



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

January 2012

MAPA TO CELEBRATE 30TH BIRTHDAY

By Charlotte Gentry, Editor

The history of the little mountain village of Mentone and its environs is amazingly rich. The people who have populated this area of Lookout Mountain, from the native Cherokee to the European explorers and adventurers who walked among them, from the dirt farmers, speculators and dreamers, to the present day inhabitants, have each left their mark for future generations to explore.

Realizing this richness needed to be preserved, a loosely-knit group met on Groundhog Day, February 2, 1982, and the concept of the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) was formulated. Later that same year, April 6, 1982, the group was officially organized. Its newsletter was in the form of a basic, mimeographed, legal-sized mailing.

Charles White McGehee, a former newspaper editor and retired Unitarian Universalist minister, was the first editor of *The Groundhog*, along with his wife, Jean, as associate editor. Through the years there have been several editors of this publication and it has evolved from that simple little mimeographed document to the full-fledged newspaper you see today.

Since that Groundhog Day thirty years ago, MAPA has continued its efforts to preserve the history of the Mentone area and

has striven to have an impact on its future. Membership in MAPA has seen within its ranks those whose roots go deep into the rocky soil of Lookout Mountain as well as those who count Mentone as their second home, either in fact or fancy.

The Groundhog is now sent out all over the United States. Some of those who subscribe are former residents of this area and want to stay in touch with an old friend. Others who subscribe have never before been to Mentone, but they are interested in the natural beauty and slower

pace of life Mentone has to offer. They would love to live in a place such as Mentone.

MAPA's impact on the community is seen in the continued growth and improvements of Mentone's Volunteer Fire Department, the support given to area groups such as Boy Scouts, Moon Lake School and others. Its role as a "good neighbor" is funded through MAPA memberships, subscriptions to *The Groundhog* and through contributions from those who want to see the area's history preserved.

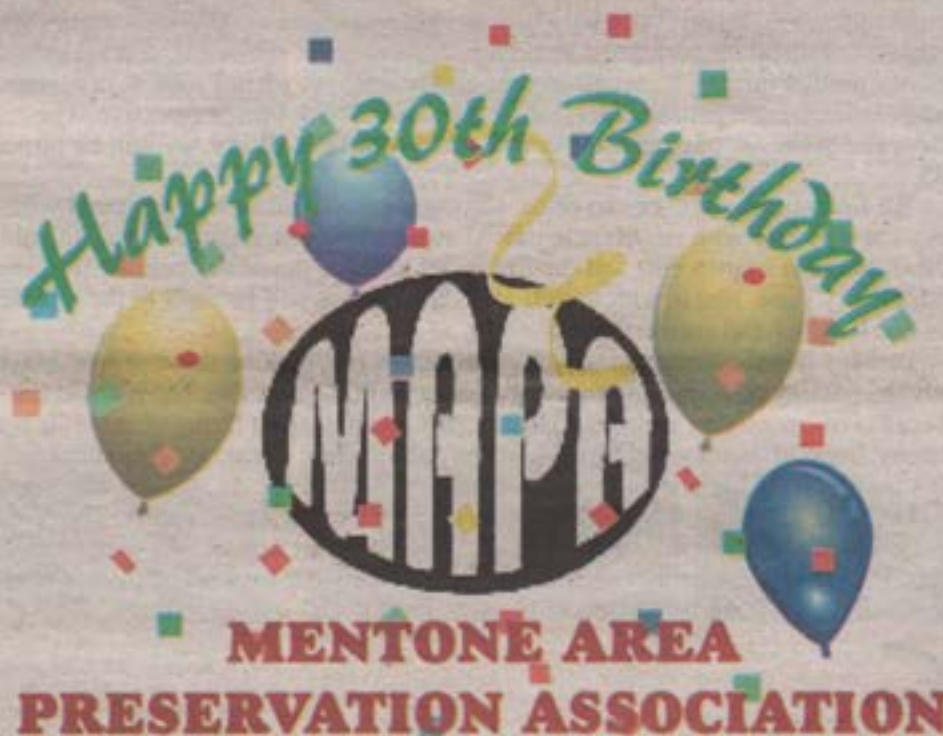
A MAPA 30th birthday celebra-

tion is being planned for Groundhog Day, February 2, 2012, and the public will be invited to the event. Details will be made known as they are available. Notices will be put up around Mentone and information posted on *The Groundhog* Facebook page. Even if you aren't using Facebook, you can do a search for Ground Hog and Facebook.

As part of this celebration, February's *The Groundhog* will feature highlights of its 30 years of the people and events that have appeared in its pages. We'll also try to catch you up on the editors and contributing writers who kept the publication going through the years.

The Groundhog is eager to hear from its readers who would like to share any photos or stories that could be added to make the birthday celebration complete. For instance, if you or someone you know was featured in a Birth Announcement in the early days, it would be fun to have a current photo of that person.

Technology has made it easier to get information out instantaneously, but it is still nice to pick up a copy of *The Groundhog*, or open up the mailbox and find it there, to read about the people, places and events that, one day, will be the history of this place where people have long found that certain something for which they may not even have realized they were looking.



THE GROUNDHOG

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**

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Contributing Writers.....Linda Brown,
LC Moon, Kristen Emory, Dixie Wilson.

MAPA OFFICERS

President.....Gerald Bailey
Vice President.....LC Moon
Secretary.....Robert Green
Parliamentarian.....Amelia Kirk-Lolli
Treasurer.....Ray Padgett
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

I was sitting on my porch this morning enjoying the unseasonably warm weather with two of my sisters who'd come down from Virginia to visit for my mother's 85th birthday and we were, of course, commenting on how nice it was to be able to be outside without a jacket in January.

There was just a bit of rain, just enough to create a pleasant sound in the metal downspout of the gutters. The trees were enshrouded in mist and there was a certain beauty in the dreariness. It was an almost perfect porch moment, shared with women who live far away, yet are so near to my heart.

We'd heard from the other two sisters who were on their way from Myrtle Beach, delayed for a day due to one of the sisters needing some recovery after dental surgery. It was good to know they were finally on their way and, by tonight, we'd have the five of us Martin sisters together. Oh my! What a gab fest this is going to be!

As is the case with many modern families, we seldom get to see one another because our lives are so busy and we are involved with our own families, jobs, community, etc. It seems the only time we get to see one another is a major event such as a funeral or, perhaps, a wedding.

My mother turning 85 seems almost impossible, yet when I look at my sisters and realize we are getting older, too, it puts things back into perspective. The days and years are passing quickly and one day, if God allows, we will be turning 85.

We find ourselves, every so often, talking about our sister Margaret and wishing she was here with us. Maggie passed away a few years ago. She was the oldest of the nine Martin kids and the first of us to leave the others behind. But, she isn't really gone. She is with us still and her presence will be right in the middle of our laughter and conversation.

Perhaps it is the misty, drizzly day that makes me think on these things. Maybe it's the passing of another year and the new one that has begun. Or, it could be because of my mother's birthday. But it isn't an unpleasant frame of mind. It is a happy, hopeful, homey feeling that settles on me like a warm, snuggly blanket. It's family. It's what makes us who we are.

Oops! Looks like I'd better be getting back in there with the sisters. They've gone inside and there may be a game of Scrabble about to start. We may be sisters, but we're a competitive lot. Scrabble played by our own set of rules. Oh yes, that's always a good time, especially when I win!

C.

Letters To the Editor

Dear Editor,

I lived at Hammondville for 38 years and I used to get your paper. Then, when my husband, the late Max Moore, passed away, I moved to my sister's home and had a double-wide mobile home in the Pine Grove Community.

Then, on April 27, I lost everything but the clothes on my back when the tornado took my home and a big part of my sister's home.

So, we moved to an apartment in Fort Payne. Then, on September 26, my sister Vergie Wilson passed away. So I will continue to live here.

I always enjoyed your paper. I especially like the recipes. The Mrs. Arvel Jones I used to know when I worked in Dr. Igou's office in Fort Payne. I always thought she was a very sweet person. [Editor's Note: a recipe passed down to me by Mrs. Jones was in the Holiday Recipe insert in the December Groundhog]

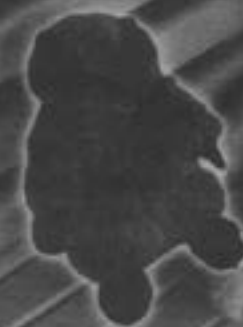
I had not had one of your papers in several years. So, yesterday my nephew that lives across the street from me was at the Waffle House and a man gave him the paper. I so enjoyed looking at it and want to subscribe.

Thanks so much,
Louise Moore
Fort Payne

CHUCK RETURNS...READY TO PLAY HIDE-N-SEEK

Chuck the Groundhog was returned to us just in time for Christmas and we're mighty relieved to have our little stuffed animal mascot safe and sound. The ransom money has been given to the Moon Lake PTO to help with the 5th Grade Space Camp Trip. Chuck is fully recovered from his time away from us and is ready to return to hiding in and around Mentone. Beginning with the February issue of the Groundhog, Chuck will be hidden each month and 10 clues will be given to help in his recovery. The lucky finder will win a great prize donated by area merchants/restaurants. Be sure and pick up a copy of next month's Groundhog to follow the adventures of Chuck the Groundhog!

**W. Chuck
Groundhog**





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**Welcome To
Mentone!!**



Stop by our Log Cabin in front of the Wildflower Cafe. We always look forward to a visit from our neighbors and friends.

