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Volume 40, No. 12 "Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain" December 2021/January 2022

Mentone Christmas Tree Lighting

The fourth annual Mentone Christmas Tree Lighting will take place Friday evening, December 10, at 5 p.m. Join your friends and neighbors at the town square at the corner of AL Hwy. 117 and CR 89 (next to the Mentone Inn).

Bundle up, bring the kids, and enjoy caroling and a special performance by the Mentone Ukes, a local ukulele group. Cookies and hot chocolate will be served at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the Mentone Inn.

Santa will make a special appearance, as well! Ornaments will be available on which you may write a Christmas wish or prayer to hang on the tree. This event is graciously hosted by Cynthia Stinson of the Mentone Inn.

A New Eagle Scout in Mentone's Troop 106



L to R: Assistant Troopmaster Dr. Bill Berry, and Eagle Scout Brant Smith at the Fort Payne Opera House.

Congratulations to Brant Smith of Valley Head for becoming an Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Brant's Eagle Scout ceremony took place on October 9 at the Fort Payne Opera House. Brant is the son of Stacy and Karen Smith. He is a sophomore at Valley Head High School, where he is president of the Future Farmers of America program and plays on the varsity football team.

Brant joined the Boy Scouts as a Webelo in 2016 and in 2017 advanced to Mentone's BSA Troop 106, where he serves as Junior Assistant Scoutmaster. He has earned a total of 67 merit badges. "I have really enjoyed all of my scouting experiences, many of which I probably would never have had the opportunity to do," *(continued on page 5)*



DeSoto Rescue Squad Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser

Saturday, December 4 • 8-11 a.m.

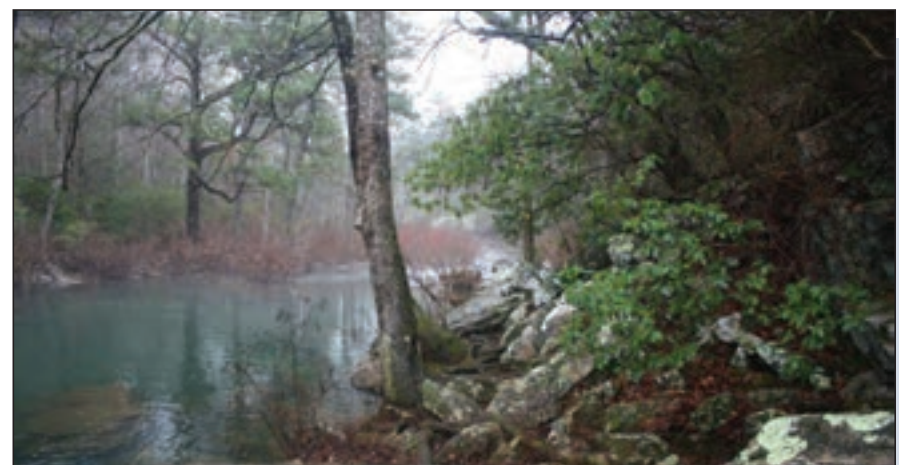
**Mentone Community Church
90 Summerville Road, Mentone**



DeSoto Rescue Squad is once again serving up a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, and hash brown casserole for dine-in or carry-out. Coffee and juice are available with dine-in. This popular fundraiser directly benefits DeSoto Rescue Squad. Tickets cost \$10/plate and are available at Little River Hardware, from a Squad member, or at the door.

Get your photo taken with Santa from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.! The cost is \$5 for a 4"x6" photo.

For more information, please contact Captain Michael Stone at 256-755-1023.



Start the New Year with a First Day Hike DeSoto State Park • January 1

First Day Hikes are held annually on New Year's Day throughout the country to encourage visitors to enjoy state parks year-round and to promote good health and exercise by working off those calories gained during the holidays. Start the New Year off right! For details on the 2022 DSP hike, visit stateparks.org/special-programs/first-day-hikes.



THE GROUNDHOG

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MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. The Groundhog has been in publication for 39 years.

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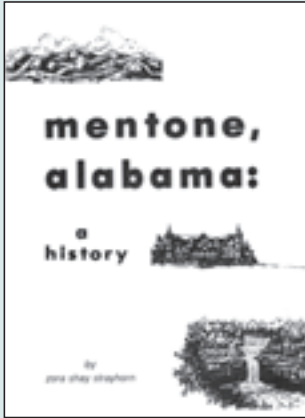
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The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice

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



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

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond

The town has invested in 13 lighted wreaths for our downtown Christmas decorations. Additionally, clerk Kristen Emory has replaced the lights in the snowflakes with warm white LED lights. Some of the poles on which we usually placed decorations were replaced in the bridge construction so we were unable to mount wreaths or snowflakes on those poles. Hopefully we will be able to add more next year.

At the end of November, the DeKalb County Board of Education will transfer the Moon Lake School campus to the Town of the Mentone. It is the hope of both the school board and the town that the Moon Lake campus will become a center for community activities. We are excited about the possibilities and are also aware that sustaining the facility will have its challenges. Some citizens have already given us great ideas on the future



use of the school.

In December, a pre-construction meeting will be held on the sidewalk project. Representatives from ALDOT, the town, and Lambert Contracting will attend. Construction should begin early in the new year.

Merry Christmas, and best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!



From the
Editor

Northeast Alabama was blessed with a spectacular fall this year. We're so fortunate to have such natural beauty right outside our front doors.

We also are blessed with a strong community spirit. As I've reviewed this issue, I'm once again struck by the abundance of our area's caring and giving individuals and groups. It's been a while since DeSoto Rescue Squad has been able to serve up their pancake breakfast, and I encourage everyone to purchase a ticket, which directly benefits the Squad. This month, we can once again gather for community tree lightings, both in Mentone and Valley Head, and Valley Head will hold their traditional Christmas parade. Children can send their letters to Santa at Valley Head's Town Hall. Pecans are on sale at the Tigers Inn to benefit the Valley Head Women's Club's scholarship fund. Moon Lake Library will hold its holiday open house and a holiday pajama party for the children. The Mentone Ukes will perform publicly for the first time at Mentone's tree lighting, and the Mentone Arts Center continues its songwriters series.

Winter is my favorite time to walk in the woods. DeSoto State Park will once again offer its First Day Hike on New Year's Day, and DSP naturalist Brittney Hughes writes about one of many hikes at the park on page 7.

A Norwegian proverb says, "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing." Even in the depth of winter, Scandinavian children spend much of their days in the outdoors. If you have children in your life, take them for a hike, or spend some time at MERF's Pathway to Community walking trail. Fresh air, sunshine, and unstructured play time are so important for children's development. If you need "good" clothing to be able to enjoy the chillier days outdoors, be sure to check out Ryleigh's Closet in Mentone—it's a clothes closet that offers free clothes to anyone in need.

Finally, remember the importance of shopping locally! It's convenient, saves on gas, and truly helps local business owners, as well as the tax base for our communities.

I wish you all a beautiful holiday season.

—Kelly



MAPA News by Susan Seago

Can you believe 2021 is almost over? Mentone has come through the pandemic well and our economy seems to have done okay. I trust you and your loved ones are doing well also and are looking forward to the Christmas season. This year we may be able to celebrate with family and friends, giving thanks for all our blessings and sharing with others. MAPA continues to serve the Mentone

community. In November, we were able to fulfill a grant request to help with the renovation of the ball field in Hammondville which will benefit the Valley Head, Hammondville, and Mentone communities. The ball field will contribute to the quality of life for current and future generations of residents and students. We wish them the best in getting the funds needed to complete the project.

We are also encouraging our membership to renew their affiliation with MAPA. At our membership meeting in October, we voted on our board for 2022. Those board members are Mark Hoffman,

president; Susan Seago, vice president; Beverly Haynes, secretary; Douglas Brewer, treasurer; L.C. Moon, parliamentarian; and Domenic Fulginiti and Jane Bouldin, our members-at-large. Joe Piscatelli recently resigned his position as vice president after many years of dedicated service. He will continue supporting MAPA as a volunteer. Thank you, Joe!

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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



Please remember our area's first responders when considering your seasonal donations.

DeSoto Rescue Squad
P. O. Box 517, Mentone, AL 35984

North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District
P. O. Box 154, Mentone, AL 35984

Valley Head Volunteer Fire Department
P. O. Box 126, Valley Head, AL 35989

Hammondville Volunteer Fire Department
37684 US Hwy. 11, Hammondville, AL 35989

Cloudland Volunteer Fire Department
163 Gadsden Ave, Cloudland, GA 30731

Menlo Volunteer Fire Department
P. O. Box 155, Menlo, GA 30731



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mapamentone.com/gift**

Free Tai Chi Class for Seniors Begins in January

by Emily McCamy

Are you interested in improving your health, your balance, and your mind? Consider tai chi, a series of movements performed in a slow, focused manner. Don't confuse tai chi with hard martial arts. Tai chi is an ancient Chinese tradition that today is practiced as a graceful form of exercise. It involves a series of movements performed in a slow, focused manner. Tai chi will teach you patience, give you confidence, and inspire you.

DeKalb County Council on Aging offers FREE classes taught by certified Tai Chi instructor Frank Kenney. Learn a simple form of tai chi that will improve your balance, assist you in falls prevention, and perhaps help you to deal with a chronic condition such as arthritis, depression, and neurologic conditions like Parkinson's and multiple sclerosis. This class is also a great way to make new friends and expand your social network.

The class will begin on January 4 and meet each Tuesday morning for 16 weeks (through April 19). You'll learn a routine that consists of 21 moves. Sound like too much? It's not. You can do it!

Limited to those age 60 and older, the class begins at 9:30 a.m. at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 600 Tyler Ave. SE in Fort Payne.



*Certified Tai Chi Instructor
Frank Kenney*

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

Join MAPA Today

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

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

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

JOIN AT mapamentone.com

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

Letters to Santa



The Town of Valley Head is helping Santa with his mail!

Please bring your letters to Santa to the Valley Head Town Hall before December 10 and Rudolph will pick them up and get them to the North Pole. Ho Ho Ho!

Valley Head Area Women’s Club Pecan Sales/Scholarship Fundraiser

by Anna Mae Horn

The Valley Head Area Women’s Club had a fun November meeting at The Hatter Cafe. The delightful tea party consisted of scrumptious goodies and friendly chatter, topped off with hats and crowns. The primary topic of conversation was the pecan fundraiser for scholarships to help local seniors achieve their academic goals.

Pecan halves and pieces are once again available to purchase for only \$11 per one-pound bag. The new owners at the Tigers Inn restaurant in Valley Head are carrying on the tradition of selling these. All proceeds go directly to the scholarship fund.

The ladies of the Valley Head Area Women’s Club are happy to provide



L to R: Judy O’Daniel, Anna Mae Horn, Debbie Johnson, Marsha Merrell, Sharon Harris, Martha Stanley, JoAnn Phillips, and Judith Hammond

annual scholarships of \$500 for Valley Head High School seniors. Interested students should ask the Valley Head guidance counselor for details. Contact any member of the Valley Head Area Women’s Club for more information on pecans.



L to R: Mike Campbell, Father Bill Winters, and Cynthia Stinson, innkeeper/general manager of the Mentone Inn

Jack Campbell Golf Classic Helps Food Bank

The Jack Campbell Golf Classic was held on November 12 and 13 at Lil Mole Run Golf Course in Mentone. The tournament is held each year in memory of Mentone Inn owner Mike Campbell’s father, Jack. Since its inception six years ago, the event has served as a charity fundraiser, and this year funds were raised for the St. Joseph’s Food Pantry. Over \$2,000 was raised this year and presented to Father Bill Winters.

