

GROUNDHOG

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A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association

Christmas Traditions

Two Mentone Families Share Their Best

Christmas really begins at Dallyne and Jim Jones' house the second Sunday in December when Jim's, brothers and sisters along with their wives and husbands gather for Christmas dinner.

They are also joined by Clara and Sammy Cash, Clara is a cousin and close family member.

There were originally 11 brothers and sisters in the Jim Jones' family, eight are now alive. Their Christmas celebration is looked forward to by all of them and they travel from near and far to get together.

"We have a continuous two weeks of visits from our children and grandchildren around Christmas," said Dallyne. "They begin coming as soon as school is out. Some of the 10 grandchildren stay with us the whole time of their vacation."

Selecting a Christmas tree is a family event that all look forward to each year.

"Jim and the children go out and find a tree. There is always a discussion about the three," she said.

They cut a tree from their woods in Mentone and there is a congenial disagreement about the tree being "too short, too tall, too fat, too skinny."

Dallyne makes all her decorations and wreaths from natural evergreens. They put their Christmas tree up on Christmas Eve and everyone helps decorate it.

"We have a star at the top to represent the star of Bethlehem," Dallyne related. "We try to teach the true meaning of Christmas in everything we do." In trying to steer away from commercialism, the family gives extra money to charities at Christmas time, especially the Lottie Moon Christmas Fund for foreign missions through their church, Moon Lake Baptist.

The family draws names so that each member receives one nice gift each year.

When the Jones' six children were young, the whole family spent part of Christmas Day with their two sets of grandparents.

"We all have sweet memories of being with grandparents at Christmas," Dallyne said.

The date for Christmas Dinner for the family varies from year to year, depending on when everyone can come. Traditional fare: turkey, ham, vegetable casseroles, pumpkin and pecan pies and cakes are on the menu.

"We share our Christmas meals with others and take plates to a shut-in or older friend," she said.

"All Christmases are special," Dallyne said. "One of the happiest was Mr and Mrs. Jones' 65th wedding anniversary. They were married on Christmas Eve and the whole family gathered at the church fellowship hall for that."

Wassail simmering on the stove is also a tradition at the Jones', the wonderful aroma fills the house.



THE JONES' CHRISTMAS WASSAIL

- 1 gal. apple cider
- 2 c. water
- 3 c. brown sugar
- 1 large can frozen orange juice concentrate
- 1 can frozen lemonade
- 1 Tbl. ginger
- 1 Tbl. nutmeg
- whole cloves
- whole allspice

Combine the spices in a cheesecloth bag. Combine all the other ingredients in a large kettle on the stove with the spice bag. Bring to a boil, then let simmer for several hours. Serve in cups with a piece of cinnamon stick.

The importance of Christmas to the Jones' family is summed up in a letter their oldest daughter Sharon Jones Harris gave to her church in Sheffield in 1981. Excerpts from that letter are found below.

Unto Us

By Sharon Jones Harris

In order to accept the resurrection, one must accept the death; in order to accept the death, one must accept the life; in order to accept the life, one must accept the birth - that birth of a perfectly human child, who would live and breathe and strive and love. One must also accept the conception, which was not of the will of a human father, but of the will of God.

My dear Christian friends, there could be no resurrection without the miracle of Christ's birth - there could have been no perfect sacrifice for our sins had He not come to live in a completely human form, knowing life as we know it, having been born as we are born, carried in the womb as we are carried, yet conceived by a perfect conception that is beyond the understanding or comprehension of our finite minds.

Continued on page 5



Christmas Wishes from Third Grade

Christmas gift-giving is always a challenge. Each year we make careful lists of family and friends and we try to find the perfect gift for each one. And, we must carefully consider our budget, knowing that in January, our pocketbooks will be empty.

Suppose budget were no object and you had all the money in the world to spend on Christmas gifts this year. The Groundhog gave Bill Berry's class at Moon Lake School this pleasant assignment and set the imaginations of these third and fourth graders in motion.

We asked, "If you could give any gift in the world, what would you give and who would you give it to?"

