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THE GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
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Volume 37, No. 4

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

April 2018

REMEMBERING STAN LAWTON

by Kelly Leavitt

Mentone lost a valuable and beloved member of our community on February 24, 2018, with the death of Mr. Stanley Lawton. While most knew Stan as the owner of Little River Hardware Store, his first love was his family. A Seventh Day Adventist, Stan was deeply devoted to his church family, as well.

"If there be any truer measure of a man than by what he does, it must be by what he gives." These words were spoken by Robert South, a 17th century clergyman. The measure of Stan Lawton is great indeed, both by what he did and what he gave during his lifetime. He will be long remembered for his service to others, his generosity, and his humor.

In the 1970s, Stan had two children, John and Jessica, during his first marriage. In more recent decades, he and Linda, his wife of 28 years (who died a year and a day before Stan's passing), fostered Justin and adopted Stevie and Nathan. For the last six years, nine-year-old Bella has lived in the Lawton home as a foster child. "Stan called her Bella Two Hearts," said his longtime close friend, Dowe Foreman, "because he said she has a heart for people and a heart for animals." The Lawtons were also a host family for several foreign exchange students.

"Their house was always full," Dowe said. "A lot of life was going on there. Neither Stan nor Linda would want anyone to think they were perfect, or saints, but they lived how they thought their God would want them to live. I think Stan would be shocked to know how many people his passing affected. This in itself should say something of his character. He was a humble man.

"Stan was also quick-witted," Dowe continued,

"with a great sense of humor. He was talented and creative, and enjoyed chair caning and photography. As a landlord, Stan sometimes gave free rent to those who were having a hard time and tried to help them get back on their feet. I remember him taking bags of groceries to those he knew had no food. He would slip money into people's hands who he knew were having a hard time or just to make them feel special and a little freer in life."

Harriet O'Rear reflected on the "full-service" nature of Little River Hardware, explaining how "Stan could and would take care of the gaps in our lives."

(cont'd on page 19)



Stan at Little River Hardware

It's Application Time for College Scholarships

by Kat Griffith

Now is the time to get excited and motivated if you are planning for a post-high school education! St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church is grateful to continue its partnership with students in the Mentone area by offering college scholarships. We invite you to submit an application for our Vann McCary Scholarship through May 1, 2018. This opportunity is open to high school seniors and post-high school graduates interested in further education or even a career change.

The Van McCary Scholarship is available to those who live in Mentone or in the near vicinity and is based on financial need and academic record. It is available to students for four years, providing an application is submitted and the stated guidelines are adhered to each year. Students at Valley Head High School can receive an application packet in the Counselor's office, packets can be printed from our website, stjom.dioala.org (choose the Outreach pull down, then chose Scholarship), or they are available from the church office during open hours (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.).

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church is at the corner of Highway 117 and Scenic Highway (CR 89). If you have questions or need more information, please call the church at 256-634-4476 or Kat Griffith, Scholarship Chairperson, at 256-418-0092.

Wildflower Weekend

presented by Little River Arts Council



Friday, April 6 • 6 p.m. • Free
Lecture & Slideshow by Jay Clark
author of *Wildflowers of Pigeon Mountain*
Moon Lake Community Library

Saturday, April 7
Plein Air at the "Pocket"
Outdoor painting, drawing and photography
at the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail
on Pigeon Mountain

Visit littleriverartscouncil.org for registration and details.

Change Is Afoot - Highway 117 Bridge Update

by Kelly Leavitt

The trees have been cleared, and plans are being finalized for construction to begin on the new bridge on AL-Hwy 117 over the West Fork of Little River. The trees were cleared in advance so that bats wouldn't have a chance to nest in them as they emerge from hibernation. Utility relocation is ongoing in preparation for the onset of construction.

The new bridge is being built by Wright Brothers Construction on the southwest side of the existing bridge in order to minimize disruption of traffic flow. Several unique features are being incorporated, based on the result of community input at three public involvement meetings held by AL-DOT in recent years. The spandrel arch design is similar to that of the old bridge. It will also include decorative railing with arched windows. Also, retaining walls and riprap stone surrounding the bridge will closely match native river stone in appearance.

The new bridge will be wider than the existing bridge. It will be wide enough to accommodate two 12-foot traffic lanes with 6-foot shoulders on either side.

The existing bridge will become a pedestrian bridge. According to Mayor Hammond, once the new bridge is complete, the plan is for the Alabama Historical Commission to take ownership of the old bridge and then coordinate its transfer to the Town of Mentone.



DeKalb County Master Gardeners

Master Gardeners Plant Sale
Saturday, April 14
7 a.m.

VFW Fairgrounds, Fort Payne

Trees & Shrubs
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Perennial flowers & Bedding plants
Native plants

Proceeds benefit Auburn Horticultural Scholarships
 and also local projects.



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THE GROUNDHOG

P. O. Box 387
Mentone, AL 35984

The Groundhog is published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA). It was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and organized April 5, 1982, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area, and is chartered as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.



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**Have a Letter to the Editor
or a story idea?
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MENTONE MATTERS

by Mayor Rob Hammond



SB146 passed both the Alabama House and Senate and on March 21 was sent to the Governor for her signature. Under this law, a community development district can petition the governing body where

it is located to call for a yes or no vote to allow for the off-premise sale of alcohol within the district. Once the petition has been received and approved, the governing body can schedule this vote (not less than 82 days from passage of the act) in the next held election. When the Town of Mentone receives the petition, there will be a vote to proceed with a yes or no vote. If approved, the earliest vote would be in the November general election. The council is on record approving the sale of alcohol within the community development district for off-premise use. People only have to go five miles to another state to buy alcohol. Sales here would help local businesses and generate much-needed revenue for the town.

Mentone suffered a great loss with the passing of Stan Lawton. He helped many in many different ways. He will be missed.

Letter From The Editor

Nature is reawakening day-by-day as we turn more and more towards the sun. Change is everywhere. I sit at a table in my garden writing this letter and welcome this balmy and breezy day. The trees

around me are filled with birdsong. Cottony clouds have surrendered to a cornflower blue sky, and chimes hanging from branches sing the songs of the wind. Colors are emerging from the earth — bright yellow dandelions, indigo hyacinths, coral red columbine, periwinkle bluets, emerald green hostas, purple redbuds, fuchsia azaleas, and chartreuse ferns.

Over the course of the last week, four men in my life have died, all unexpectedly, all good men who made a difference in the lives of those who knew them. It's as if heaven needed more angels. The dichotomy of death and rebirth has been especially illustrated this week. As spring reveals itself, I find myself being more aware of the small moments — aware that these good men (and others) won't be seeing the dogwoods bloom in the deep woods, or the day lilies emerge along roadways, or the bluebells which dance with the poppies at the Pocket. They will miss this season when the hummingbirds live with us.

And yet...in each moment I spend savoring the unfurling of nature, they are still with me. It's these personal connections that give meaning to the bigger picture, always, when we maintain a certain awareness of the present moment. I feel somewhat honored to be seeing Spring with these men in my heart.

This issue of *The Groundhog* also reflects this sense of tapestry, of people sharing glimpses of their own world with others. Many local writers have contributed stories that reflect their own personal interests.

Rebecca Henderson writes about a memorial

prayer garden, deJoly LaBrier writes about honeybees and beekeepers. Leaders of local organizations inform us of the volunteer efforts of our neighbors as they fulfill various missions. Two game masters invite us to join them and explain the cognitive benefits of chess and mah jongg. We learn about



hummingbirds and tomatoes, cleaning up our community, and protecting Little River's watershed. Photographs of students' artwork tell "a thousand words". The volunteers coordinating MAPA's Rhododendron Festival are represented by Festival Chair Sharon Habin. Pat Johnson reports on the Cloudland and Menlo communities and Lynn Hixson advocates for senior health. Rhea Pirsch writes about Shakespeare and children.

It's easy to thumb through an issue of *The Groundhog* and get a feel for what's happening in the area. It's even more enriching to really peruse it. We live in a small community, and we're fortunate to be connected by the voices represented in these articles.

In the midst of writing about Stan Lawton, I submitted to our designer the obituary for Hollis Gentry, who passed away a few days ago. These were two good men who could teach us all a bit about living with integrity, fun, and service. Let's honor them and others who have passed before by really being alive and aware in more and more moments, by choosing connection over distraction, and by seeing the full spectrum of colors this beautiful world offers us.

In the spirit of rebirth, Happy Spring, everyone.

Kelly

MAPA: Reaching Out

by Joe Piscatelli



I grew up in Brooklyn, a borough of New York City. When some folks think of New York, they think of a mass of unfriendly people. Growing up in my neighborhood in the 1950s, we all knew each other. A neighborhood was generally a city block-long and included both sides of the street.

Some of the stereotypes of these neighborhoods we have become familiar with are true. Mothers called kids home for dinner out the windows of three or four-story buildings. Neighbors looked after their own as well as others, always checking in with each other to make sure things were ok. The young families looked in on the older folks.

On Sundays, we all dressed up for church. When my friends and I got home, we changed as quickly as we could and went out on the street to play stickball with old broom sticks and a pink Spalding ball. I was pretty good at it. I could hit as far as three sewer covers.

City living in those days was about community and, even now, in some areas of the big cities it still exists. Our neighborhood was similar to any small town all over this country. The kids' games and fun play may be different, the accents and culture unfamiliar, but the community who cares and looks after each other is the same. A true community identifies with each other with mutual feelings of place, friendship and family. I have lived in many wonderful small-town communities in many states. I was invited to Mentone by two people I met in Boone, North Carolina. I

finished my assignment in Louisville, Kentucky and here I am, 16 years later.

Mentone is one of the most beautiful places in this country. It is the home of musicians, artists, writers, and spiritually-minded, kind folk. This eclectic community of people who care about each other and look after each other keeps me here. Those of you who have ancestors who settled here and those who live here by choice understand this. It keeps you here.

I joined the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) because I would like to preserve our beautiful natural environment, the unique flora and fauna, and our clean little river. I want to continue to support each other and the charitable organizations that give.

We, the MAPA members and board, want to preserve our history, our way of life, and our community spirit. MAPA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable association that donates to the other nonprofits in Mentone and the surrounding area so the whole community benefits.

MAPA receives its major funding by annually creating two festivals. The Rhododendron Festival is held the third weekend in May and Colorfest is held the third weekend in October. These two festivals attract people from Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and beyond. Colorfest has attracted 10,000 people in recent years. The festivals are a great support to the local businesses in the Mentone area. It is the major funding source for MAPA to be able to continue its mission. MAPA is reaching out for your help. We are appealing to your sense of community and service. We need volunteers to give a small portion of their time to help us continue creating these festivals.

Our membership is small and is continuing to grow. You can be a member of MAPA and have a voice in how you would like to preserve and serve this community. You are not required to be a member to give of your time as a festival volunteer.

Help us preserve this pearl on Lookout Mountain. Contact us at MapaMentone.com. Leave your contact information and a brief comment if you want to

volunteer. All we are asking for is a little of your time. We also welcome your membership.

Joe Piscatelli is Acting President of the Mentone Arts and Preservation Association, whose mission is to preserve and protect the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area.



Become a MAPA Member Today!
Help us preserve Mentone's history and impact its future.

Individuals - \$20 a year

Couples - \$30 a year

(includes a subscription to *The Groundhog*)

MAPA

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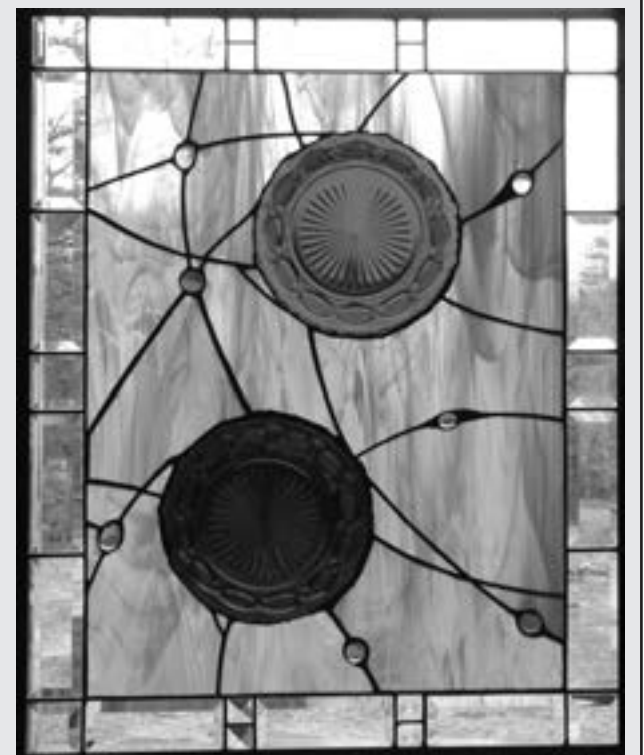
Rhododendron Festival Raffle

A beautiful stained-glass piece of art has been donated by local artist Chuck Peters for the Rhododendron Festival's traditional raffle. Proceeds will benefit the Mentone Area Preservation Association. Tickets cost \$2 each, or 3 for \$5, and are available in Mentone at The Graceful Giraffe, Green Leaf Grill, Moon Lake Community Library, Wildflower Café, Mentone Market, and Plowshares Bistro, and in Valley Head at Bell Battelle.

The stained-glass piece measures 21" wide by 27" high and is valued at \$500. Central to the piece are two plates of depression-era glass which Chuck bought at the World's Longest Yard Sale. (Depression-era laundry soap manufacturers used to put glass plates in their boxes to stimulate sales.) This stunning work of art is sure to add a touch of elegance and color to your home. It is currently on display at Mentone Market.