LOTS and LAND

APPROX 1.54-ACRE BROW LOT on S Brow of Mentone (maybe a mile from the village) offers the perfect spot to build your dream cottage. \$120,000. (PLS# 21308)

1.69 ACRE LOT W/LAKE VIEW! Level, wooded, on a private road, approx 1.5 mi from downtown Mentone. Lightly restricted. Add'l land avail. \$27,500. (PLS#19225)

MENTONE LAND W/CREEK 4.42 acres, wooded, peaceful, abundant wildlife, myriad hiking/walking areas. Restricted. \$42,000 (MLS#578905, PLS#21482)

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)

TWO ACRES W/DRIVEWAY, public water at road, building site already prepared. Approx one mile from downtown Mentone on N Scenic Hwy. Unrestricted, wooded, level. \$29,900. (MLS#553792, PLS#21346)

CREEKSIDE LOT IN MENTONE! 1.13 ac lot w/approx 200' of frontage in lightly wooded area. Undergrowth & wildflowers. Considering building a cabin, this is exactly the right place. \$29,900 (PLS #20832)

REDUCED - 3.21 ACRE WOODED LOT in Northend gated community. Privacy & security to build your mountain getaway. \$27,500 (MLS#387708; PLS#21363)

NEW LISTING! Come back to the country. Slow pace Mentone living at its best. Historic Nightingale community. Great building lot; unrestricted, level, with lots of trees. Not a big lot, not a big price. Only \$6,500. (MLS#981737; PLS#21572)



BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE! But, you can snuggle up by the stacked stone, WB Fpl in this 2BR/2BA cabin. Cedar interior & siding; full front porch; screened back porch with seating area. Bring the greenery & enjoy your own Mentone getaway cabin!! \$139,900 (PLS#21615; MLS#786624)



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 wraparound porch & deck, vaulted great room w/stone, WB Fpl. 1.5-acre wooded lot. Mentone. \$179,900. (PLS#21677; MLS#379991)



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



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 with less acreage or up to 22 acres total. 3 small bldgs w/electric & a fenced, irrigated garden plot in field. \$215,000 (PLS#21697) (MLS#560320)



40 ACRES WITH TWO PONDS & HOUSE Family farm, generations-owned, now for sale. Quaint board-n-batten 3BR/2BA farmhouse with 3/4 wraparound screened porch; outbuildings; old chicken houses; stream flowing through woods; two ponds; public water and well; workshop that looks like a dollhouse! Land is approx 1/2 pasture (fenced), 1/2 wooded, with frontage on two roads. Owner may divide into two portions. Property in town limits of Mentone. Build your own family compound, summer retreat, or get back to the land and become a farmer! A rare opportunity at a very attractive price! \$250,000. (PLS#21468; MLS#554750)



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)



CYPRESS LOG CABIN. Custom-designed & built cabin sitting amid the trees & quietude of 6 acres near Little River Canyon. Full wraparound porch w/expanded hot tub deck. Antique oak doors; stacked rock WB Fpl; antique chestnut floors & countertops. If quality of workmanship, materials & design are important to you in your quest for a mountain getaway or residence, you will find your search at an end. \$216,000 (PLS#14869; MLS#210539)



THE JAMES PLACE w/ a breathtaking view of the valley below, mountains beyond & those fabulous sunsets! Over 185' brow frontage. 4BR/2.5BA, 2-car att gar, hot tub on back deck, 1.46 ac, beautiful landscaping. Quaint stone columns & iron-gated entry. Less than a mile from downtown Mentone. Residence, retreat or rental! An incredibly reasonable price for this much land, this much brow frontage, this much house at Mentone! \$275,000! (PLS#21259; MLS#580676)



BEAUTIFULLY RUSTIC LOG CABIN in Hunters Ridge, on 2.06 acres, 2BR (or 3 if you decided to turn the DR into a BR)/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 mornings with a cup of coffee. Stone Fpl w/gas logs completes the mountain getaway atmosphere. \$149,900 (PLS#20916; MLS#588906)



RARE, SELDOM-SOLD RIVERFRONT PROPERTY NEAR DESOTO FALLS. Over 4,000 sq ft of one-level living area, perfectly-suited to entertaining on the river. A family gathering place, a corporate retreat or a spectacular residence, this is mountain lake living at its finest! Over 2000 sq ft of deck. Approx. 108' deep river frontage where you can swim from the dock. 4BR/4BA; 3-car attached garage; roomy, gourmet kitchen w/loads of cabinets, butcher-block work island (found in a great little shop in New Orleans!), professional-grade gas stove & sub-zero fridge. Three WB Fireplaces! Billiard room/library area w/built-in wet bar. 1.6 acres, nestled in the woods next door to historic Nippersink Lodge. A rare piece of real estate at an amazing price. \$825,000. (PLS#21417; MLS#372261)



SOLD

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY

Birthdays

- 1 - Jim Byrum
- 2 - Kelly Wright, Amber Stokes, Jan Cherbonneau, David Baker, Beverly Henry, Elizabeth Romans
- 3 - Joe Mayhew, Bennett Crow
- 4 - Raymond E. Ringer, Lillian Wigley-Speakman, Loretta McGee (in memory)
- 5 - Charles McGee (in memory)
- 6 - Gage Baker, Donnie Voils
- 7 - Kristen Emory, Amanda Holaway
- 8 - Taylor Grace Davis
- 9 - Lillie Martin
- 10 - Walt Dillenbeck, Neal Whitt, Deb Plunk
- 11 - Robert Green, Butch Jones, Robert Reese
- 12 - Marie S. Dillenbeck, Christina Wise, Scott Davis, Dottie Kirkland, Patricia Anderson, Aaron McKenzie
- 13 - Diane Sanders, Alayna Wright, Paulett Manning, Phil Faircloth, Jimmy Graves (in memory)
- 14 - Robert Pullen, Andrea Harris, Lickety-Split (in memory)
- 15 - Joey Blalock, Mickey Luck, Kat Griffith, Linda Hufstedler, Bonnie Bailey
- 17 - Bill Cobble
- 18 - Max Cherbonneau, Barbara Blalock
- 19 - Cindy Jones, Floyd Bailey (in memory)
- 20 - Courtney Wigley
- 21 - Sherry Daniel, Leland Cox (in memory)
- 22 - Alicia Cherbonneau
- 23 - Sierra Nicely, Dowe Forman
- 25 - Sarah Wilcox
- 26 - Martha Hicks
- 27 - Jess Moore
- 28 - Edna Morgan, Cynthia Wooten
- 29 - Karen Stone
- 31 - Michelle Broome

Anniversaries

- 12 - Scott and Katie Meadows
- 16 - Mr. and Mrs. Sonny Gilbreath
- 17 - Katie Bird and Bill Cobble
- 24 - Marie and Walter Dillenbeck

JANUARY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LRCNP GREEN & GRAY PROGRAM, Saturday, Jan 14, 10:00 a.m. Little River Canyon Center. Free, ranger-led walk on the Canyon Center Path to Learning. Dress for the weather and wear walking shoes. More info, call the park office (256)845-9605.

DEKALB COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY will meet Jan. 14 at 10 a.m. at the DeKalb Public Library in Fort Payne. Ken Record from Southern Micro Technologies will speak.

FT PAYNE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Annual Banquet, Thursday, Jan 19. DeKalb Theater with entertainment by Three On A String. Tickets are \$25 each, \$40 for two. For more info, call the Chamber office (256)845-2741.

DEKALB COUNTY SPELLING BEE will be Jan. 25 at 9:15 a.m. at the DeKalb Theatre, Fort Payne.

GROWIN UP WILD: Food, Water & Shelter, 4th Friday (Jan 27), 11 am-noon. Join Little River Canyon Center staff & volunteers for this fun nature & art program for preschool-age children. No fee. Pre-registration encouraged. (256)782-5697.

RIVER RHYTHMS: Wild Survival, 4th Saturday (Jan 28), 1 pm-2 pm. Little River Canyon Center. This fun nature program for the entire family includes hikes, crafts, games, nature talks, activities & more. No fee. Pre-registration encouraged. (256)782-5697.

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL 101, Saturday, Jan 28, 10 am-2 pm. \$10 adults, \$5 children/students (ages 15-22). Join Larry Beane (National Park Service), Ken Thomas (Alabama State Parks) and Renee Morrison (JSU) as they teach methods of basic survival skills dealing with water, shelter, food, fire and getting found. Program is held outside. Appropriate clothing a must. Bring your own lunch, snacks, water. Little River Canyon Center. Pre-registration required. (256)782-5697.

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, Saturday, Feb 11, 10 am-4 pm. Join DSP staff for a fun day of hiking throughout the park and see some of DeSoto's waterfalls, big & small. See Lost Falls, Laurel Falls & many more. Moderate terrain. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a daypack w/plenty of water/snacks & wear comfortable shoes/clothes. Not recommended for children under 10. No fee. Registration appreciated, but not required. More info (256)997-5025.

BOY SCOUT TROOP 106 ANNUAL VAN DINNER February 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!

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.

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 Bunnell.

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

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

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

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church - 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

Cloudland 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.

St. Joseph's Church Continues Registration for Food Bank

St. Joseph's Episcopal Church will continue to interview and register people who are eligible for Food Bank services at the church on Tuesdays and Thursdays this month, from 9AM till 12noon. If interested to learn about your eligibility please bring a photo ID, and eligibility papers for SSI, Food Stamps, or financial assistance from the Dept. of Family Resources. If eligible you can receive food the same day you are registered. Food will also be available to those already registered and found eligible, during the same hours.

Get Over It!