Here are their responses, with most of the original spelling:

I would give my Dad all the guns he wanted and I would give my Mom diamonds. I would give my two brothers motorcycles and my Mommy and Papa a new church and 1,860,342 and a convertible for me. Candace

I would give my Mom and Dad, Meemow and Granne \$999,991,444,102,500 each. And, a pink catulach for me. Brandy

If I could give any gift in the world, I would give it to Jana and it would be nice. Tracy Coots

I would give my Dad a thing-a-ma-bob that goes over his neck when he preaches, kind of like a scarf. Emily

I would give Nathan Owen, because he is my best friend, work. James Tipton

I would give to my family all big Christmas gifts because I can never afford to give them big gifts so I buy small gifts. Tiffany Derck

I would give Menoe some American candy because she lives in Japan and she has never had it. Jessica Pless

I wish I could give my Mom a manchin. I wish I could give my Dad a new Ford Bronco. I wish I could give both of my sisters 10 foot deep swimming pool. Jason Samons

I would give peace to everyone in the world and happiness too. Jonathan Rutledge

I would give money to the poor, because they live on the street and they have no money. Buck

I would give lots of love to my parants and to my brother. Jeffrey

I would give my family some money to buy a new house. Ashley Foster

I would give Laura Pullen a dimend ring. David Chaney

I would give a gift to Candace Jones and I would give her a cute little tiny kitten. Emily Collins

I would give clothes and food to needy parents and children. Laura Pullen

I would give Nathan a cap gun. Joseph

I would give a motercikl to Josh Pullen. He really wants a motercikl for cristmas. Guess way he wants won because it is hard riding a bike a mile thats way to hard to ride a bike that far and thats way he wants won. Will Shanklin

My parents need a new van. They can not find a van. They need a van realy bad. I would give my parents a new van. Ashley Langston

I would give my family a new house with goldin windos and a wight door. It will look very very good!!! and we will live in it forever. Davey Goodwin

I would give my mama a English Bulldog, my sister a Nancy Drew book, my daddy a horse. Heather Pruitt

I would give Mom and Dad lots of love and hope that they love me. Stephanie

I would give Candace Fuller a Girl Talk and I hope she likes it. and I hope she will play with it. Nathan Owen

Roland Walls, The More We Hear, The More We Like

By Nia Bryan

If the voice is raspy, the jokes are corny, and the banter is non-stop, you're listening to Roland Walls. His morning chatter on WZOB Radio is such an institution that many listeners feel they know him. The man himself, though, is not exactly what he appears to be.

"I remember one time when somebody finally met me, they said I sounded taller," he chuckles. "I don't know how you sound taller or shorter."

He admits to being short and rather homely of face, but his gravelly voice and plain appearance mask a heart as deep as Little River Canyon. His speech is as country as the records he spins, but his outlook on life is decidedly rosier than the cynicism found in those same songs.

To hear Roland tell it, there's not a better place on earth to live, not a better place to raise a family. He gives DeKalb Countians high marks for their charitable nature and their willingness to lend a helping hand. But even though he sees the world through rose-colored lenses, he is not blind to its shortcomings.

"We've got some of the finest people in the world right here," he says, "folks that would do anything to help you out. There's been times when I've told about a family with a burned house, and I've said what they needed and their sizes, and they call me back later to tell me how people helped them out."

"But at the same time that you've got all this charity and neighborliness, you've got gossiping and backstabbing. That is one thing about this place — there's more gossiping and talking about people here than you would find in a big city. That's a real paradox, isn't it? You've got all this giving and goodness, but there's entirely too much of the backstabbing. People will bear tales and twist things and make up stuff even. They can be very malicious. And, you know, if people had more love for their fellow man, they couldn't do that."

He recalls a minister who once said, "If I were gonna do wrong, I wouldn't do it in Fort Payne, Alabama." To Roland, who makes his living with the words of his mouth, gossiping do-gooders abuse the privilege of speech and inflict permanent damage on their neighbor.

"I've always said, when something is true and it gets told, that's bad. But when people twist it or make it up out of pure air, that's really bad. You never know when somebody's going to repeat something you've said, so you have to watch your tongue — and it shouldn't be that way."

He attributes our neighborliness to growing up in the Bible Belt. The gossiping and backstabbing, however, more likely stem from envy. "Everybody wants to be on the same level," he says. "If somebody's out in front achieving, and you can't rise to their level, then you feel like you have to drag them down to yours. You can do that by spreading something bad about them or criticizing them."

"That's just totally opposite to what we can do. If they would stop that, to the same extent that they would go and help somebody when their home burned, it would be a wonderful community."

"But I don't know how you'd get people to do that. There's no way you can legislate for people to be kinder to their neighbor and not spread gossip and rumors about them. Law and government can't do very much to change that. People have to want to do it inside themselves." That inner desire to do what's right is a Roland's life. His cheerful and optimistic attitude has its roots in his childhood. He describes his father as "a kidder" and his mother as "real optimistic."