An artist, designer, and craftsman throughout his

life, Chuck has been creating stained glass windows and sculptures since the early 1970s. Chuck's ongoing passion for stained glass has led him to offer his talents professionally. Residences, governments, commercial businesses and numerous galleries now display his work. His studio, Cloudland Stained Glass, is located on his 40-acre organic farm north of Mentone. He has lived in the area for the past 28 years. Chuck can be contacted at 706-859-8211, by email at cloudland@mindspring.com, or on Facebook at 'Cloudland Stained Glass.'



Rhododendron Festival 2018 Update

by Sharon Habin

Plans are coming together for this year's Rhododendron Festival, which will be held in Mentone on Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20. This festival is one of the main fundraisers for the Mentone Area Preservation Association

(MAPA). Proceeds from the festival help MAPA fulfill its mission. We have accepted 75 artists, craft makers, food vendors, and non-profit organizations who will set up their booths at Brow Park and the old Mentone Springs Hotel site (on AL-Hwy. 117). Plans for paid public parking are beginning to shape up.

The Miss Rhododendron Pageant will take place on Friday, May 12, at 6 p.m. at Mentone Community Church. Entry packets will be available starting April 3 at Moon Lake Library, Moon Lake School and Valley Head School, as well as at other schools in the surrounding area. The packet may also be requested by email at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com.

Musicians who would like to play during the Rhododendron Festival at the Brow Park Pavilion may request an application. Email rhododendronfestival@gmail.com or send a request to MAPA, PO Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984. Completed applications must be received by May 1 and will be notified May 3.

We are in need of a **Sound Provider** for the live entertainment at Brow Park. This is a paid position. Email rhododendronfestival@gmail.com or send a request to MAPA, PO Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984.

Volunteers are always welcome! It takes great effort to put on the festival, and many hands make light work, as the saying goes. We need a volunteer to coordinate the Miss Rhododendron Pageant, as well as general volunteers in a variety of areas. If you are interested, please email rhododendronfestival@gmail.com, or go to 'Volunteer Mentone AL Festivals' on Facebook.

Sharon Habin is Festival Chair of this year's Rhododendron Festival.



Miss Rhododendron



Presented by
Mentone Area Preservation Association

Friday, May 11, 2018 at 6 p.m. CDT

Mentone Community Church, Family Life Center
90 Summerville Road, Mentone

Miss Rhododendron is part of the annual
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Six Age Divisions for Girls Ages 0 – 18

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WHERE'S MY CRYSTAL BALL?



by
**Charlotte
Gentry**

Sometimes it would be handy to know what the future holds. I've often joked with homeowners when I'm discussing listing their homes for sale that it would be great to have a crystal ball to know who our buyers would be and what they'd be willing to pay. Unfortunately, I have to rely on knowing my market and years of experience. (Sometimes I get it right anyway.)

On the other hand, it is the unknown quantities in life that often make it more interesting, isn't it? Not knowing the future also keeps us from dreading the unpleasantness and, hopefully, allows us to just enjoy each day as it comes, complete with good and bad moments.

The Mentone Business Association was formed to try and improve the future of business in the Mentone area. Being a resource for business as well as a liaison between business and local government is our goal. There is no crystal ball to help us at this task. It is an ongoing, often frustrating search for ways to fulfill this mission.

Changes in business happen constantly here in Mentone. Shops and restaurants open and close. Laws and ordinances are added. One of the most significant of those laws was the legalization of "on-site" alcohol sales in Mentone. At the March meeting

of the Mentone Town Council, Mayor Rob Hammond informed us the legislation was passed and was waiting to be implemented that would make off-premises sales (package sales) legal. This stands to impact the town's economy in an even larger way.

Changes in MBA are also coming. This month we will elect new officers. As a matter of fact, this will be my last article as president of MBA. But I trust one of the newly-elected officers will continue to write articles for *The Groundhog* about our organization.

I'd like to recognize and thank Lisa Schad for her fabulous work as Secretary of MBA. Lisa is a Licensed Massage Therapist and owner of Tohi Massage Studio & Spa. Her energy and enthusiasm have been amazing. She planned and executed the Scavenger Hunt and the Scarecrow Holler events during Colorfest for several years. She has also helped get the word out about meetings and activities of MBA through the membership email list. Great job, Lisa!

Thank you, also, to those who attend the meetings, give us feedback, and join the discussion (either in person or on the MBA Facebook group page). There have been some great ideas put forth about ways to make MBA more effective and increase attendance at meetings. One great idea at our March meeting came from Ruth Thomson Hathorn (owner of Tranquility Campground in Mentone), who suggested we hold lunch meetings.

What will the future hold for the MBA and for businesses in Mentone and surrounding communities? It's a certainty we won't be relying on a crystal ball for the answer. But, if we can rely on each other, it will be a great future! Our next meeting will be held Monday, April 9, at 6 p.m. at Green Leaf Grill.

Charlotte Gentry is the president of the Mentone Business Association.



INTERESTED IN LEARNING TO PLAY MAH JONGG?

*The real thing; not tile matching,
like on your phone or computer!*

by **Edna Fortner**

Mah Jongg is an exciting game that relies on skill and luck. It originated in China and has been played in the United States for almost 100 years. It is a little like Poker and Rummy, but it uses different suites which are on tiles, instead of cards. There are runs and multiples that make hands, and the hands have various values, depending on how difficult they are to make.

Donna McComb and I will teach a class at Moon Lake Community Library on Saturday, April 14, at 10 a.m. We have enjoyed playing Mah Jongg for years and have taught before. Studies show that playing mah jongg improves cognitive ability and flexibility, and that the effects can be long-lasting.

To get the feel of the game, you will get hands-on play time with your two coaches explaining the options that are available as you discard tiles after picking up new ones. We will teach you how to play 3-handed and 4-handed, so you can practice on your own. Everything needed to play this ancient Chinese game will be supplied. (We play the National MJ League rules/card.)

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MOON LAKE COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

by Kelly Leavitt

The library got a bit cozier in late March when we acquired two attractive and comfortable chairs. Come on in and have a seat! We plan to soon add a side table and coffee table.



We're excited to announce that the library now offers Wi-Fi as a free service to our patrons and visitors. Public access to the internet allows everyone in the community to have access to the world, whether for job applications, research, correspondence, or general surfing. You'll need to bring your own device,



then simply sign in and agree to follow policies which the library board is currently formulating. Soon, we plan to have a library computer that patrons can use.

Thanks to the efforts of volunteer Mickey Luck, Moon Lake Community Library is now officially hosting a "Little Library" in DeSoto State Park's Country Store. Mickey designed and constructed the

library and we've stocked it with a variety of free books that people can choose from. Take a book, leave a book, or borrow a book. Soon, another Little Library will be erected at the Mentone post office.

In order to increase access to the library, we are extending our hours on Saturdays until 1 p.m. Our current hours are: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3–6 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. (Coffee and games begin at 9!) Visit moonlakecommunitylibrary.org for an online catalog and our latest news.

Kelly Leavitt is the community librarian for Moon Lake Community Library.



Chess Is a Game of Life

by Jerry Megli

I first discovered Mentone last year, and soon began returning weekly, driving 90 miles from an area northwest of Huntsville. The energy I felt was very positive and welcoming.

Every week I was so looking forward to coming back up to explore the caverns and walk the meandering pathways through the beautiful hardwood forests that surround this blessed community.

On one occasion, an owner of one of the local shops offered me a copy of *The Groundhog*. In that edition, I discovered that Moon Lake Community Library has "chess and games of strategy" every Saturday morning. What?! With everything else this community has to offer — chess, too!

My priorities immediately shifted. They became: #1 — Chess on Saturday mornings; #2 — Hike another day.

Through these chess games and the library, I have had the privilege of meeting many local residents. In



October of last year, I moved to Mentone.

We invite you all to come to the library each Saturday morning between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. for chess, other games of strategy, coffee, and conversation. This

library is a great place to spend some time. (Paradigm shift: It's not your typical library. This one is really fun.) Playing chess is a great way to spend some time. A social pastime. Casual chess.

Throughout the years, studies have found that, for young people, learning to play chess dovetails learning real life lessons. Have a plan. As time passes, review the plan. Adjust the plan to accommodate changes that have occurred. Chess teaches, as do real life lessons, that there are consequences for the choices that you make. Stay focused, follow the plan. Consider options for the most desirable result. Make bad choices, and you will not survive for long.

Studies have also found that, for those of us who are...older, keeping the mind active and engaged with games of strategy, such as chess, helps deter the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's.

If you have ever played chess at all, please come in for a visit and for play.

If you have never played before, but are interested, please come in. I will gladly help you learn how to set up the board, how the pieces move, the rules of the game, and chess etiquette. It remains a light-hearted atmosphere. No stress.

Regardless of your age, please come. When a man of 70+ years sits down at the table with a young man of 10 years, the age difference disappears. It's all about the game.

Explore the caverns of your mind. Create pathways across the board as you walk through the hardwood forest of chess pieces.

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MACC UPDATE: TEMPORARY HOME, GRANTS AND FILM WORKSHOP

by Randy Grider

MENTONE ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTER

The Mentone Arts & Cultural Center (MACC) is now officially holding events and workshops in its temporary home (former Kamama Gallery) at 5951 Alabama Highway 117. The Education Center officially kicked off with the opening of the arts gallery in March.

MACC continues to fundraise with a goal of starting Phase 1 construction of its permanent facility later this year. We are in the middle of a grants competition (A Community Thrives) sponsored by *USA Today*, which is awarding a total of \$600,000 in grants.

One aspect of the competition is that approved charities must raise money using the crowdfunding organization CrowdRise through May 11. All money



raised through CrowdRise goes to MACC and it puts us the running for *USA Today* grants of \$10k, \$15k, \$25k, \$50k and \$100k. *USA Today* also is giving an extra \$25k to two charities in each category that raises the most money.

Donors can visit the MACC Facebook page to donate or our website, www.mentoneartscenter.org or by visiting www.crowdrise.com/ACT-Tier1 and searching for Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

Sign up now! MACC also is hosting a two-day, black-and-white film workshop on May 12 and 13. Master photographer John Dersham will guide you through a two-day workshop that includes shooting around Mentone, processing film, and developing your own work in the darkroom. You will be provided with a 35-mm camera to use, a roll of black-and-white film, and professional instruction throughout the fun-filled, hands-on experience.

The cost for the 2-day event is \$125. Class size is limited to five persons so reserve now (256-674-3366 or mentoneartscenter@gmail.com). Any travel or overnight stay is not included in price. Proceeds will benefit the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

Randy Grider is executive director of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

WANTED

Hosiery mills have been a major part of our history in DeKalb County. Landmarks of DeKalb County is working with the Hosiery Museum to identify all the hosiery mills that have been in DeKalb County from the time of the Florence Knitting Company in 1907 until the present. If you have the knowledge of a hosiery mill in DeKalb County, email landmarksdekalb@bellsouth.net or mail Landmarks, PO Box 680518, Fort Payne, AL 35968, and include the following details: name of mill; owner; years of operation; location; type of operation; additional information. The information obtained about the hosiery mills in DeKalb County will be on display at the Hosiery Museum, which is located at 514 Gault Ave. No. in Fort Payne. Hours are 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, or by appointment.



Shirley Hussel

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INVITE HER FRIENDS IN THE
COMMUNITY TO A CELEBRATION
OF HER LIFE.**

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N • E • W • S

by Kelly Leavitt

Little River Arts Council (LRAC) was originally founded in 2006 as the Mentone Area Arts Council (MAAC). In response to the formation in 2015 of another local non-profit organization — the Mentone Arts and Cultural Center (MAAC) — MAAC voted to change its name so that the two would not be confused. It has become apparent, however, that confusion still occurs. The two organizations have similar but different missions. The goal of Little River Arts Council is to encourage individual creativity and to broaden community participation, appreciation and support for the visual, performing, and literary arts in the Mentone Area. We suggest you visit both littleriverartscouncil.org and mentoneartscenter.org to clarify the differences.

Manitou Cave Tours

Many thanks to Annette Reynolds and Manitou Cave of Alabama for hosting a series of four private tours for LRAC members. Annette spoke to us at length about the history of the cave, which is in Fort Payne. There is now evidence that Manitou Cave was used for ceremonial purposes by the Cherokee before they were forced from the area in the 1830s. Some of the cave's walls are inscribed with the Cherokee syllabary, which was invented by Sequoyah, who lived in area once known as Willstown (current-day Fort

Payne). The syllabary dates to 1821. These inscriptions have recently been researched by scholars and translated by the Cherokee.

Saltpeter was mined from the cave during the American Civil War to aid the efforts of the Confederacy. It is reported that during Fort Payne's Boom Days, the cave became Alabama's first tourist attraction, with social dances being held in a cavern formerly known as "the ballroom". It eventually became a commercial "show cave" in the 1960s and 70s. Electricity was run throughout, and fortified walkways, concrete steps, steel bridges, and handrails were constructed.

The cave fell into decline in the 1980s and when it was offered for sale in 2015, Annette raised funds from



anonymous donors to purchase the property. A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, Manitou Cave of AL, Inc., was formed "to respect and protect this historic, sacred site through conservation and education so that the cave, land and water are preserved for visitors and wildlife as a place of peace." Now that the cave is protected, it is returning to its natural pristine state.

Our members genuinely enjoyed the tours. Many were inspired artistically; many had personal, emotional responses to both the beauty of the cave and its illustrious history. You can learn more about the cave

or reserve a private group tour at manitoucaveofal.org. Thank you, Annette, once again.

Creative Placemaking

In mid-March, board members Rhea Pirch and Bill Rutledge and I travelled to Chattanooga to attend the regional Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit, a conference presented by the National Consortium for Creative Placemaking with support from the National Endowment for the Arts. We were granted a scholarship by South Arts to participate. Creative Placemaking is an integrative approach to planning and community building. The conference explored how small communities can be impacted in a variety of beneficial ways by using the arts as a foundation. Case studies and data are proving the economic and social value of the active use of culture and the arts in communities. The various sessions were enlightening and inspiring.

