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THE GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

Volume 36, No. 11

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

December 2017

Plants R Us . . . An Inspiring Visit to Moon Lake School by Kelly Leavitt

"Why try to explain miracles to your kids when you can just have them plant a garden?"
—Robert Brault

Moon Lake Elementary School students are fortunate in countless ways, and now they have one more thing to be excited about—a new greenhouse. I recently spent time with Mary Lance, principal of Moon Lake School, to learn about this ambitious new program, which will begin in January. The faculty chose names for the greenhouse, and the students voted "Plants R Us" as the most popular choice.

Mrs. Lance said she originally conceived the idea of obtaining a greenhouse so students can collaboratively learn new skills, including math, science, economics, and teamwork. "I strongly believe in hands-on learning," she explained. Each grade will use the new greenhouse one day a week, and there is no limit to how much time they may spend there on that day. Mrs. Lance is developing grade-specific lessons which will cover topics such as soil types, water cycles, energy cycles, etc.



On behalf of Moon Lake School, Mary Lance recently accepted a \$5,000 grant from the Tillotson Menlo Charitable Foundation.

The greenhouse was purchased with a variety of available funds, including Title I funds. Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of children from low-income families. According to the U.S. Department of Education's web site, "Title I schools with percentages of students from low-income families of at least 40 percent may use Title I funds, along with other federal, state, and local funds, to operate a 'school-wide program' to upgrade the instructional program for the whole school."

Since Moon Lake's after-school students will spend a good deal of additional time in the greenhouse, funds were also used from the school's 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant to offset the purchase of the greenhouse. Again, from the U.S. Department of Education's web site: "This program supports

(cont'd on page 4)

MOON LAKE COMMUNITY LIBRARY HOSTS A HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

The Board of Directors of Moon Lake Community Library will host a community-wide Holiday Open House on Sunday, December 17, from 3–5 p.m. at the library. As a way to express gratitude to our local non-profit and volunteer organizations, the library has invited their representatives to attend, so you'll have the opportunity to personally thank them for the work they do, learn about the services they provide, and ask any questions you may have.

Enjoy holiday refreshments provided by the library's team of volunteers, as well as live music performed by students of Moon Lake School and area residents. Door prizes (for children and adults) will be given to those in attendance.

The Christmas village, which Mentone resident Mickey Luck constructed for the library many years ago, will be on display. Children, especially, will be enchanted by the scene, which

features the Yuletide train as it passes through the village. (Due to lack of storage space, the library is considering selling the train set. If you're interested, please call Dianne Kuehl at 256-634-4538.)

Bring your holiday cheer and community spirit, and enjoy time socializing with your neighbors at Moon Lake Community Library.

(More holiday events are featured on page 12.)



The Moon Lake Community Library Christmas village

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?
Send it to
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MENTONE MATTERS

by Mayor Rob Hammond



I am thankful to live in Mentone—in a community where a generous spirit prevails. We in Mentone are fortunate to have so many people who donate their time and

money in different ways to make this a better place to live. Keep it up!

As the Christmas season approaches, I am reminded of my days as a teacher, listening to my students perform Christmas carols. They were all beautiful, but a line from one I try to always remember is, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." My Christmas wish of 2017 would be for all of us who serve the public and run for offices to keep this as one of our guiding principles.

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

Letter From The Editor

Walking in the Winter Woods

Winter is my favorite time to walk in the woods behind our home. A main reason is that snakes, ticks and spiders are no longer a nuisance (or threat). There's no longer a need to be as watchful, wondering if I'm stepping on a stick or a snake. Often when I hike in the spring and summer, it's as if ticks are dropping from the trees, and my companions and I patiently inspect each other and pick them off, one by one. With the increased presence of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases being reported in our area, ticks are an unfortunate aspect of warm weather hiking. As several of my friends are suffering from the effects of Lyme disease, I have become sorely aware of its effects. It can be truly, perniciously debilitating. Once bit by a Lyme-bearing tick, the journey back to robust health can be a long one indeed. Spiders don't bother me much, but I do find it a bit distracting when I walk in the fall, and find it necessary to twirl a long stick in front of myself to break up any inter-tree webs I might otherwise walk into, face-first.

So, while these creatures are lying low, waiting for the warmth of spring to return, I easily enter the woods, with the purpose of my own "lying low". I enjoy the vista of the winter woods. Rocks and boulders boldly reveal themselves, having spent much of the year in relative obscurity, hidden amongst vines, brush and other foliage. The sky opens up in a new way, peeking through the branches of tall, naked trees, creating a much

deeper horizon. There is a unique silence to the winter woods, as well. Sometimes, the simple scampering of a single squirrel can sound more like a herd of deer marching across the dry leaves and dead branches. Often, I can hear the sound of the train as it passes through Valley Head—amazing, considering the distance. It's not an intrusive sound, to me, but rather carries a feeling of comfort, and nostalgia. Birds that are wintering in Mentone flit from tree to tree, perhaps wondering if a treat might fall in my wake. The flight of hawks, or crows, or even vultures, become more apparent, no longer obscured by a canopy of leaves.

When I make my way to the stream that cuts through the woods, I enjoy sitting on a favorite flat rock on a sandy beach, listening to the water's song as it tumbles over rocks, creating mini cascades along its way.

It's the most active part of the woods during these days, and its sound inspires me. After a good rain, I can feel the effects of the negative ions emanating from the water; these ions have been proven to be especially beneficial to our overall health, and I can feel myself being recharged in a unique way.

I used to walk these woods with my son's dog, Odin, who often stayed with us for extended periods. (Not every dog has a city home and a country escape!) Tragically, a year ago, our beloved Odin ingested a poisonous plant and passed away. And so, last winter, I could not bring myself to enjoy the woods we had spent so much time in. We had so much shared experience in the forest together that I saw him everywhere, and missed him to the point of pain. And so I left the woods

(cont'd on page 5)





MAPA NEWS

by Anna Mae Horn

The Mentone Area Preservation Association is a non-profit organized to preserve and protect the heritage, natural environment, and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area for current and future generations.

Happy Holidays! It's hard to believe that another year is coming to a close. The holidays are a time of reflection, thankfulness, and looking forward to a new year ahead. There is much to celebrate throughout the holidays.

To celebrate another successful Colorfest, the MAPA board held a reception in November for the volunteers who made the festival not only possible, but a great success. Claudia Lowe and Dave Wassom played gracious hosts for the event by donating the use of their beautiful Crystal Lake Lodge. Most attendees took a tour of the public areas of the charming facility. All first-time visitors were impressed by the unique private baths in each of the guest rooms at Crystal Lake Lodge, where showers are designed to match the room name and décor. The weather was fabulous, so volunteers were able to walk freely around the

tranquil grounds, and Mentone troubadour Tony Goggans made an appearance and entertained with his talents. Local restaurants gladly supplied mouthwatering dishes for guests, which were much appreciated and enjoyed. Volunteers were able to eat, relax, and just have a pleasurable time. A nice change of pace after all the hard work expended on the festival. Thank you to LC Moon for making these fabulous arrangements.

As an organization, the Mentone Area Preservation Association has much to be thankful for at this time of reflection. Most notably, volunteers top the list. Volunteers donate their time to the organization as officers, festival workers, and supporters of the goals of MAPA. As a non-profit that is completing its thirty-fifth year, MAPA is tremendously grateful for the original founders of the organization who had the insight to know that Mentone and the surrounding area is a treasure worth preserving. Bruce Bon Fleur and Sandra Padgett are two of those founding members. Much thanks is owed to the many people who have kept the organization maintained over the years. This extends especially to those who have remained dedicated over the last few years, even though membership and involvement were low at times. A special thanks goes to Ray Padgett, Kayla Worthey, Jerome Stephens, and other past board members for "carrying the torch" and carrying on the MAPA mission. Many thanks

to all the current board members who stepped up this year to ensure the continuation of the organization. Great work takes great people and a great deal of time.

Looking ahead to the new year, MAPA is making a budget and planning good ways to spend the funds raised through Colorfest to improve the Mentone area. The MAPA board would like to remind everyone that we welcome ideas and suggestions from you (yes, you!). If you have an idea for a historical marker, a way to preserve our natural environment, or any idea that coincides with our mission statement, we encourage you to share your ideas with the board. You may discuss this with a current board member or let us know you would like to present your idea at our next meeting. You can do this by emailing mapamentone@gmail.com, through our Facebook page, or via our website's contact page (mapamentone.com). You may also contact me personally via email (mrsannahorn@gmail.com) or by phone (256-635-8775). Our meetings are held the first Tuesday evening of each month at 6 p.m. at Moon Lake Community Library. Unfortunately, due to unavoidable circumstances, the November meeting was cancelled. There will be much information to take care of at the December meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Anna Mae Horn is the president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

MBA Mix: Where Did the Time Go?



by
**Charlotte
Gentry**

Goodness gracious, it's almost Christmas! And, after that, we'll be staring at 2018. Where did the time go?

If you haven't finished your Christmas shopping yet, or are maybe still looking for that certain special something extra, be sure and check out the shopping opportunities right here in Mentone, from locally-grown foods and products at the Farmers' Market, to a fantastic variety of art, clothing, household goods, candles, soaps, furniture, crafts, pottery, and so much more throughout the shops in Mentone. Shop locally! It's good for us all.

As we draw near to the year's end, we look at the things the MBA has accomplished. Through the coordination of the Town of Mentone and ALDOT, the MBA's concerns about reducing the speeding problem through downtown have resulted in new speed limit signs and a broadened 35 mph speed zone on Highway 117. Traffic monitoring has also increased. Now these things may not seem like much, but they are certainly a beginning. We believe if we keep up with attending

town council meetings and writing letters, we'll see more results. As the saying goes, "The journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step."

We've had great crowds and lots of fun at Movie Nights this year. We've seen folks searching for clues during the Scavenger Hunt that was part of Colorfest. We even won the third prize in the Scarecrow Holler competition! (Our \$25 award will be used in a future MBA project.)

We're not a big, non-profit organization. We're just individual members who are a part of the fabric of Mentone: small business owners; local craftsmen and artists; and people who are interested in local business and who know a strong economy is vital for even a small town like Mentone.

We are working on ideas to improve the MBA's service to the shops and businesses in Mentone in the coming year. Part of this will include featuring a different business each month in our article. We are also hoping to have "movable meetings" where we take the meeting to the shops.

Join us for our December meeting at the Mentone Inn on Monday, December 11, at 6 p.m. We'll be sharing a time of fellowship and food. We hope to have information on holiday sales and events taking place in Mentone and Valley Head. We encourage you to bring a canned food item to donate to the Mentone Food Pantry. Visit our Facebook page or on the web at mentonebusiness.com.

Charlotte Gentry is the president of the Mentone Business Association.



**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
P. O. Box 50
Mentone, AL 35984
www.mapamentone.com**

MERF COMMUNITY HOUSE - NOVEMBER



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.

It's a party! Once again, the seniors of our community will celebrate the season with a Christmas party at the MERF house on Wednesday, December 6. If everyone behaves between now and then, maybe a special visitor will take a break from toy making and bring some of his elves for some special entertainment. Joyful noises will be made!

And if that is not enough fun, Ms. Paula and the Moon Lake Elementary school students will put on their version of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" in the gym on Tuesday, December 12, at 6 p.m. Ms. Paula may even have some special surprises up her sleeve. The students have enjoyed learning the original story and the costumes and the customs of that era. And in that same week, on Thursday, the 4th-6th grades will head to Atlanta to see the professional performance of "A Christmas Carol" produced and directed by David Bell and Rosemary Newcott. This field trip is made possible by a matching grant from Alabama Council on the Arts.

MERF has two fundraising events each year, with the annual end-of-the-year fundraising letter and the Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction in April. MERF has been able to provide services to Mentone for the past 24 years due to our faithful and giving contributors such as you. Please consider offering financial support for another year. Funds are needed to continue great programs for the young and seasoned, to maintain services

of a director and to make needed repairs to the MERF house. Donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107 or submitted online at merfhouse.org.