It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway: "we have all made mistakes." As Alexander Pope so aptly put it: "To err is human, to forgive, divine." We should remember this the next time we make a mistake. Most certainly, we must learn from our mistakes, and hopefully not continue to repeat them, but we should also forgive ourselves. While it can be hard enough to forgive others for their mistakes, it can sometimes feel almost impossible to forgive ourselves. We sometimes cannot bring ourselves to forgive something we've done, and we may punish and harangue ourselves for years, or even decades, over youthful indiscretions. In addition, some of us may not be able to forget the sins of our past. And although that may prevent us from repeating them, we must be charitable and forgive ourselves, just as we should forgive others. So, we should make a real effort in the coming days and weeks to forgive the offenses of others as well as our own. Sometimes, it helps to just forget about them; that is, to try to put them out of our mind and stop repeatedly mulling over them. One of the reasons we use the phrase "forgive and forget" is because sometimes that is the only way to forgive, i.e., by forgetting. But far better, and more divine, is to be able to forgive even while remembering the offense. So, we should let go of those unforgiving, vindictive, shameful feelings about the past, and get over it! Corrie ten Boom, who survived incarceration in a Nazi



prison camp said, "Forgiveness is to set a prisoner free, and to realize that the prisoner was you."

Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven...

R.S.V. Luke 6:37

MOUNTAIN LORE— Honey Locust Pods

By Charlotte Gentry

When I was a young girl and heard the story of John the Baptist living off locusts and wild honey, I didn't believe he was actually eating the insect. Rather, I envisioned him enjoying honey from the pods of the locust tree. Of course, I didn't know if there were honey locust trees in the Middle East. I still don't know if there are. Theologians seem to agree, though, that John was, indeed, dining on insects.

John the Baptist may not have dined on locust pods, but Martin kids did! They were a real treat to us when we were outside playing in the cold weather. We'd gather several of the pods and strip them open to glean the gooey, sweet-tart pulp that was between the seeds. The seeds are quite large and the quantity of edible "honey" is very small in comparison. This natural "candy" was like nectar of the gods to us and (although I can't prove it) helped us stay healthy in early winter.

Now that the leaves are off the trees, the pods of the honey locust trees are visible. With the hard winds and rains we've experienced lately, most of the pods have fallen to the ground as well. That makes it much easier to experience the tangy sweetness of the honey in the pod.

The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) is native to the U.S., but other species with similar qualities exist

throughout the world. Tamarind trees produce pods that look similar, but there the similarities end. Tamarind is used extensively for flavoring soft drinks and sweets in Latin America. To my knowledge, there are no commercial uses of honey locust pods in American society. (Some Chinese medicine

adherents do use honey locust pods) Only the animals, wild and tame, seem to have discovered their tastiness.

Cattle and hogs really enjoy eating them. Some research has been done on the pods' nutritional qualities in regard to livestock feed. Agricultural experts report honey locust pods provide as much as 12-13 percent protein (including the seeds) and up to 42 percent carbohydrates. Little research has been done on medicinal uses for the pods or nutritional value for humans.

Native American peoples did include honey locust pods in their diets. Some historians say that there are records of a fermented "beer" being made from the pods as well. It would take quite a large crop of pods to produce sufficient quantities of honey to make this worthwhile!

Insects sometimes bore into the pods and destroy the honey. If you find a pod with holes in it, don't bother with it. Try to find ones that are puffy and fat in between the seeds. Break the pod open. You'll see the honey has an unattractive yellowish-greenish-brownish color. It's a little difficult to separate the honey from the pod and I will often just break off a piece of the pod, stick it into my mouth, and suck the honey off it.

Don't be put off by its looks and you will find yourself looking for honey locust pods every year when you're outside enjoying the cold weather.

Happy Winter foraging!





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MY OBSERVATIONS

By Linda Brown

I find "people watching" to be an interesting hobby. Many, many years ago I flew to San Francisco with several other women. We had a layover in Los Angeles and they all got off the plane to shop. When asked if I wanted to go shopping, I replied, "No, just sit me down and let me watch the people." I was not disappointed. The people were very entertaining. I realized then that I had done this all of my life and I still do it today.

That said, this year I noticed that clubs were having contests at their December meetings for, "the ugliest Christmas sweater, ever." Remember the sweater with the snowmen made of felt with the tassels at the end of the cap on their head? Their eyes were made of real buttons and white sequins cascaded over the area to represent snow and snowflakes. My second daughter, participated in such a contest. She pulled a sweater from the bottom of her cedar chest which I could not see how it wouldn't win any prize in any contest. It was an awful, bright blue color with snowmen which fit the above description except it had little hard cotton balls at various places on the sweater. It was a cardigan and the buttons were snowmen. She didn't win. The winner was a black pullover sweater with brightly-painted poinsettias cascading over the shoulder and down the front of it. I agreed with the decision. My first daughter, was also in a contest. She wore a vest with a winter scene complete with all of the above plus glitter. She didn't win either. The winner in that contest was a Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer scene which could not find a stopping place on the sweater. Ugh, how did we wear these with a straight face? Wait a minute, that's what I pulled out of my trunk and I wore them!! There's just no accounting for

taste with some people.

Another fashion I observed is the "bling" jeans. These are very pretty, well-made denim jeans with so many studs and beads on the back pockets that they are almost too heavy to pick up. Needless to say, only the young can wear these. Bling is in this year. Sometime when you are people watching, count the number of piercings in the ears of many women and some men. This enables them to wear earrings in many colors, materials and sizes. I have one set of bling, a necklace of beads and clip earrings. The necklace consists of three or four rows of bright, shiny silver beads in graduated sizes. Thank goodness they are not pure silver. I know someone who would want to smelt them down to ingots.

I observed the people who were around me during the holiday season. My husband watched a lot of ballgames. One of my daughters made wreaths of the new bouffant ribbon and one cared for a two-year-old granddaughter who lives out of town.

My son worked, rested and "grumped" - his grandchildren call him Grumps. My grandchildren performed their duties as parents and/or anticipated an addition to their family. My granddaughter-in-law reported a bumper crop of tourists who came to the Wildflower Restaurant for holiday celebrations. Many of my friends and extended family traveled to places of interest or where family members live. It seemed to be a good year to visit family and celebrate being together.

People-watching can get you into trouble if you aren't careful. This can be thought of as "being nosy." Here is a way to get around that. Take a book or the electronic book that so many people received this year and sit on a porch swing, a stump or any unusual place and pretend to read. Peek over the top of your book and watch people. Happy New Year to Everyone!! Aren't you glad to be here for the year 2012?

RHODODENDRON GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Linda Brown, Secretary

The Rhododendron Garden Club of Mentone met at the home of member, Elaine Gauldin, for the December meeting and holiday celebration. As each of the eleven members arrived it soon became apparent that they had a "covered-dish" in hand. When the luncheon plans were revealed, it was discovered that the hostess was furnishing the meat, drinks and bread. The members brought dishes which contained everything from a crisp, green salad to country style corn. This made for a wonderful luncheon. What made it even more fun was the fact that we all were seated at one of Elaine's many tables. Linda Brown gave the meditation and the blessing of the food.

A short business meeting convened for the purpose of presenting a Life Membership in The Garden Club of Alabama, Inc. to Dianne Kuehl. President, Jill Whitten stated that Dianne had served as president of the club for the term of 2008-2010 and has held many of the office positions in other terms. Dianne is a faithful member and has almost perfect attendance to the meetings for the last several years. It is the practice of the club to present a state membership to the out-going president. Dianne's membership brings our records up to date. Several years ago, the members of the club decided to present a life membership each year, thus enabling each past president to be in this elite group. This membership is used for the Scholarship Fund to enable grants to be given to students in the School of Horticulture.

After lunch the members gathered to sing Christmas carols. Harriett Lillich played the piano and was accompanied by Jan Wilkinson on the cello. Dianne Kuehl led the singing and a wonderful time was had by all.

The Rhododendron Garden Club is a working club but we take out enough time for fun to make it interesting. Two of our main projects are the upkeep of the Heritage Garden at the MERF Community House and the Adopt-A-Mile litter pickup on Alabama Highway 117. Other interests are Arbor Day at the Moon Lake Community Library, encouraging of litter control and conservation with the Town of Mentone, encouraging the observance of a Bird Sanctuary in the Town of Mentone, and stressing the importance of recycling. We also participate in many of the projects at the county, state and national level.

The next meeting: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the MERF Community House in Mentone, Alabama. The program will be Hellebores, also known as Lenten Roses by Margaret Baker. 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.



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COWBOYS & COPS FOR KIDS

By Charlotte Gentry

"Team doesn't have an 'I' in it," states Kathy Zimmerman, speaking of her work with the Cowboys & Cops for Kids charity. She, along with several other volunteers, met the weekend before Christmas at St Joseph's Church on the Mountain at Mentone to give away toys, clothing and groceries to needy families. This was their fourth year to help area families in this capacity.

"Our Equestrian team got the idea to do this and then some of the cops who were our friends said they wanted to go in with us to help these kids and their families," Kathy explains. Thus was born Cowboys & Cops for Kids.

"All donations of money and toys go to these families," Kathy states. "It's all volunteer. No one gets paid. We have helped 108 foster kids and 120 underprivileged families this year."

Funds are raised year-round through roadblocks, performances with the Mountain Breeze Equestrian Team, gospel singings and donations from church groups. The group also accepts donations of toys and groceries closer to Christmas time (they don't have storage for these year-round.)

"Pick up points (where families come to get the toys and groceries) vary every year. It depends on who lets us use their facility. St Joseph's was good to let us use their space this year," adds Gwen Terrell, another volunteer with Cowboys & Cops.

