



THE GROUNDHOG

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Volume 37, No. 12

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

December 2018

Mentone Christmas Tree Lighting

Sunday, December 2 • by Kelly Leavitt

Mentone will have a community Christmas tree this year, thanks to Cynthia Stinson and the assistance of other community members. "My mom passed away this year," said Cynthia, who runs the Mentone Inn. "She loved Christmas, and always started decorating the day after Thanksgiving. We've always travelled to her for Christmas, so this will be my first Christmas spent in Mentone since I moved here 12 years ago. It's time for me to make a new tradition."

Cynthia had in mind to begin a tradition that would both commemorate her mother and bring our community together in the Christmas spirit. In early November, she announced a planning meeting on Facebook, and about 25 people met at the Mentone Inn to begin planning a tree lighting ceremony in the square at the corner of AL Hwy. 117 and Co. Rd. 89, where the large spruce tree stands.

Carolers will sing Christmas favorites, Father Bill Winters of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church will offer a blessing of the tree, Santa Claus will happily pose for photographs, and Christmas treats will be enjoyed.

"Many people are contributing to this event, and I'm grateful," said Cynthia. "I have bought lights for the tree, Rebecca Henderson of Tip Top Bakery is making sure lots of cookies are being made, Debra Fey of The Graceful Giraffe is providing hot apple cider. My daughter, Fontana, will be making hot chocolate, and Camp Laney is letting us use their thermal containers." Bruce BonFleur made some colorful promotional flyers that you may have seen around town. In addition, several anonymous donors have provided funds to help with the event's expenses.

Everyone is welcome to bring their child or pet to take photos with Santa (with your own camera). Santa will be seated by a decorated Christmas tree by the lit fireplace at the pavilion behind the Inn.

Cynthia added that in the future, she hopes the tree will become a memorial tree, with ornaments honoring those who have passed. "I'm hoping this will grow into an annual tradition that will be going long after I'm gone."

The ceremony will begin at 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 2, at Mentone's town square (where the Farmer's Market is held).



Dixie Mountaintop Market Makes Debut

December 7 & 8 • by Rhea Pirch

The Little River Arts Council will partner with Moon Lake Baptist Church to host the Dixie Mountaintop Market in the Arlene Fowler Youth Center at the church, 4671 Alabama Hwy. 117 in Mentone.

The Market will be held on Friday, December 7, and Saturday, December 8, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. All proceeds from vendor fees will be donated to Moon Lake Elementary School. An additional booth will also be set up for community donations.



Little River Arts Council Board Member Jessica Harper-Brown suggested the idea of hosting a holiday market for the Mentone area to the rest of the board in August. She mentioned that such an event would bring the community together, bring visitors to Mentone, and support local artists in a festive gathering, all at the same time. The board shared her enthusiasm for the event, and The Dixie Mountaintop Market was launched.

After hearing of the struggle Mentone's Moon Lake Elementary School was having with meeting their expenses, Jessica, an artist/maker/baker and parent of an MLES student, suggested turning the event into a fundraiser by donating all vendor fees directly to the school. She approached Moon Lake Baptist Pastor Mike Ellis with the idea of holding the event in the newly built Arlene Fowler Youth Center at the church. Pastor Ellis eagerly agreed to help host the event by providing the spacious inside venue.

The Dixie Mountaintop Market will feature artisans with a variety of wares, including baked goods and candy, soap, handmade ornaments and other crafts, photography, painting, massage therapy, printmaking and paper goods, woodcarving and much more.

It is a perfect holiday season opportunity for artists to show and sell their work to shoppers, who can browse unique gifts, listen to music, get their gifts wrapped at the gift-wrapping station, and visit Santa Claus, all in one Christmas-Spirit filled atmosphere. (Santa will be there on Friday from 12–2 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m.–2 p.m.).

Vendor applications can be found at littleriverartscouncil.org. Click on the events link, then "entry info" under the Dixie Mountaintop Market event. Booth fees are \$20 for a 10' x 10' space and \$15 for a 6' x 6' space.

Join us for this community event that helps support local artists and Mentone's own Moon Lake Elementary School. We hope to see you there!

THE GROUNDHOG



The Groundhog is published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA). First conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982, *The Groundhog* has been in continuous publication for 36 years. MAPA is dedicated to preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area. MAPA is chartered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

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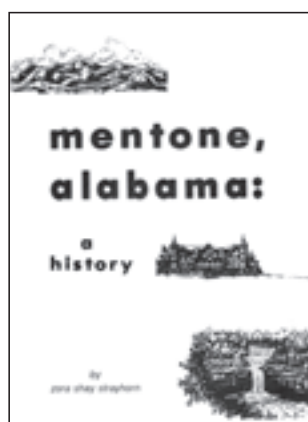
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***Do you have a story idea?
Perhaps a poem or recipe?
We welcome contributions!***

Email groundhognews@yahoo.com

Learn about the History of Mentone



On sale at the Wildflower Café, Moon Lake Library, Green Leaf Grill, Little River Hardware, Mentone Market, DeSoto State Park, Earthly Elements & Bell Battelle. \$15; proceeds benefit MAPA.

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

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond



gave reverent thanks for their safety, for the health of their children, for the fertility of their fields, for the love that bound them together, and for the Faith which united them with their God."

As we go through the busy Christmas season it is sometimes difficult to focus on what the celebration is all about. As we enjoy special times with family and friends hopefully we can also make time to do this. Merry Christmas!

Best wishes for a prosperous, healthy, and Happy New Year!

Hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving! As I have said many times I am happy to live in Mentone—in a community where a generous spirit prevails. The following was in our church bulletin the Sunday before Thanksgiving. "As we gather this week to give thanks, let us remember that giving thanks to God was the genesis of the first Thanksgiving. In his proclamation on November 5, 1963, President Kennedy stated, "Over three centuries ago, our forefathers in Virginia and in Massachusetts, far from home and in a lonely wilderness, set aside a time of thanksgiving. On the appointed day, they

Letter from the Editor

I remember my first Christmas in Mentone. It was my first (ever!) white Christmas—and there was a lot of it. What a singular experience, to actually wake up on Christmas morning to a breath-taking, snow-covered world. (At my age, unique experiences like this become increasingly rare, and memorable.) We'd planned to drive to Atlanta to pick up Steve's son, Ben, who was coming for a visit from his home in Germany. The roads, though, were almost impassable. Needless to say, it was a mildly dramatic trip. We trepidly worked our way down the mountain on Highway 48, and then the driving became much easier. When we were entering the Sloppy Floyd State Park on the other side of Summerville, traffic was stopped for quite a while and we waited patiently while road crews prepared the road. Finally, we collected Ben and headed home in the dark. I remember how our headlights revealing an ongoing landscape of pure winter wonderland as we travelled along the country roads.

The next morning, we spent hours walking in the snowy woods, making our own trail. My children, Miller and Anne Ryan, were scheduled to drive over the next day from northwest Alabama, where they'd been visiting family. They began to balk, because the Shoals area had also gotten a lot of snow and the roads across northern Alabama weren't going to be fun to travel on. But I persisted, and they wanted to make their mama happy, so they came. It was important to me that we all spend the day together. Our children hadn't yet met each other, and this was a rare opportunity for us all.

Steve had to drive to the bottom of the mountain in our 4-wheel truck to pick up my children, but by the middle of the day, we were all in Mentone to celebrate Christmas together (two days late). The snow had begun to melt, but we had huge fun playing with our family dog, Kobe, in the snowy field, and making a huge snowman, and having snowball fights, and enjoying a lovely Christmas dinner in our cabin in the woods, with a warm fire, glowing candles, and colored lights brightening the night.

It was also memorable because on Christmas Day the next year, my mother passed away in Seattle. Christmas was always her favorite holiday and, had I known her end was so near, I would have moved mountains for her to have shared the experience of that white Christmas in Mentone.

Her passing has helped me gain empathy for those who have difficulty during the holiday season. For the last seven years, I haven't felt much like celebrating, to be honest. But this year I feel inspired to decorate our home and enjoy a comforting meal with family. With November's unusually cold temperatures, perhaps it's not too much to dream of once again enjoying a white Christmas....

I wish you all a season of beauty and light, warmth and safety, and comfort and camaraderie. Reach out to someone who may be having a tough time. You will make a difference. And that's what it's all about. —Kelly



Christmas 2010

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Mentone Area Preservation Association

by Mark Hoffman



I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. It's such a great time to share food and conversation with family and friends. My sister Katherine hosted extended family this year, and believe it or not, there were no major altercations or hurt feelings—I think that is because she laid a hard and fast rule down to all: no discussions, or even mention, of politics or politicians allowed!

Now that the entire country's attention has turned to shopping, it seems, I urge each of you to support our local small business owners. A gift that didn't come from a big box store or the internet is always a little more special and unique. There are lots of treasures out there in our community's many shops. Have some fun and do some exploring.

On another note, I'm sure you have noticed that the MAPA community bulletin board at the post office has recently been refurbished. Thanks go out to Don Highfield and Anne McLeod for volunteering to do that, and for their ongoing efforts in monitoring the board's contents for outdated notices, etc.

Have a safe and wonderful "finish" for 2018. And Happy Holidays to all!

Mark Hoffman is president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Mentone's Bicentennial Committee Receives Major Funding Grants

by Holley Midgley

The Mentone Bicentennial Committee has received a number of grants to be used to fund a celebration of the town in 2019, in conjunction with activities marking the 200th anniversary of the creation of the state of Alabama.

A video documentary of Mentone and its history, entitled "Mentone: A Video Time Capsule", is being produced, set to premier in July of 2019. This project is supported by a grant from the Alabama Humanities Foundation, a state partner with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The foundation's mission is to foster learning, understanding and appreciation of our people, communities and cultures.