During this season of gift giving and celebrating, support for MERF can come in the form of a "Leave Me in Mentone" mug, tote bag, shirt, ornament, apron or hat found at DeSoto State Park's Country Store, Little River Hardware or from Sarah Wilcox. The Christmas cards designed by the Moon Lake Elementary School students are available at Moon Lake Trading Co., Magnolia Rose & Co. at the Hitching Post, and from Ms. Paula. Magnolia Rose & Co. also has totes and caps. Great gifts that give twice!



How else can you support MERF? Amazon purchases made through smile.amazon.com designating MERF as your charity earns MERF a percentage of your total. Volunteers are needed for tutoring; art auction planning; set up and take down of the gym for the auction; festival set-up; and other activities. Encourage others to support MERF, too! Like, follow and share MERF on Facebook @merfhouse and Instagram @leave_me_in_mentone.

MERF wishes everyone a holiday season of peace, joy, hope and faith.

MERF: Mentone Educational Resources Foundation is a local non-profit with the mission "to enrich the learning

and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources." If you would like to support our programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984, or you may contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-634-4673.

Plants R Us (cont'd from page 1)

the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty...schools."

Funds from the school's general account supplemented the purchase, as well. The Tillotson Menlo Charitable Foundation has awarded the school a generous \$5,000 grant, and these monies will pay for such needs as tables, shelves, plants, soil, and other nursery supplies; the remaining funds will be used to supplement the needs of the after-school program.

Once construction is complete, the sizable 18' x 32' greenhouse will be heated by propane gas. Cooling fans will be powered by electricity, as will the thermostat system, which can be remotely controlled by computer. "If it's snowing and I can't make it up the mountain, I can still monitor and control the temperature from home. It's a password-protected system, so volunteers can help us monitor it, as well," said Mrs. Lance. The county is providing the manpower for connecting the gas and wiring for electricity. A water catchment system with gutters and barrels will collect rainwater that will be used to water the plants.

Each class will choose what they'd like to grow and will be responsible for their plants' nourishment and survival. As they explore the workings of the natural world, they will learn about communication, teamwork, and successful choice-making. To paraphrase an old adage, "Give a child a plant, and you feed him for a day. Teach a child to plant, and you feed him for a lifetime."

Many of the plants grown by the children will be sold to the general public directly from the greenhouse; these funds will offset the program's expenses, as well as provide a means to sustain Moon Lake's after-school program. "We have to sustain our 21st Century grant, because we only have it for three years. This will be sustainability money for us, so we can keep our after-school program." The students will also learn about giving back to the community, as some of the food plants will be offered for use in the Senior Lunch program facilitated by MERF.

Volunteers from the Rhododendron Garden Club are helping establish the greenhouse and have committed to work with students during the after-school program. Mrs. Lance expressed that after-school volunteers are always welcome. "You learn from people who have experience," she said. "Anyone in the community who'd like to help with this program is always welcome." If you're interested in volunteering, contact Principal Mary Lance at 256-634-4113.

Christmas Potluck at the Green Leaf Grill

The Green Leaf Grill extends an open invitation to our community to attend a Christmas Day potluck dinner. This will be the second year owner/chef Jimmy Rogers has opened the restaurant to anyone who has no family left or is home alone. "The holidays can be a very depressing time of the year for many who have lost their family and friends," says Jimmy. "I lost both my Mother and Dad five years ago, so I understand. I am fortunate that I have a large family, yet they have their own immediate families to share the day with, so I like

providing a place for all to come together and enjoy each other."

Jimmy suggests that guests bring the one favorite dish they like to cook. "If you can't bring a dish? Come anyway, there will be plenty," he says. "If anyone needs transportation to get here, let me know and we will come and pick you up. Just join us for a fun Christmas Day. No charges. We will all have fun together." Dinner will be served beginning at 11 a.m. on Christmas Day. The Green Leaf Grill is located at the Log Cabin Village in downtown Mentone. Call Jimmy at 256-634-2100 for more information.



by Barb Stoll

Christmas Time Is Here . . .

Hello everyone, hope you are enjoying this holiday season thus far. The weather has that bracing feel, colorful lights are everywhere and holiday goodies are tempting me at every turn...ah, how wonderful. This is also that time of year when curling up with a cup of hot cocoa and a good book or DVD makes the season complete. Here at your Community Library we have just what you need, and they are Santa-approved!

BOOKS

The Midnight Line

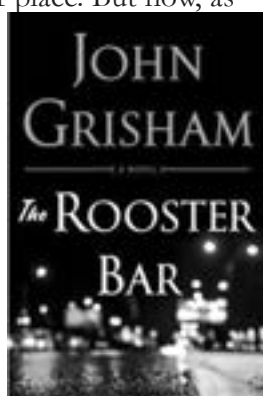


Lee Child's latest Jack Reacher novel is a powerhouse of a thriller. Reacher takes a stroll through a small Wisconsin town and sees a class ring in a pawn shop: West Point 2005. A tough year to graduate: Iraq, then Afghanistan. The ring is for a woman with her initials engraved inside.

Reacher decides to find the woman and return her ring, and discover why she gave up the ring. The deeper he digs, and the more he learns, the more dangerous the terrain becomes. Turns out the ring was just a small link in a far darker chain.

The Rooster Bar

John Grisham's newest legal thriller takes you inside a law firm that's on shaky ground. Mark, Todd, and Zola came to law school to change the world, to make it a better place. But now, as third-year students, these close friends realize they have been duped. Maybe there's a way out—but they would first have to quit law school. Crazy, right? Pull up a stool, grab a cold one, and get ready to spend some time at the Rooster Bar.



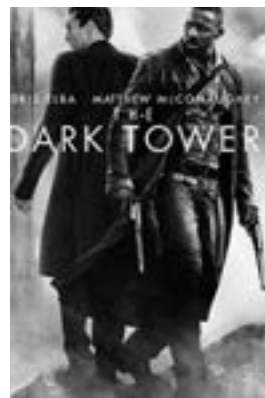
Turtles All The Way Down - In his long-awaited return, John Green, the acclaimed, award-winning author of *Looking for Alaska* and *The Fault in Our Stars*, shares Aza's story with shattering, unflinching clarity in this brilliant novel of love, resilience, and the power of lifelong friendship.



D V D s

The Dark Tower

Based on the best-selling book series by author Stephen King. The last Gunslinger, Roland (Iris Elba), has been locked in an eternal battle with the Man in Black (Matthew McConaughey), determined to prevent him from toppling the Dark Tower, which holds the universe together. Rated PG-13.



Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales



The final adventure begins. Set sail with Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) as deadly ghost sailors, led by the terrifying Captain Salazar (Javier Bardem), escape from the Devil's Triangle bent on killing every pirate at sea—notably, Jack—in an epic story packed with humor, suspense and amazing special effects. Rated PG-13.

Cars 3

From Disney-Pixar comes an epic adventure packed with heart, hilarity, and full-throttle fun. Blindsided by a new generation of blazing-fast racers led by arrogant hotshot Jackson Storm, the legendary Lightning McQueen (Owen Wilson) is suddenly sidelined and pushed from the sport he loves. To get back on track, he'll need the help of eager young racing technician Cruz Ramirez. Loaded with unforgettable characters and spectacular animation. Rated G.



Ho, ho, ho! There you have it, folks. Fun for everyone on a cold winter's night, or day, for that matter. All of us here at your Community Library wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and joyous New Year. Stay warm and may the blessings of the season be with you.

Barb Stoll is a member of the board of the Moon Lake Community Library.

Letter From the Editor (cont'd from page 2)

to themselves, and patiently waited until I felt I could once again enjoy them in celebration rather than mourning. I'm looking forward to this winter's walks, carrying his memory with me as I walk the paths we once travelled together.

I'm looking forward to being in the woods at nightfall, when I can see the full moon as it starts rising on a low horizon through the naked trees. It's as if a companion is joining me, off in the distance, growing larger as it approaches me, until it eventually follows its own true path of reaching for the sky. I'm looking forward to feeling nurtured and recharged by the stillness of deep woods. There is a strength to this stillness, one that can carry me through dreary and drizzly days. Our modern lives can become so filled with distraction that we often forget that we're missing what's important. Communion with nature has been scientifically proven to be healthful, on so many levels.

A few years ago, I attended a camp where one of our group's activities was to find a solitary spot in the woods and simply sit for thirty minutes. I was astounded when we regrouped, and several elder folk confessed they had not ever had that experience. This is the more common way, these days. I consider it one of our culture's weaknesses—the inability to sit quietly, to be alone, and to listen to ourselves. During the dark days of winter, this seems the most judicious response to our busy lives. Nature has become still, and too often we miss the invitation to join her. Our vision is filled with colorful lights and extravagant decorations. Our ears are filled with seasonal music and commercial ditties. We too often miss the gentle sound of a single branch falling, or of trees creaking under the weight of new-fallen snow, or of ice cracking as it breaks away from a thawing shoreline.

Living in Mentone takes away our last excuse, really, to walk deep into the woods. Many of us have easy access from our own homes, or from our friends' homes, and DeSoto State Park and Little River Canyon National Preserve offer us thousands of acres of opportunities. We are fortunate. This is no small thing. While the rest of the world is being increasingly encroached on by technology, we can follow the ways of old, and let the healing power of nature take its course, and let her effect on us then influence how we approach the world. As Henry Thoreau once said, "I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees."

Kelly Leavitt

MAPA Survey Seeks Festival Feedback

The Mentone Area Preservation Association, which plans and conducts both the fall Colorfest and spring Rhododendron Festival, is conducting a survey in the Mentone area. The survey is available online at mapapmentone.com. If you receive a questionnaire in the mail, please return it. We are eager to hear your feedback on these two festivals.



Little River Arts Council News

by Kelly Leavitt

The Little River Arts Council enjoyed an active fall while hosting our Mentone Home Tour, Silent Auction, and Creative Spirit Market. Each event was well attended, and we successfully

raised over \$4,000 to fund our upcoming programs in 2018. We are tremendously grateful to the homeowners who participated in the tour, as well as to the volunteers who assisted in so many ways.

At our most recent board meeting, we welcomed local artist Barbara Umland to the board. Barbara was instrumental in creating last September's Global Plein Air Paint Out event, and we look forward to her ideas and active participation as we move forward.

We also discussed ways to improve and enhance our annual events, as well as possible new programs for the coming year. We are beginning to plan our annual membership meeting, which will be held in January, and the board is looking forward to spending time socializing with Arts Council members.

New members have joined the Council at each event this summer and fall, and we held a membership drive in November. This drive involves a collaboration with Manitou Cave of Alabama; in 2018, members will be invited to a

private guided tour of the cave. Our membership roll currently stands at 108.

Our board meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Moon Lake Community Library, and anyone who would like to address the board with ideas or concerns may be added to the agenda and will be given time at the beginning of the meeting.

Throughout world history, the arts have provided vital aspects to a successful and flourishing culture, and we enthusiastically welcome community participation and membership. To learn more about our mission of actively supporting the arts and artists in the Mentone area, visit littleriverartscouncil.org.

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

Take a Hike! First Day Hike along the DeSoto Scout Trail



**January 1,
2018
DeSoto
State
Park**

First Day Hikes are held annually on New Year's Day throughout the country, and are designed to encourage visitors to enjoy parks year-round and to promote good health and exercise by working off

those calories gained during the holidays. Join the DeSoto State Park, Little River Canyon Preserve (National Park Service), and JSU Field Schools staff on a beautiful outdoor adventure/hike along the West Fork of Little River on the rugged DeSoto Scout Trail. See historic Civilian Conservation Corps-built structures, waterfalls,

and wonderful views of Little River. This hike will be roughly two miles total (moderately strenuous terrain). Meet at 1 p.m. at the DeSoto State Park Country Store for a pre-hike orientation. This event is free and open to everyone. For details, contact Brittney Hughes at 256-997-5025.



