



THE GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
PO Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

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"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain" — In our 30th year

February 2012

MAPA & THE GROUNDHOG TURN 30-- An Interview with MAPA Pioneer Sandra Padgett

By Charlotte Gentry, Editor

"If someone holds a gun to your head, try to run. Just zig-zag as you run." Sandra Padgett was giving an impromptu lecture on self defense at her home when I arrived to interview her.

The sun porch of the Mentone home she shares with husband, Ray, had become something of a salon as visitors came and went to check on her as she convalesced. (Sandra had broken her shoulder in a freakish fall just days earlier.)

Mentone-area artists Lucy Mitchell and Suzan Buckner were listening attentively. "My last safety tip is, when you are finished shopping and get into your car, don't waste time putting on lipstick or checking your purse," Sandra cautions. "Just GO!"

Over the years, Sandra Padgett has definitely been on the GO. Her relationship with Mentone began in a very big way when she and Ray purchased the run-down Mentone Springs Hotel in 1981. "I think it was because I was turning 40 and needed a project," Sandra says of the purchase.

Her work to preserve the hotel brought her in touch with other like-minded individuals. Sandra remembers that Groundhog Day in 1982, when Bruce Bon Fleur invited a group to meet at his restaurant, Cragmere Manna, to introduce his concept of a Mentone preservation association.

"I had never met Bruce before this meeting. He had his chef (Michael Van



Sandra Padgett was featured in an article that appeared in the *Chattanooga Times*, 1983.

Minden) make swan-shaped pastries. We had coffee and tea," Sandra remembers. "Bruce had it all laid out. I was very impressed."

She adds, "He was a creative force, a promoter extraordinaire, a genius. He could put together a proposal that was so incredible."

During that first meeting, attended by Sandra, Bon Fleur, Dr. Charles White McGehee and his wife Jean, Bernise Crow (and others who Sandra couldn't recall) the name Mentone Area Preservation Association (or MAPA) was adopted, along with the basic guiding principle to which it adheres to this day: "To preserve and protect the heritage, natural environ-

ment, and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone Area."

By April of that same year, MAPA was a fully-organized entity and began publication of its monthly newsletter, *The Groundhog*. The name was chosen, obviously, because of the group's conception date. The newsletter was, in those early days, a basic 2-page mimeographed document sent out to MAPA members to inform them of the minutes of MAPA meetings and announcements of upcoming activities.

(Here in our conversation, Amelia Kirk-Lolli shows up to check on Sandra's well-being. She is drawn into the conversation about "the early days" and relates how her mother, Mabel Kirk, was active in the early work of MAPA. Amelia is going to be a great subject for a *Groundhog* article!)

"The meeting about the 'Premier *Groundhog*' newspaper took place at Dr.

McGehee's house," Sandra continues. "We argued and argued over the format. He wanted it to be able to be folded to fit into mailboxes."

Sandra assigned the first story. "It was at least a 3-hour meeting, arguing,

we all had different concepts. Dr. McGehee had experience. So did Bruce. The others of us were novices." (See this month's centerfold to see the resulting "Premier Issue" of *The Groundhog*.)

"Bruce owned Cragmere and he came up with a huge vision. We were very excited and had enough money from MAPA for the first printing. The whole town of Mentone was great with their support. They lined up enthusiastically to buy ads. Everyone jumped on the bandwagon. Sharron Baron (owner of *The Gourdie Shop*) was great!"

"My daughter calls that period of my life my 'Mentone Daze,'" Sandra jokes. "Not only was I trying to restore the hotel, I was working with Bruce on another publication 'The Mountain View,' still dabbling in selling real estate in Atlanta and bringing the children with me on weekends to do the work."

"Our vision with *The Groundhog* was to bring people together. We hoped to win over the long-historied families and the newcomers to the area. We knew it could bring a sense of unity to the community by honoring regular folks."

"The 80's were a very productive period in my life," she reflects. "I was kind of full of myself. I was a 'pushy old broad.' Ray was in the background, he was a balancer if things got too hairy."

Sandra sums it up, "Of all that I was trying to do, I am proudest of the *Groundhog* more than anything. The fact it has survived 30 years is remarkable!"



Sandra today.

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PO Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

Published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association, MAPA 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 non-profit organization by the State of Alabama.



THE GROUNDHOG STAFF

Editor.....Charlotte Gentry
Layout/Design.....Diane Sanders
Contributing Writers.....Linda Brown,
LC Moon, Kristen Emory, Dixie Wilson.

MAPA OFFICERS

President.....Gerald Bailey
Vice President.....LC Moon
Secretary/Treasurer.....Ray Padgett
Parliamentarian.....Amelia Kirk-Lolli
Members-At-Large: Lamar Bray,
Hobson Kirby

MAPA dues for the new year are:
\$10/individual and \$15/couple. Send
your dues to: MAPA, PO Box 50,
Mentone, AL 35984 (Groundhog sub-
scriptions are not included)

In case of errors in advertisements,
The Groundhog assumes liability only
for the actual space that is incorrect
in the advertisement.

**CALL CHARLOTTE GENTRY AT
256-996-5995 for advertising.**

Letters to the editor are welcome.
They should be typewritten and of rea-
sonable length.



**Join MAPA today!
Help us preserve
Mentone's history
and impact its future.**

**Just \$10/year individual
\$15 for a couple
MAPA, PO Box 50
Mentone, AL 35984**

From the Editor

The month of January was a surprisingly warm one here in the mountains. We saw the daffodils begin to bloom and heard the frogs warming up their vocal s for their anticipated spring concerts. The rain seemed, at times, determined to keep our driveways and parking lots a constant mud hole and swelled the creeks, streams and rivers to a wonderfully-rushing torrent.

It seems rather strange to find myself, yet again, sitting on my porch without the need for a jacket, warming my face in the sun, and enjoying watching the grandkids play in the woods. They've been busily building another "secret hide-out." (Of course, it is very visible because of the gaudy blue tarp they've managed to hang from the fallen trees.) What a great place to live!

This month's celebration of MAPA and The Groundhog's 30th birthday had me poring through old copies of The Groundhog with the intent of writing a synopsis of those 30 years of stories, people and events. Reading the writings of the talented editors and contributors throughout those years made me realize, again, how blessed Mentone has been to have such a publication to record its history.

It also made me realize it would be nigh on impossible, if I did it justice, to get all this wonderful history into one issue. After all, it took 30 years and many writers to get us where we are today. So, rather than trying to stuff it all into this issue, we will run a series of articles about the paper itself and about those who kept it alive for 30 years.

Thanks to MAPA members and several talented writers in the area, we have some fresh, new articles and poems in this month's Groundhog. It's a nice balance to have the historical and the new in this birthday issue. Thanks to you, our readers and advertisers, we will continue to bring you the "Neighborhood News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MAPA!

C.



Letters To the Editor

Dear Editor,

In the past, someone or some organization in Mentone arranged for electronics recycling at City Hall. Could you see about doing that again?

Much appreciate any effort you can make to see about this.

Thanks again,
Barbara Lieu
Menlo, GA

*Excerpted from September
1983 editorial:*

"The Groundhog is an unusual venture in journalism. It is not a newspaper, not a magazine not a newsletter. It is a publication. It is naturally impossible for us to cover those news items which a daily or weekly newspaper feature. Our task is to summarize, to develop features unique to our area and to MAPA's principles, and to the community interest.

"While comments to this point have been largely favorable, we welcome suggestions for improvement, for special features, and for broadening our scope."

Charles White McGehee, Editor

Chuck is at it again!

W. Chuck Groundhog (our stuffed animal mascot) has been getting restless (he always does when Groundhog Day comes around!). So, we've got him out of his den and have hidden him somewhere in the Mentone area. Look for 10 clues hidden within our ads to help you find Chuck's hiding place. If you find Chuck, bring him home to us and you'll win a prize. And, we'll take your picture and run it in next month's issue of The Groundhog.

(If you find Chuck, bring him by the Mentone Realty office during regular office hours, or call (256)996-5995 to make arrangements for his return. Thanks!)

This month's prize is a \$20.00 gift certificate from
The Wildflower Café in Mentone. Good luck!





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Broker/Owner
256-996-5995

Mentone Realty



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Welcome To Mentone!!



**HAPPY
30th BIRTHDAY
to MAPA and
The Groundhog!**

LOTS and LAND

JUST LISTED! RIVERFRONT LOT w/over 270' frontage, West Fork Little River. 3.01 acres with driveway in place. Rhododendron, laurel, holly & hardwoods. \$39,900. (PLS#21805; MLS#991016)

7.59 BROW ACRES, TATUM GULF A "Getaway in the making!" Roughed-in retreat or guest house on an amazing Brow lot on Lookout Mtn. Situated on a hillside of rhododendron by a small mtn stream, private & serene. Beautiful forest & great views. \$199,000 (PLS#21592; MLS#604670)

OVER 400' CREEK LOT on Ivan's Branch. Highland restricted already. \$1,000. (PLS#21596)

114 ACRES, HAMMONDVILLE. Prime land at a price you won't want to miss. Start your own hunting club, sub-divide or just build & enjoy the quietness & serenity. \$205,200. (PLS#21672; MLS#605176)

REDUCED! 4.42-ACRE LOT W/CREEK. Wooded, private, peaceful, abundant wildlife, myriad hiking/walking areas. Mentone. Now \$39,900 (PLS#21482; MLS#578905.)

10.8 ACRES ON N. BROW. Approx 340' of brow frontage. Awe-inspiring views; interesting rock formations; large trees. \$199,900. (MLS#928654, PLS#21467)

10 ACRES FARM LAND Come home to the country! Build your dream home or do a little farming (or do both!). Great price on this unrestricted piece of property. Power & public water avail. \$30,000 (PLS#21471; MLS#371573)

CREEKSIDE LOT IN MENTONE! 1.13 ac lot w/approx 200' of frontage w/underground water, trees, rocks. \$29,900. (PLS#21452)

HUGE REDUCTION! 3.21 ACRE WOOD-ED LOT in Mentone's Northend community. Gated entry offers privacy & security to build your mountain getaway. Now only \$27,500 (MLS#387708; PLS#21363)

BUILDING LOT IN VALLEY HEAD in historic residential area with view toward Lookout Mtn & frontage on Hwy 117. Traditional houseplan in mind? This would be just the right place to build it. \$15,000! (PLS#21624; MLS#429457)

"The Natural Choice"



www.mentonerealty.com
Office: (256) 634-4767



THE LARIMORE HOUSE, on the National Register & one of the few remaining early DeKalb homes. Feel the history in its hand-crafted doors; wavy window glass, well-worn heart-pine floors; massive stone fireplace in the kitchen (one of six!); the smokehouse w/its hand-carved pegs; servant's quarters w/stone fireplace in the middle of the floor. Artesian spring well, Creek on property. Just listed for \$189,900. (PLS#21788; MLS#586683)



"MOUNTAIN HAVEN." Down a private, winding lane, through the woods, you'll find this charming, fully-furnished, one-level cabin home on 15+ acres. 3BR/2BA, approx 1800 sq ft; front & back porches (screened on back!) w/pleasant view of neighboring lake. Beautiful, stone WB Fpl; pine floors & ceilings. Stone work along drive, foundation, steps & walkway. Mentone. \$239,900. (PLS#21688; MLS#516090)



SPACIOUS LOG CABIN. From the huge stone fireplace to the rich, warm wood in the great room, you recognize the quality construction & attention to detail, and you know this is one special cabin! Daniel Boone log cabin w/upgrades. 2BR/2BA. Fabulous wrap-around porch. Unf full basement offers future bonus space for workshop & living area w/bath. Your own cabin in the mountains! Now \$229,000 (PLS#20723; MLS 644363)