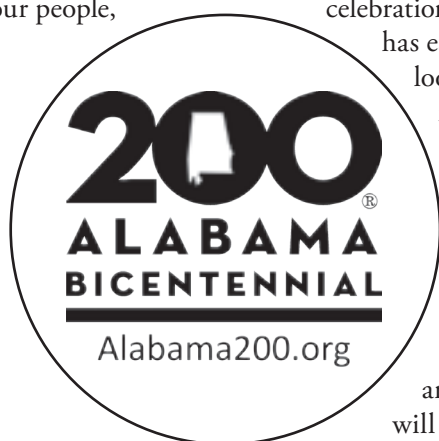
The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) has also provided a significant grant for the project. Additional grants were contributed by the Alabama Bicentennial Commission and the Tillotson-Menlo Foundation. The total funds received to date exceed \$10,000. The finished production will be premiered next July at an outdoor gathering to be held at the

Mentone Inn Pavilion. Several people involved with the production are donating their time and talent to the project.

The documentary video production will highlight the town of Mentone's history and people, beginning with the earliest Native Americans and continuing up to the modern era. A teaching unit will be created, to be used at Moon Lake School; a copy of the video will be mailed to each household in the Mentone Town limits.

Next year, the State of Alabama will celebrate its 200th birthday with a year-long bicentennial celebration. The Mentone Town Council has established the local committee to look at ways the town can honor and remember our own rich history and heritage. Cynthia Stinson and I are serving as co-chairs of the committee.

The committee is seeking old photographs and movie film or videos, diaries, newspaper articles, interview subjects who know the area's history, etc. In February, we will be set up on a Sunday afternoon at



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the Mentone Inn to copy your old photos and diary entries; it will take just a few minutes, and you do not have to leave them with us. If you think you have such resources, or know someone who does, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact me directly via email at duckman1@centurytel.net.

Holley Midgley is serving as the producer of "Mentone: a Video Time Capsule."

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This Old House: MERF Community House

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

Being a Board Member, Not a Bored Member! by Vicki Patrick

“Congratulations, you’re a new MERF Board member!” The voice on the phone was Sarah Wilcox, the executive director of MERF. This was a “two scoop ice cream” event for me, an expression Sarah uses to describe exceptional moments.

I never had the chance to develop a sense of community, as I moved frequently. Living here in the Mentone area and being exposed to MERF has changed that. The first introduction was the art auction and the feeling has grown since then.

I met Sarah at a Senior Lunch and was impressed with the mission of MERF. Her enthusiasm draws you in to understand the programs of serving the community with various types of education and support. From paying the salary of a gifted teacher, Paula Easter, who helps to discover and grow artistic skills for the children of Moon Lake Elementary School, to having lunches with fellowship and education for the seniors, MERF makes many significant contributions to our community.

grow. MERF has the energy and vision through Sarah and the MERF Board. Please make this wish come true!

A few words from Sarah:

MERF is so thankful for Vicky Patrick and Kayla Worthey being able to join the board this fall. Their enthusiasm, insight and sweat

equity will benefit MERF and the community well.

It’s a party at the MERF house! The senior lunch bunch crew will celebrate the season with a Christmas party at the MERF house on Wednesday, December 5. If everyone behaves between now and then, maybe a special visitor will take a break from toy making and bring some of his elves for some special entertainment. Joyful noises as always will be made! And if you missed the lunch on November 14, then you missed a good time. So thankful that the second and third graders from Moon Lake School joined us and sang their songs celebrating America and our veterans! The bells were spectacular! Thank you, Paula Easter and Kelbi Ballenger, for bringing the talented children to share themselves with others in the community. All the vets at the lunch received handmade cards from the students thanking them for their service.

Join MERF and Miss Paula on Friday and Saturday, December 7 and 8, at the Dixie Mountaintop Market hosted by Little River Arts Council and Moon Lake Baptist Church. The Market will be open 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. in the Arlene Fowler Youth Center. Stop by our booth for Christmas cards designed by the Moon Lake students and “Leave Me in



Moon Lake 2nd and 3rd graders performed songs and a poem celebrating America and honoring our veterans.

The programs that Sarah and the MERF board have developed based on community needs are awesome. To be associated with these caring and thoughtful people is an honor for me. Sarah definitely knows this community. Under her leadership and vision, the board has found the money and physical energy to allow the development and growth of the programs. The number of tutors for the children has grown. The Senior Lunch attendance has multiplied to where our beloved house needs to be expanded. There is now a support system for young moms and their youngsters. I can go on and on with praises for their achievements.



Moon Lake students made special cards for the veterans who attended lunch at the MERF house.

Thank you, Sarah, and thank you MERF board, for allowing me to be a part of your organization. I know that the community is blessed by the services of all involved. Having been a tutor, now an elf for senior lunches and a worker bee for the art auction, I see the end results of your vision. If only

everyone could see the transformations of the individuals served by MERF and those who provide the services!

My wish is that MERF continues to receive financial support through donations and sales of merchandise that will allow these and future programs to

Mentone” items such as mugs, ornaments and hats. Gifts that give twice!

MERF: Mentone Educational Resources Foundation is a local non-profit with the mission “To enrich the learning and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources.” If you would like to support our programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984, or you can contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193.

Sarah Wilcox is the executive director of MERF.



Stop by the Dixie Mountaintop Market at Moon Lake Baptist Church to pick up some great gifts like these handmade mugs and ornaments.



MERF President Kristen Emory gratefully received a \$10,000 check from Good Samaritan Mission Services, presented by Dr. Susan Heape. Susan told Reverend Phil Bryant from her former Huguenot Church of Charleston, South Carolina, about the work of MERF in Mentone. Good Samaritan Missions is an organization begun in the 1970s to distribute funding to non-profits which demonstrate a commitment to their community. Thanks to Reverend Bryant, the Good Samaritan Missions board saw fit to honor Dr. Susan Heape with this check to MERF.



N • E • W • S

by Rhea Pirch

Despite frosty temperatures, a steady stream of visitors came out to enjoy the third annual Creative Spirit Market, the collaborative makers market sponsored by the Little River Arts Council and DeSoto State Park, held each year over Veterans Day weekend at the park's picnic grounds.

While shopping the wares of the makers, market-goers were entertained by a steady stream of music from local acoustic musicians, enjoyed freshly made popcorn, warm cider and other edibles from food vendors, watched demonstrations by local artisans, created their own works of art at the free art tables, and saw the progress of the community DeSoto Falls project, on display at the event. Vendors and visitors alike expressed their appreciation for the event, saying they look forward to Creative Spirit Market 2019.

This year's Creative Spirit Market was made

possible in part through a grant received from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment of the Arts.

The tenth annual Home Tour and Silent Auction, the Arts Council's annual fundraiser, held the last weekend of October, raised close to \$3,700 in home-tour tickets and silent auction purchases. The money raised will help Little River Arts Council continue to sponsor events, provide educational opportunities for the community, and strengthen cultural resources for the benefit of businesses and citizens in the Mentone area.

Upcoming events for the Little River Arts Council include a collaborative effort with Moon Lake Baptist Church to sponsor a holiday market and fundraiser for Moon Lake Elementary School called the "Dixie Mountaintop Market," to be held on December 7 and 8 at the Moon Lake Baptist Church Arlene Fowler Youth Center.

The Arts Council is pleased to sponsor the

Alabama Shakespeare Festival, who will visit Moon Lake Elementary School to perform "As You Like It" to the students on January 9. Fine arts teacher Paula Easter will prepare the students for the play, "a beguiling game of love, desire, and mistaken identity that revels in the pleasure of life." The cast

will host a question and answer period afterwards, to further students' understanding of the production.

We regret to report the resignation of Kelly Leavitt, who served as president of the Little River



Artisans demonstrated their crafts at Creative Spirit Market.



A chilly yet sunny day at DeSoto State Park, where the 3rd annual Creative Spirit Market featured makers from our region.

Arts Council since July 2017. Kelly resigned from her position in October to focus more on her commitments as editor of Mentone's *Groundhog* newspaper, and as Moon Lake Community Librarian. Her presence will be missed, as she led the organization with vision and determination. The current vice-president, Bill Rutledge, will serve as president until a replacement is found.

We are currently seeking to fill three vacant board member positions. If you are an artist or are interested in the direction the Little River Arts Council continues to follow, please submit an e-mail to info@littleriverartscouncil.org for information and consideration.

We thank all those who support the Little River Arts Council through memberships, donations, and participation and attendance of our sponsored events, and look forward to a fruitful new year for the arts in the Mentone area.

Rhea Pirch is the treasurer for the Little River Arts Council.



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IN A TIME of celebrating birth and new beginnings in the coming year, Wildflower Café wishes you and yours grace, blessings, and love!

To laugh often and much; To win the respect of intelligent people, and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics, and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty; To find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, or a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; To know that even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded. — Ralph Waldo Emerson



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Rhododendron Garden Club by Mellanie Tuttle



The November 13 meeting of Rhododendron Garden Club (RGC) was held in the Boy Scout House at 10 o'clock. Hostess Carol Argo decorated the table with a beautiful Anthurium (or as she called it the 'Little Boy Plant' — think about it) which was covered in orange flowers instead of the typical red. Since it was also the door prize, it is now gracing my Mom's bedside! She also brought cheese crackers and lemon bars from Eddie's

Bakery Cafe in Birmingham; anticipation is always high when Carol is hostess. Karen Kruse read quotes about the love of gardening. Favorites were: "God made rainy days so I could get housework done," "Be sure to talk to your plants, they understand," and finally, "I'm not getting old, I just need re-potting!"

President Mellanie Tuttle called the meeting to order. During roll call, favorite houseplants were named, such as Begonia, African violets, Peace Lily and Schefflera. Barbara Umland generously shared seeds and African violet containers. Committee reports followed. Horticulture Chair Martha Wood shared that a Curly leaf Schefflera entered in a flower show was judged to be wilted because the leaves were curling! She suggested leaving leaves and seed heads until the spring. Leaf litter protects plants, reduces weeds, prevents erosion, helps regulate the soil temperature and breaks down into organic matter to replenish the soil. Seed heads supply winter food. Permission given for messy yards! However, an exception will be made for the Post Office beds. The public is not as enlightened about messiness.