Triple G Tradin Post

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Volunteer Fire Department Recognizes Youth Fund Raisers

by Barbara Tillery

We recently had some VIPs at Station One of the North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District. They were young people who have given of their time to help with our fundraising efforts. To express the department's appreciation, Board Member Charlie Runnels presented each of them with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Brothers Gunner and Colton Hadley set up a booth at Colorfest and sold rocks for people to paint. (They have a Facebook page called Mentone Rocks which explains their project). They donated all the money they raised to the fire department. In addition to receiving certificates, Gunner and Colton were given a personal demonstration by firefighter Wes Pullen, as he showed them all the gear a firefighter must wear when he or she goes out to fight a fire.

Kansas Lee, Dylan Lee, Avion Gelfenstein, and Devin Crow tirelessly prepared food orders at Colorfest, and we couldn't have done without them. Their devoted efforts made our Colorfest fundraiser one of our most successful to date.

We truly appreciate the support from our community. You don't have to be a young person to get involved, so if you are interested in helping,



Wes Pullen demonstrates firefighting gear to brothers Colton and Gunner Hadley.



Charlie Runnels presents Dylan Lee with a certificate of appreciation.

please reach out to us. If you can't spare the time but would still like to make a difference, donations are always needed and much appreciated. You may make an online donation through our website at NorthLookoutMountainFPD.com. Once on the website please go to our donations page and click on the PayPal link. If online donations aren't your thing, you may also mail a check made payable to NLMFPD to P.O. Box 154, Mentone, AL 35984. Be safe!

Barbara Tillery is a local resident who volunteers her time to the Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District.

THE GROUNDHOG WELCOMES THE COMMUNITY'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The Groundhog is a community publication that reflects the voice of the community at large. Do you enjoy writing? Do you enjoy talking to others about local history or memorable events? Do you recall with fondness certain people who made Mentone what it is today? If so, we encourage you to consider writing for *The Groundhog*, helping sustain the tradition of preserving Mentone's history and serving its current population. *The Groundhog* staff and MAPA board are here to help you if you will help us get these fabulous stories and biographies written down to share and save for posterity. (If you are worried about your writing skills, everything is edited before print.)

We'd appreciate, as well, your ongoing submissions of photographs, artwork, poetry and recipes. If you enjoy *The Groundhog* and would like to support it through your contribution, let us know. If writing doesn't interest you, we also welcome story ideas. Email us at

groundhognews@yahoo.com or give us a call at 256-465-1107 to let us know how you would like to be a part of this great paper.

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Terrapin Hills



Proposed changes to Full Membership for 2018-2019 Membership Year

(subject to reaching new membership goal of 50 members by February 1, 2018)

Full membership dues for existing and new members will be \$2460 or \$215 per month and will include ... range at an additional cost.

Savings of \$800-1400

For new members to count toward membership goal:

- 1 New members will submit a new membership application along a \$100 "good faith" deposit prior to February 1, 2018.
- 2 If membership goal is reached the "good faith" deposit will be processed on February 1, 2018, and new members will be allowed to use the club during February at no additional fee. Balance of 2018-2019 membership dues are payable in a lump sum or by postdated check by March 1, 2018.
- 3 Upon submission of "good faith" deposit any time prior to February 2018, the two times per month limit for play on the golf course for non-members will be waived. Prospective members who have paid the deposit can play with payment of green fees.

Contact the club at
256/845-4624
for additional information.



MACC OUTREACH

Nationally acclaimed actor Sandra Lafferty works with drama students



by Randy Grider

Act One, if you will, of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center's community outreach program got underway in November when nationally acclaimed actor Sandra Lafferty started working with Fort Payne High School drama students.

Lafferty, who has more than 60 television and films credits including *The Hunger Games* and *Walk the Line*, is serving as the center's Artist in Residence of Theatre and Film. She began her



Sandra Lafferty, MACC Artist in Residence of Theatre and Film

career in theatre before ultimately moving to Los Angeles.

Lafferty will work with the students on a regular basis as part of the MACC program. During the first session, Lafferty fielded questions from students about her acting career before advising some of the students on the monologues they have been working on this semester.

"It was such a pleasure to have Sandra Ellis Lafferty visit/workshop with my drama students," FPHS drama teacher Paul Crawford said.

"She spoke about the mechanics of acting, the business aspect of an acting career and auditioning techniques. My students absorbed everything she gave and were thirsty for more. I look forward to having her come for additional visits."

Lafferty found the students' enthusiasm and willingness to be critiqued a great experience for her. "What a wonderful group of students they were: attentive, respectful, inquisitive, and very talented," she said.

It is our goal at the center to expand community programs to other schools in all arts-related disciplines. We believe having professionals in the various disciplines of the arts to be a huge benefit to the students. It allows them to be exposed to a broader range of experiences, as well as showing them the possibilities of a career, despite being from a rural area.

As we near the end of 2017, we encourage everyone to support the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center and its programs. We are currently raising funds for the first phase of construction. We need to raise approximately \$600,000 more to complete this phase, which will give us a multi-



Fort Payne High School drama student Jesse Hendricks performs a monologue about the nature of love and obsessive compulsive disorder.

purpose room with a stage for performance and classrooms. We have naming opportunities for various rooms of the center. These can be made "In Honor" or "In Memory" of someone. Also, please remember that we are a 501(c)(3) charity and your donations are tax-deductible.

Last, but not least, a group of local citizens have formed Friends of the Center to help fund special events. The cost to become a "Friend" is \$25 a year. Please contact Sandra Padgett at sandrapadgett@earthlink.net or call her at 256-418-2879 for more information about Friends of the Center.

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

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Wildflower Café Celebrates 10 Years

by Kelly Leavitt

Three years after the town of Mentone was founded, a new home was built on Cutler Avenue (back when Cutler was Mentone's main thoroughfare). Since 1887, the building has withstood the effects of time, and now, 130 years later, it is the home of the Wildflower Café, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary in its current location.

Owner Laura Catherine Moon (popularly known as "Moon") attributes much of the Wildflower's success to its location. The entrance is surrounded by flower and herb gardens, which were planted and have been maintained by Heather and Lyle Nicely. The property also boasts many strong, old trees that have borne witness to the building's many incarnations. I was told a story about Alex Glover, whose family trust currently owns the building. The story goes that Alex's aunt used to sit with him at her knee under one of the existing oak trees, and she would tell him magical stories about the little people who lived in the grove. Flash forward many decades, and much of that magic is still apparent.

Moon likes to say that the Wildflower is an "experience"—one that starts with each person who enters being heartily greeted by the staff. As diners make their way around the stone fireplace that once warmed the original home, they are treated to a vast array of local crafts and artwork hanging on the walls and filling shelves. On weekends, local musicians play, with the staff and diners often singing along.

The Wildflower Café was first opened by



Margaret Baker in its original location at the rear of the Hitching Post building. "Margaret opened the Wildflower," Moon said, "because she wanted to create a place where people could come and play bridge, and drink coffee and tea." Eventually, Moon said that when her former partner, Ben Keener, came on board, he introduced a more gourmet-style menu, and, with Moon's collaboration, the Wildflower we now know came into conception.

This humble beginning has grown into a business which has employed over 200 area residents over the last ten years. To date this year, the Wildflower has served over 29,500 meals, and Moon guesses that about two-thirds of diners are from out of town. For some, their experience at the Wildflower strongly flavors their experience in Mentone. And for good reason: the café reflects the friendliness, natural beauty, and artistic heritage that make Mentone so well loved.

The building was extensively renovated by Mark Elacqua and Andy Talton, who at the time owned the Mentone Springs Hotel. After turning the building from a house into a business, they ran Mentone Smokehouse for about a year. (When they closed, Moon and Ben moved The Wildflower in.) Many of Mark and Andy's stylistic touches remain, such as the tin tile ceiling in the foyer and the repurposed bus benches on the dining porch.

Moon was recently visited by Sally Shropshire, whose family once lived in the home. Sally enjoyed reminiscing with Moon, and explained that the current office and one of the dining rooms were once bedrooms, and that the dining porch used to be a sleeping porch, with bunk beds lining the walls.

As the business has grown, so has Moon's business acumen, and the café has been honored with such awards as Best Café in Alabama and Best Restaurant in DeKalb County. "So many magical connections have happened here," Moon said. "I've seen people be offered job opportunities, musicians connect together, and people run into old friends they haven't seen for 15 years. That's been really gratifying."



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What To Do Around Here!

December 2017 Community Calendar

Dec 1—Rock Climbing / Rappelling



Adventure Combo. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing and rappelling is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction.

11am–3pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 1—One World Adventure Company's 9th Annual Charity Auction & Holiday Gala. Join us for an extraordinary evening of giving and receiving, as we celebrate coming into a decade of serving the community with outdoor programs and activities that enhance our quality of life. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year where supporters can bid on great gift items and get a year in review of our work in the local community and see how outdoor education has made a positive impact on our youth. The evening will feature live holiday music, heavy hors d'oeuvres and over 30 silent auction items with a special live auction following. 7–10pm. Vintage 1889, Fort Payne. Call 256-634-8370 for tickets.

Dec 1—Cook Castle Christmas Celebration.

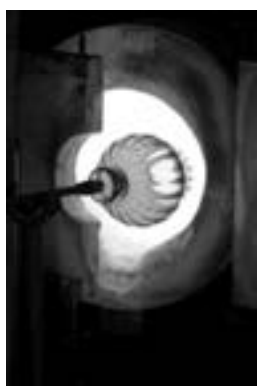
Join us for music, fun and a wonderful Christmas celebration! 6–9pm. \$25/person. 256-845-2286, ext 7.



Dec 1—Extreme Night Hike. This end-of-day adventure does not slow down just because it's dark. Intended for a large group team-building exercise, this hike has a bit of bouldering, some scrambling, some spelunking, and a whole lot of required working together. True Adventure Sports. 7:30–10pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 2—Blow Your Own Ornament.

Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed; it is on



a first-come, first-served basis. For this we welcome people of all ages (at least 5 years old). 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. Cost is \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.

Dec 2—Car Show & Bake Sale Fund Raiser for Kid's Christmas Party. Join us for a day of fun and help us raise money for our 6th Annual Kids' Christmas Party! Car show, bake sale, cake walk, face painting. Hosted by College Cafe at North Alabama Community College. 11am–4pm. 138 Ala Hwy 35, Rainsville.

Dec 2, 4, 5 & 26—Rock Climbing / Rappelling Adventure Combo. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing and rappelling is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. True Adventure Sports. 10am–2pm. 256-997-9577.



Dec 2—Valley Head Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 10am in downtown Valley Head. 256-635-6814.

Dec 2—Idler Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 1pm. 256-657-5717.

Dec 2—Henagar Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 5pm. 256-657-6282.

Dec 5—"Every Light a Prayer for Peace". The Fort Payne Garden Club will present a program honoring all active duty military personnel and veterans. Free. 1pm. DeKalb Theatre, 306 Gault Ave N, Fort Payne.

Dec 6—Cold Weather Survival Class. Learn tips to prevent hypothermia and death. This class covers the basics for emergency cold weather conditions and also covers a few tips on how to stay warm and comfortable for everyday cold conditions. 9am–12pm. 256-997-9577.



Dec 6—"It's All in Your Head" Songwriter Workshop. Songwriters at all levels of experience gather to critique songs and elevate their craft. Bring your songs, pieces of songs, melodies, lyrics, critiquing skills and most of all, your camaraderie. First Wednesday of every month, guests welcome. \$20 fee. Doors open at 6pm. Program is from 7–9pm. Coal & Iron Building, 501 Gault Ave. N. Fort Payne. 256-979-1910.

Dec 7—Rappelling Adventure. Come experience the thrill of rappelling down the sheer sandstone gems of NE AL. Each trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. True Adventure Sports. 10am–2pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. A ceremony in remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor will be held at the Little River Canyon Bridge. Program starts at 11 am and ends with a wreath dropped into Little River. All are welcome. 256-845-8192.

Dec 7—Johnny Whitley's "Rockin' Lil Christmas". Live performance presented by RadioVisions at the historic Coal and Iron Building in Fort Payne. 6pm. Tickets are \$15 at the door. For reservations, call 256-979-1910 or for more information contact Russell Gulley. 256-845-0203.