"That's the only way I know how to be. That can get you in trouble, of course, because it's not realistic. Life is not always as good as I see it. I can get taken in sometimes, when somebody turns out to be less than ideal. But I'd rather be that way than the person who's too pessimistic. People who have a dark attitude, who see everything as black, don't even get to enjoy the good things when they come around."

"An optimistic person can get disappointed once in a while, but most of the while, you're content with life. Those few occasions when you were wrong are just little setbacks. But those persons who are just so sure that things are going to be bad miss out on even the good things. They're just waiting for it to turn bad, saying, 'I know this can't be good.'"

"Of course, the ideal is somewhere in between rose-colored glasses and gloom — but if you've got to be an extremist, I'd rather be extreme in the optimist direction."

Roland is clearly grateful that his parents raised him in a positive atmosphere. "Children are the way they are because of how their parents are. My parents were cheerful, and that



ROLAND WALLS at the control panel during his morning program.

rubbed off on me, and that's the way I see life. But kids that were raised otherwise, they're just doomed to despair — or else they'll have to break away from it. "It's something that you need to do all the time. People don't realize it, but happiness is a choice and a state of mind. You can go out and chase happiness all you want, and not find it. But you can do something for another person, and you both benefit. You get a reward of happiness, and two people are better off for it."

Roland should be quite familiar with that phenomenon. Sometimes his bonus is obvious and shared by many others, while at other times it is small and quiet. The most public example of his love of people is his annual appearance in "drag" at the Ms. Macho Beauty Pageant. "You know it has to be a good cause for troopers and deputies and other public figures to dress up like women and act silly for a convention hall full of people. But anytime I can help out Toys for Tots, I'm going to do it."

Roland is a much-sought-after master of ceremonies for all kinds of public events throughout the county, from gospel sings to Henagar's Potato Festival. Still, he seems to glean just as much satisfaction from the little personal touches on his radio show.

"I hope we don't ever grow so much that we can't continue to do people's birthdays on the air. After I've said it's somebody's birthday, they'll call me later and tell me what a change it made in their day. Maybe they were down that morning, but then everybody wished them a happy birthday, and it really lifted their spirits. You couldn't do something like that in a big city. We'd be amusing to them. But where it works, it works real well."

It clearly works for Roland. As the saying goes, "If life gives you lemons, make lemonade." If you don't know how, Roland has the recipe.

A Piece Of History

BITS AND PIECES
From Zora Strayhorn's History of Mentone

Two of Mentone's original mineral springs of clear life-giving mountain water still exist. Another spring was destroyed by blasting of Alabama State Highway 117 when the road was under construction.

The terrain has been shaken by violent upheavals of the earth, according to geologists, in the dim geological past. The effects of erosion by rain, wind, ice, snow, and the wide swings in temperature changes from ice to tropical heat have had their results, too. Because of this, there are huge outcroppings of rocks and within the earth caves and caverns.

Marine water covered large areas here over 600 million years ago. Trees fell in swamplands, forming peat deposits and finally making coal which attracted hordes of people here at one time with great expectations from "get rich quick" promoters.

The Groundhog's Christmas List

By EMILY SMITH

We're "makin' a list and checkin' it twice" at the Groundhog of all the things we'd like to give our readers for Christmas this year.

Since our readers are most everyone in Mentone and lots of folks in Valley Head, Hammondville and Fort Payne as well as people who live outside DeKalb County but love our area, our list is pretty long.

To start, we want to give the people of Mentone a bright shiny new library, right in Mentone, full of books. We'd like the Mentone Library to be a comfortable place where folks would want to drop in and browse through the books and see their friends, where groups could hold meetings and where visitors to Mentone could learn about all the beautiful places we enjoy here.

Then our next gift would be to our volunteer firemen and to the DeSoto Rescue Squad. We want them to have all the funds they need to have the best training and equipment possible. All of us depend on these two groups for our well-being and for our peace of mind in Mentone.

Next, we want to give a gift to all the people in DeKalb County, a big county health department, with plenty of doctors and nurses and staff to take care of all of us. We'd move Dr. Russell and his folks into a building big enough to contain all the people who need the health department with plenty of equipment and medicine to take care of them.

The next thing on our list is toll-free calling to Fort Payne from Mentone, Valley Head and Hammondville. Our friends at the Mentone Area Preservation Association have started the ball rolling on this with those petitions we signed over the past couple of months. Now, it's up to the phone company to make the rest happen.

The Groundhog's Christmas List may seem a little ambitious. After all, we are only a once-a-month newspaper with a circulation of about 3,000. We just think that you, our readers, deserve the very best we can offer you.

Merry Christmas from Mentone's Groundhog!