Mary Shurett announced that the Master Gardeners (MG) will be starting classes in January and finishing in the spring. A new format will be tried, with live classes being held in one location and the lessons piped to three other locations so folks can be closer to home and still attend. Call the DeKalb County Extension Office for more information, check them out on Facebook (some great cow pictures) or go to aces.edu for a fabulous website with recipes, publications, and a calendar of workshops and events. I had a friend who stated that she would never join because she didn't want to be considered a "master of anything or anyone." Fair enough, and the title is a little deceiving. Certainly, anyone who has grown a garden can claim that nature is being mastered!

Do expect to do lots of volunteer work that is stimulating, rewarding, and fun and become a better-informed gardener in the process. This is why members of the RGC who are also Master Gardeners are having such a good time with the students at Moon Lake School. Illness and travels affected meetings in October, but November and December are packed with activities such as an oak, hickory, walnut, and pecan study. There are two types of Oaks - Red with pointed leaves and White with rounded edges. The Red Oak acorns germinate in the spring and the White acorns are germinating right now, so students planted a White Oak acorn to take home. An extended project will be to make a scrapbook containing leaf rubbings of Alabama native trees; first rubbings were the Sweetgum, White Oak and Redbud. A plethora of acorns will be painted and decorated next month, and fresh plants added to the terrariums. Students also cleaned the vegetable garden, amended the soil, and planted kale.

In the Yearbook, the program for November was Thanksgiving Centerpieces with a TBA (To Be Announced) for the guest speaker. It was decided that each member would be a guest speaker and bring something to the meeting for a Centerpiece. Hostess Carol Argo's use of the orange Anthurium surrounded by tiny pumpkins and gourds was easy to replicate and could be done in red

surrounded by glass ornaments or holly with berries or even just ivy for a Christmas-themed table. Dianne Kuehl had a fabulous ceramic pheasant tureen that has never been used except for decoration. Who would want to risk hot soup in that loveliness? Martha Wood had purchased a waxed Amaryllis, and no soil or water was needed. The free-standing bulb can be placed anywhere and should be in bloom with its showy red flower by mid-December. One purchase for two events. It was pricey but being able to re-use almost makes it a bargain! Mary Shurett has a carved wooden bowl filled with very realistic but artificial pomander balls, artichokes, fruits and other plants. Garden clubs always stress using fresh plant material and she pointed out that this one could have been replaced with all fresh items but had a limited shelf life. It was a very beautiful arrangement and looked great on a colorful tablecloth. Mellanie Tuttle brought a "Sunflower" door wreath made of cornhusks for the petals (remember the "petals" are actually ray flowers that do not develop into seed) and cut pinecones for "seeds" that was mounted on a straw wreath. The rounded form was the perfect piece to put on a round table. For an oblong or rectangular table, placing a cedar board or other weathered wood and adding little pumpkins, votives and greenery is an economical and attractive idea. Another idea is to buy eight-inch vases that have a band of gold along the bottom (Walmart—94 cents each), fill with purchased flowers or dried branches from the yard and place on a vintage wooden tray. For the Christmas holiday, it could be dressed up with a silver tray and crystal vases. Mellanie also shared a napkin ring idea using the kids' craft of shredded crayons and wax paper. Place different Thanksgiving quotes in between the wax paper sheets, trace a leaf shape around the quote and then cut out. Tie onto the napkin with a piece of raffia and encourage everyone read their quote. One member already had plans to make Christmas rings using the traditional colors and another suggested coloring books to find patterns for bells, trees, or other ornament shapes. Another frugal idea money-wise (does take a little time) is to make napkin rings using paired acorns tied with raffia onto a stretchy hair tie. Acorns could be gilded or painted to make more festive! The RGC is a clever group—ideas flowed, and the day was truly synergistic.

The December meeting will be the yearly luncheon in the home of Mellanie Tuttle. A new slate of officers will be sworn in by past President Jan Wilkinson. Any past members who wish to come or visitors who would like to taste deliciousness, please contact Mellanie Tuttle (256-634-4403) and we'll set a place for you! Marsha Merrell is taking over as President; Mellanie Tuttle will be VP; Dianne Kuehl remains as Treasurer, and Rhea Pirch as the Secretary. The RGC wishes everyone a very blessed and safe month of December. I think in January the club will be moving back into the MERF House, but the Boy Scout House has been an awesome place to meet and we thank them so much for sharing their space.

The Rhododendron Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Region, The Garden Club of Alabama - District II and the Northeast Federation of Garden Clubs.

*Here and there, now and then,
lose yourself in nature
and find peace. John Muir*

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Mentone Arts & Cultural Center News

MACC Dedicates Building Site, Reveals Sculpture by Randy Grider



The Mentone Arts & Cultural Center (MACC) held a Blessing of the Land dedication on November 3 and gave attendees a first glimpse of the Sequoyah statue that will grace the grounds of the sculpture garden.

The event featured a tribute to the Cherokee people, who claimed this area of part of the Old Nation. The Cherokee were forced west in 1838. Featured guest speakers taking part in the tribute included Charlie Rhodarmer, director of the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum in Vonore, TN, and Shannon Fuller Keith, president of the Alabama Trail of Tears Chapter. Keith and Bruce BonFleur read Cherokee blessings as part of the tribute.

Other speakers included MACC Executive Director Randy Grider, MACC Board President Ben Shurett, Alabama Sen. Steve Livingston, and Alabama Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter. Additional dignitaries and special guests present included Pam Abernathy from U.S. Congressman Robert Aderholt's office, Mentone Mayor Rob Hammond, Mentone Town Council member and former MACC Board President Ray Padgett, Manitou Cave of Alabama Founder/Director Annette Reynolds, sculpture artists Carl McCleskey and Betsy Scott, Dr. Charles "Soc" and Barbara Sennett, Dr. Stephen and Lynn Brewer (Fort Payne City Council member), MERF Executive Director Sarah Wilcox, architect Clay Birchfield, and Native American pottery expert Tammy Beane.

We also wish to recognize: MACC board/committee members Meg Richardson (and husband Al Richardson), Hank Willett, Olivia Dodd, Melinda Whitt, Rev. Tom Bell, Paul Howell, Dick Tindol

and Don David; local artists/musicians Meg Justice, Mickey and Cynthia Luck, Terry Hutcheson, and Lisa Crow; and volunteers Lisa Schad, Marsha BonFleur, Robert Moehr, Kevin Worthey, Bobby Browder, and Milton Chambers, who all helped make the event successful.

McCleskey and Scott donated their artistic work on the Sequoyah to MACC. Plans



Alabama Rep. Nathaniel Ledbetter and Alabama Sen. Steve Livingston express their support of the center.



Terry Hutcheson entertains as Bruce BonFleur looks on.



After the unveiling: (left to right) Dr. Stephen Brewer, Lynn Brewer, Betsy Scott, Carl McCleskey, Ben Shurett, Dr. Charles "Soc" Sennett and Barbara Sennett

were to bring the clay-and-wax model to the event for a public unveiling but that proved to be too risky due to fears transporting it might cause it to be damaged before a mold for bronze casting be made. Instead, a foam board cutout was used for the unveiling.

Sequoyah (named in English George Gist or George Guess) was a Cherokee silversmith.

In 1821, he completed his independent creation of a

Cherokee syllabary, making reading and writing in Cherokee possible. During his work on the syllabary, he lived in the Cherokee village of Willstown, which stretched from present day Fort Payne to Lebanon.

The finished bronze statue will be prominently featured in one of the property gardens, which will be dedicated as the Dr. Stephen Brewer Sculpture Garden in the future, thanks to a charitable gift from Brewer's family.

The main auditorium or multipurpose room will be named for Dr. Charles and Barbara Sennett's son, Chuck Sennett. If anyone is interested in naming opportunities in other areas of the MACC facility, please contact me or any MACC board member.

We ask that as you prepare your end-of-the-year donations, please consider supporting the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center. Your donation is tax-deductible.

For more information on the Center and events, please visit mentoneartscenter.org.

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

ALL PHOTOS: Juergen Beck/Freedom Light Productions



The crowd enjoyed a bright and sunny day.



Board President Ben Shurett gives remarks about the center.



hello winter!

December 21



Traditions . . . Then and Now by Paula Easter

Well...Friday has come and gone and our Thanksgiving holidays have officially begun here at Moon Lake Elementary School. Today in my classroom, I asked each class if they knew what the word "tradition" meant, and what their plans might be during this holiday season. To help them understand what I was talking about, I related my own favorite "traditions" from my childhood, in hopes that my story would bring out favorite memories or traditions from them. (I have to admit, they love for me to share my crazy stories from childhood with them.) As I sit here now at home in my living room, contemplating how I am going to change my decorations for the upcoming (faster than I care to imagine) Christmas holiday season, my mind begins to wander back in time (are you surprised? I didn't think so) to holiday seasons of my past. My day at school has brought back so many wonderful memories for me.

As a six-year-old, my holiday season officially began on Thanksgiving Day. After oohing and aahing over the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, my parents and I indulged in two wonderful family meals. There was lunch at MaMa Red's house and supper at Granny Easter's house. We always packed the car with our suitcases before we went to Granny's because we weren't going home that night, we were going from her house to Atlanta for Rich's Lighting of the Great Tree! We always stayed in the same wonderful hotel and walked down Peachtree Street, looking at all the magical Christmas windows (especially to a six-year-old), to Forsyth Street and Rich's Crystal Bridge, where all of the choirs would sing before the finale of "O Holy Night" and then that magical moment when the great tree would come alive with light! Even at six, I loved music and remember dreaming of being the lady in the long white dress singing that solo. Little did I know,

twenty-one years later I would have the opportunity to sing in that choir and the butterflies would be just as alive then as when I was a six-year-old listening to all that beautiful music. The day after Thanksgiving was the next best day, as that meant I got to see Santa and ride the Pink Pig at Rich's. This yearly tradition continued even when I had to "scrunch up" to fit into the Pink Pig ride, with Daddy laughing as I rode by. One of my favorite memories of the 1980s has to be as a mother, when I shared my Thanksgiving experience with my son, Paul. I'm still not sure how I ever got into the Pink Pig, but I was determined and we rode it together on that faithful Friday after Thanksgiving.