We invite the community and area artists to attend a special meeting on Wednesday, April 18. Rhea, Bill and I will share what we learned about creative placemaking and some of the Council's ideas for enhancing the Mentone area, and attendees will have the opportunity to be part of the creative process and help us brainstorm further possibilities. Join us at Moon Lake Community Library at 7 p.m. on April 18 for a dessert potluck and discussion. We'll provide coffee and tea. Please RSVP at littleriverartscouncil.org. To learn more about creative placemaking, visit artsbuildcommunities.com.

Kelly Leavitt is president of Little River Arts Council.

Pictured to the left — One of the groups of LRAC members who toured Manitou Cave, from L to R:

1st row: Annette Reynolds, Rich Nuckolls, Sandra Barnes, Guy Barnes

2nd row: Sharon Habin, Caroline Nuckolls, Kenneth Johnson

3rd row: Tom Whitehurst, Eugenia Johnston

4th row: Kelly Leavitt, Debra Fey, Jerry Megli

5th row: Juli Jordan, Pat Martin

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APRIL SCHEDULE

- 6 Riverstreet Tavern Ellijay, GA
- 7 Lookout Mountain Restaurant, Cloudland, GA
- 8 Cartacay Vineyards, Ellijay, GA
- 14 Pigeon Mountain Grill, Chickamauga, GA
- 18 Nashville, TN
- 20 The Spot, Fort Payne, AL
- 21 Lookout Mountain Restaurant, Cloudland, GA
- 27 Private Party

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**GA Texaco Country Showdown Winner
Award Winning Songwriter
Smokey Mountain Songwriter Showcase
AMP'D Music Contest Semi-Finalist**

Longleaf Pine Needle Basketry Class

sponsored
by Little River Arts Council
and hosted by DeSoto State Park

Learn the basics of pine needle basket coiling, an old craft with a long history. The art of coiling baskets is universally common to indigenous peoples. Coiling is the technique of creating baskets and art from pine needles and was a part of pre-Columbian Native American crafts. Today, pine needle baskets and art are made primarily for decorative purposes.

Join artist Brittney Hughes to learn the basic steps to making a coiled basket on Sunday, April 22, from 1-5:30 p.m. at DeSoto State Park's Nature Center. The cost is \$20 for LRAC members, \$25 for non-members.

Each participant will learn the basic skills: how to start a coiled basket, basic stitching, how to shape a basket, and how to finish a basket. All materials (pine needles, thread, and small center for basket) will be furnished. This class is limited to 12 people and is for ages 10 to adult.

Pre-registration is required. For details or to pre-register: call 256.997.5025; email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov; or visit littleriverartscouncil.org.

What To Do Around Here!

April 2018 Community Calendar

April 1 - Easter Sunday

April 3, 10, 17 & 24—Art with Lydia

Randolph. 2 hours of art instruction—sketching, watercolor, papier-maché and more. \$20 per class. All supplies included. Boom Town Makers Market. 6–8pm. 205-531-5181.

April 5—Little River Waterkeeper

Stakeholders Meeting. Discuss topics of interest about Little River, including herbicide spraying in the Little River Watershed. 5:30pm. Moon Lake Community Library. Email angie@oneworldadventureco.org for more information.

April 5—'Art in the Alley' at Boom Town

Makers Market, a project of Landmarks, Fort Payne Main Street, and the Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce. Meet the artists and enjoy local art, food vendors, and entertainment as we work to develop downtown Fort Payne's entertainment district. 5–8pm. 324 Gault Ave. N., Fort Payne.

April 5—RadioVizions "Homegrown Music Series"—Jess Goggans

Live performance at the historic Iron and Coal Building in Fort Payne. 6pm. \$15 at the door. For reservations, call 256-979-1910 or for more information contact Russell Gulley at 256-845-0203.

April 6—Wildflower Lecture & Slideshow with Jay Clark.

Get to know the flowers of "The Pocket" with a wildflower lecture and slideshow presented by Jay Clark, author of *Wildflowers of Pigeon Mountain*. The Pocket is well-known for its profusion of spring wildflowers. A moderately easy walk up the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail (part of the Crockford-Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Area) leads flower lovers upstream along a creek to a quite scenic waterfall at the end of the trail. Jay will teach us about the flowers and the unique qualities of this remarkable area. Presented by Little River Arts Council. Free. Moon Lake Community Library, Mentone. 6–7:30pm. LittleRiverArtsCouncil.org.

April 6—Sculpt Your Own Flower.

Have you ever wanted to actually sit at the gaffer bench and feel what it is like to shape hot glass? It's all about hands-on experience in a safe and fun atmosphere with a final product we know you will love. There is a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5 in each class. 1pm. Reservations required. Orbix Hot Glass. 256-523-3188.

April 7—Mentone Community Clean Up.

Meet at Mentone's Town Square (next to Mentone Inn) and spend a few hours helping clean up the roadways in and around Mentone. You will be provided with a safety vest, trash bags and grabbers. A potluck lunch will be provided afterwards (around noon) at the Mentone Inn Pavilion. Barbeque and drinks will be provided. Please bring your own covered dish to share. Larry Joe Hall will perform. For more

information, see the April *Groundhog* or call Lyle Nicely at 256-996-0169.

April 7—Plein Air Paint Out.

Little River Arts Council will host a unique event for plein air enthusiasts and patrons. "The Pocket" on Pigeon Mountain is well-known for its profusion of spring wildflowers. The Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail boardwalk area offers many spots to set up and paint, draw, or photograph. If you simply enjoy painting outdoors or if you are a professional plein air artist, we invite you to bring your paint box, easel, and brown bag lunch and spend the day amongst thousands of wildflowers in bloom. This is a great opportunity for photographers, as well. Free to participate, but a \$10 day pass must be purchased in advance. (Details about the permit will be given after registration). Call event organizer Barbara Umland at 256-619-1004 with questions. 10am–4pm. Pre-registration required at LittleRiverArtsCouncil.org.

April 7—Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction.

Join us for a night of great food creations provided by Mentone area restaurants and for amazing artwork for auction by Moon Lake Elementary School students and local artist friends of MERF. Table of Eight \$250 or Single ticket \$35. Don't miss out on a special evening that celebrates and supports all of MERF's programs enriching Moon Lake students, Mentone senior citizens and the community. 6pm. Tickets in advance from MERF, merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193. merfhouse.org.

April 7—Writing/Publishing Seminar with Jerry Ellis.

Do you have a book in you aching for an inspiring nudge to start, or are you a writer seeking more motivation and professional insight into the New York publishing world? Join Random House-published, Pulitzer Prize-nominated author Jerry Ellis, and author and attorney Robert French, Jr., for the 9th annual Writing and Publishing Seminar. 10am–4pm at Tanager House, a three-story Italian villa surrounded by lush woods and flower gardens in Fort Payne. \$130 fee includes a tasty lunch. Pre-registration is required. Send a check or money order by April 5 to Jerry Ellis, 1714 A Smith Gap Rd NW, Fort Payne, AL 35968. Email jerrywalkingthetrail@gmail.com with any questions.

April 7—Sock Stuffies Workshop.

Join us for a fun-filled workshop! Learn to create a sock monkey, monster or any other animal. The options are endless with just a little imagination. The class is open to motivated children, with adult supervision. \$20 class fee covers supplies and instruction (contact us for group or family discounts). Materials include: 1 pair of socks generously donated by Zkano; stuffing: yarn or fleece fabric for hair/hat; buttons and trims for embellishments;

shared sewing machine station. Bring your creativity, any unique material, supplies, and sewing machine if you wish. If you want to make more than one to donate to children in need, then please let us know and we will have extra material available. Please note the Makers Market is volunteer-based and we use supplies that have been donated or come from our personal stash and any donations are very welcome and appreciated! 1–4pm. Boom Town Makers Market, 324 Gault Ave. N., Fort Payne. Contact Katelyn Worley at 256-548-2623.

April 7—Tumbler Glassblowing Class.

This introductory glassblowing class teaches many fundamentals through the process of making a small tumbler (cup). Plenty of hands-on experience from choosing colors, gathering, paddling, blowing and shaping is gained in this 4-hour experience. Limited to 4 students so everyone has adequate time at the bench working. Some safety material is provided before the class for you to review. Orbix Hot Glass. Call 256.523.3188 or email info@orbixhotglass.com for more information or to make a reservation. Reservations and full payment required. \$145. Minimum age is 13 years old with parent.

April 10—Rhododendron Garden Club.

Our monthly meeting will be a trip to the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail in Georgia. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to bring wet-weather gear. Meet at the Boy Scout house (the log cabin behind Little River Hardware Store) at 9am.

April 14—Learn to Play Mah Jungg.

Come to the library and learn to play an exciting game that relies on skill and luck. To get the feel of the game, you will get hands-on play time with your two coaches explaining the options that are available as you discard tiles after picking up new ones. We will teach you how to play 3-handed and 4-handed, so you can practice on your own. Everything needed to play this ancient Chinese game will be supplied. Taught by Edna Fortner and Donna McComb. Moon Lake Community Library. 10am. Free.

April 14—Fort Payne Reservoir and Wills Creek Cleanup.

Be a part of our annual community cleanup! One World Adventure will provide bags and gloves. Meet at the boat launch on 67th Street for bags. 9am–1pm. To sign up or for questions, contact angie@oneworldadventureco.org.

April 14—Master Gardeners Plant Sale.

Trees, Shrubs, Perennial flowers, Bedding plants, Herbs, Vegetables, Native plants. Proceeds benefit Auburn Horticultural Scholarships and also local projects. 7am. VFW Fairgrounds, Fort Payne

April 14—Young Eagles Flight.

Pilots are available to fly youngsters interested in flight! Flights are offered to those ages 8–17 years of age. Come out and enjoy the thrill of flight and

allow your kids the opportunity to experience this adventure. It's free of charge. 10am–1pm. Fort Payne Municipal Airport.

April 14—Sculpt Your Own Flower. Have you ever wanted to actually sit at the gaffer bench and feel what it is like to shape hot glass? It's all about hands-on experience in a safe and fun atmosphere with a final product we know you will love. Minimum 3 people, maximum 5 in each class. 10:30am & 12:30pm. Reservations required. 256-523-3188.

April 14—2nd Annual 5K Kicking it for Christ Color Run and Spring Festival.

Come out and support Adamsburg's Christian Academy and enjoy a nice day with the family at our Color Run and First Annual Spring Festival! We will have a variety of vendors set up selling a lot of wonderful goodies. Kids can enjoy bouncy houses, pony rides, face painting, and carnival games. Live singing by Ryan Watkins. There will be BBQ plates available for purchase, a Silent Auction, and a cake walk. There will also be a Car Show where you can check out some awesome hot rods. Our 2nd annual 5K Kicking it for Christ Color Run will start at 1:30. 10am–2pm. Free admission. 5008 County Road 78, Fort Payne.

April 15—Valley Head Fire Department Fish Fry Fundraiser.

The VHFD Fish Fry will be dine in or carry out. Tiger's Inn Restaurant in Valley Head. Tickets can be purchased at the Town Hall or from the VHFD and walk-ins are welcomed. Plates are \$8 each. 11am until the food's all gone!

April 18—"Creative Placemaking".

Community discussion hosted by Little River Arts Council about creative placemaking, with a brainstorming session for future possibilities. Bring a treat for a dessert potluck. 7pm. Moon Lake Community Library. RSVP at littleriverartscouncil.org.

April 19—RadioVizions "Homegrown Music Series"—James Roberts.

Live performance at the historic Iron and Coal Building in Fort Payne. 6pm. \$15 at the door. For reservations, call 256-979-1910 or for more information contact Russell Gulley at 256-845-0203.

April 19-22 & 26-29—"The Addams Family".

Join the NACC Theatre Department as they present "The Addams Family". Held at the Tom Bevill Lyceum on the campus of Northeast Alabama Community College. Friday–Saturday evening performances at 7pm., and Sunday matinees at 2pm. All seats are reserved, and tickets are \$5 each. Phone the theatre department at 256-638-4418 or 256-228-6001 x 2218.

April 21—Little River Cleanup. Be a part of our annual community cleanups scheduled this spring! One World Adventure will

(cont'd on page 11)

What To Do Around Here!

April 2018 Community Calendar

(cont'd from page 10)

provide bags and gloves. Meet at Little River Canyon Center and clean along Hwy. 35, from Martha's Falls back to the bridge. 9–11am. To sign up or for questions, contact angie@oneworldadventureco.org.

April 21—Orbix Glass Open Studio and Experimental Glass Sale. Come celebrate beautiful Lookout Mountain this Earth Day weekend. We have several opportunities to enjoy throughout the day including: 1. Demonstrations by Cal Breed & his team of artists; 2. A chance to blow an ornament (\$38/each); 3. A slew of 2nd's or discontinued pieces on the porch to purchase at reduced prices. 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. 256-523-3188.

April 21—Medicinal Plants with the Southern Herbalist. This workshop is designed for both homesteader and prepper alike to learn the art of using medicinal plants in everyday life. This program will be presented by Darryl Patton, well-known herbalist and author of "The Southern Herbalist." Darryl Patton has been hunting, gathering and working with medicinal plants for the past twenty-five years on Lookout Mountain in the Southern Appalachians. Darryl is a naturopathic doctor as well as a Master Herbalist and brings many years of experience

to the field of alternative medicine. Known for his easy-going approach towards teaching the identification and uses of medicinal plants, Darryl has been called a walking encyclopedia of herbal folklore. Little River Canyon Center. 9am–1pm. \$20 per participant; pre-registration required by calling 256-845-3548 or email fieldschool@jsu.edu for details.

April 21—Earth Day. Celebrate Earth Day with JSU Field Schools at the Little River Canyon Center. We will host hikes, crafts, and a day of fun. Sign-up sheets will be at the front desk for attending hikes hosted by various instructors. Live animal programs and awesome nature hikes promise to make this celebration a blast! Little River Canyon Center. 10am–4pm. Free. Call 256-845-3548.