Members of the Cowboys & Cops for Kids group come from all over the area from Valley Head to Gadsden, from Bryant to Mentone and Rainsville. The group is always looking for Christian volunteers who ride horses and want to be of service to the community. If you would like more information about the group and the opportunities to help, contact Kathy Zimmerman at (256)899-4011 or kivmyhrs@yahoo.com; Gwen Terrell at (256)364-0251 or email her at gwen@boon-link.net



ONE OF THE FAMILIES HELPED by Cowboys and Cops for Kids. The group provided groceries and toys for some 120 underprivileged families and 108 foster kids for Christmas 2011. Shown with the family are (L-R) Janet Burns, Gwen Terrell, Kathy Zimmerman, Wilma Fletcher and Jim Fletcher.



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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)	STUNNING MOUNTAIN HOME and Retreat Center. Features vaulted ceilings, private Hot Tub. Newly renovated Kitchen. 2 living areas, and Gas FP. Open loft above the 2nd living area and open kitchen design. Master bedrm has separate entrance to the deck, guest bedroom, and 2 more baths. 700 sq ft. 2 rm guest cottage and a glassed Greenhouse/artist studio. Many possibilities with this wonderful property with seasonal views. \$299,000 (20562)
					
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)	BROOMFIELD CREEK 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)	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)
					
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)

THE DRIVEWAY HAS BEEN STARTED to build your Mentone getaway!

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

An Article of Faith

Part 1 "Introductions"

By Kathy McMunn

Last week I had to go to Mentone Town Hall and while I was there I remembered to pick up a *Groundhog*. Ms. Fletcher, totally out of the blue, said something to the effect of, "I'll bet you could write some articles for the *Groundhog*." What in the world! Does she say that to everybody who goes in?

After reading "From the Editor" in the December issue I realized Ms. Fletcher was desperate to find help - in order to hang on to a very good thing - editor Charlotte Gentry! I've been telling everybody I talk to what a great job she is doing with the *Groundhog*, and thanks to her editorial, now I know why...She works HARD at it! Thomas Edison said

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work". Ms. Gentry is making a good paper an excellent one with her hard work!

I didn't give any kind of encouraging answer to Ms. Fletcher, but after I left I did think about it. What on earth could I write about? How many of you remember "The Mentone News," written by Ms. Ruby O'Rear for the *Times Journal*? Nah, I'm definitely not in Ms. Ruby's league...What about an article of faith? I tell my children that my love language is "questions" and I try to get them to let me ask them questions (they aren't interested) or I try to get them to ask ME questions (they aren't interested). Could I find some people in our community who would let me ask them questions about their faith?

As a wholehearted follower of Christ, I have wondered if the only reason I embrace the Christian Faith is because of where I live and how I was raised. What would I believe if I'd been born in Pakistan? Every single day I spend time in the Word and in prayer, in meditation and listening for the Spirit's voice. I wonder...how do other people in our community practice or exercise their faith?

We practice the piano or a sport, like basketball or golf, to get better at it. We exercise our bodies or our minds to grow in strength and build muscle. The principle of exercising/practicing faith is the same - to get better at it - to grow stronger in it. What kind of faith do other people have? In what, or in whom? Do some people actually have no faith? And, if not, why not? Is there not enough evidence for the existence of God in their minds? Why would I believe in an all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal, God while my relative or neighbor wouldn't? Does either having faith or having no faith make any difference in how we live our lives in time?

Do you like to listen in on other people's conversations? If I talk to other people about their faith, and write down their answers, either anonymously or giving them recognition if they are willing, would you like to read about our dialogue? Wouldn't it be fun to interview the Greatest Generation? Some Baby Boomers; Generation Xers; People in their 90's & 100's; 70's & 80's; 50's & 60's; 30's & 40's; 20's and under? Some male and some female; some Baptist and some Catholic; some Eastern Religion and some None Religion? Who are we in this community? What do we believe? I told Editor, Charlotte Gentry that I would commit to writing an article every month (For how long? Not sure.), and that we would call it "An Article of Faith". (Oh brother, what was I thinking?!!)

Next month will be some kind of interview. Who knows what it will be like...we'll see...time will tell.

See ya'll, Kat Mc



Tips for Beating the Winter Blues

by Ginny Zulker

Are you feeling a little blue since the holidays are over? It is common to feel a little down this time of year. As the days get shorter and the nights get longer, even the best of us can get a little down. Many people experience mild depression and low energy in the winter months. Here are a few tips to lift your spirits and before you know it, spring will be here.

1. Eat healthy food! We have all enjoyed the goodies of the holiday season and may have even put on a few pounds. Actually, having a poor diet can be a cause of depression. Stay away from comfort foods like carbs and sugars. They can make you feel worse. Dig out that cookbook and find a new recipe. Invite someone over to join you. You can still find fresh fruits and vegetables at your grocers.

2. Get Physical, even if you feel like going to bed and pulling the covers over your head. Get regular exercise. If the weather permits, go outside for a walk and not only are you getting that fresh air and sunshine, but staying active is a great way to get fit, manage stress, and keep the blues away. Call a friend to join you and it will be twice as beneficial. If the weather is too nasty, put on some music and dance in your living room. Exercise is a great way to beat depression. Exercise releases those 'feel good' chemicals in your body.

3. Get a good night's sleep. Six to eight hours of sleep each night is recommended. But don't sleep too much. Too much sleep can make you lethargic.

4. Be social. Every day is a good day to be grateful for family and friends, so make it a point to get together. Start a weekly card game or family game night. Go to your local church and sing with the choir.

5. Start a project. Dig out those old sewing patterns, clean up that workbench, or organize those old photos. Taking on a new project will keep your mind active and make those winter days pass more pleasantly.

6. Get a new haircut. Get a manicure. When you look good, you feel good.

7. When the weather is nasty, curl up with a good book. Make it better by starting a book club and trade with your friends.

8. Write. Sit down and put pen to paper. Write that poem or short story or better yet, write letters. The introduction of email has made the written letter almost extinct. It will lift your spirits and those of the receiver.

9. Act on your New Year's Resolutions. Don't worry if you don't succeed at first. Keep at it and you will.

10. Think positive. The sun will come out tomorrow and spring will be here before we know it. Plan a project for spring. Maybe you want to plant a garden, remodel your home, or go on a trip. Research your project and write or draw your plan. Having something to look forward to will keep those mental juices flowing.

If you feel your 'blues' may be more than mild, see your doctor.

(Ginny Zulker and her husband, Paul, own Rock Bluff Rentals in Mentone)



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DECEMBER MOON LAKE PTO MEETING AND STUDENT PROGRAM

PTO meetings at Moon Lake School always offer some sort of program featuring a class or sometimes two. Music, poetry, jokes, and more music are generally the fare for the evening's entertainment following the regular meeting.

December's program was entitled "Elfis and the Sleigh Riders" and it was a colorful, fun and musical evening. "Elfis" started the program off right away with a laughable snafu when the top broke off his guitar as he entered. Not to be deterred from his role as "The King," Elfis carried on with his lines and the rest of the cast, made up of the entire student body of Moon Lake and directed by Ms. Paula, sang and danced and kept the audience entertained.

There was a decent-sized crowd to watch the show and it was a fun way to get ready for the last few days of the school year before the holiday break.

During the meeting prior to the program, PTO President Pam Thomas encouraged students to continue collecting can tab tops as a fundraiser for the PTO. This is a simple way for folks to support the good works done by the Moon Lake PTO to benefit the students and the community at Mentone.

The next regular PTO meeting at Moon Lake is scheduled for 6:00 pm, Tuesday, February 14, 2012. Families of Moon Lake students as well as the community and folks interested in the ongoing excellence in education at Moon Lake are encouraged to attend.



Brain stones, clod busts and general drizzle... Random musings of an outhouse philosopher



If you're wonderin' where the title comes from, and some may or not, well, it goes back to one rainy morning when I was in High School and ridin' to school in a '58 Ford convertible piloted by one Sam Houston. No, not that Sam Houston,

he didn't have motorized transportation, much less a '58 Ford convertible. But, this Sam did meet Davy Crockett, down on the University of Alabama campus one afternoon as Sam was riding his motorcycle to class and Davy was thumbing for a ride...that's another story.

Now where did I put that thought? OH, anyway, I was on my usual roll spurtin' out weird observations of the way I saw things and Sam says, "Dang, Randy," I swear that's what he said, "Dang Randy, you need to write a book and call it 'Brain storms, cloud bursts, and general drizzle!'" So, I did. It only took me 50 years to start writin' this stuff down. The title, like me, has morphed a bit.

THANKS SAM! OH, by the way he now has an alphabet soup of letters after his name and is a "respected" educator.

And me? I have a part time job in the textile business, here I sit spinnin' yarn and figure most of it is probably outhouse quality.

Unlike politicians, preachers or prophets I don't really want anyone to join me. These are just reports on how the world looks from where I sit. I'm perfectly content out here all alone.

So, why is it that when I ask the folks for comment on the fresh stuff they all fall silent? I guess things don't really change after all.

My sole purpose in presenting this is for the reader to experience some relief in reading it.

>>>>

I recently exposed my endeavors to an old friend who said "You might have a creative streak going there." And I replied: "I only hope it's not like the one you're apt to find in your undies after a big scare, or trip to a new BarBQue place."

>>>>

We all come with an attitude/opinion dispenser maybe two.

>>>>

So, how come it is it that vacuum is the only word I know of with two u's in it. Even when I use it as an adjective I want to loose one of those u's. That would take all the power out of it I guess. It always sounded to me like it should have two c's. Maybe that speaks to the contents of my brain.