As I look at all of these boxes of Christmas ornaments, I realize some of them are as old as I am. (And we know that is pretty old!) There is a box with my name on it which

holds all the different ornaments

my parents traditionally gave me throughout the years. That is one tradition I love and have continued with my boys, Paul and Justice. For me, every ornament is a story and a memory, and a tradition that is always there to remember.

Growing up, the holidays always meant the same wonderful smells in our home, like the ham baking in the oven all day, the cinnamon sticks, cloves and oranges in the big white bowl, and the wonderful fragrance of the evergreen tree. Yes, I know, I tried many of the same things in later years in my own home and had success with them, but, they just weren't the same as Mom's. (Don't you think that's always true? It's always better at Mom's house.)

As an adult and mom, we have made many new wonderful traditions in our home, like watching the movie *Home Alone* together every Christmas Eve, going to Nanny's house for Christmas Eve lunch,

and to MeeMee's for Christmas breakfast. Even though these new "traditions" are wonderful, it's still the ones from my younger years that always ring the truest for me at Christmas. I must say, my first Christmas as a mother was a wonderful experience.

That Christmas, it was like it all became new again for me, even though Paul actually remembers it only in pictures, since he was just six months old then.

As I write this article, I am actually sitting in the living room of the home where I grew up and had so many wonderful Christmas holidays. I guess you could say I have come full circle...back to where all the memories and traditions started. As these holidays approach, I am looking forward to unpacking all those wonderful memories and traditions, and maybe adding a few new ones to the old.

I would like to take a moment to wish all of you the happiest of holidays...and maybe a memory, or perhaps a tradition or two, to come your way.



My first Christmas



Visiting Santa in Atlanta



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Cloudland/Menlo News

by Pat Johnson

Menlo School

On November 9, Menlo School hosted their annual Veteran's Day program. All veterans from Menlo were recognized. U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Keith Lutz was the guest speaker. Pippa Key sang the national anthem and there was an American Sign Language performance by Savannah Greene of "God Bless the USA." All grades participated in paying tribute to the veterans. The turnout was amazing and everyone had a great time.

On December 1, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. EST, the school will have its annual Winter Festival. There will be games, prizes, food, and drinks. The public is invited.

Menlo School is very proud to announce that 6th grader Benjamin Swords won the county-wide Historical Society's essay contest for grades 6–12. It is entitled, "Chattooga County History, Menlo's Mineral Springs."

Burning Leaf Festival

October's Burning Leaf Festival was a big success. Lots of food and music and vendors. Everyone loved roasting hot dogs and marshmallows over the open fire and the chili was hot and delicious cooking in a huge pot over the fire. Mark your calendars for next year's festival on October 26, 2019!



Winners of the Burning Leaf Festival's costume contest, from left to right: Kimberly Jackson, Reese Willingham, Lola Marcus, Alex Durham, and Bea Marcus.

Cloudland Park Kitchen Renovation

The renovation of the kitchen is complete and it looks wonderful and is much more functional. Many thanks to Dick Tanner, Max Tucker, and Johnny Smith for all their hard work in completing these improvements.

Cloudland Cookbook

Cloudland Community is looking for your best recipes. They are going to publish a cookbook entitled "Cooking Above the Clouds: Recipes from the Cloudland Community." They need recipes from Cloudland and surrounding area residents or former residents. If you have a special recipe and wish to put it in this cookbook, please email your recipe to cloudlandcommunitypark@yahoo.com or mail it to Cloudland Community Park, 904 Cloudland Drive, Cloudland, GA 30731. Memorial/dedication pages with a photo and recipe from someone special will also be available for \$50. Cookbooks will be \$25 with all proceeds going to the park. Shipping is available for extra \$7.50. So send in those recipes!



CHATTOOGA COUNTY HISTORY: Menlo's Mineral Springs

by Ben Swords



Entrance to the Mineral Springs Hotel on Shinbone Ridge

Congratulations to Ben Swords, a 6th grade student Menlo School who won first place in a countywide essay contest for students in grades 6–12 that was sponsored by the Chattooga Historical Society.

The rolling plains and majestic mountains of Chattooga County hold many interesting facts and areas. For example, one of these areas was the Mineral Springs located in Menlo, GA. This essay will cover many things from the rise of Mineral Springs, its popularity as a tourist attraction and its downfall, so stay tuned.

The rise of Mineral Springs

Mineral Springs Hotel, which could house up to 35 guests at one time, opened in July, 1891. It was built on Shinbone Ridge, just west of Menlo, at 1,100 feet above sea level, which drew visitors to it because of the beautiful view. The site was chosen because of the eleven mineral springs that the builders enclosed within a rock wall measuring thirty by sixty feet. The springs were easily accessible from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Gadsden, Alabama, via the Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia Railroad (TAG Railroad), and from Rome and Atlanta, Georgia, via the Central of Georgia Railway. The facility's brochure advertised the location as a "pleasant and beautiful ride by automobile from Gadsden, Anniston, Birmingham, Rome and Chattanooga."

Activities at Mineral Springs

Guests at Mineral Springs enjoyed dining in a state-of-the-art dining room which served fresh dairy products from their own farm. Because the hotel was located "in the heart of the famous Georgia Fruit Belt," recipes featured fresh fruit in season. Many of the guests took automobile tours of nearby historic areas, including Chickamauga Park, Missionary Ridge and Chattanooga. The hotel also featured long-distance telephone and telegraph service. However, the biggest attraction was the springs themselves. These eleven springs were thought to have many healing properties for conditions and diseases involving the digestive system and skin diseases. Guests would swim, bathe and drink the spring water, in hopes of being cured of their diseases. The site was also a popular area for church picnics, family gatherings and a rest place for tired travellers.

Mineral Springs' downfall

In 1918, a fire of unknown cause burned down the hotel and ended the springs' popularity in tourism. When Highway 48 was built, the Department of Transportation partially filled in the springs, but some of the rocks that bordered them still remain. The rock steps and an old rock wall that led from the hotel to the springs are still visible today. I just wish that they could tell us the hotel's full story and secrets.

Conclusion

From its rise in 1891 to its downfall in 1918, the Mineral Springs Hotel was a place where tourism thrived. The visitors enjoyed the many activities offered while they could be healed by the springs. After its fiery fate was met, nature has attempted to overtake the ruins of this once popular destination.

Research Resources

Chattooga: The Story of a County and its People by Robert S. Baker. "The Mineral Springs Hotel and The St. Thomas Hotel." pp. 598–599.



Ben Swords with his teacher, Susan Noel, of Mentone.

River Voice by Bill Shugart



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE is a film fellowship program that is actively raising awareness about Alabama's incredible natural resources and important environmental issues that impact all of us. This innovative summer fellowship brings emerging filmmakers from across the country to tell authentic, engaging stories through short documentary films about Alabama's environment and the people who cherish it, from the mountains to the coast. The Southern Environmental Law Center sponsored the program from 2012–2016. In January of this year, the Alabama Rivers Alliance assumed the role as primary sponsor of the Southern Exposure Film Fellowship program.

The Southern Exposure Film Fellowship seeks the best and brightest emerging documentary filmmakers who are committed to protecting our natural resources, improving human health and achieving environmental justice through film, journalism and collective action. The film fellows spend the summer working in partnership with Alabama Rivers Alliance partner groups and other state environmental organizations, who provide guidance on film topics and crucial community contacts to help the fellows create the short documentaries that will be most useful for raising awareness and advocating for the protection of Alabama's special places.

On November 15, Little River Waterkeeper hosted its fifth consecutive viewing of SOUTHERN EXPOSURE. We would like to say a special thank you to Martha Hunter and Curt Chafin of Alabama Rivers Alliance, as well as to the Moon Lake Community Library board, especially Holley Midgley. They agreed to let us to hold the event there. Thank you, Kelly Leavitt, for helping our event happen and most importantly, thank you to everyone who attended.

Environmental issues aren't feel-good topics most of the time. People are sick and dying because of pollution. Judging by the responses to posts on social media, we see that fewer people respond to important environmental posts than to photos

of our family dog. Granted, Rusty is a handsome fella and a heck of a dog. But it leaves me asking, "Do people care about what happens to the environment around them?" Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "In the end... we are all one world. And that which injures any one of us, injures all of us."

Many people we know feel a certain responsibility to advocate for the environment. Not everyone shares the same perspective or level of awareness. So, through the series of short films, we share stories of real people whose lives have been impacted directly, in hopes that their words will touch someone's life in a positive way.

Recently, one of our local River Heroes, Bill Schwarz, passed on to his next appointment. I didn't know Bill and only met him once briefly in passing. But I heard his name many times in our community. I was listening to his story recently, and it sounded remarkable. Among the many things he did in life, Bill was part of the original Friends of Little River advocacy group that helped Little River become protected. It is because of folks like Bill and Sue Schwarz that the way has been paved for us to carry on the work. We are, as all of us should be, grateful for his work.

Water has a right in this country. It's given by the Clean Water Act of 1972 and upon this federal law, citizens have the right to hold polluters accountable for degradation of the finite natural resource. There are some places that need oversight and protection. We all have the right to fish, swim, and drink clean water. As advocates, we are not only standing up for the actual body of water but the citizens who depend on it.

When I look at my 4-year-old grandson, I think to myself, "I do it for you, buddy." And we do it for you, too. We do it for the future of clean water and for those that will enjoy it long after we are gone. And so did Bill Schwarz. Cheers to Bill! And Cheers to Clean Water Advocates everywhere!

