



THE GROUNDHOG

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Volume 40, No. 2

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

February 2021

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Volunteers Help Provide Food Security by Kelly Leavitt

A group of local volunteers makes a big difference each week for residents of Mentone, Valley Head, and Hammondville who benefit from the Food Ministry of St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Church in downtown Mentone. Some of the volunteers are members of St. Joseph's, and others are not. What brings them together week after week, year after year, is an impulse to be of service and to be sure no one suffers from food insecurity.

The Food Pantry at St. Joseph's has grown out of a long history with the church's longstanding grocery cart ministry. Many years ago, Ann Chestnut, on behalf of the church's outreach ministry, established a relationship with the Food Bank of North Alabama (FBNA). This Huntsville-based agency secures donations of food from major retailers, transports it, secures and stores it, and then provides it at a greatly reduced cost to approved organizations.

Every other Monday, Jim and Joan Byrum and Ron and Marsha Merrell take turns travelling from Mentone



There are big smiles on these masked faces! Food Pantry Volunteers, L to R: Craig Sheldon, Ron Merrell, Burton Brockman, Jim Byrum, Marsha Merrell, Melanie Baugh, Elisabeth Sheldon.

About a dozen volunteers in total assist with the Food Pantry program.

to Huntsville to "shop" at the food bank and then delivering the food to the church's pantry. On Tuesdays, volunteers meet at the church to sort these items, in addition to other things which have been donated. Wednesday is pick-up day, when those who qualify for the FBNA program come to the church to pick up supplemental food for the week.

Usually (i.e., pre-COVID-19), they are able to come inside and "shop," choosing items based on their personal needs and desires. In response to the rise in coronavirus cases in March 2020, the Food Pantry implemented a drive-through distribution system to reduce personal contact between volunteers and shoppers. Boxes of food that are pre-packaged on Tuesday afternoons

are delivered by volunteers directly to the shoppers' cars. Volunteers wear protective masks and have access to hand sanitizer and wipes.

According to the U.S. Census, from November 25 to December 7 (including Thanksgiving), 2020, 27 million adults—13 percent of all adults in the country—reported their household sometimes or often didn't have enough to eat. Alabama's Department of Public Health claims that around 23 percent of children and 17 percent of adults in Alabama currently struggle with food insecurity.

As defined by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), food insecurity "means that households were, at times, unable to acquire adequate food for one or more household members because they had insufficient money and other resources for food." This is an economic condition, not to be confused with "hunger," which refers more to a physical or emotional state.

The USDA states that "food security means that 'people have access, at all

(continued on page 4)

MAPA Continues to Adapt to the Times

Rhododendron Festival Canceled . . . Golf Tournament Announced

For the second year in a row, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, MAPA's board of directors made the difficult decision to cancel the organization's Rhododendron Festival. The annual festival is held on the third weekend in May, which means volunteers are usually busy during the months of January through May. With the numbers of people affected by the virus still being high, the board decided it cannot ask community members to take any risks. The board's foremost concern is the public's health and safety, so once again MAPA will "pivot" and offer a spring charity golf tournament.

Colorfest, traditionally held on the third weekend of October, was also canceled last year. Since both festivals serve as MAPA's main fundraisers, the board organized a charity golf tournament on October 10 to supplant the funds lost by the cancellation of the festivals. Everyone had a great time, and it was so successful that the event actually raised more funds than had the previous Colorfest.

MAPA's event coordinator, Sharon Habin, is currently planning the second charity golf tournament, which will be held on Friday, April 23, at Lil Mole Golf Course in Mentone. (The rain date

is April 30.) A four-person scramble format will be followed. The registration fee, which includes green fee, shared 2-person cart, and lunch, is \$75/person or \$300/foursome team through April 8; \$85/person or \$340/foursome team after April 8. DeSoto Rescue Squad will once again serve lunch, allowing the squad to raise funds needed to continue offering its valuable services to the communities of Mentone, Valley Head, and Hammondville. Teams may begin signing up on February 4 at mapamentone.com/golf. Sponsorship information is available at mapamentone.com/sponsors. Space is limited, so it is advised to register early!



THE GROUNDHOG

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MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 38 years.

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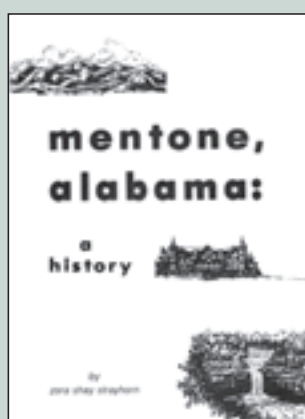
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Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice

Do you have a story idea?

We welcome contributions!

Email groundhognews@yahoo.com



**Learn about the
History of Mentone**

Zora Strayhorn's book,
*Mentone, Alabama: A
History*, is for sale at
Mentone Market.
\$15; proceeds benefit
MAPA.

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond

Representative Nathaniel Ledbetter and Senator Steve Livingston invited Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Director Kenneth Boswell to meet with local officials in DeKalb and Jackson counties. On January 7, Director Boswell came to Mentone, had lunch, viewed the route of the new sidewalk, and discussed possible future projects for Mentone. The town would like to thank Representative Ledbetter and Senator Livingston for bringing Director Boswell to Mentone!

Every public official at the local, state, and federal levels should make vaccine distribution the number one priority for the country. All of now know family and friends who have been very ill or have died in this pandemic. It is hitting close to home. Vaccines will save lives



and livelihoods. The roll out has been slower than expected. This should improve in the coming weeks and months. In the interim it is crucial to continue to wear masks, social distance, and wash hands.



Director Kenneth Boswell meets with Mayor Rob Hammond

MAPA's Spring Charity Golf Tournament

Friday, April 23 RAIN DATE APRIL 30
Lil' Mole Run • Mentone, Alabama

Tee Off 8 a.m. Central Time

\$300 Foursome • \$75 Person UNTIL 4/8
\$340 Foursome • \$85 Person AFTER 4/8
Includes 18 holes of golf | Cart | Lunch

**Four-person Scramble
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Space is limited, so register early!



Register at mapamentone.com/golf

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MAPA News by Mark Hoffman

As I am writing this, a misty cloud lingers and continues to envelope the mountain, filtering through the woods and laying a wet blanket over the ground. It's beautiful! Not sure if the flatlanders are getting so lucky today. Well, it's beautiful and wonderful if one is warm and dry in the house without the need or desire to venture out into the day, as is my current situation. That will not be the case, however, on Friday, April 23. I will be at

Lil Mole Run Golf Course assisting Sharon Habin (our event organizer extraordinaire) and my fellow MAPA board members in our efforts to make our upcoming Spring Charity Golf Tournament a success, and as much fun for all of the participating golfers as possible. One of those could be you. Please set the date aside and put together a team and come out and play. Details and how to register can be found in the article on page 1 of this issue. Let's hope that the

misty clouds now surrounding me decide to move elsewhere on that day—an abundance of sunshine is welcome!

Thanks in advance for your support. If not sooner, I'll see you at the course. Meanwhile, let's try and keep it in the short grass in our daily lives. Be safe and healthy. *Mark Hoffman is the president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.*

**The following letter was sent to the members of MAPA in January 2020.
If you are interested in supporting MAPA through membership or donation, please visit mapamentone.com**

Dear MAPA Member,
On behalf of the board of directors of the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA), I hope this finds you well. As you are aware, 2020 was an extraordinary year. Our annual membership meeting and other MAPA activities were canceled in order to protect as many people as possible during the current pandemic. The purpose of this letter is to keep you apprised of the board's activities as we determined how to navigate through the pandemic, and to let you know how we are preparing for the coming year.

January was a time of analysis of 2019's Colorfest. We reviewed all aspects of the festival and began preparing for May's Rhododendron Festival. Preparation involves inviting festival artists and vendors to submit applications, sorting out problems from the last festival and correcting them, finding new sponsors and contacting past sponsors, securing volunteers from the community, finding reliable and cost-effective shuttle transportation, and planning advertising and promotion. This is only a small part of the work done behind the scenes before a festival can take place. It is a process that takes months of dedicated work.

In February, everyone became very aware of the seriousness of Covid-19 and MAPA made the painful decision to cancel the Rhododendron Festival. Event organizer Sharon Habin had been in close contact with public health officials as she monitored the contagiousness of the virus. When the spread worsened and the means of spreading the virus became more clear, it was obvious that the festival had the potential to be a superspreader event, especially because we must rely on shuttle transportation. The board takes the well-being of everyone seriously and even one person contracting Covid-19 by attending the Rhododendron Festival would be too many. We still had hopes for holding Colorfest in October.

One of MAPA's main activities is providing financial grants to local organizations in need. In order to be able to fund these grants, we rely on membership fees, fundraising events, and advertising revenue from *The Groundhog*, a MAPA publication. Due to the financial uncertainty created by canceling the Rhododendron Festival, in March the board tabled pending grant applications. However, two small grants to Ryleigh's Closet and the DeSoto Rescue Squad were approved earlier in the year. We will continue to hold the pending grant applications until we know how 2021 will look financially.

The MAPA board did not meet during April or May but resumed meeting in June, gathering at Mentone's Brow Park so we could maintain social distancing. At that meeting, the board realized the virus was not abating and voted to cancel Colorfest. It was suggested that a golf tournament at Lil Mole Run could be a fundraising solution and a committee was

formed to pursue that possibility. August, September, and October were spent planning the tournament, with the enthusiastic cooperation of the owners of Lil Mole Run. The outdoor venue and natural social distancing allowed the event to be held safely. Additionally, all participants were offered masks customized with MAPA's logo.

We were delighted that the tournament raised more money than the last Colorfest. We added over \$5,000 to our bank account! There was such a great response that MAPA is planning two golf tournaments in 2021. In addition, we were delighted to receive a \$2,000 grant in December from the DeKalb County Development Commission. That and the golf tournament response really improved our financial outlook for the future.

The Rhododendron Festival will not take place this May due to the continuing pandemic. The Miss Rhododendron Pageant, however, will be held, following the same online Zoom format we used in 2020. The continuation of the pageant means that one young woman ("Miss Rhododendron") will receive a full-year scholarship to Northeast Alabama Community College. To submit an application, look for announcements soon on the MAPA website—mapamentone.com—and in upcoming issues of *The Groundhog*. A decision about holding Colorfest will be made later in the year, as more becomes known about progress against the virus. We have high hopes.

Currently, we are in the process of developing a completely new website for the community. The website will keep residents and visitors aware of anything that pertains to Mentone and the surrounding areas. For example, there will be links to interesting historical sites, restaurants, lodging, churches, shopping and things to do. Along with *The Groundhog* and other established resources, this new website should keep everyone "in the know."

We would like to assure you that publication of *The Groundhog* will continue. We were able to keep going through the early days of the virus through the innovative efforts of our editor, Kelly Leavitt, and the support of our small businesses. In April, during the

earliest phase of the pandemic, *The Groundhog* was published online only. Once in print again, delivery to our distribution points was handled with caution.

Small businesses—our advertisers—were and still are having their own difficulties because of Covid-19. In the months of April and May, many advertisers received deep discounts on their ads in order to assist them in their cash flow. We will continue to publish the paper by working with our advertisers and being sensitive to their needs. We believe in the worth of *The Groundhog*, as it provides not only news about the community but also brightness in this less-than-bright time.

If you receive your copy of the paper in the mail, check your label for the expiration date of your subscription. The form to renew is in the paper itself, or you may renew online at mapamentone.com. We do not want you to miss any editions of this paper.

The MAPA board of directors works for you. We honor our purpose of "the preservation and protection of the heritage, natural environment, and other unique qualities of life in the area of Mentone, Alabama." We welcome any input from our members. We hope to hold our annual member meeting in 2021. Some board positions will be up for election. If you are interested in serving on our board of directors, please let us know. We will announce the meeting once it is safe to gather in groups again.