IT'S WHAT A MOUNTAIN CABIN SHOULD BE. Plenty of rustic charm, plenty of eye-appeal, plenty of space! 1900 sq ft, 3BR/2BA cabin built w/mostly local woods. Cedar cabinetry; cedar-lined closets; peeled pine railings/spindles on staircase & loft; pine slab siding. Metal roof, 3/4 wrap-around porch & deck, vaulted great room w/stone, WB Fpl. 1.5-acre wooded lot. Mentone. \$179,900. (PLS#21677; MLS#379991)



STATELY MOUNTAIN MANOR on East Lookout Brow. Entertain in luxury with panoramic views from every room. Featuring vaulted ceilings, stone fireplace, all new Kitchen w/granite, large dining, covered stone porch on Brow, carport/pavilion and basement. Storm shelter & screened porch. This home has it all. Situated on 3.44 ac. Prime brow that adjoins over 1,000 acres in conservation, helping insure a lifetime of privacy & preservation. This approximately 3400 sq ft, 3BR/3BA home is remarkably well-appointed with inviting ambiance. Reasonably priced at \$599,000. (PLS#21789; MLS#882781)



THE OLD BRUCE HOUSE, one of the few remaining early Mentone summer homes! Two-story frame cottage w/heart pine walls, ceilings & floors. Stone, wood-burning Fpl fitted w/gas logs. The well bucket & windlass on back screened porch is still operational! Breathe new life into this one-of-a-kind classic. In the heart of Mentone, behind the Mentone Inn, \$137,500. (PLS#21463; MLS#913251)



THE JAMES PLACE with over 185' of brow view & 1.46 ac, this 4BR/2.5BA cottage is worth considering. The cottage is OK now, but with upgrades it could be a WOW brow-front home for far less than comparably-sized brow properties. Fabulous sunsets! 2-car att gar, hot tub; beautiful landscaping; stone & iron-gated entry. Less than a mile from downtown Mentone. Residence, retreat or rental \$275,000! (PLS#21259; MLS#580676)



CHARMING CABIN ON 15 ACRES Relax & rejuvenate in this 1450 sq ft, 2BR/2BA getaway/residence. Open floor plan, glass porch, hot tub, vaulted ceilings w/open beam trusses, stone Fpl w/Buck insert. 3-car carport w/workshop & det 12x24 studio/office. Buy it w/less acreage or up to 22 acres total. 3 small bldgs w/electric & a fenced, irrigated garden plot in field. Cabin & 15 acres \$215,000 (PLS#21697; MLS#560320)



BEAUTIFULLY RUSTIC LOG CABIN in Hunters Ridge, on 2.06 acres. 2BR/2.5BA; great covered front porch to enjoy the serenity & quietude of nature's beauty around you. Small stream below the back deck gives wildlife a place to drink & humans a place to spend peaceful moments. Stone Fpl w/gas logs completes the mtn getaway atmosphere. Now \$144,500 (PLS#20916; MLS#588906)



SIMPLY ELEGANT WATERFRONT CABIN with deep water frontage & covered dock on Lake Lohasage. Walk down to the lake from terrace-level patio. Relax with a game of pool on the vintage, commercial-style Brunswick pool table in the den. 5BR/4.5BA; approx 3,000 sq ft; open living/dining; galley kitchen w/lots of cabinets & pantry storage areas. Spacious screened back porch overlooks the lake & provides outdoor living in most any weather. Comes partially furnished. Split-system CH/A. Garage to house outdoor goodies. Year-round living or vacation retreat; for a few or a crowd. \$299,000 (PLS#20999; MLS#655876)



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

- 1 - Tammy Kirby, Fontana Stinson, Rindy Flannigan
- 2 - Kevin Nelson, George Walker (in memory)
- 3 - Susan Van Apeldorn
- 4 - Alex Hazell, Jamie Cameron, Zeb Kincer, Loree Brownfield, Sophia Blair
- 5 - Cameron Collins, Dorothy Bridges, Jamie Blair
- 6 - Felicia Key, Maxine Baty
- 7 - Jordan Sutton, Carley Verdon, Haley Stinson
- 8 - Jimmy Hester, Sarah Campbell
- 9 - Cayden Collins, Jonathan Gentry, Willie B. Langston (in memory)
- 10 - David Gilbreath
- 11 - Shinice Smith, Cayla Voils, Cayla Wigley
- 12 - Bubby Browder
- 13 - Doris Martin Battles
- 14 - Sue Key Goodridge (98 years young!), Ashelyn Watson, Taylor Poff, William Teague
- 16 - Janis J. Carter, Sharron Baron
- 17 - Fay Langston (in memory)
- 18 - Kaleb McMunn, Gail Crider
- 19 - Jewel Cochran
- 20 - Joan Byrum
- 22 - Isaac Akes, Justin Langston, Corey Blalock
- 24 - Susan Collins, Tom Emory, Payton Day
- 25 - Austin Jones, Dorothy Cyr, William A. Beasley
- 26 - Margie Coots
- 27 - Livvy Griffith, David Hilliard
- 28 - Frances Gilbreath, Elizabeth Perry, Ethan Bailey

Anniversaries

- 4 - Willie B. & Fay Langston (in memory)
- 8 - Dave & Yvonne Blalock
- 14 - Mr. & Mrs. Huey Matthews
- 16 - Nelson & Cynthia Kerby
- 22 - Andy & Susan Akes, Kathy & Dick Casler
- 24 - Ed & Gerry Disney
- 28 - George & Harriett Lillich



FEBRUARY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MOON LAKE PTO MEETING, Feb 7, 6:00 pm, in the gym. 4th Grade class will present a Valentine/President's Day program.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER, Feb 21, 6 pm, St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Mentone. Tickets available from church members for \$5 each. Also available evening of the event for donation of \$5. Evening will begin with a said Eucharist at 6 pm, pancake supper follows in parish hall. Good food, worship and fellowship for all.

BOOKS FOR THE TROOPS collection sites Moon Lake Public Library, Mentone; in Ft Payne at Bruce's Foodland, DeKalb Co Library, VFW Post, St Philip's Episcopal Church, and Region's Bank main branch. For more information, contact Charles Green (256)254-0899

AFTERNOON OF POPS, Feb 11, 2-4 pm, DeKalb Theater in Ft Payne, featuring Loree Brownfield of Mentone along with Hugh Jack Bell and more.

CAC 17th ANNUAL DINNER THEATER, Feb 9-10: 13; 16-18. "Guess Who Is Coming to Dinner," written by Eddie McPherson. Six performances. Dinner at 6 pm, play at 7 pm each night. Ticket prices vary and are reservation only. For more info or tickets, contact the Children's Advocacy Center (256)997-9700.

WATERFALL TOUR at DeSoto State Park, Feb 11 & March 10. 10 am-4 pm. Hiking throughout DSP. See DeSoto's waterfalls, big & small. Lost Falls, Laurel Falls & many more. Moderate terrain. Meet at DSP Nature Center (next to Country Store). Bring daypack w/water, snacks. Comfortable clothes/shoes a must. Not recommended for children under 10. Free. Registration encouraged, but not required. (256)997-5025.

GROWIN' UP WILD: Un-Natural Trail Hike, Feb 25, 11 am-Noon. Join Little River Canyon Center staff & volunteers for fun nature and art programs for Pre-school-age children. LRC Center. No fee. Pre-registration encouraged. (256)782-5697.

RIVER RHYTHMS: Un-natural Trail Hike (Advanced), Feb 25, 1-2pm. Join Little River Canyon Center staff & volunteers for this family-friendly, fun, hiking adventure. No fee. Pre-registration encouraged. (256)782-5697.

BOY SCOUT TROOP 106 ANNUAL VAN DINNER Feb 12, Noon till 2 pm. At the Boy Scout Hut, Mentone. Proceeds go to upkeep of troop van. Donations taken for dinners.

MENTONE FARMERS MARKET is open year-round. On the Square next to Mentone Inn. Wednesdays 2-5 pm; Saturdays 10 am-1 pm (winter hours may vary). Locally-grown & hand-made items. Jellies, jams, preserves, local honey and firewood. Pre-order available! Buy fresh, buy local! It's good for all of us!

SENIOR LUNCHESES at the MERF House, Mentone, Wednesdays at 11:30 am. From February 15th until April 18th. For more info or to help, contact Sarah Wilcox (256)634-4673.

DEKALB CO DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB meets every 3rd Thursday of the month at Ryan's in Ft Payne. Dutch treat dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. More info contact: Angela Morgan 256-845-3386

GREEN & GREY SATURDAYS, 2nd Sat each month. 10 am. Little River Canyon Center. Presented by National Park Service. Topics include climate change, recycling, energy conservation, eco-gardening, exotic plants, native landscaping and more! Free! More info (256)845-8548

FREE SQUARE DANCE LESSONS offered most Thursdays. 6:30 pm, at Tom Bevil Center in Rainsville by Duos and Solos Dance Club. For more information (256)638-2780

DEKALB QUILTERS meet every 4th Tuesday, 9:30 am, Second Baptist Church in Ft Payne.

FREE BRIDGE LESSONS are taught each Thursday from 1-3 p.m. at the Fort Payne Senior Center. Call 256-845-8590.

SPAY AND NEUTER ASSISTANCE for dogs and cats is available through the DeKalb County Humane Society. Call 256-845-9463.

FREE BASIC COMPUTER and Internet classes for adults are being held at DeKalb County Public Library. Call 256-630-2769 to schedule an appointment.

NORTH ALABAMA COIN CLUB, Meets Mondays at Mi Casita's in Fort Payne from 5 pm - 8 pm (256) 630-3201. Visitors always welcome. NACoinClub@charter.net

THE LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN KNITTERS are ready to Knit 'n' Gab Thursday mornings, 10:00, at the MERF Community House behind Moon Lake School in Mentone. If you want to learn, join us, we'll teach you. If you only crochet, you can join us, too. We have fun! For more information contact Beth Holt at (256) 390-9780.

DESOTO'S GPS QUEST game. Ongoing. Check out www.Alapark.com/desotoresort website and get into the spirit of Hernando DeSoto's expedition! Explore the wilds of DeSoto State Park on a hide-and-seek quest using GPS to find markers located throughout the park. Find the markers and record the letter on your scorecard. Once completed, visit this website and enter the correct letters to print your certificate of completion.

DESOTO RESCUE SQUAD meets the 1st Saturday of the month at 9am at the MERF house in Mentone.

If you have announcements for the Community Bulletin Board, please email them to: editorgroundhog@yahoo.com; fax to 256-634-0027 or drop them by the Mentone Realty office.

SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH

The Sunday morning services at **Winston Memorial Presbyterian Church** are held at 9AM each Sunday, except no services on 5th Sunday. Rev. Jerry Davis and Rev. L.A. Smith are alternate speakers for these services.

The Valley Head Baptist Church invites you to attend Sunday School at 10AM; Worship Service at 11AM; Sunday Evening Worship at 6PM; Midweek Service (Wednesday) at 6PM; Women on Mission meet at 1PM the second Tuesday of each month at different homes. Everyone is welcome to come.

Lee'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 9AM.

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: 9:30-10:45 AM, 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 Mass Services at 10AM each Sunday-English; 1PM-Spanish; 6PM-English; Tuesday 6PM-English; Wednesday 4:30PM-Spanish; Thursday 6:30AM-English; Friday 9AM-English.

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 at 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 10 AM,

Wednesday evening at 6PM. God Bless you.

Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA), 5760 Gault Ave., NE, Fort Payne, AL Rev. Billy Dempsey, Pastor, Sunday School 9:45AM; Sunday Worship - 10:55AM.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend the 10- and 11AM services and evening services are at 7-and-9PM. Visitors are always welcome.

Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Cloutland, 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 - a place of prayer, thanksgiving, and celebration. Come by any time to pray and give thanks. Open 24 hours every day. Sunday service is at 10:30AM.

Mentone United Methodist Church, 415 Cutler Avenue, Mentone, Alabama invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday, our worship service is at 11:00 a.m. and Sunday School is at 10:00 a.m. Rev. Tom Holt is the pastor. He and his wife, Beth and daughter, Abigail reside in the parsonage which is adjacent to the church. 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. Minister Tom Holt.

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 Lords Supper is observed on the first Sunday of September, December, March, and June at the morning worship hour. Discipleship Training is at 5:00PM and Sunday Evening Worship at 6:00PM. On Wednesdays, Team Kids; Youth Bible Study and Adult Bible Study and Prayer Meeting are all at 6:30PM. Rev. Terry Turner is the pastor at Moon Lake.

Alpine Community Church, 115 Hwy 337, Menlo, GA. Pastor and Rev. Tommy Pledger welcome each and everyone to worship service, Sunday morning, 11AM, GA time; Sunday School 10AM GA time; Wed. Night Bible Study, 7PM GA time.

Cove Road Baptist Church, County Road 631, Mentone, Alabama. Brother Marlin Starnes, Interim Pastor, welcomes all to Sunday School - 9AM (10AM GA time);

Church Services 10AM (11AM GA time); and Sunday night services 5PM (6PM GA time).

Summit Church of God invites you to be in service. Sunday morning 10:45 a.m., Sunday night 5:00 p.m., Wed. Bible study 6:30 p.m. Pastor Lance Kincer invites everyone. Summit Church of God will be renting spaces for Worlds Longest Yard Sale in Aug. \$10.00 a day. For info, call 265-634-4418

Mentone Church of God of Prophecy regular service times are Sunday School at 10AM, with worship at 11AM. Evening services begin at 5:30 on Sunday and 6 on Wednesday. Rev. Dean Clair invites everyone to attend.

Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd., Mentone, AL 35984 Sunday Services: Sunday School 9AM - all ages; Sunday Service 10:30AM; Bible Study Wednesday 6:00PM; Youth Services 7:00PM Sunday and 6:30PM Wednesday (Meet at Mentone Revival Center Bldg.). Pastor Fred Johns

Cloutland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Roger Kvam. Bible Study Sunday at 9:00 a.m (e.s.t.) and Worship at 10:00 a.m (e.s.t.)

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 10:55 AM. 256-845-2915

New Oregon United Methodist Church, located off DeSoto Parkway, would like to invite you to their services. Sunday School for all ages 9:45; Traditional Worship service 11:00. Sunday Evening youth activities 5:30 pm, Evening Worship 6 pm. We have a variety of activities for all ages including Wednesday evening youth activities; knitting ministry for ladies each Tuesday at 9 am; Elderberries for Senior Adults once a month for fellowship and meal. Pastor Jeff Davis, Associate Pastor Keith Davis. Address : 1203 New Oregon Dr, Ft 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 9:30 AM and Worship Service at 11:00 AM. Visitors are always welcome.

Pray For Our Neighbors



"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us."

1 John 4: 11-12

The Word Is Love

I saw a bumper sticker recently which said "The school is life. The lesson is love." Life is indeed a school, and it doesn't have to be the "school of hard knocks," as some would have it. Far better that life be a school where loving kindness and compassion are the constant lesson. Again and again throughout the Bible the centrality of love is preached. Consider 1 John 4:8, where we are told that "Whoever does

not love does not know God, because God is love." The Bible is an epic saga of God's love for humanity (and the rest of creation) despite man's tendency to turn away from God and not appreciate the wondrous bounty of God's love. Perhaps we should consider how we might live a life devoted to love, and how our thoughts, words, and actions, might reflect that divine love always and unconditionally.

FROM THE GROUNDHOG ARCHIVES — SEPTEMBER 1983

(Editor's Note: We thought new readers (and old) to the Groundhog might like to get to know Linda Brown, regular contributor to our pages with "Libs from the Library" and "Rhododendron Garden Club News," and other articles. Linda was the cover story for the Sept. 1983 Groundhog.)

Linda Brown: An Example For Us All



No organization in the Mentone area has yet established the annual title and honor which is usually designated "Woman of the Year." If there were such a designation, there is little doubt that a foremost nominee

would be Linda Brown.

Her various activities, her capacity to budget her time, her ability to get things done are mind-boggling to those who say there are just not enough hours in the day to get everything done. Yet she gets them done, with a quiet efficiency and an obvious thoroughness.

Linda was born in Adamsburg, attending elementary school there. Her family, the Cochrans, moved to Valley Head. After graduating from Valley Head High School, she attended Northeast Alabama State Junior College.

She became a Mentone citizen by virtue of marrying into one of its prominent families. Her husband is C. Robert "Bobby" Brown, who holds the highly responsible position of Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations for the Sand Mountain Electric Cooperative.

They are parents of three children, all of whom are now grown and live in the Mentone area: Gayle, Charles and Carol.

Linda is justifiably proud of the progress of the Crafts Festival. "Every year it has improved," she says. "We plan to continue the fair as long as there is interest in arts and crafts. We started at a good time. There is competition from many other similar projects. But we think our steadily improving quality will cause us to survive a long time."

Most of all she has good feelings about the manner in which the entire community is participating in the Crafts Festival.

"Just about every organization in town is involved in some way." When asked about the greatest needs for this annual event, she instantly said, "More parking space. We've got to work this out. We're restricted to some extent until the parking situation is improved. As for the space for exhibitors, we cleared some additional space at the park this year, and we have permission from one of the property owners to allow us to see some extra space."

The Groundhog interviewer then turned to Linda Brown's views about her home town. *How would she like Mentone to be in 25 years?*

"Basically the same - the same friendliness with which people help each other. I'd like to see the old buildings restored, and our concept of outdoor living maintained. I don't want to see a rat race."

Are you afraid we will become another Gatlinburg or Helen, Georgia?

"I have no fears about that. A main reason is that lack of land prevents abnormal growth. In downtown Mentone there is just not enough land that could be purchased for abnormal expansion. It's a little different further down the highway, but I'm not worried about that."

What do you think we need most?

"We are growing. There's no doubt about that. So far, I think, it has been a good growth. But because of growth we definitely need to improve our police protection, water department, and the condition of our streets. We just need better facilities to take care of our people."

"There are really no recreational facilities for our young people. They just have no place to go, nothing really to do with their spare time. Something needs to be done about this - with some kind of community center, playground facilities. There also needs to be someplace downtown where retired men can gather, play checkers and talk, particularly in the winter."

What do you like best about Mentone?

There was no hesitancy about her reply. *"The basic goodness of the people - especially those who have always lived here. They are friendly, helpful, and they respect your privacy. We have our differences, like those of any big family. But the people are good and that's what makes the town good."*

LIBS FROM THE LIBRARY

Linda Brown



Looking for a warm cozy place to spend some time? Are you tired of watching TV or Facebook? I have discovered a wonderful place where

you can take a trip to the zoo, find Nemo, watch wild lions in Africa, or take a trip to the Grand Canyon and ride the donkeys. You can go to the moon and back. You can solve crimes faster than they can be committed. You can travel across the country in a covered wagon. You can travel through the galaxy on a starship or venture deep into the earth in search of the meaning of a special ring. There is nothing you cannot do.

Where does this all start? Come and visit the Moon Lake Community Library and begin your adventures. We have books on every subject. You may have received one of those electronic readers for a Christmas present.

I did, but I have already discovered that I want a book to hold in my hand.

A book where I can use my collection of pretty bookmarks and open the pages when I get ready to read.

The library has a very large collection of DVD's. (Don't tell anyone that I said this, but I heard that it may have, The Help.) Stop by the next time you are out and about and check out some of these wonderful items. You can stay and read or visit with your neighbors on Tuesday and Thursday from 3 PM until 6 PM and you can go on Saturday from 9 am until 12 noon.

You can probably tell from the cover of this Groundhog that we are celebrating a milestone birthday of M.A.P.A. and the Groundhog publication.

We have a complete collection of Groundhogs in the library! Charles White McGehee was the first editor and his widow,

Jean, gave us these when she left Mentone to live with her son. These cannot be carried out of the library, but you may read them while there and you can copy anything from them. Please ask Beverly, the librarian, to help you with copying as the copier is getting quite old and tired and needs TLC which Beverly is able to give it. There are four big boxes of these so plan a block of time to look at them. Recently, I looked at the oldest box and found that each one brought back so many memories. At one time the editor honored one person of the community with a front page article and a rather large picture. Looking at these was truly a bittersweet moment for me. So many of them have passed but I remember the good times I had with them, most of the time.

The Moon Lake Community Library is in one side of the Moon Lake Elementary School Library building. This is on the right just past the Moon Lake Baptist Church if you are headed east on Alabama Highway 117. It is the only building of the school that faces the highway.

Come and visit with us any time. During what we call, "open hours" the library will have Beverly Ashley, librarian, and a volunteer on duty. The volunteer has been trained to help you and anything they don't know how to do or find, Beverly does. You will be greeted with a smile and a "Hello, how can we help you?"

You are welcome to stay ten minutes or the full three hours. You can check out books, read books while there, check out a DVD, look at our extensive collection of Mentone area history or just visit.

If you have young children, you can peruse the "school side" books and check them out. Books may be kept for two weeks before a fine of ten cents per day is levied. DVD's may be kept for one week and the fine is a dollar per day when overdue. ALWAYS, you can avoid any fine by using the outside drop box. Come and see us. To keep our library we need to continue to use it, the more the better!!

You may write to us at: Moon Lake Community Library, PO Box 481, Mentone, AL 35984. To be on the agenda for a meeting call Jan Wilkinson, 256-845-5048.



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The Special Dress

By Patricia Shavers

As a little child my parents dropped me off at Grandma's house on their way to work. From time to time I arrived in my pajamas. Grandma took this as an opportunity to give me a treat. She would hoist me onto the couch and open the Sears and Roebuck catalog. Flipping the pages we'd come to the pictures of the little girls' dresses, surveying them one by one, allowing me to pick out my favorite.

Next she ruffled through her little stack of fabric, fabric that in a former life was a flour sack. She pressed the chosen cloth smoothly on her wooden legged ironing board. Then the cutting began, scissors clicking, cutting out odd shapes and sizes, none that looked at all like a dress to me.

Off we'd go to her bedroom where the Singer sewing machine lived. It was a formidable black contraption to my curious eyes. There was much to be done in preparation before the sewing machine was ready to go. The proper colored thread must be found from the thread basket, the maze of loops and holes navigated to feed the creature and a bobbin to be filled. As she guided the fabric through the teeth of the machine, I danced to the rhythms of the click click click made by the pumping of the treadle. Zip, zap and presto a garment took shape.

Then came my part. I was to stand as still as a statue while she held the sewn pieces up to my little body. A nip, a tuck and then it was slipped over my head. I was to turn ever so slowly as she pinned up the hem.

One special time I chose a dress that had a lace yoke. I did not know the difference between lace and any other fabric. I just knew the little dress was so pretty, the prettiest dress in the world to my childlike eyes. Grandma studied my request. She went into her bedroom, opened the closet door and on her tiptoes pulled a very thin box from the top of the closet. It was not even an inch thick and it had a small shiny pink ribbon around it. I wondered what was inside. Then she slid the ribbon off and opened the box. There inside was a beautiful lace handkerchief. She took it out and the wonder began as she used the delicate lace handkerchief for the yoke of my dress.

