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Volume 40, No. 6

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

June 2021

A Fond Farewell to Moon Lake Elementary School 1911–2021 by Kelly Leavitt



Moon Lake School, drawn by Alice Pettyjohn and painted with the assistance of MLS students.

May 26 truly marked the end of an era in Mentone's history, when Moon Lake Elementary School marked its final day of operation. Ordered to close in February by the DeKalb County Board of Operation, the school has been consolidated with Valley Head School.

For 110 years, Moon Lake has educated our community's children, and through the years many generations of families have enjoyed what many call "the best years of their lives."

Founded in 1911 on land donated by Ed Mason (the son of John Mason, the founder of the Town of Mentone), the school building was originally two stories, with lower grades on the bottom floor and upper grades on the top floor. Students were enrolled in grades one through nine. The school's first teacher was Miss Lizzie Mason. Principals in the original building included Chester Alle, Ernest Shigley, Pearl Young, Mr. Davis, Maude Brown, Mrs. Stewart, Foye Doherty, Ben Price, and W.B. Smith.

(continued on page 5)

Summer Concert Series Returns to Mentone

Black Sedan Band Opens LRAC's 2021 Summer Concert Series

by Anne McLeod

The Little River Arts Council's Music for the People Summer Concert Series kicks off on Saturday, June 26, from 7–10 p.m., with Black Sedan Band out of Birmingham. Their classic rock covers will get listeners up and dancing. The band's rhythm section has been called "second to none" and their soulful vocals will take you back to your jukebox days.

Tom Petty, Elvis, Ben E. King, Doobie Brothers, and Eagles fans can expect to hear some favorite songs but the band says, "We don't cover the same overplayed songs every other band plays (unless you request them). We are the ultimate party band because



we play the music YOU want to hear. We guarantee a fun evening of dancing and listening to great music." Black Sedan Band is composed of six very talented and professional musicians: Lead Vocals—Chris Todd; Lead Guitar—Vic Atherton; Keyboards—Barry Key;

Saxophone/Flute—Ken Bonham; Bass Guitar—John Hard; Drums—Don Hecklinski.

The Linger Longer Pavilion is directly behind the Mentone Inn at the corner of Highway 117 and County Road 89. Concerts are free, family-friendly, and open to the public. Little River Arts Council will offer free grab-and-go art activity bags for kids.



The Fontastic Foods truck will be set up on site with delicious gourmet sandwiches. Some chairs will be available or you can bring your own chair or a blanket for a musical evening under the stars.



(continued on page 11)



THE GROUNDHOG

Published monthly by the
Mentone Area Preservation Association

MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 38 years.

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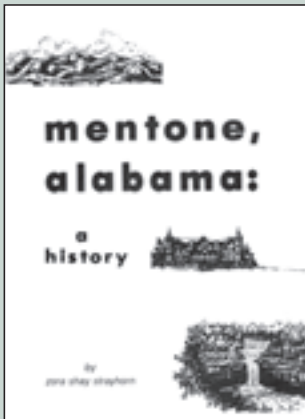
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The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints or policies of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice

Do you have a story idea?
We welcome contributions!
Email groundhognews@yahoo.com



Learn about the History of Mentone
Zora Strayhorn's book, *Mentone, Alabama: A History*, is for sale at Mentone Market. \$15; proceeds benefit MAPA.

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond



More normal summer is approaching—the campers are coming! With the opening of the camps, our second homeowners arriving, people renting cabins, and staying in the B&Bs, pedestrian and bike traffic will be on the increase around town. Please be aware and “share the road.”

According to Seth Burkett at ALDOT, AL 117 should reopen sometime during the week after

Memorial Day. After the reopening there will some lane closures from time to time through the middle of July until the project is complete. Any official releases from ALDOT concerning the reopening of AL 117 will be posted online.

We would like to thank our Mentone officers and the Alabama State Troopers for their time and effort in controlling the 18-wheeler traffic.



Letter from the Editor

I would like to take this opportunity to give a special shout-out to Sarah Wilcox. As executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF), she has consistently gone above and beyond to serve both Mentone’s children and its seniors. This has been an especially challenging time for her, with the closing of the school she is so dedicated to, but she continues to greet each day with a cheerful attitude, and always a smile. I have full confidence that she will determine a way to continue to meet the needs of Mentone’s families.

MAPA needs your help! The board of directors is committed to holding Colorfest

this year, but needs to fill two critical positions—a Festival Organizer and Festival Vendor Coordinator. If you have an interest in working hard but making a difference, this is a great opportunity. Please see page 3 for more information.

I’d also like to remind everyone that with the growing population of black bears in our area, it is crucial that we each help to “keep them wild.” Bears will seek any available food sources, so please do not make it too easy for them—do not feed wildlife, keep your trash secure, grills clean, etc. Remember, the goal is to *not* see a bear!

Have a happy June! —Kelly



MAPA News by L.C. Moon

BE A PART OF MENTONE'S FESTIVAL TEAM!

The Mentone Area Preservation Association is excited about the prospects of the upcoming festivals and events now that we are free to schedule without as much concern of social distancing. It takes a village to make the magic happen in any town and we definitely have some magic in Mentone to pool from. Please reach out if you are interested in helping keep the magic of the festivals thriving for all to enjoy. Sharon Habin has done a tremendous job over the years and we love and commend her. She is willing and ready to help a team carry the torch she has been carrying largely herself, though with the help of the MAPA board and volunteers. Please reach out to volunteer or help lead the coordination.