In closing, please know that we are largely able to continue serving the Mentone community because of the support of our members. If you did not renew your membership in 2020, we invite you to do so now. MAPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, so memberships are tax-deductible. Additionally, MAPA greatly appreciates any donations you may give that are over and above the membership fees. Any additional funds will allow MAPA to continue to serve despite any decrease in revenue that will occur from cancellation of the festivals. To renew your membership, visit mapamentone.com/membership.

Feel free to contact us at mapamentone@gmail.com if you have suggestions or concerns. We wish you a healthy 2021 and much happiness.



Teri and Dick Taylor

MAPA extends condolences and appreciation to the family and friends of Dickerson Taylor of Armuchee, GA, who passed away on December 27, 2020 from Covid. His wife, Teri, said, "One of Dick's favorite places on earth was DeSoto Falls. His parents owned the cabin up from the well-known red boat house near the falls. We spent many times riding to Mentone. We often came up there for dinner. Our favorite place was Craigmere Manor. Dick would often ride his Goldwing there if he had a few extra hours. We were fortunate enough to stay twice at Mrs. Christina Wise's B&B with an amazing view of the falls and of course the red boat house! My son and daughter and I thought of all the places we could suggest for memorials, we chose the Mentone Area Preservation Association." As a result, many generous financial donations have recently been received in Mr. Taylor's memory. We are grateful.

Helping Neighbors

(continued from page 1)

times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. At a minimum, this includes: 1) readily available, nutritionally adequate, and safe foods and 2) assured ability to acquire personally acceptable foods in a socially acceptable way.”

It is because of the commitment by those who are able to help that our neighbors may feel “food secure.” In the first quarter of 2020, the pantry served an average of 35 households per week. By the end of the fourth quarter of 2020, the average was 47 households per week.

In spite of the stresses associated with COVID-19, the Food Pantry at

St. Joseph’s has continued to open every Wednesday, distributing a variety of foods, toilet paper, pet food, and often coffee. During the days in 2020 when toilet paper became scarce, Father Bill Winters, rector of St. Joseph’s, issued a call for “TP” in his weekly email, and St. Joseph’s family and friends responded. Shoppers at the pantry now receive at least one roll of toilet paper each week.

The pantry is not allowed to spend use its food budget on pet food, but, again, thanks to donations of pet food and cash to buy food by animal lovers such as Katie Bird and Wil Henry Cobble, it is available each week. “Pet food would arrive at the church, as if by magic,” said Food Pantry Chairman

Jim Byrum. “The same thing happened with toilet paper.”

According to the St. Joseph’s Food Ministry annual report for 2020, Riverview Camp for Girls donated several large boxes of individual-size bottles of hand sanitizer, so for several weeks each shopper received a bottle in their food box. Moon Lake Baptist Church made several food donations, as well as a \$100 donation. Mentone United Methodist Church continued their monthly \$200 donations (divided between the Food Pantry and the Snack in a Backpack program). Cove Road Baptist Church continued to send their \$50 monthly gift. Food donations were made by Camp DeSoto and Camp Laney.

In mid-March, when schools in DeKalb County closed in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, students at Moon Lake Elementary and Valley Head Elementary were left without the meal they would have received during the school day. St. Joseph’s partnered with the Mentone Community Church and others in the community to provide a daily meal for all students in the area from March through the first of June.

In May, Joan Byrum and St. Joseph’s parish administrator Melinda Baugh prepared and submitted a grant application to the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama requesting funds to purchase fresh produce from local farmers. In June, the application was approved and St. Joseph’s received \$2,450. From June through September, fresh locally grown produce was purchased from The Farm at Windy Hill, Mountain Sun Farm, Jones Farm, and Phillips Farm and Garden.

The pantry’s largest food donation in 2020 came from a volunteer with the City of Refuge in Dalton, GA. St. Joseph’s parishioners Pattie and Warren Coppedge were contacted by Tim Costlow, a City of Refuge volunteer, who wanted to donate several pounds of dried black beans—2,150 pounds of beans. (Yes, that’s over a ton of beans.) Father Bill has since delivered 1,000 pounds of black beans to Episcopal



Craig Sheldon and Burton Brockman prepare food boxes for distribution

churches all over northeast Alabama and the beans have been (and will continue to be) a part of the food boxes well into 2021.

In September, a local trucker whose mother is a food pantry shopper arranged a donation of about 700 loaves of sour dough bread. One of the pantry’s shoppers has contacts with a Sand Mountain chicken hatchery and was able to secure close to 200 dozen eggs during the year. The pantry continued to receive produce, baked goods, and packaged foods from the Upper Sand Mountain Parish in Sylvania, a partnership generated by Jan Newhoff. The DeKalb County Sheriff’s office shared corn, tomatoes, squash, and other produce from the county jail’s garden.

The DeKalb County Council on Aging made 25-pound boxes of food available at no charge to residents of Mentone, Valley Head, and Hammondville. St. Joseph’s served as a distribution site for several of these deliveries. The largest distribution occurred on September 17, when volunteers from St. Joseph’s and Valley Head distributed 210 of those boxes, which were provided through a USDA COVID-relief grant.

(continued on page 5)

Snack in a Backpack Program

The Snack in a Backpack program, coordinated by volunteer Liz Baker, ensures that all students at Moon Lake School have access to food during the weekend. The school determines who is most in need and distributes the food each Friday. Two small meals are included (usually canned food such as spaghetti), along with two servings of fruit and juice, shelf-stable milk or pudding, two small boxes of cereal or fruit and grain bars, and a sweet treat.

From January through mid-March, 2020, 13–14 students were served weekly. 135 snack packs were given out until schools were closed early due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the current school year, 10–13 students have been served weekly, excluding the weeks when schools have been closed for remote learning). Between 8/14 and 12/15, 2020, 189 snack packs were delivered by volunteers Buddy Cole, Kat Griffith, and Liz Baker. The average cost per snack pack is \$4–5.

If you would like to financially donate to this program, contact Melinda Baugh at 256-634-4476 or email stjom@centurytel.net.

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Helping Neighbors

(continued from page 4)

"Since we've moved outside, we've had several folks stop by to ask what we were doing or what we were 'selling,'" said Jim Byrum. "After explaining, some would leave a cash gift and a 'God bless you.' One elderly gentleman stopped by regularly for about a month and would leave a \$10 donation on each visit. During the summer, The Farm at Windy Hill brought flowers, which everyone enjoyed. Even some of our male shoppers seemed to enjoy them but might not admit it."

St. Joseph's donates \$2,000 from the church's annual budget. Members of the church and other donors give cash funds through the year that is delegated to the food ministry budget.

Additionally, in January, 2020 a monthly program has been added this year providing monthly grocery boxes, juices, and cheese through a USDA program and facilitated by the council on aging. These boxes are provided to clients in need as determined by financial eligibility. Currently we are distributing 25 boxes a month. We hope to see our allotment increase in the new year. J.D. Trammell has been



instrumental in the monthly transport of these large food boxes, along with assisting in other county-based food programs.

The year ended with the St. Joseph's Episcopal Church Women (ECW) purchasing hams and preparing gift bags and Christmas stockings for every household served by the Food Pantry. Gift cards to Bruce's Foodland were also provided to each household. Father Bill added candy canes to each stocking and promoted a campaign to add gloves and socks to the stockings.

The St. Joseph's Food Pantry would not be possible without the dedicated

volunteers who work without complaint to prepare and distribute food boxes, pick up food from Huntsville and Sylvania, stock the shelves, bag up pet food or potatoes, break down and recycle boxes, and do whatever else has been needed to make the program successful. "Although the year has not gone as we would have liked it has been a rewarding and positive year in many respects," said Jim Byrum. "Thanks to all of our volunteers, Father Bill, and Melinda, the church secretary, St. Joseph's Food Pantry was able to assist families during a very unusual year when the need was greatest."

Food recipients are determined by eligibility in a variety of ways. Those who prove eligibility to receive support from the Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF, formerly AFDC), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or income at or below 130% of the poverty level as determined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human

FREE Food Distribution

- 500 boxes of free food will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis
- Wednesday, February 3 10:30 am – 1:30 pm, while supplies last
- VFW, 151 18th Street NE Fort Payne
- DeKalb County adults are eligible. You will need to provide your name and address.

Services (HHS), or those who have special circumstances (fire, flood, illness, injury, etc.) can contact Melinda Baugh at 256-634-4476 or email stjom@centurytel.net.

If you would like to volunteer or donate to St. Joseph's Food Ministry, contact Melinda at the above phone number or email. Single servings of non-perishable items such as meat, vegetables, soups, fruits, and beans are especially welcome.



Storage restrictions for the Food Pantry and Meals on Wheels have been alleviated with the addition of a new freezers acquired by the DeKalb County Council on Aging for both their facility and St. Joseph's.

Pictured is one of the food pantry's coordinators, Joan Byrum.

Meals on Wheels Program

The Meals on Wheels program is coordinated by the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) and the DeKalb County Council on Aging. It provides a weekly box of frozen meals and fresh milk to area seniors who are unable to prepare meals due to health, mobility, and financial restrictions. Volunteer Domenic Fulginiti coordinates pickup and delivery to the seniors in our area who are unable to prepare meals for themselves or make the trip to the senior center in Ft. Payne. Father Bill Winters makes regular donations to the Council on Aging from St. Joseph's discretionary fund to assist with the cost of the program. This is a valuable program for our area's seniors, many of whom are on a very tight budget.

In 2020, the total number of clients fluctuated between 14 and 22 clients. The Meals on Wheels program currently serves 18 elderly clients in our community. This includes 14 frozen meals and four shelf-stable meals per week. Currently, four frozen meals are delivered directly, four frozen meals are dropped off at town hall for pickup, and the remaining six frozen meals and four shelf stable meals are stored in the St. Joseph's Food Bank room for distribution at the Wednesday Food Pantry pick-up. Additional shelf stable meals have been provided for frozen meal clients as part of pandemic relief. A moratorium has been placed on the limitations of the number of clients the program is able to serve during the pandemic.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

EFSP is a federally funded program that provides assistance with emergency needs for food and shelter. This includes utilities, such as metered electric, water, and propane gas. Residents of M VH and H who need assistance with utilities and also meet the eligibility requirements for the Food Pantry may contact Melinda Baugh at 256-634-4476 for more information. This program is administered in DeKalb County by the Community Action Agency of Northeast Alabama.

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MOUNTAIN HERBALIST: Peace, Love and Partridge Berry

by L.C. Moon

Winter is a time of stillness, peace and quiet atop Lookout Mountain. The symphonies of the insects and frogs are silenced. Often the only sounds you hear outdoors in the winter are from the wind, such as a gentle breeze, branches dancing in the wind and swaying up against one another, or the wind whistling or whipping about. The echo of the train in the valley, a cow mooing in a nearby pasture, a dog barking, songs of the birds, the call of an owl or the howl of coyotes sound sharper and more crisp in the mountain winter air. The scenery also shifts to take on a new beauty in the winter, allowing the rocks, evergreens, and mosses a season to shine along with the meandering streams, waterfalls, and the Little River.

I took a walk this winter on the DeSoto Scout Trail (DST) leading toward Moon Rock to admire the scenery and see what I might discover. On the journey, I was delighted to see red berries still waiting to be plucked from the evergreen vine commonly known as squaw vine or partridge berry.

Birds are big fans of the berry. It is said the name “partridge berry” was given to the vine as a result of the partridge bird being especially fond of the fruit. I am also a fan of plucking the berries here and there as I walk through the woods. The berries often are flavorless, though every now and then I get one that is a little less mealy than the rest and has just a hint of sweetness.