Four foursomes played 18 holes on Friday and Saturday. Players from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Alaska, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Alabama stayed at the Mentone Inn.



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Eagle Scout (continued from page 1)

Brant said. "I feel that scouting has had a lifelong effect on me, and I plan to remain active in it."

Eagle Scout is the highest attainable BSA rank. To rise to the level of Eagle Scout, scouts must earn at least 21 merit badges, demonstrate Scout Spirit—an ideal attitude based upon the Scout Oath and Law, service, and leadership—and plan, organize, lead, and manage an extensive service project.

At the suggestion of David Gilbreath, the District Advancement Chairman for local Scouts, and retired Circuit Judge David Rains, Brant's Eagle Scout project focused on curating

an exhibit of artifacts which reflect the history of scouting in DeKalb County. The exhibit is on display in the Richard C. Hunt Reception Hall adjacent to the Fort Payne Opera House. The display will periodically change as additional items are obtained.

"Brant is an outstandingly mature and dependable young man with boundless energy and potential," said Asst. Scoutmaster Bill Berry. "He rakes my leaves every December, and he was my go-to guy when I cleaned out my mom's attic shortly before she died. We found countless little treasures she had stored away, many of which fascinated



Thanks to Leslie Bunch for sharing this photo of Winston Place in Valley Head with a full moon rising over Lookout Mountain. Winston Place is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Its rich history began in the 1840s as a two-story pioneer dwelling. Additions and renovations took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Currently owned by Jim and Leslie Bunch, it serves as a bed and breakfast inn.

Brant due to their vintage qualities. It was fun to work alongside him and see the enthusiasm he expressed with each new discovery!"

If you are interested in donating or

loaning Scouting artifacts or providing a written troop history, Scoutmaster David Killian can be contacted at Killian and Killian Law Offices at 256-845-4396. Congratulations, Brant!



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St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Invites All to Christmas Services



Join us Friday, December 24, at 4:30 p.m. for carol singing, a Christmas pageant, and live nativity scene at the creche. Our Christmas Eve service will begin at 5 p.m. and all are welcome to take Communion. Then, on Sunday, December 26, at 10:30 a.m. we will begin lessons and carols.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas!

St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church
21145 Scenic Highway | Mentone | (256) 634-4476

JUST BETWEEN US
A Curious Q & A by Rebecca Henderson



Lyle Nicely

Lyle Nicely and I met for the first time recently, a conversation that started with “Nice to meet you” and ended with Lyle inviting my husband and me to come canoeing. Careful what you ask for, Lyle! I’m not talented with a paddle. Many in the area know Lyle for organizing the Mentone Area Annual Cleanup and Cookout, a volunteer effort held in late March/early April. “I’m the trash man,” he says. He is married to Heather Nicely and has two children: Sierra, 30, and Orion, 25. He was patient with all my questions.

Q *Town you were born?*

A Memphis, Tennessee

Q *How did you get to Mentone?*

A I met Heather at Christian Brothers [University] in Memphis. Her grandfather was born here and went to Moon Lake School.

Q *What do you do for a living?*

A I build houses. My company is Ecological Designs. I’m always looking for different houses to build. For example, I built a passive solar house that we lived in, and I built one for someone else. It’s simple. You orient the house so

that windows face south and collect solar energy that is stored in the thermal masses inside the house. [The energy is stored in building materials during the day and then released at night, when there is no sun to heat the house.]

Q *How did the community cleanup come about?*

A Back when Mayor Britt was here, we began talking about the need one day and next thing we knew, it began. I can’t even remember how long it’s been going on. I wish more people in the community would come to the picnic. We have good food

and good music. I think sometimes people are afraid they can’t come if they didn’t help with the cleanup, but I’d like it to be a community picnic.

Q *What do you want most for Christmas this year?*

A Another day in paradise. Any day you’re vertical is a good day.

Q *What’s your favorite meal?*

A I eat a lot of salad and salmon. Cholesterol and I love each other, so I try to get my cholesterol to cooperate. I don’t like taking medicine, so I do it the old-fashioned way.

Q *First historic event you remember?*

A Back then in Memphis there were a lot of Civil Rights events in that area. That struck me.

Q *Do you ever wear long pants?*

A Sometimes at weddings and funerals.

Q *Best band ever?*

A I’ve always been a jazz fan. Miles Davis, Artie Shaw, Stan Getz. The 40s and 50s.

Q *Would your wife say you’re a talented singer?*

A No! I wish I could sing. I can’t carry a tune in a bucket. My father was a good singer.

Q *Best vacation?*

A Scotland. Right after I got out of the Air Force I spent a month there. Rented a car and drove all around. It was fantastic.

Q *What do you like most about Mentone?*

A The people. There’s a good sense of community here.

Thanks, Lyle. I think I’ll join in on Cleanup Day and check out the picnic afterward.

Congratulations, Valley Head FFA Chapter!



In October, the Valley Head High School chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) competed in the DeKalb County Competition, held at the farm of Randy Owens.

Valley Head placed 1st in Safe Tractor Driver, 1st in Mower Safety and 3rd in Forestry. Congratulations to Eli Day, Cade Collins, Ethan Webb, Carson Frost, Brant Smith, and Brandon Vazquez. Your community is proud of you!

Photo at left, L to R: Eli Day, 1st place Safe Tractor Driving; Cameron Mitchell, Ag Teacher & FFA Advisor; Caden Collins, 1st Place Mower Safety

Photo at right, L to R: VHS FFA Forestry Team members Carson Frost, Brandon Vazquez, Ethan Webb, and Brant Smith



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UNFINISHED BRIDGE HIKE

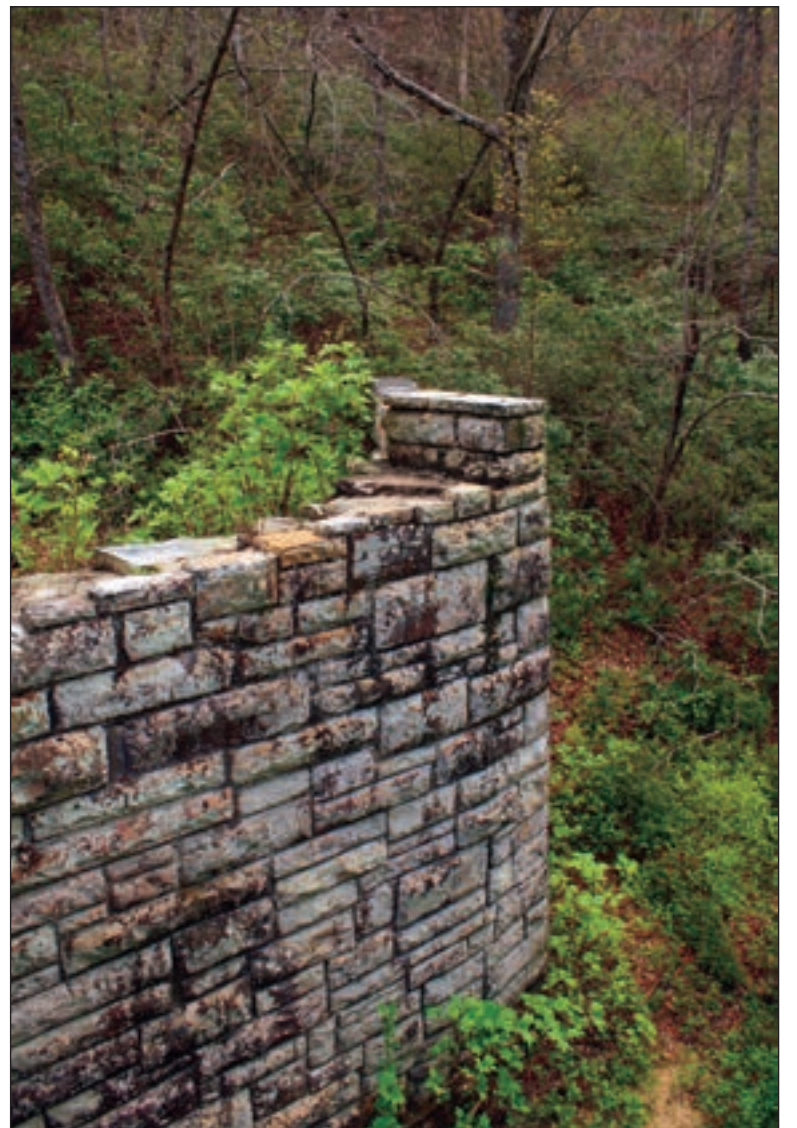
by Brittney Hughes

While this hike is not on the official log for DeSoto State Park's Trail Trekker club, I wanted to showcase this one for it does have an interesting history. First, a bit of backstory...bear with me, I do get to info about the hike further down.

Located at the Gilliam Loop Trailhead, there is a closed gate with an old roadbed behind it. It looks ordinary, but this roadbed is steeped in the history of the park. Going back to the Great Depression days, there was an organization during the 'New Deal' era called the Civilian Conservation Corps. You can read the story later about how the program was started, but essentially, it was created to provide work for the unemployed and to conserve our great natural resources throughout the United States. It ended up being a 9-year program, starting in March of

canyon was owned by the State of Alabama; it became a preserve in 1992 and is now operated by the National Park Service).

The road was meant to weave past the Lodge and continue on to May's Gulf, which is why you now have to drive to the end of DeSoto's cabin road past the Lodge to access the roadbed. So, whether you are interested in the history of the CCC or would just like to have a decent length hike, I don't think you will be disappointed. If you park at the Gilliam Loop Trailhead, walk past the gate and hike approximately 1.75 miles on the dirt roadbed. You will come to the first unfinished bridge, which spans Straight Creek. This is the tallest of the bridges, with hand-cut sandstone rockwork, and it now has a metal hiking bridge across it to access the other side. This would be a good place to turn around, or if you are up



1933 and ending in June of 1942. The enrollees in the camps were civilians, but camps were run by the Army department and were similar in structure to a military camp. There were different types of camps based on race, age, and type of work projects (state parks, forestry, fire, fisheries, etc.).

In DeKalb County, there were two camps of men in two different time periods—Company 472 (late 1933–March 1941) and Company 2436 (September 1941–January 1942). CCC Company 472 started out as a company that worked on fire lanes and fighting wildfires, but quickly became SP-5 in what is now known as DeSoto State Park. Over the years, blood sweat, and tears (I'm sure) were put into developing the park from the ground up, building roads, telephone/power lines, cabins, bridges, pavilions, trails, a 9-hole golf course, and a stone group lodge. When this company left, several months later Company 2436 came in and continued the work on projects, leaving in early 1942. Before another CCC company could be sent to finish the work, the CCC was disbanded by Congress in June of 1942.

What does this have to do with this hike? The old roadbed you see is one of the 'unfinished' projects the men of the CCC left. All along this road and beyond, there are small and large stone culverts and bridges, some tall and some short. Beautiful rockwork silently sits in the middle of the woods. This road was intended to be the official highway to May's Gulf, which is now known as Little River Canyon National Preserve (at the time, the

for a much longer hike you can go further along this narrowing trail and see smaller bridges/culverts further down. (As a disclaimer, this section of trail past the first unfinished bridge is not maintained often.)