Bill Shugart is the Little River Waterkeeper.



Thousands of children enjoy the clean waters of Little River every summer.



Volunteers help Little River Waterkeeper analyze and report on water safety during the summer months.



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December

1	Gayla Blalock Mark Hatfield Morgan Crane Marcia Tucker Christine Brooks Megan Kelley	6	Austin Potts Judy Johnson Tonja Bell Sharon Crouch Mia Sweeney Chuck Williams	12	Valerie Logan Jeff Nelson Connie Nelson Waylon Collins Gwen Stone	18	Ashley Pounders Daniel Brown Scot Sharp	24	Caleb White Joe Kent Emma Lee Avion Gelfenstein Susie Southerland Sophia Sharp Anthony O'Shields	30	Matt & Ginger Lee Bryan & Melissa Roe
2	Ladon Willingham Dwayne McKenzie Angel Baggett Brody Britton	7	Gavin Myers Keesha Burgess Reagan Owen Nathan Owen Olivia Burton Brandy Graham	13	Moria Potts Deborah Mason Crystal Poteat Jerrod Landers	19	Brynda Hopper Jake Nelson Jesse Bailey Tyler Gravitt	25	Mary Porter Irene Willingham Justin Easler Amanda Foote Adam Bethune	31	Kiley Shankles Michael Kelley Jr.
3	Karen Saferite Austin Battles Angie Bell Young Cherita Holman	8	Bailey Pryor Trish Clink Ross Hulkan	14	Ginny Zulker Jim Phillips Patton Pridmore	20	Shelley Meadows Denise Carden Ann Dean	26	Jason Goss Melanie Grisham Sheila LaRock	1	Cotton & Pam Baggett Hoyt & Helen Ashley
4	Lloyd McElhaney Nichole Williams Lydia Rastall Heath Blalock Raymond Beasley Easton Bailey Melissa Patton	9	Brenda Kerby Kyle Freeman Mike Stone	15	Jessica Van Pelt Brody Baber Justin Shankles	21	Tyler Dean Jordan Henderson Coby Harrison Lydia Roe Benny Graham Ronnie Bowman	27	Melissa Shoults Houston Downer Jennifer Blalock Sally Wheat	2	Joe & Donna McClure
5	Jess Goggans Brian Howard Berkley Chambers Barbara Neel Avery Pepper Aero Potts Zack Peek	10	Kevin Worthey Tammy Frost John Breithaupt Daniel Kilgore Jeremy Hart Darlene Swindall	16	Lane Traffanstedt Jeff Pack	22	Remi Norsworthy Dale Howard William Beasley Briana Kilgore Ashlee Smith Weston Carter Bryan Roe Lorelai Chaney	28	Avice Pearson Annette Chappell Brooke Morris Elizabeth Russell	3	Walt & Shirley Zange
		11	Christine Ballenger Toni Freeman Hannah Blansit Christy Cordell Kaelan Shankles	17	Holly Williams Chris O. Smith Austin Black Jay Wagner	23	Daniel Gray Aubrey Smith Steve Chandler Melissa Claire	29	LeAnn Bain Christie Langston	8	Alvin & Sherry Durham

Ongoing Calendar

*Calendar entries are
subject to change.*

December 2018 Community Calendar

December 1–12th Annual MAINx24 Celebration. This annual 24-hour event draws over 12,000 folks. Showcasing Chattanooga's Southside neighborhood with live music, crafts, gallery tours, parades, human foosball, chili-cookoff, Chattanooga Football Club street soccer, adult Big Wheel racing, dance parties, specialty food and beverages provided by local restaurants and food trucks! Over 150 events listed at MainX24.com.

December 1, 8, 15—Blow an Ornament. Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed, it is on a first-come, first-served basis. 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.

December 4, 11, 18—Art Class with Lydia Randolph. Boom Town Makers Market, Fort Payne. 6pm. \$20.

December 6—Art in the Alley. Bring your friends and let's have some fun! Join us after work for Art in the Alley, and enjoy local food, music, and art in Fort Payne's Entertainment District - and Boom Town Makers Market. Look for the festival lights in the Alley behind the theater. 5–8pm.

December 7—Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. Come and be a part of this remembrance program presented by the DeKalb County VFW. The program will culminate at the bridge. Each year, Traci's donates a wreath that is dropped from the bridge and carried downstream in tribute to those who gave their lives in the line of duty at Pearl Harbor. Exhibit Hall of the Little River Canyon Center. 11am. 256-845-8192.

December 8 & 9—Harmless Doves in Concert. Lead singer George Hartline, the only band member not originally from California, brings his Orange County band to show them his roots - or close enough to them (he is from Section, Alabama). Partial proceeds from this show will be donated to George's alma mater, Section High School, to support the faculty and students' efforts to increase awareness of music and arts. Historic DeKalb Theatre, Fort Payne. 7pm. \$15 advance/ \$20 door. harmlessdoves.com.

December 11—Courtyard Concerts: Outlaw Country. Courtyard Concerts takes place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday at The Courtyard (located beside DeKalb Theatre). Featuring local and regional artists performing a variety of themes, styles, and genres. Admission is free. Gates open at 5:30pm, music begins just after 6pm. A cash bar is available, as well as food, drink, and merchandise. NOTE: In case of inclement

weather, the concert will be held inside the theatre.

December 14—5th Annual Vulcraft 'Christmas Market'. Food vendors, crafts, and silent auction during and after the Fort Payne Christmas Parade. Benefits the DeKalb County Children's Advocacy Center. Held at The Building in downtown Fort Payne. 4–9pm. 256-845-2460.

December 15—Lost Hollow/Teddy Gentry Concert. Tommy Harden, the leader of Lost Hollow, is the new drummer for Alabama and former drummer of Reba McIntire and Larry Gatlin, among others. Chris Roberts School of Music. 6pm. Tickets are \$20. 256-996-1547.

December 15—TVRA Tennessee Valley Roping Association Event. Agri Business Center, Rainsville. 9am. 256-638-1650.

December 16—Moon Lake Community Library Holiday Open House. Refreshments, camaraderie, music, door prizes. 3–5pm. 4607 AL Hwy. 117, Mentone. moonlakelibrary.org

December 21—Winter Solstice

December 25—Merry Christmas!

December 29 & 30—Alabama NBHA 01 Barrel Racing. Saturday 8am and Sunday 9am. NE Agri-Business Center, Rainsville. 256-638-1650.

December 31—Courtyard Concerts: New Year's Eve. Come ring in the new year with your favorite cast of local talent. \$10 cover includes party favors and champagne at midnight (when we drop the bowling ball). Cash bar is available, as well as food and merchandise. The Historic DeKalb Theatre, Fort Payne. Doors open at 8pm, show begins shortly after.

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It's Beginning to Feel a Lot Like Christmas in DeKalb County!



December 1

Valley Head Christmas Parade. 10am.

Menlo School's Annual Winter Festival. Games, prizes, food and drinks. The public is invited. 11am–2pm EST.

59th Annual Rainsville Christmas Parade & Christmas Open House. Open House in the Bevill Center from with snacks and games for the kids 10am–1:30pm. The 59th annual Rainsville Christmas Parade begins at 12pm.

Henagar Christmas Parade 5pm. 256-657-6282.

"Santa Paws" Pet & Children Portraits. Join Friends of DCAAC and All Paws on Deck for portraits at Tractor Supply in Fort Payne on December 1 any time between 10am and 3pm. For a \$5+ donation, you can get a digital photo with Santa and also be able to help DeKalb County's homeless fur friends with their various rescue needs.

December 2

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

December 3

A Visit to Santa's Workshop. Fun, holiday-themed activities for children ages 10 and under. Cecil B. Word Learning Resources Center on the campus of NACC. Hosted by the Learning Resources Center and the Child Development Program. 4–7pm.

December 6

RadioVizions presents Johnny Whitley's "Rockin' L'il Christmas" performing live at the historic DeKalb Theater in Fort Payne. An annual holiday gathering of family, friends, and fans of 50s/60s R&R Christmas classics. 6pm. \$15 at the door. For reservations, call 256-979-1910 or for more information contact Russell Gulley 256-845-0203.

December 7

Fort Payne Christmas in the Park. Join in the festivities at

FREE Movies

at the Historic DeKalb Theatre in Fort Payne

Doors will open at 6pm. Show begins at 7pm.

Concessions will be sold in the lobby. Items include popcorn, hot dogs, candy, hot chocolate and sodas.

12/7 **ELF**

12/14 **The Santa Clause**

(immediately after parade)

12/21 **The Polar Express**

Fort Payne City Park for the 34th Annual Christmas in the Park, featuring visits with Santa, Santa's Friends roaming the park, refreshments, caroling around the yule log and more. 3–7pm. 256-845-1524.

December 7 & 8

Cook Castle 3rd Annual Christmas in Dixie Tour. Take a tour of the fabulous Cook Castle at Christmas. 6–9pm. \$30. 256-845-2286 ext 7.

December 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15 & 16

NACC Theatre presents "A Christmas Carol". Thursday–Saturday performances at 7pm and Sunday Matinees at 2pm. Tickets \$8. 256-638-4418.

December 8

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

Idler Christmas Parade. 1pm. 256-657-5717.

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

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

Collinsville Christmas Parade. 2pm. 256-524-2135.

Crossville Christmas Parade. 5pm. 256-528-7121.

Canyon Christmas. An annual tradition to celebrate the season that is filled with holiday spirit and activities including Christmas arts and crafts, a gift shop, puppet shows, and a visit with photos with Santa, and more! JSU's

Little River Canyon Center. 10am–3pm. Most activities are free. Call 256-845-3548 for more details/schedule.

December 11

"The Sounds of Christmas". Musical presentation by Moon Lake students. The public is welcome. 6pm. Moon Lake School Gymnasium, Mentone.

