongues (proboscis). A butterfly garden would consist of brightly colored, scentless flowers with shallow blossoms that allow easy nectar access. The most popular flowers in a butterfly garden include milkweed, coneflowers, hyssop, asters, and liatris.

Let's not forget the nighttime pollinators such as moths and bats. Moths have good night sight and an excellent sense of smell. To attract these pollinators, choose angel's trumpet, moonflower, and woodland tobacco. Bats rely on sound as well as smell to find food. They are attracted to the fruity flowers of mangoes, bananas, and guava, and many species of flowering cacti.

For the conservation report, Marsha Merrell handed out information on how to recycle wooden pallets. They can be used for several different projects, such as a tool-storage corral, an herb garden, a wine rack, or a compost bin. Marsha provided us with detailed instructions on how to take old pallets (which can be found for free at hardware stores, garden nurseries, or simply for the asking from your friends and neighbors) and turn them into composting bins.

Last on the agenda was the review of unfinished and new business. We recognized the passing of Dallyne Jones, mother of member Sharon Harris and the first president of the Rhododendron Garden Club upon its founding in 1966.

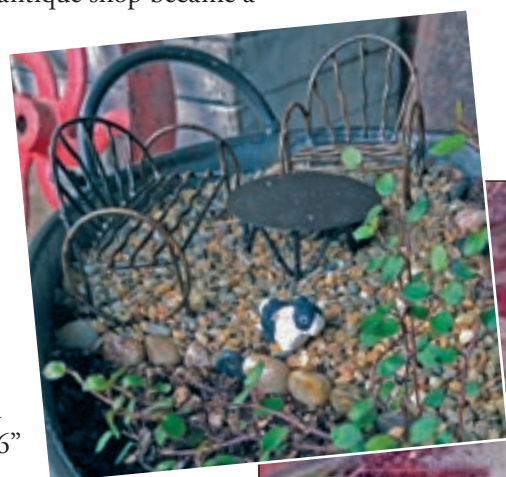
It is our time-honored tradition to plant a rhododendron in honor of any member who has passed. In this case, we decided to honor Dallyne with a plaque in front of the foundation planting of rhododendrons we plan for the MERF House this fall.

We also briefly discussed the upcoming flower show in September. During the August meeting, Mellanie Tuttle will demonstrate some of the flower designs that we can create for the show, using the "Brush Strokes"

paintings as inspiration. She will show us various containers we can use and elements we can add to our flower arrangements so they will reflect the paintings and follow the guidelines of each design class.

Our meeting then adjourned with a reminder of our next meeting, Tuesday August 10, at 10 a.m. at the MERF House. All are invited to attend! Until then, follow us on Facebook, or send any questions to our e-mail, rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Rhea Pirch is the secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.



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River Voice by Angie Shugart

During June and July, Little River Waterkeeper celebrated Little River in two big ways. On June 25, the organization threw a Chef and Brewer's Dinner for 50 supporters. We enjoyed seeing familiar faces and meeting many new friends of LRWK. The venue, Nippersink Lodge, was built in 1935 and overlooks the West Fork of Little River. It could not have been a more perfect setting. The Cox/Disney family has been gracious enough to host our events over the past several years and we are so grateful for their generosity. Guests greatly enjoyed exceptional musical entertainment from Terry Hutcheson and craft beer from Back Forty Beer Company. A four-course dinner was catered by Roadside 'Que and featured foods from local farms within 70 miles, with an exception for Gulf seafood. Justin and his crew did an excellent job. The music, people, and food all came together for a great cause! Through sponsorships, ticket sales, and donations, the organization raised over \$5,000. These funds will help us cover the costs for water testing supplies, as well as fun, educational programs that enhance and protect Little River.

We came together to celebrate our amazing Little River again on July 25 during a press



conference organized by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The event was an announcement of the purchase of 157 acres of pristine land near DeSoto Falls by Alabama State Parks. The Commissioner of DCNR, Representative Ledbetter, Mayor Hammond, and I spoke about the new addition to DeSoto State Park and the importance of protecting land for future generations. The land was originally to be sold at auction in lots as part of a new subdivision for up to 35 homes. Construction of the roads and homesites would have been devastating to the land and river. Little River Waterkeeper worked night and day to

spread awareness about the auction and encouraged interested parties to purchase only for conservation purposes. Our pleas made their way to the state capital and the land was saved. This acquisition will remain protected in perpetuity and is a big win for the residents of Mentone and an especially big win for Little River. If you get time, I encourage you to write Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter and Commissioner Chris Blankenship and thank them for their leadership.