The MAPA board had a lovely meeting at Brow Park on Monday, May 10. The board is starting to look at some new grant requests to help support the Mentone community. The board also voted to beautify the Mentone area more, starting with planting flowers around the engraved rock Mentone sign at the top of the gap leading to DeSoto Falls. This beautiful sign was provided by the Little River Arts Council and MAPA hopes to continue to beautify their efforts. Look forward to the beauty of 2021. Blessings, and enjoy the magic of Mentone.

L.C. Moon is the parliamentarian of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.



MAPA Festival Volunteer Opportunities

MAPA is hopeful that we'll be able to host Colorfest 2021 on the weekend of October 16 and 17. (We will make that decision by late June.) In November 2020, Festival Organizer Sharon Habin stepped down from that position and became our Event Organizer. She will continue to coordinate our charity golf tournaments, the Miss Rhododendron Pageant, and a possible charity run.

We are now looking for volunteers to fill two important positions: the Festival Organizer and Festival Vendor Coordinator. Although a financial stipend is provided, these are essentially volunteer positions with many duties, some of which include: working with Mailchimp, Google Docs and Sheets; communicating with many people by email, phone, and Facebook; and working

with volunteers and vendors. Preparation for Colorfest would start in June, so as soon as these positions are filled, training can begin. Sharon will help with this process, sharing her experience over the last several years. She and MAPA Treasurer Beverly Haynes have updated a comprehensive manual that covers all aspect of the festivals; this will be a very useful document for the new Organizer and Coordinator. Organizing festivals is a lot of work. It's also a highly rewarding experience to see the beauty of how all the people and groups interweave together to create the tapestry of the festivals!

If you'd like to know more about the Festival Organizer and Festival Vendor Coordinator positions, please email sharonhmapa@gmail.com as soon as possible.

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MAPA was organized in 1982. It is chartered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

LAMAR BRAY
recently retired
from the Mentone
Police Department.
Mayor Hammond
presented him with
a Key to the Town.

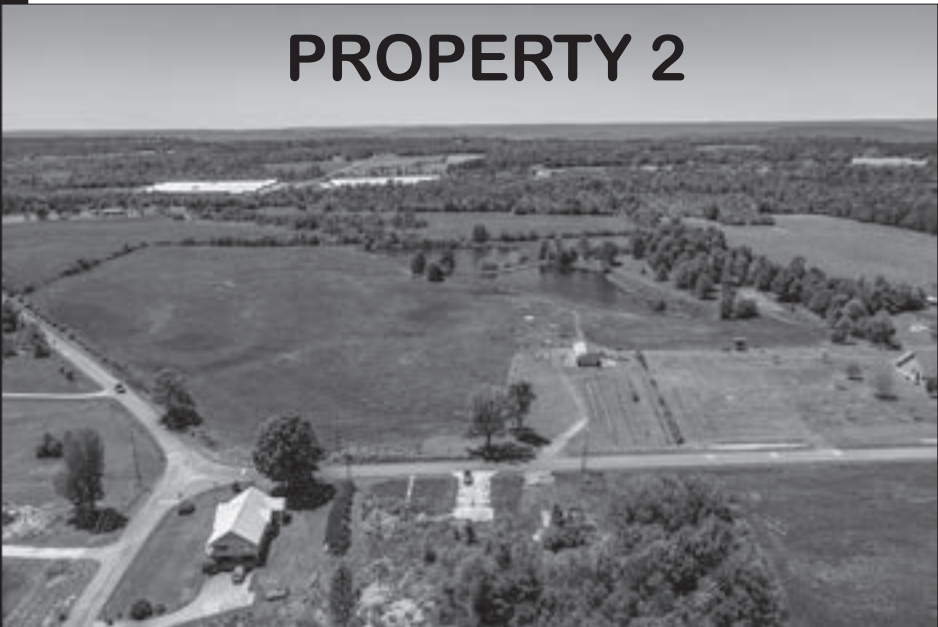


Back row, L to R: Mentone Councilman David Allgood, Mentone Mayor Hammond, Lamar Bray, Mentone Councilman Ray Padgett
Seated: Mentone Councilman Gerald Bailey



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PERSONAL PROPERTY



Farewell Moon Lake *(continued from page 1)*

Sixteen years after its founding, in 1927, the school building burned down on a “dark and dreary” November evening. According to former teacher Foye Jones, when a new two-room schoolhouse was built in 1928, teachers Mrs. Willie Mae Davis and Miss Louise McKown “had very little equipment—not even desks. Long wooden benches were borrowed from Camp DeSoto for the students to sit upon.” In the early 1930s, the north and south

Grace Jones was the first cook, and after a few years Mrs. Winnie Mae Shigley became the lunchroom manager—a position she held for many decades.