Eventually you can hike into the Little River Wildlife Management Area and come out on DST exit 4/ Road 5. The old roadbed continued on to another bridge on the other side of Road 5, called the Morris Branch Bridge. I'm not sure at this time where it was meant to go from there.

Feel free to stop by DeSoto State Park's Lodge or Country Store, where staff can answer any questions about this hike and help direct you to the trail.

Stay safe out there and see you on the trails!

Brittney M. Hughes is the DeSoto State Park Naturalist.

For further reading/exploring:

- **CCC in DSP**
alapark.com/parks/desoto-state-park/CCC-in-DSP
- **CCC in Alabama Legacy**
encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3682

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256.634.0066

"Field of Dreams" Update

by Kelly Leavitt

Progress is moving swiftly on the renovated baseball field at Hammondville Town Park, a project that is being spearheaded by community citizens and local municipalities. Soon, the Valley Head Tigers baseball team will have a regulation field where they can host games. With the new lighting, they'll also be able to practice on the field at night (rather than in the school gym).

Many, many people have been instrumental in this effort, giving of their time, their money, and their labor. From the financial contributions of the towns of Hammondville, Valley Head, and Mentone to the personal contributions of area citizens, along with contributions by the DeKalb County Board of Education and the office of Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter, the project is becoming a reality.

The backstop has almost been completed and the poles for the netting have been set. Numerous loads of topsoil have been laid on the outfield to level the expanded area needed to meet the Alabama High School Athletic Association's regulations. Knee walls have been built and work on the dugouts has begun. Six 70-foot aluminum light poles (they must be sunk 10 feet) will soon be installed and the wiring completed. The old concrete fence posts have been removed and new fencing installed. Broken water pipes have been repaired and diseased trees and their stumps have been removed. The bathrooms are getting a facelift and the parking area is being expanded and resurfaced. An irrigation system has been laid, and a new scoreboard, back stop net, and bleachers will be installed. The total cost of these upgrades and associated costs is estimated to be \$390,500. To date,

\$283,000 in donations of money and in-kind services has been received.

Hammondville Mayor John Moore and the town's council have made the baseball field a priority. In January, the Town of Hammondville signed a lease agreement with the DeKalb County Board of Education (\$1/year for 30 years). The town has been working closely with the Valley Head Athletic Club, Valley Head High School, and many area residents, all of whom have one mission in mind—the children of Valley Head, Hammondville, and Mentone.

"We want everybody to feel like it's their ball field," said Kim Johnson, Hammondville's town clerk. "It takes a village, it really does." The collaborative effort has included a variety of people, from those who are working their bulldozers and doing other physical work (either at their cost or at no cost) to those who are raising money and promoting the cause through communication with state and county officials, the area towns, and concerned citizens.

The effect will be stupendous. The Valley Head Tigers baseball team, who advanced to the area playoffs in 2020 and 2021, despite not having a regulation home field, will no longer need to play their home games on the fields of other county schools. They will be able to proudly host teams on their new home field, which is located next to Hammondville's town park on AL Highway 117. Valley Head School will also be able to profit from the sales of concessions

(continued on page 9)



Checks to be made payable to:

Valley Head Athletic Club

or

Hammondville Town Hall

Please mail all checks to:

37646 US Hwy. 11, Valley Head, AL 35989

*Memo: Baseball Field

Baseball Field Committee

Joseph Lee, Mentone, 256-899-4027

Barbie Hester, Hammondville, 256-393-4726

Lee Buffington, Fort Payne, 256-996-2660

*Worthey, Mentone, 256-516-3556

Michael Owen, Hammondville, 256-266-3085

Gene Clecker, Hammondville, 256-516-4152

Ashley Manning, Mentone, 256-635-8798

Ralph Williams, Hammondville, 256-657-8069

Dave Vest, Mentone, 256-418-2386

AC Windom, Hammondville, 256-635-8488

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4245 CITADEL ROCK ROAD
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DESOTO BLUFFS - CITADEL ROCK ROAD - LOOKOUT MTN. 1.41 acre tract with hardwoods, rock formations, great view, restricted community and only \$30,000.



4215 CITADEL ROCK ROAD
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#447673

DESOTO BLUFFS - CITADEL ROCK ROAD - LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN - 3.5 Acre wooded tract with large rocks and view. Restricted community. Deer, turkey, and privacy. Only \$45,000.



4140 CITADEL ROCK ROAD
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#483941

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DESOTO BLUFFS - CITADEL ROCK ROAD - NEAR DESOTO STATE PARK - 1.07 Acre wooded tract, perfect for cabin. Across the road from the brow and Only \$17,500.

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Fort Payne, AL 35967 #808434

REDUCED!! A VIEW FROM LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN Wooded Bluff lot with 1.3 acres just outside the Fort Payne City limits., paved road frontage, public water and NOW only \$25,000.

Baseball Field (continued from page 8)

and advertising, something that is routine for other schools.

During baseball season, the school will maintain the field, and off-season maintenance will be handled by the town. The baseball team will continue to help out with physical work needs.

Hammondville's town council has chosen to name the field the "Town of Hammondville Field of Dreams, Home of Valley Head Tigers Baseball." A sign will be made and donated by a Hammondville business. It will welcome

everyone to the new ball field, not only players from around the county, but also area residents who want to cheer on the Valley Head team.

Because of the dedication of countless people whose focus is to make the field a reality, the Valley Head Tigers will begin practicing and playing games on their home field in early 2022. If you would like to donate to this cause or speak with anyone on the Baseball Field Committee, see the boxed area on page 8. Let's all "root, root, root" for our home team!



The town clerks of various DeKalb County municipalities gathered at The Hatter Café in Mentone for their November monthly meeting. Seated, L to R: Debra Rhodes (Valley Head); Kim Johnson (Hammondville), and Lora Corbin (Henager). Standing, L to R: Tricia Dunne (Fort Payne); Brandi Clayton (Fyffe); Lana Porter (Sylvania); Kristen Emory (Mentone); Donna Johnson (Geraldine); and Debbie Stapleton (Crossville)



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52 ACRES, WITH LAND ON BOTH SIDES OF PAVED COUNTY ROAD. This old home place offers so many options & some of the best Sand Mtn sandy loam soil there is; Shankles Branch running through the property on one side of road, serving as property line on other side of road. Level land. Current use is approx. 22 ac in orchard grass & fescue hay, 30 ac in woods. Old home site w/remains of the farm house that is falling in. Well house is still intact & the ancient pear tree still bears fruit. Public water meter in place; 3 wells are known to exist on property. Beautiful land with deer & turkey often seen enjoying fields & woodland. Agent owned. \$350,000 (1790110)



CEDAR SIDING, DORMERS, A BIG FRONT PORCH; add some woods & a cute little detached building that would make a dandy bunk house or studio; put it all in a room? 2BR/2BA; beautiful wood floors; inside is a vaulted living area; kitchen w/island; nice laundry w/1/2 bath; wide-plank pine floors; large loft area for add'l sleeping space or studio; main-level MABR. \$249,900 (1794163)



RIVERFRONT LOT ON W FORK LITTLE RIVER; 3.01 acres; approx 270' frontage on the river. Beautifully wooded w/building site on the river side of the road. Imagine a cabin w/ river access, a screened porch to enjoy the sounds of the river & possibly even see the water. Very private, with that "away-from-it-all" feeling; less than 2 miles from downtown Mentone. Adjacent to historic Little River Baptist Church, just down the road from Lil Mole Run Golf Course. \$75,000 (1788717)

..... LOTS and LAND

75 ACRES OF UNRESTRICTED WOODLAND. Just think what you could do with a chunk of land like this! Mentone, TN. Just looking for a place to off? Head out, about, hike, bike, ride 4-wheelers, horses, whatever the weather dictates. What could YOU do with 75 acres? \$276,500 (1773800)

NEW LISTING! 1.47 PARK-LIKE ACRES ON LIBBY LANE; inside Mentone Town Limits; on a quiet, dead-end paved road; with water, power, septic tank and circle drive already in place. Ready to build. Zoned R-1. \$64,900 (1795866)

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

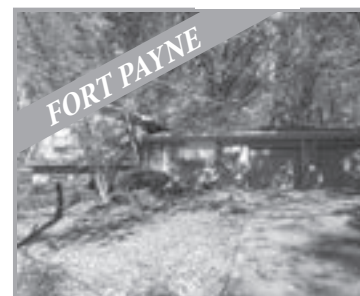
GORGEOUS VIEWS & 2.2 ACRES. This Mentone East-brow-front property already has the major prep work done for you to begin building your dream getaway cabin or residence. Septic tank in place, driveway in place, building sites for a cabin & for a shop cleared & leveled. Now incredibly priced at only \$85,000. (1775068)

COME BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME IN A PEACEFUL VALLEY! Here are 19+ acres of beautiful vistas that would be perfect for horses, or whatever strikes your fancy. The property is part of a large family farm which has a major portion in a permanent farmland conservancy. The interstate is 5 minutes away, convenient to Chattanooga, Fort Payne and Mentone. \$164,050 (1790823)

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE ALL THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A BUILDING LIKE THIS! Good ceiling height combined with the wide open space - entry, for a very comfortable environment to a building that is being revitalized, across the street from the Fort Payne post office, & pretty much move-in ready! Just listed for \$107,500 (1786006)



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



IS IT A HOME IN THE WOODS, OR A HOME CLOSE TO TOWN? Hmm. This place is like being on the mountain in the woods, but you're not. One-owner home; nestled into a lush woodland; on a small, dead-end side street; near schools; close to everything! The 0.8-acre lot is entirely fenced, has a paved drive, & offers privacy without seclusion. 3BR/1.5BA, classic split-level home has been well loved & well maintained. Beautiful hardwood floors; large family room/den in lower level w/great built-ins & chimney for wood-burning heater (currently gas log fireplace). Bright, white, eat-in kitchen. 2-car garage w/shop area. Private patio in back with lovely plantings. Needs a bit of updating. \$172,900 (1795443)



*We give thanks to God for the blessings of 2021.
For our families, our friends, our customers and our neighbors, especially during the uncertainties of the past year, we are thankful.*

From our family to yours, Mentone Realty would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed, healthy and Happy New Year.

From Charlotte, Holly, Melody, Steve & Ben

SENIOR SERVICES

by Lynn Hixon

Protecting Yourself from Plan Marketing Violations
or Being Enrolled in a Plan without Consent

During Open Enrollment, there is a higher risk than usual for fraudulent activities. Medicare has rules about how plans can and cannot communicate with you during Medicare’s Open Enrollment Period to market their insurance products. Knowing how to protect yourself from, detect, and report marketing violations can help save both you and Medicare money. Plans are allowed to send you emails and/or direct mailings, but they are not allowed to call you or visit you in person to market their products without your permission. Plans who send emails must provide an opt-out option for people who no longer wish to receive them. Watch out for people who:

- Pressure you to join their plan
- Tell you they represent Medicare and want to offer you a service for free
- Offer free consultations only to people with Medicare and ask for your Medicare number
- Call you or visit your house without your permission to offer services or equipment
- Inform you that you will lose your Medicare benefits unless you sign up for a certain plan

- Require you to provide contact information at an event for a plan (Note that contact information provided for raffles or drawings may only be used for that purpose).