December 14

"Christmas in Dixie" Fort Payne Christmas Parade. Join the City of Fort Payne for its 46th annual Christmas Parade. Grand Marshall is the "Alabama" band and their families. Parade starts at 6pm at the VFW Fairgrounds on 18th Street N. and runs south on Gault Ave. to 3rd Street S. Parade applications can be picked up at the Fort Payne Chamber Office or Coffey Agencies. 256-845-2741.

Special Christmas Show: Wilburn & The Lefevre Quartet at The Pickin' Post. Tickets are available at Black's Tire in Rainsville and Rodger's Pawn & Music in Fort Payne. Located at 833 Old Hwy 35 East. \$15. 7pm. For more information, call 256-657-3817 or 256-996-8910.

December 15

Photos with Santa. Mentone Market, 5872 AL Hwy 117, Mentone. 10am–1pm. Free.

Breakfast with Santa. Come on out and help us support Relay for Life! \$5 per person. Each ticket will get you a photo with Santa, 3 pancakes with sausage and your choice of coffee, tea or water. See an ABC Plus Relay Team Member to get your tickets or come by our office at 1825 Everett Drive W, Fort Payne, AL 35968.

December 22

Courtyard Community Christmas. A special seasonal event to celebrate the holidays. This is a pot luck dinner, so bring a dish if you can. Historic DeKalb Theatre, Fort Payne. Doors open at 5pm. Dinner at 6pm, with music following.

Potluck Christmas Dinner at the Green Leaf Grill

Christmas can be depressing for many people who are alone. It's especially difficult when we miss our family and friends who are no longer with us. Jimmy Rogers, owner of Green Leaf Grill, recognizes this and, for the third year, he will be opening his Mentone restaurant for a community potluck to be served between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Christmas Day for a time of good fellowship and comfort.

"Bring a dish if you can," says Jimmy. "If you can't bring a dish, join us anyway! There will be plenty for all to eat." If anyone needs transportation, Jimmy invites you to call 256-634-2110. "We will pick you up and take you back home."

**Please remember
Mentone'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

William "Bill" Wright Schwarz 1928–2018

William "Bill" W. Schwarz died on November 6, 2018, just three weeks shy of his 90th birthday. He was born November 27, 1928, in Savannah, GA, and grew up in Williamsburg, VA, where he graduated from The College of William and Mary with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry.

After college, Bill served for two years in the U.S. Army Ordinance Corps. "In 1952, Werner von Braun was in Huntsville forming his team that developed our space program," explained his wife, Sue. As a soldier, Bill was part of a unit of people who were sent to Red Stone Arsenal because they had the skills von Braun needed to develop the program. When Bill left the Army, he began his career in rocket research and rocket propellant development with Thiokol Corporation.

Bill caught the acting bug during college, when he had a summer job working with theatrical sets in Williamsburg, VA. In the 1950s, Bill was an organizer in the formation of Huntsville Little Theatre, where he served on the board as well as acted, winning the Best Actor award in 1955 and 1956.

Bill and Patricia Atwill married and raised two daughters in Huntsville, where he enjoyed working with cars as a hobby in the 1960s. He joined the Sports Car Club of America and pit crewed for a friend during road rallies and races. He built his own kit car, and eventually taught his daughter Janet how to take apart an engine and put it back together.

He and his daughters became involved with their local Boy Scouts Sea Explorers unit. Bill enjoyed sailing his 25-foot Hunter and teaching sailing skills to the Sea Explorers, often supporting them during their races on the Tennessee River. "He enjoyed teaching and encouraging kids to do what they enjoyed doing. He brought out the best in them. They seemed to flourish under his hand," said Sue.

In 1984, Bill and Sue married and, a few years later, bought a home in Mentone. After Bill retired in 1989, they spent the warm half of each year in Mentone, and permanently relocated in 2000 to their home on Little River, where they enjoyed taking canoe rides together up the West Fork to Camp Skyline and back to their home near DeSoto Falls. They soon became deeply involved with the Friends of Little River, a group that had formed in the late 1980s to protect the waters of Little River. It is largely because of Bill's efforts that Little River was awarded the status of an Outstanding National Resource Waterway, the nation's highest level of protection.

Bill and Sue enjoyed traveling in a travel trailer to visit family around the country, and hosting visitors at their home, where Bill put his chemistry background to work making homemade wine. He also had strong, largely self-taught, woodworking skills. He built a weaving loom for Sue, along other pieces of furniture. He and the late John Wilkinson built the standing shelves at



Bill Schwarz enjoyed helping Moon Lake students with science projects.



Moon Lake Community Library in the early 2000s. As his age progressed, he was still able to work on smaller pieces, such as boxes. "The last thing Bill completed was a jewelry box he'd made in October that he gave me a few weeks before he died," said Sue.

Just ten days before his passing, Bill was treated to a 90th birthday celebration in Mentone which was attended by his family and many of his friends from his days in Huntsville. He remarked to his family that it was great to be able to celebrate his life's journey surrounded by so many of his friends and family and to laugh at the stories and memories that

everyone shared. "If this is it, I'm going out with a bang!"

Bill Schwarz was preceded in death by his first wife, Patricia, his eldest daughter, Kathleen, and his sister, Dorothy. He is survived by his wife, Sue, his daughter, Janet, two stepdaughters, two step-granddaughters, a niece and nephew and five grandnieces and nephews "who he never failed to welcome with open arms and a big bear hug."

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Start the New Year with a First Day Hike in DeSoto State Park January 1, 2019 • 1 p.m.

On New Year's Day, January 1, 2019, join DeSoto State Park and JSU Field School staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure/hike along the West Fork of Little River on the rugged DeSoto Scout Trail. See historic Civilian Conservation Corps-built structures, waterfalls, and wonderful views of Little River. This hike will be roughly two miles total, with moderately strenuous terrain. Meet at the DeSoto State Park Country Store at 1 p.m. for pre-hike orientation.

First Day Hikes are staff-led hikes, held annually on New Year's Day throughout the country, and are designed to encourage visitors to enjoy 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!

The hike is free and open to everyone. No pre-registration is required. For details, call Brittney Hughes at 256-997-5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Bring plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately, according to seasonal temperatures/weather.

As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with DeSoto State Park before leaving home (256-845-0051). Please make every effort to arrive early or on time so that you do not hold up the group.

Christmas in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, 1962

by Mary Alice Stout

My mom bought a flute in 1933 for \$65. She wanted a trombone but she and her dad could not afford it. Mom was an excellent flute player. She won a scholarship to Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, but she and her parents could not afford the remainder of the money needed to go to school there. So, she paid her way to West Georgia College in Carrollton, GA, and then to the University of Georgia.

When I was in the second grade, Mom let me play with the mouthpiece of her flute. She later gave me lessons with the whole flute. When I was in the seventh and eighth grades, I played in an elementary school band and enjoyed it. Next, I played in my high school's band in Athens, TN. My second year of high school, we moved to Gatlinburg, TN. There were 33 students in my sophomore class. There was no band in this small school, so I began to play with the Methodist Church organist. We played a special sheet music for Christmas, called "When Shepherds Watch Their Flock by Night." The Episcopal organist heard that we were doing this special music and she asked me if I would play it with her at the midnight Christmas Eve service. Of course, I agreed.

Well, on Christmas Eve day the snow began to fall and fall and fall. Soon there was three feet of snow on the ground. I called to ask if the service would go on as scheduled, and learned that the service was ON. I lived about 1.5 miles from the church. I layered my clothes and wrapped my 30-year-old flute inside my coat. Off I went with a flashlight, music and flute. It was difficult to walk through the deep snow, but I arrived at the big red church door about ten minutes 'til midnight. I pulled the door open and saw the organist and the minister. No one else arrived. The three of us went on with the service and it's a Christmas Eve that I will never forget.

I went on to play in the Pride of the Southland marching band of the University of Tennessee. Today, I have dusted off that flute—now 85 years old—and have been playing hymns and special music at the Cloudland Presbyterian and Mount Calvary Baptist Churches.

And I'm still willing to hike through a deep snow to be able to play special music in a church for Christmas.



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SENIOR HEALTH

Open Medicare Enrollment

by Lynn Hixson

The enrollment period for Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage Plans started on October 15. If you have not yet enrolled and you want to make a change or see how your plan compares with the plans for 2019, please do so before December 8, 2018. The State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) is available to counsel you at the DeKalb County Council on Aging with this decision. It's important to be aware that you could still qualify for the Part D "extra help". You can apply for this service at the Council on Aging, where shopper guides for Medicare supplements are also available. If you need assistance, please call the Council on Aging at 256-845-0382 and make an appointment.



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3/4-ACRE located on Fire Tower Rd. just off Co. Rd. 89. Level to sloping with rock formations. Private road access. County water available. \$15,000. (1105646)



HIDDEN BROW. 5.1 acres of level, wooded East brow views of Shinbone Valley. Located in Cloudland, GA. Lightly restricted. \$125,000. (1102406)



LAKE WINDMILL ESTATE. 103 ft. on 13-acre lake on the brow. Wooded, sloped. Build your home here. Restricted. \$42,900. (1044127)

REDUCED



CANYON CABIN. 2 bdrm/1bth. Open living, kitchen, large covered porch. 5.1 acres of lush foliage and fauna. 2 creeks come together and make 2 cascading waterfalls. A great getaway! \$160,000. (1092904)



3.89 ACRES at Mtn River Estates. Hwy 117 frontage. Wooded, Rock formations, level along the river. Over 200 ft on Middle Fork of Little River. \$38,000. (1060565)



3.77 ACRES located at Canyon View Forest Subdivision. Wooded and joining the bluff of Little River National Preserve. \$60,000. (1013604)

PENDING



Oakwood Subdivision - 6.1 acres. Wooded, level, lightly restricted. \$31,000 **REDUCED** (1057247)



LEVEL WOODED LOTS in Crestline Park Subdivision in Mentone. Lot 25. 1.31 acres. Great area to build that getaway cabin in the woods. \$25,000 (1032494)



REDUCED

5 ACRES on the East Fork Little River. Driveway in place. Home-site cleared. Septic, power, well installed. 245ft on the water. Privacy a plus, lightly restricted. \$100,000 **REDUCED** (1080261)



1.8 ACRES on East Fork of Little River. Easy access to river from common trail that runs along the banks of the river. Bluff views. County water available. Gated community. \$65,000 (1063624)



REDUCED

LEVEL BUILDING LOT in downtown Menlo, GA. Great site for Residential or Commercial use. Non-restricted. Many possibilities! \$11,500 **REDUCED** (1062897)

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Sacred Harp Singing "School"

All are invited! by Susan Cheronos

You don't have to be "a singer" to enjoy singing. You can make a joyful noise, have fun, praise God and/or join a rousing historic tradition, all without perfect pitch, formal training or any special talent. There are no auditions, it doesn't cost anything, we don't practice and we don't perform. We meet around a "hollow square" where we sing "for each other and for God," and we have fun!

