



THE GROUNDHOG

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

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mapamentone.com/groundhog

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"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

April 2020

STAY HOME, Stay Healthy, Stay Positive

by Kelly Leavitt

Life as we know it has certainly changed, quickly. Although it sometimes seems like it's been months, in reality it was only a few weeks ago that Alabama confirmed its first case of COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. Since then, events have been cancelled, jobs have been lost, churches have gone online, and businesses have been closed. Students from kindergarten through college have swapped spending their days in classrooms to spending their time at home, with many continuing their studies online, and others having an extended break before their online or paper-packet studies begin in early April. Two major fundraisers in Mentone have been cancelled: MAPA's spring Rhododendron Festival and MERF's annual art

auction. The Little River Arts Council cancelled its annual membership meeting and open house. Our community library has closed and MERF's senior lunches have been suspended. The summer camps that our local economy so depends on are in a state of uncertainty whether camp sessions will be cancelled for the season.

Workers who have the ability to telecommute have found ways to create a new structure within their home. Parents have adjusted to their children unexpectedly being home all day, and it's not been easy for many of these parents who must continue going to their jobs; nor is it necessarily easy for the children, who miss their friends and teachers, and the predictable structure that school offers them.

Families have also been forced to handle the pain that comes from not being able to visit their loved ones in nursing homes, or even in hospitals. Funerals have become a casualty of this pandemic, as have weddings. High school and college seniors are missing out on some of the most important and memorable days of their scholastic careers. The list goes on.

One thing we've learned, across the world, is that we are all in this together. A global pandemic takes no sides. We are battling a "novel" virus that our bodies have no immunity to. Health professionals and scientists are learning more about the virus and the ensuing disease each day.

(continued on page 7)



Rhododendron Festival Cancelled

See "MAPA News" on page 5 for details.



WHAT DO YOU SEE FROM YOUR WINDOW?

by Cynthia Stinson

Normally when you wake and start your day, you may look out the window and just take note of the weather, noting if there's rain, snow, or sunshine—but not really "seeing" what's out your window.

In these strange days that we are in, looking out the window has taken on a whole new meaning. For some looking out their window, they are looking for a sign that everything is going to be ok, a sense of calmness. For some, it's the only connection to the world outside.

There is a new public Facebook group called "[What do you see from your window? #StayAtHome](#)." This page has become a place for people around the world to really see what's out their windows, and share their view with the world. When I joined the group, there were 177 people who were posting photos of the world outside their window. Now, just a few weeks later, the group has grown to almost 50,000 members, worldwide.

I have seen what life is like in places I could only imagine before. The change of seasons all over the world are evident. We in Mentone are experiencing the awakening from winter's sleep to spring, as promises pop up in the form of wildflowers and trees showing signs of new life, while other parts of the world varying stages of the spring and fall seasons.

I have formed friendships with people from all over the world who I would never have met, if not for this state of isolation. A man in Israel who is celebrating his 60th birthday, that normally would be celebrated with friends and family, is



#theviewfrommywindow
by Jerome Ferrere
Menton, France 3/28/20

now being celebrated by people all over the world, just by simply posting a picture on this page. He is not alone.

From the kangaroos of Australia, to the giraffes of Africa, to the house cat sunning on the veranda in Greece, there is life outside our windows. This is something we all have in common.

I have been able to see photos of Menton, France, the Mediterranean town that our lovely little town was named after. I have grieved with people who have lost loved ones, and others who are alone and have only this page to share their thoughts and fears. I have celebrated birthdays, births, marriages, and anniversaries with people who normally I would not know about. Collectively, we offer wishes of good tidings and blessings, pray with people, and reassure each other that this is only temporary. Together, we are keeping faith and hope alive.

We all have one thing in common: we are staying inside our homes to prevent the spread of this horrible virus. Looking out my window, and really seeing what's out there, I have watched the daffodils bloom, and the tulip tree transform from bare branches to purple blooms that are giving way to the green leaves of summer. I'm seeing the perennials start to pop up from a winter's sleep to bring us the beautiful blooms we love. The robins, cardinals, and chickadees are out foraging for food, getting ready to build their nests for the new life they will bring forth.

So, what do you see from your window?



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

Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice.

Do you have a story idea?

We welcome contributions!

Email groundhognews@yahoo.com



Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond

John Dersham, CEO of DeKalb Tourism, is actively discouraging people from coming to Mentone and other tourist venues until this pandemic threat has greatly subsided. I concur. We will welcome you back when this thing is over. If a family owns a second home in Mentone and chooses to shelter here, please come with several days of supplies and quarantine for 14 days. Follow all CDC guidelines.

Recently, I was on a conference call organized by Senator Livingston and House Leader Ledbetter. Representatives from the governor's office, the Alabama Department of Health, Patrick Trammell, administrator DeKalb Regional Hospital, and others discussed plans and strategies to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on our communities. I was on a conference call this past week with DeKalb County EMA and other officials and given the latest information on the COVID-19 situation. Right now the situation is manageable. There is a concern that the present inventory of Personal Protection Equipment for health care personnel is in short supply if the situation rapidly gets worse. DeKalb County EMA is working with providers to increase inventories.

Folks—this is not a drill. It is crucial that we each take responsibility for our own health and for the health of our neighbors. Wash your hands often with soap and water, sneeze or cough into your sleeve, sanitize frequently touched surfaces, and, crucially, stay at home. If we follow all



these guidelines it will help break the chain of transmission and fewer people will get sick.

Get your information from reliable sources as the situation rapidly changes. Governor Ivey issued a new proclamation on April 3.

[Alabama Department of Public Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.alabamagov.com/newsroom/2020/04/03/governor-ivey-proclamation-covid-19/)

Town Hall is open now Monday–Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., but that is subject to change. The Mentone Fort Payne Water office is closed.

Take care of yourselves, your families, and your neighbors. To overcome this challenge we all have to work together and discipline ourselves to do things we are not used to do doing. This has to be a team effort!

Stay safe.

Rob Hammond

Mayor, Mentone

Letter from the Editor

In a “normal” April, this issue would be focusing on May’s Rhododendron Festival, which is presented by MAPA as a fundraiser largely to support the financial grants MAPA issues to our local organizations in need. In mid-March, the MAPA board of directors made the difficult decision to cancel the festival. As far as I know, this was a first in the festival’s history. So many “firsts” these days...something we can each attest to.

In the days following this decision, the board had to make another challenging decision, and voted to make this issue available online only—another “first.” I am personally grateful for both of these decisions, which I consider to be both wise and considerate.

The Groundhog has an ongoing agreement with its advertisers that we will print a certain number of papers and distribute them to a certain number of points. Businesses need to know that their ads will be seen in order for it to make sense to invest in those ads. To this end, in recent days I have begun contacting all of our advertisers to let them know we can't meet our “print” obligation this month. I have explained that with the loss of the festival revenue, we would very much appreciate their supporting us by continuing to pay their normal ad rate, if their business is healthy enough to support the expenditure. As well, I explained that if their business was being negatively affected by these times of constriction, that MAPA wanted to support them by offering a discounted rate. This has proven to be a supportive relationship,

as many of the businesses chose to pay their normal rate, and others were very grateful for the discount.

Our advertisers are, by and large, small local businesses and we appreciate—each month—their support of this publication. Please take note of their ads and support them as you can, or when you can. We are all in this together, and every ripple has an effect.

As MAPA president Mark Hoffman states in his article on page 5, this is a good time to consider becoming a member or donating to MAPA, so the organization can continue to fulfill its mission and support our community.

I know many of us have felt especially grateful in recent weeks that we live in a sparsely populated area, and that we have the beauty of nature to immerse ourselves in, often right outside our back doors. Our community has shown its generosity and compassion towards others in recent weeks, as well as (for the most part) good common sense when it has come to simply staying at home whenever possible. I hope that reading this issue in its online rendition brings you some sense of comfort and connection with the remarkable people we each call neighbors.

For those of you who love Mentone and surrounding areas but cannot be here now, I have included many photos in these pages to help you feel “connected.” We look forward to welcoming you back to town in the near future.

Be well, everyone. —Kelly

Stay-at-Home Order Issued by State of Alabama

Read the full order
[Alabama State Health Directive](https://www.alabamagov.com/newsroom/2020/04/03/governor-ivey-proclamation-covid-19/) [4/3/20]

A statewide stay-at-home order for Alabama residents was officially put into effect on Saturday, April 4, by Governor Kay Ivey. The order will expire on Thursday, April 30. The order is intended to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. “You need to understand we are past urging people to stay at home,” said Ivey. “It is now the law.” The order defines which businesses or operations are considered “essential” and “non-essential.” Some highlights of the order are:

- All non-work-related gatherings of 10 or more people are prohibited.
- Non-essential businesses must remain closed.
- People may leave their residence to obtain necessary supplies, including food, fuel, or supplies needed to work from home.
- Citizens must stay home except when they need to perform “essential activities” which are laid out in the order.
- Occupancy at grocery stores and big box stores is limited to no more than 50 percent of the normal occupancy load as determined by the fire marshal.
- Religious services, weddings, and funerals must involve fewer than 10 people who maintain a consistent 6-foot distance from each other. Drive-in worship services are allowed if all participants in each vehicle share the same place of residence, remain in their vehicle for the entirety of the service, and do not come within 6 feet of participants in other vehicles.
- Employees may leave home to perform work at “essential businesses and operations.”
- Outdoor activities must involve fewer than 10 people who maintain a consistent 6-foot distance from others.
- Individuals may leave their home to obtain or provide dental, medical, or surgical procedures as allowed under the order, automobile repair services, and services necessary to maintain health and safety.
- Essential activities that the governor's order recognizes include the following, though there are exceptions or stipulations in some cases: working, visiting family members, obtaining necessary supplies or services, attending religious services, taking care of others, engaging in outdoor activity, shelter, and travel that is required by law.
- People may leave their residence to care for or transport a family member, friend, or pet in another household, or to donate blood.

Best Practices During COVID-19 Outbreak for Farmers’ Market Customers

We are fortunate to have access to fresh food from local farmers. The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries has issued the following guidelines for anyone attending a farmers’ market. (Farmers selling at market have a similar set of guidelines to follow.)

We encourage everyone who is healthy and feels safe to visit our farmers’ markets in order to procure healthy, local food from area farmers, ranchers and small businesses. But we ask that you follow these strict guidelines:

- Please be patient and follow new market rules during this time.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds upon arrival at the market and frequently as you move throughout the space. We will have an increased number of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer and all vendors are required to display hand sanitizer in each booth.
- Do not congregate between booths or in walkways.
- Maintain at least an arm’s length distance between other shoppers and vendors, especially while you are waiting in line.

Use of Cloth Face Coverings Recommended to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19



The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends wearing cloth face coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s0403-cloth-face-coverings.html) in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it

from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Face coverings should be routinely washed, depending on the frequency of use. A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

When removing a used face covering, be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth and wash hands immediately after removing.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

[U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams demonstrates how to make a simple face covering](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s0403-cloth-face-coverings.html)

[Instructions for making sewn and non-sewn face coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s0403-cloth-face-coverings.html)

Helpful Facebook Groups

[DeKalb County Alabama COVID19 Resources](#)

[Mentone Neighbor to Neighbor](#)

[Mentone Neighbors Alert](#)

- Do NOT greet anyone at the market with hugs or handshakes.
- Avoid touching your face.
- No hand-to-hand contact will be allowed between vendors and shoppers. Point to the product that you would like, allow the vendor to bag it and set it down on the table before you pick it up.
- Do not hand vendors payments directly. Place cash and credit cards on the table for vendors to pick up. Use Apple Pay or Venmo when available. If you are able, we encourage you to set up Apple Pay or Venmo on your smartphone before you arrive and use this as a payment method. If you do use this method of payment, please sanitize your phone before you arrive and after you leave the market.
- Anyone who is feeling unwell in any way should stay home.
- Any shopper who is at a higher risk, including individuals who are over 65 and/or with underlying health conditions, should stay home.
- Please refrain from bringing your dogs to the market during this time.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Novel Coronavirus Protection Guidelines

Source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

Know How it Spreads



There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Take steps to protect yourself



Clean your hands often
Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact
Avoid close contact with people who are sick
Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).

Take steps to protect others



Stay home if you're sick
Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
[Learn what to do if you are sick](#).



Cover coughs and sneezes
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash.
Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Clean and disinfect
Clean AND disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](#) daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
[Complete Disinfection Guidance](#)

Stay Informed
Governor Ivey's Office
State Health Order (4/3/20)
Alabama Department of Public Health

MAPA's decision to cancel the 2020 Rhododendron Festival was a difficult one. With regard to this event and the coronavirus pandemic, our primary concern is certainly for the health and well being of all—visitors, vendors, performers, volunteers, and locals, as well as services such as fire, police, rescue, bus drivers, etc.

We are taking the pandemic seriously because we would be welcoming thousands into our small town. Our vendors and approximately 5,000+ festival-goers come from Alabama and other states. The virus is exponentially growing in Alabama and nearby states and may not plateau until late April through early May. There is the possibility that, even if the virus is lessening at that time, locals as well as visitors could be exposed to another round of virus through interaction at the festival and on the shuttle busses. Keeping our elderly population safe by limiting the influx of people is important.



It seems most wise to follow the precautions set by the CDC and the guidance of the ADPH.

Postponing was not an option because immediately after the Rhododendron Festival, our festival organizer begins planning for Colorfest, which is an even bigger undertaking and our main fund raiser. We anticipate a great fall festival and look forward to seeing you there (October 17-18).

Meanwhile, and in particular due to the absence of funds that we would normally generate through the Rhododendron Festival, please consider becoming a MAPA member and/or sending a tax-deductible donation! Thanks all, and be safe.