Before you enroll in a plan, make sure you understand what the plan covers, how it affects your Medicare benefits and other health benefits (like Medicaid or your retiree/union coverage), and whether it covers the drugs you need. An agent or broker should never pressure you to join a plan. If you feel an insurance agent has violated Medicare’s marketing rules, you should save all documents (such as an agent’s business card or marketing materials) or other suspicious information, such as recorded messages, and contact the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590. Your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) can help you identify and report marketing violations, as well as other forms of Medicare fraud and abuse. Lynn Hixon is ready to assist you with SHIP and SMP.

For more information please call your SHIP coordinator, Lynn Hixon, at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590.

Special Enrollment Periods

There is a federal program that helps pay for some to most of the out-of-pocket costs of Medicare Prescription drug coverage. If you get Extra Help, you will have a Special Enrollment Period (January through March, April through June, and July through September). If you make a change to your coverage using this Special Enrollment Period (SEP), the change will become effective the first of the month following the month that you make the change. During the fourth quarter of the year, you will not be able to use this SEP, and should instead use Medicare’s Open Enrollment Period to

make prescription drug coverage changes. There are other circumstances when you can be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period to change your Medicare health or drug coverage. For example, if your Medicare Advantage Plan leaves your service area, or if you want to change into a plan with a five-star rating in your service area, you may be able to access an SEP to make changes outside of normal enrollment periods. If you have any questions about Special Enrollment Periods, please call Lynn at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590.

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

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

LOTS & LAND

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

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

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

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

1781133 HERE IS A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TODAY! 200 ACRES LOCATED NEAR HISTORIC MENTONE ALABAMA! Mature trees, creek, paved road frontage, minutes from Interstate 59. Land like this doesn't become available very often. \$1,000,000.

#1788540—40 ACRES OF PRIME MENTONE AL LAND. BEAUTIFUL TRACT WITH ABOUT A 5 ACRE LAKE. Flat

open land with an old well on the property. Mostly fenced all the way around. good road through it. Over a half of a mile of county road frontage with power and water available. \$400,000

#1791030—Beautiful 13 acres on East Fork Little River in Mentone. Privacy awaits you on this heavily wooded lot. Get your plans ready and build the home you've dreamed of! Call today and make it yours! \$175,000

#1792283—BEAUTIFUL BROW PROPERTY located in Lake of the Brow. Just minutes from Little River Canyon and the falls. Enjoy beautiful views of Shinbone Valley below. \$79,900

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

**Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year from
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River Voice by Angie Shugart

*"What good is the warmth of summer,
without the cold of winter to give it sweetness?"*
—John Steinbeck

As I sit here in mid-November on a windy and brisk Saturday morning before Thanksgiving, I ponder what Little River will look like in December and in January. Right now there are a few leaves hanging onto their branches, with many more covering the ground. Soon the rocky landscape will be visible again and the evergreen forest emerges for another season. Little River will become frigid and will rise with the rainy cold season, attracting whitewater boaters from all over the world. The water will be the bluest green and clear to the bottom. I love to take a canoe out on the lake above the A.A. Miller dam at DeSoto Falls to seek out the footer of an old sawmill's dam and greet the same kingfisher year after year. My reaction is a familiar childlike excitement.

Although the busy summer season has passed, our work doesn't slow down. Patrolling the watershed is a priority during the winter and keeps us busy. We are able to evaluate the landscape and note any negative impacts to the river. Sediment pollution from erosion in the watershed is the biggest threat to our pristine water quality. This happens when root systems from vegetation along the river and creeks are removed. When soil is washed into the waterway, it is devastating to the diverse aquatic ecosystem that can only thrive in pristine conditions. The three main causes of this pollution in our watershed are land development, chert roads and culverts, and logging. Incredible growth is happening in our region and we believe that encouraging our local governments to adopt special provisions to keep Little River and its tributaries protected is important. The three culprits go hand-in-hand, but low-impact development is the key. Getting our river towns and counties on board with smart growth ideas will prevent future degradation and keep the river corridor intact for future generations. Why would anyone oppose it?

Little River Waterkeeper is also busy with programs that mitigate pollution in Little River. Erase the Waste will begin in January. Beginning on the National Day of Service in January until Earth Day in April, we schedule litter cleanups along Little River. Each year, with the help of our amazing volunteers, we prevent over 500 pounds of litter from entering our local waterways. We are also excited to announce a new restoration project in the Spring of 2022 as well and will be busy organizing over the winter months.

Little River Waterkeeper Celebrates 10 Years in January!

We are planning a celebration for Saturday evening January 15, 2022 after kicking off Erase the Waste 2022 by removing trash from Little River for MLK National Day of Service! More details of the cleanup and anniversary celebration will be coming soon; keep an eye on our Facebook page and web site.

2022 Membership

Membership is a great way to keep our heads above water. Jump in! The fee for individuals is \$25 and businesses is \$50. Send by mail: 215 Grand Ave. SW Ste. A, Fort Payne, AL 35967. To make an online donation, visit littleriverwaterkeeper.org.

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



Brad Lackey of Lookout Mountain Photography flew his drone on November 5 to capture this unique perspective of DeSoto Falls.

Moon Lake Community Library: Busy Times Ahead

by Holley Midgley

Your Moon Lake Community Library is going to be a busy place this winter, and we'd love to have you join us for a number of special activities.



NEW HOURS
Tues., Wed., Thur. 12–4:30
Saturday 10–1

- Our children's programs, known as the Little Library Learners, will continue to be offered on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. These kid-friendly programs (ages 3–8) are presented by Ms. Lynn Vanderhoff. See the box below for program details.
- New book purchases, including best sellers, are being acquired and you'll find them soon at the library. If you have finished a recent book, we welcome your donation.
- We will hold our annual Holiday Open House at the library on Sunday, December 12, from 2–4 p.m. We'll have treats and a special performance by a choral bell group of school children from Valley Head. I understand they are terrific, and are being coordinated by a familiar face: Ms. Paula Easter. Drop by and meet our new librarian, Dr. Anne McLeod.
- Trivia Night, on Thursday, January 13. See our website (moonlakelibrary.org) for additional details as they become available.
- Our next Book Club get together will be at 10:30 a.m. on January 15. The group will discuss "Dispatches from Pluto."
- We will present an author talk, via Zoom, after the first of the year. Look for details on our website as they become available.
- Beginning December 1, we will be increasing the time we are open each week from 11 to 16.5 hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays we'll be open from 12 until 4:30 p.m., and on Saturdays we'll operate from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

A special shout-out to our board members, who meet each month to manage our activities. These truly hard workers represent a lot of brain power, and I thank them all for their remarkable dedication: Dr. Betsy Sheldon (our new vice chair); Jennifer Booker (our new treasurer); Dr. Bill Berry (secretary); Dr. Jacob Brown; and Jim Byrum. Two new members will soon join the board, filling vacancies left by Anna Mae Horn (previous vice chair) and Dianne Kuehl (our treasurer, who has served tirelessly for a remarkable 18 years). The town owes these two folks a big hug and a hearty "Thank you" for all the time and effort they have committed in service to the library and our community. We will announce our two new board members in the next issue of *The Groundhog*.

Finally I want to thank two donors who have contributed significant financial support to our institution: the Menlo-Tillotson Foundation recently presented to us a check for \$5,000; and a husband and wife from New Orleans, who have a home here and wish to remain anonymous, have given us an extremely generous contribution in memory of his mother, Hazel Holland, who was born and raised in Mentone. I cannot put too fine a point on it: your contributions are invaluable to the viability of the library, and we thank everyone who has made donations in the past year.

Finally, I want to personally thank our long-time librarian, Kelly Leavitt, for all she did for our library during her years of service. Kelly took the library to new heights, and it is no exaggeration to say that without her leadership and dedication we would simply not be the library we have become. Thanks, Kel.

See you at the library.

Holley Midgley is the chair of the Moon Lake Community Library board.

Check It Out! by Lynn Vanderhoff

Want to learn more about the world around you? The Little Library Learners program at the Moon Lake Community Library is a great place to start! Presented on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month, the program is a great way to learn and make friends.

This year, we've read about astronomy, frogs, worms, migrating birds, and seasons changing. We've investigated the library stacks, read stories, and celebrated Halloween by making bats to take home. When you stop by the Moon Lake Community Library, check out the "Wall of Fame" full of artwork and pictures from our programs. Here's just a glimpse of the fun we've had this year!

Who Needs a Winter Nap? Saturday, December 11

Why do some animals like to hibernate and others don't? We'll check out both kinds and see who takes a winter nap and who likes to play in the cold. What kind of animal are you???

The program begins at 10 a.m. for 3–5-year-olds and at 11 a.m. for 6–8-year-olds. Please plan to attend at the appropriate time for your child's age, as activities will be tailored to their abilities. Accompanying adults are welcome to learn too, or they can just hang out in the Adult section!



Holiday Pajama Party Thursday, December 23

SPECIAL EVENT—Note the date and time change! We'll meet on the Thursday before Christmas, since we would normally meet on the 4th Saturday. Please join us

in your pajamas for a special time in the stacks between 5–7 p.m.

Gather around for stories, crafts and songs in your favorite PJs. It's a special time to get the little ones out of the house to give parents time to finish getting ready for Santa's big night. Please note, one supervising adult must remain with children.

Beginning in January, programs will begin at 10:30 a.m. for all children ages 3–8. This will allow families to bring all their children at one time. We'll still have stories and activities geared towards whatever age and skill level for your child's participation.



Dinosaurs Galore! Saturday, January 8

Who's your favorite dinosaur and why? Bring yours to show and tell. We'll talk about what they ate, how they lived, and why extinct animals are still so important to us today.

Father of Public Libraries Saturday, January 22

Did you know Ben Franklin was the first person to set up public libraries? Not only was he a statesman, scientist, inventor, author, and publisher of a newspaper, he is the reason we have Moon Lake Community Library today. We'll look at why he was such a special person.

Please note: We will observe pandemic guidelines.

Also coming up in 2022 are programs highlighting fairy tales, the power of seeds, butterflies, animal habitats, bees, turtles, pollution solutions, Abraham Lincoln and much, much more. If you have a topic your child would like to investigate, please let our librarian, Ms. Anne, or program director, Ms. Lynn know. We'd love to "Check It Out!"

For more information, contact moonlakecommunitylibrary@yahoo.com. All activities are at the Moon Lake Community Library at 4607 AL Hwy. 117 in Mentone.



Christmas in De Kalb County!



December 4

Valley Head Christmas Parade. 10am.

'Light the Night' in Valley Head. Christmas tree lighting family fun for everyone. Santa will be there! 6pm.

Photos with Santa. Photos with Santa from 9:30–10:30am.; \$5 for a 4x6 photo. Mentone Community Church (DeSoto Rescue Squad's Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser).

Henagar Christmas Parade. Christmas parade and Christmas activities in the park right after. Parade at 5pm.

Rainsville Christmas Parade. 11am.

Sounds & Scenes of Christmas. Rainsville's Christmas in the Park with free Ice Skating, pictures with Santa, free hot chocolate, free wrapped snacks. 5–10 pm.

Ider Christmas Parade 5pm. 256-657-5717.

Sylvania Christmas Parade. 2pm. 256-638-2604

Collinsville Christmas Parade. 6pm. 256-524-2135

December 10

Mentone Christmas Tree Lighting. Lighting of the tree at the town square in Mentone (at the corner of Co. Rd. 89 & AL Hwy. 117). Caroling, cookies, Santa. 5pm.