Dec 8—Christmas in Dixie: Yuletide Arts & Crafts Fair. Local artisans will showcase their work. Presented by Big Wills Arts Council. Coal & Iron Building in Fort Payne. 3–8pm. 256-996-0229.

Dec 8—Book Signing with James Dean. James Dean, author & creator of "Pete the Cat", will sign books at The Spot Coffee Shop in downtown Fort Payne. 3–4:30pm.

Dec 8—Fort Payne Santa Dash. The Santa Dash is a free fun run/walk that starts at First Fidelity Bank and ends at 3rd Street South in Fort Payne. Participants run/walk through the center of town along Gault Ave. at the beginning of the Fort Payne Christmas Parade. All money raised goes toward buying Christmas gifts for children in Fort Payne. The Santa Dash partners with First United Methodist Church in Fort Payne.



Dec 8—Fort Payne Annual Christmas Parade & Christmas in the Park. Christmas in the Park festivities will take place in Fort Payne City Park. Free popcorn, soft drinks, coffee, hot chocolate and hot apple cider. Enjoy caroling and a visit with Santa from 4–6pm. The parade begins at 6pm. This year's Grand Marshall is James Dean, author of Pete the Cat. You don't want to miss this fantastic night of fun for the whole family! 256-845-2741.

Dec 8—A Christmas Ringing. The Grand Avenue Bells would like to invite you to a one-of-a-kind Christmas experience. Enjoy

beautiful Christmas music of hand bells and hand chimes from several different churches in the community. Refreshments will follow the concert. In the Sanctuary of First United Methodist Church of Fort Payne. 6:30pm.



Dec 9—Canyon Christmas. An annual tradition to celebrate the season that is filled with holiday spirit and activities, including winter wildlife feeding, Christmas arts and crafts, a Secret Santa gift shop, puppet shows, and a visit with photos with the Real Santa, and more! 10am–3pm. Most activities are free...call for specific schedule. 256-782-8010.

Dec 9—Christmas in Dixie: Yuletide Arts & Crafts Fair. Local artisans will showcase their work. Presented by Big Wills Arts Council. Coal & Iron Building in Fort Payne. 10am–2pm. 256-996-0229.

Dec 9—Blow Your Own Ornament. Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed; it is on a first-come, first-served basis. For this we welcome people of all ages (at least 5 years old). 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. Cost is \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.



Dec 9—58th Annual Rainsville Christmas at the Crossroads and Parade. Rainsville City Park. Parade begins at 4pm.

Dec 9—Fyffe Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 12pm. On Hwy 75 in Downtown Fyffe. 256-623-2222.

Dec 9—Geraldine Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 2pm. 256-659-2122.

Dec 9—Sylvania Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 2pm. 256-638-2604.

Dec 9—Collinsville Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 2pm. 256-524-2135.

Dec 9—Crossville Christmas Parade. Parade begins at 5pm. 256-528-7121.

Dec 9 & 22—Night Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration. True Adventure Sports. 6–8pm. 256-997-9577.

What To Do Around Here!

November 2017 Community Calendar

Dec 9—Night Sky Swing Adventure. This is an adventure of a lifetime. Enjoy the thrill of the swing at night. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 8–10pm. 256-997-9577.



Dec 10—"The Sounds of Silents". Christmas-themed silent movies accompanied by Landmarks' own 1927 Kilgen pipe organ. Presented by Landmarks of DeKalb County and the Atlanta Theater Organ Society. 2–4pm. Fort Payne Opera House, 510 Gault Ave N, Fort Payne.



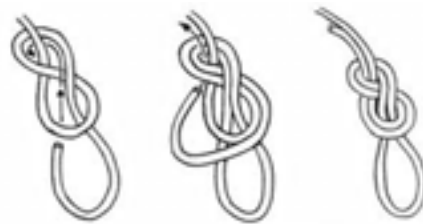
Dec 10—Community Christmas Cantata. Choral performance by community members of "Bethlehem Morning". Performances at Moon Lake Baptist Church at 5pm and Valley Head Baptist Church at 7pm.

Dec 12—"A Dickens of a Christmas" Christmas Musical. Performance by the

students of Moon Lake Elementary School, with special guests. 6pm. Free. Moon Lake School Gym.

Dec 12 & 30—Sky Swing Adventure. This is an adventure of a lifetime. Enjoy the thrill of the swing at night. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 12–2pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 13, 16 & 21—Extreme Night Hike. This end-of-day adventure does not slow down just because it's dark. Intended for a large group team-building exercise, this hike has a bit of bouldering, some scrambling, some spelunking, and a whole lot of required working together. True Adventure Sports. 6–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.



Dec 14—Knot Class & Application. Introduction and instruction to essential knots and their application for camping, rappelling, rock climbing, outdoor survival, and other applications. 1–5pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 15—Night Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure

to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 6:30–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 16—Blow Your Own Ornament. Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed; it is on a first-come, first-served basis. For this we welcome people of all ages (at least 5 years old). 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. Cost is \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.



Dec 17—Community Holiday Open House at the Library. Enjoy holiday refreshments, live music, and community camaraderie, and meet representatives of local non-profit and volunteer organizations. The library's Christmas village train set will be on display. 3–5pm. Moon Lake Community Library, 4670 AL Hwy 117, Mentone.

Dec 18—Bouldering Adventure atop Lookout Mountain. Come experience first-hand what bouldering is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. No prior climbing or bouldering experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 2–6 pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 20 & 30—Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 10am–12pm. 256-997-9577.

Dec 24—"Christmas Eve in the Park". Enjoy Christmas carols (with candles), cookies, and hot chocolate. Hosted by Mentone Community Church. 4:30pm. Mason Park, next to Mentone Town Hall.



Dec 27 & 29—Hypothermia Class. This 3-hour class teaches the extreme dangers and how to treat hypothermia. Learn how quickly hypothermia can set in and the signs indicating it is setting in. True Adventure Sports. 1–4pm. 256-997-9577.



Ongoing Calendar

The Little River group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Saturday AND 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!

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.

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

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

Gluten Free/Diabetic All Natural Cooking classes with Brenda Trace are held at Little River Hardware at 6pm on Wednesdays. Classes \$10.

Lookout Mountain Parkway Association meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11am. Call to find out how to get involved! 256-845-3957.

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

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

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

FREE FOOD for eligible persons and families. Wednesdays, 9–11:30am. 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.

Storytime at the Canyon Center is held every

1st Saturday of the month. 11am–Noon. Free. 256-782-5697.

The NLMFPD Board meets the 3rd Monday of every month at 7pm.

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!

Mentone Farmers Market is open year 'round on Saturdays from 10am–1pm.

The Mentone Business Association (MBA) meets the 2nd Monday of each month from 6–7pm.

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

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

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.

Little River Arts Council meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6pm at Moon Lake Library.

The Farm at Windy Hill hosts an Open Farm Friday Market every Friday from 3–6 pm (through November). 445 Road 942, Mentone.

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

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 St. Joseph's the 1st Tuesday of each month at 1 pm. Call 256-635-8775 for details.

Chess players and others who enjoy games of strategy meet on Saturday mornings at 10am at Moon Lake Community Library. Casual games, for all ages.

Calendar entries are subject to change.

Enjoy These Holiday Events This Month

Community Christmas Cantata

Bethlehem Horning

Performances on Sunday, December 10

5 p.m. at Moon Lake Baptist Church

7 p.m. at Valley Head Baptist Church

Christmas Eve in the Park

at Mason Park
(next to Town Hall)
Mentone

December 24
4:30 p.m.

Christmas Carols

Candles

Cookies

Hot Chococate

Hosted by
Mentone
Community Church



You are cordially invited to

A Dickens of a Christmas

a musical based on *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

Presented by
all the students of Moon Lake Elementary School, with special guests

Tuesday, December 12, 6 p.m.
Moon Lake School Gymnasium

Mentone Wedding Chapel



*Candle Lite Ceremonies
Music • Photographs
Flowers • Receptions
Lodging
Limousine*

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*

The Sounds of Silents

*Christmas-themed silent movies accompanied
by Landmarks' own 1927 Kilgen pipe organ*

December 10, 2-4pm

Presented by Landmarks of DeKalb County and the Atlanta Theater Organ Society
Fort Payne Opera House, 510 Gault Ave N, Fort Payne



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WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

A New Place to Enjoy a Love for Horses in Mentone by Rebecca Henderson

My husband, Tim, and I have been in Mentone almost a year, and we still routinely stand outside and ask ourselves, “Do we really live here?” It feels like a dream that we’ve managed to not only find a farm on this glorious mountain but we’ve also relocated our horse business and met more nice, interesting people than we could ever have imagined.

Our aim was to downsize from our stable in Birmingham and find a pretty piece of land and a community we could call home. We’d looked at listings until we were cross-eyed in Huntsville, Atlanta, Chattanooga and even western North Carolina. We had sold our property in Birmingham, and the clock was ticking for us to find the right place for our customers, the horses and ourselves — no small feat.

One night I started thinking about the places in my life that held the best memories. When in doubt, go back to something you know, right? I’d spent lots of summer weekends on Lake Lahusage, driving into Mentone for lunch and exploring country roads with my mother and her fun friends. This area is one of the ties I have to her, and even though she didn’t live long enough to know I landed here, it makes me feel good to see things we saw together: the camps, Little River, the Hitching Post, and many other landmarks.

Before we knew it, Tim and I were heading north on I-59. We’d driven the wheels off our car trying to figure out where we wanted to be, so why not pack a few more miles on! We met Charlotte Gentry of Mentone Realty, and from there our dream became reality. We bought a house and a beautiful piece of property on the corner of County Roads 106 and 642 and began construction of the stable and paddocks last October. Long Meadow Farm was born.

The house had been on the market for some time, and it needed a ton of updating. But it felt so solid. A former cattle farm, the land hadn’t been conditioned in years but it had the most beautiful roll, and the openness of the landscape took our breath away.



The new horse barn on County Road 106 adds a prominent feature to the landscape.

The move was somewhat of a leap of faith for us, because we had a fairly large program in Birmingham, with several horses in training for competition and about 30 students in our lesson program. But we’ve since found that Mentone is a central location for lots of horse people. Plus, several Birmingham customers came with us. Some had heard of Mentone and some hadn’t, but to a person each one has fallen in love with this charming area. A couple of them are even thinking of buying part-time homes here. Since the move we’ve picked up clients from downtown Lookout Mountain, Fort Payne, Mentone, Chattanooga and northeast Georgia.

We feel very fortunate to love where we are and what we do. Tim has been training American Saddlebreds for 35 years and has guided horse-and-rider teams to world championship-level competition. Saddlebreds are known as the “peacocks of the show ring” due to their naturally high head carriage, animated movement and intelligent expression. A lot of people confuse them with Tennessee Walkers, because they’re not as widely known. But Long Meadow trains, boards and teaches on multiple breeds.

In fact, Tim didn’t start out riding high-stepping horses. His first horse was a fast pony named Fireball, who carried him around his childhood farm in Jacksonville, Alabama, and into the show ring for the first time. He helped his father train and show horses over the years. After attending Jacksonville State University, he moved to Kentucky, where he apprenticed under some of the top trainers in the Saddlebred industry before opening his own facility. His training process is methodical, starting young horses by ground lining, jogging to a two-wheel cart and progressing up to under-saddle work. You have to be consistent when you train horses, and you have to have a talent for it. Tim has been known for his talent and versatility. Not many trainers can win riding a Saddlebred in a five-gaited class, then turn

around and drive a Standardbred in a speed class, and finish up with a Western pleasure class with an American Quarter Horse. That’s pretty rare.

I fell in love with horses at an early age. I’ve shown Saddlebreds for years but I gave up my amateur status several years ago to teach full time. We had a big demand for lessons at our old farm and we had just a part-time instructor. I took over the program and it grew quickly. We now offer beginner through advanced lessons in three disciplines: saddleseat, huntseat and western. We also teach driving, which is a fast-growing sport. Horses are a great confidence builder and they’re usually good for your overall fitness level. Unplugging from your phone, your job, school, whatever, and getting to know these interesting animals really can be a stress reliever too.