So why would I eat a berry without much flavor? One reason I eat them is because of the novelty that I know I can. It still makes me feel like a child like when I forage food and medicine. The other reason I eat them is because I am ingesting a very clean fresh food that has some nutrient content and is also medicinal. If I really want to get the full medicinal benefits I also harvest the vine



How to Identify Partridge Berry

Lookout Mountain’s native partridge berry or squaw vine—*Mitchella repens*—has deep green simple leaves shaped kind of like a mouse ear. There is a thin white/pale yellow line down the center of the leaves. The leaves grow opposite each other. The vine is creeping but it is not a climber. It blooms a pair of small fragrant 4-petal, white to pinkish tubular flowers in late spring to early summer. The pair of flowers are fused and both must be pollinated by insects in order to create one single red berry. The berries are unique in appearance because they have two flower scars on the skin of the berry. *Note there is another plant with the common name of partridge berry/American wintergreen—*Gaultheria procumbens*. As far as appearance, the main things the two partridge berry plants have in common are deep green evergreen leaves and red berries that can last through the winter. *Gaultheria procumbens* have more elongated leaves, bell-shaped flowers and are very distinctive because of the wintergreen smell of the leaves and berries.

and leaves in order to make tea or an extract.

Squaw vine is the other common name for partridge berry. Some Native American languages used the word squaw—or squa—to mean woman or wife. Hence the name squaw vine because the vine, leaf and berries are known to have many beneficial uses for women, particularly during the years of menstruation. The plant is known to be helpful when used in combination with red raspberry leaf during the last 4–8 weeks of pregnancy. It has been used as a feminine tonic and for many female health issues including heavy, irregular menses and infertility. Women who have also reported some relief from hot flashes by drinking the tea and/or using the extract.

I refer to the plant as squaw vine one minute and partridge berry the next, often depending on whether I am referring to it as food or tonic/medicine. I used it as a tonic during the end of my pregnancy, though I never tried it on a regular basis for any other female complaints. Historically, the vine, leaves and berries have also been used for purposes such as rheumatic pain, dysentery, diarrhea and as a diuretic. There are other natural remedies more effective for these conditions, so it is rarely used for these presently.

My inspiration to study native botanicals has come from a great respect for the miraculousness of our relationship to nature and how it can help heal humanity’s mind, body, and soul. Venturing through the forest with openness and curiosity is invigorating and peaceful for me. Whether I am walking man-made trails, deer trails, or off the beaten path, there are always new things to learn and discover when I quiet my mind and slow down my pace. I hope you find many moments to have nature soothe you with its peace or teach you in its own subtle way.

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SPACIOUS CABIN HOME ON 3.31 ACRES. w/winding, private drive. 3BR/2.5BA, 2500 sq ft, one-owner home features a welcoming front porch & a deep, oversized back porch. Entertainment area, dining room, kitchen, living room, w/wood floors. Property includes a well-equipped workshop/garage; large pole barn for firewood with attached chicken coop; combination cleared/wooded land. \$262,000 (1128526)



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE WOW FACTOR! From the wrought-iron, fenced entry, to its panoramic views from over 350' of brow frontage, this 4.2-acre property has plenty of everything to WOW you. Spacious, cedar-sided cabin w/4BR/3BA; rich wood floors; great kitchen; generous back deck; walk-out basement w/views & great potential. Attached 2-car garage; detached 34x39 workshop (perhaps a future guest quarters or event building?) Half the property is fenced, & includes intriguing boulder-surrounded pond w/ waterfall; fruit trees; so much more, & every feature keeps leading your eyes back to that magnificent view! \$695,000. (1155122)



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

LOTS and LAND

46 ACRES, BARN, PONDS & fencing. Lookout Mtn acreage, ready for whatever dream you have been considering. Privacy, peace & quiet await. Convenient to Little River Nat'l Preserve, Fort Payne, DeSoto State Park, Mentone. \$220,000 (1155213)

45 ACRES WITH POND. Turn this farm into a dream home! Currently an active cattle farm, this lovely property has the elements for a new life. It's a beautiful country-side property, close to DeSoto Park - Mentone - Fort Payne orbit that is waiting for someone to make it shine. \$160,000 (1155481)

MENTONE. PLENTY OF ROOM TO ROAM! Enjoy 18.2, unrestricted, wooded acres of your very own, just minutes from downtown Mentone. Substantial, paved, county road frontage. Priced very agreeably at only \$85,000! (1152988)

22 ACRES WITH LOG CABIN. Compact, 1BR/1BA cabin is BIG on the possibilities it offers! Detached 2-car garage & small storage building; gorgeous land (1/2 wooded, 1/2 field); plenty of room for expansion! The cabin is beautifully simple in construction, yet could possibly be one of the best built, low-maintenance cabins you will find. All wood interior, practically-new appliances. \$250,000 (1154959)

BUILD AND BE IN DOWNTOWN MENTONE! One parcel, divided by survey into 2 buildable lots, each with a place. Nice lot, hard work, but a little here, a little there on the property. Cutler Avenue near the Wildflower Cafe. Listing agent is owner & seller. 0.8 acres total. \$50,000. (1107996)



WELL-MAINTAINED CABIN IN NORTHBEND, on 3 mostly-wooded acres. Durable, fiber cement lapboard siding exterior. 3BR/3BA; bonus loft area; studio space; large kitchen; sunroom; one bedroom; one bathroom; new interior paint; new HVAC; new main level; new appliances. Small workshop. Less than a mile from Brow Park/Mentone, yet very private. Includes most furnishings & 1-yr Home Warranty. \$245,000 (1156411)



BROW-FRONT GETAWAY CABIN. A straightforward, solid, little, one-level, one-owner cabin located along the DeSoto Pkwy. All-wood interior features a huge stone fireplace, a large kitchen, a sunroom, a bedroom, a bathroom, a shower, a linen closet. Select cut glass create the view you want. 2-car garage could be converted into guest quarters. Great rental potential! \$299,900 (1148480)



TRULY THE HEART OF MENTONE: the Hitching Post, rich with history & even a bit of mystery! Steeped with charm & interesting nooks, this building has potential to be most anything! Plenty of space for office/retail w/covered, stone-floored entryway. This is THE corner on the market...literally! But, there is also that magnificent, light-filled space upstairs (approx 2800 sq ft) for a studio or booths. Generous parking. \$350,000 (1143518)



THE YELLOW DELI, LOG CABIN DELI, MOONLIGHT BISTRO, GREEN LEAF GRILL... There have been some great memories made in this cool, old stone log cabin. The building is perfect for a business. Tuesday through Saturday, this place could be most any kind of business. Come & sit on the front porch, nestle up to the wood-burning fireplace inside, take in the hand-hewn beams, & dare to dream. \$159,500 (1145258)



PERFECTLY SUITED TO LAKEFRONT LIVING, for rentals or both! This property offers possibilities for a main residence or for a vacation home. 3BR/2BA, approx 2000 sq ft; new, spacious main level; new kitchen; new bathroom; new flooring; new paint; new appliances. Also conducive to relaxation and gatherings. Was not on market. Private sale. \$450,000



SENSITIVELY RESTORED classic Mentone home, re-born with the perfect combination of old farmhouse and cottage style. 3BR/2BA, approx 2000 sq ft; new, spacious main level; new kitchen; new bathroom; new flooring; new paint; new appliances. Also conducive to relaxation and gatherings. Was not on market. Private sale. \$275,000.



LAKEFRONT CABIN. Just the right size, just the right details, just the right price, and just the right time for you to make it your own! One-owner cabin features 2BR/2BA; all wood interior w/vaulted ceilings, beautiful beams, interesting nooks for collections, stone fireplace, granite kitchen w/nice built-ins & pull-outs in the cabinetry; large 2-car garage/workshop w/attic storage; upper & lower decks with views of lake; under-house storage room; 150' frontage; small dock & owner will even throw in the aluminum boat! Located in Lake on the Brow, offering 2 lakes on which to fish, kayak, swim, boat (no gas motors) or relax by the water. \$259,900 (1773282)



Happy Valentine's Day!



Veterans Honored at Bankhead Cemetery



Above, L to R: Linda Jones (HWA member), Scott Azbell (Retired Air Force), Marian Doss (HWA chapter Regent).

At left, L to R: Fort Payne High School Colorguard and Scott Azbell, Retired Air Force

The Hannah White Arnett Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3128 participated in the National Wreaths Across America Day on December 19, 2020, at Bankhead Cemetery to honor veterans with the laying of wreaths. Mayor Rob Hammond was in attendance, as well as veterans, guests, and Hannah White Arnett members.

Mentone's American Legion Post Seeks New Members

by Dorma Hutcheson

The American Legion is the nation's largest wartime veteran's service organization. Mentone Post #215 was founded by returning local World War II veterans. It was chartered in 1946. The Post advocates patriotism and honor, sponsors programs for the youth, promotes national security, and supports fellow service members and veterans. You probably see the American flags they place in local cemeteries on Decoration Days to honor deceased veterans. The Post also hosts a Veteran's Day dinner to celebrate our neighbors who have proudly defended our country.

Commander John O'Rear and Adjutant Hobson Kirby recently shared some of the history of the Mentone

Post membership and building located at 195 Cove Road. They noted that the Post has lost several members over the past few years and they need new members. Anyone who served active duty in the US Armed Forces and is honorably discharged or still serving is eligible for membership. The Mentone area has many veterans of more recent conflicts and the community Post needs their support. The monthly meetings are the third Tuesday at 6:30 pm. The next meeting is February 16. If you have questions, please call Hobson Kirby at 256-634-4446.



A recent raffle raised \$1000 for the Post and \$1000 for the winner, Ann Killian. Her husband, George Killian, is shown accepting the prize.

It's Easy to Join St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain's Virtual Services

St. Joseph's live streams the following services, and all are invited to join!

Sunday Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday Noonday Prayer 12 p.m.
Thursday Compline 8 p.m.

Visit our website at stjom.dioala.org to join the Live Stream.

Don't have internet access or have a question about how to join?
Feel free to call the church office for alternative instructions: 256-634-4476.



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FOOD FOR FRONTLINE FAMILIES

Over the past year, hospital workers across the world have risked their personal safety to tend to COVID-19 patients, often communicating with patients’ families who cannot be with their loved ones, and sometimes having to say goodbye to the patients they could not save. Even though they’re on the “frontline” of the crisis, they are often in the background of the public’s minds. In January, a call was put out in the “Mentone Neighbor to Neighbor” Facebook group inviting folks to make casseroles which could be delivered to workers at DeKalb Regional Medical Center. Nurse Angela Hadley of Mentone arranged times to pick up individual casseroles and then delivered them to the hospital.

“They were received with great appreciation,” said Angela. “It means the world to them to know that after a long and stressful shift, they have a meal to simply put in the oven when they get home. Many have families with small children, so this really makes a difference in their lives.” Thanks to everyone who has contributed. Following are some of the recipes that were used.

Maple Brown Sugar French Toast Bake
submitted by Kerry Breithaupt

1 loaf of crusty french bread, torn into bite-size pieces
8 eggs
2 cups whole milk
1/4 cup packed light brown sugar
1/4 cup maple syrup
1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
1-1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg

TOPPING:
1/4 cup cold butter, cut into small dice
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
1/4 cup flour
1/2 tsp salt
confectioners’ sugar for dusting

Fill a lightly greased casserole dish with the bread pieces, extending just beyond the top of the pan. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, brown sugar, vanilla extract, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Pour the egg mixture over the top of the bread and cover. Place the casserole in the refrigerator overnight or until the bread soaks up all of the creamy egg mixture (at least 2 hours). When the casserole is ready to bake, remove it from the fridge and allow it to come up to room temperature a bit as you preheat the oven to 350°F. Make the casserole topping by combining the butter, brown sugar, flour and salt in a small bowl. Use a fork or your hands to break up the butter into even smaller pieces, until the mixture is the consistency of coarse sand. Spread the topping evenly over the casserole and bake for 35 minutes, or until the center is set. Dust the baked french toast with confectioners’ sugar and serve with extra maple syrup on the side!