In 1988, the school’s gym was built, primarily through a generous donation by the country music group, Alabama. In 1994, the wooden playground was constructed, and the next year new restroom facilities were built (another exciting development for the children!). The same year saw the establishment

of a butterfly garden in the wooded area behind the gym. Dr. Bill Berry, principal at the time, and the Rhododendron Garden Club were instrumental in this delightful creation which featured pollinator plants and unique landscaping features. The garden

was the vision of Master Gardener and Garden Club president (and former Moon Lake student) Ann Blalock Wright. (Sadly, the butterfly garden fell into disuse after Dr. Berry’s tenure, but he has hopes to revitalize it in the future.) During this time period, the gazebo on the south side of the gym was designed and constructed by Ann’s son, Mark, who also attended Moon Lake School. This quiet locale became a gathering place for outdoor meetings, classes, and receptions.

Two acres of neighboring land were acquired in 1996, allowing the construction of a new cafeteria and classroom. A pre-school Head Start program was initiated that year, as well.

Until this time, principals had always also served as teachers, but in 1996 the school had a teacher for each grade level and a full-time principal. In 1997, another classroom was built and the following year, a full-time special education program was established. The current network of covered sidewalks was

(continued on page 21)



wings were added. In 1934, the school’s first bus service began, with a long wooden bench running along each side of the bus which was driven by Mr. Roy Crow. This was an exciting development for the children who had previously been walking to and from school.

New Union School, in the Alpine community, consolidated with Moon Lake School in 1939, dramatically increasing the school’s enrollment. An additional classroom and a lunchroom were installed, so the students were able to count on hot and nutritious meals. Mrs.





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Congratulations Moon Lake School Kindergarten!



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Hadley Gregory



Christian Magana



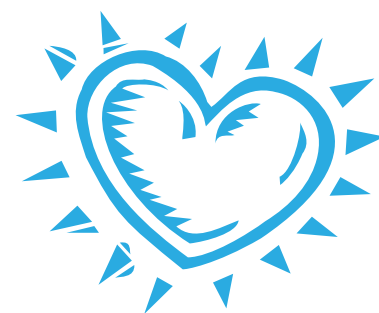
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Kindergarten teacher Lea Long and her class helped tidy up the school grounds to celebrate Earth Day in April.

Congratulations Moon Lake School 6th Grade!



Aubrey Gregory



Ava Harrison



Bella Harrison



Adyn Heinrich



Nathan Hudgins



Kansas Lee



Zach Pullen



Eli Rosson



Michael Stone

Hunter Gill (photo not available)



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“What qualities of Moon Lake School will you take with you to your new school?”



Dave Bailey
Custodian

Transferring to Ruhama

I'd like to still be on a first-name basis with the students. Like they say, "Same thing, only different!"



Kelbi Ballenger
Grade 3

Transferring to Sylvania

I want to try to keep my classroom like family. It's been like family because we're small and it's so important to get to know the kids before anything else. I think at a big school, that's especially important to do.



Barbara Davis
Secretary

Transferring to County Office

I've enjoyed seeing how well the community works with the school the way Mentone does. We're all so close-knit.



Paula Easter
Fine Arts

I hope that things work out so that I can follow some of our students and continue to instill in them the love of the fine arts. There is incredible art and music out there and I hope I can still bring a little bit of that into their lives as they change schools. I hope I can continue to carry that on, and still be that person who helps them see how talented they can be.



Michele Kincer
Lunchroom

Transferring to Henegar

This experience at Moon Lake will benefit everybody else who moves to a new school. We all work so well together. We're always a team, no matter what. Whatever we need to do, we just do it. I don't think that'll change when we go somewhere else. It's just what we're used to doing. It won't bother me at all to step up and help somebody else however I can.



Mary Lance
Principal

Moving to Special Services

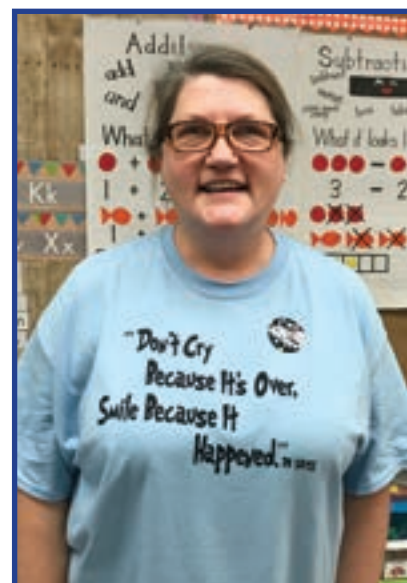
Getting the community to rally around the school. It's about the community and parents and everybody being involved. That's what makes a school. It's the teachers and students, but when you have parents and community backing you, that's what makes it special.



Cindy Wilks
Lunchroom

Retiring

Wherever I'm at, this school's always going to be a part of me.



Lea Long, Kindergarten
Moving to Valley Head

At Moon Lake, we have strong teamwork and work toward the same goals. We take everything we know about the kids and work together to see them succeed. It doesn't matter what grade they're in, or what level they're at, we all still work together to move forward.





Karen Prestood
Grades 4 & 5
Moving to Valley Head

To try to keep my classroom like family. There is a lot of one on one with the kids and I hope to take that with me. The teachers are always here to help each other. I hope to take that collaborative spirit with me.



Crista Sims
Grades 1 & 2
Moving to Crossville

Working together as a community, as a family, for the best for our students.