I still treasure the worn and faded picture of me in my special dress, my face beaming with pride, feeling like a princess. But more importantly I treasure the memory of the woman who made the dress, every stitch sewn with love, enough love to last for a lifetime.



The author and her little sister Angie on their Grandma's porch.

The word was E-C-O-S-Y-S-T-E-M,

spelled correctly by Zoe Lovechio of Mentone, to win the DeKalb County Spelling Bee held in January.

For the second year in a row, Zoe spelled her way to becoming DeKalb's spelling champ. She will next compete for the state title at the Alabama Spelling Bee to be held at Oak Mountain High School in Hoover on March 10 at 12:00 noon.

Zoe is a 7th Grader in Fort Payne Middle School and a 2011 graduate of Moon Lake Elementary School at Mentone. She is the daughter of Ben Keener and L.C. Moon of Mentone.

(submitted photo)



Congratulations Zoe!



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MENTONE MATTERS—

By Mayor Rob Hammond

The last several years have been difficult financially for everyone—including the town. We have cut back as much as possible. The municipal court has been abolished (this does not have to be permanent) and cases are heard in district court with no cost to the town. We no longer pay a zoning administrator and our clerk Wilma Fletcher is temporarily the acting administrator. We no longer employ a cleaning service for town hall—the police chief and town clerk have assumed those duties.

Over the last couple of years we have had to get a loan on more than one occasion to make payroll and pay bills. The council voted to raise the sales tax and lodging tax by .1%. This brings us in line with neighboring municipalities in the county. In addition Wilma has been diligent in making sure privilege licenses are being paid. Currently we have paid off our notes and are operating with a lit-

tle cushion. We have been able to keep our police officers on their regular schedules. However no town employees (police officers and clerk) have received a raise since 2008. Public safety remains our number one priority.

Last week I checked on the status of the bridge with ALDOT Division engineer Johnny Harris. The Federal Highway Administration had asked the state to address comments after the state's second environmental and historical review. That document is now being reviewed by the FHWA. After the review is completed the project can move forward.

I also spoke with ALDOT district engineer Curtis Lowe about repairs on the rock wall and removal of fallen trees on 117. Some trees have been removed but additional equipment will have to be borrowed from another district to complete the job. Mr. Lowe has had initial talks with a contractor about repairing the wall.

Mentone applied for and received a matching grant for a

tornado warning siren. We would like to thank our partners in this project. MAPA was responsible for the town's portion of the matching funds and Moon Lake Baptist Church provided the location and the electricity for the siren.

The town has received a grant to build a website. The site will contain a section for visitors and an official section for the town. We will have links to local businesses and attractions as well as to DeKalb tourism and Alabama tourism sites.

Tourism remains vital to DeKalb County and the Mentone area. John Dersham, director of DeKalb Tourism, is doing an outstanding job in promoting our area (www.DiscoverLookoutMountain.com). Mentone is well represented on the DeKalb Tourism Board. In addition to myself, Dr. Bill Berry is serving and Ken Thomas, Superintendent of DeSoto State Park is the board president for 2012. Kayla Worthey of Mentone works at the visitor center for DeKalb Tourism full time.



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WILD RIVER COMMUNITY - 1.6 acres on the east fork Little River 235 ft of pools and rapids. Bluff views. Large Rocks in water. Very Scenic, and private \$69,000 (21382)	WHIPPOORWILL FARM. 49 acres on the East Fork Little River. 2800 ft on the water with deep pools and rapids. 2BR/2BA. Rock and log home with all the comfort amenities. Rock FP. Pasture land, wood trails- horse barn w/ apt, detached double garage. Screened sleeping cabin overlooking river. Much more! \$595,000 (19355)	SOUTHLAND LOG HOME. on the E. Fork Little River. 5.5 acres. Deck, lighted walkway to lower property. 2BR/2BA, loft. Vaulted ceiling w/exposed beams. Kitchen with granite counters. Stacked stone FP. 2 story with Basement. Sep. garage, large enough for motor home. \$349,000 (19919)	FORMERLY MOUNTAIN MAMA'S CRAFT STORE AND ROCK SHOP. 4.5 wooded acres on the east fork little river. approx. 550 ft on the water. Included on the property is 2 historical Log cabins. Could be used as commercial or build that perfect place, for a relaxing mountain retreat. REDUCED \$129,000 (20799)	40 ACRES LOCATED NEAR MENTONE. Stillhouse Branch runs through the middle of tract. Mtn Laurel line the banks of the creek with 2 waterfalls. Large rock formations along the hiking trails. What a wonderful sanctuary this would make for development or private estate. \$190,000 (18760)	3 ACRES LOCATED on the West fork little river 1 mile above Desoto Falls. Deep water for boating. level wooded property with native Holly scattered throughout. circular drive, perc tested, water meter installed, a beautiful spot to build that retirement home. 70ft on the water, quiet neighborhood. \$125,000 (21648)
NICELY WOODED 5 ACRES on DeSoto Parkway with Stream. Can be Residential or Commercial. Land has old homesite and green house. Large Rock formations. Possibilities are Endless! \$100,000 (19419)	WILD AND SCENIC LITTLE RIVER LOTS, privately located off Co. Rd. 628, Mentone. Two lots combined to make 2.2 acres with 337 ft on river. Partially cleared building area. What a View, \$69,000 (21685)	NICE LEVEL WOODED PROPERTY with partial drive and homesite cleared. Previous perk test. Easy access to the middle fork of little river. Restrictive cov. apply. Located Mountain River Estates \$77,000 (20892)	LOG CABIN KNOWN AS "KNOWUS ARK" is an artist dream of a property. Unique decor and even a separate artist studio are part of the special qualities that go with the 2BR/2BA, w/FP, covered porches and double decks. Privately located on 6 acres. \$255,000 (20453)	MOUNTAIN CREST CABINS. 2 fully-furnished log cabins nestled in the woods on 6 acres, next to Cloudmont Resort. Both cabins are currently on a rental program. Above the Clouds is 2br/1bt with kitchen/dining combo, and large crawlspace that can be made into a basement. The Hideout is 2br/1.5bt with open floor plan and small loft. Lots of amenities in both cabins. \$249,000 (21433)	
WALTONS MILL SITE PROPERTY. Back in the civil war, there was a grist mill located on this east fork river site. A unique property with 900 ft on the water, 2 building sites, easy access to the water, large rock overhang and flat rock bottom for easy floating down the river. A true Gem, 10 acres. REDUCED TO \$175,000 (20451)	7.15 ACRES with West Brow Sunset view. Great location between DeSoto Park and Mentone. Partial drive, County water available. Great price \$145,000 (21411)	NICE WOODED LOT WITH STREAM located in Crestline Park Subdivision. Just down the road from Cloudmont Resort and DeSoto State Park. Build your Mentone cabin for yourself or use as a rental. \$20,000. (21086)	PRISTINE 25 ACRES on the East Fork Little River. over 1,000 ft of river frontage. Rapids, natural pools, fishing, canoeing, rafting. Build that dream home in this natural setting. \$295,000 (19136)	NICE LEVEL & WOODED LOT located in Crestline Park Subdivision. Just down the road from Cloudmont Resort and DeSoto State Park. Build your Mentone cabin for yourself or use as a rental. Wild blueberries and trees are abundant. Priced to sell at \$25,000. (21087)	TALL MEADOW RUE CHAPEL. in Downtown Mentone. Lush landscaping. Heavenly ordained Chapel, Glass Greenhouse, Coy Pond w/fountain. Rock walls, and Iron Gates. Enjoy the peace and serenity this property gives. REDUCED \$95,000

LOTS AND ACREAGE

WOODED, level mixture of hardwoods and Pines, some trails through property. Over 2500 ft. of paved road frontage. Could be nice development opportunity. Build a few cabins in this spot. \$184,500 (21649)

INDIAN TRAILS, 2 lots for sale. **1)** 2.71 acres (lots 12, 13) sold together for building purposes. Brow view city water, power, & paved rd.

2) 1.32 acres brow frontage & creek at boundary. Wooded, city water, paved rd. power. Both priced at \$35,000 ea. (19933)

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paved rd. One block from central business area. Reduced \$39,000 (20021)

EAST FORK OF LITTLE RIVER. 5.4 acres partially cleared. 200ft on River. Secluded with private road access. Scenic with rapids and pools. \$106,000. (19673)

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5.7 wooded acres across from Lake Lahusage. Paved road frontage, city water available, perc tested. Lightly restricted. \$58,900 (19865)

WOODED .09 ACRE non-restricted lot. Perfect for mobile home or cabin. Paved road on two sides. \$9200. (21600)

OLD HOMEPLACE next to Shady Grove Dude Ranch. 1.7 acres. Great building sites. Non-restricted. \$20,000. (21599)



Rhodochrosite

By Dixie Wilson

I'm sorry to have missed the previous edition of the GROUNDHOG. However, I'm going again with another stone for you. This one is not blue, it is pink and incredibly beautiful. It is called rhodochrosite (ro-do-kro'-site). The name means rose and color. There are not too many pink or red stones. It is a manganese carbonate which gives the pink color. This stone is primarily found in the United States (which is unusual!). The Sweet Home Mine in Alma, Colorado is a leading producer. The stone is soft (3.5 to 4.5) and therefore difficult to cab or cut. It is usually pink and red and white. Alii have ever seen is banded (or striped). Rhodochrosite is a very good stone to carve. I saw a beautiful teacup at the mineral museum at Cartersville, GA. They also had a HUGE piece - two or three feet in each direction. It is botryoidal-looks like boiling pudding.

I have cabbed several pieces and have also broken a few! As it is very expensive, I try to salvage any broken pieces to use in

other projects. One of the things I like about the banding is that it forms pictures like flowers sometimes. Probably the reason it was called Inca Rose is that it was mined by Incas near the silver mine and they thought the flowers looked like roses. As with all soft semi-precious stones, it should not be used in rings or bracelets which take a lot of knocks. Presently, I have a little more of this stone in the workshop.

I think they have changed the name of the museum (it used to be the Weinman Mineral Museum) in Cartersville and leaned more toward fossils. I was sorry to hear this as so many people are taught the earth is millions of years old and deny the account of the creation in the Bible. However, I did meet the head of the Geology department at St. John's in

Newfoundland and he said he believed the Bible account of creation. Of course, even Einstein said there had to be a creator.

One of the many pleasures I receive from my little shop is showing others the many kinds of stones of which I have samples. The

variety of precious and semi-precious stones is just fantastic. Remember, if you have questions, e-mail me at jerrywilson@centurylink.net or give me a call at (256) 634-4137. I will be happy to help you if I can. If I can't, I can probably put you in touch with someone who can help. Enjoy God's beautiful creation!

(Dixie's Rock Shop is located off County Road 600, along the Scenic Pkwy S, Mentone. For more information, call 256-634-4137)



GET HELP WITH YOUR MORTGAGE PAYMENT

By Charlotte Gentry

Many people in our area are unaware there is a program in Alabama whereby you may qualify for assistance with your mortgage payment if you are currently receiving Unemployment Compensation. The best thing is, this program will pay your mortgage payment for up to 12 months, up to \$15,000 and it's FREE! You don't have to pay it back. Ever!

Hardest Hit Alabama (HHA) is a program that has been in place for a year, but very few folks in our area have ever heard of it and those who have may have received faulty information and are under the false impression they do not qualify.

Some folks also falsely assume (because of the name of the program) that it is intended only for those affected by the tornadoes of 2011. This is totally unrelated to the tornadoes and was, in fact, put into place in early February 2011, long before the tornadoes occurred in Alabama.