Beefy King Ranch Bubble Up
submitted by Cat Finley

1 lb ground beef
1 (1-oz) package taco seasoning
2/3-cup water
1 (10.75-oz) can cream of chicken Soup
1 (10-oz) can Rotel diced tomatoes with green chilies
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp onion powder
8-oz Velveeta cheese, cubed
1 (12-oz) can Pillsbury Grands Jr. Biscuits (10-count)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9" x 13" pan with cooking spray. Set aside. In a large skillet, cook ground beef until no longer pink. Drain fat and return to skillet. Add taco seasoning and water. Simmer 5 minutes. Stir in soup, Rotel tomatoes, garlic and onion powder. Add Velveeta cheese, cooking until melted. Remove from heat. Cut biscuits into quarters. Stir into beef and cheese mixture. Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 30 minutes. Top with favorite taco toppings, if desired.

Spaghetti Casserole
submitted by Cynthia Stinson

1 – 16 oz. package spaghetti noodles
2 lb. ground beef
1/4 cup sliced mushroom
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup diced bell pepper
2 26 oz. cans meatless spaghetti sauce
1 16-oz. fat-free sour cream
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F. Boil spaghetti for 8-10 minutes; drain. Brown beef, mushroom, onion, and pepper in a large skillet; drain fat. Stir in spaghetti sauce, sour cream and 1 cup mozzarella. Mix with pasta. Put in 9" x 13" dish and top with Parmesan and remaining mozzarella cheese. Cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes until hot and bubbly.

Town House Chicken Casserole
submitted by Donna Hedgespeth

Roughly-cut carrots, onions, celery as desired to season chicken
Salt and pepper
4 or 5 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
1 box Town House crackers, crushed
8 oz. sour cream
1 can of cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 can sliced water chestnuts, drained
1 stick butter, melted

Boil chicken 15-20 minutes with chopped veggies, salt and pepper. (Safest practice is to check internal temperature of chicken to 165 degrees.) Cool, drain, and shred chicken. Mix melted butter with cracker crumbs. Place half the cracker mixture into large baking dish (approx. 13 x 9). Press into the dish to line the bottom. In a medium mixing bowl, mix the soups and sour cream. Place a layer of half the shredded chicken over the cracker mixture. Over the chicken, dab half the soup mixture and spread. Sprinkle with water chestnuts. Repeat layers of chicken and soup mixture and top with the rest of the cracker mixture. Bake at 350 for 30-40 minutes, until cracker mixture is golden brown.

Super Easy Chicken Casserole
submitted by Sarah Morgan

2 chicken breasts, shredded or chopped (I cook mine in an instant pot)
8 oz sour cream
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 can cream of chicken soup
2 sleeves Ritz crackers
1 stick of butter

Combine chicken, sour cream, & soup in a bowl. Crush up crackers (I put mine in a big ziplock bag). Melt stick of butter and stir into crackers (I use a big bowl). Put half cracker/butter mix in the bottom of a medium-sized pan. Spread chicken mixture evenly on top. Add the rest of the cracker mixture on top. Bake uncovered @ 350°F for approximately 25 minutes or until top is golden brown.

Sausage, Pepper & Rice Skillet
submitted by Megan Halderman (slightly adapted from Life Made Simple)

1-1/4 cup white rice, uncooked
2 tsp olive oil
12 oz package smoked sausage
1 red bell pepper, sliced
1 yellow bell pepper, sliced
1 small white onion, quartered and sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp kosher salt
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
5 Tbsp tomato paste
1-1/4 cup chicken broth
1 tsp paprika
1-1/2 Tbsp parsley, chopped (optional)

In a small saucepan, cook rice according to the package's directions. Place a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once the skillet is hot, add the oil. After the oil shimmers, add the sausage and cook until browned on both sides, about 5 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside. Add the peppers and onion to the skillet. Saute until the vegetables have softened, about 5-10 minutes. Add the garlic, salt, and pepper, cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Remove from the pan and set aside with the sausage. Add the tomato paste, chicken broth and paprika to the skillet, whisk to combine. Allow the mixture to simmer for 1 minute. Stir in the cooked rice, sausage, pepper and onions until combined. Garnish with chopped parsley, serve immediately.

SENIOR HEALTH

Help Fight Medicare Fraud
by Lynn Hixon

Medicare covers the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you, so if anyone asks you to share your Medicare Number or pay for access to the vaccine, you can bet it's a scam.

Here is what you need to know:

You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.

You can't pay to get early access to a vaccine.

Don't share your personal or financial info if someone calls, texts, or emails you promising access to the vaccine for a fee.

Con artists may try to get your Medicare Number or personal information so they can steal your identity and commit Medicare fraud. Medicare fraud results in higher health care costs and taxes for everyone. Guard your Medicare card like it's a credit card. Remember, Medicare

will never contact you for your Medicare Number or other personal information unless you've given them permission in advance. Medicare will never call you to sell you anything. You may get calls from people promising you things if you give them a Medicare Number. **Don't do it.** Medicare will never visit you at home and they can't enroll you over the phone unless you called first. Review your Medicare claims and Medicare Summary Notices for any services billed to your Medicare Number you don't recognize.

If you have any questions or concerns please call the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590 and ask to speak to Lynn Hixon. *Lynn Hixson is the SHIP coordinator for the DeKalb County Council on Aging.*

The Blessing Box

Originally at Valley Head Baptist Church, the Blessing Box has been relocated inside the Servant Mission Thrift Store located at 8403 Hwy. 117 in Valley Head.

Anyone who needs food or anything else inside the box is free to go by and the people there will help you with it...

This is a free community service. Donations would be greatly appreciated!

Take what you need,
Leave what you can.

Community Calendar

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

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

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

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

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

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

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


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Moon Lake Community Library News

by Kelly Leavitt

What would our community do without our library? It would certainly be different! For more than 20 years, the library has offered much richness to our lives, through the book collection, workshops and classes, book clubs, author talks, social gatherings, and a variety of other events.

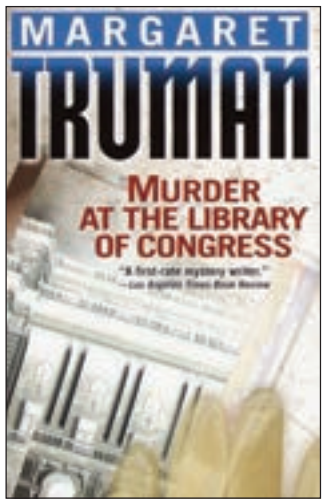
The treasurer's annual report for 2020 reflects how much the library has been impacted by the pandemic. With the loss of MAPA's two festivals last year, we were unable to hold the book sales which ordinarily generate a substantial portion of

our income. This resulted in a loss of \$1,800 from the previous year's sales. Our annual budget was reduced overall by over \$3,000.

We humbly ask those in our community who can afford to do so, to donate \$20. If enough people respond, this would really make a difference!

The library continues to offer curbside service with the ability to privately browse the shelves. Please visit moonlakelibrary.org to make your appointment or to browse our virtual book sale. Happy reading!

Kelly Leavitt is the librarian at Moon Lake Community Library.



Moon Lake Book Club: *Murder at the Library of Congress* by Margaret Truman Tuesday, February 23 6:30 pm via Zoom

In the depths of the U.S. Library of Congress toil thousands of researchers, chasing down obsessions, breakthroughs, and new contributions to human wisdom. But when amateur D.C. sleuth Annabel Reed-Smith enters this stately American institution, she discovers a hornet's nest of intrigue and murder.

After a renowned scholar is bludgeoned to death among the scholarly stacks, an ambitious TV reporter links the case to the heist of a Spanish painting from a Miami museum and a killing in Mexico City. Annabel suspects that buried in the Library are secrets some people will do anything to keep silent—the secret of a rich man's ambition, a researcher's disappearance, and a mysterious diary of Christopher Columbus's journey written 500 years ago. . . .

Margaret Truman (1924–2008) was an American author, classical soprano, actress, journalist, radio and television personality, writer, and New York socialite. She was the only child of President Harry S. Truman and First Lady Bess Truman.

Murder at the Library of Congress (1999), published by Random House, is part of Truman's "Capitol Crimes" mystery books.

To learn how to connect to this free Zoom presentation, go to moonlakelibrary.org. Everyone is welcome to join the discussion!

Cloudland News by Pat Johnson

The community of Cloudland would like to thank and recognize several of our citizens for their care and effort in keeping our community clean and attractive.

John and Jan Low regularly travel up and down County Road 103, Cloudland Drive, and Gadsden Avenue in their green UTV picking up trash. This is why these roads stay so clean. They also organize LauraWood residents to decorate their signs at Christmas!

Rick and Jennifer Linn saw John and Jan picking up trash on the roadside and were inspired by them. So they decided to take on keeping our Cloudland sign at the blinking light looking neat and nice. They have consistently mowed and weed eated around the sign and also decorated with pumpkins in the fall and a wreath at Christmas. Elizabeth and Marty Destafney have now planted some flowers in the two stone columns. We need to thank them all for making our welcome sign look so good.

Addiline and Earl Drennen decided they were tired of seeing a large pile of trash on the side of Brow Drive, so they got their pickup truck and started filling it up. Burmah Green and Tiffany Agee were walking by and stopped to help. They completely filled the pickup with the trash! Thanks from everyone who lives on Brow Drive.

A big thank you to Clay Birchfield who replaced the tennis nets at the tennis courts! He saw they needed replacing and he took it on himself to do it! Thank you!

I feel sure there are others in our community who help keep Cloudland neat and tidy. Thanks to everyone, and keep up the good work. You are truly appreciated.



Calling All Book Lovers! Monday, February 15 @ 6:30 pm via Zoom

It's February, the month of love! The library will hold a Zoom gathering with no goal in mind other than talking about our love for books. This will be the closest to a simple social gathering that we can offer at this time. Let's talk about why we love to read, or what books we have loved, or how books have influenced

us...the sky's the limit. So mark your calendar, settle into your favorite chair and get cozy with a cup of tea, perhaps with a cat on your lap, and join the discussion. Everyone is welcome! Visit moonlakelibrary.org to learn how to connect on Zoom via computer or phone.



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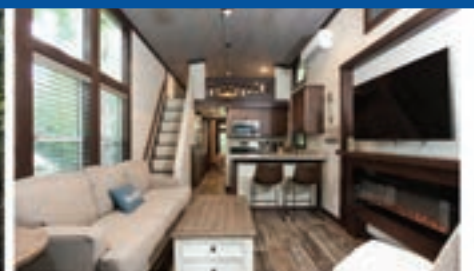
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Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

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

A new development is coming to Mentone, only 3 miles from town. Mentone Mountain Escape will be a tiny home neighborhood with +/-20, 1/2-acre wooded lots per house and a common area with a dog park, patio, and firepit area.



RIVER RIDGE ESCAPE

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RiverRidgeEscape.com 706-936-0007

Every Picket Tells a Story!

by Jay Robbins

Drivers who are traveling into or out of Mentone on Highway 117 via the east end of town almost certainly notice the multicolored, brightly painted fence that separates the highway from the MERF walking track. What's not obvious to drivers, though, is that on the other side of the pickets are pictures painted by members of our community.

The MERF (Mentone Educational Resources Foundation) walking track is officially called the Pathway to Community. Regular readers of this newspaper know how it came to be, but here's a quick recap. The ¼-mile walking track has been there since 1997 (designed by youngster Jake Pinholster for his Eagle Scout project). Hoping to make it more of a community centerpiece, some local leading lights, on behalf of MERF, put together a five-minute video presentation of their vision for the track, applied for a \$20,000 competitive grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, and won.

That was a little more than a year ago. Since then, benches and chairs have been added along the path, as well as a variety of outdoor musical instruments. The once-unsightly concrete block building that sits behind the MERF House has been painted on all four sides with murals depicting native flowers. There is a large abacus that helps you keep track of how many laps you complete. And, of course, there is the fence.