Mark Hoffman is the president of Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Hello from DeSoto Rescue Squad! by Mike Stone

First, I would like to thank everyone who has sent in donations for our annual fundraiser. Your support is greatly appreciated and much needed. We are still planning to hold our concert fundraiser featuring the Willie Underwood Family. Rayne with Magic Music Foundation has donated 130 N-95 masks to the rescue squad so that our members are protected while responding to patients that meet the additional personal protective equipment requirements. We are still responding to our calls and will continue to do so through this crisis. We have ordered additional supplies and are hoping to receive them at any time. During this health crisis, please follow the recommendations of the [Governor](#), the [President](#), the [Alabama Department of Public Health](#), and the [CDC](#). Please wash your hands regularly with soap and water as well as maintain the social distancing recommendations. I know it is not fun to be isolated from everyone, as we in Mentone and Valley Head are very social people. It is imperative that we follow the recommendations to help decrease the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. I would also ask that everyone not panic and hoard needed supplies. If we all purchase only what we truly need, that will leave enough for the rest of the community as well. If you have a need for our services, please dial 9-1-1 and not one of our cell phones if it is an emergency. By dialing 911 you get a faster response from us and an ambulance responding as well. Also, if you need a lift assist, please call in through 911 and ask for the rescue squad to be dispatched for a lift assist. If you have a non-emergent need you can contact our office number at 256-560-9110 and we will return your call as quick as we can. I am always asked what our biggest needs are for the rescue squad, and unfortunately my answer is always the same: funding. Our biggest expenses are gasoline, insurance, and vehicle maintenance. Donations can be made online through our website at desotorecue.com or by regular mail at P.O. Box 517, Mentone, AL 35984. Again, I appreciate everything everyone has done to continue to support us.

Be safe, be well, and God Bless,
Michael Stone, NRP
Captain, DeSoto Rescue Squad



Join MAPA Today

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

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

One of MAPA's key missions is supporting local organizations and projects which seek to improve the quality of life in Mentone. Financial grants are made possible through MAPA memberships, donations, and funds raised by the publication of *The Groundhog* and by hosting annual spring and fall festivals which feature handmade arts and crafts and live music.

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

Your membership includes a complimentary subscription to *The Groundhog*.

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

MAPA is chartered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

A Note to Valley Head Residents by Debra Rhodes

On behalf of the Town of Valley Head, we would like to assure our residents that the town is working to determine how to best serve you during this time while striving to keep our community safe and healthy. To limit possible exposure to sickness, we would like to remind those who need to pay sewer bills, please mail them to P.O. Box 126, Valley Head, AL 35989. As the doors of Town Hall will be locked, residents are encouraged to call to see whether any substantial business can be handled over the phone. We will be sure to post any updates as we receive new information. If you have any questions, please call 256-635-6814 during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and we will help you. Thank you for your patience during this time as we all do our best to respond to this situation.

Debra Rhodes is the town clerk of Valley Head.

County Closures

On March 31, the DeKalb County Courthouse and DeKalb County Activities Building were closed to the public until further notice due to circumstances related to COVID-19. Those having service needs should attempt to call the appropriate office of need to conduct business via telephone or internet.

[DeKalb County Commission](#) 256-845-8569
[DeKalb County Probate](#) 256-845-8510
[DeKalb County Circuit Clerk Office](#) 256-845-8525
[DeKalb County Revenue Commission](#) 256-845-8515
[DeKalb County Sheriff's Office](#) 256-845-3801
[DeKalb County Emergency Management Agency](#) 256-845-8569



Food Bank

Volunteers for Mentone’s local food bank have adjusted their normal routine by pre-packing bags of food to be picked up by recipients from up under a tent outside St. Joseph’s Church. (Traditionally, recipients are able to shop from the various foods on display in the church fellowship hall.) Donations of toilet paper, Spam, and cash are always welcome. Contact Jim Byrom at 256-635-8747. (By the way, since the photo above was taken [3/12/20], volunteers have begun wearing face masks and gloves, while also practicing social distancing.)



Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

In 2019, Little River Escape Tiny Home Community was named one of the nation's top 6 tiny home communities by U.S. News & World Report. As a result, our community is now almost fully occupied by folks who have come from 12 different states. Little River Escape has decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership, where 6-8 tiny homes are available to tour and purchase. RRE is now delivering across the nation, as well as developing other communities to bring more folks to Lookout Mountain.

A new development is coming to Mentone, only 3 miles from town. Mentone Mountain Escape will be a tiny home neighborhood with +/-20, ½-acre wooded lots per house and a common area with a dog park, patio, and firepit area.

RIVER RIDGE ESCAPE

Tour River Ridge Escape's Tiny Homes • Thurs-Sat 11-5 EST or by appointment
12333 Hwy 48, Menlo, GA 30731
RiverRidgeEscape.com 706-936-0007



Plein air artist Victoria Pearlmain practiced social distancing while painting at Mountain Cove Farm in Georgia on March 21.



#theviewfrommywindow by Cynthia Stinson (Mentone Inn) 3/24/20



#theviewfrommywindow by Leslie Bunch, Winston Place, Valley Head 3/29/20

Stay Home (continued from page 1)

Our duty to ourselves, our families, and our communities has become a unified call to prevention. We are told to “stay at home,” not only to avoid contracting the disease ourselves or spreading it to others (as the virus can be transmitted by people who are not experiencing symptoms) but also, perhaps most importantly, to lessen the burden on our hospitals so they can remain able to best care for the regular myriad of health conditions beyond COVID-19. This can be a difficult transition for our minds, which are still wired for “normal” life.

Separation is the key to “flattening the curve,” but as social beings, this has been a difficult shift for many, especially for our senior citizens, for those who live alone, and sadly, for those who live with abusers. Thankfully, we can continue to stay in touch with these neighbors by phone or internet to let them know that, while they may be physically alone, we are there for them if they need us.

These unprecedented times are calling for us to shift from being social animals to being adaptive ones. Our bodies are wired to (eventually) tame this virulent disease, and our spirits are designed to rise to the occasion.

When people in our area began to understand the impact of isolation, they also began to find ways to meet the needs of others. Facebook has become a main source of connection in our area, as the internet has become a locus for maintaining friendships, offering support, and sharing both feelings and information. In mid-March, people began offering their time to care for others’ children; they offered

to pick up food or medication for those unable or unwilling to go to town. Social media has become a kind of release valve for the tensions of the day, with humorous virus-related memes being shared, as well as ideas for creative ways to spend our days in isolation.

Volunteers in DeKalb County spent countless hours in the last weeks of March packing more than 27,000 sacks of food to be distributed to children who normally rely on receiving meals at school. (In fact, this food is being distributed not only to students, but to any child 18 years old and younger,



Handpainted sign by Lisa Schad

at least through May, thanks to federal funding.) School buses have been dropping off food at the end of driveways for those children whose families have no way to drive to the distribution points. Mentone Community Church and the Masonic Lodge in

Valley Head have served as distribution points, but to further practice the all-important “social distancing,” in April food will be prepared by each school’s lunchroom staff and delivered along normal bus routes. Each child is being accounted for, and cared for as best as possible.

No one knows what will happen in future weeks and months. Humans are showing a remarkable resiliency in spite of the great unknown. Some are using their time in isolation learning new skills by watching online videos; some are artistically expressing themselves in unusual ways; some are connecting with others through video chats, email, and phone calls. Some have learned new walking paths through their neighborhoods. With the quiet that comes from the general lack of activity, many who live in and near downtown Mentone have commented on how appealing the chimes of St. Joe’s church have been, offering a certain sense of rhythm and comfort.

The reverberating slogan of these days is “Stay at home, stay at home, stay at home.” Certainly, those in our area who have stable internet access are finding these times easier to navigate than those who don’t have that connection to the greater world. Weeks ago, the internet started being flooded with free online classes, casual

concerts from the living rooms of musicians, free e-books, and the like. Humans are by nature curious, and countless web sites have emerged to nurture that curiosity.

One question on the minds of many is what “normal” will look like after this unique experience we are collectively sharing has ended. Will we use new skills we are learning? Will our family dynamics be enhanced by the amount of time we are spending together? Will we value our own communities even more? Will we be grateful for the simplicity of a sunrise, or will we retreat into old patterns and ways of being? So many unknowns face us.

April will possibly be a very difficult month, and we will learn to sustain a certain fortitude that will carry us through days and weeks of troubling news, financial strains, and loss of lives. These times are new to us, but they are not new to humanity. Millions of people through the ages have lived through even more unpredictable and tragic times. We can do this, together, even if it means we must stretch our own levels of comfort and reform our own patterns. We can no longer take things for granted, but we can learn to appreciate certain simplicities, and remember to appreciate each other. Our area will be all the stronger for it, I feel certain.

If you would like to share your own story during this time for our readers in the May issue of *The Groundhog*, please email groundhognews@yahoo.com. *The Groundhog* has long served as a kind of historical document for our area, and your stories are important to us. Please let us know of new insights or skills that you’ve acquired; of random acts of kindness you’ve witnessed; and also, of losses that you’ve experienced. Our story as a community is comprised of each of our individual lives, and every life matters. Be well, everyone.

Not so long ago, we were going about our usual routine—work, school, meetings, social gatherings. Now, all structure as we knew it seems to be only a distant memory. So, how do we make good use of family togetherness in one location, twenty-four seven, with no imposed structure from outside the home? It is very important for each home/family unit to create its own plan. Plans that work for one unit may not be at all feasible for another unit. So, following are some general thoughts to consider as each unit creates its plan.

Planning works best when each person who will be impacted understands and participates in the structuring of the plan. Therefore, a first step could be a sit-down-together time with everyone present from the youngest to the oldest member of the group. It is important that each person understand it is okay to be open and honest about his/her feelings as the planning is done. Acknowledging and naming feelings is a first step to managing them. It is reasonable at this time to feel scared, uncertain, frustrated. A thorough, realistic review of the issues we face paired with an inventory of available resources gets us on the road to a healthier sense of control over our situation. After we have faced the facts of our situation, we are ready to create a plan that works for our family. But we must have the foreknowledge that best-laid plans often have to be revised as unforeseen factors arise. An important side benefit of the planning process is that we are talking and listening to each other. We may learn amazing things about one another because we have this time together. We may even feel more hopeful.

These unprecedented circumstances call for true out-of-the-box thinking. Yet, it is wise to have some basic factors in mind as we create a workable, healthy lifestyle. Balance in each aspect of life, whether physical, spiritual, mental, or social should be considered. In order to have balance, we have to begin with a structure for our daily activities. Perhaps a weekly schedule would work best to ensure balance of time and activities. A written Monday through Friday schedule including times for



#theviewfrommywindow by Dana Goggans, Mentone 3/25/20

Staying at Home

by Karole K. Ohme

our financial resources as we plan activities, especially if we have children and teenagers in the household. Even if money is not a major problem, in the current circumstances, we can't just run to the store to purchase what we need. For those of us who live in the Mentone area, we have the riches of Mother Nature at our disposal. Now is a great time to explore and learn about plants, animals, and birds, as well as our land and water resources.

We can hike, picnic, and even camp out in our own neighborhood. We can teach care for the environment by picking up trash near roadways. The internet and television can be great learning resources if we go to the more educational outlets. We can make a game of repurposing "stuff" around the house. We can teach organizational skills through cleaning out closets, pantries, garages, sheds, etc. We can feel the satisfaction of sharing what we have with others as we organize the things we have that others might use. We can use our phones to visit with each other, especially checking in with people who may be lonely. We can read aloud to each other and talk about what we have read. We can sit inside or outside and just talk to each other about nothing at all. We can share our creative ideas with the outside world through technology.

This time can be a wonderful opportunity to be children again with our children. We can design imaginary playhouses outside with rocks and sticks. We can take an afternoon nap with them after reading or telling a favorite story to each other. We can pass on our family-of-origin history, stories, recipes, etc. Together, we can create our own family story using memories and pictures, including actual photos and drawings of our children. Hopefully, these will become histories for them to pass on to their children at some future date as they talk about this time of imposed isolation.

Finally, let's take time to count our blessings even as we worry about current uncertainties.

A family blessings log in which we each write daily can help us now as well as when we look back on this experience. We can get through this time! Especially if we give it purpose through planning, sharing and doing.

A favorite passage which seems apt at this time in our lives, is from Charles Frazier's historical novel, "Varina." Jefferson Davis' wife, Varina, is trying to get from Virginia to Florida to escape the Union forces. Her trusted friend and guide, Delrey, says the following to her as they deal with dangerous, uncertain circumstances.

"We're not by any means getting to Florida in one sprint. So don't start counting days or miles. The end of every day has to leave all of us able to get up in the morning and do it all over again and then do it again day after tomorrow. You have to get your mind right, and always look way down the road, not at your feet. The slowest man sets the pace because we're not the kind of people to leave anybody behind."

Karole K. Ohme is a licensed professional counselor living in Mentone.

meals, chores, learning vs. play, physical vs. rest, inside vs. outside, togetherness vs. aloneness, gives direction and helps everyone feel safer and more in control. The weekend schedule could be quite different with more time for individual, just-for-fun activities.

All of us have to consider



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Moon Lake Community Library News

by Kelly Leavitt

The community library board decided on March 12 to temporarily close the doors, in light of the current pandemic. For those looking for new reading material, books are available at our Little Libraries outside the post office and at DeSoto State Park's country store (unless they are mandated by state to close). We've also put two bins outside the library's front doors that are filled with a selection of books and DVDs the community is welcome to borrow on the honor system. Just bring them back when finished, please. Once the library reopens, they'll go back on our sale shelves. *When handling any of these books, be sure to wipe the front and back with disinfectant and then put the book aside for a day or two. A recent study shows that the virus lives on cardboard for 24 hours, so it's probably a comparable time for paper—best to err on the side of caution.* Happy reading, everyone!