HHA has only 3 basic requirements:

- You must currently be receiving state-administered unemployment benefits.
- Your total household income must be less than \$75,740 (income of all occupants 18 years or older)
- You must owe \$258,690 or less on your home's mortgage, including subordinate loans. You must be less than 6 months and less than \$7,500 past due on your mortgage payment(s). This applies ONLY to your primary residence that must be in Alabama. (This assistance is available to you even if your residence is a manufactured home so long as it and the land it sits on are part of the mortgage.)

The process of applying for this assistance is very simple and you can do it online at www.HardestHitAlabama.com. You will need to be sure you have proof of your eligibility for Unemployment Compensation, proof of your income and your complete mortgage information to fill out the online application.

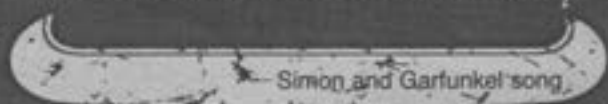
If you think you or someone you know may qualify for this program, you'd better go ahead and apply. There was \$162 million put into this program and, of this amount, only about \$62 million had been used as of January 1, 2012. However, this money is on a "first come-first served" basis and as word spreads about the HHA program, funds will diminish.

There is one additional thought to keep in mind: although your application for HHA assistance may be approved, your mortgage servicer will make the final determination as to whether or not your loan qualifies for participation in the program. The HHA website has a lengthy list of lenders who are participating. Chances are very good that yours is on it.

(for more information, charlotte@mentonerealtyinc.com or call (256)996-5995, or visit the HHA website www.HardestHitAlabama.com)

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MOUNTAIN LORE— Acorns

By Charlotte Gentry

If you aren't a squirrel, chances are you've never felt the urge to nibble on an acorn. As a matter of fact, most humans consider the acorn as a nuisance. In those years when the supply of acorns is vast, we are subjected to the risk of being hammered on the head by a shower of the things when going out to the car or when walking in the woods. And, if you have a metal roof, you are well aware of the noise when a barrage of acorns hits it.

When we were kids, we would gather shirt-fulls of acorns and take our positions behind trees to have a battle with neighbor kids or amongst ourselves. Our throwing aim was pretty good, so it was never a good idea to get involved in an acorn battle with the Martin kids! (We had good aim with slingshots and bb guns, too, but we knew not to shoot at anything alive with these weapons.)

We never consumed large quantities of acorns, but we did occasionally eat some just for the boost they gave us during our long ramblings in the woods and to tide us over until we were called in to supper. Some



were very bitter and some were not. It didn't take us long to learn to recognize the difference!

Contrary to what you may have been told as a child, acorns are not poisonous. In fact, these are one of the oldest foods known to man. Ancient cave dwellings show evidence of early man's consumption of acorns and all Native American groups gathered acorns in the fall to supplement their winter diet. The high carbohydrate levels in nuts and their capacity for storage over long periods of time made them an excellent choice.

It is a fact, though, that the bitter taste of most acorns would lead you to believe you've been poisoned should you bite into one. Oak trees have large amounts of natural tannins (tannins are, as the name suggests, what was used to tan hides by our native peoples) and this is where the bitterness comes from.

To get the least bitter acorns, you must first find a member of the white oak

family to provide you with nuts. The red oaks have far more tannin and are, therefore, much more bitter. An easy rule of thumb to help you recognize a member of the red oak family is to remember "Ragged means Red." (This was the way we learned to distinguish between the two families, anyway.) White oak leaves tend to be more roundish on their tips.

Food foragers who gather acorns use two methods to tame the bitterness. One way is to roast the nuts (which has only modest results). The second method is to boil the acorns for a few minutes to make it easier to remove the shell. After removing the shell, you slice them, then put them into a food processor until they are the consistency of rice grains. Next, you want to blanch them several times with boiling water, tasting each time to see if they've lost their bitterness. (You'll need to put them into a cloth bag or pillowcase for this process.) Lay the acorns out to dry completely, then grind into flour. (Note: unless you are using the acorn flour immediately, you will want to freeze it because it will go rancid rather quickly.)

Acorns are rich in complex carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins, but much lower in fat than most other nuts. Acorns are also a good fiber source. Folks in the Tennessee hills would often (and some still do) let their hogs go into the woods to feed on acorns in order to fatten them up good before "hog killin' time." (That's one reason there are so many wild hogs in Tennessee, too. Many of these "tame" hogs didn't get gathered up and went feral.)

When using acorn flour, keep in mind that it is naturally sweet and tends to be very heavy (like most home-ground whole-grain flours) and doesn't rise easily. You'll have to experiment with your recipes (and you can find recipes using acorn meal online), but most experienced acorn foragers suggest you don't want to use more than 1/3 acorn to 2/3 of regular flour/meal to get the best results.

Why not give acorns a try? Taste acorns from several varieties of oaks. If you find a tree that produces acorns that are not bitter, take note of it and you'll be rewarded with years of good eating. The novelty of being able to tell your guests they are being served pancakes or biscuits made with acorns should be quite fulfilling...and FILLING!

Of course, if your guests are squirrels, you can just eliminate all the work and serve them as God intended—straight from the tree!

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FROM THE GROUNDHOG ARCHIVES — A LOOK BACK

the GROUNDHOG

Vol. 1 No. 1 A Publication of the Mentone Area Preservation Association

Ruby O'Rear

Woman of the 80's
in Her 80's

By SANDRA PADGETT

Ruby O'Rear is looking forward to spring this year as she always does. She is a consummate gardener. Her daffodils are already in full bloom, and her lilacs, iris, lilies, and rhododendron are beginning to bud.

Her white lilac bushes have a special significance because she retrieved them from the Mentone Springs Hotel in the 1940's and transplanted them to her flourishing yard. Now there is a virtual thicket of lilacs in her side yard. The original two bushes still lend their fragrance to her backyard each spring.

Ruby Winifred R. O'Rear was born February 23, 1900, as this century began.

(Continued page 1)



Miss Ruby O'Rear

PREMIER ISSUE!

Ruby O'Rear, the Unlikely "Cover Girl."

The Groundhog grew from a mimeographed newsletter to a full-fledged "newspaper" with the publication of the April 1983 edition. Sandra Padgett and the other members of the Editorial Board wrangled over who would be the subject. Many wanted to have someone of prestige to grace the inaugural issue. Sandra staunchly held out for featuring a "regular" citizen of Mentone, one with whom all people could identify.

Ruby O'Rear became the subject, and her plain, lined face became an endearing symbol of the "roots in the soil" native families of the Mentone area and helped define more clearly why The Groundhog would be a voice for all who called Mentone home. These stories were worth preserving.

Thirty years later, it is still the "regular" people of this area who make The Groundhog something special. They aren't fancy and most are too modest to try and call attention to themselves. In a world where celebrity, wealth, and fame seem to rule, these simple stories are of even greater interest to our readers.



Alice Mason (Ruby's mother') in 1882, age 22, two years before she named Mentone.



Paul Whitehead and Jessie O'Rear (Ruby's sister) on their first date.



A composition by Alice Mason written as homework in April, 1883:

LITTLE RIVER FALLS

The sun was just setting upon this lovely cascade, and as its level beams shone upon the sparkling waters of Little River as they leapt from one high rock to another, and on the massive moss-covered rocks which surrounded it, making a most beautiful picture for the eye to behold, I thought how much beauty the Creator has concentrated in this one place.

The rushing river as it dashed over the precipice was all that disturbed the stillness, except now and then when a deer came to drink, but seeing intruders in his wild, yet beautiful dominion, quickly fled.

The laurel and ivy which were in bloom almost covered the banks of the river. In an open space at the right of the falls was a platform, where persons who have come to peruse may dance if they prefer it to looking at the scenery around them.

From the platform, winding along the edge of a high cliff is a wandering trail which terminates abruptly at the top of a high wall of rocks; here, a ladder (somewhat dilapidated) is placed by which a descent can be made to the river.

From this ladder the trail continues a short distance down the river to where some boards have been placed across a narrow part of the river (to cross on). It then winds over rocks and through patches of faurel, ivy, and holly, so closely woven together that it is almost impossible to penetrate them; till it suddenly stops at a small cave under a high perpendicular rock; and looking up you can see Little River as it rushes over a precipice nearly a hundred feet high (her grade, "very good").



Ruby O'Rear and her mother, Alice Mason O'Rear.

At left, Ethel O'Rear (Ruby's sister), about five years of age.



Jessie O'Rear, age 6, and Ruby O'Rear (Winifred Ruth), age 15 months.

Excerpted from Groundhog article written by Sandra Padgett:

"Ruby Winifred R. O'Rear was born on February 23, 1900, as this century began. Her parents, Samuel A. and Alice Mason O'Rear, were pioneers of this area. Her mother is credited with naming Mentone while at the dinner table with her grandfather John Mason and Dr. Frank Caldwell. The Masons were among the first settlers here. They moved to Mentone in 1872 from Iowa.

"Ruby's father was a carpenter and she inherited his skills and preference for outside work. This was exemplified just last week when she repaired her greenhouse.

"Years of hard work, proper eating, plenty of sunshine and walking may account for Ruby's never having been hospitalized until she had an eye operation when she was 81.

"This woman, born at the beginning of a new century, is as modern as the 80's. What is her major concern just now? The future existence of America! She has recently completed reading *America is Too Young to Die*, which deals with the threat of nuclear war. An admirer of Abe Lincoln, she quotes his statement, "If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher; as a nation of free men, we must live through all time or die by suicide."

[Editor's note: Sandra Padgett states that she is especially proud that Ruby O'Rear was the first personality featured on the cover of *The Groundhog* because, only about six months later, Ruby was dead.]



Each month we'll be featuring a favorite family recipe from one of our readers. If you have a recipe you'd like to submit, please send it to editorgroundhog@yahoo.com, mail it to The Groundhog, PO Box 387, Mentone AL 35984, or drop it by the Mentone Realty office. Please include any additional information such as where you got the recipe and any additional history or details you think would be of interest to Groundhog readers.

This month's recipe is submitted by Jennifer Cruse of Mentone. As owner of The Clip Joint (the beauty salon on Hwy 117 in Mentone), Jennifer is a busy wife and mother, so this is quick-to-make favorite with her family. Jennifer says about this recipe, "This is easy and feeds a crowd."

TACO PASTA SALAD

- 1 head of lettuce
- 1 pint container of cherry tomatoes
- 1 box of spiral noodles
- 1 package taco seasoning mix
- 1 bottle of French dressing
- 1 lb. ground round
- 1-2 packages of desired cheeses
- 1 bag of tortilla chips
- 1 diced onion

Cook ground round and onion. Drain and set aside. Prepare noodles as directed and drain. Rinse with cool water until cool to the touch. Drain extremely well. Mix all other ingredients except the tortilla chips in a large mixing bowl. Toss well and refrigerate. Serve over crumbled up tortilla chips. Be creative...add whole kernel corn, black beans, black olives - you are only limited by your imagination!

NOTE: Best if mixed the day before eating.



Little River Canyon National Preserve Has First Walk in Park For Scale Back Alabama Program

On Saturday, February 4, 2012, at 10 AM Ranger Larry Beane from Little River Canyon National Preserve will co-lead the first of many Scale Back Alabama/Fresh Air Family events. We will meet in front of the Nature Center at DeSoto State Park for this walk along the Azalea Cascades Trail. For more information or to register for this free event contact Katie Burrus at 256-701-1046, or katie@freshairfamily.org. This will help make sure everyone coming has arrived before the walk and allow us to contact people in case of a change.