My wife and I find ourselves at the Pathway to Community from time to time in order to stroll, walk our dog Akra, or to show the fence to visitors. There are 420 pickets in total, each of them decorated in some manner by people in our community. (Some people did more than one.) They depict all manner of things—people, animals (lots of animals), scenes from nature,

and more. Some have words, some don't. Some make sense, some don't. Some are spiritual. Some look like they were done by artists who know their way around a drawing pencil and paintbrush and can stay within the lines. Others look like they were painted by adults (like me) who haven't drawn anything since high school, or by children. (It can be hard to tell the difference.) And, of course, there are lots and lots of colors.

It occurred to me recently that each one of the images on those panels was painted by someone for a reason. If every picture tells a story, and if there are hundreds of painted pickets, there must be hundreds of stories. So I selected some of the pickets (some at random, some because they caught my eye for one reason or another), tracked down who painted them, and asked if they would mind sharing their thoughts. They were all kind enough to do so.

It should be noted that when you look at the fence, you are looking at the culmination of a lot of time and labor, most of it voluntary. Each of those hundreds of pickets had to be primed, and then painted on both sides. Painting sessions had to be organized so community members could paint their pictures. (Jan Wilkinson graciously hung around much of the time and drew sketches on pickets for those who felt more confident having a design to work with.) A lot of nailing, digging, lifting, and leveling had to be done to get the fence up. And all this during the year of COVID-19! MERF Executive Director Sarah Wilcox says, "Loved family and friends came together to create. I am glad so many stepped out of their comfort zones. Covid gave us a gift to have a purpose that created a happy and inviting local space that we all have ownership of now."

Here are the stories of some of the pickets.



What's your picket's story?!

If you painted a picket for the Pathway to Community and would like to share your story in a future issue of *The Groundhog*, contact Jay Robbins at jrobbins727@gmail.com.

1 Gene Justice

When we, the girls at Camp Skyline, heard about the opportunity to paint fence pickets for the MERF track we were immediately excited! We couldn't wait for the chance to not only get out of the office during Covid, but also to participate in a unique project for the community! It was a great way to see the community come together in a time when we were mostly apart and produce something so filled with life. I am not the most gifted painter, so I drew Charlie Brown characters for others to paint because who doesn't love Charlie Brown? Now every time I go to the MERF House or drive by, it brings a smile to my face to see all of those colorful pickets. And I'm reminded of just how grateful I am to be part of the Mentone community and, also, of my gratefulness for the community members, specifically Sarah Wilcox, who orchestrated this project and did an incredible job.

2 Kerry Breithaupt

Most locals know I'm a licensed massage therapist of approximately 23 years. Hence the hands-on experience. The pup is Angel, my rescue—or perhaps it's the other way around? She rescued me and is my comfort gift!

3 Linda Espy

I love koi and the peace and beauty they bring to a setting. There has been a koi pond in my backyard for 30 years, and I enjoy having friends join me in the swing to feed and watch them. They are almost like pets. Painting koi was my way to add some of nature's beauty to the fence.

4 Anne McLeod and Don Highfield

As the picket project was winding down, Kelly Leavitt, the Moon Lake Community Librarian, mentioned to me that there were not as yet any pickets featuring books or reading. So Don and I took that on as a challenge and an opportunity to make some book recommendations through a collaborative art project. Don sketched out the design, I came up with most of the titles, and we both worked on the painting.

At the bottom of the stack is the childhood classic, *The Secret Garden*, by Francis Hodgson Burnett. There are two graphic novels, a literary form popular with young readers: *El Deafo* by Cece Bell and *March* by Congressman John Lewis, who was originally from Alabama and who died in July. There wasn't enough space for the full title *The Story of My Life: Helen Keller*, but we wanted to acknowledge another inspiring Alabamian who led an extraordinary life. There wasn't room either for Roald Dahl's our favorite *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, so we used his *Mathilda* instead. Don had read Dahl's autobiography, *Boy*, and he added that—not a children's title by any means! *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear* by Elizabeth Gilbert tops the stack, a how-to manual about unlocking your creative spirit, something many of us have had to do to make it through 2020. This and most of the other titles in the stack are available for check out at the Moon Lake Community Library.

5 Joan Byrum

I've painted on a lot of objects in my life but never a fence picket. Even loving the idea of being a part of such a beautiful project as this community-created fence, I was still concerned about how to paint a subject on such a long narrow surface. I wanted something that children would instantly recognize, something that would tell them a story without words. A cat and mouse in some sort of interaction came to mind. So my picket depicts an elongated cat stretched as far as possible struggling to regain control of his favorite toy from a smart little mouse. The toy, a ball of yarn, is being pulled quickly away by a little grey mouse who is looking over his shoulder with a taunting grin on his face. Poor kitty...outsmarted by a tiny mouse.

6 Liza Thornell

I had so much fun getting to paint my picket. I picked the farmer picket (it was already sketched in) because I just thought he was so cute and had a story to tell.

A few things about me: I am a senior at Samford University in Birmingham and I grew up in Tuscaloosa. I started going to Camp Skyline when I was 10 and my parents purchased a weekend home in Mentone my senior year of high school. We have always loved the area and spend a lot of time there. This summer my mom called me and told me she had a surprise and that I had to come to Mentone and wear messy clothes. That weekend, I brought my boyfriend, Jackson, with me (it was his first time meeting my parents) and she got us in the car and wouldn't tell us where we were going. We guessed the whole way there that we were going horseback riding, so when we pulled up to paint pickets, I started dying laughing. We had so much fun and it is such a sweet, fun memory!

7 Rand Hall

I had a definite intention when I painted my picket. My precious sister, Diana, died December, 22, 2019. She was of Cherokee descent and we walked the Red Road together, which means following a Native American/Lakota spiritual path. My sister was always my guide and guidance. By example, she showed me how to walk "in a good way." The stripes on the bottom, at the base of the picket are the four colors representing the four directions (the cycle of life). The eagle in the sky is to carry her spirit to the other side, to the spirit world. And in between, the feather floating in the sky represents Diana's life. At the very bottom is the turtle, representing Turtle Island, what we call this continent that supports us. The turtle, the colors of the four directions, the eagle, and the feather are all symbols of things we hold sacred. Mitakue oyasin (We are all one).

8 Jan Wilkinson

This is Sarah Wilcox and her dog, George, in front of the MERF House. The crowd of people at the bottom releasing balloons are community members thanking Sarah for her never-ending work to enhance life in the Mentone community. She represents MERF and her personal love for Mentone.

9 Lucy Massey

I painted a few different pickets but my favorite was the one I did that was supposed to be me! I have on a Camp Skyline shirt with a pink skirt and I have red hair. I'm not artistic in the slightest but I loved painting this one because it's the red hair with the Skyline shirt so that describes me pretty well. I've been attending or working at Camp Skyline since 2004 and love it more than anything and I have loved living in Mentone year round!



(continued on page 14)

Picket Stories (continued from page 13)

10 Mark Hoffman

Well, I am not an artist (at all!) and can't paint a real picture, and I wanted to do something that was dissimilar to the ones already done. I think it is important for people to take a look at symbols outside of their normal viewpoint. The "Chinese" characters and yin-yang symbol exemplify a way of looking at the world, and oneself, in a non-western cultural way.

11 Alyce Kenney

Painting my slat made me feel like a kid again! My picket is based on a comic strip character named Alice Otterloop. She is a pre-school ragamuffin type girl who says what she thinks. She is my personal hero because she lives life to the fullest! My picket shows her looking and reaching upwards towards the magical wonders of the universe. I love Alice so much I have t-shirts, coffee mugs, stationery, and other items with her image on them. The comic strip was called "Cul-de-sac" and Richard Thompson drew it. Sadly, he died from complications of Parkinson's disease and the comic strip lives no more. BUT Alice lives on in my heart every day. I try to imagine what she would do or say in daily experiences. At times like these, I think we all could use a little Alice Otterloop in our lives to get us through the tough times. We all were children fearless, with rich imaginations and endless possibilities once, we should try to capture some of that spirit again.

12 Lisa Crow

I was so tickled to make space to paint a picket for our lovely walking trail at the MERF House. The Mentone community came together and truly did a fantastic job creating a fence worthy of walking by daily. I chose to paint a bit of the starry night (my impression, of course) with a chakra color chain on mine because I pray so much lately for calmness and peacefulness in the midst of all that is happening in our universe. I find peace under the stars. We do have the best skies to gaze upon them. Don't you think? Honored to be a part of this. Truly.

13 Bill Berry

My initial plan was to simply paint the word JOY on my picket, using colorful lettering to express my love of that word and its meaning. But Jan Wilkinson came to my rescue (as she did for so many other picket-painters) and sketched the final product that is now on display. She selected several things that are important in my life ... BERRY PATCH, which is the family compound where I grew up and where I still live ... MOON LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, where I worked as teacher for 13 years and principal for 13 years in what I consider my life's mission ... CAMP DeSOTO, where I have worked as office manager for the 14 years since my retirement from Moon Lake ... and HARD ROCK CAFE SHANGHAI, in tribute to my lifelong passion for foreign travel (I have so far visited 123 countries). I'm grateful to Jan for providing me such a unique sketch, especially since those items she included collectively portray the JOY that I have experienced in my life and work.

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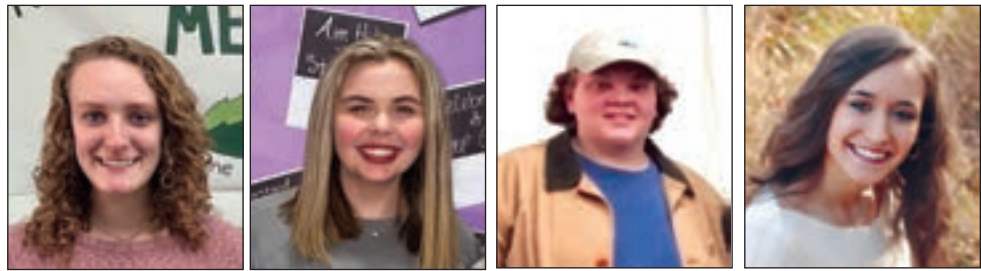
MERF News

[Mentone Educational Resources Foundation]

by Sarah Wilcox



December brought a little fun and joy to the MERF house to end 2020 with a boost. Pat Peterson and Paula Easter helped me pack goodie bags with festive masks and candy for the Moon Lake students, the MERF moms group, and the senior lunch bunch crew. On Wednesday, December 16, kitchen elves Susan Noel, Carolyn Nail, Vicky Patrick, Hazel Bickerstaff, Kathy McMunn, Paula Easter, and Dee Dee Dunkerley helped prepare, deliver, and pass out a wonderful meal of chicken and dressing, green beans, creamed corn, and mashed potatoes purchased from Tiger's Inn. Judy Johnson and her crew know how to make our tummies happy! It was so great to see many of the lunch bunch crew, even if it was from a distance! Everyone can't wait to be back in the MERF house for fellowship and food!



Sue McLaurin Henry Memorial Scholarship winners:
L to R: Avion Gelfenstein, Saddler Emory, August Shanklin, Julie Smith

December also meant that it was time to review the hard work of local students. Congratulations to the four Sue McLaurin Henry Memorial Scholarship recipients. The scholarship committee awarded Saddler Emory (University of North Alabama), Avion Gelfenstein (Northeast AL Community College), Julie Smith (Northeast AL Community College), and August Shanklin (Jacksonville State University) with a check to help offset school expenses for the spring 2021 semester. MERF looks forward to seeing these future college graduates making a difference in our community. The committee was especially proud that they kept up with their studies well during a difficult season, with the pandemic moving most of their classes online. In person learning is much more appreciated and preferred now. Unless specified for other means, memorial checks sent to MERF are deposited in the scholarship fund.