Fort Payne Christmas in the Park. Visit with Santa and his special Christmas guests! Enjoy free refreshments. Carol around the Yule Log. After Christmas in the Park, enjoy the annual Christmas Parade. 4–6pm. 256-845-1524.

Fort Payne Christmas Parade. With Grand Marshal Mr. Jim Cunningham. 6pm.

Fyffe Christmas Parade. 12pm. 256-623-2222.

Geraldine Christmas Parade. 2pm. 256-659-2122.

December 12

Holiday Open House. Moon Lake Community Library. 2–4pm.

December 16

Christmas with the Isaacs. NACC Tom Bevil Lyceum. 7pm. Seating will be limited. Tickets can be purchased at nacc.edu or call 256-638-4418, ext. 2248.

December 17–20

Winter Wonderland Ice Skating at the Rotary Pavilion. What better way to experience Christmas but with Ice Skating? Be sure and bring \$10 CASH and cash for hot chocolate and popcorn while you are there. You have an hour to skate away and on the hour skaters will swap out. All proceeds benefit Patriot's Park, so money collected for this fun event will go right back in to the community. All proceeds go to Patriots Park. Friday, Dec 17: 12–9pm; Saturday, Dec 18: 9am–9pm; Sunday, Dec 19: 12–9pm; Monday, Dec 20: 9am–9 pm. First come, first served. Limit 40 skaters per hour. For more information: jennifer@fortpaynechamber.com or call 256-845-2741.



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Mentone Arts & Cultural Center Update

"Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" Songwriter Highlights Monthly Round by Randy Grider

Our monthly Songwriters Round will have a definite holiday spirit about it. The featured songwriter is Randy Brooks, who wrote the popular Christmas hit, "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer."

The event is Monday, December 13, at 7 p.m. Songwriters Craig Hendricks, Stuart Douglas, and Marcus Spurlock will perform during the opening round, followed by Brooks.

"Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" is a multi-year No. 1 hit on Billboard's holiday singles chart and earned Brooks SESAC Songwriter of the Year and Song of the Year honors. It has been covered by everyone from Ray Stevens to Mitch Ryder to the Coasters. "Grandma" is typical of the tongue-in cheek novelty songs for which he is known.

Brooks has decades of performing credits—as far back as a trip to New York from his native Louisville, KY, to appear on the Ted Mack Amateur Hour at the age of 15. After graduating from Vanderbilt, he entertained U.S. troops with USO in Vietnam, Thailand, and Europe. In all, he has performed in 30 states and nine countries outside the U.S.

In recent years, Brooks has performed at Nashville's Bluebird Café and Douglas Corner, the Tin Pan South songwriter festival, the Frank Brown International Songwriters' Festival, the Smoky Mountains Songwriters Festival, the Wisconsin State Fair, San Antonio's Holiday River Parade, as a guest performer with the Roanoke, VA Symphony Orchestra, at assorted venues in Ireland, and at various and sundry house concerts.

In addition to solo singer/songwriter appearances, he plays bass and sings with Dallas-based pool party band The Bad Monkeys and longtime Americana group Young Country.

Hendricks, who lives in Mentone and serves as the monthly host, is an award-winning singer-songwriter. Among his recent accolades and credits are: 2021 World Songwriter Award Winner for Best Traditional County Song (Blackberry Whiskey);



Randy Brooks wrote the holiday hit, "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer."

2021 "Songwriter of the Year" finalist—Josie Music Awards; six Songwriter Achievement nominations and one co-writer Songwriter Achievement nomination—Josie Music Awards; Alabama Music Awards nomination for Male Country Artist; and multiple recognitions in American Songwriter Magazine.

Douglas is a Fort Payne-based singer-songwriter.

Growing up in Louisiana and the Mississippi delta, he was drawn to music at an early age, teaching himself to play guitar at the age of 8. Douglas has five studio albums to date, including the 2020 release, "This Fire Has Started." The new album is a rock record with pop sensibilities and has something for everyone.

Spurlock, was born in Bartow, FL, before moving to Hollywood, AL, when he was 15 years old. He began playing guitar since he was 16 years old when a preacher bought him his first guitar and amplifier. He wrote his first song at 17, and since has penned innumerable songs. His goal is to have a No. 1 hit one day.

The songwriters rounds are part educational and part entertainment in an interview/performance format. While free to the public, those attendees who can contribute a \$15 suggested donation are appreciated, as it is used to offset the volunteer songwriters' travel expenses.

We have several events coming up in January and February, including our monthly songwriters round (on January 10—songwriters to be determined),

our January 15 "Paint Like Bob Ross" workshop (the class is full, but we have another scheduled for April 23), and our "Make Your Own Scrappy Quilt" on February 19. The 6-hour quilting class is being taught by Tracey Rybka.

For additional information on any of the events and workshops, contact information is below.

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



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A Message from Ms. Paula

Wow! How can the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays be here already? It seems like only yesterday that I began this year's venture at Valley Head (funded by MERF) and Menlo Elementary Schools. I am so excited to tell you that it has been a wonderful adventure so far this year at both schools!

My Valley Head students are looking forward to playing their handbells for the Moon Lake Library's Christmas open house this year, and we will once again have original Christmas cards by the students for you to purchase!

This year I had the opportunity to work with Menlo's kindergarten teachers in a Thanksgiving program, featuring both classes, that spans over three generations...what fun it was!

This time of year I am once again so very grateful to the people of Mentone for their love and support through all my years at Moon Lake.

Wishing you all the happiest of holidays!



Birthdays

1

Gayla Blalock
Mark Hatfield
Morgan Crane
Marcia Tucker
Christine Brooks
Megan Kelley

2

Ladon Willingham
Dwayne McKenzie
Angel Baggett
Brody Britton
Jean Hardman

3

Karen Saferite
Austin Battles
Angie Bell Young
Cherita Holman

4

Lloyd McElhaney
Nichole Williams
Lydia Rastall
Heath Blalock
Raymond Beasley
Easton Bailey
Melissa Patton
Sibyl Sadowski

5

Jess Goggans
Brian Howard
Berkley Chambers
Barbara Neel
Avery Pepper
Aero Potts
Zack Peek
Arrielle Turner
Dylan Evans

6

Austin Potts
Judy Johnson
Tonja Bell
Sharon Crouch

7

Gavin Myers
Keesha Burgess
Reagan Owen
Nathan Owen
Olivia Burton
Brandy Graham

8

Bailey Pryor
Trish Clink
Ross Hulkan

9

Brenda Kerby
Kyle Freeman
Mike Stone
Dee Frost
Genella Tolbert

10

Kevin Worthey
Tammy Frost
John Breithaupt
Daniel Kilgore
Jeremy Hart
Darlene Swindall

11

Christine Ballenger
Bryson Morgan
Toni Freeman
Hannah Blansit
Christy Cordell
Kaelan Shankles

12

Valerie Logan
Jeff Nelson
Connie Nelson
Waylon Collins
Gwen Stone

13

Moria Potts
Deborah Mason
Crystal Poteat
Jerrod Landers
Hugh Don Henderson
Kathy Nappier

14

Ginny Zulker
Jim Phillips
Samuel Dobbins
Patton Pridmore

15

Jessica Van Pelt
Brody Baber
Justin Shankles
Iivy McCoy
Isaac Crow
Teah Landress

16

Lane Traffanstedt
Jeff Pack
Charlotte Goss
Hailee Wells

17

Holly Williams
Chris O. Smith
Austin Black
Jay Wagner

18

Ashley Pounders
Daniel Brown
Scot Sharp

19

Brynda Hopper
Nick Hill
Jake Nelson
Jesse Bailey
Tyler Gravitt

20

Shelley Meadows
Denise Carden

21

Tyler Dean
Jordan Hatfield
Coby Harrison
Lydia Roe
Benny Graham
Ronnie Bowman

22

Remi Norsworthy
Dale Howard
William Beasley
Briana Kilgore
Ashlee Smith
Weston Carter
Bryan Roe
Lorelai Chaney

23

Daniel Gray
Aubrey Smith
Steve Chandler
Melissa Claire
Claire Wooten
Carol Hensley

24

Caleb White
Joe Kent
Emma Lee
Avion Gelfenstein
Susie Southerland
Sophia Sharp
Anthony O'Shields

25

Mary Porter
Irene Willingham
Justin Easler
Amanda Foote
Logan Smith

26

Jason Goss
Melanie Hollis
Avery Frazier
Sheila LaRock

27

Melissa Shoults
Houston Downer
Jennifer Chambers
Sally Wheat
Cindy Lee
Rachel Ford
Madeline Taylor
Sparrow Sizemore

28

Avice Pearson
Brooke Morris
Elizabeth Russell
Shawn Turner
SaraDawn Langston

29

LeAnn Bain
Christie Langston
Mary Spicer
Rylan Deerman

30

Dawn Langsto
Ryley Chambers

31

Kiley Shankles
Michael Kelley, Jr.
Holly Gentry
Alicia Robertson

Anniversaries

1

Cotton & Pam Baggett
Hoyt & Helen Ashley
Lamar & Cheryl King

2

Joe & Donna McClure

3

Walt & Shirley Zange

8

Alvin & Sherry Durham

9

Jake & Melinda Easler
Dennis & Amanda McDonald

12

Walter & Christine Brooks

13

John & Jennifer Chambers

14

Benny & Brenda Goss
Mike & Barbara Neel

15

Johnny & Sissy Crider

17

Rob & San Hammond

18

Jim & Joan Byrum

19

Steve & Melissa Patton

20

Dave & Jamie Vest
Bruce & Jennifer McCurdy

21

Derik & Mandy Williams

23

Heath & Tara Kirby
Eddie & Mary Porter
Doug & Kaye Kiker
Randy & Virginia Ballinger

27

Ben & Mary Shurett
Dee & Nancy Frost

28

Danny & Julie Mewes
Chad & Ashley Wooten

30

Bryan & Melissa Roe
Kelly & Donna Johnson

31

Steve & Patti Watkins
David & Stephani Chaney
Geoffrey & Amy Lingerfelt



Winter Solstice

December 21

Ryleigh's Closet

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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 Heath Croft, 334-315-3459. Van Ministry for Children pick-up/take home, ages K-12, for all surrounding areas 8:15am. 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. Robert (Bob) Reynolds. 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. 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 and Sacred Garden is open daily for prayer and thanksgiving. Everyone is welcome to join us, in person or online, for Holy Eucharist each Sunday at 10:30am, and for online only services each Tuesday at 12 noon for Noonday Prayers and each Thursday at 8pm for Compline. Please visit our website at stjom.dioala.org for more information. We continue to support our community with outreach, so please call our church office at 256-634-4476 if you need assistance. 21145 Scenic Hwy, PO Box 161, Mentone, AL 35984.

Summit Church of God in Mentone invites you to Sunday School 10am, Sunday Worship 11am. Pastor Brian Hughes. 1792 AL Hwy. 117. 256-706-5705.

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.

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.

*May the Christmas season
fill your home with joy,
your heart with love, and
your life with laughter.*

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 Bunnell.

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.

First United Methodist Church offers a Contemporary Worship service at 8:30am and a traditional service at 11am on Sundays. 206 Grand Avenue North. 256-845-1141. fpfumc.org

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.

Highland Baptist Church welcomes you to join us for Sunday Morning Worship Service and Youth Sunday School from 10am–11am. We are located at 2004 Clark Ave. Follow us on Facebook @highlandbaptistfp for updates and events!