On Sunday, January 6, at 2 p.m., the annual "singing school" at Liberty Baptist Church (1500 Liberty Road, Henagar) will be held. All are welcome and loaner books will be available. At 5:30, there will be an actual singing—the monthly first Sunday evening singing, which will take place through March. From March through October, the monthly singing reverts back to the last Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Senior Center in Fort Payne.

During the afternoon, you will learn about our simple shaped note tradition, practice singing the Fa Sol La scale, experience the different modes of time, and sing a variety of songs. Have some snacks and then stick around for the evening singing and put it all into practice!

Singers the world 'round have found this unique tradition and venture to our fair county for several historic singings which have taken place annually for over 100 years.

Why have folks from all walks of life the world over found DeKalb County to be the singing capital?

Up on Sand Mountain and over here on Lookout, the electrifying tradition has been preserved by singing families in small churches who held on to this hymn book, and its a capella (no instruments!) style, published in 1844, when the rest of the world moved on to Gospel and then "praise" music.

Not only does this music look different and have a different tradition, but it also sounds different. Broad dispersed harmonies allow for robust singing in all the four parts. To hear a snippet, go to YouTube and type



Andy Ditzler, of Atlanta, leads a song.

in Sacred Harp. If you add the number "47" you'll pull up dozens of renditions of a haunting minor mode favorite, *Idumea*, that was featured in the movie *Cold Mountain* with Nicole Kidman. Many of the singers who sang on that soundtrack will be there for the singing school in the very room where the track was recorded to best obtain the authentic sound, which has not changed much since the Civil War.

Back before radio and television, folks got together to sing! Your grandparents probably knew this music and gathered with friends and neighbors to sing at church, at Courthouse singings, in the fields as they worked, and on the porch with the family at the end of the day.

Come co-create living history and enjoy a full-voice, soul-thrilling, tradition native to these parts.

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Welcome To Mentone



Stop in and see us at our log cabin office in the heart of Mentone. Porch sitters welcome!

..... LOTS and LAND

DESOTO FALLS AREA LAKE-FRONT LOT with approx. 94' frontage on the prime part of W Fork Little River, the truly navigable part where you can canoe, kayak or pontoon all the way to Mentone! So much natural beauty, so rarely available. \$155,000 (355152)

30 ACRES (+/-) IN MENTONE of mostly hardwood forest, some pasture land. Slight slope to offer a great elevation for future cabins, a farm, hunting cabin or whatever your Mentone dream dictates. \$105,000 (\$3,500 per acre)

OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE! 2 WOODED ACRES with a tiny little rustic one-room camping cabin (no plumbing, water or septic installed). Sort of a getaway or place to stay until you're ready to build your mountain home. Restricted. \$39,700 (1034503)

SOUTH COOL STREET brow-front property w/beautiful old stone chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. New survey. An original Mentone summer home once stood here; owned by the same family since early 1920s. Approx 0.45 acre lot in an area where properties are seldom available. Build your own memories! \$125,000 (1070474)

EASTERN LOOKOUT MTN'S EDGE, expansive views, gorgeous sunrises. 1-acre lot w/approx 120' brow frontage; paved road; public water. Driveway tile already in place. Just right for your mountain home or getaway. Lake on the Brow Subdivision allows for use of lakes in common areas. Only a mile or so from famed Little River Canyon Nat'l Preserve, Jacksonville Center & favorite swimming holes of Little River. Less than 15 minutes to Ft Payne. \$59,900 (1088539)



THREE FEATHERS RANCH was the name given this beautiful, 34-acre(+/-) Mentone property featuring a 3BR/2BA house with 2 bonus rooms and a bath in finished basement! Land is approx 1/2 woods & 1/2 pasture, fenced & cross-fenced; 2 small ponds; tractor shed; picturesque ranch entry way with gently-curving driveway leading to house. Satisfying views of pond & pasture from house's full front porch. Located about halfway between Mentone and Alpine area near DeSoto State Park. We've just listed this property, so we don't have a lot of photos (house is currently rented). But, we know it is definitely something to get excited about! Not many properties like this come on the market at Mentone. Priced at \$299,900. Call Charlotte for more info.



HMM. WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE? A cute little board-n-batten cabin. 1BR/1BA with loft bonus room. Great location between downtown Mentone & DeSoto State Park. Yes, it could use a bit of fixing up here & there. But, this cabin has an extra lot to sweeten the deal! Approx 1.8 acres in all, with great frontage on DeSoto Parkway. (Cabin is built on Rd 934, which is a quiet little road off the parkway). Cabin & 1-acre bonus lot priced at \$149,000. Call Charlotte for more info.



FROM BLAH TO BLISS! The best of the old was kept, now it is being updated with the best of the new! Mid-century Mentone cottage located on the Parkway. Renovations underway include: new metal roof, CHA, windows, granite countertops, fresh paint inside & out, new bath, stainless appliances, new electrical & plumbing throughout. It has the right location close in to Mentone. It has the appeal of vintage, except it's mostly all brand new! \$179,000. Call for info.



WOODLAND CABIN; 2BR/2BA, perfectly nestled into 3 wooded acres; away from it all, but within minutes of downtown Mentone. All wood interior w/vaulted ceilings; stunning fireplace; dining room w/stone fireplace. Gravel driveway including a large covered porch on the side, covered front porch & sweeping open decks. 10x20 det bld. New exterior paint & gutters. New internet & TV installed! \$170,000. (1083660)



ANTEBELLUM FARMHOUSE, built by one of the original Valley Head families, McGown, in the 1850s. Large front porch facing Lookout Mtn. Some of the rooms have been restored to original style and grace; other rooms have been redone with repurposed tin, wood, etc. to create a more eclectic style. High ceilings, original pine floors, fireplaces (non-working), architectural details aplenty inside & out. 4BR/4BA. Picturesque outbuilding believed to have been the cook house before a kitchen was put inside house. Small, one-car (or buggy) garage; stone "root cellar;" and a small chicken coop. There's still work to be done, but the price is right at only \$89,000 (1101135)



DEFINITELY NOT A TINY HOME! 3875 sq ft, bungalow-style home, w/1900+ sq ft basement. gives you space seldom found in Mentone. Ideal for family gatherings, retreats, possible B&B, multi-family home...well, whatever your inspiration can come up with! Pine floors throughout; wood ceilings accented by solid beams in spacious, open dining/kitchen. 6BR/2BA. Upgrades underway: new windows & exterior trim color change. \$260,000 (1104553)



"THE BURREN." Snuggled into intriguing rock formations, huge boulders & woods on 1.9 acres you'll find this 3BR/2.5BA mtn retreat, just off the DeSoto Pkwy. Metal roof; screened porch; wood-burning mtn stone fireplace; private back deck w/new hot tub; 2nd floor balconies. Large screened porch offers expanded living area outdoors. Active vacation rental with great rental history! \$185,000 (1087665)



SOMETIMES IT'S THE SMALL THINGS that make life good! And if you're looking for a personal retreat that could also be used as a rental, this could be the cabin for you! Combination of rustic & civilized elements: HW floor & mtn stone, WB fireplace in LR; spacious BR; galley kitchen; shower bath; CHA; lg laundry; new roof; updated ext paint; HUGE screen porch with hot tub; timber-frame pavilion that could be made into a studio or garage. \$129,000 (1104545)



FABULOUS VIEWS, FABULOUS NEW PRICE! And plenty of room to enjoy it all! Lovely frame & stone cottage on the brow at Mentone. Over 3000 sq ft; 3BR/4BA; lg bonus room for 4th BR, office, exercise or play room. Main-level Master Suite with wall of windows to enjoy the view. Huge kitchen is a dream for those who love to cook & entertain: granite counters, commercial gas cooktop, double wall ovens, wine cooler, disposal, compactor, gas fireplace, enormous pantry. Large dining room opens onto brow-side screen porch & decks. New wood floors & ceiling; new paint; new windows in MA BR & Living. Detached 3-car garage w/efficiency apartment & shop. Wrought-iron gated entry; circular, paved drive. Now \$389,900 (1084334)



Mentone Area Church Directory

Mentone, Alabama

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

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

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

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

Mentone United Methodist Church invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday our worship service is held at 9am and is led by Pastor Carol Gullatt. 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".

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church welcomes everyone to gather for the church's Christmastime services and events. The annual live nativity is set for Sunday, Dec. 9, from 4–4:30pm outside the church and will include Scripture and carols. A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will take place Monday, Dec. 24, at 5pm. On Sunday, Dec. 30, voices will join together for a special Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols, beginning at 10:30am. Come one, come all! 256-634-4476. 21145 Scenic Highway. stjosephmountain.dioala.org.

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

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

Hammondville, Alabama

The **Church of God 7th Day** invites you to Sabbath School

classes at 9:30am and Worship Service at 11am. Visitors are always welcome. Located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road. 256-717-5040.