Have you seen the teepee going up at the MERF house? Just kidding, but the new cover for the ramp did look like a future teepee as the posts were being set. So now, when it's raining or snowing, passengers can be dropped off at the bottom of the ramp and stay dry coming into the MERF house for senior lunch or a meeting! Also, the MERF house soon will have a new coat of paint and be all bright and shiny for a hopeful community celebration in the spring. Fred Smith, the grant manager for the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, came by one snowy day in December to see the Pathway to Community work. He was so impressed with all the transformation that you all made happen, especially

the fence and the instruments. We will have a celebration with the Foundation as soon as it is safe to do so. For now, just keep enjoying the fun and creative atmosphere of the walking path, the instruments, and the happy fence. Thanks to Jay Robbins, we will have a chance to get to know our neighbors better as he has initiated a great idea of gathering the stories of the fence pickets. He will interview the creators and then put their stories in *The Groundhog* in coming months. How wonderful will that be?! You can read this month's picket stories on page 12.

Finally, thanks to Hershel Pruitt, a friend of MERF, for helping me to find the correct person to speak with and the correct service to ask for at Spectrum so that the MERF house has Wi-Fi. If you have an academic need for Wi-Fi, contact me for an opportunity to use the service at the MERF house.

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 contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193.

Sarah Wilcox is the executive director of MERF (Mentone Educational Resources Foundation).



Carolyn Nail, Vicky Patrick, Paula Easter, and Susan Noel working hard and safely in the MERF kitchen getting lunches ready to deliver to the senior lunch bunch crew.



Paula Easter enjoyed creating holiday wreaths with the MERF Moms group.

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River Voice by Angie Shugart

"The river called. The call is the thundering rumble of distant rapids, the intimate roar of white water." -John Craighead

Whitewater on Little River is a seasonal phenomenon that attracts professional kayakers from all over the world. When most of us are dreaming of Little River on a hot, summer day; winter is the perfect time for adventure seekers to don their drysuits, strap down their kayaks and head to the nearest put-in. Today's technology provides an "app" to alert eager boaters when the flow is at a safe level after a heavy rain event. It is not long before Little River Canyon is dotted with bright colored kayakers against a green and gray landscape. To watch kayakers fearlessly ascend the 30-foot waterfall at the beginning of Little River Canyon is not for the faint of heart. Be assured, these guys and gals are trained in whitewater safety and know how to "read" the river, and scout out and understand the dangers. Having experienced kayaking skills makes

the Canyon no less dangerous. In fact, it's quite the opposite. Little River literally gets wild along the East Fork, within the Little River Wildlife Management Area and of course Little River Canyon and its major creeks, making it famous for the sport. Kayakers named sections of the river "Pinball" and "Suicide" for a reason. They take on these challenges all the way to where the mouth of Little River flows into Lake Weiss.

So what makes Little River roar? People ask me, "Where is the dam release?" Although there are dams on Little River, none of them generate electricity or release water in order to maintain a certain level of flow. We see other waterways, such as the Ocoee and Nantahala rivers, that are dam-controlled and popular areas for whitewater rafting and kayaking.

The reason for the seasonal rise in cubic feet of water on Little River is unlike anywhere else in the world. There is a thin layer of shale that perches water on top of Lookout Mountain, making the river completely dependent on rainwater to keep it flowing. During heavy rains the headwaters of Little River fill up ephemeral (wet weather) streams and tributaries that lead to Little River, washing away anything in its path. Items that are not secure along the river, such as furniture, boats, floats, and even docks, get swept away and are not only a loss for homeowners but a danger for boaters downstream.

A flooded Little River is a sight to behold for a short while, giving whitewater paddlers a slice of heaven during the most dreary days of winter. River flow across the nation is measured with gauges in real time by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Although the data collected on a national level is used

for the creation of river management plans, to forecast flooding, and to manage reservoirs, the maps can be read by anyone who is interested in water levels and streamflow. At any given time, you can visit usgs.gov to look up real time data on Little River. This is how boaters know when the river is ready to run. The USGS gauge on Little River is located above the Highway 35 bridge at Blue Hole. If Little River is flowing over 1,000 cubic feet per second (CFS), make sure to secure your items that are close to the water. This river can get up above 10,000 CFS during any given rain event. To give you another perspective of how big Little River can get, during the Easter flood of 2020, the Blue Hole gauge read close to 40,000 CFS. Now that is some BIG WATER!

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



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February Birthdays

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| 1 John Lawton
Abby Bell
Tammy Kirby
Walter Brooks
Rindy Flannigan
Fontana Stinson
Thomas Blevins
AJ Hairston | 6 Amanda Blalock
Allie McElhaney
Ruthie Jane Brown
Kendall Thompson | 11 Cayla Wigley
Faith Nelson
Gentry Grisham
Amanda Ditmore
Elizabeth Rich
Rhett Davis | Renee Peek
Tom Tate
Charles Allen | 24 Michael Chambers
Tom Emory
Payton Day Lewis
Melinda Easler
Susan Collins |
| 2 Beverly Smith
Karen Nixon
Zeb Kincer
Elijah Rogers
Lamar King | 7 Jordan Sutton
Tristan Rodriguez
Haven Stone
Haley Stinson Moore
Carley Verdon
Jase Kirby
Norah Underwood
Kevin Burt | 12 Harry Ohme
Tara Kirby
Nicholas Freeman
Sydney Grider
Bubba Browder
Petie Gatlin | 18 Richard Harrison
Gail Crider
Braden Villarreal | 25 William Beasley
Emily Tate
Pam Bettis
Dorothy Cyr |
| 3 Melanie Potts Garrett | 8 Wyatt Blackburn
Crystal Smith
Helen Brown
Annette Johnson
Sandy Tate
Jay Cullen Thompson | 13 Belle Easley
Gretchen Winder
Carol Busby
Craig Hall
Isaac Pangle | 19 Danielle Powell
Aaron Goss
John Fischer, Jr.
Tim Henderson
Beverly Bates
Nick White | 26 Kylee Elkins
Johnny Battles
Kate Smith
Amina Bearden |
| 4 Angela Phillips
Carson Dan Frost
Sophia Blair
Brittany Daniel
Aubree Lewchuk
Cameron Norsworthy
Katie Beth Woods
Andrew Hairston
William Tyler Lee
Mandy Morton
Mark Clark | 9 Kara Goss
Jonnie Frost
Cayden Collins
Heath Jones | 14 Abbi Gifford
Eddie Manning | 20 Jon Baggett
Stella Pierce
Joan Byrum
Juanita McGuire
Adam Battles
Will Barksdale
Elizabeth White | 27 Makayla Mullis
David Hilliard
Holden Smith
Marc Hale
Larissa Roe |
| 5 Yon Hopper
Savannah Wallace
Cameron Collins | 10 Joe McClure
Leonard Keith
Katie White
Luke Hulan | 15 Ashley Coffman
Diane Smith
Axl Blake Jones
Brandon Davis | 21 Wendy Manifold
Lad Steinemann | 28 Derek Davis
Ethan Bailey
Russell Odell |
| | | 16 Katelyn Busby
Mary Jane Gray | 22 Justin Langston
Johnny Ferguson, Jr.
Corey Blalock
Derek McMahan
Jordan Bethune | (29) Ethen Battles |
| | | 17 John David Blalock
Trey Moore
Tyler Allen | 23 Jaden Turner | |



Anniversaries

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| 1 Russell & Jan Odell
Craig & Ashley Hulan | 4 Larry & Kathy Gray | 8 Clark & Genella Tolbert | 15 Leonard & Amy Keith |
| 3 Ray & Sandra Padgett
Jeremy & Amy Henderson | 5 David & Pam Dean | 10 Danny & Sible Hopper | 17 Vance & Patti Carden |
| | 7 Calvin & Myra Lanier
Mack & Debbie Flannigan | 14 Joey & Melanie Garrett
Kevin & Connie McElhaney | 23 Jeff & LeAnn Bain |

V	Q	I	L	O	Y	A	L	T	Y	U	P	I	A	F
S	S	E	N	D	N	I	K	P	A	N	A	P	T	O
Y	C	X	Z	T	A	S	A	U	F	D	R	D	C	N
R	T	X	U	N	I	T	W	A	S	E	T	O	E	D
N	R	S	A	S	I	M	M	E	K	R	N	Q	P	N
O	E	I	E	E	S	I	A	X	E	S	E	N	S	E
I	D	V	N	N	L	E	E	C	I	T	R	M	E	S
S	W	C	O	Y	O	C	N	D	Y	A	I	T	R	S
S	E	L	X	L	N	H	E	E	W	N	D	E	F	E
A	M	F	N	A	T	R	S	T	V	D	I	P	U	C
P	T	A	M	Y	A	W	G	J	S	I	R	P	R	K
M	X	O	I	T	S	Y	U	R	C	N	G	J	J	K
O	R	A	I	N	H	Z	H	C	Q	G	W	R	K	H
C	N	O	I	T	A	I	C	E	R	P	P	A	O	Q
G	N	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	I	P	O	J	F

Just for Fun! Love Word Search

Find and circle the words listed in this Word Search puzzle focused on love!

(Hint: You'll have to look forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally!)

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| APPRECIATION | INTIMACY |
| COMPASSION | KINDNESS |
| CONSIDERATION | LOVE |
| CUPID | LOYALTY |
| FAMILY | PARTNER |
| FONDNESS | PATIENCE |
| FORGIVENESS | RESPECT |
| FRIENDSHIP | ROMANCE |
| HONESTY | SWEETIE |
| HUGS | UNDERSTANDING |



Mentone Area Church Directory

Mentone, Alabama

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church and Sacred Garden is open daily for prayer and thanksgiving; however, indoor service and group meetings have been temporarily cancelled due to COVID-19. You may join us for weekly services by visiting our website at stjom.dioala.org. We are continuing to support our community with outreach, so please call our church office at 256-634-4476 for more information. 21145 Scenic Hwy, PO Box 161, Mentone, AL 35984.

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

*We suggest you
contact the churches
to inquire about how they are
currently holding services.*

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 Moon Lake Baptist Church's dining hall. All are invited to attend. Sabbath School and Song Service 9:30-10:45am, Worship Service 11am-12:15pm. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnell.

Fort Payne, Alabama

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

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

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. Our worship services are at 11am and also on Sunday evenings in the Chapel 6pm. You can also worship with us on-line @ facebook.com/neworegonumc. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible studies for all ages meeting at 6pm in the Family Life Center. Pastor Ian Conerly. 1204 New Oregon Drive NE. 256-

845-7446.