I was inspired by several folks commenting about other positive signs along the road in Fort Payne, so I decided to make some for my yard and neighborhood. As a healing offering. As a way to stay connected to folks, especially since my very hands-on massage practice was put on hold with the social distancing mandate. With no more Taco Thursdays at the local pub, author talks and game nights at the library, and annual festivals to support, waves and brief stop-n-chats have made my day. And if this is one small way to help folks smile and heal—job done. I had asked for slogan suggestions on Facebook, which added to the co-creative energy that fuels this town. —Lisa A. Schad 3/17/20

Social distancing is easy when we're doing this civic duty! Jerry and I picked up 18 pounds of trash this morning along the section of Scenic Highway we adopted. —Debra Fey 3/19/20



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Rhododendron Garden Club by Rhea Pirch



The Rhododendron Garden Club met for their monthly meeting at the MERF House, Tuesday, March 10, at 10 a.m. Ten members and two guests were present. President Marsha Merrell provided refreshments. Dianne Kuehl read the meditation, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," a poem by William Wordsworth.

For roll call, we were asked to bring in a flower that grows from a bulb. Daffodils were the most popular choice, but there was also hyacinth, snowdrops, and anemone. We were also asked to name a new plant we plan to add to our gardens this year. The response for this question was more varied and included salvia, tulips, forsythia, button bush, hydrangeas, and blue globe thistle. I didn't have an answer at the meeting, but since then have considered planting a moon garden with flowers that bloom at night, such as moonflower, evening primrose, and night phlox.

After roll call, the business portion of the meeting began. The treasurer's report and minutes from the February meeting were presented and accepted into the record.

Horticultural chair Martha Wood gave her report on the National Garden Club initiative, "Plant America with Trees: Each One Plant One." With this initiative, Garden Club

members nationwide are encouraged to reach out to members of their communities with the goal of planting at least 165,000 native trees in each year of the 2019-2021 National Garden Club administration.

The initiative, according to an article on the NGC website, reaches beyond the physical planting of trees. The article states that planting trees as a community project can be an empowering experience, uniting neighbors in tree selection, planting and nurturing. (<http://gardenclub.org/resources/plant-america/NGC-Plant-America-With-Trees-Each-One-Plant-One.pdf>) The article goes on to suggest native trees to select, such as willow, cherry, plum, birch, poplar and cottonwood, and gives tips for planting. Martha also suggested planting oak, catalpa, and Domingo pine.

Old and new business was then discussed, including a review of upcoming

events and the news that member Mellanie Tuttle purchased six oak leaf hydrangeas (on behalf of the Garden Club) to compliment MERF's community walking path project. They will be planted after the fence and musical instruments are installed.

After business matters were wrapped up, Martha Wood presented her program on Summer Blooming Bulbs. She started by introducing the types of bulbs available to plant: true bulbs, corms, rhizomes, and tubers.

True bulbs have the roots and stem compressed. They have a basal plate from which the roots emerge and are usually round or egg-shaped with a pointed end from which the leaves emerge. True bulbs include daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths.

Corms have a modified stem. They are round and have a basal plate like a true bulb but are flatter in appearance. Gladiolus, freesia, and crocus all grow from corms.

Rhizomes are swollen stems that grow horizontally just under the surface of the soil and send up leaves and flowers at intervals. Rhizomes include iris, lily-of-the-valley, and canna lily.

Tubers are thick underground stems. They don't have a basal plate and can look like fat fingers, as can be found on dahlias and anemones. Daylilies also grow from tubers, but are long and slender. The potato is a tuber with leathery skin and numerous eyes from which the plants grow.

Martha then gave us tips on the different types of bulbs: their selection and growing advice, their cost, which grow what sort of flowers, their growing season, light, soil and water needs, hardiness, and maintenance once they are planted. Among the 24 types of bulb flowers Martha mentioned were calla lily, which need moist fertile soil and bi-weekly feeding, tuberous begonias, which need late morning or afternoon sun and are regarded as some of the most spectacular of the genus; dahlias, which bloom from summer to first frost; and if you are looking for a lily with a giant bloom, try the crinum lily, which boasts the biggest blooms of all lilies.

To conclude her program, Martha gave a list of catalogs from which we could purchase our own selection of bulbs for spring planting, such as Brent & Becky's, K Van Bourgondien, and McClure & Zimmerman. Along with local nurseries, she also mentioned that bulbs are available in the garden centers at Lowes, Walmart and Costco.

We had planned to enjoy our yearly pilgrimage to the Shirley Miller Wildlife Trail (also known as "The Pocket") in April, but that trip will need to wait until next year. For updates, please visit our [Facebook page](#) or e-mail us at rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Rhea Pirch is the secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.



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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

MERF News by Sarah Wilcox



My boards may be a little creaky and my paint a little flaky but I am full of life. I continue to open my doors to the young and the wise so my walls are full of joy, laughter and learning.

Can clothes make a mole rat?" That was the question of the day, when the entire Moon Lake Elementary School headed to Atlanta to see the rock musical based on Mo Willems' children's book, "The Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed," at the Alliance Theatre. The music kept us out of our seats and the creative script kept parents, kids, and friends

all laughing with lessons and jokes on all levels. The five-member cast was amazing with their singing abilities and their timing. And how fortunate were we for all 99 of us to enjoy it from the first five rows of the fabulous theatre, thanks to Paula Easter's long-time friendship with the Alliance director and coordinator. We were up close and ready to enjoy. Officer Tim is still singing Be Bolder, Be Kinder, Be Smarter. Paula also secured a \$700 grant from Target to help with the costs of this fun adventure. The adults enjoyed it as much as the students. After the tail wagging and laughter, we all headed to the Varsity for a fabulous lunch and sharing of our favorite parts of the musical. The bus trip back to the mountain was quiet as many of us were a "good tired." A matching grant for the trip was also funded by the Alabama Council on the Arts and the National Endowment of the Arts.

Usually, MERF's April article is focused on the Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction. For now,

the event is postponed due to the need for social distancing. MERF will refund any ticket purchases, as needed, when the new date is decided. The students' artwork is fabulous again, thanks to how well Ms. Paula inspires her students. Tom Emory, at his new business Mountain Framing, has done a wonderful job of matting and framing already so we can't wait for everyone to see the artwork in person. Follow him on Facebook. Here are the artists with their work.

At this time, MERF lunches and MERF moms are suspended until further notice.

Sarah Wilcox is Executive Director of MERF, a local non-profit organization whose mission is "to enrich the learning and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources." If you would like to support our programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984, or you may contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193 for more information.



Mentone teachers, kids and adults ready to enjoy their front row seats at the Alliance Theatre.



Lexi, Anna and Hallie looking forward to seeing "The Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed" rock musical.



Budding Moon Lake Artists

Amazing artwork was produced by all the students at Moon Lake Elementary School under the guidance and encouragement from Paula Easter provided by MERF. From fabulous flamingos to an Alabama landscape, these pieces were chosen for MERF's Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction that is postponed for a future date.



L to R: 1st graders Ashtynn, Mikey, Randall, Christian, Myles, Naomi, Anna, Landon and Baxter read "Make Something Beautiful" about a community that beautified their area with art and created this beauty for the auction.



America, 6th grade



Sydney, 4th grade



Brysen, Kindergarten



Stormy, 2nd grade



Austin, 5th grade



Grayson, 2nd grade



Alex, 3rd grade



Hunter, 4th grade



Reid, 3rd grade



Kansas, 5th grade



Emma, 2nd grade



Katie and Brantley, Kindergarten



Owen, 6th grade



Michael, 5th grade



Ryland, Kindergarten



Kansas, 5th grade



Carson, 4th grade



Ashtyon, 1st grade





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LIVE YOUR MENTONE DREAM! This unique home sits atop Lookout Mountain, built on the edge of the brow. Open style w/windows throughout both sides & both floors of the entire home, the top floor is a full open loft w/2 sep bedrooms each w/balconies above the main deck for sipping coffee or a glass of wine while watching the sun set. Galley style kitchen + butlers pantry w/ top of the line stainless steel appliances+washer & dryer. Outside-screened porch with hot tub, fire pit w/cedar chairs/tables, circle drive & wooden fence. On top of all this, it's also being sold fully furnished!! Great rental history, too! \$325,000 (1138642)



TURN THE TENSION METER DOWN & shift the clocks to slow speed, because this custom home, with a view of a small lake, is the place for you to RE-LAX. Originally built as a full-time residence, it has become a top earner in rental program. Sold furnished. 4BR/3.5BA. Custom cabinetry; granite counter tops; SS appliances; stone FPLCE w/gas logs; open floor plan; exposed beams & wide-plank floors. Just off DeSoto Pkwy; easy access to Mentone, DeSoto St Park & Falls. \$295,000 (1130640)



LOTS and LAND

10 ACRES OF WOODED LAND, WITH SPRING. Public water/power avail nearby. A driveway was cut into the property several years ago, still viable. If you've been considering building your own cabin in the woods, this might just be the place to start. \$65,000. (1137280)

NEED A BIT OF EARTH? Well, here it is! Less than 5 minutes from downtown Mentone. Public water & power avail. A single acre, unrestricted, has been very hard to find in this area until now. \$19,000. (1109345)

11.03 UNRESTRICTED ACRES IN MENTONE, cornering 2 county roads (one paved) with driveway, with level-to-top hill. Ideal for a few acres. Have a place to park a camper, build, do a little hunting, too. \$6) **PENDING**

UNIQUE, YEAR-ROUND NAVIGABLE RIVER LOT AT DESOTO FALLS Lake area. Approx 94' frontage on the prime part of W Fork Little River, the truly navigable part where you can canoe, kayak or pontoon all the way to Mentone! Survey & perc in file. \$155,000 (355152)

SOUTH COOL STREET BROW-FRONT property w/old stone fireplace chimney, part of foundation, plus small garage. Owned by the same family since early '20s. Approx 0.45-acre lot in an area where properties are seldom available. \$118,000 (1070474)



OWN YOUR OWN LITTLE CANYON with Johnnie's Creek cascading through the forest below and 36 acres of beautiful, mostly-wooded land (on both sides of creek) & a fabulous, custom-built, cypress-sided home. Approx 3600 sq ft of deliciously-designed living inside, tremendous tree-top decks & porches outside! Two wood-burning fireplaces (one w/insert); Brazilian floors, windows galore, fab light fixtures throughout. Huge, open kitchen/living area. Tons of cabinetry, commercial-grade gas range, granite countertops; large pantry. A mountain escape, with simple luxury in a residence, hunting lodge or getaway. \$599,000 (1010510)



GREAT VISIBILITY & TRAFFIC COUNT ON HWY 117 IN MENTONE! Work is completed on the exterior painting, roofing & general upgrading of the exterior of Mentone's iconic gas station and eatery, Helena's Gas & Deli. This is a thriving restaurant, bar & grill, store, and gas station business. So, why would Helena want to sell? Well, she says she's ready to retire and be with her grandbabies. (And she's selling it "Lock, stock and barrel.") Locals and visitors to Mentone alike know this is the place to go for delicious food, reasonable gasoline prices & cold beverages. Lots of paved parking & add'l wooded land behind the existing building for future growth. \$345,000 (1119821)



SPACIOUS CABIN HOME ON 3.31 ACRES, with pleasant, winding, private drive. 3BR/2.5BA, 2500 sq ft, one-owner home features a welcoming front porch & a deep, oversized back porch for easy entertaining outdoors. Open living/dining/kitchen features an efficient, wood-burning heater; hardwood floors. Main-level master suite. First level also offers a laundry room & 1/2 bath. Upstairs are two large bedrooms & guest bath. Two new CH/A units in Aug 2019. Outdoors, the property includes a well-equipped workshop/garage; a large pole barn for firewood with an attached chicken coop; and a combination of cleared/wooded land. Add'l land avail. \$264,500 (1128526)



KNOCK, KNOCK! Who's there? Well, it could be you! Cute & cozy cottage w/private upstairs guest quarters. Furnished. Front & back porches w/benches & swings. Main level w/hardwood floors; 1BR/1BA; light & breezy living area; handy kitchen. Upstairs is a tree-house-feel, efficiency apt w/claw-foot tub nook, privy closet, wood floors & multiple beds. Storage bldg. Near DeSoto Falls, State Park, Comer Scout Camp. Just off the parkway. \$119,000 (1124542)



IT'S SOUTH COOL STREET, and it's pretty special! Brow-front property with a beautiful old stone fireplace chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. Newly surveyed. An original Mentone summer home once stood here, built and owned by the same family since early 1920s. Approximately 0.45 acre lot in an area where you're in town, but private & properties are seldom available. Build your own memories! \$118,000 (1070474)



SAGE ADVICE: INTO THE WOODS

by Susan Seago

It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood and I am thankful to be living in the woods here in northeast Alabama. Each day I walk through the yard to see new growth and marvel at the beauty of this world. While we cannot surround ourselves with others at this time of seclusion, we can surround ourselves with nature's magnificence and prepare our landscapes for this spring and summer, whether you are a first-timer in the gardening area or a seasoned veteran.

I would suggest that before you begin to plant that you walk around the area where you decide to plant your garden. Have pencil and paper in hand and

maybe a phone with your camera turned on. Take note of the way the sun does or does not shine on your yard, noting where it is in the morning and afternoon. Note the sunny and shady areas. Look up to see if the trees will put on leaves and create shade. This will determine which plants to use.

Also, you may need to improve your soil. There are some areas of the mountain that have great soil and others that have sandy soil and a lot of rocks. The soil determines how well your garden will grow. You may need to add a landscape amendment. If you are not sure about your soil, call your [county agent](#) to ask about a soil test. Soil testing kits may be available from the internet.

Now, let's walk around my yard to see what is growing. In the sunny areas, there are daylilies with their bright green leaves and promise of varying colors in yellow, orange, purple, and some with two colors. The old-fashioned daylilies will bloom once during the summer for a few weeks, while the rebloomers will bloom for about three weeks, take a break, and bloom again, creating color all summer.

"Thrift" or creeping phlox, a groundcover good for hills or banks, is blooming with its blue, pink, white, or even striped colors. It's an old faithful that will come back year after year. Other ground covers are ajuga (shade) with its tiny blue blooms and vinca

minor (which can be invasive but so pretty) with its larger cornflower blue petals. For sunny banks that you don't want to mow but need to have something to keep soil erosion at bay, try a sedum groundcover such as trifolium, which has pink, white, and green leaves and a small bloom mid-summer, and creeping raspberry (no berries but a nice little bloom once a year). Both are evergreen, never dying back during the winter.