At Long Meadow, we emphasize safety and fun. Customers can enjoy their horse hobby rain or shine and hang out in our lounge. We hope to expand people’s knowledge and love of horses through things like horsemanship clinics for novices, where participants can groom a horse, feed a horse and handle it safely from the ground. There really isn’t a facility in the immediate area that offers the services we do.

We hope folks will feel welcomed to call us at 205-410-8965 and come visit. We also have a Facebook page, Long Meadow Farm LLC.

So yes, we really do live here, and we couldn’t feel luckier.



Tim and Rebecca Henderson with their beloved farm dog, Bandit.



Rebecca instructs Birmingham student Claudia Keane on the proper foot position in the stirrup.

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Enjoy These Delicious Holiday Recipes . . .

Crustless Sausage Apple Quiche

submitted by Beverly Bates

- 1/2 pound bulk sausage, hot or mild
- 1-1/2 cups Granny Smith apples, chopped
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup half and half
- 1/2 cup Bisquick biscuit mix

Cook sausage, stirring to crumble; drain well. Combine apples, spices, cheese and sausage. Spoon into 9-inch quiche dish or pie pan. Combine eggs, half and half and biscuit mix. Mix well. Pour over sausage and apple mixture. Bake at 375° for 40 minutes or until set.

Crock Pot Tortellini Spinach Soup

submitted by Kerry Breithaupt

- 1 - 16 oz. bag frozen cheese tortellini
- 1 bag of fresh spinach
- 2 cans (10.5 oz) Italian-style diced tomatoes
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1 package cream cheese (8 oz.) - cut up in 1-inch cubes
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp garlic peppers
- Salt and pepper to taste

Place all ingredients in a crock pot. Cook on medium heat for 3-4 hours, stirring occasionally. Serve warm.

Potato Corn Chowder

submitted by Donna Hedgspeth

- 12 slices of bacon, chopped
- 3 cups cubed peeled potatoes
- 1 can chicken broth
- 1 package (10 oz.) frozen corn, thawed, drained (or a tub of creamed corn)
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup sliced celery
- 2 Tbsp flour
- 1/2 cup Miracle Whip Light Salad Dressing
- 2 cups milk

Cook bacon in large saucepan until crisp, drain. Return to pan. Stir in potatoes, corn, broth, onion, and celery. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 15 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle with additional cooked bacon, if desired. Enjoy!

Parmesan Crusted Brussel Sprouts

submitted by Judy Raiburn

- 1 lb. Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3/4 cup Panko bread crumbs
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp cayenne
- Caesar dressing, for dipping (optional)

Preheat oven to 400°. Grease a large baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray or olive oil. Add flour to a medium shallow bowl and eggs to a separate medium shallow bowl. In a third shallow bowl, whisk together Panko bread crumbs, Parmesan, olive oil, salt, garlic powder and cayenne. Working in batches, toss Brussels sprouts in the flour until fully coated then dunk in eggs. Dredge in Panko mixture, then place on baking sheet. Bake until golden and crispy, about 25 minutes.

Sweet Potato Casserole

submitted by Debra Champagne

Crust:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1 cup chopped nuts (pecans preferred)
- 1/3 stick butter, melted
- Combine sugar, flour, nuts and butter in mixing bowl. Set aside.

Sweet potato mixture:

- 3 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350°. Coat a medium-sized casserole dish with nonstick spray. Combine sweet potatoes, sugar, salt, vanilla, eggs and butter in a large mixing bowl in the order listed. Beat thoroughly with a hand mixer to increase the fluffiness of the sweet potato mixture. Pour mixture into buttered baking dish. Bake for 30 minutes. (At this point, dish can be covered and refrigerated.) Sprinkle the surface of the sweet potato mixture evenly with the crust mixture and return to oven for 10 minutes. Allow to set at least 30

minutes before serving. The brown sugar and pecan crust should be slightly browned and crunchy. Bon appétit!

Fresh Cauliflower Casserole

submitted by Loree Brownfield

- 2 fresh heads cauliflower
- 2 large cans condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cups Cheddar cheese
- 1 can French onions
- 1 Tbsp tarragon, marjoram, parsley
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp melted butter
- Pinch of salt, pepper and garlic powder to taste

Cut cauliflower into medium-sized pieces. Spread evenly in 9 x 13 metal pan. Gently toss with olive oil and butter. Bake covered at 375° for 40 min. or until al dente. Add 1-1/2 cans undiluted cream of mushroom soup. Bake 35 minutes. Sprinkle the top with a mixture of marjoram, tarragon, parsley, salt, pepper, and garlic. Spread cheese on top and add French fried onions. Heat for 15 minutes at 350°.

Mashed Chipotle Cheddar Sweet Potatoes

submitted by Harriet Turner

- 3 lbs sweet potatoes
- 6 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 cup half & half
- 1 Tbsp minced canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, with seeds
- 1 Tbsp adobo sauce from the can of chipotle peppers
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 4 oz (1 cup) grated cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350° and set oven rack in middle position. Line large rimmed baking sheet with foil. Prick each potato several times with a fork and transfer to baking sheet. Bake potatoes until tender, 60 to 75 minutes; turn potatoes over halfway through baking. Let cool slightly, then peel potatoes and discard skins.

Melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add half & half, chipotle peppers, chipotle sauce, and salt, and bring to a simmer. Off the heat, add the sweet potatoes and cheddar. Using a potato masher, a fork, or an electric mixer on low speed, mash potatoes until coarsely puréed. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. Serve warm. Serves 6.

... Contributed by Members of Our Community

Cranberry Apple Casserole

submitted by Charlotte Gentry

3 Granny Smith apples, cut up, unpeeled
1 can whole cranberry sauce

Topping:

1-1/2 cups oatmeal
1/4 cup pecans
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup flour
1 stick butter, melted

Mix the apples with cranberry sauce. Mix topping ingredients together and sprinkle over apples and cranberries. Bake at 350° for 1 hour.

Blue Ribbon Old Timey Fudge

submitted by Millie Johnson

5 cups sugar
2/3 cup cocoa powder
1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
1 cup milk
1 stick real butter
1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 cup pecans, in pieces

Set up a work area for tempering the fudge. I run about 3 inches of cold water in the sink and lay out a dish towel next to it. The water will be to quick cool the chocolate and then you set the pot on the towel and stir. (The towel also keeps you from dripping water when you pour the chocolate.)

Coat a 8 x 12 pan (9 x 13 will be ok, too) with butter and set next to towel. Cut remaining butter and set aside. In a 6-quart pot add sugar, cocoa powder, and salt. DO NOT TURN ON THE HEAT YET! Using the flat side of a spatula, mix well. You do not want clumps.

Add both milks and stir until well mixed and there are no lumps. Turn heat on to medium high and bring to boil. Notice how it looks like there is not much in pot. Stir CONSTANTLY. As the mixture heats up, it will bubble up. When it reaches a certain temperature it will start to go back down. It will start to really shine.

Every now and then do a water test. To do this, fill a glass with cold water and drop some fudge mixture into it. When it reaches the softball stage, remove from heat. Softball stage is when you can roll the drop into a soft ball. Add vanilla extract and stir (it will bubble up some as it burns off the alcohol). Add butter and stir.

Now dip pot into water in sink for 4-5

seconds, then place on towel and stir.

Repeat several times. Mixture will begin to thicken. Add nuts and stir. Let set up for 20 minutes, then cut with a smooth-bladed knife. Mixture will start to look a little dull. Hurry and pour into buttered pan. Sprinkle a little nuts on top if you want. Let it cool completely before putting in a bag or tin. (Otherwise it will sweat and not look so pretty...) Enjoy!

Cook time: 40 min. Prep time: 5 min.
Serves: makes 3-1/4 pounds

Fresh Pumpkin Pie

submitted by Kelly Leavitt

1-1/2 lbs. (2 packed cups) shredded pumpkin, uncooked
2 eggs
3/4 cup brown sugar
2 Tbsp flour
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1-2/3 cup half & half

Spiced topping:

1 cup sour cream
2 Tbsp brown sugar
1/8 tsp cinnamon
1/8 tsp nutmeg

Spread pumpkin evenly and loosely in pie shell. Combine remaining ingredients (except half & half). Beat until smooth. Gradually stir in half & half. Slowly pour over pumpkin. Bake 15 min. at 425°. Reduce temperature to 350°. Bake an additional 40-45 minutes. Cool slightly. Spread with spiced topping, if desired.

Grasshopper Pie

submitted by Beverly Bates

20 regular marshmallows
3 Tbsp heavy cream
1/4 cup creme de menthe
1/2 pint heavy cream, whipped
1 9-inch dark chocolate or oreo pie shell
Bittersweet chocolate, shaved
Thin Mints or Thin Mint Oreo Cookies

Heat marshmallows, cream and creme de menthe in double boiler until marshmallows melt. Cool. Fold in whipped cream. Pour into pie shell. Sprinkle with chocolate shavings. Chill 2 hours before serving. Add a spoonful of whipped cream and a thin mint cookie to top of each slice.

Molasses Crinkles

submitted by Barbara Lockhart

3/4 cup Crisco (lard or butter could also be used)
1 cup brown sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2-1/4 cups flour
2 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground cloves
1 tsp ginger
1 tsp cinnamon

Mix Crisco, sugar, egg and molasses together well. Sift remaining ingredients together and stir into sugar mixture. Chill dough. Roll into balls the size of walnuts. Dip tops in sugar and place 3" apart on greased sheet. Sprinkle each cookie with 2 or 3 drops of water. Bake at 375° until set but not hard.

Oreo Truffles

submitted by Beverly Bates

1 package double-stuffed Oreo Cookies, plain or mint, crushed
1 8-oz package cream cheese, softened
1 package white almond bark, melted

Mix the crushed Oreos and softened cream cheese together and chill. Roll into walnut-size balls. Chill again for about an hour. Melt approximately 3/4 package of white almond bark. Dip each ball into the melted almond bark using slotted spoon or toothpick. Allow to harden on wax paper about 15 minutes.

Lesly's Mulled Cider

submitted by Mildred's Meadows Farm

1 gallon fresh pressed apple cider (unfiltered)
1 naval orange, sliced
1/2 lemon
4 cinnamon sticks
1 tsp ground cloves
1/2 tsp. ground allspice

Heat all together and let simmer on stove! (For the adults, a nice dark rum can be added for a little extra goodness.)

Bon Appétit

HAPPY DAY!