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

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

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

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

Cloudland, Georgia

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

Menlo, Georgia

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

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

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

Summerville, Georgia

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

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

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IMMACULATE MENTONE HOME. 3BR, 2BA. Open kitchen & dining area with lots of cabinets and granite countertops. LR & Den. Central heat/air, central vacuum, tile & hardwood floors, fireplace. Large bath with tub & separate shower, double sink vanity. Nice patio & back porch, 3-car garage. 3 wooded acres. \$350,900. MLS #1153481

NEW



ONE OF A KIND property with vaulted ceilings, open exposed solid wood beams. Wood walls, wood ceilings, master on main level w/ walk-in closet and small office space. Loft bedroom upstairs plus 768 sq. ft. of outdoor living on this 4-seasons porch! Situated on approx. 1.2 acres PLUS... It has a 100-year-old farmhouse and barn on property. \$210,000. MLS #1770545



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



CABIN BY THE RIVER 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath cabin situated on 3.39 wooded acres bordered by the Chattooga River. Custom glass kitchen cabinet doors and Sylacauga marble backsplash in the kitchen. Kayak or float river to Weiss Lake or take it easy and fish for supper. \$89,900. MLS #1154660

NEW



DOWNTOWN MENTONE, within walking distance to all the downtown attractions, including Brow Park. The original 1965 rock foundation gives much to the imagination of what this place could be with some tender love and care! Enjoy living at the end of a dead-end street with a wooded backyard or offer this as a weekend rental spot that will be convenient and peaceful. \$250,000. MLS # 1770919



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

NEW



6 FULLY FURNISHED CABINS LOCATED ON THE BROW IN MENTONE positioned on 7 tracts totaling approx. 22 acres. Each cabin boasts wood exteriors, wood interior walls and floors, vaulted ceilings, gas log fireplaces, full kitchen amenities including granite countertops, impeccable cabin decor AND hot tubs on the back decks with focus on the spectacular VIEWS! Each fully furnished cabin is currently in a rental program with a strong rental history, providing an income-producing opportunity for the new owner. \$1,499,000. MLS #1772318

NEW



LOTS & LAND

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

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

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

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

#1078140—16.3 acres, unrestricted, partially wooded! \$66,800

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

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

#1113936—Looking for a brow lot inside the city limits of Mentone? \$68,500

#1118808—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118810—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

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

#1145590—GREAT POSSIBILITIES! This 22 acres +/- has lots of road frontage on Hwy. 117. \$125,000

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

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

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

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

#1150911—PANAROMIC VIEWS FOR MILES & MILES! Along with views of Battelle below in the valley. Bring your home plans and enjoy nature on this 8.9 tract of land. \$220,000

#1150912—WOW! What Amazing VIEWS you have for miles and miles! Beautiful views of Battelle below. Great place to build your forever home on this 8.8 acres of prime brow property. \$215,000

1156528—9.93 acres with a spring! Great Building Spot! \$65,900

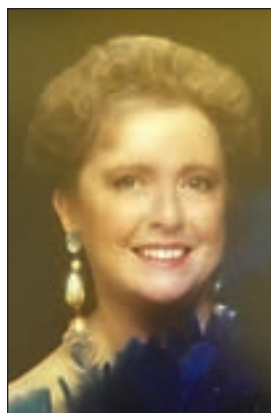
#1770010—3.10 acres on CR 89. \$30,000

#1771067—Mentone Alabama! Beautiful Building Lots across from Lake Lahusage near the dam! This Wooded 5 acre parcel has all the making of a wonderful home site! Power and Water at the road. Stream on the property. This is an old home site per seller! Property is near the Alabama/Georgia line. \$43,000

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In Memoriam

JOSEPHINE THOMPSON BLALOCK July 25, 1936 ~ December 1, 2020



Josephine Thompson Blalock, of Mentone, passed away on December 1, 2020 at Erlanger Hospital.

Mrs. Blalock is survived by her grandson, Matthew Sword Sr. (Jada). She was preceded in death by her husband, Willis H. Blalock, and daughter, Eleasa Blalock Sword.

MARGARET BURCON April 28, 1932 ~ December 1, 2020



Margaret Alice McElhaney Burcon, 88, of Mentone, passed away on December 1, 2020 at home surrounded by love and peace. She was born on April 28, 1932 to her parents Jadie and Claude McElhaney.

She married the love of her life Dick Burcon on

November 25, 1965 and spent a wonderful and loving 55 years together as husband and wife. Margaret left behind many loved ones including her husband, Richard Burcon; sister, Joyce Culberson; brother, LB (Pat) McElhaney; two daughters, Linda Clark and Dodie (David) Myers; and one son, Robert "Storkey" (Lori) Steward.

Mema will also be missed by her five grandchildren, Cindy (Tommy) Harrison, Charles Pullen, Amanda (Wes) Fontaine, Jennifer (Micheal) Bass, and Carol (Blake) Hunter; her seven great-grandchildren, Melissa (Josh) Shoults, Samantha Harrison, Gracie Pullen, Zach Pullen, Abigail Pullen, Skylar Bass, and Camden Bass; her three great-great-grandchildren, Addie, Callie and Blakely Shoults; and her special nieces.

TREVOR OWEN SMITH March 29, 1991 ~ December 6, 2020



Trevor Owen Smith, age 29, of Valley Head, passed away on December 6, 2020.

He is survived by his wife, Kayla McFall Smith; mother, Carolyn Renee Smith; brothers, Cody Allen Smith (Ciara) and Corey Drew Blalock (Amanda); grandmother:

Kay Blackstock Hayes; great-grandmother, Deanna Blackstock; beloved nephew, Hudson Ray Smith; beloved nieces, Kama Jade Blalock; Amelia Jane Smith, and Alyssa Claire Smith; uncles, Jason Smith (Samy) and Carl Smith (Donna); aunts, Tammy Bartlett (Brett), Tabitha Scruggs (Greg), Naomi Jones (Dave), and Star White (Tyler); mother-in-law, Kim Manicure McFall; father-in-law: Bob McFall; and brother-in-law, Tyler McFall.

Mr. Smith was preceded in death by his father, Allen Ray Smith; grandparents, Ralph Smith and Dewey Smith; and great-grandparents, Jewel (Janie) Smith and Alma Smith.

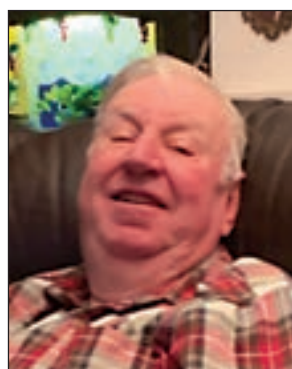
Trevor was loved by many friends, cousins, and everyone who knew him.

THOMAS EDMOND CROWE April 30, 1946 ~ December 11, 2020

Thomas Edmond Crowe, 74, of Mentone, passed away December 11, 2020 at his residence. Mr. Crowe was born on April 30, 1946 to the late Edmond and Haynie Bramblett Crowe. He was a radio DJ for many years. He served our country in the United States National Guard, was a member of Mentone Community Church, and served on the Mentone Water Board for many years.

He is survived by his wife, Brenda Heard Crowe; step-children, Sandra McGrandle (Darren), Richey Watkins and Michael Watkins; sister & brother-in-law, Sue Crowe Johnson (Hughey); and brothers & sisters-in-law, Kenneth Crowe (Diane) and Jim Crowe (Donna); and grandchildren, Rachel McGrandle, Taylor, Landon, Adam, Jake, and Ben Watkins. He was preceded in death by his parents.

MARVIN "TOMMY" TURKETT July 13, 1945 ~ December 15, 2020



Marvin Thomas "Tommy" Turkett, 75, of Menlo, GA, passed away on December 15, 2020, at Redmond Regional Medical Center.

Mr. Turkett was born July 13, 1945, in Cedartown, GA, son of the late Marvin William Turkett, Sr. and Elizabeth

Corban Turkett. He was Baptist by faith, and prior to his retirement, was employed with Norfolk Southern Railroad. He was also a member of the Chattooga River Coon Hunters Association.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Glenda Tracy. Survivors include his wife, Janice Roach Turkett; sons, Graham Turkett and Christian Turkett; and a sister, Vicki Boyce.

MARTHA J. CARDWELL December 27, 1940 ~ December 17, 2020

Martha Janett Galloway Cardwell, 79, of Valley Head, passed away on December 17, 2020. She was born December 27, 1940 in Abilene, TX to the late Ernest D. and Florence Malone Galloway. Mrs. Cardwell attended Lea's Chapel Baptist Church in Hammondville.

Mrs. Cardwell is survived by her husband of 61 years, Jerry Mack Cardwell; brothers, Alton Galloway and Joe Galloway; sisters, Jeannie Harendt and Donna Prentice; grandson, Johnathan Norton; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her sons, Johnny Mack Cardwell and Clinton Ray Cardwell, and brother, Coyte Galloway.

JOAN COLLINS January 11, 1970 ~ December 19, 2020

Joan Tipton Collins passed away at her home on Lookout Mountain on December 19, 2020. She was a loving mom, sister and friend. Joan was a hard worker and enjoyed her job as a truck driver and when she wasn't working, she was driving her little red car and her motorcycle, sitting by her koi pond, or swimming with her grandkids. She always lived life

to the fullest, and her sweet smile and bright blue eyes drew everyone to her. She was good at everything she set her mind to, and if you ever told Joan she couldn't do something, it only made her try harder.

Joan is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Blake and Jessica Medley; granddaughters, Jordan and Savannah Medley; sister, Sharon (Sandy) Gothard; niece, Katy (Seth); and nephews, Xander and Windsor. She also leaves behind wonderful aunts, an uncle, and cousins, as well as a host of loving friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Jay Tipton and Kathy Walker; grandmother, Ina Long; and beloved dog, Puppy.

The family is grateful for the loving and generous support Joan received during this time. So many friends and family members called, visited with Joan, prayed with her and cared for her. She truly appreciated all the food, flowers, cards and acts of kindness she received. In lieu of flowers, the family request memorial donations be made to the Dekalb County Animal Adoption Center, or another animal shelter.

ISABELLE BRADLEY MOODY November 7, 1921 ~ December 20, 2020



Isabelle B. Moody, 99, passed away peacefully at her Cloudland, GA, home on December 20, 2020. Mrs. Moody was born and raised in New York City before moving to Miami, Florida in the 1940s, where she met and married her first husband, Ernest J. Smith in 1949. Both of their daughters

attended Valley View Ranch Equestrian Camp for girls, which is when the family was introduced to Lookout Mountain and the Cloudland area. After her husband's death in 1968, Mrs. Moody purchased 6 acres on the East Brow in Cloudland from Mr. Jack Jones and built her first home there, a vacation cabin. She returned to work as a medical office administrator for a family physician, and later went on to found her own business as a corporate consultant.

When she remarried in 1991, Mrs. Moody and her second husband, C. Osment (Oz) Moody, began spending half of each year at his home in Key Largo, FL, and the other half in Cloudland. In 1993, the couple decided to make Cloudland their permanent residence, and purchased a new home, also on the East Brow, where Mrs. Moody continued to live after her husband passed away in 2013. She was joined on the mountain by her younger daughter, who oversaw her care and enabled her to remain in the home and community she loved so much until her death.

How does a Manhattan debutante end up in the quiet country life of Lookout Mountain? Isabelle Moody lived a remarkable life, filled with travel and many adventures. She loved the ocean and was an avid swimmer, boater and deep sea fisher. Music was a major part of her life, and she was an accomplished pianist, still playing the piano her grandparents gave her when she was 9 years old, well into her 90s. A lover of the English language, she insisted upon proper grammar and punctuation and was named "Grammar Queen" by her children. Isabelle enjoyed reading and working daily crossword puzzles in ink. She embraced technology and was the first in her family to own a

computer, continuing to advance her tech knowledge well into her 90s with the help of her granddaughter. Isabelle raised orchids for more than 50 years, as well as parakeets, parrots, and many dogs and cats. She loved all God's creations and was a devout Episcopalian all her life. She delighted in her loving family and made an impact on many friends around the world with her elegance, class, intelligence, and optimism.

She is survived by her loving daughters, Sherry (Thomas) Barrat and Susan (Anthony/deceased) Sparkes; granddaughter, Denise (Gil) Rivas; great-grandchildren Elise and Matthew Rivas; and stepson, Thomas Moody and his children, Christopher, Ashleigh, and Lily.

DAVID LEE CRIDER

November 7, 1962 – December 28, 2020



David Lee Crider, 58, of Valley Head, passed away on December 28, 2020.

Mr. Crider is survived by his daughter, Danielle Crider Evett (David); son, Ethan Crider; grandchildren, Colton Shankles, Joesie Shankles, and Ethan Crider, Jr.; step-grandchildren, Ethan Evett and Emma

Evett; mother, Bessie Crider Wilkes; brothers, Jeff Crider (Tammy) and Chester Crider (Kim); sister, Connie Patterson (Edward); and sister-in-law, Sissy Crider.

He was preceded in death by his father, Leon J. Crider, Sr., and brother, Johnny Crider.