This walk will take about 2 hours and travel at a leisurely rate around a loop of approximately 2.7 miles. We will stop along this easy to moderate trail to see winter and early spring foliage, unusual plants and several waterfalls. Bring your camera, drinking water, clothing appropriate for the weather, and good walking shoes. With all the rain, the waterfalls should be flowing strong, great for photographs.

The staff of Little River Canyon National Preserve has partnered with the Fresh Air Family for the Scale Back Alabama program in Northeast Alabama to get people walking outdoors, and enjoying the park. We have scheduled over a dozen free walks in the park with Ranger Larry Beane and Katie Burrus of Fresh Air Family. You do not have to join anything to participate.

Scale Back Alabama is a statewide weight loss program with a 10 week contest. This program began in 2007. Last year's participants lost a total of 143,309 pounds. To learn more about Scale Back Alabama go to their website <http://www.scalebackalabama.com/>. Contest information is also there.

Park Ranger Larry Beane said "This is a wonderful opportunity for people to take a walk with us, learn about the park and just get outside." Walks are regularly scheduled on Little River Canyon National Preserve and DeSoto State Park Lands for the next few months. For more information, call the National Park Service office at (256)845-9605 or Fresh Air Family Coordinator Katie Burrus at 256-701-1046.

Mentone Wedding Chapel



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 sunrises 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.

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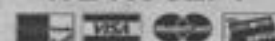
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Mentone Farmers' Market

The Mentone Farmers' Market had an exciting January even with the cold and the rain. Officially, open Saturdays from 10 AM – 1 PM, some die-hard vendors were there on Wednesdays from 2 PM – 5 PM. The visitors and local community support the market even in the worst of weather-Thank you!

February will start off with a French Toast Breakfast on Saturday the 4th. The market opens at 10 AM-breakfast will start about 10:30. Breads and eggs from market vendors will be used. Jams, jellies, honey and syrups from the market will be available for sampling on the varieties of French Toast.

On the 4th we'll also celebrate the Ground Hog's 30th birthday. The Ground Hog has been a continued supporter of the Mentone Farmers' Market. Join us to say "Thanks!" we'll have a birthday cake to share and more.

Saturday, February 11th you'll be able to purchase sweets for your sweetheart. Several vendors will take

orders for delivery or pick up in time for Valentine's Day. What better than a locally made treat or gift?

Come by on Saturday the 18th for a cooking demo. Using what's at the market and a few other staples, a dish will be created that you can make at home. Watch, ask questions, get some prep and storage tips, and taste freshly-prepared food.

During February, the Mentone Farmers' Market is open Saturdays 10-1. You'll find fresh produce-including lettuce, greens, herbs, carrots and tomatoes. There's also baked goods, eggs, jams, dried vegetables, breads, sweets, honey and fire wood. Although the market is not officially open Wednesdays in February, it just means there's no information booth with hot drinks. You'll more than likely see some vendors on the lawn from 2-5.

Stop by and visit with the growers and producers from Dry Creek Farm, Old West Farm, Jay's Garden Variety, Jones Family Farm, June Cagle, Roger's Real Homemade and Bama

Breeze Farm.

Booth space is available at weekly markets for local growers and artists. Musicians are welcome. Applications are at the market or on line at www.mountainmarket.org. or call Les Rivett, 25-657-7247.

See you in Mentone buying fresh, buying local!

Recipe

Many ingredients are available at the Mentone Farmers' Market:

Italian Rolled Chicken Breast

- 4 boned chicken breasts
- 4 oz Feta Cheese
- 16 dried tomatoes (soaked in oil or water for about a hour)
- 2 cups fresh spinach or basil leaves
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 Cup Italian Bread Crumbs-see below
- 1 Tablespoon grated parmesan cheese

Flatten chicken breast so they can be

rolled. Place 1/2 cup spinach over the chicken breast. Break up 1 ounce feta over the spinach. Place 4 dried tomatoes on top. Roll the chicken breast around the stack and hold in place with a toothpick. When all 4 are ready, dip in egg and roll in mix of Italian bread crumbs and Mix bread crumbs and parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. To serve, cut in half, open on the plate to show the red, white and green inside. Spoon some spaghetti sauce over the top. Serve with pasta, sauce, bread and a salad for a complete meal.

Make our own Italian Bread Crumbs-Dry about a cups worth of Italian bread or baguette in the oven or if time allows, in a paper bag. Once it's dry, use a grater or the food processor to make it into crumbs. Toss with 1 Tablespoon of dried Italian seasoning. Basil, oregano, rosemary and thyme are a great blend. Store in a sealed container or bag until needed. Use for Italian chicken or meat balls.

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"COLOR IN FEBRUARY" ART SHOW

A One Woman Art Show featuring the work of Debbie Happy Cohen, a local artist, from Mentone, Alabama, will be held on Thursday, February 23, from 6:30 pm until 7:30 pm at Rock Ridge Retreat at 451 Rock Ridge Road in Valley Head. The show will feature fifty colorful paintings by Debbie as well as live music with Kam Showers from Atlanta, Georgia.

The show is a celebration of the completion of over a year-long "painting a day" commitment resulting in 396 paintings. "Color is what I miss most in winter, so I decided to paint it." — Debbie Happy Cohen.

For more information call 404-395-9512 or visit www.artinthe-mind.com to link to Debbie's facebook painting project.



Debbie Happy Cohen



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SPEND COUNTLESS EVENINGS on the 3-season screened porch enjoying the sunset view. Set on 2.6 acres and features wood floors, sleep loft, sunroom, storage shed and multiple decks. Enjoy serenity secured for only \$315,000. (21176)



EAST FORK OF LITTLE RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT. Come and discover this newly listed 4.5 acre parcel with 3 rock/log structures, 550' on the East Fork of Little River and just 1/2 mile from the AL/GA line. \$129,000 (20929)



FIRST TIME OFFERED. Main house, guest house and 45 acres on the west brow of Lookout Mtn. with the ambiance of a true mountain home. Wood floors, wood walls, rock fireplace, walkways and patios with sunset views and heirloom landscaping. A must see for \$799,000. (21010)



ENJOY LIFE UNINTERRUPTED in this custom built log get-away on 4 secluded acres. Loft BR and 1BA with wood floors offering a cozy atmosphere and a front rocking chair porch complete the picture. Hurry before someone buys the cabin of your dreams for only \$125,000. (20551)



NEW PRICE! Rental cabin in downtown Mentone for sale at \$99,900, option to purchase four adjoining commercial lots. 2/3BR, 1BA, living/dining combo, stone FP, and CH&A. Cabin is being sold furnished. (20961)



MENTONE - A FRAME CABIN on 5.3 acres. Features 800 sq ft on the main level and 240 sq ft in the second floor loft. Open design living, dining, kitchen with ceramic flooring, tongue and groove ceilings, and a freestanding gas log fireplace. \$79,900 (21564)



ALMOST NEW CABIN in Mentone with a view of the lake. Features 2BR/2BA, pine walls and floors, large open living room with FP, spacious kitchen with dining area (appliances included), wraparound porch, back deck, and a great space for entertaining outdoors. \$159,900 (21498)



INCREDIBLE BROW HOME offers three levels to enjoy the gorgeous view. Kitchen has t-bar bar and stainless appliances. MBR has private deck, FP and wood walls and ceilings. Outside enjoy the stacked rock FP, log grill, patio and deck. Come see this unbelievable home today! \$569,000 (15736)



BEAR CLAU LODGE offers 3BR/3.5BA, stacked rock fireplace, vaulted ceiling, full appliance package, granite countertops, outdoor fireplace, spacious living areas with plenty of entertaining space outdoors on 2.2 acres. \$344,900 (21142)



NORTH BROW - Unique log structure that was moved from Georgia. 1BR/1BA, open living space and lots of room for entertaining. 8.3 acres +/- \$279,900 (18256)



PRIVATELY LOCATED Authentic Mentone Brow house offers all you could dream of for a lovely retreat from every care of everyday life! Covered Porch, open living/dining area, spacious kitchen, 2BR/2BA, screened porch/detached Guest House w/Beds&Bath. \$335,000 (21269)



LIVE & PLAY on the water...200' of frontage on the East Fork of Little River. 3BR/2BA, all appliances, wood burning fireplace, storage building and more. \$325,000 (18278)



CUSTOM BUILT LOG CABIN... situated on 2 lots in Laurel Creek. 2 LARGE BR/2BA, spacious great room with cathedral ceilings, hickory floors, 2-car garage, and fishing dock. \$199,900 (18898)



RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL property located on Hwy. 117 in Mentone is now FOR SALE! Approx. 1350 +/- sqft. Room for expansion on this 1.36 +/- acre lot. ONLY \$142,500 (20377)



THE BEST OF BOTH Custom 3BR/2.5BA cedar sided home on 1 acre in Mentone. Great room with FP, kitchen/dining combo, above-ground pool with decking, BONUS room, laundry/mud room, double garage, and lots more. \$219,000 (20051)



THE BEST OF EVERYTHING has gone into this compelling 1.5 story home on the West Brow of Mentone. Over 4000 sqft featuring 4BR/4BA, great room with FP, large living room with FP, A "view" from every room! Built on 8 acres that was formerly owned by Willie Nelson! \$429,000 (21680)



SITTING ON TOP OF THE WORLD... UNIQUE "round" cabin offering an open living space, 2BR/1BA, most all furnishings, 9.58 acres and SPECTACULAR views of the valley and mountains beyond. \$275,000 (20120)



LOVE PEACE AND PRIVACY? Own this secluded streamside 3BR/2BA cabin in superb condition. Kitchen offers island, full appliance package, custom lighting, and dining area with exit to the relaxing screened porch. 3.17 Acres. \$269,900 (21135)



COMM PROPERTY, DOWNTOWN MENTONE. Convenience store and service station with 162 feet of frontage on Highway 117. The store and service bays include an office, storage area and bathrooms. \$199,500 (21395)



FEEL LIKE A KING 2BA Cabin with soaring ceilings, level master, stainless steel appliances, laundry room, and covered porch. REDUCED \$159,000 (21114)



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY! Two cabins located in Mentone already in rental program. Both cabins are being sold FULLY FURNISHED with all appliances and have 1BR, 1BA, jacuzzi tub, covered porch, deck, and hot tub. A great weekend get-away, or a money-making business. Call now! \$129,000 (21590)



CUSTOM BUILT, 2 BR/2BA Log Cabin situated on shaded woodland acres. Two stone fireplaces, luxurious loft, 3 season sleeping porch, detached storage, additional small cabin, fully pond. Kitchen with 5 Star sis burner gas range... REDUCED \$289,500 (20272)



RETREAT OR PERMANENT RESIDENCE? Either way, you will love coming home to this charming cabin located just off DeSoto Parkway near Mentone. Features include 2BR, Den (or 3rdBR), 2BA, CH&A and a detached guest cottage. You can't let this one get away. \$189,900 (21641)



WHISPERING PINES... Charming log cabin and guest house each with 1BR/1BA. Covered porches and a deck with hot tub connects to the guest cabin. Selling FULLY FURNISHED. A great investment property (currently in a rental program), or just a nice weekend get away. \$89,000 (21580)

NOW'S YOUR CHANCE to purchase 100 to 243 acres on Lookout Mountain (Mentone). (\$3975 per acre.) (21449)

BUILDING LOT (.59) on DeSoto Parkway near The Cliffs. \$25,900 (21143)

BROW LOT! Gorgeous views all around from this beautiful 1 +/- acre lot in Mentone. \$158,900 (21131)

BREATHTAKING SUNSETS and views await you on this 6.5 acres w/300' of brow frontage. \$345,900 (17268)

TIME WILL STAND STILL when you see this view! 106' of prime brow view with paved road frontage. Walking distance to downtown Mentone - walk to dinner or have an ice cream cone. Level and ready to build. All Mentone city services available. \$109,500 (21055)

12.1 ACRES... mostly wooded. \$48,500 (21669)

PRIME LOCATION... 31.45 Rolling acres that joins DeSoto State Park. Ideal for permanent home, weekend getaway or development. \$170,000 (21652)

PLENTY OF LAND TO BUILD AND FEEL SECLUDED! Wooded 7.13

acres in Mountain River Estates. Restricted land with possible creek flowing on back of property. \$54,500 (21573)

A RARE OPPORTUNITY to own a lot on the lake at DeSoto Falls. The perfect spot to build the perfect mountain cabin home on this once in a lifetime lot with 94+ feet of frontage on the water. Just Listed at \$194,500. (21532)

NEW LISTING...23 ACRES ON HIGHWAY 117 in MENTONE! Just minutes from downtown, property has mature hardwoods, spring fed creek with potential pond site. Power, water and septic in place, private and extremely peaceful with abundant wildlife. By Appt! \$219,900 (21443)

NEWS FROM THE BEAT

By Mentone Police Chief Lamar Bray

When I was growing up, I would spend a lot of time with my Grandfather. He lived on a small farm. He took pride in his farm and always kept it neat. One day when I went to visit him, I noticed his barn top and the tops of all his outbuildings had a new coat of aluminum paint. They looked so good. He told me a group of men had come by and painted all the roofs for \$400.00 (A lot of money in the 60's).