We don't have to gather or plan a special event in order to appreciate and adore Little River. There are so many reasons to celebrate the life blood of our area. The water is near pristine, cool, and refreshing. There are very few rivers you can say that about. I hope you will get out to enjoy this exceptional waterway. Little River is like no other and deserves to be celebrated and protected.

Angie Shugart is the executive director of Little River Waterkeeper, a 501(c)(3) water advocacy program and a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a global clean water movement. Learn more at littleriverwaterkeeper.org. Donations are tax-deductible. 215 Grand Ave. SW Fort Payne, AL 35967.



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Moon Lake Community Library News

by Anna Mae Horn



OPEN HOURS
Tuesday & Thursday 3–7
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We love seeing you again! Patronage is picking back up at the library as we ease back into pre-pandemic normalcy. It seems that each week we see more familiar faces coming through the door to check out or purchase books.

Many have conveyed the fact they thought we were closed down or getting rid of our stock—just the opposite. We are expanding hours, raising funds for the future, and ranking up activities. Expanded hours start August 1: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Book sales are an important fundraiser for us. Kind patrons donate gently used books, and we simply haven't the room to shelve them all for check out. Also, we periodically check to see which books haven't been read in a long time. We need these sold to make room for new books that our readers want. While the library was closed for the pandemic, books were still being donated. So, our shelves are overflowing.

Attention all Spenser and Jesse Stone fans! I noticed 14 Robert B. Parker books on the sale shelf. There were also several Nora Roberts books and many other fabulous authors. Remember, we also have a free section of books available for the taking.

This month, we welcome back Mickey Luck, Jerry Megli, Debra Fey, and the rest of their group as they resume free ukulele sessions. They will meet August 7 at 1 p.m. For more information, check out the Mentone Ukes Facebook page or call Debra Fey at 404-630-2918. If you have a small group that needs meeting space, please reach out to us to see what can be arranged.

Also this month, we will begin a children's program on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. Activities start at 10 a.m. for ages 3 to 5 and at 11 a.m. for ages 6 to 8. As a reminder, children can sign up for a library card to check out their very own books. Children under age 14 also require an adult signature.

Thank you to the volunteers who have stepped forward. We appreciate you! Volunteering only requires a few hours of your time, but the benefit to the library is great. If you are interested in volunteering or in details about our activities, please follow us on Facebook or sign up for email updates. Our website is MoonLakeLibrary.org. See you soon!

Anna Mae Horn is the vice chair of the Moon Lake Community Library board.



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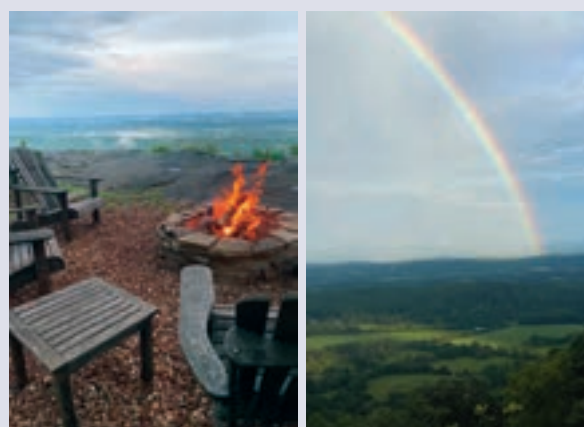
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- Jim's Family Restaurant
- River Ridge Escape
- Menlo Design Cuts
- Menlo Lucky's
- Menlo Restaurant
- Menlo Town Hall
- Mountain Top Country Store
- Paradise Garden
- Reece Tire

In Memoriam



Dallyne and Jim Jones

MARY DALLYNE TILLEY JONES October 9, 1927 – July 2, 2021

Mary Dallyne Tilley Jones was born October 9, 1927, on Sand Mountain in Henagar, AL. She was the second of seven children born to Dallas and Minnie Tilley. Dallyne married James Thomas Jones, of Mentone on June 23, 1945. Since Dallyne and Jim were too young to get married (17 and 16 respectively) without their parents' consent in Alabama, the pair drove the short distance across the state line to Georgia to elope with Dallyne's younger sister, Ruth, in tow.