>>>>

Have you ever noticed that "stuff" seems to expand to fill the space available? After a while it seems to take on a life of its own; which kicks, screams and locks itself in the door frame if you try to remove it.

>>>>

Both genetics and ignorance are terrible diseases. Unfortunately, I don't think there is a treatment for, or anyone has ever recovered from genetics.

>>>>

I suppose you could say that I've always been a curious person.

>>>>

I hate being called out. Don't you hate being called out?

The other day I said something about being 5'9" tall to

PattyD and she said "You aren't 5-9 anything"

As with all best buds you should at least check the reality of what they state as their perception of reality so I did and said: "You're right I'm NOT 5' 9", I used to be... however, after checking with a standard measuring stick just now, I find that I am now 5' 8 3/4" from floor to top but it is still early in the day.... My apologies.

>>>>

It's a good job, to be a cat.

Cats are sculptors. Most folks don't seem to understand that and get upset when their cat wants to mold the corner of the living room couch into a fluffier shape. I think that the cat has a vision that she is trying to fulfill and is having trouble gathering up enough material. I must acknowledge, however, that the sculptures all seem to be quite abstract and I'm not sure I "get" many of them.

For instance, the screen on my front door is being transformed into something that looks like an armature for a sculpture that Henry Moore and Alexander Calder would have done in a collaboration of work performed only on Mondays.

>>>>

Some people read to get ideas. Somehow they just seem to fall on me. Yes, it puzzles me to. My current theory is that the clearest view comes from an uncluttered mind.

>>>>

It's not what you get from looking into someone's eyes, but what you get from them looking back.

>>>>

My constant prayer: Lord, take my hand And hold it over my mouth.

(Look for more contributions from the Outhouse Philosopher in upcoming issues.)

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MENTONE AREA HISTORY: THE CAPERTON ROAD

By James D. Fletcher

The Caperton Road (or Caperton Ferry Road) started in Stevenson, Alabama at the Tennessee River and came over Sand Mountain to Valley Head, Alabama, and then up over Lookout Mountain, through the Mentone area, then to Alpine, Georgia.

It is thought that it was used in the Cherokee Indian removal in 1838 to round up the Indians in the Lookout Mountain area and bring them to the stockade at Fort Payne and then be taken from there on to the Benge removal route to Oklahoma.

General McCook's 20th Corps (Union) left Stevenson and crossed the Tennessee River on the Caperton Ferry and crossed Sand Mountain with an estimated strength of between 20,000 and 40,000 troops arriving at Valley Head, September 3, 1863. The Union headquarters were made at the home of Colonel William O. Winston. The troops put up tents and camped in and about Winston and Allen Springs.

On the evening of September 9, 1863, while at Winston's place, General

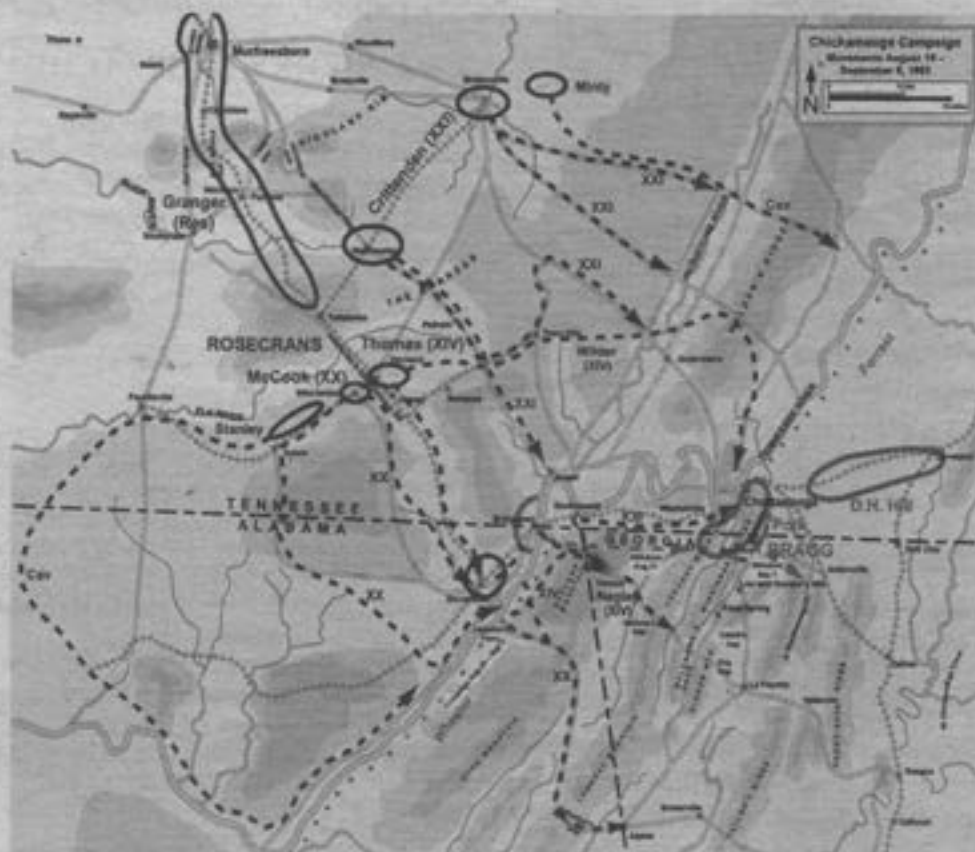
McCook was informed that General Bragg was retreating southward from Chattanooga, and he was ordered to move rapidly upon Summerville, Georgia to intercept Bragg's line of retreat and to attack his flank. However, the next day, after crossing Lookout Mountain, McCook learned that Bragg had not retreated far from Chattanooga and he was ordered to move to Chickamauga.

McCook desired to take a mountain road on Lookout Mountain to his destination, but felt that the route back through Valley Head was the only practical route. Taking this route delayed the arrival of his troops at Chickamauga a day. General Rosecrans later testified before a Congressional Committee that the "tardy arrival of McCook's Corps came near fatal to us."

After once again coming through Valley Head, General McCook's Army proceeded north through Lookout Valley to Rising Fawn and then up Lookout Mountain on the Stevens Gap road where they went through Davis' Crossroads and then on to Chickamauga where they rejoined the Union Army, but were soon defeated by the Confederate Army.

When Mentone was being made into a resort village, a more direct path was needed to Mentone, so a "Y" was put into the old Caperton Road about halfway up the mountain and this came out at the top of the mountain in the area of the Mentone Springs Hotel.

(James "Jim" Fletcher is a history buff, a "ham" radio enthusiast and the proud husband of Mentone Town Clerk, Wilma Fletcher. The Fletchers reside in Ider, AL.)



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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 editor@groundhog@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 was sent out in a newsletter by Rita Morel, a Realtor® in Huntsville, Alabama. It sounds like something yummy for "cold weather comfy" moments and I think I'll try it.

Frida writes: "Ever had a scone? I had, but I'd never made one before. I tried this new recipe and the family loved them. Try this great recipe for Cranberry & Pistachio Scones!"

I made these over the holidays and they were great. Rather than the usual scone shape, I used a heart shape to highlight the love of the holiday season, but, I guess, any shape will do. More like a biscuit than a cookie, you should keep them wrapped up to prevent drying, but otherwise, ENJOY!"

CRANBERRY & PISTACHIO SCONES

2 1/2 cups sifted, all-purpose flour
1/2 cup plus 2 Tablespoons sugar, divided
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup cold butter, cut into pieces
1 cup finely chopped dried cranberries
1/2 cup finely chopped salted pistachios
1/2 cup plus 3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream, divided

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper, set aside. In large bowl, combine flour, 1/2 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture until mixture is crumbly. add cranberries and pistachios, stirring mix well. add 1 cup plus 2 Tablespoons cream, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. (if mixture seems dry, add more cream, 1 Tablespoon at a time, until dough forms.)

On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to a 1/2 inch thickness. Using a 2 1/4 inch thickness round cutter, cut scones. Place scones on prepared baking sheets.

Brush tops of scones with remaining 1 Tablespoon cream, and sprinkle with remaining 2 Tablespoons sugar.

Bake until lightly browned, 14 to 16 minutes.

Cool on a rack for 5 minutes.

Enjoy!!



WHY DUST?

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To Paint a picture or Write a letter,
Bake a cake, Plant a seed,
Ponder the difference between Want and Need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,
With Rivers to fish and Mountains to climb,
Music to hear, and Books to read,
Friends to cherish and Life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the World's out there,
With the Sun in your eyes and the Wind in your hair.
A flutter of Snow, a shower of Rain,
This day will not come again!

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,
Old age will come and it's not kind.
And when you go and go you must,
You, yourself, will make more dust!

Remember, a house is not a home until
you can write, "I Love You" on the furniture!

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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OIL CAN HOUSE

By John Baty

The photo of the rather odd house which accompanies this writing was the home of the late Jim and Willie Isbell of Mentone, Alabama. Jim built the house himself and my understanding has it that he didn't own the land but was permitted to build and live there by whoever did possess the property.

When I was a youngster during WWII, my brother, Glenn Baty, and I were fishing in Little River at the Bell Rock and on our way home we passed another house where the Isbells lived located north of and across the road from Camp DeSoto. It was situated in a Jack pine thicket called the "Dorman Thicket" from the fact that a blacksmith named Dorman once lived there.

Glenn stopped for a drink of water. There was no one at home and the doors having no locks, Glenn went on in and located the water bucket. He and Jim had known each other for a long while and I guess Glenn thought Jim wouldn't mind. That was the only time I saw the house at the Dorman Thicket.