Moon Lake PTO: Supporting Our School for Over a Century

by Jessica Harper-Brown

The Moon Lake PTO was officially formed in 2004, but the essence of the parent-teacher collaboration has been evident throughout the school’s 110-year history. In 1911, after Ed Mason deeded land for a school to the State of Alabama, the community provided the materials, labor, and time for their children’s education. In the fall of 1927, when a devastating fire destroyed the school, the community built the present-day main school building and hosted the students in nearby churches so as to not interrupt their learning. During the Great Depression, to fight the threat of closure, parents, teachers, and neighbors donated what money they could, provided more teachers, and built additional wings to accommodate the growing enrollment.

Moon Lake School has been the center of the Mentone community for over a century and several generations of families have had the honor of attending. The community has served its school unfailingly by raising funds for a gymnasium, a library, and an assortment of student needs with the Harvest Festival, held annually since the 1950s. Many former students have returned to Moon Lake School to continue teaching, feeding, and caring for the next generations so that they too could have the same foundation that encourages success in all stages of life.

After the county board of education voted on February 18 to close Moon Lake School and consolidate with Valley Head School, the Moon Lake PTO was informed that we had to expend the existing funds we had raised and close our bank account by the end of the school year. The PTO’s Executive Committee decided to use the funds to provide the students with memorable and exciting experiences during the remainder of the school year. The students and faculty were able to go on field trips each Friday. They

will never forget riding the Southern Belle and Chattanooga Duck Boats, visiting the Chattanooga Zoo, Camp Tranquility, the Depot Museum, Opera House, and Hosiery Museum in Fort Payne, having a Glow Party in the gym, and attending Medieval Times in Atlanta. The PTO provided books for the Summer Reading Program, and teachers were provided funds to select books for each of the students to take home with them. The funds were also used to provide gifts for the Student with Perfect Attendance, winners of the D.A.R.E essay contest, and Kindergarten and 6th Grade graduates. We showed our thanks during Teacher Appreciation Week, purchased commemorative yearbooks for all the students, faculty, and staff, and, with the help of Mrs. White, we hosted an unforgettable Field Day for everyone.

Although many of us are sad that this wonderful institution has come to an end, we feel confident that a new chapter will soon begin at Moon Lake, hopefully as a center for the community. This community has proven time and time again that it knows where its heart lies and will continue to supply whatever means are needed for the new generations so that their futures are set for success. We should all be so lucky to call this tiny mountain town our place.



Dia White
4th grade Math, 6th Grade Science, School-wide Physical Education
Moving to Crossville

Since this is such a small school, I’ve been able to get know the students, to know their interests and try to use some of what I know about their experiences to help them and encourage them. I’m going to try to do that at a bigger school. I think having that personal awareness of their background and their experience can help me as their teacher to reach them at their level.



Cheryl Wilborn
Nurse
Moving to Plainview

I’ll be moving from the smallest school in the county to one of the largest. I hope things can be on as personal level as it is here. When you go to a new place, if you’re real busy you don’t have time to do much bonding.



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Linda Pullen, Moon Lake School
1956–1957 school picture

I entered Moon Lake School in the fall of 1953, where I was in Mrs. Foye Jones' class. Mrs. Foye had taught at Moon Lake for many years and knew all our parents, having taught many of them. Mrs. Foye was known for giving students a good start in school, both in academics and in the finer points of behavior. She was a "no nonsense" teacher, and she dished out caring along with liberal doses of physical encouragement! I didn't think she was as sweet as Mrs. Kathryn Jones who taught second grade, but they both were excellent teachers. Those who began school with those two had a strong basis for future school success.

The time I spent at Moon Lake School was an innocent, wonderful time. The whole school had recess at the same time, which was a social time as well as a time to run and play. We had no physical education teacher at our school, so we created our own

Memories of Moon Lake School

by Linda Pullen Burns

physical activities, like "Tree Tag". My first year at Moon Lake, I had older cousins in the upper grades, and they treated me like their personal baby doll at times, carrying me around the playground. The playground consisted of some swings, see-saws and a slide some of our fathers had constructed. There was a ballfield the older boys used for playing softball or football. At one time hula hoops became a fad and we were all honing our skills with hula hoops during recess. Jumping rope was another economical recess activity.

Quite often, during recess, I would take a couple of friends and visit my great-grandmother Shigley, who lived next-door to the school. Her cookie jar was always stocked with fresh tea cakes, and she was always welcoming! Grandma Shigley's house is currently the MERF house.

An obsolete activity we engaged in at Moon Lake School was building and maintaining playhouses. Our playhouses were constructed with empty cans from the lunchroom and boards we got from somewhere. There would be several playhouses scattered throughout the wooded area behind the outhouses. Yes, outhouses! We did not even have indoor restrooms when I began school. I was in third or fourth grade before we had the modern convenience of indoor restrooms and flushing commodes!

THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Things have changed so much since I entered school at Moon Lake. Years later I taught in large modern schools with all the latest amenities and technology, but I would not trade anything for my educational beginnings in the small white frame



Mrs. Foye Jones

school with, what I perceived then, as large rooms with high ceilings and bare wooden floors that were oiled. There was a large pot-bellied stove near the center of each classroom. My granddaddy Green was the janitor. After building a warm fire in each stove early each morning, he would leave a scuttle of coal to be added to

the heater near mid-day. That stove was our heat, and open windows were our air conditioning. We had no drinking fountains; only a bucket of water and a dipper in the Cloak Room.