Letters to the Editor

Moon Lake Parent's Concern

Dear Groundhog Editor,

I hope that you will print this in the next issue of your paper. My sons go to Moon Lake Elementary School and, yesterday one of them came home hurt and confused. He said a child in his class was having a birthday party and invited all the kids in the class except four, my son being one of the four.

Can anybody understand or explain to a child why that happened? What is happening to this world? and is it not also the time of year of goodwill to mankind? It makes a person very depressed for the future of these children.

Thank you, Mrs. M. Butlock

Support of National Park

Dear Editor:

There has been much controversy concerning the Little River Canyon National Preserve most of the publicized statements have been on the negative side. The bill to create the "preserve" is coming before the committee on such things to make a decision. It is time for those who support the protection of the canyon and area to speak out. I have done so and here is a copy of my letter to the committee.

We are property owners and residents of DeKalb County, and we have followed with great interest all of the developments and controversy concerning the Little River Canyon National Preserve. Our property is adjacent to the West Fork of Little River just north of the dam at DeSoto Falls.

We applaud the provision in the reference bill to not take land or force the sale of land by an unwilling landowner. Likewise we are pleased with provision which will continue Alabama state ownership and operation of the accommodations portion of DeSoto State Park.

In general the idea and purpose of the "preserve" is good; and we are in favor of it and you may add our names to the list

Valley View

By ELOISE M. BROWN

A wonderful event happened in Valley Head at the Methodist Church. A woman said, "I will cook a turkey and dressing," another said, "I will bake a pie," another said, "I will fix a bowl of beans" (to serve the shut-ins and lonely). Like the few loaves and little fishes, this exploded into a miracle of fantastic proportions. All the churches pitched in together, restaurants and businesses gave generously and individuals gave their holiday to work hard and to serve others.

The turkeys, hams, potatoes, rolls, desserts - there was every thing imaginable for a bountiful Thanksgiving feast to overflow. Over 200 people were served and many plates were delivered. Doesn't that inspire you and uplift your spirit with new hope? It is a good world full of fine people who care

and share with others. We have more to be thankful for than we realized.

Sarah Lee Cooper had a happy reunion of relatives at her home recently. Those present were: Hazel and Porter Johnston from Rossville, Ga., Kay and David Rhea from Hixson, Tenn., Melvin Smith from Ider, Thelma and Clyde Hawkins, Martha and Lester Hawkins from Geraldine, Howard Hawkins and Mavis Hawkins from Valley Head, Chris Cooper, Randall Hawkins and Shirley Miller from Chattanooga.

Gladys Cobble and the Jesse B. Stott family spent Thanksgiving with the Micky Cobble family in Chattanooga.

Gladys Stott had a reunion of about 60 members of her relatives recently.

Chris and Carol (Gracie) Brown and daughter, Amanda, spent the weekend with Carol's parents, Betty and Coy Butler in McDonough, Ga.

Ruth and Bert Pickett had as Thanksgiving guests their son Joe and Lillian Pickett and family, daughter, Patricia and Sid Spencer and family and Troy Chambers of Chattanooga.

Mark and Jane Gibson and baby son, Matthew Blackburn Gibson, from Houston, spent several days with their parents, Martha and Hoot Gibson, and grandparents, Dot and Bill Blackburn. Linda Blackburn of Jacksonville, Fla., was also visiting.

Opal Tatum is recovering at home after a stay in BMC-DeKalb.

Sue and Foyl Cooper met their daughters, Peggy Gray and Maggie Wilson and their families in Chattanooga for Thanksgiving dinner.

Venna Livingston spent Thanksgiving with her daughter, Marilyn Mercer, at New Salem, Ga. They were joined next day by her other daughter, Sue Mosely and her family.

Emily and Barry Brown and son, Robert, and nephew, Carl Wright, spent the day with Emily's sister, Pauline Wright in Chattanooga.

Ed Ringer spent Thanksgiving with his brother, Robert and Myrtice Ringer in Marianna, Fla. Robert came home with Ed to keep a doctor's appointment at UAB.

Helen and Arno White have returned home after a visit with their daughters, Karen Smith and Carol Miller and their families near Baltimore, Md.

Mary Louise and Ted Holleman and their son John went to Nashville's Opryland Hotel and they attended the ceremony of the Yule Log lighting. They and E.T. and Gladola Holleman spent Thanksgiving day with Betty and James Adams in Gadsden.