The story of Jim Isbell, in brief, as Glenn told me, had Jim arriving in Chattanooga, Tennessee by train, working as a caretaker of a carload of mules. Someone from Mentone, one of the older Blalocks I think, was instrumental in getting Jim Isbell to come to Mentone to live and work. He came and stayed, spending the remainder of his life here.

Jim was married twice and is buried at Little River Cemetery with his last wife Willie.

Like most rural residents of this area in the first half of the century recently passed, Jim was poor financially. He was unfortunate in being afflicted with *cheiloschisis* (the older term was "harelip") which distorted both his features and speech. Some people may have avoided him for that reason.

In his older days when I knew him, Jim owned a two-wheeled, wheelbarrow-type cart which he built using bicycle wheels and other materials. He and his wife Willie would push the cart sometimes traveling great distances, camping wherever night found them.

Jim collected old cans—quart motor oil cans then made of metal—along the roadside or wherever he found them. Back home, he "opened" the cans, discarded the ends and used the straightened sheet metal for siding his house. If you look closely at the photograph, you will see he also used old, discarded automobile license plates. The photo was snapped in 1960 by my future wife, Mary Sue, when we were dating and happened to pass that way.

Not many years ago, I happened to read the book *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac, 1959, and imagined a possible similarity in some of his characters and the lifestyle of Jim Isbell.

Was it possible that this wandering man, Isbell, was some manner of prelude to the restless characters that changed the face of America in the '60s?



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Diary of a Chicken Lady

Part 8
By Kristen Emory



I would not tell this story if there was not a witness to my actions other than my family. I was busted by none

other than Hershel Pruitt (and probably the rest of his family) watching me from Evelyn Ruth's back window. Yes, I was blow-drying my favorite chicken's tail feathers. Why you ask? Well, let's start from the beginning. Saddler and I were cleaning the chicken coop on New Year's Day, 2012. We have had so much rain that we have not been able to move the "moveable chicken coop." I had put a lot of straw in the coop to help with the water. Today was the day that I was going to beg Tom to help me move the girls to dry land. Their poor feet have been shriveled and pink for long enough. Saddler, with the use of a pitchfork, removed all the wet straw and I cleaned out the poop. As the day went on, everyone in my family asked, "Where did we get a pitch fork?" The answer, "I have had that pitch fork for about three years." Obviously, I am the only person who uses it.

I digress. Back to the story. In the process of cleaning and socializing, Saddler and I noticed that Favorite Chicken, which never leaves my side, was having a slight tail feather issue. I don't know the best way to say this, so I'm just going to put it out there. She had a dingle berry (poop stuck to her tail feathers). I knew that this was not good and was going to require gloving up. It has been a while since last I needed to glove up; I was not looking forward to it.

Saddler and I went on to other things. We started to prepare the coop to be moved and had it all ready except for one wheel that we could not get in place. I sent Saddler to coerce her dad for his help. This would be no easy task getting him away from the football game. Knowing that my girls were not happy, Tom came without fuss. (I can-

not confirm, but I think it may have been halftime.)

With the use of the tractor, boards, shovel, hoe, pitchfork and three people, we were successful in moving the coop to higher ground. I am sure there is no less effort in moving a crane at ground zero than moving the coop in our soggy, muddy yard! To those who have moveable coops, take them to higher ground before the rains set in!

The coop is moved. Now, what to do with the dried poop in Favorite Chicken's tail feathers? I know this is not good. I faintly recall it from my book. I will fetch the book and have a conference with Jim, my dad, my official volunteer partner in this chicken circus. While telling dad about Favorite Chicken's issue, my mother, Joan (mind you, who is firm in her stance of egg-only involvement with chickens), says, "soak her bottom in warm water." Simple yet effective, I can do that, no problem.

I get the warm bath ready. Call Favorite Chicken. Stick her backside in the warm water. We, the chicken and I, sit and wait. Thank goodness warm water soothes chickens; Cagney/Favorite Chicken was very cooperative.

Now, not so out of the ordinary, I am covered in mud, chicken poop, and water. I notice it has turned real cold outside. Surely she has been in the water long enough. I pull her out and what I see is indescribable. Her tail feathers are wet and all stuck together, the poop is still dangling and her vent is red.

Oh my goodness. What am I going to do? I just know she has a prolapsed cloaca. The cloaca is where the egg comes down and then out the vent. I must confess, dad gave me a subscription to Backyard Poultry for Christmas and there was a whole article on prolapsed cloaca and it wasn't pretty. It kind of burned in my brain; quite possibly I may have dreamed about it! From the article I knew that death or months of daily rehab, that could possibly not work, was in our future.

In a panic, I run into the house and show Tom the chicken, forgetting that "he does not do chickens." He replies, "looks like her butt is wet, what are you doing to that chicken?"

I call Jim, and he comes over right away. (What else would he be doing he is retired after all, and it's only his birthday!) We glove up! Thank good-

ness he lets me hold the chicken while he pulls the dried poop off and investigates the area. Then we inspect a healthy chicken butt for comparison.

Our diagnosis: no prolapsed cloaca but some kind of feather issue. She is missing all the soft feathers around her vent. Why? I have no idea. We decide more research is necessary. Meanwhile, we will keep her separated from the other chickens and, of course, when in doubt, apply some Sevin Dust.

SO...you can't apply Sevin Dust to a wet chicken butt! Thus, like any other sound-minded chicken lover I got out the blow dryer and did what had to be done. In the privacy of my back yard, I began drying Favorite Chicken's tail feathers. In the middle of this process I said to myself, "I sure am glad no one can see this!"

No sooner had that thought left my head than I saw Hershel Pruitt walk around the side of Evelyn Graves' house. Busted! Busted again doing something, shall we say, stupid. ??

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

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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 b/fast bar and stainless appliances. MBR has private deck, fireplace and wood walls and ceilings. Outside enjoy the stacked rock FP, bbq grill, patio and decks. Come see this unbelievable home today! \$589,000 (15736)



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MENTONE... You will be amazed at the Magnificent Views to be enjoyed from this 3BR/2BA Custom Log Cabin. Ceiling Fans throughout. Open Dining/Kitchen with all appliances, Laundry area w/washer and dryer to remain. This home offers so much more, call for details. \$329,900. (18235)



FEELS SO RIGHT! 3BR/2BA Cabin offering spacious floor plan, attic storage, soaring ceilings, Main-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, lily pond, Ambiance with 5 Star six burner gas range... Ambiance/quality/privacy/dramatic flair. REDUCED \$285,500 (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 3rd Bedroom), 2BA, CH/A and a detached guest cottage. You can't let this one get away. \$169,900 (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 (21589)

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Out & About - MENTONE AREA

Scenes from MAPA's
Christmas party and other
goings on around Mentone
during the holidays.



MY DEAR CHILD...

(Author Unknown)

In the Autumn of my life, please try to understand and be patient with me, if, due to my declining vision, I break a plate or spill some soup on the table. Please don't berate me. Old people easily get hurt. Self pity breaks me.

When I can hardly hear and can't understand a word you say, please don't call me "deaf," please. Simply repeat it or write it down. I'm sorry, my child, I'm so old.

When I could hardly stand up because my knees are weak, please help me up, just like what I did when you were learning to stand up and walk.

Be patient with me, my child, if I sound like a broken record. Just listen and don't laugh at me. Do you remember when you were young? When you wanted a balloon, you would ask for it the whole day through 'til you finally had it. I was so patient with your childish ways then...and listening to, "why, why, why."

I'm sorry if I smell like an old coffin. I guess,

old people smell the same. Don't force me to take a bath, please. My body is fragile. I easily get sick with a sudden change of temperature. Don't abhor or despise me. Do you remember when you were young? I even playfully chased you down under the bed when you didn't want to take a bath.

Be patient with me if I am often cranky. That's probably because of my old age. When you grow old, you'll understand. Do you remember your temper tantrums when you were young?

Can I have a piece of your time, please? I just want to have a little conversation with you. It feels so lonely: alone at home the whole day with no one to talk with. I know you're busy with your work;

but I long for your presence, too, to talk and be with; well, you can pretend to like my stories. Do you remember when you were a child? I would look at your eyes and patiently listen to your stories about your teddy bear, your crushes and little adventures...and read the same bedtime stories over and over!

And when the time comes that I could not get up anymore, pinned on the cursed bed of suffering, you may get reluctant and tired of taking care of me. Who knew there would be such a role reversal?

Forgive me if I pee or defecate on my bed due to incontinence. There were times when you were an older toddler that changing your smelly diaper was almost more than I could take, but I did it with love!

Please, bear with me at the last moment of my life. Anyway, I won't stay much longer. On my deathbed, please hold my hand and make me strong in facing the inevitable death. And please don't worry, for when I come face to face with our Creator, I will whisper and beg him to bless you, for you've been a loving child.

Thank you for taking care of us.

Love,

Your Mom and Dad

(This article was submitted to The Groundhog. It has been going around via email for years, but its message is timeless and makes us stop and think.)

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(Excerpted from *Mentone: A History*, by Zora Strayhorn)

A Description of the Mountain

Alabama lies between 84 degrees 51' and 88 degrees 28' 03" west longitude and 30 degrees 13' and 35" north latitude; it is about halfway between New York and Mexico, near the southern end of the North Temperature Zone which puts Alabama in a semitropical zone. The growing season in North Alabama is measured at Valley Head and is 198 days. Valley Head has the dubious distinction of registering the coolest spot in the state. The annual average temperature in North Alabama is 60 degrees F. The yearly average of rainfall for the whole state is 53 inches, northeastern section 55 inches.