The second year I went to Moon Lake School, I was in the third grade, and Mrs. Edith Lyday was my teacher. I remember getting a new heating system which sent hot water through pipes along the wall and sometimes it would make strange noises. About the same time, we got drinking fountains in the hallways, and the water bucket and dipper became a thing of the past.

My brother, Walt, started school when I was in third grade. He was cute and smart, but I was a little embarrassed at times when he got into mischief and received some of Mrs. Foye's physical encouragement! He turned out to be a very fine man, and perhaps largely due to the guidance and expectations of Mother, Daddy and Mrs. Foye Jones.

A grand event during fourth grade was the May Day program. Our principal was Mr. Charles Adams, and his wife, Mrs. Ethen Adams, directed the program. Our class was responsible for the May Pole dance. All the girls wore white dresses with a sash that matched the color of a streamer attached to the May Pole. Each girl had a boy partner who wore a white shirt, dark pants, and a bow tie the

(continued on page 13)



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Little River Arts Council (continued from page 1)

Little River Arts Council is a local non-profit group whose mission is to encourage individual creativity and to broaden community participation, appreciation and support for the visual, performing, and literary arts in the Mentone Area. Our community-based arts activities are funded through memberships, donations, and grants. Become a part of LRAC by visiting our website at littleriverartscouncil.org, and clicking on the membership link. We welcome volunteers to help with projects and local events. Contact us through the website or sign up at our tent at summer concerts.

Anne McLeod is the secretary of Little River Arts Council.

"MUSIC FOR THE PEOPLE" Summer Concert Schedule

JUNE 26

Black Sedan Band from Birmingham, AL
Party Rock & Roll

JULY 24

Natti Love Joys from Cleveland, TN
Reggae

AUGUST 7

Jess Goggans Band from Fort Payne, AL
Funk / Rock / Blues

SEPTEMBER 25

Showcase of local musicians TBA
Local performers interested in participating
should email Cynthia Stinson at
lractreasurer@gmail.com for information.

LRAC Pop-Up Art Market by Anne McLeod

Two Mentone artists who work in wood will be at the Linger Longer Pavilion on Saturday, June 12, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., as part of Little River Arts Council's pop-up art markets.

Bill Adams, a first-time exhibitor, harvests driftwood and enhances the grooves and spaces worn by river water with colorful stained glass. These one-of-a-kind pieces have a look that is both natural and abstract.

Don Highfield began woodcarving almost 30 years ago at Horsin' Around, a carousel horse

carving studio in Chattanooga. His ostrich Olivia is now a part of the Coolidge Park Carousel by the Tennessee River in Chattanooga. Don carves walking sticks, figures both large and small, Celtic knotwork, and cottage signs.

The pop-up markets will continue through the summer and fall at the pavilion behind the Mentone Inn and Bed and Breakfast. If you are an artist who would like to participate, text Destin Padgett at 256-926-8375 for more information.

Pictured at right: Don Highfield



Menlo News by Pat Johnson Yard & Bake Sale—June 18

The Menlo Housing Authority is hosting a at the Lawrence Center in Menlo on June 18 and 19 from 8 a.m.–1 p.m. EDT. All baked goods are homemade: fried pies, cakes,

cookies, breads, etc. The Yard Sale will include clothes of all sizes and many household items. All proceeds go to fund Menlo's Veteran Marker Program. Come join the fun!

Congratulations Vann McCary Scholars by Kat Griffith

Parents and friends of any school-age person from kindergarten through the post-graduate years knows how challenging the last pandemic year has been on students and teachers! The Vann McCary Scholarship Committee of St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain is particularly proud to announce the worthy recipients of this year's scholarship funds.

Saddler Grace Emory is our celebrated fourth-year recipient who will be graduating from the University of North Alabama with a major in Mass Communication and a minor in Political Science. Julie Kristen Smith is a third-year recipient who will be a junior at The University of Alabama, Birmingham. Avion Michelle Gelfenstein is a second-year recipient at Northeast Alabama Community College (NACC), Daisy Panola Hernandez continues at NACC for her second year and Cally Todd Mays is a first-year recipient at NACC.

The folk at St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain send a collective hoorah for all the graduating Valley Head High School seniors of 2021! We especially endorse two scholarship winners from VHS class of '21 in this year's class of the Vann McCary Scholarship Fund, Kylee Brooke Elkins and Luke Russell Harrison. They are eligible for three more years for the scholarship and we encourage their perseverance to achieve their goals!



Luke Russell Harrison and Kylee Brooke Elkins

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Dine-in & Carry-out

Moon Lake Community Library News

by Kelly Leavitt



OPEN HOURS
Tuesday & Thursday 4–6
Saturday 10–12

Moon Lake Library will resume having regular hours on Tuesday, June 1. We will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Curbside service will continue to be offered; visit moonlakelibrary.org to view the library's catalog and reserve your books.

Thanks to everyone who came to May's book sale at the

library and Mentone Farmers Market! Mark your calendars... we'll be holding another book sale on Saturday, June 17. Paperback fiction will be sold at the Mentone Farmers Market and hardcover fiction and all non-fiction books will be for sale at the library between the hours of 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. We have an abundance of books for sale, so during June, we'll be offering a "Buy One, Get One Free" sale!