The Sunshine Club met with Evelyn Clark Nov. 20. Those present were Ruth Pickett, Gladys Stott, Geraldine Hawkins, Vernitice Young, Bess Bauerle, Sue Cooper, Addie Hall, Gladys Cobble, Leona Chadwick, Carmel Gifford, Karen Freeman and Eloise Brown. Some beautiful Christmas tree ornaments were shown which had been made for the tree at the courthouse in Fort Payne.

Thelma J. Brown
1895-1991

She will be remembered as the widow of Arthur J. Brown, and a former resident of Sulphur Springs and Valley Head. She was the step-mother of my husband. She died in Chattanooga on Thanksgiving day.

A long and beautiful life has ended on earth. Leaving memories of true value and great worth. She was a lady of character, grace and real beauty. Who never neglected an obligation or duty. She labored for others and strived for their good, in every way that a true Christian should; She was a leader for Red Cross and WCTU, Taught Sunday School and inspired many children too. She had an intimate fellowship with her Savior and Lord, And delighted to speak of His every promise and word, And of the Gloryland where she was praying to go. Now her prayer has been answered, her assurance to know. We have precious memories of her concern and her love, And look forward to a heavenly reunion in her home above.

Eloise M. Brown



MENTONE'S

GROUNDHOG

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Letters to the editor are welcome. They should be typewritten and of reasonable length.

The deadline for all material for The Groundhog is the last day of the month preceding publication.

of supporters. We would also like to see the following added to the bill:

- 1) Provisions for a citizen/resident advisory council to take an active part in setting policy for governing the Preserve.
- 2) Recognition of the fact that Little River was recently designated by the state of Alabama as an Outstanding National Resource Water (ONRW). This was done in keeping with federal EPA guidelines.
- 3) A statement that nothing in the bill (law) is to be construed as giving permission to modify, change or delete any of the regulations governing ONRW rivers.
- 4) A statement that the National Park Service will undertake to police and otherwise protect the entire Little River according to all of the rules and regulations concerning its use.
- 5) A provision stating that mineral or other natural resources shall not be taken by any means from the Preserve.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to make our feelings known. We hope that you will give serious consideration to our suggestions.

Very truly yours,
Bill and Sue Schwarz

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Country Journal

Country Journal will be back next month with a report of Bernice and Homer Crow's trip to London. In the meantime, we hope you will enjoy this excerpt from the September 1989 Groundhog.

Those of us who attended Moon Lake School have been talking about having some sort of reunion for the alumni of the school. If anyone reading this article is interested, please contact me. We would probably stipulate years between 1930-1945.

We used to have concerts at the school to raise funds for the school. I remember the Swanee River Boys, coming from Atlanta, Ga., in the late 30s. They sang a song called "River of Memories." The words go something like this:

"Did you ever go sailing down the river of memories
To a little log cabin that's nestled beneath the sycamore tree
Where the sunshine is cherry and nothing in the world is dreary
That's my cabin at the end of my river of memory."

Then during the 40s we sang, "Gonna take a sentimental journey, Gonna set my heart at ease, Gonna take a sentimental journey, To renew old memories." Then in the 50s it was "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree."

All of us want to go back home again, and rekindle precious memories. Thomas Wolfe said, "You cannot go home again," but in memories we can.

Town Council Notes

The Mentone Town Council decided to purchase insurance for the town from the Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation at a cost of almost \$6,000. The city will save over \$1,800 per year with the new company.

Alabama Municipal Insurance was formed by the Alabama League of Municipalities to meet the insurance needs of towns

throughout the state. They have 170 members including Ider, Bridgeport and Stevenson.

In order to participate in the insurance program, Mentone paid a one-time capitalization fee based on the population of the town. Recent census figures calculate the town's population to be 476.

The council also reappointed Steve Noles as town judge for a term of two years.

Mayor Cash reported that the zoning committee had met with Bob House from the consulting firm in Birmingham. Mr. House's firm, House Associates, has been hired to help with the zoning process. The chairman of the zoning committee is Jim Wright.

"We'll be holding some open meetings soon," Mayor Cash said.

The committee is considering three categories of zoning, business, residential and, farm related.

Discussion about the rock wall on Highway 117 continued at this month's meeting. The council is seeking an opinion from town attorney, Pat Tate, on the city's liability for the wall and highway.

Mentone Police Chief Johnny Ferguson can be reached at 634-4378 in case of an emergency.

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THE HITCHING POST

Antiques, Collectibles, Glassware, Books

Cherokee Cabin



Ken Pennington's latest art print features the last home of the legendary Cherokee woman, Granny Dollar. The barefooted, pipe-smoking centurian is seated on the steps of the ancient log cabin with her faithful dog, Buster.