The hellebore are blooming much later this year due to the odd weather patterns this past fall and winter. They are my favorite perennial, with evergreen shiny leaves that look like a small shrub when not in

bloom. They are deer-resistant, and they come in so many beautiful colors. I have a dark red one blooming now. Some will also send up babies after a few years so you can have a shady garden full of them. And, the Solomon's seal is blooming now with its tiny bell-shaped flowers. This is a dependable shade perennial and the first to bloom each spring. Another shade lover is

the astilbe, with its feathery tall blooms in colors of red, purple, pink, white, and cream. It is another very hardy perennial.

Shrubs blooming now are forsythia (sun) with its abundant yellow blooms, azaleas (of course) which are semi-shade lovers in so many colors, kerria (sun) with its yellow flowers on long flowing branches, or Persian lilac (sun to part shade) with its beautiful fragrant blooms. The hydrangeas (semi-shade) are just now leafing out but will bloom by summer through fall, depending on the variety. The old fashioned oakleaf is majestic in late summer to early fall with its huge blooms, then the leaves turn red in fall to give a glorious end to its growth for the year. The Penny Mac hydrangea is a rebloomer for an all-season show and may be blue or pink, depending on the soil.

Blueberries are putting on their leaves and will soon delight us with delicious fruit. Different varieties have different production times.

I could go on and on, but I hope you have been



Solomon's seal

inspired to make your landscape more beautiful and enjoyable. Now, clean the fallen leaves from your present beds and new ones. Add soil amendment (most areas do well with the amendment even if they don't need it), get your plants and/or seeds, and plant. Remember, our last average frost date is April 15 so wait until then to plant seeds and annuals. Even if the ground is damp from recent rains, water it anyway after you plant. This removes any air spaces which may allow for fungus to grow. Then watch your plants grow and bloom. As long as the rain comes every few days, there will be no need to water. When the temps get higher in the 80s and we have no rain for a week, check your soil and water as needed. Remember to water deeply (1 inch) or put your finger in the ground up to the first knuckle. If it is damp, no water needed.

So, stay well, play in the dirt, and remember to wash your hands! Feel free to e-mail me with any gardening questions at earthly_elements@aol.com. Happy gardening!



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- Rose Cox *Painting*—1st
- Rose Cox *Painting*—Best of Show
- Annabelle Gifford *Poetry*—1st
- Annabelle Gifford *Mixed Media*—3rd
- Elena Pritchett *Jewelry*—3rd
- Alyssa Reese *Woodworking*—2nd
- Isaac McElhaney *Math*—4th
- Elementary *Banner*—1st
- Elementary *Living Literature*—5th
- Abbi Gifford *Drawing*—3rd
- Angel Rosales *Language Arts*—5th
- Cooper Kirby & Kowen Worthey *Trading Pin*—1st
- Junior *Banner*—2nd
- Junior *Board*—3rd

Congratulations to the Valley Head Junior Beta Club and to the students who won awards at the Alabama Junior Beta Convention in February! The students will attend the National Beta Convention in June in Fort Worth, Texas.



"You can't use up creativity. The more you use the more you have."
—Maya Angelou



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3 bed 2 bath close to Brow Park
300' brow frontage West Brow



24 County Rd 936, Mentone
4 bed 3.5 baths
89' Little River Frontage deep water



434 Marigold Dr., Cloudland
2bed 2 bath log home
200' frontage East Brow.



39 Still Hollow Rd., Cloudland
Creekside gated community
3 Ac Building lot East Brow



12850 County Rd 103, Mentone
Lake Lahusage 4 bed 3.5 bath
2 Ac 190' frontage on lake



Highway 157 - 2.66 Ac building lot
East Brow Frontage

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Little River Arts Council News by Rhea Pirch

The Little River Arts Council board of directors met for their monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 11, at the Mentone Inn. Although the board had originally planned to hold the annual meeting and social on March 14, edicts to limit social gatherings and concerns for the health of all led us to cancel the event. Although we may not be able to reschedule the event in the near future, we would still like to encourage members to renew their memberships online, or sign up for a new membership at littleriverartscouncil.org.

At the annual meeting, we had planned to announce the resignation of board members Holley Midgley and Jerry Megli. We appreciate their dedicated service over the years. We welcome two new board members, Lacy Hope Dobbs, an artist living in Rainsville, and Steven Stiefel, a photographer and writer living in Fort Payne.

For the sixth year, students at Moon Lake School got a taste of Shakespeare in the school's gymnasium on March 27, thanks to a matching grant to the Arts Council from the Alabama State Council on the Arts. This year, the touring company of eight acting fellows from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival performed "A Midsummer's Night Dream." The students sat in rapt attention and giggled at the antics of the Athenians, the Mechanicals, and the Fairies, as their plots wound together in a finale full of music and dance. The students were well behaved and asked thoughtful questions afterwards (which many of the actors said were the best questions they've ever received!). After the play, the fellows presented a workshop for the students, which included exercises in voice projection, such as volume, diction, tone, pitch, inflection, and pace. The children delighted in the play and the

workshop, and followed through by making their own illustrated thank-you cards which Moon Lake fine arts teacher Paula Easter presented to the cast during a breakfast hosted by Cynthia Stinson at the Mentone Inn on the following Saturday morning. This breakfast, which has become an annual tradition, allows LRAC board members and the actors to intermingle. Board president Bill Rutledge accompanied the troupe on a tour to DeSoto Falls and Little River Falls. The acting fellows hail from across the United States, and this was the first time any of them had visited northeast Alabama. They were certainly impressed by both the beauty of the area and the friendliness of local residents. Several said they look forward to returning to the area with their friends and family. Your support of Little River Arts Council makes events like this possible, and we are grateful.

We are in the beginning stage of planning a retrospective exhibit of the works of artist Lucy Mitchell, who lived in Mentone for the last decades of her life before moving to Florida three years ago, where she passed away last year. Her daughter, Max Mitchell, will hang her personal collection of Lucy's works, and we invite any local collectors who own works by Lucy to hang them, as well, for this one-night exhibit to be held in the near future in the Mentone Community Center (formerly Kamama Gallery). Stay tuned as plans for this exhibit evolve. If you'd be willing to loan your work by Lucy Mitchell for this exhibit, please let us know by emailing info@littleriverartscouncil.org.

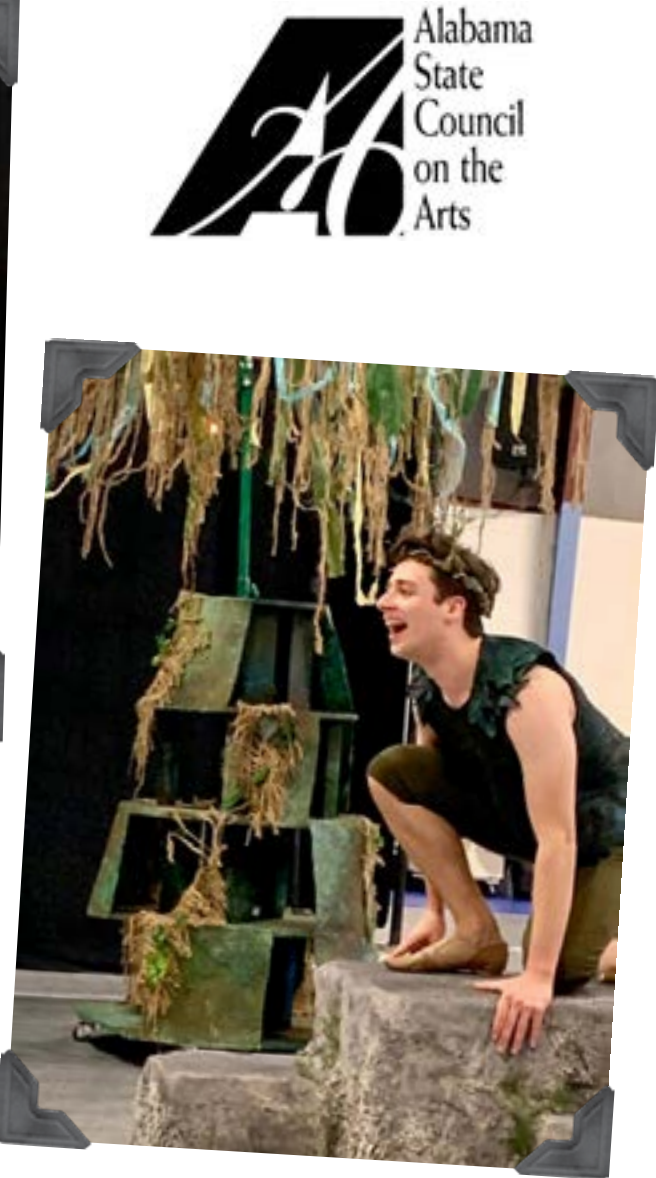
Being creative has long been proven to be stress-reducing and healing in the best of times, and certainly even more so during the uncertain times we're all currently experiencing. We encourage you to



find ways to express yourself artistically if you're feeling anxious, or bored. Many online courses, for both children and adults, have been made available at no cost in fields such as photography, drawing, and even art history. YouTube also has an abundance of free videos which teach skills in fields as varied as crocheting or knitting, painting, music, and lots of DIY craft projects. During these days when we're all (ideally) spending more time at home, this is a great time to learn new skills by yourself or with your children or spouse.

To stay informed about Arts Council news, please visit our [website](http://www.littleriverartscouncil.org), where you can join our email list. While you're there, be sure to take a look at our new long-sleeved t-shirts, which are available in ash grey or light blue for \$22.

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



“I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.”
—Oberon, Act II, Scene 1



Photos by Cynthia Stinson

FARM MARKET OPEN (DRIVE-THRU ONLY)

We are continuing our careful and diligent work to get nutritious foods to you during this time. Because spring is upon us our harvest options should increase month to month. As we move forward in these uncertain times, we will make any adjustments needed at Market in order to give you the safest and best service possible. Please follow us on Facebook or Instagram (@thefarmatwindyhill) for the most up-to-date information. Need to talk to a farmer: email us at info@thefarmatwindyhill, or text/call at 256-674-3639. Sweet potatoes, meat, and pork are available Monday-Friday by appointment. We look forward to seeing you at our Market.

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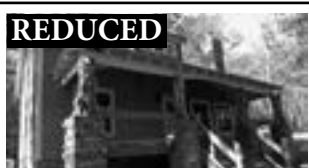
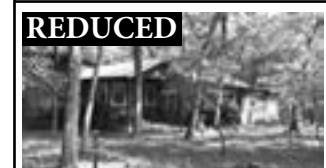
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 REDUCED 2 BR, 2 BA, also get a 1-room Cottage House. Indoor pool and its own attached screened porch. Large storage shed. Bathroom also serves as storm shelter. Furnished! \$182,000. MLS #1127846	 SURROUNDED BY NATURE IN MENTONE. 2.3ac lot w/ 2 bedrooms, large kitchen w/ cooking bar, sun room, laun-dry room, covered side porch, screened side porch, detached garage & carport, lots of land-scaping and room for more. \$115,000. MLS# 1132899	 PEACE AND PRIVACY ARE YOURS! Three bed/1 bath home within walking distance to downtown Mentone. \$79,000. MLS #1125288	 ONE LEVEL RANCH located near Georgia Line of Alabama, offers 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths, open floor plan, and screened porch allowing outdoor living you can enjoy! Attached garage plus detached carport situated on 3.5 acre parcel! \$299,900. MLS #1125366	 MENTONE BROW HOME! 2 BR, 2 BA hardwood floors, rustic wood walls, gas log fireplace, CH/A, decks, detached storage building. \$288,000. MLS #1130058	 REDUCED NEW HOME ON THE BROW! 2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms with loft area. Nestled in the woods with seasonal views, covered back porch, wood burning fire-place, open floor plan, vaulted ceilings, and LAKE ACCESS! \$189,500. MLS #1125898

LOTS & LAND

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

#1039769—6.32+/- waterfront building lot in Mountain River Estates! REDUCED TO \$44,950

#1070628—3.01 acres. 152’ on West Fork of Little River. \$49,700

#1070629—3.01 acres. 152’ on West Fork of Little River. \$59,500

#1073864—Brow Lot! .78 acres. REDUCED TO \$83,900

#1076239—Cleared & wooded 3.6 acres on Scenic Hwy. REDUCED TO \$74,500.

#1078140—18.3 acres, unrestricted, partially wooded! \$66,800

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

#1099911—LAST CHANCE to buy open land before entering into Georgia!!! \$165,000.

#1108339—Better Than a Bargain...this is a STEAL! \$89,000.

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

#1112787—40 acres in Mentone, AL with stream and untouched family owned property since 1923! REDUCED TO \$198,000.

#1113936—Looking for a brow lot inside the city limits of Mentone? \$78,500

#1118808—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call

today for more information. \$25,000

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#1118815—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118229—A great little investment property or place for your weekend get-a-way. \$49,900

#1118898—BEAUTIFUL LAKEFRONT PROPERTY ON TOP OF WORLD FAMOUS LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN! Sloping wooded lot inside gated community. Call Now for more information. \$30,000

#1120910—Five-acre wooded property with stream, across from Lake Lahusage. \$39,900

#1127776—2.41-acre property just steps away from down-town Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$47,500

#1128694—40 acres with 3-acre lake stocked with bream and bass. \$229,000.