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. Our worship services are at 11am and also on Sunday evenings in the Chapel 6pm. You can

also worship with us on-line @ facebook.com/neworegonumc. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible studies for all ages meeting at 6pm in the Family Life Center. 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 1pm. Sunday School is at Noon. 1519 Smith Gap Road NW. 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
The Groundhog
at groundhognews@yahoo.com
or P.O. Box 387
Mentone, AL 35984

Birthdays

1	William Blackburn Alexis Reed Brittany Harrison Harold Carden Jim Byrum Kathy Carson April Hurst David Tucker Andrew Campbell Abby Mitchell Jeannie Woods	Aiden Justice Brynna Justice Cooper Justice	9	Dallas Lee Ellie Shugart Kristy Sweatman Ashley Jones	13	Paulette Manning Anita Johnson Erin Dean Alayna Wright	Ainsley Wright Addison Wright	Lucas Elkins Grayson Booker Zakk Johnson DeLeslyn Stephens Giovanni Nasoni			
2	Donnie Bell Kristen Adams Amber Wilson Rickey Williams Gideon Grisham Thomas Worthey Kelly Floyd	5	Aidan Dupree Angela Chambers Tiffany Wallace Gage Gelfenstein Steve Sharp Hayden Williams Kay Bryan	10	Neal Whitt Stacey Painter Nancy Frost Heath Miller Eli Durham Layton Williams	14	Eric Kirby Isabella Chaney Larry Johnson Emily Wheat Haleigh Battles	18	Nicole Goldsmith Bobby Blalock		
3	Stacy Howard Aiden Logan Owen Izell Lance Elkins Cameron Hunt Tressie Thomas	6	Sharron Hatfield Laiton Keith Amanda Dyar Emily Guin Ryker Chester Bush Kerby	11	Josh Shoults Robert Green Kandis Lawton Preston Owen Allen Powell Freda Pike Ryan Wooten Avah Poe Annabelle Ferguson Shawn Bullock Brett Justice	15	Anna Bailey Alice Shanklin Mickey Luck Fawn Kitchens Cody Smith Amanda McDonald Tim Bryan	19	Candace Perkins Jacie O'Tinger Olivia Elkins	25	Shannon Tolbert Sarah Wilcox Larry Sonsil Hudson Grider Dennis Lewis
4	Ed Ringer Tyler Blansit Kaleb Underwood Emma Goggans	7	Kristen Emory Madisen Smith Jace Carden Hoyt Ashley Ronnie Hulgán Lolah Claire Coots Gina Martin	12	Beverly Henry Aaron McKenzie Bud Atkins Thad Heinrich Christina Wise Chris Collins Nola Kay Pilotte Isaiah Avila	16	Wynston Keith Trent Smith Sarah Chastain Tyler Godwin Geiger Guin	20	Calee Ann Owen Spencer Smith	26	Shirley Burton Seth Norman Shane Grider Brandi Justice
		8	Tyler Carden Zachary Wallace Emily Stallings Jerry Boatwright Ryker Abernathy Jessica Chester			17	Olivia Bowman Jim Poe Joseph Brown Michael Owen Caiden West Naomi Chandler Shaun Wheat Margie Collins	21	Ryley Smith Tiffany Gatlin Justin Smith	27	Kaie Facticeau Jessica Heinrich Lindsey Frazier
								22	Kyle Carden Anna Garrett Rosetta McGee Alvin Durham Flor Chasity Battles	28	Ruth Battles
								23	Jaden Turner Bence Chambers Scott Gifford Melissa Couch Dowe Foreman Kent Kerby Anita Hester	29	Allie Baker Lacey Byrum
								24	Sandy Sharp Marysa Wigley Darrin Smith Tommy Harrison, Jr.	30	Stephanie Roberts Gunner McGinnis Donna Hairel
										31	Tyler Cooper Bill Battles Ashton Carpenter Nate Bain Axel Clark

Anniversaries

2	Jim & Cynthia Connor	13	Kenny & Doris Chamlee	24	Taylor & Nancy Brown	29	Bubba & Martha Browder
10	Tony & Cindy Tipton	19	Bill & Donna Carman	25	Greg & Nikki Wheat		
12	Darius & Hope Turner	23	Kevin & Ashley Gifford	28	Robert & Annette Johnson		

Ongoing Community Calendar

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ryleigh’s Closet is a clothing closet that provides men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing to those in need on 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 4–6pm. Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

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

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

Ukulele Sessions Continue. Bring your uke to the Moon Lake Community Library at 1 pm on December 11, January 8, and January 22. Follow us on Facebook (Mentone Ukes) or contact Debra Fey (debrajfe@gmail.com) for more info. Beginners of all ages are invited to join in. Strum and be happy!

The Mentone Mah Jongg Group meets at the MERF House in Mentone on Sundays 1–4pm. Please note: We ask that you wear a mask and gloves. We have several players with underlying health concerns and just want to keep everyone safe. Also, please bring \$5/month contribution to the MERF House, so they can keep the lights on.

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

**The Mentone Area Preservation Association
(MAPA) wishes you a very Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!**

The Musings of a Wannabe Farm Girl

by Martha Ooten

Hello to all my neighbors. This morning after I drank my coffee, I had to wade through piles of fall leaves that are so high I'm beginning to wonder if my goats can eat them all off before spring. Should I start raking, so that by spring the sun can hit the grass and it will grow, or should I leave them because—let's face it—this time of year I get super lazy. I've worked my backside off all spring and summer and I'm tired. Decisions, decisions, decisions!

This is breeding season for me. If I breed in November and December, then I get April and May babies. That's if everybody cooperates, which, to be honest, is unusual. But in my perfect world, if breeding goes smoothly, I have beautiful spring babies and the milking begins.

An interesting thing about breeding season is the fact that my farm smells like a skunk preserve—or worse. My rams actually urinate on their own bodies in order to entice my does. When this happens, the smell is quite unbelievable. But it's the way things are, so I know that for about 6 to 8 weeks, I shouldn't invite anybody over for coffee.

I chose to raise Nigerian dwarfs because first, they have the sweetest and most creamy butterfat of any goats, and second because as I get older, I can better handle taking care of a goat that weighs 40 to 50 pounds, versus a goat that is 100 to 150 pounds.

During breeding season, farmers must become peeping toms. It's very important that I know the date of breeding so I can make sure to be available during delivery.

The Nigerian mamas tend to birth between three and four babies at a time. Surprisingly, they have no problems feeding that many babies, even though they only have two teets. In almost eight years of farming, I've only had one mama not able to keep up with that many babies.

The mamas generally have no problems giving birth to so many babies, but sometimes as they birth baby number three or four, the first baby can suffocate due to mama still giving birth and not being able to sufficiently clean off the mouth and nose. That's where shepherding comes in. We are there to help clean off little

noses and mouths and, if it's still cold outside, wipe down little bodies until mom is finished giving birth and can take over. It is the most awesome, scary, and humbling experience this farmer has had. Many times, I have crocheted sweaters to put on the babies if the weather is still very cold. Seeing a bunch of little two-pound babies running around with sweaters on is just so cute.

After breeding season and Christmas are over, I start planning all the cheeses that I will be making from their milk. I do not like a sour goaty cheese. My cheeses are sweet and creamy, but this year I think I'm going to add a cheese cave and make hard cheeses.

As a shepherdess, I'm not only madly in love with my animals but also madly in love with being in a kitchen and whipping up creamy, delicious recipes using the products from all my animals. Their hard work and my hard work equal good old-fashioned southern yumminess. I plan on sharing some of my recipes with you after breeding season.

The sun is up and the air is warm, so I'm thinking a quick walk in the woods is just what this shepherdess needs. I would invite you for a visit, but the smell will probably knock you over, so maybe next year you can drop by and we can sit on my front porch to drink coffee, watch goats, and enjoy southern country living.

From my farm to yours,

Martha Ooten, a.k.a. shepherdess, baby goat deliverer, coffee enthusiast



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

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

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

Come Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

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Book Review: The Golfer's Carol by Anne McLeod

Huntsville attorney Robert Bailey steps away from his two series of legal thrillers with *The Golfer's Carol*. The structure and plot of the novel are borrowed from the holiday classics, Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* and the Jimmy Stewart/Donna Reed film, *It's a Wonderful Life*, but the setting is on various iconic golf courses during Masters week of 1986.

Randy Clark is in serious debt due to hospital bills from his late son's battle with cancer. His daughter, a golfer like her dad, plans to go to college, but Randy sees her upcoming tuition bills as yet another financial obligation he cannot possibly meet. Although he and his wife Mary Alice still love one another, their grief over the loss of their son has driven them apart, and their marriage is hanging by a thread.

For Randy, there seems to be only one way out, and that's for Mary Alice to collect his life insurance money to pay the hospital and tuition bills and to maybe have enough left to start a new life without him. He's already made the decision to commit suicide by throwing himself off the Tennessee River Bridge on his fortieth birthday when he gets word that his best friend, Darby Hays, has died in a car wreck.

The cruel irony of this latest loss is that Darby had been living Randy's dream of playing on the PGA tour, having qualified as a pro years before while Randy had missed qualifying by one point. Rather than trying one more time to qualify, Randy chose to go to law school instead, largely due to his father's remark, "There comes a point in every man's life when he realizes he's not going to be Joe Namath."

As Randy prepares to die, he is visited by Darby's ghost who tells him that he's about to be visited by four of his true heroes and will play four rounds of golf with them. What follows are a series of life lessons taught that will enlighten and sustain Randy through the hardest of times.

Because Bailey borrows from *A Christmas Carol* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, readers can feel confident of a predictably happy conclusion. The joy of reading this heartwarming book comes from its exploration of relationships that can be both complicated and loving, and the fact that it's a straight-up love letter to the game of golf. Bailey's author's note explains how he came to write the book as a tribute to his father, a bittersweet story he shared with those who attended his author talk last month at Moon Lake Library.

The Golfer's Carol is a book both for golfers and the people who love them. It is available for check-out at the library.



"Mentone Ukes" Sessions Continue by Debra Fey



As this challenging year draws to a close and we give thanks for our many blessings, I feel a sense of pride in what our little group has accomplished. First, laughter and camaraderie as we strum together and sing off key. Secondly, since August, when we resumed our sessions after the Covid interruption, we have learned 12 chords and 30 songs—not to mention some basics in music theory. That is an incredible accomplishment!

Our group continues to practice our Christmas songs in anticipation of our first-ever live performance at the Mentone Christmas Tree Lighting on December 10. The last regular FREE ukulele session of this year will be held on Saturday, December 11, at 1 p.m. at the Moon Lake Community Library.

Newcomers of all ages are always welcome to join us. We recently purchased three loaner ukuleles (one of all three sizes) which allow those new to the instrument to "give it a test drive." Now there is nothing stopping you from joining in the fun at our next session! Strum and be happy and bring a friend! In January, we will meet on the 8th and the 22nd. For more information, please contact Debra Fey (debrafey@gmail.com or 404-630-2918). Follow us on Facebook/Mentone Ukes.



At this stage of my life, retirement, I am happy to have found a group such as the "Mentone Ukes." Growing up, I never did learn music nor learn to play an instrument, and it was something that I have wanted to do for some time. I purchased a ukulele a number of years ago, while I was still working, and tried to learn to play it using a book but soon became discouraged and quit. After retirement, my wife and I were looking for new, enjoyable, and productive activities to become involved in, with which we weren't able when working. When my wife discovered "Mentone Ukes," she encouraged me to check them out. I did so and have really enjoyed it.