Granny Dollar was born Nancy Callahan, on Sand Mountain, early in the 1800s to a full-blooded Cherokee father and mixed-blood mother. Her father had two wives and between them produced a large Cherokee family of twenty-six children, which included three sets of triplets.

Her family was witness to, but escaped, the tragic "Indian" removal on The Trail of Tears and continued living for awhile in their beloved Alabama. After a fight between her father and a white neighbor who had his nose and one ear bitten off, they left Alabama and moved to Marthasville (Atlanta) in Georgia.

In Georgia Nancy worked as a mule skinner, hauling freight to stores within 30 miles distance. She hauled for several years until being disrupted by the Civil War and the Battle of Atlanta. During the siege her father was killed fighting for the Confederacy and she also lost her fiancé, for whom she grieved for almost 40 years.

Eventually she returned to Alabama, met and married a white man named Nelson Dollar. They settled on Lookout Mountain above the location of the old Indian community of Willstown.

Granny lived to see both mothers and all her brothers and sisters pass on and time eventually took Nelson too, leaving her to live the remainder of her life alone, except for a faithful dog named Buster. When she died in 1931, Granny was believed to be 110 years old.

The little log cabin stood in the shadows of the forest for years, entangled with vines and thickets of briars. It served as a kind of silent memorial for the ancient Cherokee woman who had lived there, one of the last links to the Cherokee Nation in Creek land.



Ken Pennington

Presents

Cherokee Cabin

The last home of Granny Dollar, the legendary Indian woman whose remarkable life had been witness to the Trail of Tears and the Civil War. She was believed to be 110 years old when she died here in 1931.

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START THE DAY WITH A GOOD BREAKFAST Corey Bialock (left) and Lloyd Bellmore enjoy the breakfast program at Moon Lake School. The program began December 2 and is open to all students, the cost is only \$.50 for those paying full price for meals at school.

Rhododendron Garden Club meets

Original and beautiful holiday decorations are easy to make, Gladys Stott told members of the Rhododendron Garden Club at its November meeting at the Mentone United Methodist Church.

Bernise Crow introduced Mrs. Stott who is from Valley Head and a well-known speaker in our area. Mrs. Stott gave instructions from making table arrangements and wreaths for doors. Materials are available locally and many books give further instruction and ideas for decorations.

The Garden Club purchased dwarf nandinas and hollies to complete the planting along the sidewalk between the Hitching Post and the Kountry Chef. Ann Walker, chairman of the special projects committee asked for volunteers to help plant the shrubs on November 14.

President Hope Walker presided at the meeting. Linda Brown, Hope Walker and Ann Wright were the hostesses. Thirteen members were present and one visitor, Marion Lamkin of Tampa, FL, introduced by Hope Walker.

The next meeting in December 10 at 12 noon. It is the annual covered dish Christmas luncheon at the Mentone Town Hall.

Our Town

By Linda Brown

What makes each of us the way we are? What shapes our personalities and molds our character? I believe that much of it is determined by the people we associate with.

Sometimes we are influenced by a person we don't want to be like. How many people don't drink alcoholic beverages because of an alcoholic parent? We all know persons who are always down on everything and everyone. We try not to be like them.

This is all on my mind because of the question Charles McGehee asked in a recent newspaper article. He asked how he became a liberal thinker with his rather conservative background. I, too, have a tendency to lean to the liberal side. I always try to see both sides of an issue. Mentone is faced with many decisions at this time.

We are changing and we must decide the best direction to go. The changes are subtle. We now have cable TV - change. We could have a National Recreation Area in our back door - change (big time). The idea of our own library has been planted - change. A town planning commission has been appointed - change. People from places far and near are moving to the mountain - change.

When you face change remember to look at both sides and weigh the issues carefully. Study the effects the change will make on our lives and decide the best course to take. Then take a stand!

This is my favorite time of the year. People are busy. People are happy. Everyone is thinking of someone other than themselves. This is the season of peace. Peace of mind is possible even if peace on earth is not. My wish for everyone is that you may have peace.

Happenings

By Emily Smith

Ethel Mahlfold surprised her step mother Evelyn Bain with a birthday party Saturday, November 16. 39 people attended from as far away as Chicago, Illinois.

Linda and Greg Frith start the holidays off with a party for their Mentone, Gadsden and Centre friends at the Hanging Cottage in Mentone. With Tony Goggans providing the music and entertainment and great food from Dorothy Crow, everyone had a great time. Many of the Frith's non-Mentone friends visited our town for the first time. Now that they know their way, we hope they'll come back again and again.