April 21—Neal Wooten's Writer Workshop. Do you have a writer's spirit? Have you ever had the desire to write a novel, a children's book, columns, articles, or blogs? Then come to the Coal & Iron Building in Fort Payne for a day of fun and enlightenment. We'll cover writing, editing, proofreading, points of view, traditional publishing, agents, query letters, platforms, Indie publishing, self-publishing, ebooks, ibooks, and more. We will have pizza delivered for lunch. Cost is \$60 per person. Send check for \$60 to Neal Wooten, 4062 Plains Ave SW, Fort Payne, AL 35967. Or stop by the Depot Museum

Wed-Fri 10am–3pm and Sun 2–4pm. If for some reason you cannot make it, your money will be refunded.

April 21—Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-In. A family fun event featuring a car cruise-in, children activities, food, art show, music and other entertainment. Gault Avenue in downtown Fort Payne is closed from 1st–5th Street for the event. 5–9pm. Contact Amelia, 256-996-3857, or Terry, 256-996-2668.

April 22—Longleaf Pine Needle Basketry Class. Presented by Little River Arts Council and hosted by DeSoto State Park. Learn the basics of pine needle basket coiling with DeSoto State Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes. Each participant will learn the basic skills: how to start a coiled basket, basic stitching, how to shape a basket, and how to finish a basket. All materials (pine needles, thread, and small center for basket) will be furnished. This class is limited to 12 people and is for ages 10 to adult. \$20 for LRAC members. \$25 for non-members. 1–5:30pm. De Soto Park Nature Center. Pre-registration is required. For details or to pre-register: call 256.997.5025; email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov; or visit littleriverartscouncil.org.

April 27 & 28—Shrine Rodeo. Northeast Alabama Agri-Business Center will host an all

new Shrine Rodeo. Tickets are \$15 Adults, \$10 Kids 6–11, Free Kids 5 & under. Free. 256-717-6263.

April 28—First State Bank 5K Run/Walk Fun Run. Join First State Bank for the 7th Annual Relay for Life 5K Run/Walk Fun Run. Participants are encouraged to walk or run in memory or in honor of a loved one. DeKalb Lake in Sylvania. Final registration 7–7:30am. Race begins at 8am. Entry fee is \$20 postmarked by 4–6–18 or \$25 thereafter. Fun Run for ages 5–11. 256-845-6101.

April 28—Fort Payne Community Wide Clean-Up. Be a part of our annual community cleanups scheduled this spring! One World Adventure will provide bags and gloves. Meet at Wills Valley Rec Center. 9am–11am. To sign up or for questions contact angie@oneworldadventureco.org.

April 28—Glass Paperweight Class. This class is designed for those who really just want to see what molten glass is all about. Feel the heat, gather from the furnace, sculpt the glass into your own design. Please join us for some in-depth discovery at Orbix Hot Glass. Reservations required \$145 per person. 9am–1pm. 256-523-3188.

Ongoing Calendar

MAPA Board meets on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 6pm at Moon Lake Community Library.

Mentone Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 6pm at Mentone Town Hall. Everyone is welcome.

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

Mentone Farmers Market is open year-round on Saturdays from 10am–1pm in the Town Square (Al Hwy. 117 & CR 89).

The Farm Market at Windy Hill sells fresh produce, eggs, beef, and pork every Friday from 3–6pm Central. 445 Road 942, Mentone.

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.

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.

The Mentone Business Association (MBA) meets the 2nd Monday of each month.

Moon Lake Community Library is open on Saturdays from 9am–1pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3–6pm. Enjoy complimentary coffee, chess and other games of strategy on Saturday mornings at 9am. Visit moonlakecommunitylibrary.org.

The Rhododendron Garden Club meets each month on the 2nd Tuesday at 10am at the Boy Scout House. 'Green thumbs' and 'brown thumbs' welcome! 256-634-4403.

The Lookout Mountain Wholistic Center meets monthly on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays at Rock Ridge Retreat Center in Valley Head at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome!

Yoga classes at Moon Lake School are held every Wednesday afternoon from 4–5pm in the school gym. There is no charge. This class is taught by video. Call 256-634-4113 for more information.

Writing anyone? Point of the Pen is a small, supportive writing group that welcomes anyone to join us for a casual sharing time with other writers interested in life stories, poetry, and fiction. Come to Moon Lake Community Library on the 1st Thursday of each month at 3:15pm. Call 256-635-8775

for details.

The Lookout Mountain Knitters meet each Tuesday at 3pm at Moon Lake Community Library.

Lookout Mountain Strummers mountain dulcimer group meets on alternate Thursdays at 1pm at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church. For a schedule and directions, send an email to norbaker194@gmail.com. Beginners are welcome.

DeKalb Quilters meet every 4th Tuesday at 9:30am. Second Baptist Church in Fort Payne.

The DeKalb County Genealogical Society meets the 2nd Saturday of every month in the DeKalb County Public Library, 10am.

The Little River group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Saturday & every Tuesday night at 6pm at St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church in Mentone. Both meetings are Open AA Discussion Meetings. Anyone who thinks they might have a problem with alcohol is welcome. Questions? Call 256-634-3060.

AL-ANON family and friends support group meets every Tuesday at 6pm at St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Church in Mentone. Same time and location as the AA Meeting. Come

join us and help us grow!

Hope AA/NA, a Christian-based support group, meets each Friday at 6pm at Church of God of Prophecy on Hwy. 117 in Mentone.

JHH & CLC meet at 9am each Friday at the DeKalb County Council on Aging, followed by a quilt-making class that is open to the public.

Exercise Room is open at the Dekalb County Council on Aging each week, Monday through Friday (except for certain holidays), from 8am to Noon.

Ballroom dancing lessons are offered at DeKalb County Council on Aging on Monday nights from 6–8pm. 256-845-8590.

Line dancing lessons are offered at DeKalb County Council on Aging on Tuesdays from **1:30–3:30pm. 256-845-8590.**

Free Square Dance Lessons offered most Thursdays, 6:30pm, at Tom Bevill Center in Rainsville by Duos and Solos Dance Club. 256-638-2780.

*Calendar entries
are subject to change.*



Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to submit? We would love to share it with our readers. Mail it to us at P.O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984, email it to groundhognews@yahoo.com, or send us a private message through Facebook. We look forward to featuring our readers' recipes!

BUCKEYE BUNDT CAKE

submitted by Lisa Crow

Peanut Butter Filling:

- 3/4 C. creamy peanut butter
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/4 C. powdered sugar, sifted
- 3 Tbsp. whole milk

Cake:

- 1 C. water
- 6 oz. unsalted butter + 1 Tbsp. for greasing the pan
- 1/3 C. cocoa powder + 2 Tbsp. for dusting the pan
- 1 heaping Tbsp. instant espresso powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 C. all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 C. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 C. sour cream

Shiny Peanut Butter Chocolate Glaze:

- 1/2 C. heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 2 Tbsp. corn syrup
- 1/4 C. creamy peanut butter

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 10–12 cup Bundt pan generously with 1 tablespoon of softened butter. Sprinkle the 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder into the pan and swirl it around to coat the entire pan evenly. Pay attention especially to the middle tube and the bottom.
2. Make the filling by adding all of the peanut butter filling ingredients to a large mixing bowl and mix with a hand mixer until smooth and no streaks of cream cheese or peanut butter remain. Set aside.
3. Heat the water, 6 ounces of butter, 1/3 cup of cocoa powder, espresso and salt in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk to remove any lumps. When butter is melted, and the pot just comes to a boil, take off the heat and set aside.
4. In large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, granulated sugar and baking soda. Whisk in the chocolate and butter mixture, followed by the 2 eggs, vanilla and sour cream. Whisk until there are no streaks of sour cream but try not to overmix — a few lumps are okay.
5. Pour 3/4 of the batter into the prepared Bundt pan. Spoon the peanut butter cream cheese filling evenly on top of the batter, trying to keep it from touching the sides or middle tube.
6. Cover the peanut butter filling with the rest of the cake batter. Bake in the preheated oven for 50 to 60 minutes.
7. Cool the cake for 10 minutes. Loosen the sides with a thin knife, if needed, and place a cake plate over the pan. Invert the pan so it's resting cake-side down on the plate, and carefully lift the Bundt pan away from the cake.
8. Make the glaze by heating the cream, sugar, peanut butter and corn syrup to almost a boil. Pour the heated mixture over the chocolate and let it sit a minute to start melting. Whisk until smooth and shiny, then pour the mixture over the top of the cake.

Tip: Don't skip the butter and cocoa powder coating of the Bundt pan! If you do, you risk the bottom of the cake sticking to the pan and the cake coming apart.

HAPPY DAY!

April Birthdays

- April 1 – Michele Kincer
- April 1 – Angie Miller
- April 1 - Calvin Lanier
- April 1 - Kayla Cronnon
- April 1 – Cayson Hughes
- April 2 - Milton Chambers
- April 2 – Ellie Cox
- April 2 - Jayken Lawton
- April 2 – Nancy Lawton
- April 2 – Amanda Patrick
- April 3 – Ray Padgett
- April 3 – Jessica Battles
- April 4 – Jamie Vest
- April 4 – Mina Blalock
- April 4 – Sherry Barkley
- April 4 – Coty Powell
- April 5 – Kaitlyn Tedder
- April 5 – Jana Sharp
- April 5 - Kenny Chamlee
- April 5 - Steve Rhodes
- April 5 - Chris Black
- April 5 – Andi Runnels
- April 5 – Donna Busby
- April 5 – Jamie Pannell
- April 6 – Jazz Hazelton
- April 6 – John Chambers
- April 6 – Ethel Manifold
- April 6 – Sydney Ingram
- April 6 – Jennifer Cruse
- April 7 – Shannon Chappell

- April 7 – Kansas Lee
- April 7 – Kyle Miller
- April 7 – Dori Reed
- April 8 – Angie Wright
- April 8 – Jackson Eli Rosson
- April 8 – Sharon Coots
- April 8 - Madissen Chitwood
- April 8 - Hayden Knowles
- April 9 – Josh Goss
- April 9 – Justin Kahler
- April 9 – Mickey Smith
- April 10 - Brittany McAdams
- April 10 – Newly Ingram
- April 10 – Paul Ethan Blackwell
- April 10- Lindsey Webb
- April 10 – Lisa Moore
- April 10 – Emily McElhaney
- April 10 – Debra Rhodes
- April 10 – Stanford Carson
- April 10 – Conner Barkley
- April 10 – Robert Tillman
- April 11 – Jorden Beasley
- April 11 – Joey Garrett
- April 11 – Josie Crider
- April 11 – Jerri Ann Tidmore
- April 11 – Austin & Ashton Simpson
- April 12 – Corey Davis
- April 12 – Kyle Coots
- April 12 – Tiffany Baker
- April 12 – Jeff Stephenson
- April 12 – Liam Cooper
- April 13 – Brian Blalock
- April 13 – Tessa Gravitt
- April 14 – Zoey Chambers

- April 14 – Carl Tubberville
- April 14 – Jason Baber
- April 14 – Tucker Wayne Smith
- April 15 – Barbara Busby Rape
- April 16 – Preston Kirby
- April 16 – Danny Hopper
- April 16 – Al Blackburn
- April 16 – Sandy Johnson
- April 16 – Walker Reece Stinson
- April 17 – Ann Cash Harrell
- April 17 – Scott Guinn
- April 17 – Hannah Drain
- April 18 – Taylor Verdon
- April 18 – Shan Smith
- April 19 – Butch Manifold
- April 20 – Lane Ingram
- April 20 – Brenda Clinton
- April 21 – Charlene Smith
- April 22 – Thelma Coots
- April 22 – John Paul Verdon
- April 23 – Lauren McGee
- April 23 – Philip Cash
- April 23 – John P. Smith Jr.
- April 23 – Coleton Phillips
- April 23 – KareyAnn Garner
- April 24 – Courtney Meadows
- April 24 – Taylee Keith
- April 24 – Adam Dupree
- April 25 – Cooper Kirby
- April 25 – Jennifer Hamilton
- April 26 – Molly Manifold
- April 26 – Eloise Lance
- April 26 – John Moore
- April 26 – Phyllis James

- April 26 – Cindy Carden
- April 26 – Zack Payne
- April 26 – Wesley Flarity
- April 27 – Kaden Brody Johnson
- April 27 – Emily Miller
- April 27 – Kaylee Cartwright
- April 27 – Tommy Stephens
- April 28 – Stacey Bowman
- April 28 – Austin Reed
- April 28 – Alfred Langston
- April 29 – Linda Stephenson
- April 29 – Katie Hester
- April 29 – Dawson Kincer
- April 29 – John Kincer
- April 29 – Ezra Underwood
- April 30 – Mandi Goza
- April 30 – Anita Meadows
- April 30 – Shane McMahan
- April 30 – Jaimee McGee
- April 30 – Doug Powell

April Anniversaries

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

Hear That Buzz?

That's the sound of honey bees from Underwood Honey Farms in Valley Head. Joe and Yvette Underwood, certified Beekeepers, love what they do. They are members of the Etowah Beekeepers Association in Gadsden.

Joe and Yvette are quiet people who patiently answered my questions and made me feel right at home during our conversation.



Joe's dad, Jeff, was a beekeeper and sharecropper who became a Master Gardener and was honored by A&M University. He died in 1980. "Beekeeping and selling the honey was a way to make extra money back in those days," says Joe. Jobs were scarce because of segregation, so Joe went north for a better life at the age of 24.

In 1988, Joe and Yvette came home for a visit and realized they were going to have a new baby, Jeremy. So, they moved to Valley Head from New York, where Joe had been working, having spent some time in the military.