December Birthdays

Dec 1 - Gayla Blalock
Dec 1 - Mark Hatfield
Dec 1 - Morgan Crane
Dec 1 - Marcia Tucker
Dec 1 - Amanda Tucker
Dec 1 - Christine Brooks
Dec 1 - Megan Kelley
Dec 2 - Ladon Willingham
Dec 2 - Dwayne McKenzie
Dec 2 - Angel Baggett
Dec 2 - Brody Britton
Dec 3 - Karen Saferite
Dec 3 - Austin Battles
Dec 3 - Angie Bell Young
Dec 3 - Cherita Holman
Dec 4 - Lloyd McElhaney
Dec 4 - Nichole Williams
Dec 4 - Lydia Gifford
Dec 4 - Heath Blalock
Dec 4 - Sibyl Sadowski
Dec 4 - Raymond Beasley
Dec 4 - Easton Bailey
Dec 4 - Melissa Patton
Dec 5 - Jess Goggans
Dec 5 - Brian Howard
Dec 5 - Berkley Chambers
Dec 5 - Barbara Neel
Dec 5 - Avery Pepper
Dec 5 - Aero Potts
Dec 6 - Austin Potts
Dec 6 - Judy Johnson
Dec 6 - Tonja Bell
Dec 6 - Sharon Crouch
Dec 6 - Mia Sweeney
Dec 7 - Gavin Myers
Dec 7 - Keesha Burgess
Dec 7 - Reagan Owen

Dec 7 - Nathan Owen
Dec 7 - Olivia Burton
Dec 7 - Miranda Dudley
Dec 8 - Bailey Pryor
Dec 8 - Trish Clink
Dec 8 - Ross Hulan
Dec 9 - Brenda Kirby
Dec 10 - Kevin Worthey
Dec 10 - Tammy Frost
Dec 10 - John Breithaupt
Dec 11 - Christine Ballenger
Dec 11 - Toni Freeman
Dec 11 - Hannah Blansit
Dec 11 - Christy Cordell
Dec 11 - Kaelan Shankles
Dec 12 - Valerie Logan
Dec 12 - Jeff Nelson
Dec 12 - Connie Nelson
Dec 12 - Waylon Collins
Dec 13 - Moria Potts
Dec 13 - Deborah Mason
Dec 13 - Crystal Poteat
Dec 13 - Jerrod Landers
Dec 14 - Ginny Zulker
Dec 14 - Jim Phillips
Dec 15 - Jessica Van Pelt
Dec 15 - Brody Baber
Dec 15 - Justin Shankles
Dec 16 - Lane Traffanstedt
Dec 17 - Holly Day
Dec 17 - Chris O. Smith
Dec 17 - Austin Black
Dec 17 - Luther Hendrix
Dec 17 - Chris Smith
Dec 18 - Ashley Pounders
Dec 18 - Daniel Brown
Dec 18 - Scot Sharp
Dec 18 - Jodi Strickland
Dec 19 - William Tucker
Dec 19 - Brynda Hopper
Dec 19 - Jake Nelson
Dec 19 - Jesse Bailey

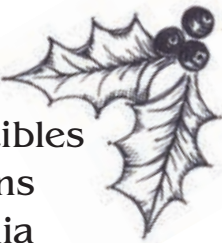
Dec 20 - Shelley Meadows
Dec 20 - Denise Carden
Dec 20 - Ann Dean
Dec 21 - Tyler Dean
Dec 21 - Jordan Henderson
Dec 21 - Coby Harrison
Dec 21 - Lydia Roe
Dec 21 - Benny Graham
Dec 21 - Ronnie Bowman
Dec 22 - Dale Howard
Dec 22 - William Beasley
Dec 22 - Briana Kilgore
Dec 22 - Ashlee Smith
Dec 22 - Weston Carter
Dec 22 - Bryan Roe
Dec 22 - Lorelai Chaney
Dec 23 - Daniel Gray
Dec 23 - Aubrey Smith
Dec 23 - Steve Chandler
Dec 23 - Melissa Claire
Dec 24 - Caleb White
Dec 24 - Joe Kent
Dec 24 - Emma Lee
Dec 24 - Avion Gelfenstein
Dec 24 - Susie Southerland
Dec 24 - Sophia Sharp
Dec 24 - Anthony O'Shields
Dec 25 - Mary Porter
Dec 25 - Irene Willingham
Dec 25 - Justin Easler
Dec 25 - Amanda Foote
Dec 26 - Jason Goss
Dec 26 - Melanie Grisham
Dec 26 - Sheila LaRock
Dec 27 - Melissa Shoults
Dec 27 - Houston Downer
Dec 27 - Jennifer Blalock
Dec 27 - Sally Wheat
Dec 28 - Avice Pearson
Dec 28 - Annette Chappell
Dec 28 - Brooke Morris
Dec 28 - Elizabeth Russell
Dec 29 - LeAnn Bain
Dec 29 - Christie Langston
Dec 30 - Dawn Langston
Dec 31 - Kiley Shankles
Dec 31 - Michael Kelley Jr.

December Anniversaries

Dec 1 - Cotton & Pam Baggett
Dec 1 - Hoyt & Helen Ashley
Dec 2 - Joe & Donna McClure
Dec 3 - Walt & Shirley Zange
Dec 8 - Alvin & Sherry Durham
Dec 8 - Susan & Donnie Goodman
Dec 9 - Jake & Melinda Easler
Dec 12 - Walter & Christine Brooks - 70th!!
Dec 13 - Ron & Valerie Logan
Dec 13 - John & Jennifer Chambers
Dec 14 - Benny & Brenda Goss
Dec 14 - Mike & Barbara Neel
Dec 15 - Johnny & Sissy Crider
Dec 17 - Rob & San Hammond
Dec 18 - Jim & Joan Byrum
Dec 20 - Dave & Jamie Vest
Dec 21 - Mackey & Marcella Campbell
Dec 23 - Heath & Tara Kirby
Dec 23 - Eddie & Mary Porter
Dec 23 - Doug & Kaye Kiker
Dec 23 - Angela & Michael Hadley
Dec 28 - Lendell & Annette Chappell
Dec 28 - Danny & Julie Mewes
Dec 28 - Chad & Ashley Wooten
Dec 30 - Matt & Ginger Lee
Dec 30 - Bryan & Melissa Roe
Dec 31 - Steve & Patti Watkins
Dec 31 - David & Stephani Chaney



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Worship

Valley Head Baptist Church invites you to come and worship with us. On Sunday, Bible Study is at 11:00 AM & Morning Worship is at 11:00 AM; Kidz Connection is at 5:00 PM, Evening Worship at 6:00 PM. Kidz Connection & Youth meet on Wednesday from 5:00 – 6:00 PM & a snack supper is provided. On the second Wednesday of the month, there is a church wide covered dish Fellowship Meal at 6:00 PM.

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 to 18); 6:30pm Praise and Prayer time. Located at 4212 County Road 751, Valley Head. 635-1001.

Visitors are always welcome at the **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.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, is currently holding 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 11:00-12:15. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnel.

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church on N. Gault Avenue in Fort Payne holds Sunday mass in English at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in Spanish. Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in English, Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. bilingual, Thursday at 6:00 p.m. in English, Friday at 9:00 a.m. in English and Saturday at 6:00 p.m. in bilingual.

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

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.

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. God Bless You.

Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA), 5760 Gault Ave. NE, Fort Payne, AL. Sunday School 9:45AM; Sunday Worship 10:55AM. Church office: 256-845-4756.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend the 10AM and 11AM services and evening services are at 5PM on Sundays and Wednesdays. Visitors are always welcome.

Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Cloudland, GA, welcomes everyone to come and take part in our church services. Sunday School at 10AM; Worship Service at 11AM, Sunday evening at 6PM, and Wednesday evening at 7PM.

DeSoto Church of Christ invites you to attend Sunday Bible Study at 10AM, Worship at 11AM, Wednesday Bible study at 5PM.

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

St. Joseph’s On-The-Mountain Episcopal Church, 21145 Scenic Highway, Mentone. Everyone welcome to 10:30AM Sunday service of Holy Eucharist. Open for daily prayer and thanksgiving. Supporting our community with outreach. Call for more information, 256-634-4476, <http://stjosephmountain.dioala.org>

Mentone United Methodist Church, 415 Cutler Avenue, Mentone, Alabama 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.

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.

Alpine Community Church, 115 Hwy. 337, Menlo, GA. Pastor and Rev. Rodney Blaylock welcome each and everyone to worship service Sunday morning at 11AM GA time; Sunday School 10AM GA time; Wednesday night Bible Study 7PM GA time.

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

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

Mentone Church of God of Prophecy - regular service times are 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.

Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd, Mentone, AL 35984. Pastor Tim Miller; Crosswalk Sunday School K through Adult - 9:15am; Adult Worship Service - 10:30am; JC Kids Worship Service - 10:30am. Van Ministry for Children pick-up/take home, ages k-12, for all surrounding areas 8:15am. For children pick-up and drop-off van, please call Donna Bunn 706-398-0720. Wednesday small group study - 6:30pm.

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).

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.

New Oregon United Methodist Church: Located just off Desoto Parkway 1/4 mile south of Fischer Crossroads. We would like to 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. Address 1204 New Oregon Drive NE, Fort Payne, AL 35967. phone 256-845-7446.

The Church of God 7th Day in Hammondville located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road. Sabbath School classes at 9:30AM and Worship Service at 11AM. Visitors are always welcome.

Gravel Hill Baptist Church, 14701 Hwy 11 South, Ft Payne, AL 35967 has Sunday School 10 AM & Worship Service at 11 AM each Sunday. All welcome! Wednesdays at 6PM we have supper and a brief devotional time together. Pastor George Moses.

Greater Vision Ministries Church of God, 38623 US HWY 11, Hammondville, AL 35989. Come as you are . . . LEAVE CHANGED! Sunday School 10 am, Sunday Worship *10:45 am, (*Nursery & Kid’s Church). MidWEEK re-charge Wednesday 6:30pm. Loving God & Serving Others. Pastor Tim Coppock. 256-601-0679.

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

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





Rhododendron Garden Club

by Mellanie Tuttle

A sterile variety, "Millennium" will not spread throughout the garden by seed and can easily be propagated by division in spring or fall. Site in sun or shade and dry or medium soil; zones 5-8.

The club voted to plant a rhododendron bush at the Mentone Post Office in honor of Madelon Houghland. Mary Shurett has diligently followed through with this project with the purchase of the plant from Misty Waters. Mary is also spearheading the Woody Owl and Smokey Bear poster contest with the after-school group at Moon Lake School. Each grade will have a chosen winner and those posters will be sent to a state competition. The state winner receives a trip to Washington, D.C., so we are rooting for our local artists! Apologies to Mary for omitting mention of her winning both blue and red ribbons from the flower show in September.

Members were informed, entertained and fascinated by the presentation "Mighty Oaks" given by Mary's friend, Louise Radanovich, who is



formerly from Michigan and Ohio but now lives in Albertville. She is a Master Gardener, certified arborist and certified urban forester and she knows her 'stuff'. A seven-page handout provided an outline of her talk with information, stories and poems about the oak, but Ms. Radanovich's side stories were the highlight. She started the talk with "The Oak Tree is the King of Trees...". Before there were cathedrals, there were sacred groves. Before there were Kings and Queens, there were Druidic Priests and Priestesses. Before there were lumberyards, there was coppicing

and pollarding. Much of human history, religion iconography, science and progress have happened because of, under and thanks to the Oak Tree. She then expounded on those topics. I took two pages of notes that weren't even in the handout (i.e., pigs love acorns)! If an acorn floats when it's put in water it is not viable; only sinkers are good for planting. Druid punishment was to seal people inside a hollow tree. The Druids also would invoke the spirits of the Oak gods by knocking on the bark, thus the phrase "Knock on Wood." The non-functional xylem loads up on water in the fall and early spring so the oaks are better at surviving a drought, but that water also attracts lightning, so stay away from oaks in a storm! Ship builders would make a template, go into the woods, match a tree notch to the template and then cut it as one piece so that strength was maintained. The Spaniards de-forested their country to build the Armada and that land is still a barren scrublands. Oak gall ink has been used for centuries. A left-handed writer would use quills taken from the right side of the pheasant or goose and right-handed people used feathers from the left side! Who knew? The Oak is a phonological indicator as well. When the leaves are "no bigger than a mouse's ear", it's time to plant warm weather crops. Ms. Radanovich admitted that she was one of the best "plasterers" of her time. The old practice of filling hollow trees with concrete is no longer in vogue. "Rams-horn" is when new callous tissue growing on the edge of the wound grows inward to create a columnar growth, giving it strength. Ms. Radanovich was a delight and a font of knowledge.

The final meeting of the year will be in the home of Marsha Merrell on December 12. An evergreen to use for holiday decorating and seed sharing will be roll call topics. We wish you and yours a very blessed holiday.

Melanie Tuttle is the president of the Rhododendron Garden Club, which is a member of the Northeast Alabama Federation of Garden Clubs; The Garden Club of Alabama, Inc., District II; Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc., and National Garden Clubs.

The Rhododendron Garden Club met in the home of Martha Wood on November 14, 2017. Martha provided delicious homemade muffins, fruit and apple cider. Dianne Kuehl read a cute story, "Bring Potato Chips", about a boy and older man sharing food—each thinking the other one was God and reminding us about the power of a touch, a smile, and listening ears.