Mentone Police Chief Johnny Ferguson can be reached at 634-4378 in case of an emergency. He can also be called at the City Hall, 634-4444.

Curtis O'Daniel, our county agent, reports that agriculture provides jobs for 21 million people in the U.S. Two million of those people are farmers, thirteen million are in manufacturing and distribution and, six million are involved in wholesale and retail sales of agricultural goods and services.

He says, "If these people could not feed and keep the rest of the population in clothes, lots of folks would have to quit their jobs and move back to the farm. Lots of my friends would hate to do that! They are second and third generation folks away from the farm and they like their town jobs. That's as it should be!"

"It's a pretty good arrangement! To make things better, all we need to do is be more appreciative of one another and respect the choices each has made for his or her livelihood," he says.

Country Cooking

By Nova Dean Kilgore

APPLE MUFFINS

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1/2 cup grated raw apple
- 1/2 cup melted Oleo
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/4 cup milk

Sift together flour, baking powder, salt, nutmeg, sugar and cinnamon. Cut in shortening. Mix together egg, milk and apples. Add all at once to the dry ingredients. Mix quickly but thoroughly. Fill greased muffin tins 3/4 full. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes. Yield: 1 dozen.

APPLE STREUSEL MUFFINS

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 large beaten eggs
- 1/4 cup butter melted
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/4 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon soda
- 1 cup dairy sour cream
- 1 cup unpeeled, chopped apples
- Streusel Topping:**
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons butter

In large bowl stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and soda, set aside. In small bowl beat eggs, sour cream and butter. Add all at once to dry ingredients along with the apples. Stir just until moistened. Fill well greased muffin tins 3/4 cup full. Combine topping ingredients, sprinkle on top. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes. Yield: 18 muffins.

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Continued from page 1

I submit to you, that unless we instill in our own hearts and the hearts of our children the wonder and glory of Christ's conception and birth, we will never know the depth of Christ's life and sacrifice.

The Brock Family's Christmas

With the hustle and bustle of busy family schedules, Christmas gives the family of Yvonne and Don Brock a chance to be together and enjoy one another.

"Our girls, Connie and Donna are 19 and 16. With Don's work and the church now a days it's rare that we spend time together," Yvonne explained.

The Brock's begin decorating their house for Christmas early in December with candles, swags of greenery and arrangements. An artificial tree in the dining room is hung with handmade ornaments they found left behind when they moved into the house which had belonged to Mary Wegan. The ornaments remind them of the former owner of their home.

In the living room, a live tree will stand and decorated with ornaments the Brock's girls have made throughout the years.

"I've kept everything the girls made," Yvonne said.

On Christmas morning, the family gathers for hot chocolate in their own Christmas cups. They read the Christmas story while they sip their hot chocolate and then open gifts.

"Connie and Donna still look forward to that time," Yvonne said. "It is very important to us to keep what Christmas is about.

The stockings on the mantle are the ones that Yvonne made for the family when the children were small.

After a morning together, the family goes to visit grandmothers Delilah Coots and Ruby Brock, both living in Mentone.

Yvonne cooks a traditional Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings for the family.

"I usually stay up late Christmas Eve wrapping gifts. I like to surprise the girls on Christmas morning when they come down to a tree with all the presents underneath," Yvonne said.

They also participate in church activities. Each year, the Mentone Church of God of Prophecy where Don is pastor, has a Christmas program that involves both the young people and the older members of the congregation.

One of the Brock's most memorable Christmases was when they lived in Pottstown, Pennsylvania.

"It snowed and the snow was so deep and beautiful. We had just never seen a snow like that for Christmas before. Don's



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS CONTINUE WITH DALLYNE AND JIMMY JONES' GRANDCHILDREN: Shown clockwise from bottom left: Andrea Smith, Drew Jackson, Tom Harris, Aaron Carr, Carah Jackson, Mary Beth Harris, Adam Carr, Dallas Manning and Ashton Jones.

parents and my mom had driven up to spend Christmas with us. We were all so homesick and it was so enjoyable to be with them that year," Yvonne remembered.

This will be the last Christmas for the Brocks to be together as a family of four, in February, their oldest daughter Connie will be married. That will add one more to their celebration.

A favorite Christmas treat at the Brock house are peanut butter cookies, decorated with M & M's.



Yvonne's Peanut Butter Cookies

1/2 c. butter
1/2 c. peanut butter
1/2 c. sugar
1/2 c. granulated sugar
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla
1 c. flour
1 bag M&M's
Cream butter and peanut butter. Gradually add Brown sugar and granulated sugar. Add egg and vanilla. Gradually fold in flour. Drop in small balls on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8 min. at 350 degrees. Mash M&M's into each cookie and bake 3 or 4 minutes more.