JEFF BAIN

March 4, 1967 – January 3, 2021



Jeffrey Shannon Bain, age 53, of Mentone, passed away on January 3, 2021, at DeKalb Regional Medical Center. Jeff was born on March 4, 1967 in Harvey, IL. He served in the United States Army and was employed at the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Bain is survived by his wife, LeAnn Bain;

children, Jeffrey Bain (Samantha), Jacob Bain (Alley), Jordan Bain (Mackenzie), and Taylor Verdon; grandchildren, Easton Bain, Jaydon Bain, Beau Barnes, Brynlee Bain, and Judson Bain; parents, John and JoAnn Bain; sister, Joy Phillips (Brad); and brothers, Jon Bain (Tara) and Joseph Bain (Erika).

He was preceded in death by his daughters Kenya Bain and Logan Chandler.

JOANNIE DIANE THORNBERRY

September 24, 1968 - January 4, 2021

Joannie Diane Thornberry, 52, of Hammondville, passed away on January 4, 2021. She was born in Hartselle, AL to Hulen Norris and Linda Alexander on September 24, 1968. She was a member of Walnut Grove Baptist Church.

She is survived by her husband, Steve Thornberry; children, Steven Thornberry, Jessica Tubbs (Travis), Anna Thornberry and Sarah Thornberry; parents, Hulen Norris and Linda Alexander Sneed; step-father, Herschel Sneed; brother, Buddy Norris; sister, Gina Porter.

JOYCE WRIGHT

June 10, 1954 - January 12, 2021

Joyce Wright, 66, of Mentone, passed away on January 12, 2021 at her residence. Mrs. Wright was born June 10, 1954 in Alabama. a memorial service will be held at 6 p.m., Thursday, January 14, 2021 at the Wilson Funeral Home Chapel. The family will receive friends on Thursday from 4 p.m. until the 6 p.m. hour of service.

She is survived by her children, Brad Wright and Crystal Lee (Joseph); grandchildren, Vince Wright (Tasha), Clint Wright (Gabi), Dylan Lee, Kansas Lee, and Dallas Lee; and 6 great-grandchildren.

GENE ARNOLD WAGONER

May 13, 1940 ~ January 10, 2021



Gene Arnold Wagoner, 80, of Menlo, GA passed away on January 10, 2021 at Floyd Medical Center. Mr. Wagoner was born May 13, 1940 in LaFayette, IN. He was retired from Mt. Vernon Mills as a systems analyst/programmer and was an

avid computer expert. He was a veteran of the United States Army.

Mr. Wagoner is preceded in death by his wife, Martha Idle Wagoner; brothers Fred, Frankie, and Ron Wagoner; and sister, Freeda McClure. Survivors include his sons, Brian Wagoner and Eric Kindler; sister, Debra Wagoner; and grandchildren, Ian and Gene Wagoner.

HENRIETTA WILBORN BLEVINS

November 24, 1950 - January 14, 2021



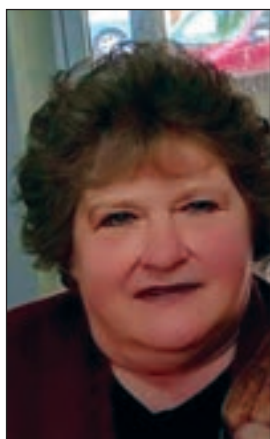
Henrietta Wilborn Blevins, 70, of Valley Head, passed away on January 14, 2021 in a local hospital. She was a retired school bus driver for the DeKalb County School System and was a member of Rainsville Holiness Church. Mrs. Blevins

enjoyed traveling and sight-seeing and being with her family and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Claude & Annie Chaney Wilborn, and daughter, Annette Blevins.

Survivors include her husband, Bobby Blevins; daughter, Christy (Tim) Riddle of Trenton, GA; granddaughters, Megan Blevins, Desirae Riddle, and Tara Riddle; sisters, Claudean Wilborn Kindred, Rainsville, AL, Madelyn Cooley, Scottsboro, AL, and Joann Loudermilk, Section, AL.

GARNETT WHATLEY SMITH

January 8, 1963 – January 18, 2021



Garnett Lee Whatley Smith, 58, of Mentone, passed away on January 18, 2021 at Floyd Medical Center in Rome, GA. She was born in Denver, CO on January 8, 1963 to Samuel Whatley and Rosemarie Prichard Whatley.

She is survived by her husband, Matt Smith; daughters: Megan Brown (Lee), Cassidy Cox, and Jennifer Hamilton; sons, Joseph Hudgins (Alicia) and

Brian Smith; siblings, Karen Powell (Richard) and Samuel E. S. Whatley; grandchildren, Alexis Brown, Kara Eberhart, Austin Cox, Dexter, Lay, Colter Hudgins, and Bella Smith; great-grandson, Colt Eberhart; nieces and nephews, Keisha Dobbins, Kayla McKenzie, Alex Whatley, Johnny Smith, Shanice Smith, Kanissa Smith, Jason Green, Justin Green, Stephanie Worthey, Stacie Worthey, Mellissa Worthey, Lee Worthey, Julie Green, Lynn White, Bill Smith, and Bob Smith.

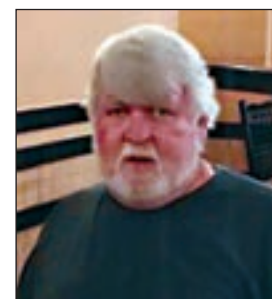
DANIEL MILLARD DUCKWORTH

October 15, 1949 – January 18, 2021

Daniel Millard Duckworth, 71, of Valley Head, passed away on January 18, 2021. He was born on October 15, 1949 in Miami, FL to Kermit M. Duckworth and Hilda Thompson Duckworth.

JEP JACK SUTTON

January 2, 1954 – January 18, 2021



Jep Jack Sutton, 67, of Valley Head, passed away on January 18, 2021 at his residence.

He is survived by his wife, Sandra Sutton; son, Allen Hulgan (Darlene); daughter, Julie Gregory (Scott); grandchildren, Meagan

Hulgan, Zac Hulgan, Dekota Hulgan, Noah Gregory, and Isaiah Gregory; great-grandson, Isiac Hulgan; siblings, Georgia Veale, Norman Sutton (Lillie Beth), David Sutton, Sam Sutton (Donna), Ginny Miller, and Becky Meeler; special niece, Karen Grala; and a host of nieces and nephews that he loved dearly.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Marcus Sutton and Lillie Bryant Sutton, and brothers, Moses Sutton, Bill Sutton, and Paul Sutton.

HOWARD HARVEY DURHAM

February 6, 1957 ~ January 23, 2021



Howard Durham, 63, of Cloudland, died on January 23, 2021 at Floyd Medical Center.

Mr. Durham was born February 6, 1957, in Arab, AL, son of the late William Harvey and Mattie Mae Smith Durham. He was a veteran of the United States Army, and prior to his retirement, was employed

in the construction industry with Fundamental Materials. He was also a member of Alpine Lodge # 211, F. & A.M.

In addition to his parents, Mr. Durham was preceded in death by his wife of 38 years, Wanda Cadle Durham; and sisters, Laverne Grace and Wanda Sue Bright.

Survivors include his son, James (Mandy) Durham; daughter, Annette Durham; stepdaughter, Rene Gilreath; grandchildren, Alex Durham, Avery Durham, Elizabeth McNair, and Devin McNair; sisters, Linda (Willie) Watwood, Judy Warren, and Patricia Blocker; and a host of nieces and nephews.

MARTHA GWENDOLYN SMITH

January 22, 1930—January 14, 2021

Dr. Martha Gwendolyn Cornelius Smith, Ph.D. of Valley Head, passed away the evening of January 14, 2021. Gwen was born on January 22, 1930 to the late Marion Leo (Bain) Cornelius and William

(continued on page 22)



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In Memoriam (continued from page 21)

Howard Cornelius of Guntersville, AL.

She attended Guntersville High school and graduated in 1948. She met her husband, Roy Carl Smith, at Jacksonville State. They were married in 1951 and have two children. She taught in Rising Fawn, GA, then taught in Valley Head Schools for more than 20 years. She later taught Student Teachers at the University of Alabama, and there earned her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education. She retired to the family's farm in Valley Head. She was a member of a teaching sorority and of MOAA (Military officers Association of America.)

Mrs. Smith is survived by her children Roy C. Smith, Jr. (Glenda Jones) and Patricia Leath (Glenn Leath); her grandchildren Dr. Roy C. Smith, III, DVM and Dr. Andrea Smith, Pharm.D. (Dr. Andrew Crowe, Pharm.D.); her great-grandchildren, Eleanor, Colette, and Annika Crowe; and one surviving brother Henry Bain Cornelius.

Her husband, LTC(R) Roy Carl Smith, Sr., Ph.D., precedes her in death.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to the Dr. Roy C. Smith, Sr. and Gwen C. Smith UA DeKalb Bama Club Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o National Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 861928, Tuscaloosa, AL 35486, attn: Deborah Parr (make checks payable to Alumni Fund and denote Dr. Roy C. Smith, Sr. & Gwen C. Smith). The family extends special thanks to Crowne Nursing Home for the love and care they gave to Gwen.

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Learn Something New!

Free Courses Available Online

by Anne McLeod

Looking for an activity to get you through the final weeks of our pandemic winter? Consider a MOOC, a Massive Open Online Course. There you can pursue job skills or do a deep dive into personal interests with courses like “Web Design for Everybody,” “Digital Marketing,” “The Age of Cathedrals,” “Basic Spanish Vocabulary,” “How to Play Guitar,” and thousands of other choices on a wide range of topics. The best part is that the courses are free unless you pursue a degree or certification.

Coursera.org and edX.org are the top two websites that host MOOCs from various institutions around the world. Many are Ivy League schools and highly regarded research universities, such as Harvard, Yale, UC Berkeley, Columbia, and Stanford. Companies like Google and IBM offer courses as well for those hoping to obtain certifications in technology-related fields. Johns Hopkins University has an in-depth training for anyone interested in becoming a contact tracer during the pandemic or who would just like to find out the latest information on the coronavirus. The Museum of Modern Art’s Modern and Contemporary Art and Design specialization through Coursera consists of four courses: “Modern Art and Ideas,” “Seeing through Photographs,” “What Is Contemporary Art?” and “Fashion as Design.”

Browse the courses on the Coursera and edX websites. If you choose to sign up for one, create an

account, and your course information will appear.

My personal experience with free online courses has been similar to most people in that initially I signed up for a couple of courses I didn’t complete in the allotted time. Although I enjoyed them, life got in the way and I let them go. There’s no penalty if you don’t complete a course. It just disappears from your account.

Then the weather turned cold, and I wanted a new activity to enjoy from the comfort of a warm house, so I signed up for “The Science of Well Being” taught by Dr. Laurie Santos from Yale University’s psychology department. The course, which is mostly video-based, began with some online assessments to gauge my current happiness levels and personal areas of strength. Since then, I’ve watched the videos of lectures and interviews with other researchers a couple of afternoons a week and completed the weekly quizzes. Since I’m auditing the course and not paying fees, the assignments are minimal. Each week there are what Santos calls “Rewirements,” habits to develop such as identifying daily what you’re grateful for or taking a few minutes for meditation. There are discussion boards where you can discuss the course week by week with other students who are enrolled through Coursera.

Six weeks into “The Science of Well Being,” I feel sure I’ll complete the course. It’s been affirming



to learn that research shows that the habits I’ve focused on over the last year, exercise and meditation, were good choices for maintaining mental health, particularly important during the challenges of 2020. Social connections, acts of kindness, and a focus on gratitude are also important, and the course served as a reminder to be more intentional about these actions and attitudes.

Lifelong learning is one of the healthiest habits of mind a person can develop, and with the technology available to us, there’s no reason not to check out some of the offerings online. The sites and course information are easy to navigate on a laptop or tablet. You might even find a friend with similar interests and take a course at the same time, so that the two of you have the fun of discussing the readings and lectures together. I know I’ll be back to browsing the listings, even after the weather warms up again.

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