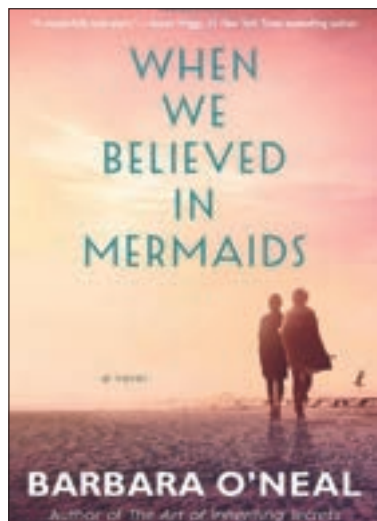
You can also shop for books during the library's open hours.

I will be resigning my role as community librarian at the end of this month. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to have been able to serve and get to know such a wide variety of remarkable people in our community.

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

MOON LAKE BOOK CLUB: *When We Believed in Mermaids*, by Barbara O'Neal

Thursday, June 24, at 6:30 pm via Zoom



Our June Book Club selection is *When We Believed in Mermaids* (2019, Lake Union Publishing) by Barbara O'Neal.

From goodreads.com:

"From the author of *THE ART OF INHERITING SECRETS* comes an emotional new tale of two sisters, an ocean of lies, and a search for the truth.

"Her sister has been dead for fifteen years when she sees her on the TV news...

"Josie Bianci was killed years ago on a train during a terrorist attack. Gone forever. It's what her sister, Kit, an ER doctor in Santa Cruz, has always believed.

Yet all it takes is a few heart-wrenching seconds to upend Kit's world. Live coverage of a club fire in Auckland has captured the image of a woman stumbling through the smoke and debris. Her resemblance to Josie is unbelievable. And unmistakable. With it comes a flood of emotions—grief, loss, and anger—that Kit finally has a chance to put to rest: by finding the sister who's been living a lie.

"After arriving in New Zealand, Kit begins her journey with the memories of the past: of days spent on the beach with Josie. Of a lost teenage boy who'd become

part of their family. And of a trauma that has haunted Kit and Josie their entire lives.

"Now, if two sisters are to reunite, it can only be by unearthing long-buried secrets and facing a devastating truth that has kept them apart far too long. To regain their relationship, they may have to lose everything."

Please join us via Zoom on Thursday, June 24, at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. See moonlakelibrary.org/bookclub for the Zoom link.

When We Believed in Mermaids is available to borrow from the library.

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Memories of Moon Lake

(continued from page 10)

same color as their partner's sash and their streamer. My partner was Alvin Coots and our color was green! We danced in and out with the streamers until they were braided around the pole. Then the dance was reversed until the pole was unbraided. It was a beautiful dance with all the colorful streamers weaving in and out somewhat gracefully.

FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES

In fifth and sixth grades I was blessed to have Mrs. Ethel Adams as my teacher. She had previously taught my Aunt Eva and several parents and relatives of other classmates. We learned to answer both to our names and those of a parent or relative. During those two years I answered to three names: Grace (my mother), Eva, and Linda.

Each day our class began with the reading of a few verses of scripture, prayer, and reciting the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mrs. Adams also assigned a memory assignment each month. During my time in Mrs. Adams' room, I memorized poems, scripture, and the preamble to the Constitution of the United States, among other things. To this day I can still quote most of the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians and "The Village Blacksmith" by Longfellow. For his sixth-grade graduation program, Jimmy Baty quoted the poem "Hiawatha", which was very long and had many Indian words. I thought it was amazing!

Most afternoons Mrs. Adams would read to us. I remember her reading *The Sugar Creek Gang* books. Reading was fun. The PTA purchased a set of biographies for our classroom library, and by the seventh grade I had read most, if not all of them.

Sometime during those two years we took a field trip through the woods. We left about the time school was out one afternoon and walked through the woods, observing wildflowers, trees, rocks, and everything of interest along the way, until we reached the Baty's sawmill. Mr. Glen built a bonfire out of slabs and when it was mostly coals, we roasted hot dogs and marshmallows. I don't remember how we got home, because the bus had completed its rounds long before our field trip ended at dusk. I think some parents came after their kids, and Mr. and Mrs. Adams carried the rest of them home.

I dearly loved Mrs. Adams, and it would break my heart on the few occasions when she had to correct me for something. At the end of sixth grade, they moved to another school. But, before they left, we had an elaborate sixth grade graduation. Mother made me a beautiful white dress with embroidered pansies on it. Both my sisters wore it for their sixth-grade graduations, also.

HISTORY

My parents had attended Moon Lake School. My Dad attended the original Moon Lake School building before it burned. The old building was a two-story building in which one teacher taught the lower grades on the first floor and another teacher taught the upper grades upstairs. Two floors, two classrooms, two teachers! During that time lunches were not provided and each student had to bring their own lunch. Recycling was a necessity before it became an ecological choice. Students often brought their lunch in a repurposed syrup or lard bucket.

Lunch at Moon Lake School was a pleasant experience. I remember

Moon Lake School and the
Mentone community have always
been intertwined in a congenial and
supportive partnership.

the food as being good, my favorite being the cookies Winnie Mae Shigley and Nina Mae Crowe made with the "commodity" butter. Another favorite of mine was the homemade vegetable soup and peanut butter sandwiches. The lunchroom ladies were genuinely concerned that the students were adequately fed and that they liked the food. Of course, it would be impossible to feed one hundred children every day with a menu that pleased every one of them, but they tried. I believe our lunches cost twenty cents and later the price increased to twenty-five cents. When I was in the upper grades, sometimes a couple of us would volunteer to sweep the floor after lunch, since our class was the last one served. The greatest reward for doing this task was receiving another of those delicious butter cookies! I will always remember fondly the savory smelling lunchroom of the 1950s.