A few days later I noticed the roofs did not look so good. My Grandfather told me the rain had washed the paint off the roofs, it was watered-down paint. The men from North Carolina were long gone. This was my first experience with thieves who cheat, or scam, innocent people.

Another time, we learned one of our neighbors had been scammed. Some men had appeared and told him they had just finished an asphalt job and had enough material left over to do his driveway. They dumped a small amount out, told him they would have to go get some more material and, of course, they never returned. They scammed our neighbor out of several hundred dollars.

These two scams, along with other home improvement scams, are some of the top scams of 2011 according to the Better Business Bureau. Remember this: NEVER pay money up front for home improvements, know who you are dealing with, always get good references.

The scams I've mentioned are made by people you see, people who come to you. But the biggest threat today comes from the ones you don't see. They will contact you by phone, by the internet, or by mail. Then they can and will use thousands of different ways to scam you (get your money). I cannot discuss every scam out there, but I would like to discuss some that have been reported to the Police Department in our small Town of Mentone.

1. THE SWEEPSTAKES AND LOTTERY SCAM: You are told you have won a whole lot of money and in order to claim your money you must send the scammer a smaller amount. Please don't respond to such offers. You will only lose your money. Think about it, even Publishers Clearing House doesn't contact you. They come in person.

2. PLEA OF HELP EMAIL: You get an e-mail from one of your friends telling you they are in trouble, or in jail in another state, please send some money by credit card. When you do, you have just given the scammer your credit card information and can just say good-bye to your money.

3. LOW-INTEREST LOAN APPROVAL: You are told you have been approved for a loan at a very low rate of interest but you are required to purchase a life insurance policy from them in order for your loan to be processed. You send them the money and, you guessed it, you never hear from your loan.

I am sure some of our citizens have been scammed in more ways than I've mentioned. No one is safe. A sheriff from a neighboring Georgia county had his identity stolen, and I received a text one evening from a bank with which I had recently done business, telling me there was a problem with my debit card and to please call them ASAP. I called an employee who told me it was a scam and they had received several calls that day about the same thing.

Even the BBB's name has been used in a scam. Hundreds of thousands of people have received emails that look like an official notice from the BBB. The email says there is a complaint against your business and instructs you to click on a link or open an attachment. When you do, a malicious virus is launched on your computer, a virus that can steal banking information, passwords, and other critical pieces of information needed for cyber-theft.

The bottom line is no one is safe. Be careful and remember, once you have sent the money or given information to the scammers, it's too late.

For more information, I would urge you to go to the BBB website.
www.bbb.org/us/scam-source

MOONLAKE NEWS

KINDERGARTEN HAPPENINGS

Moon Lake Elementary's Kindergarten class learned about the life cycle of a butterfly when they read "Farfallina and Marcel," and they learned lots about the parts of a plant when they read the book, "Seeds." They are excited because they have a flower bulb to watch grow.

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 6TH GRADER?

The 6th grade is studying PlateTectonics and fractions.

Can you solve this one-step equation that is indicative of what they have learned in class recently?

North America is moving about 1.25 cm per year away from a ridge in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Using this rate, how much farther apart will North America and the ridge be in 200 million years?

(ANSWER: 2,500.0 KM)

MOON LAKE WELCOMES NEW SCHOOL SECRETARY

My name is Crystal (Ledford) Webb and I became the secretary of Moon Lake Elementary on December 1, 2011. My roots are in DeKalb County. I am a 1978 graduate of Plainview High School.

I feel so very fortunate to be at Moon Lake. For 13 -1/2 years I enjoyed being the secretary at Fyffe High School, but moved to another area in Alabama and had to leave that job behind. After being back in the area for a couple of years, when this opportunity came to me I felt blessed beyond measure.

My mother grew up in the Valley Head and Mentone areas and always spoke with such passion about the beauty in the nature of the areas. Now I understand why. I love the atmosphere of the community and of the school. Mrs Wisner and the faculty and staff of Moon Lake Elementary are wonderful to work with and it is such a pleasure to learn the names and personalities of the children.

I believe that God has a plan for each of our lives and at this time in my life, I believe this is His plan for me, and I am thankful.



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A Stitch in Time

by Ellen Harris



Where is Quilt City, USA? Paducah, Kentucky takes pride in this title because the National Quilt Museum is located there. The museum was built in Paducah

in 1991 and was then known as the Museum of the American Quilters Society. The name was changed in 2008 when Congress awarded the museum the designated title of The National Quilt Museum of the United States.

You will find the museum within walking distance of the Paducah floodwall and if you look beyond the floodwall murals you will notice the flowing together of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers. In 1937, the earth levee did not hold the

flood waters and if you take another walk from the museum to some of the downtown buildings you will find plaques indicating the flood levels were well over 50 feet.

If you should visit the quilt museum on a Wednesday as I did, you can meet the ladies of the Yo Yo Club of Paducah. These ladies can be found in the museum and they welcome you to visit with them as they demonstrate traditional hand quilting on a frame.

Another short walk from the quilt museum, you may visit one of Eleanor Burns' quilt shops. Eleanor is well known for her "Quilt in a Day" quilt books and her strip piecing method.

About five miles away from downtown Paducah is Hancock's of Paducah. A visit there may leave you making no quilt fabric purchase at all as it is overwhelming. It's much like visiting a candy store – so many colors and varieties. The mail order catalog itself is about one-half inch thick and can provide a relaxing time to look at fabric selections.

Each spring when the dogwoods and azaleas are blooming, Paducah is host to the American Quilters Society quilt show. This year's quilt show will be held April 25 – 28 but if you plan to stay longer than a day, lodging may be difficult to find. It is such a popular international event that quilters make their reservations a year in advance. In addition to the quilt show, classes and lectures can be scheduled. A major attraction is visiting the many vendors who set up their booths at the show. I'm amazed at all the gadgets available for purchase and marvel at how the quilters in times past

managed to produce works of art without all of the new offerings today.

Only the most confident quilters will enter a quilt show. The deadline to enter Paducah's quilt show was January 2. How do you spot a prize winner? The judges will be looking at the quilt's general appearance, its design and quality in workmanship.

All parts of the construction (basting threads, pencil and chalk lines for quilting or applique) should be removed. Knots or loose threads should not be visible on either the front or the back of the quilt. The sides of the quilt should be perfectly parallel and at right angles to the top and bottom edges. If an error in construction was made, it should not be an obvious one.

The quilt's design should have pleasing rhythm and balance. The colors should work well together and the judges will be looking closely at the borders, binding and backing as well as the main design area.

Precise piecing, secure seams, no puckers or stretching, no shadowing or dark fabric under light fabric, batting that extends to the edge of the binding, even quilting stitches whether by hand or machine, and quilting stitches that enrich the surface are all judged on the front as well as the back of the quilt.

All quilts are labors of love whether the quilter decides to enter a show or not. By visiting a quilt show, the quilter learns from champions and is motivated to return home and create well-made quilts.

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Work with stone and brick

Diary of a Chicken Lady

Part 9

By Kristen Emory



Oh, to be the Chicken Lady. When I drive into my driveway I have the most wonderful welcoming party. No, it is not my children or my husband. It is my four dogs and four chickens. I pull in and here they all come running. If you have never seen a chicken run straight at you then you need to come to my house and see it for yourself. They run with purpose. They run fast. And they only have feet.

Every time I see them charging towards me I think they are missing something, arms or more legs.

I cannot decide if the chickens think they are dogs or if the dogs think the chickens are dogs. Surely the dogs know they are dogs and not chickens. They have been dogs for a long time. The chickens eat the dog food and the dogs eat chicken feed. Thanksgiving scraps were eaten out of the same pan, at the same time, by chickens and dogs. We are just a confused, messed up family of chickens and dogs.



Mentone Police Chief, Lamar Bray just cannot believe that I have trained my dogs not to chase or eat my chickens. It was not hard at all. I let all four dogs sniff my wee baby chicks. Then I let my pullets, young chickens, peck the dog's noses. Then, when my chickens were grown, I let them out of the chicken coop and stood guard over them. (I might have been holding a big hickory.) After a few days of a watchful eye, I felt comfortable leaving all the animals alone with each other. Animals are just that, animals, and I might get home one day with all the dogs dead. Eaten by chickens.

I have to admit that I was a little fearful when the chickens started to eat the dog food. We have two big dogs and two small dogs. The big dogs eat first! But, not when the chickens are out. Chickens eat first! The day they decided to all have Thanksgiving Dinner together was amazing. Two dogs were eating

from the pan with three chickens on the other side. Amazing!

You all know I am goofy. Maybe a little odd, especially when it comes to my chickens. But I am so proud of all my animals. They love and respect each other. They are two totally different species yet they coexist and are happy. We could all learn a lesson from my four dogs and four chickens. Run fast, greet your family, and love everybody. No matter what species they are.

(Kristen Emory and her husband, Tom, reside in Mentone and, in addition to raising chickens, are owners of Mentone Market)



IT'S ONLY HAIR!



Saddler Emory of Mentone recently had 11 1/2 inches of her hair cut off at the Clip Joint in Mentone by Amy Kirby. She donated it to Locks of Love, which supplies wigs to cancer and leukemia patients who have lost their hair while undergoing treatment. As you can see, Saddler still has plenty of hair and it will grow back so that, one day, she can donate it again. Thanks, Saddler! (photo submitted by Kristen Emory)

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RHODODENDRON GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Linda Brown, Secretary

It was the kind of day when you want to stay home and putter or read or whatever. The day started (and ended) gray, foggy, wet and miserable. Nine members of the Rhododendron Garden Club of Mentone braved the elements and met at the M.E.R.F. Community House. The moment we entered the room we were glad we had made the effort to be there. The tables were decorated in a lime green and red motif. Hostesses Jill Whitten and Dianne Kuehl had decorated with acuba leaves and the berries from nandina. President Whitten called the meeting to order with the pledge to the flag. Necessary reports and items of business were taken care of and refreshments were served.

Margaret Baker, member of the club and Master Gardener, presented a program on Hellebores or as they are often called, Lenten Rose or Christmas Rose. Many of you may have been given your start of them by your mother or grandmother. They are a heritage plant and well suited to the mountain soil and climate.