Conservation Chair Marsha Merrell reported that the monarch butterflies in Canada had produced a fifth generation of butterflies. Watchers are concerned that winds from the south and cooler temperatures may ground the newest batch and cause them to miss migration to Mexico. 2013/2014 was the worst season for monarch production but the last two years have shown an increase again so this year's migration is critical. Marsha also passed out a flyer with information about becoming a "citizen scientist" (iNaturalist.com) by observing butterfly migration, testing water quality in local waterways, recording the timing of leafing, flowering and fruiting of plants and noting birds at the feeder, and then reporting the findings online. iNaturalist.com has a mobile app to record observations and report your findings. The Audubon Society reports that the Endangered Species Act is in jeopardy and they have a database to find native plants for your zip code.

Horticulture Chair Martha Wood talked about Allium "Millennium", the 2018 Perennial Plant of the Year. This ornamental clumping allium developed by Mark McDonough grows about a foot tall and wide, with glossy green, upright leaves. It blooms in profusion in midsummer, with 2-inch-round purple flowers rising above the foliage. Bees and butterflies are drawn to these flowers, while deer and rabbits avoid the plant.



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A MAGICAL VISIT FROM A WHITE DEER

by deJoly LaBrier

Daylight begins to show over the tops of the pines surrounding part of my land. Light breaks through in dappled markings on the ground and on the other trees. It is a time of gratitude and hope for a beautiful day.

As I drink my first cup of coffee, I sit looking out my dining room window at the woods and suddenly, without perceivable movement, a white deer with short antlers appears, with his smaller counterpart of normal coloring. I am in awe. I've never seen a white deer. It is quiet, a magical spiritual moment. I'm frozen, staring at this apparition as he and his partner nibble on the grass and look around. They move slowly, mostly content to eat, safe. They know I won't harm them.

I watch them walk quietly into the east woods, and, as quickly as they appeared, they are gone. I sit in wonder. These unexpected visitors to my land have given me such a blessing. Their magical, mystical presence blessed me and I am privileged to have been in the presence of this stunning creature.

In Native American culture, the deer is seen as alert, keen and always aware. Translated into spiritual qualities of being spiritually aware, and this being a white deer, this symbolizes higher thoughts, higher ideals, purity of soul, cleansing of spirit and attaining higher knowledge. I call my Elder, Babbette Thin Elk, and she says it is an important sign for me in my journey. Tears of gratitude trickle down my cheeks.

I interpret the things she says to me: the fact that I saw this very powerful sign—the white



deer—is a message that I am on a path of growth and expansion that will lead me in a direction beyond my wildest dreams. The message of the white deer is one of “get ready.”

“The Native Americans believed the occurrence of a white animal was a huge sign of prophecy—a sign from the great spirit that a major shift in their world was to come. Usually, white animals were seen during soul-quests, or vision-quests. However, if one was seen during the normal course of day, this would cause a tremendous ripple among the tribe. A great meeting would be called, the elders would be consulted, and great care would be taken to communicate with the animal spirits to determine the meaning of the message.” (from symbolic-meanings.com)

In Native American cultures, white deer, representing Great Spirit, are often signs of the

indigenous people coming together to lead the world with their wisdom. Around the world, certain European, Native American, and Asian cultures have their own stories and myths about the white deer. They are often seen as having supernatural powers. Celtic mythology includes white deer around King Arthur's court, and it was an important symbol for England's King Richard II.

In Kamakura, Japan, the Engakuji Temple, which was founded in 1282, is the head of a branch school of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism. As the story goes, a herd of divine white deer are said to have emerged from a cave to listen to the sermon of the temple's founder the day it opened.

Later, I see some of my neighbors, and not one of them saw the white deer. I speculate in my head that this experience was just for me.



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Warmth at Wintertime

by Anna Mae Horn



As winter approaches and cold fills the air,
My soul warms with remembrances:
Friends, family, and loved ones gathering
For food, presents, and loving embraces;

Grandpa stirring the wood fireplace;
Grandmother cooking at the stove.
The dressing and pies tasty,
And all garnished with love;

Singing carols with Mama around the fire;
Playing games with Dad all through the night;
Brothers and sister sharing candy and toys;
Everything feeling so perfectly right.

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Incredible Opportunity! Beautifully perched atop the West Fork of Little River in Mentone, AL, this large tract, scenic property presents a compelling opportunity to own a significant piece of paradise. Over 1,400 ft. of waterfront amidst 157 total acres. \$2,900,000. MLS #1077059.



REDUCED
A piece of history is found in this tiny cottage constructed entirely of stone and wood sitting quietly on the hillside in East River Park developed by Col. Milford Howard before it became Camp Alpine. \$110,000. MLS #1077206



A RARE FIND! Mentone home w/acreage & guest home! 2BR/1.5BA, wood walls, hardwood floors, new appliances, Trane CH/A system, Fisher cast iron wood stove, tankless water heaters w/city & well water. 20 acres. \$199,500. MLS #1075152.



TWO Residences on the Brow with 45 +/- acres! Rock walls, walkways and patios. Call for more details. \$495,000. MLS #815966



CRYSTAL LAKE LODGE in Mentone... Fifty breathtaking acres surround you in this one-of-a-kind property. Call today for your private tour! \$899,995. MLS #1070805



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.



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.



MENTONE BROW HOME! 2BR/2BA brow home with tons of character! Enjoy all the extras like hardwood floors, rustic wood walls, gas log fireplace & more. Being sold furnished. Call today! \$339,000. MLS #1076700.



ENJOY SUNRISE & SUNSET VIEWS in this cozy Mentone home located on Scenic Hwy. Open family room, dining and kitchen. Call for appointment today! \$325,000. 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/tow maintenance metal roof. Deck. \$235,000. MLS #1000691.



REDUCED
LAKEFRONT LIVING! Custom decks & walkways to your dock on Lake Lahus-age. 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 LIL' 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. \$325,900. MLS #1048899.



SOLD
SECLUDED MENTONE CABIN. 2BR/2BA home on 3.25 acres in West Fork Sub. Pine floors & walls, vaulted ceilings, wood burning FP, lots of windows. Lge. deck, screened porches. \$179,900. MLS #1065642.



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.



WATER FRONT Vacation Home. 2BR/2BA, 1-1/2 story cabin located in the Laurel Lake subdivision, Mentone. Open floor plan. Master Suite has its own entrance to a large screened in back porch that could serve as a whole new living area in pleasant months. \$174,500. MLS #1017650.



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. Siting on 1.5 acres, totally fenced. Appointment only! \$187,500. MLS #1013991.



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. \$169,900. #1062659.



SOLD
Cabin overlooking the water features pine walls & floors, vaulted 25' ceilings and fireplaces. Enjoy your own relaxing paradise w/plenty of Mountain Laurels and rocks. Built to preserve the property's natural beauty. \$459,900. MLS #1019610



LIVE & PLAY ON THE WATER! 200' of frontage on East Fork of Little River featuring 3BR 2BA, rock floors, some carpet, all appliances, WB fireplace, & storage building. Call for more details. \$239,999. MLS #902940.



BEAUTIFUL MENTONE CABIN w/2BR, 2BA, oak flooring and woodburning fireplace. Extra's include large screened porches, large walk-in closets, marble bathroom floors. \$199,900. MLS #1066473.



REDUCED
One of the most photographed landmarks in Ala... The iconic "Red Boathouse" on Little River is less than 500' from Desoto Falls. One-acre w/186' on navigable part of the river. Mid-century wood cabin w/living & dining, 3BR/2BA, eat-in kitchen, rock FP, & screened porches. \$289,000. MLS #1054645.

LOTS & LAND

#656265 - 7+ WOODED ACRES in Mtn. River Estates. \$35,000.
#665968 - 1 ACRE LOT in Hidden Lake Sub. \$40,000.
#762331 - 1.02 ACRE lot in Hidden Lake Sub. \$40,000.
#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 - 6.4 acres on Co. Rd. 89, Lot 8, in Mentone. \$138,000.
#1039769 - 6.32 +/- waterfront building lot in Mountain River Estates! \$49,950.
#1056358 - 3.2 acres on Co. Rd. 89. \$369,000.
#1057228 - 5 acres overlooking Little River Canyon. \$69,999.
#1057429 - 4 acres in Valley View Forest. \$79,900.
#1061651 - 1.5 acres in Eagle Rock Subdivision. \$79,000.

#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.
#1073207 - .62 acres. \$23,500.
#1073864 - Brow Lot! .78 acres. \$109,500.
#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. \$150,000.
#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.

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Escape Rooms Offer Collaborative Fun

by Kelly Leavitt

In cities across the world, “escape rooms” or “breakouts” have become wildly popular over the last ten years. I first heard of them while I was in Tuscaloosa last month. I had befriended a children’s librarian and she excitedly told me she’d created a “breakout” for the students in the school library. I had no earthly idea what she was talking about. As it turns out, these games are rather a fad in the rest of the world. Who knew?

A few weeks later, I was surprised to learn that there’s an escape room nearby. Angela Hadley invited her fellow nursing students to join her in a session at Escape Room Adventures in Henagar, which opened last March. She encouraged me to come along so I could see what it’s all about.

I had a blast.

Describing an escape room is a bit like telling someone about a book or movie that has a complex plot. It’s difficult to explain without giving away important elements. Basically, you and a group of others are given a “mission” and are then locked together in a room that depicts a fictional location. Your task is to find enough hidden hints and clues to complete your mission, usually while running against a sixty-minute clock.

No special skills or knowledge are needed. Common sense is always helpful in life, and in this game it is well rewarded. “I think our family enjoys escape rooms so much because we all like riddles and puzzles and things that challenge us to be clever,” explains Angela. “The time limit adds a lot of drama and comedy to the game.”



Our group escaped from the “Zombie Adventure,” a series of rooms set as a military barracks. Everyone had been killed by zombies, so we had to find our way out—quickly.

*Front row from L to R: Kasie Hulkan, Sarah Otto, Brooke Whitten
Back row from L to R: Aaron Hancock, Angela Hadley, Kelly Leavitt*

Riddles and puzzles, indeed. An important hidden clue might be locked in a box which is secured by an alpha-numeric combination lock, and you must discover the passcode, through wits and quick thinking. Clues which seem plausible, or even obvious, can lead to dead ends. Word puzzles can get confusing when the clock is ticking, and everyone around you is energetically seeking out additional clues. Is there a hint under this drawer? Does the mark on this wall have a significant meaning?

Collaboration and communication are key. For instance, if you find a lock to open, or a code to decipher, or a pattern to suss out, and someone else has found something that could help you, communication is vital. There’s no room for shyness in an escape room. For those who may fret about failing, the rooms are monitored by cameras, and clues will be offered from the control room if needed or requested.

To be honest, I’m excited that this has become such a popular movement. Critical thinking skills are being used too little in a day and age when it’s easier to get lost in an electronic screen of one

form or another. Escape rooms require the mental focus to create strategies, explore your surroundings, think clearly under pressure, and work well with a team.

“I’ve noticed that since I’ve been playing these types of games online and at the escape rooms, I’m more likely to think creatively in everyday life,” said Angela. “For our family, it is a really fun way to bond with each other. I love when one of the kids solves one of the puzzles on their own and has a little ‘YES’ moment.”

“Escape rooms originated in Asia and China,” explained Lamar Hackworth, a retired deputy sheriff who owns Escape Room Adventures with his wife, Kim. “They were designed as work training programs that didn’t have anything to do with entertainment. They were used to teach people to be more productive at work, and to learn to communicate and cooperate together.” Universities and the military also use escape rooms to instill a variety of skills.

Currently, the Escape Room Adventures is offering a 50% discount (Monday through Thursday) on two of their rooms. It’s a great opportunity to have a truly fun experience with friends and family. When I “escaped” our room, my first thought was, “I feel like my brain’s had a good jolt.”