SCHOOL BUS

Transportation was not available when either of my parents went to Moon Lake School. They walked in all kinds of weather; hot, cold, and rainy. Sometimes a family would take their kids and others to school in a wagon. Later, when automobiles became more common, some families would drive their students to school and transport neighbors, also. Eventually the school system purchased buses.

My brothers, sisters, and I had the good fortune to ride a bus to school driven by the first female school bus driver in DeKalb County, Mrs. Eula Cash. Mis' Eula, as we called her, was a jolly woman who gave each child boarding her bus a big smile and cheerful greeting. Riding the bus in those years was sometimes an adventure.

We encountered muddy roads where we got stuck and had to be pulled out by the nearest farmer. We also came upon washed out bridges and flooded roads at times. All students from first grade to twelfth rode the bus together, and many cross-grade friendships were formed.

THE PTA

The PTA was a vital part of the school during those years. My parents were always avid supporters of the PTA. My Dad was the PTA treasurer for a number of years, and Mother helped out with everything else. The PTA sponsored several fund-raising activities each year. The school didn't receive much money from the county and state back then, so the PTA helped maintain

both essential services and enrichment opportunities.

One of the PTA-sponsored events we all looked forward to each year was the fall Harvest Festival. We didn't have access to all the entertainment venues that are available today, so the Harvest Festival was a delight with its Fish Pond, Cake Walk and other games. I looked forward to winning prizes as I played the various games. A highlight of the evening was the crowning of the Harvest King and Queen. A few weeks before the Harvest Festival two students from each class would become candidates for king and queen. They were tasked with raising money, and the boy and girl who secured the largest amount in donations by Harvest Festival night would be declared Moon Lake's enviable Harvest King and Queen. One year my brother Walter was the king and Sandra Coots was the queen.

A chicken supper or two would be held each year. I have delightful memories of my mother putting a chicken coop in the trunk of her old black Ford and driving throughout the community visiting parents and supporters of the school soliciting donations for the supper. She would take whatever they gave her, whether it was butter, eggs, green beans, onions, canned goods, corn meal or live chickens. Usually, she got a few monetary donations too. I will never forget the time a group of volunteers had gathered at the school to begin preparing for the chicken supper. That time apparently quite a few live chickens had been donated. There was a new young pastor at the Wesleyan Church who was among the volunteers. He had observed some of the women

grabbing up a chicken and wringing its head off. He decided to try that, so as he began wringing, an egg flew out of the chicken's hind parts, much to our delight and his astonished embarrassment!

Other events sponsored by the PTA as fund-raising activities during these years included Box Suppers and a Womanless Wedding. A Box Supper was an event where women and young girls of "courting age" would pack a picnic supper in a box and decorate the box attractively to make it appealing to a bidder. The boxes were auctioned off to the men. The man buying a lady's box had the pleasure of eating the contents of the box with her. A lady's box was usually bought by her husband or boyfriend. Occasionally some men would up the bids on a particular box when they knew it was especially desired by a man interested in the lady who prepared the box. This was all done in fun and they would never do that to a man they knew couldn't afford to pay the higher price.

A Womanless Wedding was just what the name implies. It was a play where all the participants in the wedding were men. People got a kick out of seeing some very masculine men; farmers, lumberjacks, carpenters, athletes, and others dressed in female wedding attire. This was not an annual event, but there were perhaps two "weddings" during my childhood.

THE IDEAL SCHOOL

Moon Lake School and the Mentone community have always been intertwined in a congenial and supportive partnership. When I was growing up, most permanent residents of Mentone had attended Moon Lake School at some time, and/or their children had attended. They were still interested in and supported the school regardless of whether they currently had students there. Most of the community would show up to support the Harvest Festival, the chicken dinners and other fund-raising events sponsored by the school and PTA. The school was the social center of the community during that time.

As a teacher I have taught in several schools in three different towns, and some of them were excellent schools with good parental support. But I never found another school that compared with my early years at Moon Lake School. Most of the teachers had been there a while, knew the students and their parents well, and cared deeply for each child and their family. Although it has been 68 years since I entered Moon Lake as a student, I have always been interested in the school, its success, and its place in the community. I am sad to see it close, and hope something good will evolve from its closing.

Always a Moon Lake Girl!!!!