I have attended the bi-monthly meetings since they resumed in August 2021 and since have made ukulele practice a part of my daily routine. I have really appreciated the information and instruction provided free of charge, including chord charts and song sheets

presented by experienced ukulele players, and the opportunity to meet other ukulele players. I really appreciate the encouragement and assistance I have received. Without it, I'm sure that I would not have made the progress that I have made with the ukulele. I feel that the assignment of learning two Christmas songs for the Christmas tree lighting was a good idea, because it provided impetus to practice, which has produced positive results for me. Success at learning to play these and other songs has really increased my enjoyment of the ukulele. I feel very fortunate to have found a group such as "Mentone Ukes" with such warm and friendly people as Debra, Jerry, and Mickey, who work so hard and show such interest in spreading their love of the ukulele and in the progress of newcomers to the instrument.

—Ray Gower



Happy Holidays!

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MERF News

[Mentone Educational Resources Foundation]

by Sarah Wilcox



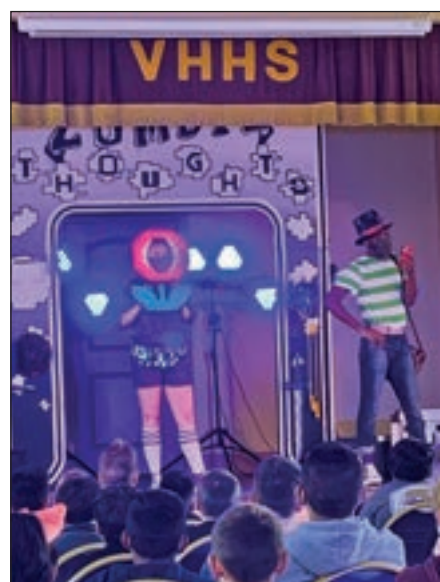
What are your Zombie thoughts? On Tuesday, November 16, the third through sixth graders at Valley Head School were entertained by the Birmingham Children's Theater's touring production of "Zombie Thoughts." The school auditorium was transformed into a video game. Sam and Pig were the beloved characters working their way through levels of the game with the enthusiastic help of the audience. The students happily voted on outfits, tools, and choices for Sam and Pig. The students were perfect audience members and were very entertained by both characters. Sam had anxious (zombie) thoughts while Pig was his happy-go-lucky friend who helped him discover ways to manage his anxiety. Armed with just a book, a rubber chicken, and the help of the audience, they try

to overcome Sam's anxiety and defeat the monsters the evil Machine throws at them. The only path to victory is if students

wonderful first experience with the Birmingham Children's Theatre organization. Thanks to the financial support of many of you, MERF can bring live theatre to local students. Hopefully, this spring another production can be brought for a different group of students.

Senior lunches have been a blast this fall! Thanks to all the kitchen elves for making meals happen as well as a thorough clean up. On Wednesday, December 8, the last lunch of the season will be a Christmas celebration starting at 11:30 a.m. Due to popular demand, BINGO will be offered at 10:15 a.m. before the party in the fellowship hall of Moon Lake Baptist Church. Santa will be too busy feeding his reindeer to join us, but there will be many elves there in his stead. Let us celebrate the season!

As 2021 ends, MERF would like to acknowledge the wisdom and work that Vicky Patrick and Roland Hendon have offered MERF and the community through their time on the MERF board. MERF is grateful for their contributions to support the work of MERF. At the December board meeting, Mary Shurett and Craig Sheldon were welcomed to the board. The new board and the executive director will continue to seek ways in 2022 to enrich the learning and the living in the community with your support and encouragement. May the joy of the season be evident to us all this year.



make a series of choices that help Sam and Pig learn empathy for each other. The students and the teachers laughed and enjoyed the whole production. Many have requested a sequel, "Zombie Thoughts 2!" MERF is grateful for a



Sue McLaurin Henry Memorial Scholarship

Applications are due by Friday, December 3.

Applicants must be full-time students with a minimum of 2.8 GPA with a financial need and reside in Mentone or Valley Head. If you are eligible, do not miss this opportunity. Applications are available from merf.mentone@gmail.com or your college counselor.

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

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Rhododendron Garden Club

by Rhea Pirch



The Rhododendron Garden Club met for their monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 9, at the MERF House. There were 10 of us in attendance, and one guest. We started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and continued with the meditation, a poem called “God’s Garden” by Dorothy Frances Gurney, selected and read by Alyce Kenney. Mary Ann Robbins supplied the refreshments: hot apple cider and delicious old-fashioned gingerbread served with a divine brown sugar and ginger whipped cream topping.

During roll call, we were asked to name a material we use for mulch. Shredded leaves topped the list, followed by pine needles, pine bark, straw bales, grass clippings, and cardboard.

Marsha Merrell furnished the Horticulture Report in Martha Wood’s absence. It was taken from the New York Times book “1,000 Garden Questions and Answers” The question? (condensed) “What

shrubs should I plant in a dappled sun area?” The answer suggests using a variety of shrubs native to the southeast. For year-round interest, plant a combination of broadleaf evergreens, including mountain laurel, azalea, and our namesake, rhododendron. The article also recommends adding deciduous shrubs for contrast, such as summer-sweet “Pink Spires,” witch hazel “Arnold Promise,” the semi-evergreen daphne “Carol Mackie,” the oak-leaf hydrangea, or the maple-leaf viburnum, all which add a variety of flowers, fruit, and autumn foliage throughout the year.

We reviewed old business, then new business was introduced. Marsha Merrell presented the slate of officers recommended by the nomination committee to hold office for the next two years. Mellanie Tuttle was nominated president; Rhea Pirch, vice president; Alyce Kenney, secretary; Dianne Kuehl, treasurer; and Mary Ann Robbins, assistant treasurer. A motion was made and seconded to accept the nominations, and those present finalized the election with an all-aye vote. The new officers will be installed at our December Christmas luncheon meeting, to be held on Tuesday, December 13.

Some programs were suggested for the new year, including Propagation by Layering, Petite Designs, Butterfly Gardening, Hügelkultur, Planting for Wildlife, Pesticides, and Native Plants. We’ll also plan on our annual April trip to the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail (the “Pocket”) in Chickamauga, Georgia.

We finished the meeting by arranging centerpieces for the November 9th MERF Senior Lunch using

flowers, leaves, and greenery supplied by the members and offered to the seniors to take home after the lunch.

Our first meeting of the new year will be held on Tuesday, January 11, at 10 a.m. at the MERF House. Our new president, Mellanie Tuttle, will demonstrate the art of petite design in preparation of our planned flower show in February. If you haven’t considered it yet, you are invited to attend and join us, a group of like-minded people as yourself, to learn, participate, and enjoy all the benefits gardening has to offer! You can also follow us on Facebook or send any questions to our e-mail address, rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com.

Rhea Pirch is the secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FROM THE FARM AT WINDY HILL

We are so grateful for your support of the farm this year, and we look forward to opening our market again in Spring of 2022. If you would like to make purchases of our 100% grass-fed and finished beef, pastured pork, or a small selection of produce during the off-season, please contact us by phone (256-674-3639) or email (info@thefarmatwindyhill.com).

LITTLE RIVER

ARTS COUNCIL

N•E•W•S

by Destin Padgett

...and then, I have nature and art and poetry, and if that is not enough, what is enough? –Vincent Van Gogh

Little River Arts Council would like to extend our gratitude to the community for their support and for supporting our local artists, musicians, and makers. We had another successful collaboration with DeSoto State Park at this year's sixth annual Creative Spirit Market, which we were able to fund in part using a grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Little River Arts Council will be starting our winter social media posts soon—laying out activities, keeping members engaged with local artists and their work, and sending out our newsletters!

We look forward to ending our year with contemplation and starting a new one with lots of planning and open conversations on how to better our community through art.

Destin Padgett serves as the president of the Little River Arts Council.

Mentone Mah Jongg



Interested in mental stimulation, challenging play and lots of laughs? Mah Jongg players meet every Sunday at 1 p.m. at the MERF House. Holiday schedule may vary. For more information email Lynn Vanderhoff at Lynn.Vanderhoff@gmail.com.

There's a New Mural in Town by Kelly Leavitt



You've likely noticed a vibrant new mural in downtown Mentone. In October, Fort Payne artist Lacy Dobbs was commissioned by Christy Plunkett, owner of the new Groovy Goat boutique shop, to add the colorful new landscape.

"I knew I wanted to have a mural painted under the balcony that would represent Mentone," Christy said. "It was just a blank space and I knew there was so much beauty that could be created from it."

Christy has long been a fan of Lacy Dobbs' style, so the two collaborated on a theme. "I mentioned some of the elements

I would love to see: a rolling landscape, mountains, trees, a campground, a farm, a river, flowers, and a few goats with funny faces," Christy said. "Lacy really did a great job of translating that vision and painting it on the wall."

It took Lacy a little over 20 hours to complete the mural. Over the course of four days, she used a combination of 15 paint colors to create the fun and quirky tableau.

"Lots of people stopped by while I was working, out of curiosity," Lacy said. "Some took photos of the mural, and some took selfies with the mural behind them."

"That was one of my original thoughts when I was dreaming this up," said Christy, "that the mural would be a spot in downtown Mentone where people, especially visitors, could take a photo. I love that when people drive up the mountain, first they see the Mentone Inn on their right, and then they're greeted by the mural's bright colors on their left."

"What is Mentone?" Christy asked. "Anybody can look at that mural and see what Mentone is."



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Ruby O'Rear's Days Come to Life

DECEMBER, 1936

December 1, 1936, Tuesday

Rainy. Cold. Freezing little.

Mother's back hurt every time she got up in the nite. She hasn't been up since 1:00 this morn. It's much after 10:00 A.M. Took two doses of kidney medicine & syrup of pepsin. Paul gone to S'ville. Mother didn't get up all day. Rained all evening. A little of it froze as it fell so we had quite a sleet. W. Paul came & he & A.J. went riding.

December 2, 1936, Wednesday

Cloudy. Misted in nite so everything covered with sleet. Warmed up during day so it all melted off.

Mother took dose of Dr. Floyd's pain relief medicine & we got her up at 6:30. Frank Green came over. Paul at home most of day. Mother got up again at 11:30.

December 3, 1936, Thursday

Cloudy – cold.

Got Mother up before Jessie went to school. Mrs. Harrison & Jessie Jones came. Took dinner & stayed all P.M. Mrs. H. told Mother about spearmint tea being good for kidneys & said she'd send her some to-morrow. Paul came home about 12:00.

December 4, 1936, Friday

Cleared off.

Got Mother up without medicine but it hurt her. Eula & Thelma O'Rear came by. Eula's baby's been sick with cold. Gracie washed. Had extra big washing & line broke but things too dry to be hurt. W. Paul came over for awhile. Jack & J.B. got home early as they ran a short schedule. Leonard Mathews came by school to see Jeane.

December 5, 1936, Saturday

Clear & Windy.