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LOTS and LAND

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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)

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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)

READY FOR YOU TO BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME! 2.75 unrestricted acres with underground utilities, & septic tank! Just minutes from downtown Mentone, tucked quietly into the woods! \$35,000 (1054586)

BROW-FRONT LOTS WITH STUNNING SUNSET VIEWS; each offers a panorama of the valley and mountains beyond. Perfect combination of wooded and cleared, ready for you to build your Mentone mountain getaway cabin (or a rental cabin on the brow!) Located along the scenic DeSoto Pkwy, just a mile or so from downtown Mentone. Quaint split-rail fence along roadway. Lot 16 offers 0.78 acres and approximately 90' of brow frontage and is priced at \$107,500. (1055395)



ALL ONE COULD POSSIBLY WANT! Downtown location, space, seasonal views & a garage apartment. 2800+ sq ft & total of 3BR/3.5BA; loft for additional living space; wrap-around porch; fireplace; pine floors; office/study; breakfast nook; partially-finished basement area for storage; att 2-car garage; back deck; fenced yard; front porch. \$275,000 (1074842)



"BETHANY ON THE BROW" is what one owner of the past called this marvelous old Mentone heritage home, with approx 210' of brow frontage, nice woods, 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, formal DR, sitting room, den & sun porches. Unfinished "grandma's attic" area with intriguing angles & nooks. Wood floors throughout. Mostly wood walls & ceilings, some sheetrock. 2.66 ac (+/-), with plenty of room for an add'l cottage to be built. Wildlife love the natural setting where the trees have been left uncut for 30+ years. \$250,000 (1074930)



MOUNTAIN CHARM & ELEGANCE ON THE BROW, along the scenic DeSoto Pkwy. 2BR/2BA, one-level home with plenty of WOW factor inside and out. Beautiful stone fireplace, hardwood floors, great view of mountains & stars at night. Vaulted ceilings & stone fireplace, masonry fireplace. Attached, 2-car garage for future living space. Sited on 1.5 acres (+/-) w/ approx 180' of brow frontage. \$375,000 (1068167)



CUTE-AS-A-BUTTON COTTAGE WITH DEEDED ACCESS TO THE WATER on the Middle Fork of Little River at Lake Lahusage; plus a little workshop that could easily become a guest cottage. Sound interesting? The screened front porch offers plenty of room for relaxation and outdoor dining. Open kitchen/living area; 2 bedrooms; 1 sizable bath w/laundry area; CH/A; L-shaped deck on back and side; fenced backyard for pets. Over one acre w/great shade trees & yard leading to path to the river (w/a place to secure your kayaks or canoes when not in use). It's the next best thing to being on the water, yet it is affordably priced at only \$115,000. (1076521)



A PROPERTY RARE. Yes, you can buy wooded acreage. Yes, you can have a brow-side view. Yes, you can have abundant wildlife. BUT, where else can you find 44 acres of undeveloped land in the heart of Mentone, has been recognized, explored & mapped by cave groups across the SE. A special piece of earth indeed! Recently reduced to \$99,900 (785767)



GET AWAY TO "SLEEPY HOLLOW" at Laurel Creek Lakes. The perfect place to relax, hike around on the walking paths or maybe even canoe on one of the 3 lakes. Choose your favorite spot on the front porch swing, or have a cup of coffee on the screened back porch; maybe catch a glimpse of deer or wild turkey. Inside is a vaulted living area w/huge windows, wood ceilings, pine plank floors, French doors to screened porch. Great rental potential, too. \$153,900 (1082594)



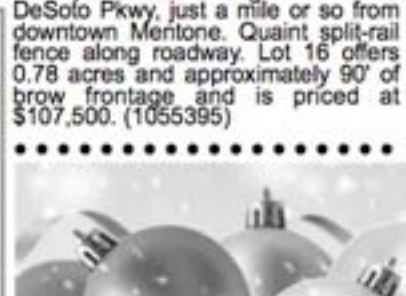
"THE BURREN." 3BR/2.5BA mountain retreat cabin, just off DeSoto Pkwy, nestled among intriguing rock formations, surrounded by woodlands. Metal roof; screened porch; wood-burning mtn stone fireplace; private back deck w/hot tub; 2nd floor balconies. Convenient to DeSoto St Park & Mentone. 1.9 acres. Large screened porch offers expanded living area outdoors. Furnishings negotiable. Good rental history. \$185,000 (1052151)



SOUTH COOL STREET brow-front property with a beautiful old stone fireplace chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. Newly surveyed. An original Mentone summer home once stood here, built and owned by the same family since early 1920s. Approximately 0.45- acre lot in an area where properties are seldom available. Build your own memories! Call for plat and more details! \$125,000 (1070474)



THE WARMTH & CHARM ONLY A COUNTRY BUNGALOW CAN OFFER. Country-flavored niceties like a screened front porch; classic picket fence; mature shade trees; nice garden areas; pergola & deck in private back yard; all on a level, 1.12-acre lot. Built in 1928, this 3BR/2BA sweetie was tastefully enhanced in 2015 with new kitchen (cabinetry, granite counters, stainless appliances, reclaimed barn wood ceiling, hardwood floor & more); new paint; tiled dining; lots of upgrades! Master BR features an 11x11 sitting area; dual bath vanities. A place for everything: storage building; small storage basement/root cellar (or wine cellar); floored attic storage room; enclosed back porch. Come on home! \$159,000 (1082607)



Wishing all our
FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS
A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

SENIOR HEALTH: MEDICARE AND VACCINE COVERAGE

by Lynn Hixson

Vaccines are considered prescription drugs, which are mostly covered under Medicare Part D—Medicare’s prescription drug benefit. However, certain vaccines are covered by Medicare Part B—the outpatient medical services benefit. You can get Part B and D coverage in one of two ways: through Original Medicare, the traditional program administered directly by the federal government with a separate stand-alone Part D plan, or through a Medicare Advantage plan that usually includes Part B and D coverage through one private plan. Medicare Part B will cover certain vaccines if you have been exposed to a dangerous virus

or bacteria. For example, Part B will cover your tetanus shot if you step on a rusty nail. Additionally, three vaccines are covered under Part B as preventive care benefits: flu vaccine, once per flu season; pneumonia vaccine; and Hepatitis B vaccine for people at medium to high risk. All other commercially available vaccines, including the shingles vaccine (known as herpes zoster), are covered under Part D. All Part D plans must include all commercially available vaccines on their lists of covered drugs (formulary). Cost and coverage rules depend on which part of Medicare is covering your vaccine. If Part B is covering your vaccine because you have been exposed to a dangerous virus or bacteria, the normal Part B cost sharing amounts apply. Specifically, if you have Original Medicare, Part B will pay 80 percent and you or your supplemental

insurance will pay the other 20 percent. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, you will pay your plan’s copayment or coinsurance. If Part B is covering your vaccine because it is a preventive care benefit, the vaccine is covered at little to no cost to you. This is because the Affordable Care Act made certain preventive services (including the three vaccines listed above) available for free or at a low cost. If your vaccine coverage is denied, call the doctor or pharmacy that gave you the shot to make sure it was billed under the correct part of Medicare. If you have any questions, please call the DeKalb County Council on Aging and ask for Lynn at 256-845-8590.

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ATTENTION GROUNDHOG READERS!

The Groundhog is available at the following locations:

MENTONE Body Maintenance Clip Joint Community Library Graceful Giraffe Gourdie Shop Green Leaf Grill Hair @ The Village Little River Hardware Lookout Mountain Realty Lookout Mountain Outpost Mentone Inn Mentone Market Mentone Realty Mentone Town Hall Moon Lake Trading Company Mountain Properties Plowshares Bistro Southern Style Log Furniture Wildflower Cafe	VALLEY HEAD Alabama Organics Bell Battelle Burt Funeral Home Citizens Bank Coffee Shack by the Tracks Dave’s Antiques Hammondville Quick Stop Headquarters Beauty Salon Miracle Pottery Tigers Inn Valley Head Drug Valley Head Food Mart Valley Head Town Hall Victory Fuel Water Board	BRUCE’S FOODLAND Chow King Days Inn DeKalb Library DeKalb Tourism DeSoto State Park Lodge DeSoto State Park Country Store First Federal Fisher X-Roads Store Ft. Payne Chamber of Commerce Hampton Inn Holiday Inn Huddle House Priceless IGA Quality Inn “S”-House Antiques Southern Gold & Silver Southern Properties The Spot Coffee Shop The Strand The Wishing Well Waffle House Waffle King	GEORGIA Auto Parts (Menlo) Little River Escape Menlo Healthmart Menlo Lucky’s Mountain Top Country Store Restaurant (Menlo) State Line Store
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Out of the Mouths of Babes

by Paula Easter

You know, I've never really ever associated myself with a particular color, but it seems that others have...and the color is RED. Dr. Bill Berry, my first principal at Moon Lake, often reminds me about my first visit to Moon Lake and my "red" hat interview with him. (I have to admit, the red hat always gives me a sense of confidence when I wear it.)

My latest experience with the color red was when a kindergartner recently asked me if I felt well. I assured him that I felt fine, but again he questioned how I felt. I finally asked him why he thought I might not feel well (my curiosity getting the better of me—imagine that), to which he answered, "Well, you don't have your red lips on!" Once I could compose myself and look at him with a straight face, I agreed that, in fact, I did not have on my "red" lips! One of his classmates, in her sweet little Southern drawl, agreed with him, stating, "You sure do wear a lot of red!" Everyone in the class concurred that, surely, red must be my favorite color. As I pondered over their observations, I realized I do wear a lot of red, but all for good reasons. It was at this point that I reminded the class that we were celebrating Red Ribbon Week, and red was in abundance here at Moon Lake Elementary that week.

What is Red Ribbon Week, you might ask? Wearing a red ribbon began as a grassroots celebration in California to honor the memory of Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, an American DEA agent who was killed by drug dealers in Mexico. The people in his hometown began wearing red ribbons in his memory and honor, and encouraged

others to take a stand against drugs—the cause their dear friend had died for. In 1988, Congress passed a proclamation which made the week of October 23–October 31 "National Red Ribbon Week" across the United States. I feel it is important that we encourage our young students to stay "Drug Free."

Why all the crazy activities during the week, you may wonder? Very simply, I want these sweet kiddos to know that life can be fun and full of excitement "drug free." (In case you were wondering why I was wearing a red Mohawk!)

In November, we once again talked about important color words, including red, as we began to get ready for our big Veterans Day

program here at Moon Lake. I started the lesson by asking if

anyone knew what the word "patriotic" means. Again, out of the mouth of babes, came the best answer, and all I can do is agree. A sweet second grader looked at me and said, "It means I love my country and the red, white and blue." Could you have answered any better, I ask? Me, neither!

We had several new veterans attend our Veterans Day program this year, and it gave me, as a teacher, a sense of pride when one of them said to me how he wished a video of all our students saying

the pledge and singing the national anthem could go out on YouTube and show the world what honoring the red, white and blue really looks like. I was touched and proud. Mrs. Ballenger and her third grade class did a great job in leading our program, and the kindergarten, first and second grades wowed everyone with the way they led the pledge. How great it was to hear ALL Moon Lake students singing "One Nation." I would like to take a moment to thank all of the veterans, spouses, and families who came to our program, because you always make it special.

My hope is that these colors—"red" and the "red, white, and blue"—will always be important to the students who pass through our doors here at Moon Lake and that, having shared these wonderful experiences with us here, they won't forget them.

"Miss Paula" is the fine arts, music and Spanish teacher at Moon Lake Elementary School.



Red Ribbon Week ... "Crazy about a Drug Free Life"
L to R: Gracie Pullen, Cayden Collins, Carley Collins, Miss Paula, Emily Stone & Hayden Bulloch



Mrs. Ballenger's 3rd grade class & veterans at 2017 Veterans Day program at Moon Lake School.

Knitting for Needs

The Lookout Mountain Knitters gather at Moon Lake Library each week to enjoy time together while knitting and chatting. Recently, they have knitted warm hats to donate to those in need. Hats were distributed to Atlanta youth in need and to the oncology clinic at Harbin Center in Rome, GA.



Left to right:
Jan Wilkinson,
Pat Peterson,
Shirley Hussel,
Gay Godbois,
Sue Schwarz, and
Harriet Turner



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