Together, they were married for 72 years and raised a family of six in Mentone. Jim and Dallyne's devotion to each other—through thick and thin—continues to exemplify what a good marriage looks like to their children, grandchildren and those they knew well. As Jim would often say, "It's ok to be hen-pecked if you love the hen that pecked you."

Dallyne was a constant contradiction in terms—she was strong-willed and ready to lead but also believed in serving others and spent much of her life doing so. She loved her community of Mentone and was often busy cooking for someone in the community, making flower arrangements for her church, Moon Lake Baptist, or out working on one project or another.

Her lifetime of service was founded in her deep faith in God. This faith was something she worked to instill in both her children and grandchildren. Her grandchildren were often told by Jim, "She's gooder'n any angel," on the many summer days and weekends they spent at the couple's home.

She was quick on her feet and always ready to take care of what needed to be done, but never hesitated to pause for a teaching moment. Her grandchildren can attest to the fact that time spent with their grandmother was always meaningful. Even the most mundane tasks, such as gardening, cooking, and working in the chicken houses, became adventures in their own right because of the stories and knowledge she shared.

Many evenings with Dallyne in her later life meant a long walk in the woods, where she could point out each native plant by name and each bird by song, finished with time spent on the porch sitting in the swing and listening to her and Jim tell stories.

All who knew Dallyne loved her for her wit, willingness to speak the truth, tenacity and charity. She was a salt-of-the-earth woman with a tough mindset and a good heart. Though her family, friends, caregivers and many in her community will miss her greatly, it's great comfort to know she is sitting beside Jim again – and probably admonishing him for not cleaning up the place before her arrival through those heavenly gates.

She is survived by daughters Sharon Harris (Jim), Glenda Jones (Roy Smith), and Susan Manning (Alan); son, Carl Jones; sons-in-law, Terral Carr and Mike Dewees; brothers Glenn Tilley and Joe Tilley; and 15 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her husband Jim; daughters Myra Nell Jones, Debra Dewees, and Rita Carr; her grandson Daniel Harris; and four siblings.

Dallyne's family would like to thank her caregivers, Marilyn Slaton, Kathy Wheat, and Sandy Tate, and Encompass Hospice for the ongoing care and comfort they provided her in her final stage of life. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations are made to the Alabama Baptist Children's Home, P.O. Box 361767, Birmingham, AL, 35236.

MR. DAVID CHRISTOPHER BROWN

September 9, 1959 – July 13, 2021

David Christopher Brown, age 61, of Valley Head, passed away on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at Memorial Hospital in Chattanooga, TN.

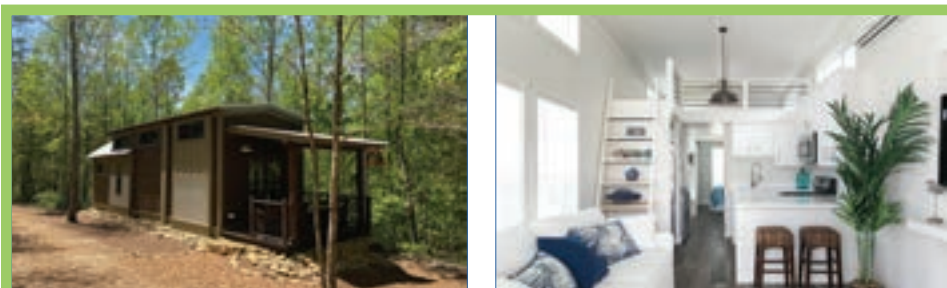
He is survived by a son, Christopher Dillon Brown; girlfriend, Pam Wooten; siblings, Robert "Cub" Brown, Cindy Meadows (David), & A.J. Brown (Patti) and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Robert "Bear" Brown and Emily Gilbreath Brown.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to St. Jude's Children's Hospital (stjude.org).

KAREN DENISE MILLICAN DITMORE

September 30, 1967 – July 23, 2021

Karen Denise Millican Ditmore, age 53, of Valley Head, passed away on July 23, 2021. Mrs. Ditmore is survived by: her husband, Tim Ditmore; children, Colton Ditmore (Amanda), Jerakah Ditmore, & Benjamin Ditmore; granddaughter, Kensleigh Ditmore; father, Kenneth Millican; siblings, Mark Millican, Daniel Millican (Sarah), Jeremy Millican (Carolyn), Heather Andrade, April Blanks (Justin), and Kelly Meadows (Colby); and a host of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by an infant daughter, Rebekah Erin Ditmore, and her mother, Judy Millican.



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