#1129833—1.5-acre brow lot in Mentone. \$124,900

#1133689—3.58-acre property just steps away from down-town Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$69,500

#1133690—4.0-acre property just steps away from down-town Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$78,500

#1137464—It’s a Natural!!! Enjoy 40 acres of country back-drop! This parcel is country pure and simple. Enjoy privacy with lots of trees and a pond. Perfect spot for a rustic or farmhouse retreat. Better take this one seriously because a buy like this won’t last long! \$239,900

#1139102—Lot on County Road 89 located on the opposite of the brow. These lots don’t come available often. If you are looking to be nestled in the woods on Desoto Parkway then this lot is for you! \$49,500

#1138874—WAKE UP TO WATERFRONT LIVING on this 6.22 acres with a long and winding stream and frontage on Brush Creek. This property is located in a cul-de-sac and has lots of rock outcroppings and boulders scattered all about. The property has beautiful frontage along the creek and is mostly wooded. \$49,900

#1139471—Ready for that brow view in Mentone? 2.3 acres of untouched land! Make this your new home away from home and build the cabin of your dreams! \$125,000

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Cleanup Organizer Lyle Nicely



Handpainted sign by Lisa Schad

Mentone Cleanup a Huge Success

Thanks to everyone who participated in Mentone’s annual cleanup, held on Saturday, March 28. “Every bit of trash along AL-117 from the library to the state line was picked up,” said organizer Lyle Nicely, “as well as at Brow Park, and along Cool Street and parts of CR 89 and CR 106.”

More than 30 people participated and about 150 bags of litter were collected. Many thanks to Joseph Lee for the use of his truck, Camp Laney for providing hand sanitizer and trash bags, the Mountain Top store at the state line for providing drinking water, Cynthia Stinson for providing rubber gloves, and Ecological Designs for buying more safety vests this year.

Lyle said Holley Midgley, who’s been participating longer than anybody, should get an award for “stick-to-itiveness.” “We really appreciate everyone coming out, and practicing social distancing,” Lyle said. “We had a great time. People were really cooperative this year. Some people did more than one section and helped others complete their sections. Thanks to Cynthia Stinson and Kelly Leavitt for getting the word out so well on social media. There was a great community spirit this year!”

Some of the trash grabbers and vests have not yet been returned, so if you participated and still need to turn yours in, please drop them off at Mentone Town Hall.



Volunteers Connie and John Livingston

I would like to tell everyone thank you for the support in the school greenhouse flower sales this spring. That money will help us sustain the greenhouse for next year.

Moon Lake School will resume digitally or paper pencil format, for those not having internet service, on April 13 and the school year will end on May 15.

—Moon Lake Principal Mary Lance

My son’s teacher and the town school bus driver just stopped by to deliver snacks. We had a brief chat from across the porch. How sweet. This would definitely not happen in New York, where I moved from last fall. — Amanda Gamsby 3/23/20

SENIOR HEALTH

Scam Alert: Coronavirus Inspires Scam Artists to Target Consumers

submitted by Lynn Hixon

Scam artists may post, email, and text to promote false information about “cases” of the disease in your neighborhood that do not exist, and bogus prevention medication in order to obtain your personal information and your money. They also may ask you to donate to victims through a sham charity or offer “advice” about false treatments for the disease.

To avoid these types of scams:

- Don’t fall victim to clickbait. If you receive an email or text claiming to have news about coronavirus, do not open it, and get accurate information about any updates on the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) [website](https://www.cdc.gov).
- Watch for imposter emails. Look out for emails claiming to be the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO). If you’re not already subscribed to receive emails from them, you won’t get one out of nowhere.

- Ignore online offers for vaccinations or miracle treatments. If you see ads touting prevention, treatment, or cure claims for the coronavirus, ignore it. You won’t hear about medical breakthroughs for the first time through an ad or sales pitch.
- Do your homework when considering making donations. Don’t donate to any organization claiming to help those sick from the coronavirus unless you have done your research.
- Watch out for scam “investment opportunities.” The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has warned people about online promotions, including on social media, claiming that the products or services of publicly-traded “companies” can prevent, detect, or cure coronavirus.

MOUNTAIN HERBALIST:

It's the little things by L.C. Moon

What does it mean to you when you hear “it’s the little things in life”? What memories does that quote evoke?

It reminds me of special moments like sitting on my grandfather’s lap watching “Hee Haw”. His jokes had me giggling between commercials and my grandmother would say he turned over my tickle box. It brings back a flood of memories that make me feel good inside, such as my dad singing in his deep baritone voice, mom scratching my back until I fell asleep, seeing my daughter smile, musical moments, dancing, sunrises, sunsets, sitting by the water’s edge and playing games and laughing with my family and friends.

In the present moment, early spring brings opportunities of appreciating the little things. Birds chirping and singing, frogs chanting into the night, creeks and rivers



full and new life springing forth everywhere. I embrace the very precious moments of experiencing the flowers of the fields and forests burst with vibrant colors and delicious smells.

Serviceberry trees are one of the first trees to bloom. The sweet-smelling white blooms will have all fallen by the end of March, though the berries are slowly forming and ripening for jam.

Wild Cherry blooms have also faded and begun ripening. The flowers and fruit are delightful, yet the bark is what I am most interested in. I harvest wild cherry bark to add to my home-made cough syrup because I have found it to be healing to my lungs and respiratory system. It is also known to help heal damaged lungs.

Redbud will likely be in full bloom on Lookout Mountain in April. I am super excited to eat the sweet-tasting blooms. The flavor of the blooms reminds me of eating raw purple hull peas. Since I was a kid, I have always loved to sneak a snack of the raw peas while shelling them.

Sassafras will likely bloom its small yellowish blooms late in April to early May. The flowers are unassuming, yet the benefits of the root are many. It is known as a tonic and blood cleanser. When I talked with locals, who have since passed, such as Pal Powell and Willie B Langston, they used to tell me that “everybody used to have sassafras on hand in case you started to catch cold.” I have still not used it to ward off a cold but it sure has seemed to help as a tonic.

The less assuming of the spring blooms are the ones that are



Trailing arbutus

literally growing at our feet. The spring wildflowers in our fields and forests often are low-growing plants and have very small flowers. Don’t let their size fool you. They can pack a big punch in the way of nourishing the body, being a big part of our ecosystem as well as precious food for the soul.

Many people refer to some these wildflowers as weeds. For instance, I might also refer to dandelion as a weed if its placement is in a vegetable or cultivated herb garden. If a dandelion is in my garden, then I usually remove it so that it does not crowd the cultivated plants and rob them of nutrients. However, I might save it for later as food and “medicine.” The root is wonderful for the liver. The leaves and flowers can be sautéed, added to soups or eaten raw. Dandelion leaves are a good source of vitamins and minerals. The flowers are very popular for making wine or mead.

There are lots of edible wildflowers in your yard or a field near you—most likely chickweed, purple dead nettle, ground ivy, clover, violets, plantain, and much more to come as the season progresses.

One of my favorite wildflowers of the forest grows from a plant called trailing arbutus. It has the sweetest



Dandelion

(continued on page 23)

Moon's Wildflower Dish



Sauté chickweed, henbit, dandelion, clover, violet, and purple dead nettle. Add a green yard onion as a garnish. Put the sauté on vegetable soup with avocado, cilantro and pumpkin seeds.

Mountain Herbalist (continued from page 22)

smelling flower to be so small and be blooming right up against the forest floor. It usually blooms in late March or early April on Lookout.

The small delicate white bloom of trailing arbutus stays hidden under a rough leathery leaf. You would never know it’s there. It is pollinated by ants and beetles. Hidden or not, they will certainly find the sweet smell that is reminiscent to me of magnolia and honeysuckle blooms. Trailing arbutus is endangered, so I pause to share any of its uses. Its best use is the simple pleasure of finding it and kneeling to its level to get the rare opportunity to experience the aroma of the trailing arbutus flower.



Viola Sororia

In a time of uncertainty, there are some things that are certain, such as the healing effect of taking time to appreciate the small things, whatever they may be to you. I love to walk barefoot through the spring bloomers and moist mosses. Every time I “lose” myself in nature, there is a youthful energy and curiosity that bursts forth, just like the flowers of spring renewing a season of growth with beauty. May this spring season renew you and may you create simple pleasures with nature and this divine creation of life as your muse.

If you have any questions or comments, you may contact me at MentoneWildflower@gmail.com.



Serviceberry



Soleil and I got some fresh air doing Art class on the Brow :) Painted and hid rocks with motivational sayings, and we each picked memes we liked to try to replicate.

—Dia White 3/18/20

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Tips to Support Your Immune System by Frances Koe, M.D.

Editor’s Note: We strongly recommend that you stricly follow the health guidelines regarding the novel coronavirus that are being issued and updated by [state](#) and [federal](#) health authorities. They are vital for the health of our community overall. In terms of your personal health, Dr. Koe’s article may help you feel a sense of control by supporting your own immune system in a variety of ways. Please do not allow yourself to feel a false sense of security, though, and be vigilant at all times in regards to hand-washing, social distancing, covering your cough, and staying at home.

An abundance of information is widely and publicly available about staying home, washing hands, cleaning surfaces, and avoiding contact with others as much as possible, as in social distancing. Why, though, do some get sick and some don’t, and some have severe symptoms and some don’t?

The immune system has an incredible function in our bodies. It is comprised of white blood cells, the thymus, spleen, lymphatic tissues, bone marrow, lymph nodes, and tonsils. Barriers of entry to our bodies include our skin, nose/mouth, eyes, and gut. Our lymph system and nodes act like oil filters in a car to clean our system. They move dead and attacked, unhealthy particles to our kidneys and gut to be removed from our body. Even the hair all over our body plays a role. It houses tiny bacteria and other organisms that play a role in keeping us heathy. We must keep our immune system strong! That is an area we have some control over.

To answer the question as to why some get sick and some don’t, and some have severe symptoms and some don’t, is fairly complicated. Some answers are obvious, such as stress, diet, medications, sleep, exercise, co-morbid conditions, age, etc. We can’t have a perfect immune system due to environmental factors, social factors, and life’s stressors, which can all be beyond our control. Some of us have lived a lifestyle that is not particularly healthy.

In recent weeks, we have seen daily theories disseminated on the internet as to the effects of the coronavirus, how to control our environment, and how not to get it. Much of what we have been told about its seriousness and spread is not yet well understood. How can we control what we don’t know?

There is a way we can mitigate the ability of the virus to take hold. We cannot go back and not eat that doughnut last week, or many doughnuts over our lifetime. We can start today to improve what we are doing at this point.

Diet is the most obvious area that we have control over. Most people know we must eat real food and avoid sugar, prepackaged foods, unhealthy oils, such as seed oils, and eat a variety of healthy fats, a moderate amount of protein, and very healthy carbs. When we eat is even more beneficial; more on this below.

People have recently shown great interest in supplements, which has led to a throng of buyers of vitamin D3, B vitamins, vitamin C, and others. There is significant hoarding going on and the supplments are becoming less available. There are ways to receive the benefits of some supplements for much less money or for free. Because we can only look back to see which supplements may have been helpful after the fact, it is difficult to know if any of these supplements will help prevent the spread of coronavirus. In my teachings, I have always recommended that we get as many of our vitamins and minerals from natural sources in foods, sunlight, and healthy habits. We do know that there are some benefits from taking these supplements if you have not been living as well as you should. Some people benefit more than others.

For vitamin D, it can take a few months to get

your levels up enough to benefit you if you know you are currently low. The good news is that sunshine can give you vitamin D. At our latitude in Alabama, we can benefit the most between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m, as the sun needs to be directly up in the sky. The time we stay out will depend on the color of our skin, so I recommend only allowing the skin to turn slightly pink, which can take 15 minutes or so for very light skinned people and longer for darker skin. Taking vitamin D supplements during symptoms of coronavirus may not be recommended (as described below) due to cytokine storm.

Studies show that Vitamin C is beneficial for many, but not for everyone. A Virginia doctor has shown how intravenous infusions of vitamin C may significantly reduce the death rate in ICU patients. [\[pilotonline.com/news/health/article_7a3063e5-24cf-56c1-b25c-142731604196.html\]](#) I have heard that doctors may be working with vitamin C in this way for coronavirus. It may still take a few weeks for journal articles to be published which corroborate the benefits of this treatment. I have recommended to my patients that they take 500mg of vitamin C throughout the day, as they think about it, approximately every 2 hours or so to help prevent colds and flu. Vitamin C is fairly benign and may help. You can take enough that it may cause loose stools. If you do, you will need to back off.

B vitamins such as B12, B9 (folate), and B6 significantly benefit the heart and brain. There is a test called homocysteine that can indicate if you may be low. I often recommend methylated B vitamins, as they are absorbed better. We also get these B vitamins from many of the whole foods we eat, such as meat, fish, dairy, legumes, dark leafy vegetables, and more. They are water-soluble, so it is hard to get too much. B12 is stored in the body for months, but you can catch up fairly quickly on this vitamin with injections.

A really important supplement that I feel is neglected as to its importance is fish oil or omega 3s. Our ancestors had a ratio of omega 6 to omega 3 of approximately 1:1. We now average 18:1 in our country. This is very detrimental to our health. Eating cold water fishes, pasture-raised eggs, and meat, as well as getting important nuts and seeds can improve this. We can also take Krill oil and fish oil to improve this ratio. This is also not done quickly. The benefits of the omega ratio in coronavirus is to our lungs. Omega 3s keep our lungs very healthy and I often prescribe it for asthmatics and folks with COPD. It helps with diabetes and hypertension, which are co-morbid conditions that cause a worse outcome with coronavirus.

One herb/supplement that has come to the attention of many is elderberry. Because there is research showing the benefits of elderberry in treating the flu, many have wondered if it may help with coronavirus. When someone has the coronavirus and it becomes serious, the body can go into something called a cytokine storm. This is a reaction to the virus, as the body tries to fight the disease, but it can be harmful at the same time. Dr. Andrew Weil, who I consider is a trusted source, recommends stopping this herbal supplement, as he does vitamin D, during symptoms of possible coronavirus due to a worsening

cytokine storm. [\[integrativemedicine.arizona.edu/COVID19/FAQ.html\]](#)

There has also been discussion online that ibuprofen, an anti-inflammatory, may be detrimental to us if we have taken any recently or during a current illness. This has also been discussed on Dr. Weil’s website and is not corroborated at this time by fact. And, as Dr. Weil says, acetaminophen can be dangerous if taken too often, causing liver damage, which is very common, although many people think it is a benign over-the-counter medication. Ibuprofen also has long-term risks, but it has not been implicated in causing coronavirus to be worse when taken prior to getting the virus.