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PRACTICING FOR THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Some of the members of the community chorus are: (front, from left) Roberta Kirby, Louise Hammonds, Priscilla Gregory and Patricia Hulet; (back, from left) director, DeVann Jackson, L.A. Smith and David Tucker.

A Time for Thanks Giving

By The Rev. Oscar Hussel

Dr. Hussel retired as faculty dean of Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta last year. He lives in Mentone and attends St. Joseph's On-the-Mountain Episcopal Church where he is a member of the vestry and assists in Sunday worship services.

The weather this autumn has been uncertain. Already we have had a week of January winter and some spring-like days. But, what is everlastingly certain about autumn is that it is an especially appropriate time for thanks giving.

For some thanks giving is most closely connected with the gathering of crops and the fattening of animals. Many nations worldwide have a special day for that kind of thanks giving, usually accompanied by a great feast.

For others, the most appropriate thanks giving is to people who have provided support and joy in our lives. Our U.S. Thanksgiving Day is a family affair as is a special thanks day in Korea. Also, it is traditional, as we approach the end of the

year, to write thank-you letters to persons important in our lives.

Yet, others want to express their thanks for our national heritage, for the sacrifices of our ancestors and of the many men and women who died for us in war. November 11 was one such day.

For still others thanks giving combines the first two ideas above and is gathered into the Christmas season with its gifts of appreciation and its parties to celebrate — friendships.

All of these kinds of thanks giving are appropriate, but there is one further kind that is more important than all of these, our thanks to God to whom we owe the blessing of harvest, of family, of a land of liberty and justice. One of the highest qualities of humankind is to be thankful, as in expressions of love, caring acts and generous gifts. That is the meaning of the Christmas season.

For many in the Mentone area this highest form of thanks giving will be because of the precious gift of God has given us in Jesus Christ, who came to show us the depth and height of God's love and to enable us to live a full and joyful life. So we celebrate his birth even as the dead winter season begins.

May our autumn thanks giving include a grand feast, calls and letters of appreciation, thoughtful gifts given in joy and, especially, thanks to God at the special services offered in our churches. "Give thanks with a grateful heart."



Church Calendar

Moon Lake Baptist Church, Sunday December 15, 5 p.m.
Community Christmas Chorus.
Valley Head Baptist Church, Sunday, December 15, 7 p.m.
Community Christmas Chorus.
Sunday, December 22, Moon Lake Baptist Church Choir will present Christmas music.
Tuesday, December 24, Moon Lake Baptist Church Christmas Eve Service, 7 p.m.
Tuesday, December 24, St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service, 7 p.m.



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Christmas Chorus plans two concerts

The Community Christmas Chorus will present "Come Home For Christmas" on December 15 in two performances. The first will be at Moon Lake Baptist Church at 5 p.m. and Valley Head Baptist Church will be the site for the second performance at 7 p.m.

The Chorus is made up of 20 people from Mentone and Valley Head who prepare yearly for a concert of Christmas music. They are directed by DeVann Jackson who also sings a tenor solo.

"Come Home For Christmas" written by Dave Clark and Russell Mauldin includes the songs "The Call of Home," "Make My Heart Ready for Christmas," "Bethlehem," "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Heaven On The Hillside" and, "Welcome Home."

Members of the Chorus are: (sopranos) Christine Brooks, Sadie Cooper, Barbara Gifford, Priscilla Gregory, Louise Hammonds, Amy Holleman, Patricia Hulet, Roberta Kirby and Martha Stanley; (altos) Janet Cooper, Teresa Cooper, Bernice Crow, Jean Jones and Jane Meadows; (tenors) Chris Cooper, DeVann Jackson, L.A. Smith and David Tucker; and, (bass) John Jones and George Walker.

Missions Month at Moon Lake Baptist

Moon Lake Baptist Church is observing Missions Month during December. Their goal is to raise \$1,000 for foreign missions, according to Pastor Curtis Bridges.

"Last year we raised \$1,300 for foreign missions. We hope to go over our goal this year, too," Pastor Bridges said.

Sunday, December 8, Dr. David Johnson, a missionary in Japan will speak to the congregation. Dr. Pat Hart, a missionary field nutritionist in Venezuela will speak on Sunday, December 15.

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Front row, from left: Marilyn Hale, Beta Ivey, Debbie Padgett; back row: Abby Grogan, Sissy Crider and, Sherry Blansit.



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