The Underwoods started beekeeping in 2006 with two boxes of bees from a certified beekeeper in Knoxville, TN. It was a hard year of learning and they lost both boxes. Joe continued and found more bees at Gardner Apiaries in Baxley, Georgia. He began splitting the boxes so the new baby bees would multiply, making new queens, and filling the boxes.

After five years, Underwood Honey Farms had 218 hives and was shipping honey to New Jersey, New York, Chicago, Texas, and Detroit.

His life-long friend, Edward Blue, helped Joe when he started working as a beekeeper. Together, they found bee swarms from trees and from some people's houses. They carefully put them into their new homes — the bee boxes or hives. Joe and Edward



would sling the honey in a machine, placing the cones from the boxes vertically in the slots, and it would spin the honey out of the cones. The honey would then be filtered several times to get all the wax and other particles out, with the last step being to put the honey in jars.

Joe quickly learned that the honey had to be filled to the top of the jar and was soon winning ribbons at the fair for his high quality pure honey. He doesn't use any fillers, like Sorghum or Kayro, that thin the honey, nor does he heat it.

Many of us have followed the trend of honey bees dying off even though they've been around for millions of years, and Joe attributes it to the poisons that are sprayed on vegetation where the bees gather pollen. When they take the poison back to the hive, the bees begin to die. "Any time you have poison in the box, you're not only hurting the bees, but you're hurting anyone who eats the honey."

There are several other things that can affect the health of the bees: cold weather, mites, and wax moth. When mites get in the bee hives, they kill the bees and as a result, the infected box must be burned so it can never be used again. It's best for hives to be located in the sun for at least eight hours. In the winter, the highly organized honey bees go into their sleep state. The hive stays warm (about 93°) by the bees clustering together. They only occasionally venture out to get food — a secret concoction which Joe provides near the box.

These non-aggressive honey bees are awake and going about pollinating the food we eat from 3 or 4 in the morning until the sun sets. It takes about a year for a hive to produce honey. Agriculture depends greatly on the honeybee for pollination, accounting for 80% of all insect pollination.

Interestingly, a honeybee hive will collect 65 pounds of pollen a year and travel over 90,000 miles

(cont'd on page 23)



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

Linda Patterson, owner of the chapel, said the idea for it began with a bell, and now that bell rings as newlyweds exit the door of the chapel.

*To arrange your wedding or renewing of your
wedding vows, call
256-634-4181*

This Old House: MERF Community House



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

MERF’s 6th annual Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction is happening on Saturday, April 7! Come join us for an evening of creative food and amazing artwork in celebration of “Mentone — It’s Only Natural”. Lots of hard work and creative juices have come together to transform the Moon Lake School gymnasium. Thanks to everyone who is making this evening a great celebration of our community.

The students’ work has been chosen for the auction, even though it was difficult not to pick all of them! Ms. Paula and the students have been creating masterpieces with paints, baby oil, pastels and different papers.

Artists who have donated to MERF’s fundraiser

are Scott Thomas, Lydia Randolph, Tim Smith, Rita Winters, Brad Lackey, Phil Faircloth, Melinda Whitt, Neal Whitt, Brandy Pecault, Nightingale Pottery, Emily Guin, Guy Barnes, Betsy Scott, Katherine’s Framing, Cathy Stephenson, and Linda Munoz.

The culinary creations are coming from Wildflower Café, Green Leaf Grill, Plowshares Bistro, JoeJohn’s Catering, Mentone Market, Fontana’s Catering, The Willow Tree, Mildred’s Meadows, Harvest Roots, Kathy’s Pickles, Paula’s Biscuits, and Valley Head culinary team.

A limited number of tickets remain, so if you plan on attending, stop by Mentone Market or call Sarah at 256-634-4673 to purchase them.

MERF senior lunches will continue until April 25 at the Moon Lake Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Thank you, Moon Lake, for sharing your facilities with MERF. The MERF Building Committee is working hard to find the right contractor to repair the foundation of the MERF house so that lunches and events can resume 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 POB107 Mentone, AL 35984 or contribute online at www.crowdrise.com/MERF. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-634-4673.

Executive Director Sarah Wilcox is the “voice” of the MERF House.



These cute leprechauns from Mrs Long’s kindergarten class sang and danced a jig at PTO and MERF’s senior lunch.



Daxson Crow, 6th Grade



Alexis Reed, 6th Grade



Daxson Crow, 6th Grade



Alexis Reed, 6th Grade



Hannah Golden, 6th Grade



Lexi Flannigan, Kindergarten



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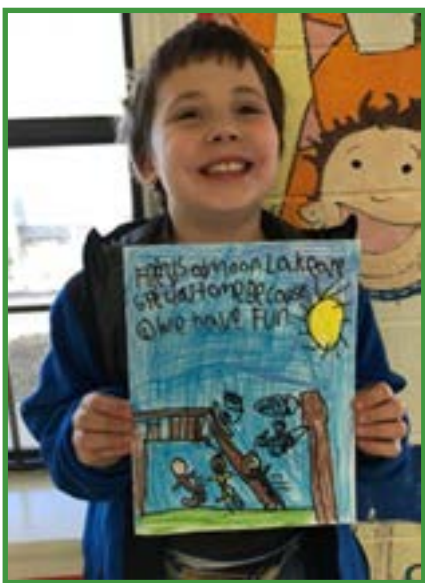
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Wyatt McGee, 6th Grade



Wyatt Spencer, 3rd Grade



Bella Kitchens, 3rd Grade



Michael Stone, 3rd Grade



Zane Crouse, 3rd Grade (Camps)



Aubrey Gregory, 3rd Grade



Jake Smith, 4th Grade



Cadyn Collins, 5th Grade



Aydin Heinrich, 3rd Grade



Autumn Rhodes, 6th Grade



Hallie Lee, 1st Grade



Domanic Patterson, 1st Grade

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Memorial Garden Project Blossoms at St. Joseph's

by Rebecca Henderson

If you've noticed the arch bearing the words, "The Lord Be with You," next to St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, you might have wondered what's beyond that entryway. The answer would be: something personal for each and every person who wishes to enter. That's the hope for the new Memorial Prayer Garden, a seed sown over a decade ago that is coming to fruition this year.

St. Joseph's member Mike Keracher, a Master Gardener himself, is chair of the garden project. Mike was eager and excited to answer a few questions about its progress.

What is the Memorial Prayer Garden and where is it?

The prayer garden idea came into being more than 16 years ago. A parishioner at the time paid a Birmingham landscape architect to design a plan for the 1-acre lot adjacent to the church. More than \$12,000 was raised for building the garden, but sadly the project was tabled for a later date. The money stayed in the garden fund until 2016, when The Rev. Bill Winters asked me to head up the project and build the garden. We've been clearing, planting and planning since then, and the excitement for this community oasis has been building.

Who can visit and use the garden?

The purpose of the garden is to serve as a beautiful, peaceful place that can be used and enjoyed by the entire community and all of the visitors who come our way — a place for meditation, prayer, reflection and remembrance. It's also a place to enjoy the natural elements of our mountain, whether you live down the road or you're exploring Mentone for an afternoon.

What will it contain when it's finished?

When construction is complete later this year, visitors will enter through a graceful archway leading to 1,000 feet of landscaped walking paths and planting beds. Park benches donated in memory of loved ones who have transitioned will be placed here and there along the pathways. In the center of the garden, we plan to build a large gazebo to serve as a versatile venue for outdoor musical events, small weddings, meetings and other gatherings.

Plans also include a prayer labyrinth, which is an ancient tool some say represents the spiritual journey and is used to inspire introspection. Its circular design will consist of ornamental grasses. Other plans include installations such as a biblically-inspired herb garden. A local parishioner gave



us a wonderful cypress porch swing that hangs along one path, and we plan to add another — perfect for pausing and reflecting on the surroundings, or even having a bite of lunch! Of course, the backdrop for these elements will be native plants, seasonal flowers and an abundance of birds to listen to and watch.

What can the community of Mentone do to be a part of and help the garden reach its full potential?

We are asking anyone interested in helping financially to make a tax-deductible donation to St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church and designate the gift to "Memorial Prayer Garden." A personalized way to give is to donate funds for a garden bench in memory of a loved one. If anyone would like to donate a bench, we will order it, install it and place a plaque with their loved one's name on the bench. Memorial benches require an \$800 donation. Look for an announcement in *The Groundhog* later this

year for our native plant drive, asking property owners in the area to donate native plants for a fall planting. This way folks can visit the garden and know that these living beauties came from their own homes. Many of the garden's plants will be purchased by the church; in fact, we've already placed more than 75 oakleaf hydrangeas and more than 50 forsythias. But we'd also love to extend the opportunity for Mentone residents to create their own connections to this place with the gift of plants.

When will the garden be complete?

Gardens aren't simply built; they evolve over time, and the St. Joseph's Memorial Prayer Garden will be an ongoing project far into the future. We started by clearing the land in 2016, and then constructing the entrance portal in 2017. Quite a bit of planting was done during the past two fall seasons, and we plan to

complete the construction portions of the space this fall. We have received support from the Town of Mentone, MAPA, MACC, the Rhododendron Garden Club, DeKalb County Master Gardeners, MERF, and many others. We want this garden to be a source of pride for all of our citizens, and we deeply appreciate everyone's help, participation and enthusiasm.

To send a donation, make your check to St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, designating "Memorial Prayer Garden" at the bottom, and mail to St. Joseph's, P.O. Box 161, Mentone, AL 35984.

For more information about the garden, or if you wish to donate a memorial bench, contact Mike Keracher at mikekeracher@gmail.com.

Rebecca Henderson is a freelance writer and editor living in Mentone.

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Rhododendron Garden Club

by Mellanie Tuttle



The Rhododendron Garden Club met at the Boy Scout House on Tuesday, March 13, at 10 a.m. Hostess Martha Wood did not disappoint in the food department and members were deliciously fed. President Mellanie Tuttle called the meeting to order, the pledge followed, and the meditation was given by Mellanie. The topic was *A Time for Everything*, with a reading from Eccl. 3:1-16 and then thoughts on what spring brings — new plantings, clearing out the old, dreaming new dreams with winter over and summer ahead. During roll call, Grape Hyacinth, Daffodils, Tulips and Amaryllis were all mentioned as spring bulbs in bloom. Horticulture Chairman Martha Wood described how to build a “puddler” to provide needed water and minerals for insects, especially the butterflies. Fill a shallow container with sand, gravel and dirt. Then saturate with water until it puddles. A few small stones added to the mixture will give butterflies and bees a place to sit while they drink. Place the container in a sunny area near plants and watch for a “puddle club party” when the butterflies arrive. (A lovely tidbit — a group of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope.) Design Chair Mellanie Tuttle discussed the Botanical Arts Division in a flower show. This new division “provides additional opportunities for exhibiting and creativity both in horticulture and design.” She shared a bookmark and wreath which are to be entered in the Deep South Flower Show (being held in Memphis on March 19). Search the internet for the Newport or Philadelphia Flower Show for examples of necklaces, purses, and clothing made from plant materials that are beautiful and amazingly realistic.

During March, members and Master Gardeners Martha Wood, Mellanie Tuttle, Mary Shurett, and Lynn Evans worked with students from Moon Lake School to repot flowers for later planting at the school during Earth Day. Thanks to The Farm at Windy Hill for nurturing our seedlings. The students

will make their own puddlers and also learn about hummingbirds.

Treasurer Dianne Kuehl did double duty and also gave the program on Hummingbirds. Dianne recommended visiting the website hummingbirds.net to see a map that shows where hummingbirds have been sighted in the U.S. On March 15, they were almost to Birmingham, so get those feeders ready for their arrival!

Hummingbirds live an average of three or four years, although one banded bird in 1976 was still migrating to the same location in 1987, making her at least 12 years old! Wings move in a figure-eight pattern and the average beats per second is 53. The Bee hummingbird has the fastest recorded rate at about 80 beats per second. The average heartbeat is 50–180 beats per minute.

Males begin flying north during their spring migration about three weeks before the females and leave earlier than the females for the return migration south. They are very territorial and promiscuous, not forming pair bonds at all.

The most commonly seen in our area is the Ruby-throated. Adult male and female birds are different in external appearance. In the Ruby-throated, the male has the distinctive red at the throat and iridescent green back; the female has the green back, but her throat is white. The male will “masquerade” as females until their first winter when they acquire their adult male plumage. Don’t assume that the white-throated hummers at the feeder are female; some may be juvenile males.

A hummingbird garden provides a natural diet. Growing a variety of plants that flower at successively later dates assures activity throughout the season.

Attract the dynamos with annuals such as Salvia, Firespike, Impatiens, Putunia; perennials of Foxglove, Coral Bells, Cardinal flower, Hosta, Sage, Butterfly Bush or Columbine; vines such as Trumpet Creeper, Morning glory; and trees and bushes such as Red Buckeye, flowering Quince, Azalea or Weigela.

Most folks think that nectar is the only food source of the hummingbird. Nectar does supply the energy source for the hummingbird’s rapid metabolism, but hummingbirds also require amino acids, vitamins and minerals, which they get by eating insects, larvae, insect

eggs and spiders. 50–70% of their diet is something other than nectar! Feeders should be filled with a solution of sugar water with the ratio of 1 part white cane (not beet) sugar to 4 parts water. Tap water is fine and it is not necessary to boil the water. Syrup can be stored in the refrigerator for two weeks. If the solution turns cloudy, the syrup is spoiled and must be replaced. Do not add red food coloring to the water, as it is not necessary and is harmful to the birds.