Billy E., Jack & Billy C. here for dinner. Clara ironed most of day. Jessie cleaned up. Didn't take Mother up until about 3:00. Didn't give her any medicine but didn't hurt her bad as usual to get up. Paul & I went to store. I took wagon & got some lumber to finish north end of cow shed. Paul had bad headache. W. Paul & A.J. went riding. Clara went to Cash's & then went to Mentone & at Bankhead. Mother taking lots of lemon, grapefruit & orange juice with mint tea.

December 9, 1936, Wednesday

Clear in morn but cloudy in P.M.

Gracie came to wash. Had small washing but part of line of line broke & had to rinse some over. Clothes didn't get dry but Jessie brot most of them in.

December 11, 1936, Friday

Still rainy.

Paul took Jack & J.B. to school. Went on to Mentone & got comforter. Blue &



very pretty. Mother got up twice today for first time. Jessie had to go to meeting at V.H. Paul & A.J. went down to bring her back so didn't get home till late. I finished crocheted piece for chair arm.

December 12, 1936, Saturday

Clear. Temp 26.

I worked some on cow shed. Billy spent day with J.B. In P.M. boys & I went for holly to make Mrs. Grace a wreath. Clara & J.B. went to Cash's. Thelma came to telephone. Brot Country Gentleman.

December 13, 1936, Sunday

Temp 28. Clear in

P.M. East wind. Clearing up in P.M. Clara went to Cash's. I went as far as Cloudland to 2:30 preaching services with Paul & A.J. Paul came for me. Came by Frank's. Mother asleep as I write this. Don't know whether she'll get up again or not. Put leaves in pig pen & cow shed.

December 14, 1936, Monday

Cloudy.

Car out of gas & Jessie & J.B. had to walk to school as Dan was gone. Then we finally had to push car to get it started. Mother still getting up several times a day. Made wreath for Mrs. Grace & mailed it to-day.

December 15, 1936, Tuesday

Cloudy. Rainy in P.M.

Mother still about the same. Finished crocheting. Went to field & got some corn for bread corn. Cash's started to gather corn & it started raining. Cut out 7 aprons.

December 16, 1936, Wednesday

Cloudy in morn. Clear in P.M.

Cleaned out stove pipe to-day & Mother soaked her feet 10 min. W. Paul came over & A.J. went for holly. I went for mail too to-day. Sammie brot

Editor's Note:

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

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

We hope you will enjoy reading these selected entries of her daily diary for the month of December, 1936. —Kelly

Mother a squirrel. Leila sent her some sausage but she can't eat it.

December 18, 1936, Friday

Rainy.

Jessie not able to go to school. I went to store with Paul & got some lard, etc. Wrapped some pkgs. Worked a little on aprons. W. Paul came over for some galax leaves. Eula & Jack came by. Left in rain & we had a regular downpour right after they left. A.J. drove Paul's car to V.H. Hit a tree coming back & bent fender. Called Paul & he came to hunt for her.

December 20, 1936, Sunday

Temp 27. Fair.

Mr. Cash came over & we discussed about the corn. Billy Smith came over for day. I went to S.S. [Sunday school] for first time in months. Gracie came by & she & Clara went to S.S. at Bankhead. We had good dinner & I had killed guinea for Mother. Addressed Christmas cards & wrapped 2 pkgs. Clara went home with Gracie.

December 21, 1936, Monday

Temp below freezing. Clear.

Paul got Howard Smith to kill hog. He helped him. Liked never to have gotten him killed. W. Paul came over with Christmas tree. He helped them hang hog. Paul went to V.H. Clara tried to get Eula to stay here while to F.P. but she couldn't. A.J. washed dishes & I got dinner. Mother & I by ourselves a little while this P.M. Paul brot Clara & Gracie out.

December 22, 1936, Tuesday

Still pretty & cold.

Paul took me to V.H. to get check cashed. Paid Dan \$13.48. Hope & Vera Mae came out. Ethel could not come. Hope & Paul cut up hog. Hope

took sausage with him to get it ground. Clara fixed lard & we rendered it up. Got about ½ can. Jessie finished fixing things for her children. Paul went to Wallace Smith's. Gracie came by.

December 24, 1936, Thursday

Christmas Eve

Still cold. Pretty.

Gave Mother Black Draught last nite. Up several times in nite. Got up late this morn. Ralph Emerson came over to see Mother. Thelma & Merlin came over. Jessie cleaned up back part of house. Paul took Billy E. & James B. to Ft. Payne. Hazel, Billy, J.B. & I went to program at Little Church. Rode over with Paul & A.J. & Paul. Jessie dressed tree.

December 25, 1936, Friday

Clear. Big frost. Very pleasant day.

Clouded up a little in P.M.

I got a pair of silk hose off tree. Paul gave A.J. wristwatch & pair of hiking bruckles. Children gave her 6 beautiful hdkfs. Hope, Faye & Vera Mae came by. Brot the sausage. My ½, 10 lbs. Paul & A.J. went for mail. Aubrey & Clara's grandmother came for her. Forrest & Oscar came over. Forrest went to Sand Mt. with them. Gracie going home with Clara if her daddy doesn't object. Hazel went home for dinner & J.B. went to Bill's. W. Paul came about 11:30. They went to S'ville.

December 26, 1936, Saturday

Beginning to cloud up.

Jessie cleaned up. Hazel ironed. Eula & Mrs. Smith came. Ethel called in P.M. & wanted Paul & A.J. to come for her. Hazel & I sang for Mother. Her folks called. Said Essie & Maurice, Tip were there & would like to come home for the night. Tip & Dewey came for her. They had left Mo. this morn at 4:00 & driven 500 miles. Got her at 6:00. They spent Christmas with David Folks. Ethel slept on Hazel's cot. Mrs. Emerson & Janie came out. So did Leona, Bill & children.

December 27, 1936, Sunday

Foggy. Warm sun.

I went to S.S. So did J.B. A.J. went on to Mentone. We had good dinner. Paul came at 2:00. They took Ethel to V.H. John Lawrence came over in P.M. Hazel & I sang a lot for Mother. James B. helped us.

December 29, 1936, Tuesday

Foggy. Warm. Sun shone a little in P.M.

Woke up early & couldn't go back to sleep. Had headache. John Lawrence came early & he & Ethel worked on building a rock porch all day. I took an aspirin for my head. Laid down &

(continued on page 27)

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In Memoriam

EVELYN EDESKLE TOMLIN July 18, 1934 – October 26, 2021

Evelyn Edeskle Tomlin, age 87, of Valley Head, passed away at her residence on Tuesday, October 26, 2021.

Mrs. Tomlin is survived by siblings Junior Bell, Rosetta Yates, Buddy Bell (Diana), and Ruth Battles (Tommy), and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband,

Kenneth Tomlin, and sons, Tony Tomlin and Gary Tomlin.



ALFRED RAY BEASON August 19, 1940 - November 3, 2021

Alfred Ray Beason, 81, of Valley Head, passed away Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at his home. He was born August 19, 1940 to the late Lemuel Jackson Beason and Harriet Mae Elizabeth Bohannon Beason. He was a veteran of the United States Army and served in Germany during the Cuban Crisis.

Mr. Beason is survived by his children Evangeline Selena Atchley (Jimmy), Kimberly Kay Clark, and Cheli Delana Seay (Anthony); grandchildren Dustin Johnson, Amber Wallace (Cody Clifton), Cody Clark, and Brittney Seay; great-grandchildren Axel and Asher Clark; and brother Amos Beason. He was preceded in death by his wife Sue Ellen Beason; brothers Arthur and Albert Beason; and sister Dorothy Mae Ledford.

TIMOTHY ALAN BELL July 10, 1957 – November 5, 2021

Timothy Alan Bell, age 64, of Mentone, passed away on Friday, November 5, 2021.

He is survived by his father, Larkin Junior Bell; siblings, Donnie Bell (Connie), Glenda Bell Ingram (Don), and Debra Bell Cash (Dewey); and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his mother, Betty Sue Goss Bell, and sister, Ginger Myers.



JOHNATHON RANDOLPH GAFFORD July 4, 1979 – November 6, 2021

Johnathon Randolph Gafford, age 42, of Mentone, passed away on Saturday, November 6, 2021.

Mr. Gafford is survived by his wife, Meg McKee Gafford; children, Braden Gafford, Alexis Gafford, and Nickolas Gafford; mother, Brenda L. Smith; step-children, Austin Eddings (Amber) and Dakota Eddings; brother, Nelson Kerby (Brenda); grandchildren, Braxton, Payton, and Kinsley; and niece, Kayla Brazell.

He was preceded in death by his father, Johnny Mack Gafford; grandparents, Cleo and Charlean Smith; and grandmother, Luvern Gafford.



JIMMIE SUE SMITH October 16, 1928 ~ November 10, 2021

Jimmie Sue Smith, age 93, of Menlo, GA, died Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at her residence. Mrs. Smith was born October 16, 1928, in Trion, GA, daughter of the late Claudie Forest and Velma Josephine Deering Green. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Kirby Charlie Smith; daughter, Patricia Ann Langston Smith; son, Charles Kenneth Smith; and grandchildren, Cynthia Kay Langston Johnson, Jimmie Josephine Langston Burrage, and Tony Dwight Smith, Jr. Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Tony Dwight and Gloria Elaine Smith; daughter, Peggy Sue Smith Aldridge; grandchildren, Margie Dabney, Claudia April Fowler, Scotty Alan Langston, Colby Lamar Baty, Tessica Nicole Bullock, Elizabeth Sue Anne Maddux, Charlsie Nicole Dodd, and Kirby Robert Smith; and several great-grandchildren.



HARRY WEDGEWORTH January 5, 1955 ~ November 17, 2021

Harry Wedgeworth, age 66, of Menlo, GA, passed from this life on November 17, 2021, at his residence.

Mr. Wedgeworth was born January 4, 1955, in Summerville, GA, son of the late Robert and Mae Ella Whitsett Wedgeworth. He attended school at A.C. Carter High School. He worked with the City of Summerville for over 25 years and had also worked for Stanley Saleman

Farming for 15 years.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Ella Wedgeworth and Ollie Mae Hudgins; brothers, Matthew Wedgeworth, Harvey Wedgeworth, Felton Wedgeworth, Fred Wedgeworth, Robert Wedgeworth, Andrew Wedgeworth, and L.C. Wedgeworth; step-children, Kathy McDonald, Connie McDonald, and Larry McDonald. He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, Susan Wedgeworth; brother, Henry (Chris) Wedgeworth; sister-in-law, Ruby Wedgeworth; grandson, Dennis Wedgeworth (Amanda McDonald); and several nieces, nephews, aunts, and cousins.

Ruby O'Rear's Diary (continued from page 25)

took a nap & then went to Ethel's & Kate's. Got some peas ½ gal & ½ gal of syrup. Rained on me coming back. Paul went to Mentone. Battery came out of car on way back. Hazel & I made 2 cakes.

December 30, 1936, Wednesday Still rainy & foggy.

Ethel had headache this morn. Hazel learning to knit. A.J. working on blue sweater for Fay. Mother getting up oftener & staying up more. Pullens called Ethel & wanted her to come back. Sang some for Mother. Jewel &

Ann over for few min. Brod Mother some juice.

December 31, 1936, Thursday Clearing up but still warm.

Hazel washed. Clara came & got some clothes. Said she could stay rest of week. Paul wouldn't eat any peas because they had hog xxxx in them. Ralph came over this morn to see about work. We soaked Mother's feet. Hazel scratched my head. Jessie & A.J. went to Culbertsons. Jessie wanted Ed to make her a picture frame.

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