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



Valley Head, Alabama

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

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

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

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, holds services in the Woodmen of the World Hall. All are invited to attend. Sabbath School and Song Service 9:30–10:45am, Worship Service 11am–12:15pm. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnel.

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

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

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

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

New Oregon United Methodist Church is located just off

DeSoto Parkway, 1/4 mile south of Fischer Crossroads. We invite you to worship with us on Sundays. Sunday School for all ages 9:45am, Traditional Worship 11am, and Sunday Evening Service 6pm. Sunday Evening youth meet at 5:30pm. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible studies for all ages, meal at 5:30pm and classes at 6:15pm. We also have Wednesday morning Bible study at 8:45am, and knitting every Tuesday at 9am. Pastor Ian Conerly. 1204 New Oregon Drive NE. 256-845-7446.

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

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

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

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

Cloudland, Georgia

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

Menlo, Georgia

Alpine Community Church Pastor and Rev. Rodney Blaylock welcome each and every one to worship service Sunday morning at 11am GA time; Sunday School 10am GA time; Wednesday night Bible Study 7pm GA time. 115 Hwy. 337. 706-862-6641.

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

Menlo Presbyterian Church (ECO) invites everyone to attend services with us. Sunday School at 10am (Eastern) and Worship Service at 11:15am (Eastern). 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; Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm. Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am; Morning Celebration 10:30am. Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue. 706-808-0909.

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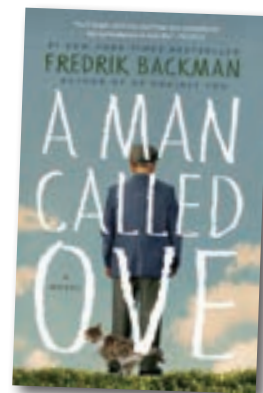
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by Kelly Leavitt

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"Learn to try something new...develop friendships...education"
"Meet new people...learn about new books...make new friends"



These are the comments from the participants of the Moon Lake Book Club's first meeting, when asked what they hoped to gain from being part of the group. There is a strong theme, no?! If any of these goals personally interest you as well, please join us on Saturday, January 19, at 10:30

a.m. for our third meeting. The book *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrick Backman will be discussed. A copy is available at the library for checking out. Enjoy reading an interesting book over the holidays, in preparation for gathering with other readers to meet new friends and to add to the discussion!

What's been happening at the library? A lot!

We'd like to welcome Anne McLeod to the board of Moon Lake Community Library. Anne is a retired children's librarian who has already brought a wealth of ideas and experience to our little library, and for this we are grateful.

Over the course of this year, we have added free wi-fi and the use of two laptop computers, thanks to a generous grant from MAPA. We installed two little libraries at DeSoto State Park and the Mentone post office, and they've been very well received. Our little libraries allow you to take any book that interests you—no need to return it! If you'd like to leave another book in return, please feel free, but know it's not necessary.

Complimentary coffee and comfortable seating have made the library a bit more welcoming. Patrons have checked out over 1,160 books and 1,120 DVDs this year. We've been busy culling our shelves of books that are no longer relevant or that haven't been checked out in many years, and we're looking forward to adding newer books to our collection.

Thanks to all who have donated books and who have bought books at our sales at the Rhododendron Festival, Colorfest, and the pop up sales at Mentone Farmers Market. Books are for sale during library hours—Saturdays 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays 3–5 p.m.

This year, to date, we have issued 88 new library cards. Library cards are free to everyone, with no geographic restrictions.

As a true community library, all of this is possible solely through donations and book sales. Your donations directly support our ability to keep the library open. The library's expenses include book and DVD purchases, utility bills, librarian's salary, catalog software, furnishings, and supplies. We now offer the ability to donate online. Please visit our web site at moonlakelibrary.org to donate and to see our online catalog.

We hope you will join us for our open house on Sunday, December 16! Everyone is welcome.

Kelly Leavitt is Mentone's community librarian.

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Nestled in the woods atop Lookout Mountain, near Mentone, Alabama, this quaint little chapel is surrounded by ferns, forest and flowers. The chapel is a scaled version of traditional Appalachian churches of days gone by. Stained glass windows filtering soft forest sunrays and soft organ music accent an ambience fitting the wedding ceremony. Inside, wooden pews will seat approximately 60 guests.

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"While Visions of Sugar-plums Danced in their Heads..." by Anne McLeod

After a lifetime of hearing this line from Clement Clarke Moore's poem, "A Visit from St. Nicholas," I'd not considered the sugar plum until I found some in a bakery case several years ago. Before this I'd mentally substituted gumdrops in this scene from the poem, but these sugar covered confections resembled date nut balls instead and gave no indication of how they might taste. In search of a few sweets for a small holiday get-together, I ordered up a mix of sugar plums and rum balls and headed off to the party.

"What ARE they?" my friends asked that evening. "I have no idea. I just had to try them."

There was sticky sweetness of fruit and bits of nuts laced with a spice whose name teased our memory before shifting into something less familiar. Yet even that elusive afternote evoked dancers, toy soldiers, mice, and children scrambling under mama's skirts. They were rolled in sanding sugar, but the sugar plum was different from contemporary confection, a mystery that, even after we tasted them, we could not tell you exactly what ingredients they were made from.

So I Googled it. And found enough recipes for sugar plums that I marveled we did not see them more frequently. The recipe I chose as my guidestar was by Alton Brown, whose snarky *Good Eats* television show offered plenty of details about how to make sugar plums—dried plums, figs, apricots, almonds, plus cardamom, anise, caraway, honey, and confectioner's sugar.

Then, a plot twist. According to candy historians (this is an actual career, something I also wished I'd learned earlier), these were not traditional sugar plums at all, but a 21st century variation. The original sugar plum contained no plums, only nuts or seeds, plus spices, surrounded by a candy coating, a sort of early Jordan almond. In recent years, new recipes added in dried fruit, creating the version I'd first enjoyed. I sensed that sugar plums were not going to break out and be the next big thing. Instead I saw them as filling a niche—a small market of people curious, like I was, about just what a sugar plum was.

But the next year, the bakery didn't carry them. I inquired. No one remembered them from the previous year. No idea where they came from.

The same the next year: plenty of lemon bars, shortbread, rum balls. No sugar plums. I inquired. No, no sugar plums this year. Had they carried them one year?

It was time to take action. I pulled Alton Brown's recipe back up, I went to the local health food store, and bought most of the ingredients. After racking up a bill of close to thirty dollars, I had a hypothesis about why they are rarely spotted in the wild.

Still, I was in. Librarians traffic in knowledge and it was my strong feeling that if we were going to talk about visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads, we

had better know exactly what that vision tasted like, even if it was a sort of postmodern sugar plum.

I prevailed upon family and friends to try them. Reviews were mixed: "NOT going to have visions of them dancing in my head." "They're ...okay." "Hey, that's different. Not bad at all. Can I have another one?" There were a few sugar plum aficionados out there, but they were a minority.

One was the uncle of one of the in-laws. He'd showed up at the family gathering that Christmas with his own tray of venison sausage, crackers, and cheese. I knew this because a couple of the women in the family had whispered to me that "He always brings that,"

adding a little side-eye that suggested they'd be better pleased if just one time he didn't bother.

But Uncle Mike happily tried my sugar plums and I reciprocated by showing genuine enthusiasm for his venison sausage. We each had seconds, and then thirds. By then others had noticed and were laughing about how Mike was into sugar plums now, while I insisted they were missing

something if they didn't try the venison. We were unlikely allies with little in common but a willingness to take a risk and try something new.

The holidays are here again, a season when families gather together to renew bonds and to rediscover their commonalities, even though sometimes these seem like uphill battles. So much of the news of the world underscores our differences, our divisions, how do we set those aside?

I choose to summon my better angels to accompany me through the season, in hopes that they will attract others of good will, even if we disagree on practically everything. At last month's Creative Spirit Market, I offered the Sugar Plum Challenge, an opportunity to try a sugar plum for \$1, and then to take my online poll: "PRO-Sugar plum (Visions of them will dance in my head); MEH; or ANTI-Sugar plum (This candy is the stuff of nightmares)."

The end result was overwhelmingly pro sugar plum, with two thirds of my 37 respondents claiming they enjoyed the candy, and the remainder split evenly between people who didn't care one way or the other and those who hated them.

It may be that people in Alabama are a lot more polite than my family and friends back in Georgia who sampled the original batches a few years ago. Another explanation is that by charging a dollar for a sample, I drew in people

who tended more toward risk taking and who were less likely to be turned off by the presence of caraway seeds in a candy. Either way, I met a lot of friendly folks, including some newcomers to the area, and sugar plums broke the ice for longer conversations in many cases. So, with that in mind, here's my own version of Alton Brown's version of the not-so-traditional-after-all sugar plum, in which dates are also added to the mix.

Sugar Plums

Ingredients

6 ounces slivered almonds, toasted
4 ounces dried plums
4 ounces dried apricots
2 ounces dried figs
2 ounces dried dates
1/4 cup confectioners' sugar
1/2 teaspoon anise seeds
1/4 teaspoon caraway seeds
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
Pinch of kosher salt
1/4 cup honey
1 cup coarse sugar

Steps

Put the almonds, plums, apricots and figs in the bowl of a food processor and pulse 20 to 25 times, until fruit and nuts are chopped into small pieces, but before the mixture becomes a ball.

Combine the confectioners' sugar, anise, caraway, cardamom and salt in a medium mixing bowl. Add the nut-and-fruit mixture and the honey and, using gloved hands, combine well.

Scoop the mixture into 1/4-ounce portions and roll into balls. If serving immediately, roll in coarse sugar and serve. If not serving immediately, put the balls on a cooling rack and leave uncovered until ready to serve. Roll in sugar just prior to serving. Sugarplums may be stored on the cooling rack for up to 1 week. After a week, store in an airtight container for up to 1 month or freeze.



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