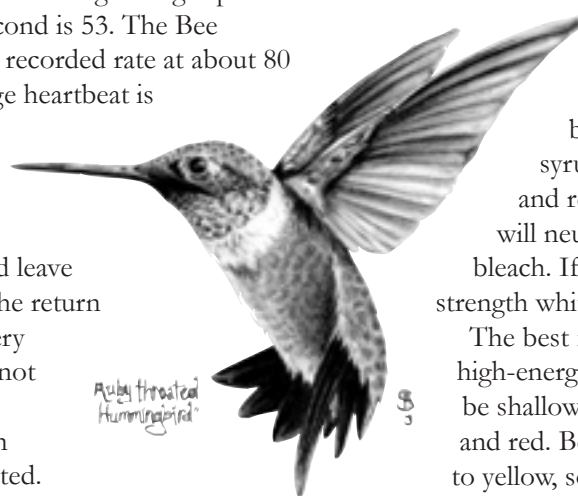
Every filling, flush the feeder with hot tap water. Do NOT use soap. Inspect the feeder for mold and do bleach soak if necessary. At least once a month, clean feeders by soaking for an hour in a mixture of one-fourth cup bleach to one gallon of water. Clean with a bottle brush and rinse. Refill with syrup. Bleach is safe and effective, and reacting with the fresh syrup will neutralize any remaining traces of bleach. If concerned about BPA, use full-strength white vinegar instead.

The best feeders provide a perch so the high-energy birds can get a rest, and should be shallow (basin type vs. inverted feeders) and red. Bees and wasps are attracted to yellow, so if the feeder has those cute

little yellow flowers, snip them off or paint them red. Folks who use a “Humm Zinger” feeder with a perch noted that its shallow pan with a low syrup level keeps bees and wasps away, is easy to clean and allows unobstructed views of the hummers. Feeders should be put up in early spring and taken down in late summer when no hummingbirds have been spotted at the feeder for two weeks. Even though the hummingbirds that frequented your feeder all summer may have already left, migrating birds from farther north may use your feeder for a quick pit stop on their way south.

The next meeting will be a trip to the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail in Georgia on April 10. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to bring wet-weather gear. Visits seem to come after torrential rains. Meet at the Boy Scout house (the log cabin behind Little River Hardware Store) at 9:00 instead of 10:00.

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



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CLOUDLAND

Cloudland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Roger Kvam. Bible Study Sunday at 9am (Eastern) and Worship at 10am (Eastern). 65 Florida Ave., Cloudland, GA.

FORT PAYNE

Since 1889, worshippers have gathered at the Historic **First Presbyterian Church PC (USA)** at 300 Grand Avenue North in downtown Fort Payne. 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, Fort Payne.

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, Fort Payne.

New Oregon United Methodist Church is located just off DeSoto Parkway, 1/4 mile south of Fischer Crossroads. We invite you to worship with us on Sundays. Sunday School for all ages 9:45am, Traditional Worship 11am, and Sunday Evening Service 6pm. Sunday Evening youth meet at 5:30pm. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible studies for all ages, meal at 5:30pm and classes at 6:15pm. We also have Wednesday morning Bible study at 8:45am, and knitting every Tuesday at 9am. Pastor Ian Conerly. 1204 New Oregon Drive NE, Fort Payne. 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., Fort Payne. 256-845-4774.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church holds regular Worship Services at 10am Sunday. Bible class or Lent/Advent services every Wednesday at 6:30pm. Steve Schrader, Pastor. Everyone welcome. 1519 Smith Gap Road (County Road 85), Fort Payne. 256-845-4314.

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, Fort Payne. 256-996-0929.

HAMMONDVILLE

The Church of God 7th Day invites you to Sabbath School classes at 9:30am and Worship Service at 11am. Visitors are always welcome. Located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road, Hammondville. 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, Hammondville. 256-601-0679.

MENLO

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

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

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

MENTONE

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, Mentone.

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.

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, Mentone. 256-634-4210.

Mentone United Methodist Church invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday, our Worship Service is at 11am and Sunday School is at 10am. Tony Gunter is the pastor. The service of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of each month, the second Sunday is Youth Sunday and Fifth Sunday is a service of music and pot-luck lunch. Bible Study Wednesdays at 6:00pm. 415 Cutler Avenue, Mentone. 256-634-8006.

Moon Lake Baptist Church invites you to worship with us. Sunday School begins at 9:45am, with classes for all ages. Morning Worship is at 11am. The Lord's Supper is observed on the first Sunday of September, December, March and June at the morning worship hour. Discipleship Training is at 5pm and Sunday Evening Worship at 6pm. On Wednesdays, Team Kids, Youth Bible Study, Adult Bible Study and Prayer Meeting are all at 6:30pm. Pastor Mike Ellis. 4671 AL Hwy. 117 Mentone. 256-634-4568.

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

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.

SUMMERVILLE

Redemption Worship Center invites you to "Find Love, Encouragement, & Purpose!" Wednesdays: Hour of Power Bible Study 6:30pm; Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm. Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am; Morning Celebration 10:30am. Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue, Summerville, GA 30747. 706-808-0909.

VALLEY HEAD

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, Valley Head. 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, Valley Head. 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., Valley Head.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, holds services in the Woodmen of the World Hall in Valley Head. 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.

Send any changes to
The Groundhog
at groundhognews@yahoo.com
or P.O. Box 387,
Mentone, AL 35984.



Stan Lawton (cont'd from page 1)

She remembered how in the days before Mentone had a bank and ATMs, “he stood at the cash register as a teller, doling out cash loans (without collateral or paperwork) for emergencies such as wrecker service and gasoline.” When Harriet and Steve married, they asked Stan if he knew anyone who could perform the ceremony. “He had a preacher onsite on Christmas Day to complete the vows. Full service. When we asked Stan about who could cane a seat,” Harriet continued, “he volunteered to do it himself. He supplied most of our needs off the shelves of Little River Hardware, but he could order almost anything for delivery on Tuesday — a claw-footed bathtub, a wooden ice cream churn, insulation for the chicken house.”

Friend Marsha Hurt concurs: “Little River Hardware Store was always so much more than just a hardware store because of how Stan cared about the community. He always offered help and connection, in all sorts of ways.”

“Stan was such a generous soul,” recalled Gay Godbois. “Once when I was going to visit my son and his family in Morocco, I came in to look at children’s t-shirts. My son’s gardener and housekeeper both had small children and I wanted to take t-shirts to them and also my grandchildren. As I was looking at the shirts, Stan came over to chat and I told him



Stan enjoyed teaching vegan cooking classes.

what I was doing. He immediately said, ‘Take them all. I’m sending them back anyway.’ I’m not sure he was actually sending them back, but there are lots of kids in Morocco wearing Little River Hardware t-shirts,” Gay continued. “When I told Stan that upon my return...huge smile! He gave me seeds when the season was waning... ‘I’m sending them back anyway.’ He gave me dog supplies ‘to test for me, I need to know if I should order more.’ He was truly a generous and thoughtful man, and he’ll be remembered fondly.”

“Stan was always there at the hardware store to help, even when his wife became ill. He was thoughtful, unselfish and kind,” said Liz Perry. “Without Stan’s aid and friendship, our life here in Mentone would have been somewhat diminished.”

Lindsay Whitaker and Pete Halupka, owners of

Mr. Hollis P. Gentry, age 67, of Mentone, passed away on Saturday, March 24, 2018. Hollis was born to the late Hollis P. Gentry, Sr. and Carrie Isabella Cofield in Albertville, Alabama. He was an employee of GameTime, a member of Fort Payne Church of Christ, and a founding member of the Fort Payne Optimist Club.

Hollis is survived by his wife of 37 years, Charlotte M. Gentry; sons and daughters-in-law, Daniel and Sarah Gentry, Jonathan and Robyn Gentry; daughter and son-in-law, Anna & Charles Bates; daughter, Elizabeth Gentry; brother and sister-in-law, Keith and Sheila Gentry; sister & brother-in-law, Shirley and Tommy Groat; and grandchildren, Andrew, LillieBelle, Lydia, Louise, Matthias, and Nathaniel.

Hollis enjoyed playing bass guitar, and he influenced many younger musicians with his kind and supportive nature. He often played music with others on Friday afternoons outside Mentone Realty. He will be deeply missed by the Mentone community.



Harvest Roots, spent much time in recent years with Stan. When they first arrived in Mentone, he offered to rent them the commercial kitchen where the Hardware Café used to be, in the back of the store. “It’s hard to imagine our business being possible here in Mentone without Stan,” Lindsay said. “He took a chance on two young people looking to grow a business. He spent countless hours with us, problem solving our growing needs. He would genuinely check in with us after we had a long day or week. It’s so rare to meet a human like Stan these days. I hope we can all pull together and be a living example of both Stan and Linda’s good nature for one another and continue their legacy for prioritizing service to this community.”

Stan’s daughter, Jessica, recalled that she was raised with the words, “Educated women can adjust.” It was one of Stan’s refrains. She remembered that when she

went to college and was living in the dormitory, her clothes were once stolen from the laundry room. She called her dad, hoping he would send her more clothes, but his response was, “Educated women can adjust.” While she sometimes rolled her eyes at this comment while growing up, now that she has four children of her own, she’s the one offering the same comment. “I appreciate him as a father more than I can explain. The Mentone community was as important to him as he was to the community.”

Farewell, Stan. The Mentone community will forever “preciate’ya!”

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SAGE ADVICE: TOMATOES, PLEASE!



by
**Susan
Seago**

One of my favorite summer sandwiches is tomato and mayonnaise. I sometimes add sliced cheese and lettuce. Yum, yum! Anyone can grow delicious, scrumptious tomatoes. They can be used in many ways for cooking, or in salads, or sandwiches. They come in any size from tiny cherry tomatoes to the BIG boy varieties, as big as a hand or bowl.

Tomatoes are easy to grow and save me a lot of money during their season because I eat so many of them. A four- or six-pack of small tomato plants costs less than five dollars for a whole summer of fresh eating plus year-round eating of canned tomatoes. Now, I am not a canner, but I have some friends who do it very well and will be glad to give you instructions.

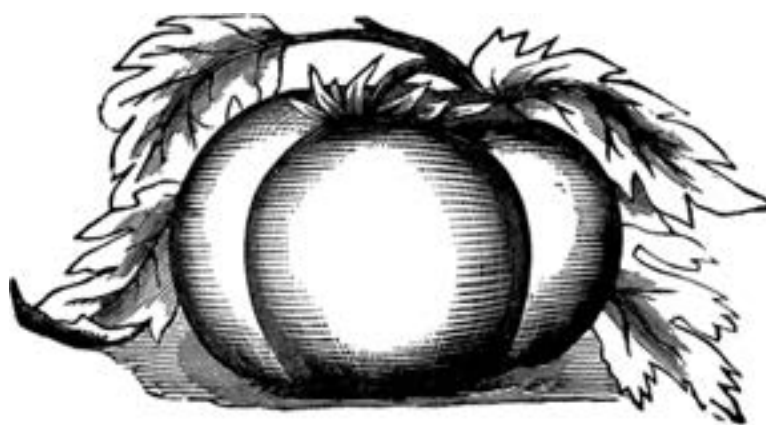
Although I do have my credentials in horticulture and landscaping, I am not a big veggie gardener. But, I do like my tomatoes and peppers, probably because they are easy to grow. Anyone can grow these and many other vegetables with the right directions.

Before you prepare your garden, look through garden magazines, the internet, or ask your experienced garden friend to decide what tomatoes you want to grow. Determinates ripen mostly at the same time and are good for soups, sauces, and canning. Indeterminate varieties produce most of the summer and maybe into early fall. The blossom production will slow when overnight temps are 75 degrees or higher. If you are organic driven, there are heirloom tomatoes that are Mother Nature choices, their seeds having been around for many, many years. The heirlooms also seem to be tastier.

The “other side of the coin” is that disease resistant varieties have been developed to have less trouble with wilt and dieback and other tomato scourges.

Every tomato plant needs at least a 3'x3' area for planting. Also, use “tomato cages” to help the vines stay off the ground to produce the best tomatoes. Cages let more light get to the plant which increases the yield. Six to eight plants will provide more than enough for you and your family. If you do want to can or share some, plant more. You will want some space between the plants to move and pick the fruit of the vine.

My secret to growing the best tasting tomatoes is to use composted horse manure as my soil amendment.



It needs to be about six months old and mixed with your soil. I like to do a 50/50 mix. If your soil is sandy or clay, a higher percentage of compost is good. Dig or till the soil before adding compost and then till or dig again. This breaks up the big lumps of soil and presents a good growing medium for your veggies. As I said earlier, give sufficient amount of space between the plants to allow room for harvesting and walking around. Insert seedlings into the ground as far as the top two leaves. Break off lower stems or leaves. If the plant is six to eight inches or shorter, dig a hole deep enough to allow only the top leaves to show. Then fill hole with soil and pat lightly. If the plant is

leggy (long), dig a little trench and lay the seedling in it up to the top two leaves, then cover with a couple of inches of soil. This will give you a well-established strong stem. The tomato will grow roots at each leaf node planted in the ground. Water in well but do not drown the plant. Water slowly to allow the water to get to the roots and not flow over the ground. Then water as needed, two to four times. Watering less often helps the roots to go down into the ground and makes for stronger plants. Rainfall of one inch or more a week provides enough for the tomatoes. So, only water when rainfall is not available.

A water-soluble fertilizer or a time release fertilizer should be applied to the ground around the plants when installed and again at regular intervals of two weeks for best production.

Wait until about April 15 or May 1 to plant your tomatoes in the ground. April 15 is the average date for the last frost. Tomatoes like warm ground and warm weather. Even though the temps may be warm, the ground does not heat up as quickly. But, when the nightly lows stay above 50 degrees, the tomatoes will be good to go.

There are some little pests that can harm tomatoes so be on the lookout for them. The biggest (and I mean an inch or so around and maybe three inches long) is the tomato hornworm. This little bugger can eat all the leaves on several plants in one day. It won't kill the plant, but new leaves and buds have to grow again. I suggest examining the plants once a day to look for the hornworm. It is bright green and blends with the green of the tomato stem. The best way to remove it is to pick it off with your finger or a small twig. Then smash it with a rock (it mashes easily)! It sounds yucky but it is the best way to get rid of the pest. Two other pests to watch out for are slugs and aphids, but the hornworm is the worst.