Where else can we have control? Relieving stress improves our immune system. These are very stressful times, to say the least. But we can work on managing stress and, as with diet, many of us know ways to reduce stress. Sometimes we can still get overwhelmed. Many studies have proven the mind-body connection when it comes to health. There is strong evidence that you can meditate to improve your illness and relieve symptoms.

One quick and easy stress reliever I recommend is the following breathing technique. Breathe in through your nose for four seconds, taking in plenty of air. Hold your breath for a count of 7 or so. Then let exhale slowly until all air is expressed. Do this four times in a row. It can change the chemistry of your blood immediately and improve any anxiety you are feeling. This can be done many times a day as needed. Other stress reduction techniques include listening to music, walking in the woods or nature, meditating, playing games with family who are also stuck at home, watching funny movies or programs, or just laughing. Gardening can be extremely beneficial at this time, as it gives us a sense of purpose, exercise, and the benefit of being in the dirt outside in the sun, exposed to nature. It may become critical for your food supply in the near future, as well.

To help people improve their immune system immediately, I recommend intermittent fasting. I do not recommend this for anyone on medications without the help of a practitioner who knows how to help you fast. But most people can do intermittent fasting, which is a method of avoiding all foods and drinks except water for 14–16 hours from one day to the next. One may go as long as 24 hours safely, under most circumstances. A great resource you can read is “The Complete Guide to Fasting” by Jason Fung, M.D.

HOW TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM
[health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system](#)

You may also want to visit [Google Scholar](#) to get more in-depth and scholarly information.

We all know these are exceptional times. You can improve your chances of remaining healthy. You might be interested in reading my blog on my educational website, [agroshare.com](#). Feel free to contact me at [willsvalleyfamilymedicine.com](#).

Dr. Frances Koe is a medical doctor with two practices in Collinsville, Wills Valley Family Medicine and Valley Care DPC.



With the arrival of Spring comes the desire to put our hands in the dirt and plant beautiful gardens. And so it’s appropriate for us to talk in this article about one of the goals of the Little River Waterkeeper organization, which is to prevent degradation in Little River and its tributaries. The most severe form of pollution in Little River watershed happens in the form of run-off. Spring and Winter rains bring torrents of water that carry loose soil into the river. A great way to prevent erosion is

One way we can do this is to educate our community about the sensitive ecosystem and encourage landowners to help us protect and improve water quality. It can easily be accomplished by simply maintaining a healthy riverbank with native plants. Areas within the Little River Watershed are being developed at a high rate and we hope our appeal will convince landowners along the river to keep riparian vegetation intact since it is an integral part of the local ecology. Native plants provide natural ecological services such as food and habitat for animals. Plant roots filter nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants from runoffs and minimize riverbank erosion, especially after heavy rain events. Greenery from native plants also provides shade and cover for fish and contributes to aesthetics along the river corridor.

If you own a home on Little River and want to improve your riverbank this spring season, consider planting native perennials that not only protect Little River from degradation but gives you a beautiful show throughout the year. Below are a few of many ideas. You can also visit the [Alabama Plant Atlas](#) online to learn more.



Wildflower Cafe wishes everyone peace and a healthy helping of hope. We hope to be serving love and delicious experiences soon. Wildflower dining will be closed in the month of April. For updates, visit [MentoneWildflower.com](#)

Online store coming soon

LC Moon’s Hand-blended Allergy Relief Tea now available by mail. Email [MentoneWildflower@gmail.com](#) for list of herbal teas, products and prices.

River Voice by Angie Shugart

“A true conservationist is a person who knows the world is not given by their fathers but borrowed from their children..”
—John James Aububon

Here are some of my favorite native plants to see along the banks of Little River.

- Small flowering natives: Dwarf Crested Iris, Joe Pye Weed, Cardinal Flower and Wild Columbine, Spiderwort.
- Blooming Shrubs: Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel, and Viburnum, Oakleaf Hydrangea, Elderberry, Spicebush and Strawberry bush.
- Groundcovers: Partridge Berry, Wood Sorrel, Maidenhair Fern and Green and Gold.

SwimGuide Season starts May 20! Yes, swim season is upon us and Little River Waterkeeper will give you the skinny about your favorite swimming hole before you dip. Because so many people depend on Little River for swimming, boating and fishing, we grab samples from Memorial Day to Labor Day in eight to ten areas along Little River to determine water quality. We post test results each Thursday so you, the user can get up-to-date water quality information.

What do we test for? Our state certified lab conducts tests for: E Coli—a common bacteria found in warm blooded mammals that can enter Little River through runoff because of failing septic systems; PH—determines the acidity and alkalinity in the water sample; Dissolved Oxygen—helps us determine if our fish and other organisms are living in a healthy habitat; Turbidity—measures the cloudiness in Little River and helps determine how much run-off is suspended in the water table; and Nitrogen—measures agricultural runoff from fields. Over the summer, I will go into more detail about each test and why this preventative measure is important for us to understand the overall health of Little River and our impact on the Little River Watershed but for now, take note of the sites listed below so you can stay informed.

- 2020 Test Sites**
- West Fork Hwy. 117 at Mentone Bridge
 - West Fork, DeSoto Falls
 - Middle & East Fork at Lake Lahusage
 - West Fork at Indian Falls
 - Yellow Creek on CR 295
 - Little River Blue Hole
 - Little River at Martha’s Falls
 - Little River Mouth Park
- Support the 2020 SwimGuide Season. Join SwimClub!**
- Your financial support helps us monitor Little River! Our budget to test eight sites for 16 weeks will be approximately \$5,500. This fee covers each test, fuel, testing supplies, and staff. By joining Swim Club, each \$10 donation funds one test site. You may choose to make a one-time or recurring donation. Your generous gift will be highlighted on our social media pages with a picture of the sponsored water sample. Visit [littleriverwaterkeeper.org](#) for more information.

Angie Shugart is the executive director of Little River Waterkeeper.

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Making Masks

by Anne McLeod

When it became clear that hospital workers on the front lines of the pandemic would soon run low on the personal protective gear (PPE) that helps keep them safe from infection, sewing hobbyists have stepped up to create simple cloth face masks to bridge the gap until sufficient commercial masks are available.

A widely circulated [article and video](#) focusing on a call for masks by Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, Indiana, kicked off other efforts around the country, including the [Bham Face Masks](#) group on Facebook that saw its members increase to over 1,000 people almost overnight. This, at least, was something that those of us with time on our hands and some basic sewing skills could do to protect our fellow citizens and to take action against an invisible enemy.

While these cotton fabric masks are not protective against the virus by themselves, they can be used to cover and extend the use of the n95 masks that are the standard for nurses and doctors caring for patients with COVID19. They can also be used by other hospital workers working with non-COVID19 patients.

After checking out both these sites and doing some research into what fabrics would be best suited for the task, I contacted Angela Hadley, a local RN who works at Dekalb Regional Medical Center. She quickly agreed to check with her nursing supervisor about whether they could accept homemade fabric masks. Once the supervisor agreed, I began working on some prototypes for them to try and also put out the call on the Mentone Neighbor to Neighbor Facebook group for others who would like to contribute materials or construct masks.



The view from Anne's window as she sewed masks

- Some recommendations based on nurses' feedback:
- Tightly woven fabric provides better protection than looser weaves AND can be super comfortable. Think 300–400 thread count cotton percale sheets. Quilt fabric is much looser, usually 70 thread count. While many people are using quilt fabric, I use percale sheets for those I make for nurses and doctors.
 - Some people prefer elastic bands to slip over their ears. Others use cloth ties. With plenty

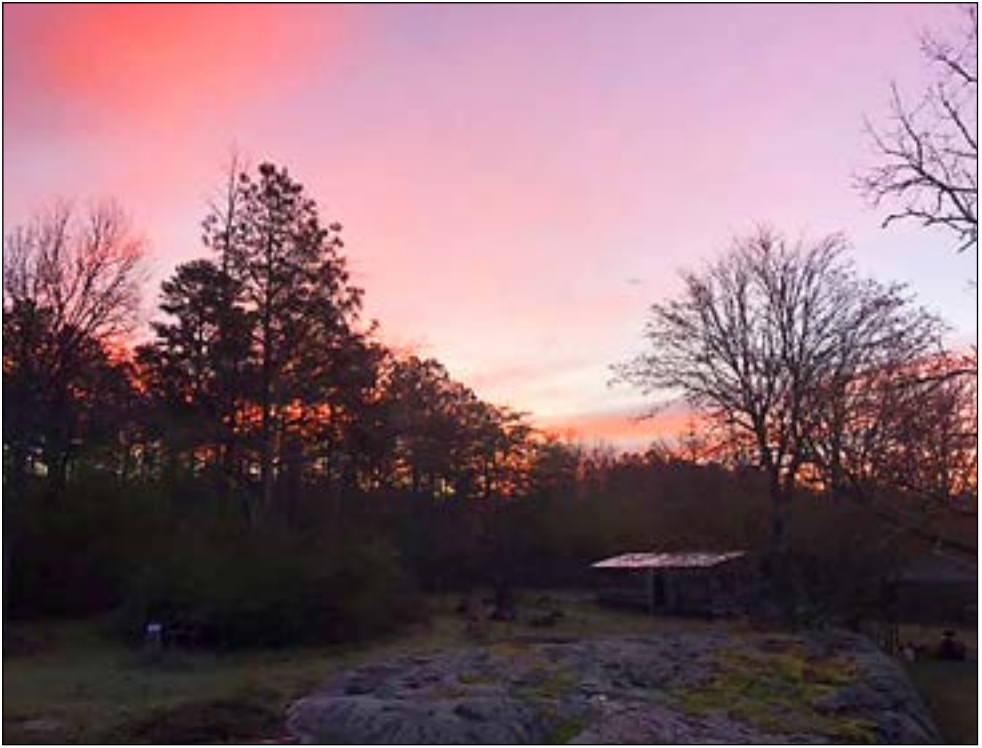
- of fabric but elastic in short supply, I am using T-shirt fabric, a cotton jersey, cut with the grain of the fabric and pulled to form a rolled tie.
- Using different fabrics for front and back allows nurses to tell at a glance which is the right side. The masks I have made call for a 10" x 14–16" fabric rectangle. Instead, I cut two 10" x 8.5" rectangles and stitch them together across the 10" seam to form the larger triangle. This is less of an issue when sewing a mask for personal use.
- The masks I have made so far have been based on the [Bham Face Masks group's pattern](#). This link is to their publicly shareable information and can be accessed if you are not on Facebook. This pattern is double-layered with a pocket to add in filter material if available, but it can be used without an added filter.

As more people become ill, wearing face masks is likely to become a part of daily life for those who have to go out in public during the pandemic, both to offer some degree of protection to the wearer, but also to help decrease the spread of any respiratory illness among others. Wearing face masks has long been common for some time among immunocompromised individuals. The fact that this is a novel coronavirus means that we are all immunocompromised where it's concerned. Taking steps to help slow down its spread protects the most vulnerable among us and decreases the peak load of hospital cases as much as possible.

Please see the links above for more information about sewing face masks. If you'd like to contribute masks for healthcare workers at DeKalb Regional, email me at cynthiaamcleod@gmail.com.



Photo by Sheila Horne, Brow Park, Mentone 3/31/20



#theviewfrommywindow by Jane Mauldin, Lookout Mountain 3/26/20

Learning Connections

by Cathy Haven Howard



In mid-March, our daughter-in-law, who quarantine-schools her children in Pennsylvania, wrote an email to friends and family inviting them to have some "connection time" with her children on Facetime, Skype, Google Hangouts, Zoom, etc., in an effort to keep a structure to their day and connect with others. She suggested that we could each share something of our lives with the children, so a few days later, my husband Ted and I met with the family on Zoom and had a wonderful time sharing and connecting. Our grandson Silas played a beautiful cello piece from Bach and granddaughter Ada shared the beginnings of a flute piece she is learning. Ted shared a brief rundown of the dynamics of flight for a helicopter versus a fixed wing airplane and tied all of this to some of his Vietnam war stories of being a Dustoff medivac helicopter pilot. Our session culminated in lots of laughter as Ted "showed" the kids how to make the starter for his famous "Ted Bread" Amish Friendship bread. This turned out to be one of the hidden blessings of this COVID-19 quarantine time for us. Great connection time with some of our grandchildren that we would not have had with our "busy schedules."

I've been doing lots of walks, enjoying Mentone. I am so thankful and happy to see old stone walls reappear after being over grown with ivy and vines for years. On Cutler Avenue, some little homes are being loved and cared for again. Seeing the rock wall and path that Jay and MaryAnn have uncovered at my grandparents' old home place makes my heart glad. Seeing the old Dorris home uncovered from years of overgrowth and seeing the stone path found under years of dirt makes me think about the people who placed those rocks there many years ago. I am so glad that people have chosen Mentone to be their home and are making yards look so good! Now I have to get busy and "keep-up" with the neighbors! —Dee Kelley, 3/29/20



Drive-in Church at Mentone Community Church

Well, this was a first! Like other area churches, Mentone Community Church is no longer holding services inside. Church member Gwen Stone had heard about another church offering a "drive-in" service, so she mentioned the possibility to Pastor Tim Miller. Gwen's husband, Mike, found an FM transmitter (whose signal reaches a couple of miles), and congregants gathered in the church parking lot on the last two Sundays of March to enjoy a sermon and music by Pastor Tim and his wife, Kathy. The parking lot was full and everyone was able to practice social distancing by remaining in their cars.



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davestone2012@yahoo.com



L to R: Stephen Rhodes, Valley Head Town Clerk Debra Rhodes, and County Forester Dan Green

DeKalb County Forester Dan Green of the Alabama Forestry Commission helped with a tree giveaway in late February in Valley Head and informed locals on how to properly plant their new trees. Valley Head has participated in the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program for the last 10 years. Valley Head achieved Tree City USA recognition by meeting the program's four requirements: a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

It's Application Time for College Scholarships!

by Kat Griffith

For all of you high school seniors who are barreling down the home stretch of your final year, and all of you college students who are cramming at night and working hard during the day to fund your college experience... Now is the time to get excited and motivated to do what you can do to secure the education to fulfill your goals and dreams!