Lookout Mountain has its own air conditioning winds. Winds are usually the friends of mankind but turn into enemies when they sweep through Alabama in the form of tornadoes or hurricanes. Mentone has not been known to have had many violent storms.

Lookout Mountain where Mentone is located on the southern end of the Appalachians is a long, narrow mountain. Three states own a portion of Lookout: Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. The northern tip, in Tennessee, is a long, narrow plateau. The Indians named it "Chatanuga Mountain," the Muskogean Indian word meaning "rock coming to a point." The widest part of Lookout is the nine miles between Cloudland, Georgia, and Mentone, Alabama.

On a fairly clear day looking toward the west from the brow at Mentone, one sees low-lying hills, softly contoured, and a wide valley below. The shades of color of the trees range from chartreuse to jade green. Two-thirds of Alabama is in forests. Below is Wills Valley that starts north around Trenton, Georgia, and extends south for about seventy miles.

To understand and appreciate the beauty and good life of present-day Mentone, Alabama, one must dip into the mysterious geological past.

During the Cambrian period of the Paleozoic Geological Era or about 600 million years ago, there was a vast tropical sea covering portions of this area as evidenced by marine life trapped before ridges were elevated. Hundreds of millions of years later during the period known as the Carboniferous period, named for the "fossil fuels," petroleum, coal, and natural gas developed as the result of the reptiles, sharks and amphibians, and large marine animals falling and dying in the swamps, as did numerous scale trees and seed ferns. At this time sedimentary rocks were laid down, such as sandstone, limestone, shale, coal, and conglomerates under water. There is little evidence of volcanic action or lava flow.

At the end of the Paleozoic era, mountain folding in eastern North America produced the heights which constitute today's Appalachians.

One of the five types of rocks in Lookout Mountain is Devonian black shale. During the Devonian period, more than 400 million years ago, amphibians, ammonites, and fish were abundant. On top of the Devonian black shale is a big block of Fort Payne chert. It is called Fort Payne chert because it is found in good form in our nearby city. On top of that is a huge block of Floyd shale, named for Floyd County, Georgia. Next is Bangor limestone. The three-named rocks: Devonian black shale, Fort Payne chert, and Bangor limestone are called subcarboniferous, or Mississippian measure. Millions of years passed between

the formation of these three layers. Then came a heavy stratum of Lookout sandstone. Walden's sandstone, after Walden's ridge, caps the rocks. The last two layers are called Coal or Pennsylvanian measure.

Little River with its spring-fed river beginning at Head River, Georgia, flows peacefully through Mentone, Alabama, and is the only known river in this hemisphere to flow along the top of a mountain. It meanders along the high plateau of the eighty-three mile-long narrow Lookout Mountain, plunging over a precipice one-hundred feet to form DeSoto Falls, in DeSoto State Park, about three miles from downtown Mentone. There are about fifteen falls in the Park, but DeSoto Falls is the most famous. DeSoto Falls was originally called Indian Falls as recorded by Federal troops in September, 1863, and later changed to DeSoto Falls by Sarah Force O'Rear. The river flows through a rock-cliffed gorge, Little River Canyon, and merges with the Coosa River, one of the three main river systems of the state.

The mountain is considered by paleologists (from the Latin root word "spelaeum," cave) to be one of the richest regions for caves in the world. Where the overlapping of the crust of the earth occurred during the time the mountains were uplifted, faults formed. At the ground level of the mountain is several hundred feet of limestone. As water seeped into the faults, the limestone was gradually dissolved by the carbonic acid found in weak solutions in rain water. Huge caverns and caves were carved out as the water made its way through the lime substrate, leaving only ledges of rock that were resistant to erosion. There are miles of winding passageways, caves, caverns, pools of water, waterfalls, and underground streams running the entire length of Lookout Mountain.

Below the brow of Mentone in Valley Head is a large cave that was supplied at one time with emergency rations by the Civil Defense for use in the event of a disaster.

The Southern Appalachians have a rich deciduous forest that is varied. Among trees found to be native to this area are ashes, birches, cherries, dogwoods, elms, gums, hawthorns, hickories, hollies, lindens, locusts, magnolias, maples, mulberries, oaks, pines, plums, poplars, black-walnuts, redbuds, sourwood, sassafras, and willows.

Shrubs found natively around Mentone include azaleas, rhododendrons, blueberries, thorns, grapes, honeysuckles, huckleberries, hydrangeas, ivies, laurels, roses, sumacs, and viburnums.

At the Rhododendron Garden Club of Mentone in May, 1984, Margaret Persons was the guest speaker, a past president of the Blanche Dean Chapter of the Alabama Wildflower Society. She stated that there are some 3,000 species of wildflowers in the Southeast. About 1,000 of these are in northeastern Alabama.

In this area are found the natural crocus, shad bush, spring beauty, false anemone, trailing arbutus, Dutchman's breeches, foam flower, shooting star, trout lily, dog-toothed violet, bloodroot, May apple, the trilliums, ferns, Virginia blue-bells, euonymus, chickweed and yellow jasmine.

Also found here are the wild geranium, iris, jack-in-the-pulpit, trumpet honeysuckle, the woodbines (which Ruby O'Rear said are yellow on the brow because of the lime and pink farther away), Indian pipes, pipsissewa, mountain laurel, azaleas, rhododendron, tulip poplar, oak leaf hydrangeas, spider lily, and lady slipper. A carnivorous plant found on Little River in the vicinity of DeSoto Park is the pitcher plant.

When the Europeans first arrived here, the Indians were

growing and using such vegetables and fruits as hickory nuts, pecans, chestnuts, walnuts, strawberries, huckleberries, blackberries, peaches, cherries, muscadines, grapes, potatoes, pumpkins, peas, beans, squash, tomatoes, okra, and corn.

In the Mentone, Alabama area, fishing is a popular sport in the ponds, creeks, and rivers. Some of the fresh water fish caught are bluegill and shellcracker brim, large-mouthed bass, crappies, and perch. Catfish are found in places that have been stocked.

Wildlife found in the Mentone vicinity includes deer, quail, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, fox, raccoon, opossum, and mourning dove.

In 1982, when John Paul Verdon was twelve years old, he caught a four-and-one-half-pound large-mouthed bass in a pond off Alabama Highway 117 on property formerly owned by Jimmy Jones. John Paul's grandmother, Mrs. R. C. Gilbreath, had it mounted for his wall.

Sammy Cash, Mentone's fire chief, before he retired from the Forest Service in the late 1970s, had a call from a woman in Valley Head; she was frantic: "Have you ever killed a bear?" she asked Sammy. "One just went through my yard."

"No," Sammy replied, "but I can try."

When he arrived in Valley Head, children in a black church were wild with excitement as the black bear put its paws up on the window frame. Sammy saw its tracks, but didn't see the bear.

In 1977 Paul Leldon Johnson of Cove Road was returning home from work on Highway 157 about six or seven miles from Mentone. He thought he saw a black object that might be a 50-gallon drum; it moved. Following him was a friend from Sand Mountain who saw the bear. It was a black bear because it walked off on its four paws. Returning to the scene, both men said it had disappeared into the woods.

In 1981 T. F. (Mack) Blalock also of Cove Road, one evening about 2 p.m. looked across his field and thought that his neighbor had acquired a black calf, until it started toward him; the bear lumbered off into the woods nearby. Mack Blalock shot a red fox by his barn a couple of years ago and sold it to someone who wanted the skin. Stanley Brown was exploring an old cave called the Council Cave at DeSoto Falls about 4:30 in the evening on October 9, 1984. He looked up and saw a magnificent red fox on the cliffs. It ran off in the direction of Little River.

In the 1940s the Tri-State Fox-Hunter's Convention met at the Mineral Springs Hotel, and after an all night of hunting, dogs yapping, they would have breakfast at early daylight at the Hitching Post.

The reason there is little fox-hunting now on Lookout is because the dogs spot a deer and follow it for miles, sometimes into the North Georgia woods, with the hunter unable to retrieve his dogs. There is still fox-hunting on Sand Mountain.

J. R. Bain, Grandpa Bain's oldest son, recalls the bonfires in the woods while hunting with his family and friends as a child, 'possum, skunk, and 'coons. J. R. was a young boy fishing at the site of Lake Lahusage the day the dam broke because of the heavy rains; the water of the lake went down dramatically.

(Zora Strayhorn's book has been reprinted and is available from MAPA. See pg 23 for ordering information)

CHRISTMAS ON THE MOUNTAIN

The Mentone Springs Hotel was filled with holiday cheer on Saturday December 3, 2011, for the second annual "Christmas on the Mountain" event held by One World Adventure Company. Owners Jim and Darlene Rotch donated use of The Mentone Springs Hotel for the event. Additional Corporate Sponsors for the event were Vulcraft/Nucor and Lee Energy Solutions.

Festive holiday Jazz music was performed by the Waters/Felts trio. A sit-down holiday dinner was prepared for over 80 guests and served by Nessa's Catering.

Local Business owners and individuals from Mentone, Fort Payne, Collinsville and Gadsden donated over 50 items to the Silent Auction, raising \$500 for One World's camp scholarship fund.

One World directors Billy and Angie Shugart thanked all of the many volunteers for a successful year and talked about 2012 programs and goals. The Shugarts shared One World's major goal for the near future which is to build a community center in Mentone that will serve as a multi-functional building for Mentone and Dekalb County with classrooms, offices and residential housing. Most importantly the center will serve as a severe weather shelter, approved by FEMA and the Dekalb County EMA.

The Outdoor Education Center will serve as One World's camp facility for their local youth camps and family programs, and will have the capacity to expand. Ground-breaking is planned within 6 months, with some phases of the center being available by Winter 2012.