Tomatoes also come in colors. There are the bright reds, yellows, purples, oranges, even blue and striped ones. Some are sweeter than others, but they are all tasty. Brighten your appetite with homegrown tomatoes this year.

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River Voice

by Bill Shugart, Little River Waterkeeper

On Thursday, February 22, the Little River Waterkeeper (LRW) held a stakeholder meeting at Moon Lake Community Library. Local residents joined Bill and Angie Shugart to discuss topics of interest on and around Little River. Discussion was had about the herbicide spraying in the Little River Watershed and Fort Payne drinking water protection area. Several complaints of over-spraying in sensitive areas created the need for LRW to act upon the issue. After investigating areas of concern and mapping out sensitive areas in the watershed, letters were written to Sand Mountain Electric Cooperative, the Town of Mentone, the DeKalb County Commission, and the City of Fort Payne. Each response acknowledged our concern and agreed to address the areas.

In an effort to promote Clean Water, Clean Air and Healthy Communities, the Little River Waterkeeper

will continue on a campaign to find solutions to managing vegetation by alternative methods. Contact us if you would like a Do-Not-Spray yard sign or have any ideas or comments. This will help others become aware of sensitive areas in a pristine, river community filled with people who care. Please join us for our next stakeholder meeting on Thursday, April 5, at 5:30 p.m. at the library. Light refreshments will be served.

Little River Waterkeeper is a local environmental advocacy program that monitors Little River and its tributaries for pollution and protects the waterway from future degradation. To report pollution, please call 256-516-2877.



Get Involved!

Local Cleanup Dates to Remember:

Saturday, April 7

Mentone Community Cleanup & Potluck
Contact Lyle Nicely

Saturday April 14

Fort Payne Reservoir & Wills Creek
Contact Angie Shugart

Saturday April 21

Little River Hwy. 35 between Martha's Falls and Little River Falls
Contact Angie Shugart

Saturday April 28

Fort Payne Community Cleanup
Contact Angie Shugart

Certified Wildlife Habitats

by Kelly Leavitt

As I was recently driving around Mentone, I noticed a sign in someone's yard designating their land as a "Certified Wildlife Habitat". Wouldn't it be wonderful to see many of these signs around Mentone, signifying a community that actively



participates in creating sanctuaries for wildlife?

Many properties in the area already have elements in place to support wildlife, whether by design or by nature itself. Others, though, can implement simple practices to enhance their property's ability to sustain a wide variety of wildlife.

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) provides the signage which designates an area as a certified wildlife habitat to landowners who have satisfied a number of requirements on the following checklist, which is provided on the NWF web site (nwf.org).

Food

Your habitat needs three of the following types of

plants or supplemental feeders: Seeds from a plant; Berries; Nectar; Foliage/Twigs; Fruits; Sap; Pollen; Suet Bird Feeder; Squirrel Feeder; Hummingbird Feeder; Butterfly Feeder; Nuts.

Water

Your habitat needs one of the following sources to provide clean water for wildlife to drink and bathe: Birdbath; Lake; Stream; Seasonal Pool; Spring; River; Butterfly Puddling Area; Rain Garden; Water Garden/Pond.

Cover

Wildlife needs at least two places to find shelter from the weather and predators: Wooded Area; Bramble Patch; Ground Cover; Rock Pile or Wall; Cave; Roosting Box; Evergreens; Brush or Log Pile; Burrow; Meadow or Prairie; Dense Shrubs/Thicket; Water Garden or Pond.

Places to Raise Young

You need at least two places for wildlife to engage in courtship behavior, mate and then bear and raise their young: Mature Trees; Meadow or Prairie; Nesting Box; Wetland; Cave; Burrow; Dead Trees or Snags; Dense Shrubs/Thicket; Water Garden/Pond; Host Plants for Caterpillars.

Sustainable Practices

You need to employ practices from at least two of the three categories below to help manage your habitat in a sustainable way:

- Soil and Water Conservation: Riparian

Buffer; Capture Rain Water from Roof; Xeriscape (water-wise landscaping); Drip or Soaker Hose for Irrigation; Limit Water Use; Reduce Erosion; Use Mulch; Rain Garden.

- Controlling Exotic Species: Practice Integrated Pest Management; Remove Non-Native Plants and Animals; Use Native Plants; Reduce Lawn Areas.
- Organic Practices: Eliminate Chemical Pesticides; Eliminate Chemical Fertilizers; Compost.

This can be an especially fun project for children, as it helps them become aware of the needs of wildlife while gaining the satisfaction of actively making a difference. Human development has created the need for wildlife sanctuaries, and those of us who live in this area can easily meet that need. This program provides a way for people to become more engaged with the wildlife that surrounds them, and it can inspire others to become more aware of the possibilities on their own land.

To learn more about certifying your garden or land, visit nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat.





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40 ACRES ON LOOKOUT MTN, with single-wide mobile home, a three-bay garage/barn/shop (with apartment & dog kennel); frontage on both sides of paved road. A nature lover's paradise with possibilities as a farm to boot! Located just a few miles from Little River Canyon National Preserve. Dogtown area. \$175,000 (1076802)

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

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

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

READY FOR YOUR DREAM HOME! 2.75 unrestricted acres less than 3 miles from the heart of Mentone. Power, water & septic already in place! Just waiting for you to build your dream home or pull in a camper or mobile home. Close to it all but nestled quietly into the woods away from it all as well! \$23,500 (1086608)



OH MY! THE POSSIBILITIES! What could one do with this marvelous old Mentone heritage property, with approx 210' of brow frontage and spacious gardens & walkways?! At one time, this was a tea house where Mentone society reportedly gathered on the porches or inside to catch up on all the news. Currently 3BR/2BA, with formal dining room, sitting room, den & sun porches. Unfinished "grandma's attic" area with intriguing angles and nooks. Wood floors throughout. Mostly wood walls & ceilings, some sheetrock. Situated on 2.66 ac (+/-), with plenty of room for an additional cottage to be built. Wildlife love the natural setting. \$235,000 (1074930)



SIMPLE OUTSIDE, SIMPLY CHARMING INSIDE. 4BR/2BA (including a "tree-house" bunk room on 3rd level); woodburning Fplce; vaulted living/dining; all wood interior. Front porch & spacious screened back porch. Access to 3 lakes & well-maintained walking trails that meander through this wooded neighborhood. One-owner cabin, just right for a get-away, a rental, or a full-time residence. Laurel Creek SD. \$189,900 (1089528)



RELAX, IT'S "MOUNTAIN TIME" NOW. You've worked hard for it, you're ready to unwind. Here's that cabin filled with rustic flavor & mountain charm. All-wood interior; vaulted, open LR/DR/KIT. Spacious, main-level MABR & bath. Large loft BR w/bright shower bath. Front porch & big screened back porch for just kicking back with no worries. Laurel Creek offers 3 lakes and well-kept walking trails to explore wildflowers & native plant life. A sweet package, a sweet price. \$173,900 (1089804)



6.3 ACRES & CEDAR-SIDED CABIN. Rugged good looks, inside & out, for that mountain cabin feeling, but with the civilized creature comforts one desires. 3BR/2.5BA. Full, covered front porch; screened back porch. Honey pine ceilings in vaulted living area with stacked stone, gas-log fireplace. Main-level Master suite. Add'l acreage available. 5 minutes from downtown Mentone shops & dining. \$215,400 (1060588)



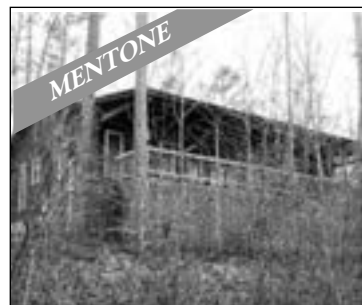
CABIN ON 5 ACRES WITH OVER 300' ON W FORK LITTLE RIVER with a nice launch site for kayaks; river-side deck; and level areas for picnicking, camping, outdoor adventures of all sorts. One-owner cabin has 3BR/2BA, approx 1800 sq ft; wood-burning masonry fireplace with stone hearth; open living/dining; spacious kitchen with lots of cabinets & counter space. Beautifully furnished, including locally-crafted dining table & benches. Full front porch and side deck. Land is covered with gorgeous native holly trees, huge boulders, large hardwoods. A place to use as a cozy mountain retreat or a family gathering spot. What are you waiting for? \$248,500 (1086017)



TINY HOUSE LIVING in a log cabin, on a little over an acre. Small in size, big on what you'll want in a retreat or in a place to live life more simply. Efficient kitchen; 1BR/1BA; log chairs on the porch; metal roof; wooded backyard; lovely front yard w/fruit trees & garden areas; quaint "outhouse-look" well house. Public water avail. Great rental possibilities, too! \$79,900 (1053288)



BEAUTIFUL CEDAR CABIN on 2.91 wooded acres with small, wet-weather stream. Picturesque setting with winding drive. The 8x42 front porch is great, but wait till you see the 12x42 back porch! 2 or 3BR/2.5 BA. Great kitchen with Kohler fixtures, Corian counters, lotsa cabinets. Spacious LR w/19' vault. Main-level MABR. Wide, pine-plank floors. Huge laundry! On-demand hot H2O. 10x12 shop. Recently reduced to \$198,500 (749941)



OVERLOOKING THE RIVER AT LAKE LAHUSAGE! 3BR/2BA cabin. Large front porch affords you a view a to relax. Inside is a of convenience & rusticity. Wood floors, wood walls, wood beams, oak cabinets, & appliances. Split BR w/2 beds. Hot tub deck. Cabin & 6.12 acres. Active rental. \$194,900. (562232)

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SPACIOUS, IMMACULATE & BEAUTIFUL CABIN on 3.81 acres on Middle Fork, Little River. Custom-built 2640 sq ft home w/WB Fplce; pine floors; high-end windows & doors; pro-quality gas range w/elec convection oven; on-demand hot H2O; custom cellular window shades; 3BR/3BA+loft 4thBR. Main-level Master suite. Move-in ready! Screened porch, covered & open decks on two sides. Three levels, incl finished, walkout basement guest suite w/den & bar; french doors leading outdoors where the pathway winds down to the bluff areas & wet-weather stream bed w/fabulous stones, ledges, & multiple falls; then on to beautiful Little River. \$229,900 (1019875)



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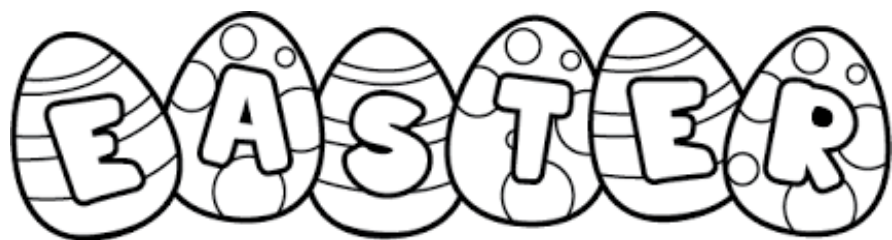
by Lynn Hixon

If you are an active duty service member or active duty family member who has both TRICARE and Medicare (for example, if you are the spouse of an active duty service member and you qualify for Medicare based on age or disability), TRICARE is your primary insurance and Medicare pays secondary. If you are no longer active duty, and you are a military retiree or dependent who is eligible for TRICARE for Life (TFL), you are required to take Medicare if

you are eligible for it. TFL acts as a supplement to Medicare, meaning that Medicare is the primary payer for Medicare-covered services, and TFL usually pays any remaining expenses, including deductibles and coinsurances, up to the Medicare-approved amount.

TFL also offers a Senior Pharmacy Program, which allows members to obtain low-cost prescription medications from the National Mail Order Pharmacy and TFL network and non-network civilian pharmacies. There is no enrollment fee for

this prescription drug program. This coverage is considered creditable, meaning it is as good as or better than the Medicare prescription drug benefit. This means that if you have TFL prescription drug coverage, you can choose to delay enrolling in Medicare Part D without penalty. If you need more information, please call your SHIP Counselor, Lynn Hixon, at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at



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Hear That Buzz (cont'd from page 13)

(the equivalent of three orbits around the earth) to collect 1 kg of honey. The queen can lay over 2,000 eggs per day. (picture of Queen Bee home) Each honeybee hive has its own odor, which is how the bees in that hive identify where they need to return to after trips out to collect pollen. The hive has three kinds of bees: a queen, worker bees and drones, and they all have a role to play in the production of honey.

The healing quality of honey is now common knowledge with its ability to reduce inflammation, indigestion, stomach ulcers and gastroenteritis, as well as reduce scarring. And it is best to use honey that is local for things like allergies and other sensitivities to foods.

When I asked Joe what he wanted the reader to really get from this article, he said, "To tell the truth about everything — tell them about companies doctoring their honey with Sorghum and Kayro syrup to make more honey because of greed." He also emphasized the fact that "without bees there would be no human life because nothing would grow. When bees pollinate trees and plants, they grow, they give off oxygen for human life."

Bees collect the pollen from the first blooms in the Spring. They flit from the dandelions that some call weeds, to the cherry tree blossoms, dogwood, and red buds. Let's give them a big Hurrah!! for helping sustain life on this planet.

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FARMHOUSE WITH LOTS OF CHARM AND CHARACTER! You'll love coming home to this 2BR/1.5BA home near Camp Desoto in Mentone. Situated on 2.7 acres with partially fenced pasture! \$159,000. MLS #1087613.



COME HOME TO PEACEFUL SURROUNDINGS in this large brick ranch-style home. 3BR/2.5BA situated on 2 acres with 2-car garage. \$164,500. MLS #1087213.



A WELCOMING ESCAPE from the city bustle! One bedroom, one bath cottage on 2.6 acres with BROW VIEW! \$195,000. MLS #1085360.