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church is grateful to continue its partnership with students in the Mentone area to offer college scholarships. We invite you to submit an application for our Van McCary Scholarship. Applications are being accepted through May 1.

This opportunity is open to you as a high school senior or someone interested in embarking on the challenges of further education or even a career change. The Van McCary Scholarship is based on financial need and academic record. It is available to those who live in or near Mentone and is available to students for four years, providing that applicants adhere to the stated guidelines each year.

Packets are available at stjom.dioala.org/Outreach/3-scholarships.html. If you have questions or need more information, please call Scholarship Chairperson Kat Griffith at 256-418-0092.

April Birthdays

1	Michele Kincer Angie Miller Calvin Lanier Kayla Cronnon Cayson Hughes	9	Josh Goss Justin Kahler Mickey Smith	19	Butch Manifold
2	Milton Chambers Ellie Cox Jayken Lawton Nancy Lawton Amanda Patrick Dee Dee Hendricks	10	Brittany McAdams Newly Ingram Paul Ethan Blackwell Lindsey Webb Lisa Moore Emily McElhaney Debra Rhodes Stanford Carson Conner Barkley Robert Tillman	20	Lane Ingram Brenda Clinton Charlene Smith
3	Ray Padgett Jessica Battles Jalen Gregory	11	Jorden Beasley Joey Garrett Josie Crider Jerri Ann Tidmore Austin Simpson Ashton Simpson	21	Thelma Coots John Paul Verdon Daxson Crow
4	Jamie Vest Mina Blalock Sherry Barkley Coty Powell Cameron Thompson Lindsay Thompson	12	Corey Davis Kyle Coots Tiffany Baker Jeff Stephenson Liam Cooper Mary Shurett	22	Lauren McGee Philip Cash John P. Smith Jr. Coleton Phillips KareyAnn Garner
5	Kaitlyn Tedder Jana Sharp Kenny Chamlee Steve Rhodes Chris Black Andi Runnels Donna Busby Jamie Pannell	13	Brian Blalock Tessa Gravitt	23	Courtney Meadows Taylee Keith Adam Dupree Mariah Shannon
6	Felicia Harrison Jazz Hazelton John Chambers Ethel Manifold Sydney Ingram Jennifer Cruse	14	Zoe Chambers Carl Tubberville Jason Baber Tucker Wayne Smith	24	Cooper Kirby Jennifer Hamilton
7	Shannon Chappell Kansas Lee Kyle Miller Dori Reed	15	Barbara Busby Rape Craig Hendricks	25	Molly Manifold Eloise Lance John Moore Phyllis James Cindy Carden Zack Payne Wesley Flarity
8	Angie Wright Jackson Eli Rosson Sharon Coots Madissen Chitwood Hayden Knowles	16	Preston Kirby Danny Hopper Al Blackburn Sandy Johnson Walker Reece Stinson	26	Kaden Brody Johnson Emily Miller Kaylee Cartwright Tommy Stephens Ben Shurett
		17	Ann Cash Harrell Scott Guinn Hannah Drain	27	Linda Stephenson Katie Hester Dawson Kincer John Kincer Ezra Underwood
		18	Taylor Verdon Shan Smith	28	Mandi Goza Anita Meadows Shane McMahan Jaimee McGee Doug Powell

Anniversaries

1	Raymond & Sharon Coots	14	Ronnie & Leslie Bowman
3	Chris & Jennifer Collins Steve & Sandy Tate	16	Nick & Shinice Stout
7	Milton & Gail Chambers	19	Corey & Abby Davis
10	Nathan & Lacie Keith	20	Josh & Brandi Rosson
		26	Ross & Jessica VanPelt

Happy Day!

In Memoriam

Doug Shanklin with his long-time friends, Will Dooley and Darlys Smith

DOUGLAS ALAN SHANKLIN

July 12, 1951 – March 13, 2020

Douglas Alan Shanklin, age 68, of Mentone, passed away on Friday, March 13, 2020, at Erlanger Hospital. He was born in South Bend, IN on July 12, 1951.

Doug had aspired to be an actor early in life and planned to attend college near Los Angeles, but heeded his mother's wish to attend a Christian college in Indiana, where he earned his Master's degree. Influenced by his parents who had met while serving in the military, he joined and played basketball for the Marine Corps and was stationed in San Diego and Japan. He later moved to Los Angeles, where he enrolled in acting classes and workshops. He broke into television acting in 1983, when he appeared on episodes of *Dynasty* and *Matt Houston*. Doug co-starred in the television series, *J.J. Starbuck*, had a featured role in *Three's Company*, and appeared in *CHiPs*, *Who's the Boss*, *1st & Ten*, *J.O.E.* and *the Colonel*, and *Otherworld*. He appeared on the big screen in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, *Dark Rider*, and *Force of Darkness*, and had a starring role in *Hunk* (in which a young Brad Pitt was an extra). Doug also did some stage work in Las Vegas and at the Terrace Theater in Long Beach, CA. He was a lead in the play, *Heaven Can Wait*, in the role that Warren Beatty made famous, at the prestigious Glendale Center Theater.

He owned a remodeling business in Los Angeles and was involved in a Christian theater group that traveled across country on tour. He often spoke as a Christian actor for the Full Gospel Businessman's meetings and at mayors' prayer breakfasts in Los Angeles.

After moving to Eugene, OR, he worked for a company that manufactured archery supplies. Being an expert marksman and hunter, he used his skills to take customers on elk hunts and made demonstration videos. After moving to Mentone, he retired as a car dealership salesman and finance manager.

Doug was known for his kind heart and generous nature and he was well loved by a close circle of friends who visited his home daily to enjoy time together, often holding pickings on Doug's porches near Little River at Alpine. He supported the people he loved in every way, and was an avid supporter of live music in Mentone. He will be deeply missed by his devoted friends, his sons, Christian and Stephen, grandson Adam Shanklin, brother Gary Shanklin, and his special friend of many years, Darlys Smith.

Photo by Michele Anderson, Valley Head, 3/29/20

#theviewfrommywindow by Hjordis Creel, Lookout Mountain, 3/27/20

#theviewfrommywindow by Ines Hughes, Fort Payne 3/24/20

..... Recipes to Enjoy

Skillet Pork Chops with Pecan Rice

Submitted by Pat Johnson

- 5 Tbsp salted butter, softened, divided
- 4 Tbsp roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 1/4 cups low-sodium chicken broth, or water, divided
- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 3 cloves garlic, or 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 thin-cut boneless pork chops, trimmed, about 3 ounces each
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbsp neutral oil, such as canola oil
- 3/4 cup sliced scallion (4 to 5)
- 2 serrano peppers, seeded and minced, or 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 cup diced carrots (about 2 medium carrots)
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped pecans

In a small bowl, combine 4 Tbsp of the softened butter and the parsley and mix gently to incorporate.

In a large bowl, combine 1 cup broth, the rice, garlic and bay leaf. Cover and microwave on HIGH until liquid is absorbed, about 8 minutes. Remove the bowl from microwave and use a fork to mash the garlic against the sides of the bowl; then mix into rice.

While the rice is cooking, pat the pork dry and season lightly with salt and pepper. In a 12-inch skillet over high heat, add the oil and heat until shimmering. Add the chops to the pan, searing until well browned, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer the pork to a plate and tent loosely with foil or wax paper to keep them warm.

Reduce the heat to medium-high. Add the remaining tablespoon of butter and, once melted, add the scallion, serrano peppers, ginger and cayenne (if using) and cook until fragrant, scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan, about 2 minutes.

Add the par-cooked rice and stir to combine with scallion mixture. Add the carrots, pecans and the remaining 1–1/4 cups broth. Stir to combine and bring to a boil.

Place the seared chops on top of the rice and pour any accumulated juices on the platter into the skillet. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover and simmer until the rice is tender, about 10 minutes.

To serve, place a scoop of rice on a plate, top with a chop and a tablespoon of the parsley butter over the meat. Serves 4.



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Corn Pone

Submitted by Dana Goggans

- 1–1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup self-rising flour (if you use all purpose flour you will have to use baking powder)
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 to 1–1/2 cup milk (If it’s too thin, throw in a little more flour. Maybe start with a cup of milk.)

Salt and pepper (if you like pepper).

Preheat oven to 450°. Sift together cornmeal and flour. Whisk eggs and add to flour and corn meal, then add oil and milk and whip until blended. Season to taste.

Heat a little oil in a 9” iron skillet skillet, rolling around to cover the edges, then pour in cornmeal batter.

Reduce heat in oven to 400°. Bake for 20 or 30 minutes, until the top is browned to your liking.

Red Cabbage Delight

submitted by Charla Hermann

Cut a red cabbage into eight pieces and place in cast iron skillet. Drip olive oil in all of the lovely tight spots, cover with chopped scallions, and maybe even cheat with a tiny bit of butter. Drizzle about 1/4 cup of balsamic vinegar on top before you cook it. Place in 350° oven or can do on stove top for at least 15 minutes, some take a bit longer. I place on a bed of rice and sprinkle with bacon bits and fried onion crisp. Then I enjoy!

Fluffy Sweet Potato Pancakes

Submitted by Megan Halderman

"If you don't have all of the dry ingredients (flax, cornmeal, whole wheat), I'm sure you could sub all purpose flour for any of them."

- 1-1/4 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1/8 cup ground flax seed (flax seed meal)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1–1/4 cups whole milk + 1 Tbsp white vinegar (as a substitute for buttermilk)
- 1/2 cup sweet potato puree*
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled, plus more for griddle
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten

Whisk together the flour, cornmeal, ground flax seed, sugar, baking powder, salt, baking soda and pumpkin pie spice. In another bowl, whisk together the milk, butter, sweet potato puree and eggs. Whisk wet ingredients into dry ingredients until just combined (mixture will be lumpy). Allow mixture to sit for 10 minutes.

Heat a griddle or large nonstick skillet over medium heat and brush griddle with melted butter. Spoon batter onto griddle 1/4 cup at a time. Cook until edges are set, 2 to 4 minutes. Flip, and cook until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Repeat with remaining batter adding more butter to griddle. Serve warm with maple syrup. Serves 4.

*To make the sweet potato puree, cut a medium sized sweet potato in half and place the halves cut side down on a greased sheet pan. Roast in a 400 degree oven for 20-30 minutes or until you can easily pierce the sweet potato with a knife. Scrape out the inside and blend in a blender until smooth, you may have to add a little water.

..... Stay at Home and Cook!

Multigrain Pancakes

submitted by Megan Halderman

"We make these pancakes every Saturday morning"

- 1–1/4 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1/8 cup ground flax seed (flax seed meal)
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 1 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. coarse salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1–3/4 cups whole milk or any non-dairy milk + 1 tablespoon white vinegar (as a substitute for buttermilk)
- 3 Tbsp butter or coconut oil, melted and cooled, plus more for the griddle
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

Whisk together the flour, cornmeal, ground flax seed, sugar, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. In another bowl, whisk together the milk, butter, and egg. Whisk wet ingredients into dry ingredients until just combined (mixture will be lumpy).

Heat a griddle or large nonstick skillet over medium heat and brush griddle with melted butter. Spoon batter onto griddle 1/4 cup at a time. Cook until edges are set, 2–4 minutes. Flip, and cook until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Repeat with remaining batter, adding more butter to griddle and keeping prepared pancakes warm on a baking sheet in the oven. Serve warm with maple syrup. Serves 3–4.

Zucchini Pancake Variation: In the summertime when zucchini is in season, I turn these into zucchini bread pancakes. To do this, I grate 1 cup of zucchini and then squeeze out the excess water and mix it into the batter with the wet ingredients. I also add a sprinkle of cinnamon and nutmeg to the dry ingredients. The cooking directions are the same after the batter is mixed.



#theviewfrommywindow by Sue Schwarz, Mentone sunrise 3/26/20

Kielbasa Sausage with Sautéed Kale and White Beans

submitted by Megan Halderman

"This is my go-to recipe when I don't know what to make for dinner and need something quick and simple."

- ½ pound kielbasa sausage
- 1 can cannellini beans, drained
- 2–3 cups chopped kale
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Feta or parmesan cheese for serving (optional)

Heat a skillet on medium high heat and add a little olive oil to coat the skillet. Slice the kielbasa sausage into ¼" slices. Cook the kielbasa until browned on both sides and cooked through. Remove the sausage from the pan and drain any excess fat.

Add a little more olive oil to the pan and add the can of cannellini beans. Sauté the beans for a few minutes until they begin to brown slightly.

Next, add the chopped kale to the pan and cook for 4–5 minutes until the kale is wilted down a bit. Once the kale is wilted down to your liking, add the kielbasa back to the pan and toss everything together. Season with salt and pepper to taste and top with feta or parmesan cheese. Serves 3–4.

Variations: The sausage can be omitted to make this dish vegetarian. It is just as delicious this way, in my opinion, and makes a great side dish. I often replace the cannellini beans with garbanzo beans as well.

Flour Tortillas

submitted by Lauren Kyle

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1–1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1/3 to 1/2-cup oil (I use olive oil, avocado, or coconut, lard or tallow)
- 1–1/2 cup very warm water

Mix dry ingredients together. Working with your hands, drizzle in oil. Work until you can squeeze the mixture together and it will hold its shape slightly. Add warm water, a little at a time, until it feels like firm bread dough. The dough should pull away from the side of the bowl and shouldn't be tacky. If it is, sprinkle a little more flour.

Turn out onto counter and knead until it feels like the back of your hand when making a loose fist. Should be relatively smooth. Cover bowl, let rest 15 minutes while your griddle or cast iron skillet heats up (a notch or so under medium heat). Roll out a small ball of dough (about the size of a large egg) onto floured surface.