Angie Shugart stated she felt the Christmas party fundraiser was a great success and it was fulfilling for her to see so many from the surrounding communities in attendance showing their support.

"One World Adventure Company would like to thank everyone in the Mentone and Valley Head communities for supporting our efforts to provide quality outdoor programs to the local youth and families. We will continue to honor our commitment to this community by enriching the lives of everyone that wants to experience the great outdoors," Angie said.

(For more information about One World Adventure Company, visit www.facebook.com/pages/One-World-Adventure-Company or call (256) 634-8370)



ONE WORLD
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Little River Canyon National Preserve Black Bear Dies in Accident

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NEWS RELEASE

A black bear died in a highway accident at Little River Canyon National Preserve on the night of December 19, 2011. The accident was reported about 10 PM. Preliminary information is that the bear was struck by a Ford Mustang on Highway 35 south of the Little River Bridge. Adamsburg Fire Department was dispatched to the scene. The occupants of the car did not report any injuries.

The bear was a male weighing approximately 230 pounds. Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources staff have taken the bear for studies. They will be studying it to find out more about the animal's health and age. Wildlife Biologist Tracy Nelson said "It appeared to be a very healthy fat bear. The bear would probably have already dened up by now if we would have had the normal cold winter weather".

Black bears have occasionally been spotted in and near the park. The park has not had any problems with bear encounters. Bears from the park seem to be quite reclusive and not acculturated to human food or contact.

For more information, call the park office at (256)845-9605.

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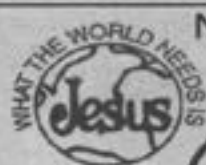
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MASSAGE THERAPY

Kerry Breithaupt LMT
National Instructor AL#456

Happy New Year! It's that time of year when we make a quick pitstop to see if we're on the best path in life to take us to our goals.

When you review your goals this New Year and re-evaluate your plans, no doubt your health will be one of the things you consider. While there are many elements involved in building and maintaining good health, one thing that seems to support nearly every aspect of health is regular massage.

Like most things in life, consistency pays noticeable dividends when it comes to massage and your health. When you are able to commit to a regular schedule for your massage sessions, over time you should notice several benefits—your body functions better overall, you have more energy and a pleasant mental outlook.

As massage has been shown to boost the immune system, you may have fewer sick days, and long-term, those regular massages just might help you fend off more dangerous diseases and add more quality years to your life.

Remember to put your health high on your list and support your health with massage. See you soon!

Simple Health Strategies Can Add a Decade or More to Your Lifespan

Massage therapists know that self-care is essential to a ... healthy life—and new research shows how simple changes can add up to more years of life. According to a press release from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, these seven strategies could potentially add 10 years or more to your life:

1. Get active. Inactivity can shave almost four years off a person's expected lifespan. People who are physically inactive are twice as likely to be at risk for heart disease or stroke.

2. Know and control your cholesterol levels. High blood cholesterol can lead to the build up of fatty deposits in your arteries, increasing your risk for heart disease and stroke.

3. Follow a healthy diet. Healthy eating is one of the most important things you can do to improve your health – yet many people don't meet the healthy eating recommendations.

4. Know and control your blood pressure. High blood pressure is often called a silent killer because it has no warning signs or symptoms. By knowing and controlling your blood pressure, you can cut your risk of stroke by up to 40 per cent and the risk of heart attack by up to 25 per cent.

5. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Many Americans are either overweight or obese, major risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Being obese can reduce your life span by almost four years.

6. Manage diabetes. Diabetes increases the risk of high blood pressure, atherosclerosis (narrowing of the arteries), coronary artery disease, and stroke, particularly if your blood sugar levels are poorly controlled.

7. Be tobacco free. As soon as you become smoke-free, your risk of heart disease and stroke begins to decrease. After 15 years, your risk will be nearly that of a non-smoker.

Source: massagemag.com

Massage Therapy Lowers Blood Pressure in Pre-Hypertensive Women

Approximately one in every three Americans, or 31.3 percent, has high blood pressure, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, and high blood pressure is a risk factor for stroke, congestive heart failure, heart disease and kidney disease.

In new research, massage therapy resulted in significantly lowered systolic and diastolic blood pressure in comparison with a control group, according to an abstract published on www.pubmed.gov.

The investigators set out to evaluate the effect of Swedish massage to the face, neck, shoulders and chest on blood pressure of the women with pre-hypertension, according to the abstract.

This was a single-blind clinical trial study, the abstract noted, and added: "Fifty pre-hypertensive women selected by simple random sampling [were] divided into control and test groups. The test group (25 patients) received Swedish massage 10-15 min., three times a week for 10 sessions and the control group (25 patients) also were relaxed ...[and received] no massage. Their [blood pressure] was measured before and after each session."

The investigators noted, "Findings of the study indicated that massage therapy was a safe, effective, applicable and cost-effective intervention in controlling [blood pressure] of the prehypertension women ..."

"The effect of massage therapy on blood pressure of women with pre-hypertension" was published in the Iranian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Research (2011 Winter;16(1):61-70.) It was conducted by investigators with the Department of Internal Surgery, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, in Isfahan, Iran.

Source: massagemag.com

How chairs cause cancer —

Sitting still for long stretches of time—at work, in the car, or at home—increases your cancer risk, even if you exercise regularly, WebMD.com reports. New research shows that as many as 49,000 cases of breast cancer and 43,000 cases of colon cancer could be prevented in the U.S. each year if people simply stood up more often. "It seems highly likely that the longer you sit, the higher your risk," says Neville Owen, a researcher at Australia's Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, but "even breaks as short as one minute" can lower it. The research supports a previous 14-year study that found that six hours of sitting a day increased a woman's odds of dying in that period by 37 percent, and a man's by 18 percent, compared with people who sat for half that time. Adults today are immobile for more than nine hours a day on average. Even if you hit the gym, the American Institute of Cancer Research now says, it's crucial that you get up and move at least once an hour—by pacing during phone calls, visiting the water cooler, or going to talk to a colleague in person, instead of sending an email.

(Look for future installments on the benefits of massage.)

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Mentone Alabama: A History

By Zora Shay Strayhorn

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A Stitch in Time

By Ellen Harris

Since most of you don't know me, let me start with an introduction. I don't live in the Mentone area but I am an easy drive away in Huntsville, AL. I am a long-time visitor to Mentone and an enthusiastic subscriber to "The Groundhog". I do have a connection to this area since Mentone Town Clerk, Wilma Fletcher, is my sister-in-law. I enjoy sharing my quilting hobby and would like to write more articles on this subject if there is any interest among "The Groundhog" readers.

What comes to mind when you think of the word "quilter"? After all, didn't everyone's grandmother quilt? Do you imagine a group of little old ladies huddled around a quilting frame exchanging grandchildren stories? Do you envision a group of Amish women continuing a traditional craft? Quilters come in a variety of ages and circumstances and cannot be lumped into stereotypes. And for those of you who think that quilters are stodgy old ladies, that is not the case. Some quilters are not ladies at all. I don't mean to question the character of quilters. All of the ones I know are people of strong moral fiber. It's just that a minority of quilters are men and some of them are quite skilled with needle and thread.

It is also incorrect to refer to quilters as "old". In order to appreciate quilting, it is necessary to reach a level of maturity that permits an appreciation of traditional crafts, but that does not bestow senior citizen status on the practitioners of this art.

Why engage in quilting anyway? Don't these people know that instead of spending dozens of hours manufacturing bed coverings they can buy a blanket at a discount store for only a few dollars? That is like asking if horseback riders are aware of the invention of the automobile. Of course anyone can buy a blanket at Wal-Mart, but it just isn't the same thing. Quilters are carrying on a tradition and expressing their creativity. It is the baby boomers who have rescued the quilting craft when it was on the decline and I expect the interest to only increase.

You can also buy a quilt at discount store but the fabric pieces will not match up and the stitches will be uneven. Those quilts were made quickly by people who were manufacturing an item for sale. Both the motivation and outcome are very different from a skilled quilter who takes pride in a quality product.

Quilters come in two basic flavors - those who hand quilt and those who machine quilt. Given that machine quilting is faster, more efficient, and more consistent, why would anyone hand quilt? An explanation I like to use is that the difference between machine quilting and hand quilting is the difference between a photograph and a painting. One is more precise; the other is more artistic.

One excellent example of precise stitching that I have seen is among the Amish in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area. Only a trained eye can distinguish between the handiwork of the best of the Amish quilters and a quilt sewn by machine.

What should you look for in a good quilt? The beauty of a quilt is in the eye of the beholder, but there are some basics on which we all agree. The fabric colors should compliment each other. The fabric pieces should fit evenly. The stitches should be small and even. In the quilting world, the smaller the stitches the better.

Quilting is also a spiritual activity. In the book of Jeremiah, God instructed the Hebrew people to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16, KJV). It is well known among Bible scholars that this is a reference to the therapeutic value of quilting. Well, ok, I just made that up but the point is that quilting is a relaxing hobby that results in not only a quilt but also peace of mind for the quilter that cannot be acquired from watching daytime TV.

Only someone who appreciates the many hours that are required to make a quilt can understand why the best of them sell for hundreds of dollars. The best quilts are not bed coverings but rather works of art to be admired and appreciated. That is why quilt shows have gloves available to prevent the uniformed from touching the quilts with bare hands and soiling the fabric. Quilters today quilt to beautify their homes and celebrate special occasions. They make quilts for special family members and friends. Should you be the recipient of one of these works of arts, the quilter will be thinking when visiting in your home: "Wonder where the quilt is?"