Vintage bungalow, completely remodeled, zoned Commercial/Residential w/250' on Hwy 117. Bright & sturdy 1940's-era, 3BR/1BA gem. Wood walls; period trim details. Updated with new electrical, plumbing, floors & cabinets. \$125,000. MLS #1046940.



ENJOY SUNRISE & SUNSET VIEWS in this cozy Mentone home located on Scenic Hwy. Open family room, dining and kitchen. Call for appointment today! \$319,000. MLS #1069365



WHIPPOORWILL FARM. 2BR/2BA rock/log home w/sunroom, FP, updated kitchen. Historic barn, stable w/1BR/1BA apt. Screened sleeping cabin, garage, fenced pastures, trails, rock walls/patio, gazebo, outdoor shower, old spring house & fire pit. \$995,000. MLS #1042624



BEAUTIFUL Mountain Get-Away with gorgeous view year round. 3 bedrooms, 2 bath, shake-sided outside w/low maintenance metal roof. Deck. \$235,000 MLS#1000691.



REDUCED

LAKEFRONT LIVING! Custom decks & walkways to your dock on Lake Lahusage. 2BR/2BA, pine floors, gas or wood burning fp and screened porch, 2-story. 2-car garage w/apt. potential. \$227,500. MLS#654813.



SWEET LII' MENTONE HOME! Life is sweet in this two bedroom two bath home! \$109,900. MLS #1068148.



3.3 ACRES of historic property in the heart of Mentone. Starting at \$325,000. Call for details. MLS #1045206.



UNBELIEVABLE brow home on 1.95 acres. 4BR/3BA, open living/kitchen area, formal DR., numerous decks and screened porch. Many gorgeous rock formations, a detached 2-car garage/workshop and more. \$323,900. MLS#1048899.



PRIVATE MENTONE COTTAGE! You'll love this gorgeous Mentone cottage that feels like a private retreat. Hardwood & tile floors, woodburning FP, covered porches, & more! \$154,900. MLS #1072513.



THE HISTORIC CRAGSMERE MANOR, on 5+ acres serves as rental lodging and/or event hosting. Perfect setting for large or small groups, 6BR/4BA, Large kitchen, dining, and living area, covered pavilion. \$749,000. MLS#1066488.



CRYSTAL LAKE LODGE in Mentone... Fifty breathtaking acres surround you in this one-of-a-kind property. Call today for your private tour! \$734,900. MLS #1070805



LOTS
&
LAND



TWO-STORY Mentone cabin w/2 BR/2BA,, loft, dining area & lge. living. Screened front porch, 9' ceilings, pine floors, & fresh paint! Sleeps 10 comfortably. Great rental investment. \$159,900. #1062659.



Golden Opportunity! Let the tenants pay your mortgage. 5 apartments, large retail space and storage building located on Hwy 117 just minutes from downtown Mentone. Sitting on 1.5 acres, totally fenced. Appointment only! \$187,500. MLS #1013991.



BEAUTIFUL MENTONE CABIN w/2BR,2BA, oak flooring and woodburning fireplace. Extra's include large screened porches, large walk-in closets, marble bathroom floors. \$189,900. MLS#1066473.



RELAX & ENJOY the ambiance of a true mountain home on the west brow of Lookout Mountain on 3.7 acres. \$275,000. MLS #1085355.



BEAUTIFUL COTTAGE with open floor plan. Fully remodeled spacious 2 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath. Comes completely furnished! \$199,900. MLS #1085122.

#1011734 - .69 ACRE wooded lot on Brush Creek.
REDUCED TO \$24,900.

#1014183 - 1.5 ACRES. Brow Lot on CR 89. \$124,900.

#1021165 - 2 ACRE LOT offering lake and brow footage. \$59,900.

#1027934 - Lot on River Lane. \$29,900.

#1034997 - Approx. 6 ACRES on middle fork of Little River. \$48,900.

#1038089 - 6 1/2 acres with approx. 250' of road frontage and 1-1/2 acres of level land for a secluded home site.

#1039769 - 6.32+/- waterfront building lot in Mountain River Estates! \$49,950.

#1057228 - 5 acres overlooking Little River Canyon. \$69,999.

#1057429 - 4 acres in Valley View Forest. \$79,900.

#1061943 - 5 acres on Hwy 117 just before GA line. \$40,000.

#1065542 - 90 acres on Co. Rd. 89 in Mentone. \$360,000.

#1065504 - One acre on Co. Rd. 89 in Mentone.
REDUCED TO \$139,900.

#1069783 - Building lot with possible view. 2.11 acres. \$38,000.

#1070628 - 3.01 acres. 152' on west Fork of Little River. \$49,700.

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

#1072189 - Lake on The Brow, \$39,000.

#1073864 - Brow Lot! .78 acres. \$104,000.

#1074480 - 5.45 acres on CR 89. \$79,500.

#1076191 - 12.10 acres mostly wooded. \$38,720.

#1076239 - Cleared & wooded 3.6 acres on Scenic Hwy. \$76,500.

#1076286 - 1.75 acre building lot in West Fork Subdivision. \$42,000.

#1076577 - Lot 6, Hunter's Ridge. \$16,900.

#1078002 - Brow view, 4.4 acres. **REDUCED TO \$125,000.**

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

#1079713 - Gorgeous lot in Mentone with .81+/- acres in Hunter's Ridge Subdivision.

#1080922 - .54 acres, Mentone Bluffs. \$59,999.

#1081506 - 7 wooded acres within walking distance to DeSoto State Park. \$70,000.

#1080381 - Lot 43, Hidden Lake Subdivision. \$35,000.

#1080377 - Lot 42, Hidden Lake Subdivision. \$35,000.

#1083789 - 2.11 acres with 300' of waterfront in beautiful West Fork Subdivision. \$44,900.

#1085244 - 1.5+/- acres in Mentone! Wooded tract with paved road frontage. \$19,000.

1082245 - Two building lots totaling 10+ acres with fabulous view! \$109,900.



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CLOUDLAND/MENLO NEWS

Local Churches Support Homeless Shelter

Kudos to Cloudland and Menlo Presbyterian churches who help to support Hope Rebirth, Inc., which is a homeless shelter in Summerville, GA, at 50 Eleanor Ave. (phone, 706-857-4804). The women of the two churches provide one meal per month for the shelter and also help with other donations. The Shelter provides meals and rooms for homeless single individuals and families. Their mission statement is, “Hope Rebirth exists to restore lives, redeem adults and return families home. Using a holistic approach, Hope Rebirth seeks to empower homeless adults and children to regain control over their lives and to attain self-sufficiency and to obtain permanent housing”. There is also a thrift store on Commerce Street in Summerville, BB’s Rebirth Thrift Store, which donates all net proceeds to the homeless shelter. Both the shelter and the thrift store welcome volunteers and donations. They do not receive any federal, state, or local government money.

5K Fun Run, June 30

Cloudland Community will have its annual 5K Fun Run on June 30 at the Cloudland Community Park on Gadsden Ave. Registration can be made via our website (cloudlandcommunity.wixsite.com/park) or by 8 a.m. EDT on the day of the race. The race will begin at 9 a.m. EDT. Following the race (10 a.m.–2 p.m. EDT) there will be Bar-B-Q, music, and bingo. Everyone is welcome, and fun and exercise are assured!

House Fire

We had a house fire in Laurawood subdivision in March. Members of all the communities around Cloudland would like to express their sincere and deepest thanks to our wonderful volunteer fire departments. They arrived at the fire very fast and were completely professional in putting it out. The Cloudland Volunteer Fire Dept., which has stations in both AL and GA, was first on the scene and sent

2 trucks and 1 squad. Also to arrive were: the Menlo, GA, Volunteer Fire Department with 1 truck and 1 squad; the Broomtown, AL, Fire Department with 1 truck; and the Teloga, GA, Fire Department with 1 truck. It is so reassuring to the residents of Cloudland and the surrounding communities, both in Alabama and Georgia, that we have such dedicated and well-trained volunteers in our all-volunteer fire departments. We encourage everyone to support them.



Miss Menlo Winners

Miss Menlo Pageant

The 2018 Miss Menlo Pageant was hosted by the Menlo Elementary School PTO. It was held on Saturday, March 17 at 6 p.m. in the Menlo Elementary gym. There were six age categories. Tiny Miss Menlo was won by Khloe Elliott, 1st runner up was Caroline Tate, and 2nd runner up was Lucy Stout. Toddler Miss Menlo was won by Blakey Wilcox, 1st runner up was Jacey Hughes, and 2nd runner up was Sierra Caldwell. Petite Miss Menlo was won by Eden Harris, 1st runner up was Brandelyn Barnett, and 2nd runner up was Cora Barksdale. Little Miss Menlo was won by Mollie Woodard, 1st runner up was Mayzee Owens, and 2nd runner up was Mariah Harris. Junior Miss Menlo was won by Josie Gazaway, 1st runner up was Emily Hughes, and 2nd runner up was Payton Keen. Miss Menlo was won by Isabella Cooper, 1st runner up was Aleigha Satterfield, and 2nd runner up was Kaitlyn Williams. Congratulations to all the winners and contestants!



Junior Miss Menlo Winners



Little Miss Menlo Winners



Petite Miss Menlo Winners



Toddler Miss Menlo Winners



Tiny Miss Menlo Winners



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COX TILE - 706-766-2758 - Sunrooms, marble, baths, shower pan repair. James Pleas Cox, jpcotile1@gmail.com.

BEAUTIFUL, WOODED ONE-ACRE building site for sale. In Cloudland on Golf Course Road about a mile behind the Lookout Restaurant. Peaceful, quiet, no traffic. Utilities available. Call 706-862-6178.

WALL BEDS (Murphy Bed style) - We have all size Wall Beds. Great for spare room and small areas. Come see our showroom in Collinsville, AL on Hwy 68 at the Alabama Mattress Outlet. Store 9-5 Mon. – Sat. Call 256-523-3622 or Andy Crow 256-490-4025.

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ATTENTION GROUNDHOG READERS!
The Groundhog is available at the following locations:

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Shakespeare Visits Moon Lake School

by Rhea Pirch

On March 16, the students at Moon Lake School gathered in the gymnasium for a performance of the Shakespeare play, “Much Ado About Nothing”, presented by the traveling company of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF) in Montgomery.

The play, one of Shakespeare’s romantic comedies, takes place in a small town in Italy after a war. It involves the uniting of a young couple (Hero and Claudio), the efforts of an enemy (Don John) to tear them apart, and the matchmaking of another unlikely couple who bicker more than agree (Domenick and Beatrice). At the end, through the comedic antics of the characters, the bad guy is caught, and the two couples prepare to marry.

The eight actors performed all the roles in the

play, doubling or tripling roles just as Shakespeare’s own company did. They brought along with them a complete theatre with set, costumes, and props in a van and a trailer.

Art teacher Paula Easter prepared the students for the play in advance, using a study guide provided by ASF and her own teaching skills, so they could watch the performance with a clear understanding of the characters, plot, and Shakespearean language. The preparation was a clear success, as the students giggled, cheered the good guys and booed the bad

guys at all the appropriate moments. After the play, the cast opened themselves to questions from the enthusiastic audience, which varied from “Who built the set?” to “What other plays do you do?” As a follow up, Ms. Easter had the students write notes to their favorite characters in the play, to keep the experience fresh in their minds.

The Little River Arts Council brought the Alabama Shakespeare Festival to Moon Lake School through a \$1,000 grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. They plan to bring another play to the Moon Lake students next year, in their mission to support the arts and educational opportunities in the Mentone area.

Rhea Pirch is Treasurer of Little River Arts Council.






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‘Art in the Alley’ First Thursdays at 5 pm



Calm After the Storm?

by Paula Easter

While having dinner with a group of friends recently, someone said to me, and I'm not quite sure who the guilty party is now, but the statement went something like this...

"So, now that your Christmas play is behind you, it's all downhill now until school is out, right? The calm after the storm." I started laughing so hard that I choked on my food. Obviously, this person hasn't been around



*Savannah Torrence and Paula Easter
at Summerville Depot*



*Carson Bullock, Sydney Ingram, Lydia Hulan, Kenya Heinrich, Addison Lee & Caden "Elvis" Birsendine perform
"Love Monster"*

me and my students very much AFTER Christmas!

After the holidays, we came back to school and hit the ground running and we haven't stopped since. I had fun helping with Mrs. Sim's 2nd grade PTO program performing "Love Monster" and rocking out with some Valentine music. March 1 was our 3rd "Family Fine Arts Night" with music, art, and lots of fun activities for students and their families. It was great to see lots of our Moon Lake families having so much fun together. On Saturday, March 3, Moon Lake participated in the "United Through Art" student art show at the Summerville Depot. It was lots of fun seeing students past and present, and sharing the wonderful artwork of Moon Lake students. Mrs. Long

and the kindergarten students let me help with their March PTO program as they sang Irish songs and danced a jig or two. Whew! In between all this fun, the MERF committee began preparations for their annual "Taste of the Mountain" art auction, choosing artwork and planning decorations.

In February's article, I told you about our great field trip to see the Huntsville Symphony. Before the field trip, I had some questions, so I called and spoke with Sharon Hicks, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Director of Education, and on another occasion, I spoke with Alison Junen, HSO Guild Fund-A-Need chairman. Most of you know it's easy for me to talk about my Moon Lake students, MERF, Mentone and how we feel the fine arts should be an important part of education. These two ladies loved our story and asked if I would be willing to participate in the fundraising video they were making about the free student concerts presented by the HSO, so I traveled to Huntsville on March 15 and enjoyed being a part of such a worthwhile experience.

And if all that wasn't enough fun and excitement... on March 16, thanks to the Little River Arts Council, Moon Lake students had the privilege of seeing the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's traveling production of "Much Ado About Nothing." Hmmm... "calm after the storm"? What do you think?!

Paula Easter is the Fine Arts, Music and Spanish teacher at Moon Lake Elementary School in Mentone.

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