These are a hardy green plant which comes in an array of bloom sizes and shapes and has foliage that provides year-round interest. In late winter or early spring you will see the blooms appear. They continue to bloom for two to three months. The flowers, which are actually sepals, range in color from white to yellow, green, pink, purple and purplish-black. Some flowers are solid color while others are speckled or multiple colors. Blooms can be cup-shaped, flat, upward-facing or bell-like. Hellebores make a wonderful addition to a wood-

land landscape and mix well with ajuga, wild ginger, primroses, violets, azaleas, rhododendrons, ferns and hostas.

These plants prefer well-drained soil with an abundance of organic matter. They grow from underground stems and once established, they do not like to be moved. They appreciate morning sun but will tolerate some shade. The seeds that drop to the ground in mid-summer will take root and provide seedlings that can be transplanted in the spring.

The most well known Hellebores is the Christmas Rose. It will grow in the South but not as easily as the Lenten Rose. The Christmas Rose has dark green, smooth, evergreen leaves with pure white flowers which appear from late December to March. The Lenten Rose has evergreen foliage that makes a clump about fifteen inches tall and two feet wide. Flowers in a range of white, green, pink and maroon appear from January to May. Many growers recommend cutting the flowers off after the seeds have ripened and cut back the old leaves just before the flowers appear in winter to better appreciate the beautiful blooms.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 14, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the M.E.R.F. Community House in Mentone, Alabama. Ann Houston, Master Gardener and Director of District II of The Garden Club of Alabama, will present a program on Mulches. You are always welcome to attend our meetings.

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

COLOR MENTONE - A visual, living landscape project

By Harriet O'Rear

Thanks to the financial success of the Mentone Area Arts Council's Home Tour and Silent auction in October of 2011, MAAC is launching a coordinated planting project for the Mentone area that will transform the town into a vibrant living display of color with beds of annuals and perennials. Purple and yellow cone flowers, phlox, orange butterfly weeds (a brightly colored native on our roadsides), orange zinnias and magenta vinca are the plants of choice since they are drought resistant, thrive in Mentone, have a long bloom period and are extremely colorful.

The project has two parts. The first is the donation by MAAC of both the bed preparation and plant materials for four public areas: The Mentone City Hall, the Mentone Post Office, the Moon Lake Library and the entrance to Cloudland. As most of you remember, the houses on the home tour were in both the Mentone and Cloudland areas. These areas will be maintained by volunteers and will be planted year round with fall pansies, spring bulbs, and summer color.

The second part of the project is the offering of the same design service, bed preparation and/or plant material to both businesses and homeowners at cost. MAAC has acquired many of these plants from generous wholesale growers who offer them to us at cost. The scope of the jobs will be from a one square yard mail box kit to much larger plantings, depending on the wishes of the owners. The participation of the houses and store fronts along Hwy. 117 would result in a stunning color display for the summer, a visual treat for all who live in or pass by Mentone and Cloudland.

Plants will be available in several sizes for both the participant who wants instant color and for the person with a limited budget and a green thumb. The deadline for ordering both bed preparation and plants is Feb. 28. Work on flower beds will take place in March and April, and plants will be picked up and/or installed starting the first week of May.

For a price list and ordering information, please contact MAAC Planting Committee members Doreen Waters (256)634-4548 or Kerry Breithaupt (256)254-9802.



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An Article of Faith— Rev Edmond Crowe

By Kathy McMunn

The first thing I've learned about writing this nutty-can't-say-no-what-on-earth-was-I-thinking-personalized-education-Groundhog article is this: Don't wait until the day before the article is due to start typing it up!

The second thing I've learned is: Even if you only interview two people it's real easy to get too much information and real hard to whittle it down to a short, readable page, rather than a long drawn out history lesson!

This is where I want to take you, to my Dad's immediate family, a tiny snippet of their history and to the one preacher he admired and loved more than any other-- Reverend Edmond Crowe.

One time I asked Daddy if he and his parents and brothers and sisters read and discussed the Bible together when he was growing up. He said, "We worked. From daybreak until dark. It was hard to read by kerosene lamp so we didn't do much reading. We just worked."

I know that my Grandmother, Maggie Crowe Kirby, was a charter member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, now called Mentone Community Church.

I know that my dad didn't like preachers. Something about a childhood memory of a gluttonous evangelist who ate several pieces of chicken while the children in the family went away hungry...

When I was young my Dad didn't attend church. I went with my mother. But after I was grown and married, one Sunday afternoon when my husband and I came into their house for a visit, he grabbed my hand and told us, "I want to tell you, I made things right."

My parents didn't talk about matters of faith. Even within our home it was rare. It was like it was so private and personal that it was some kind of indecent exposure to speak of God and relationship with Him.

I've heard that the pronunciation of the word that is translated "I AM" in Hebrew has been lost because the Jews so feared and revered His NAME that they wouldn't speak it. I got the idea that my parents had some of that same sense of awe and reverence for God.



The Crowe brothers, Edmond is pictured in the center.

Edmond Crowe's father, Finn Crowe, was my grandmother Maggie's brother.

His family attended Mentone Methodist Church and Edmond Crowe had a firm faith from a young age. He announced his "call to preach" when he was sixteen!

I asked two of Edmond's four children some questions about growing up in a preacher's home. - (Preachers Kids! You know the reputation THEY have!) - It pleased me to hear that EVERY night their whole family gathered together in their living room and read Bible verses and prayed together before they went to bed.

When you practice your faith in the privacy of your own home then you

aren't putting on some kind of show, it's who you really are.

At that time the Wesleyan Methodist denomination was known as being pretty legalistic. The pastor's family, especially, was expected to obey all the "disciplines" the denomination recommended! It was normal, in those circles, for women not to wear pants-only dresses, with at least three-quarter length sleeves, high necks, and long skirts! Long hair; no make-up; no jewelry, not even wedding rings! I didn't know until this week that they weren't

allowed to attend sporting events! And the boys weren't allowed to be on athletic teams!

When I talked to Edmond's daughter, Sue Ellen, she said, "It was pretty hard to go on dates since we couldn't go to movies or dances, pretty much the only place we could go was to church!" She also said that they didn't believe

her Dad shared all the convictions of the denomination but that he always submitted to their guidelines because he was a Pastor and was an example to others.

When Edmond was diagnosed with cancer he continued to be an example of Christlike love. If you talk to anyone who knew him then they will tell you how he encouraged and uplifted everyone he met.

Edmond Crowe was always ready to give an answer to anyone who asked about the hope that he had. It makes me sad that this Article of Faith had to be second hand, how I would love to sit down today and have a long conversation with these two beloved men.

ODE TO A FALLEN TREE



Oh fallen giant tree,
Grandfather of the forest,
Your life appears done.
But you live on
and on for millennia
To sustain those left behind.

Insects bore, feast and breed
Inside this fecund sanctuary.
Woodpeckers sharpen beaks
And then seek to
beat out a flavor feast.

Most pass you by
as old and dead,
Your glories in times past.
Yet pungent aromas
of fertile decay
Make rich fragrance of repast.

As you, oh grandfather
of the forest
Feed the next giant tree.

By Douglas Cooper

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♥ VALENTINE MESSAGES ♥

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY to Hollis, Anna, Daniel & Sarah (& baby girl-to-come); Jonathan, Elizabeth, Andrew & LilliBelle Gentry. With love, Mimi.

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

ROSES ARE RED, Violets are blue, God in His favor, led me to you. Happy Valentines Day, Ken, from your valentine, Diane.

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

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What on earth is going on at St Joseph's Church?

.....Well, quite a lot these days! "This place is really alive now!" is being said often lately, and as the New Year has begun, St Joseph's is continuing to be as busy as it was in 2011 making the church play its part living out the gospel in Mentone and the surrounding community.

St Joseph's is the quaint church situated at the blinking light in the heart of Mentone, flanked by The Mentone Inn and The Hitching Post. The Episcopal Church is the American arm of the worldwide Anglican Communion, and in the South it is something of a minority church, reflecting the historical development of different denominations over time. St Joseph's began in the 1970s in a log cabin donated for worship, when there was a falling out among the congregation of St Philip's in Fort Payne.

Over the years it has been built onto, and has been led this way and that, until today when its small and faithful congregation has been pulling together to do its part building God's Kingdom here on the mountain.

"I came down from Connecticut to see how the Episcopal Church thrives in the South", says the current Rector, the Reverend Lesley Hay, a British national who has been serving as a priest in the United States for four years now. "I was asked to bring some strong leadership to a church that had lots of potential and was eager for new ideas, and needing TLC", she says. The congregation is a mix of locals, weekenders - most being members of churches in the cities, visitors, and people giving the Episcopal Church a try, having left other denominations. "It was a bit of a mixture of this and that, but over the past 18 months the committed members dedicated to St Joseph's and to its mission to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ, have worked very hard to make St Joseph's grow in worship, strength and spirit. "God is definitely in charge here, and together we have found ways to serve Him and our community in ways that have strengthened us as a small but dedicated church. There are some wonderfully faithful people who work very generously for this church, even those who are members of other churches, but simply love St Joseph's"

For some time St Joseph's has provided help with paying bills and making available a food cart stocked daily to help callers get by when they needed store cupboard essentials. This year, driven by the worsening economic situation and people in our community struggling with little or no income, St Joseph's has taken this outreach ministry to a much higher level. "St Joseph's people were always generous donating food and cash to this outreach ministry, but we needed to raise our game as it was clear too many people are living on the poverty line" says Rev Lesley. "We got accepted as an agency of the North Alabama Food Bank, enabling us to purchase large supplies of food from the Huntsville depot very reasonably, and we now have a list of regular recipients who benefit from this. It's an

expression of what's known as living 'the social gospel', and the wonderful thing is that churches can do it together if they are minded to reach out to each other across the denominations. I was thrilled when the minister of a local Baptist church heard about it and called to offer us a very generous donation, and will from now on be collaborating with St Joseph's in a joint food ministry."

In April when the tornadoes struck, Rev Lesley went straight to Huntsville to join with the Methodist Churches who had set up a major relief initiative. As disaster plans took shape in Mentone St Joseph's collaborated with the People's Community Church in providing relief supplies to communities locally. They then hosted a youth group from

Pennsylvania who came to assist a relief project in Trentham for a week, many of our members offering hospitality, food, beds and fellowship to the eager volunteers (see pictures).

"It seemed to me there was untapped potential, ripe for the picking at St Joseph's" says Rev Lesley. We have quaint church buildings in lovely rolling gardens, and in eighteen months we have worked to make St Joseph's a welcoming place to the town and its visitors. Summer teas in the gardens have proved very popular, also promoting the church and its accommodations as a choice venue for events, retreats, weddings and meetings, which is taking off well. Blessing the Animals with a pets' coffee hour on the lawns afterwards, a Christmas Bazaar and tours of the church have all attracted large numbers of visitors and friends "I've

lived here all my life and have never been inside - it's wonderful!" is a familiar cry. "One further delight for us has been collaborating with the wonderful Cops & Cowboys group at Christmas time, welcoming them to our parish rooms to store, wrap and later distribute the mountains of toys and gifts they so generously collect for the foster children of the county. It's an honor for us to offer them what help we can".

"In November and December as we packed and delivered boxes of Thanksgiving and Christmas food to people who needed a helping hand, we reflected on the generosity of local businesses, individuals who drop by with checks "we've heard what you're doing and

want to help" and our faithful members, all of whom are truly living out the gospel of Jesus. Our hearts leap with joy when we hear people say "This place is really alive now!" and we thank God that we are finding ourselves inspired to do our part as a Mentone church serving God and our neighbors".