Cook about 1 minute or so per side. Use a fork or spatula if you have heat sensitive hands. Enjoy. Should yield 12–18 regular tortillas or 8–12 burrito tortillas.

We welcome recipes! Please email your recipe to groundhognews@yahoo.com or mail to The Groundhog, P.O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

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Mentone Area Church Directory

Mentone, Alabama

Cove Road Baptist Church invites everyone in the Mentone and Cloudland Communities to services—Sunday School 10am (GA time) Morning Worship 11am (GA time), Wednesday Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm (GA time). Bro. Brian Keith is the pastor. 2415 County Road 631.

Howard's Chapel (Church in the Rock) has regular services at 10am each Sunday. You are invited to attend these services or visit the church at other times. Casual dress is always acceptable. County Road 617.

Mentone Church of God of Prophecy has Sunday School at 10am, with Worship at 11am. Evening services begin at 5:30pm on Sunday and 6pm on Wednesday. Bro. Whitney Smith invites everyone to attend. AL Hwy 117 (across from Mentone Post Office).

Mentone Community Church invites you to Crosswalk Sunday School (K through Adult) 9:15am, Adult Worship Service 10:30am, JC Kids Worship Service 10:30am. Pastor Tim Miller. Van Ministry for Children pick-up/take home, ages K-12, for all surrounding areas 8:15am (please call Donna Bunn 706-398-0720). Wednesday small group study 6:30pm. 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

Mentone United Methodist Church invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday our worship service is held at 11am and is led by Rev. Heidi C. Bender. Sunday School is at 10am. The service of Holy Communion is held the first Sunday of each month and fifth Sundays are a service of music with a pot luck lunch afterwards. 415 Cutler Avenue. 256-634-8006.

Moon Lake Baptist Church is a growing community of believers from various walks of life who endeavor to share the light, life, and love of Jesus with all we meet. We gather together for practical Bible study at 10am on Sunday. You can count on an encouraging and life-engaging message at 11am each Sunday. At 6pm, on Sunday, we enjoy a time of praying together. On Wednesdays at 6pm, we have groups for our children, students, and adults. 4671 Al Hwy. 117. 256-634-4568. Connect with us on Facebook at "Moon Lake" or Pastor Mike at "Mike Ellis".

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church offers Sunday School on Sunday mornings at 10am (EST) and Worship Service at 11am (EST). Pastor Jack Green. 10090 County Road 103. 706-862-6221.

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church welcomes everyone to 10:30am Sunday service of Holy Eucharist. Open for daily prayer and thanksgiving. Supporting our community with outreach. 256-634-4476. 21145 Scenic Highway. stjosephmountain.dioala.org.

Spirit Expression Ministry, a Chapel of the Alliance of Divine Love, invites you to sit with us in sacred circle on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 11am Central at Heartwood Center, 7 miles from downtown Mentone. Reverend Cathy Haven Howard facilitates a spiritual wisdom topic. Email havenhoward1@gmail.com for directions and questions.

Summit Church of God in Mentone invites you to be in service Sunday morning 10:45am, Sunday night 5pm, Wednesday Bible Study 6:30pm. Pastor Lance Kincer.

Hammondville, Alabama

The **Church of God 7th Day** invites you to Sabbath School classes at 9:30am and Worship Service at 11am. Visitors are always welcome. Located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road. 256-717-5040.

During these uncertain times, please contact the churches to see if they are holding services, or to inquire about online services.

Greater Vision Ministries Church of God invites you to Sunday School 10 am, Sunday Worship *10:45 am, (*Nursery & Kid's Church). MidWEEK re-charge Wednesday 6:30pm. Pastor Tim Coppock. 38623 US Hwy 11. 256-601-0679.

Valley Head, Alabama

Lea's Chapel Baptist Church welcomes you to worship with us. 10am Sunday Bible Study, 11am Morning Worship, 6pm Evening Worship. Wednesday 6–8pm Awana (ages 4–18); 6:30pm Praise and Prayer time. 4212 County Road 751. 256-635-1001.

Valley Head Baptist Church invites you to come and worship with us. On Sunday, Bible Study is at 10am & Morning Worship is at 11am; Kidz Connection is at 5pm, Evening Worship at 6pm. Kidz Connection & Youth meet on Wednesday from 5–6pm & a snack supper is provided. On the second Wednesday of the month, there is a church-wide covered dish Fellowship Meal at 6pm. 265 Church Street. 256-465-1242.

Visitors are always welcome at **Valley Head United Methodist Church**. Please join us each Sunday morning for a traditional worship service at 9:30am. Tony Gunter is the Pastor. All are welcome. 146 Church St.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, holds services in Moon Lake Baptist Church's dining hall. All are invited to attend. Sabbath School and Song Service 9:30–10:45am, Worship Service 11am–12:15pm. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnel.

Fort Payne, Alabama

Since 1889, worshippers have gathered at the **Historic First Presbyterian Church PC (USA)** at 300 Grand Avenue North. We invite you to join us for worship this Sunday at 10:55am. 256-845-2915.

The **Fort Payne Christian Center** and Pastors Ken and Elaine Hollman invite everyone to join in Worship on Sunday at 10am, Wednesday evening at 6pm. 3610 Grand Ave. SW. 256-997-0047.

Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) invites you to Sunday School at 9:45am; Sunday Worship at 10:55am. 256-845-4756. 5760 Gault Ave. NE.

Gravel Hill Baptist Church welcomes you to Sunday School at 10am & Worship Service at 11am each Sunday. All are welcome. Wednesdays at 6pm, we have supper and a brief devotional time together. Pastor George Moses. 14701 Hwy 11 South.

New Oregon United Methodist Church is located just off DeSoto Parkway, 1/4 mile south of Fischer Crossroads. We invite you to worship with us on Sundays. Sunday School for all ages 9:45am, Traditional Worship 11am, and Sunday Evening Service 6pm. Sunday Evening youth meet at 5:30pm. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible studies for all ages, meal at 5:30pm and classes at 6:15pm.

We also have Wednesday morning Bible study at 8:45am, and knitting every Tuesday at 9am. Pastor Ian Conerly. 1204 New Oregon Drive NE. 256-845-7446.

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church holds Sunday mass in English at 10am and 1pm in Spanish. Tuesday at 6pm in English, Wednesday at 5pm bilingual, Thursday at 6pm in English, Friday at 9am in English and Saturday at 6pm in bilingual. 2910 Gault Ave. N. 256-845-4774.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church holds regular Worship Services at 10am Sunday. Clifford Herd, Pastor. Everyone is welcome. 1519 Smith Gap Road (County Road 85). 256-845-4842.

St. Stephen Anglican Church invites you to attend service on Sunday mornings at 8am. 411 SW Grand Ave. (in the basement of Killian & Killian Attorneys). Father Rodney Jackson, 205-405-0055; Deacon Jack Gilbreath, 256-845-2605.

Walnut Grove Baptist Church, on Highway 11 north of Fort Payne, welcomes everyone at Sunday School 10am, Worship Service at 11am, Wednesday night youth meeting at 6pm, and Wednesday night Prayer Meeting at 6:30pm. 3606 Greenhill Blvd NW. 256-996-0929.

Cloudland, Georgia

Cloudland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Jan Warren-Taylor. Bible Study Sunday at 9am (EST) and Worship at 10am (EST). 150 Partain Road.

Menlo, Georgia

Alpine Community Church Pastor Jeremy Stroop welcomes each and everyone to worship service Sunday mornings at 11am GA time; Sunday School 10am (EST); and Wednesday night Bible Study at 7pm (EST). 1104 Hwy. 337, Menlo GA. 706-862-6641.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend 10am (EST) and 11am (EST) Sunday services and evening services at 5pm (EST) on Sundays and Wednesdays. Visitors are always welcome.

Menlo Presbyterian Church (ECO) invites everyone to attend services with us. Sunday School at 10am (EST) and Worship Service at 11:15am (EST). Rev. Jan Taylor is our pastor. We are located at 70 North 6th Ave., next to the park in Menlo.

Summerville, Georgia

Redemption Worship Center invites you to "Find Love, Encouragement, & Purpose!" Wednesdays: Hour of Power Bible Study 6:30pm (EST); Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm (EST). Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am (EST); Morning Celebration 10:30am (EST). Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue. 706-808-0909.

Summerville Seventh Day Adventist Church invites you to worship with us. Saturday morning Sabbath School classes at 9:30am (EST) and Worship Service at 11am (EST). Everyone is welcome. Services are held at the First Presbyterian Church, 116 College Street. The Pastor is Dr. Edward Skoretz. summervillesda.com

Please send any changes to
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Driving up Lookout Mountain in the fog, with the soft ghosts of trees lining the winding state highway and a glimpse here and there of a familiar rock face, invites not thought but meditation. An overly cautious driver, I've learned that thinking too much about ascent up through a low-lying cloud leads to the grim distraction of highway statistics, a clenching of the hands at 10 and 2.

Meditation instead opens me up to the beauty of the moment with an awareness of the landscape that orients and sharpens me. The rock face is closer to the bottom, the small waterfall nearer to the top, I pass the landmarks that guide me to the summit with its flashing light, the intersection of roads leading down into Alabama and up into Tennessee. Being present in the clouds means seeing with the understanding that unknowns surround me.

A few years ago, my husband and I took a short trip to Tybee Island off the coast of Georgia. I needed the ocean to calm my worried mind during a time when I felt besieged by questions about what would come next in almost every aspect of my life. Gazing out into the vast space of ocean and sky has long provided me with a sense of proportion and allowed my anxiety to settle into a more manageable level. The voice of God I hear on the beach usually sounds a lot like Humphrey Bogart explaining to Ingrid Bergman on that runway in Casablanca that "...it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world." This recognition can be oddly comforting.

The island, when we arrived, was still digging out from Hurricane Michael, so there were piles of debris on large lots and FEMA trucks packing up to head out in a day or two. But the wreckage barely registered. We had a cozy AirBnB, a garage apartment near the beach, surrounded by palms and pines. My faith in the ocean remained; the water would pull me back to earth. We set out for the shore.

What we saw on the beach was—nothing at all. The island was socked in with a relentless fog. On our walks we heard foghorns on ships and sometimes we caught a suggestion of smaller craft out there, shrimping perhaps. Had we driven all the way here to be by the ocean only to not see it at all? What would ground me now?

The next day the fog remained. We could have been walking through the desert or even on the moon. If the Atlantic was out there, you would never know.

Then on our last day on the island I did something incredibly foolish. Walking through the mist on the north side of Tybee, we heard a ship's horn blare nearby. A massive container ship suddenly appeared, preparing to make the turn into the bay side, heading for port.

"I want to get a picture," I told my husband. Low tide revealed a series of sandbars in very shallow water. I could go out and stand on one of them and get the shot of the name on the end of the ship, something that seemed incredibly important at the moment. I walked out to the farthest small sandbar, perhaps 50 feet from shore, my Don's iPhone

NAVIGATING IN THE FOG

by Anne McLeod

in hand.

As the ship made its turn, I focused the camera on the stern, snapped a picture. Another and another. The words on the stern still looked blurry and I fussed with the phone.

Suddenly I felt a strong current rising above my ankles, backwash from the ship's displacement of the waters. I turned around and saw my husband heading toward me as he realized what had happened. The low tide was no longer so low, and my uneven path was no longer visible below the current.

I took a tentative step off the sandbar, into water up to my knees. The sudden depth along with the power of the current as it pulled at me shocked me into awareness of the potential danger I faced.

Time slowed down. This is how people drown in shallow water, I thought, just by losing their footing while stepping off a sandbar and then being caught by a strong current. I had heard of these things and never understood how it happened until now. I wanted to

run and I could not. Instead I would have to slow down, have to feel for the uneven shore.

With my next step one of my plastic sandals was pulled off my foot, and I let it go. Don was picking his way toward me, feeling his way across the sandbars and low spots, just like me. I still held his iPhone.

I felt for a step and another, each time opening up to the possibility that the next would be higher or lower than where I stood now. A step and another and then another. Balance. Feel your way forward. Stay calm.

It may have taken 30 seconds for me to meet Don in the shallows. I handed him his phone, and we laughed from sheer relief. That was stupid, I told him. Yeah, he'd realized it a moment too late to call me back. We watched the surf

for a minute or two. My sandal tumbled through the breakers. Don snatched it up. I put it on.

Later I reflected on how close I'd come to meeting a nonsensical end, only to make my way out of it through a minute of clarity there in the fog. I'd expected to find peace and reassurance at the ocean but had instead experienced an unsettling lesson I could only hope I understood.

I looked for clarity, reassurance, and certainty, and instead saw only fog and a path beneath treacherous water. But the path required only that I slow down and pay attention, trusting that I would make it to shore. This mindful awareness of both danger and possibility can help us navigate times like these when the tides seem to be shifting under our feet. Although it can be hard to accept that there are more questions than answers, at least for now, we move forward, one step and then another, knowing that this will one day be yet another journey we made together.

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A message of Love & Hope



We, at Mentone United Methodist Church, hold you in our thoughts and prayers. As we continue to walk an unsure road, we take comfort in knowing we do not walk alone. God is with us and we have each other. As you practice caution, I urge you to remember that our local businesses need our support more than ever.

***Love and prayers,
Pastor Heidi C. Bender
423-329-1165***

**Mentone United Methodist Church
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Photo by Sheila Horne, Mentone 3/20/20

Today, working in my yard, I could hear the bells of St. Joseph on the Mountain Episcopal church chiming every 15 minutes throughout the hour! I found myself praying each time I heard those bells! I prayed for a friend who just lost her husband, for families struggling with job loss at this time, for families who are missing the free breakfast and lunch programs at their school, for elderly folks cut off from visits from family and friends for their own safety, for businesses truly hurting and in danger of folding, for the fear that might crush Hope and Love! As we distance ourselves from others physically, hearing those bells can be a beckoning call to be mindful of others to stay connected in our hearts and minds, to quell any overwhelming fear and to know we have resources and capabilities to be and stay well! —Mary MacMichael, 3/21/20