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MENTONE
NEW PRICE! RARE 2.5-ACRE DOWNTOWN MENTONE PROPERTY. This is one of those places with almost unlimited possibilities! With its flexible zoning, frontage on 3 city streets (Douglas, Cutler Ave & Shady Ave), this simple little house could open the door to BIG things! Spacious front sunporch built in 2012; house was pretty much completely gutted & rebuilt in 2014. It's a great start to even greater things! Property once had at least 3 other tiny cabins on it, believed to have been part of a motor court back in the 1930s. Future for Rental cabins? Restaurant? Shopping plaza? Offices? Dream! The land is level, features 2 small streams, nice woods w/ huge white oaks & other hardwoods. \$350,000 (1779531)



MENTONE
HMM. GOOD POSSIBILITIES AT A GREAT PRICE! Updated, one-level, 70s rancher. 3BR/2BA; 1646 sq ft; 2.8 acres w/a pond, fenced back yard, detached 2-car garage (w/wood floor), 1/2 acre (w/wood floor) & more. House features an attractive stone/masonry fireplace in the living room (fitted w/gas logs); updated kitchen w/granite counters & newer appliances. \$189,000 (1777593)

***** LOTS and LAND

46 ACRES, BARN, PONDS & fencing. Attractive Lookout Mtn acreage, ready for your dream. **SOLD** waiting. Come see it at River Nat'l Preserve, Fort Payne, Desoto State Park, Mentone. \$220,000 (1155213)

79 ACRES OF UNRESTRICTED WOODLAND. Just think what you could do with a chunk of land like this! Maybe do nothing. Just let it sit there. Weekend off? Head to the mountain. Camp out, hike, hunt, mountain bike, ride 4-wheelers, horses, whatever the weather dictates. And when you're ready, you can cut the trees & mill the timber for your own home off your own property. Pick a site...or several sites... build a cabin, a compound, or a community. What could YOU do with 79 acres? Maybe now is the time to find out. \$276,500 (1773800)

MENTONE BROW LOTS, A RARE OPPORTUNITY! Rare because there just aren't many left between Mentone and Desoto Park, even rarer because they have good depth to get some distance from the road, plus they extend over the brow to allow for tree trimming as necessary. Build that dream home now, enjoy beautiful mountaintop views & spectacular sunsets. You have 2 to choose from (or, buy them both to create a spectacular personal getaway!), each offering approx. 1.8 acres. Priced at \$225,000 per lot. (1770794)

ENJOY YOUR MORNING COFFEE & GREET THE SUNRISE. From this vantage point, you can watch the changing seasons across the valley & beyond to Lookout MTN. So much potential is here for fabulous views when you build your dream home on this approx 0.8-acre lot in beautiful, woodsy, Pells Gap Subdivision, high atop Sand Mountain. Minutes away from I-59, Fort Payne, but worlds away from traffic & noise. Property offers over 160' of frontage on the East Brow of the mountain. Owner financing available. \$75,000 (1151053)

GORGEOUS VIEWS & 2.2 ACRES. This Mentone East-brow-front property already has the major prep work done for you to begin building your dream getaway cabin or residence. Septic tank in place, driveway in place, building sites for a cabin & for a shop cleared & leveled. Incredibly priced at only \$89,000. (1775068)



MENTONE
13.34 ACRES, PONDS, OLD FARM HOUSE, SHOP & VARIOUS OUTBUILDINGS. The old house needs a good bit of TLC. We're not kidding. Whether or not it is fixable is a judgement call. Stone fireplace; old well w/ hand pump; even a 2-seater out-house! Decent little front porch, too. Ponds are thought to offer good fishing. Three wells on the property, one of which is clear, freestone water. Not perfect, tons of work needed, and priced accordingly. \$129,900 (1155211)



MENTONE
SPACE FOR EVERYTHING & EVERYONE! Large, bungalow-style home gives you room for many possibilities! A spacious home, a gathering place for families, retreats, possible B&B, multi-family home with 3 separate living areas...imagine it! Unfinished lower level has 3 doors to exterior, 12 windows & carport access, making an ideal future apartment w/separate entrance. Pine floors throughout; wood ceilings accented by solid beams in spacious, open dining/kitchen. Cabinets galore! 6BR/2 baths (plus half bath in lower level). Enormous front porch. New ext pain, new windows & roof 2019. Interior needs some upgrading & TLC. Beautiful yard w/seasonal sunset views. High-speed internet! Agent owned. \$350,000 (1780870)



LOOKOUT MTN 22 ACRES & LOG CABIN 1BR/1BA cabin is BIG on the possibilities it offers! Detached 2-car garage & small storage building; gorgeous land with nice views; ponds; stream; excellent property. **SOLD** Simply put, you could not find one of the best built, low-maintenance cabins you will find. All wood interior, practically-new appliances. Long-used poultry houses on property for storage or multi-use future. \$250,000 (1154959)



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RAINSVILLE
EASY-LIVING PATIO HOME. Wouldn't you rather just enjoy your home, your leisure activities & hobbies without all that lawn care & maintenance? Perhaps this is just what your life needs. Look at this home in Rainsville, five minutes to Walmart, hospital, & restaurants in the south Fort Payne commercial hub. 2BR/2BA main level; large bonus/BR or storage upstairs; stainless appliances in kitchen. \$229,950 (1151669)

SOLD



Goodness, gracious! We need listings! We have buyers, just nothing left to sell them! If you have been considering selling your property, give us a call today!



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

DeSoto Rescue Squad's Annual Fundraiser and Newsletter

by Michael Stone



To the residents and businesses of Mentone, Valley Head, and surrounding areas:

We would first like to extend a special THANK YOU to all who have contributed to the success of the DeSoto Rescue Squad over the years. Your kind donations have helped fund the purchase of medical supplies, the repairs to our rescue vehicles, and the squad's operating expenses, including fuel and insurance.

As a reminder, we receive approximately \$1600 per year from the County Commission. This funding goes towards paying about half of our insurance for the year and is the only tax money we receive. The rest of our funding comes from donations from citizens like you and fundraisers we hold. These donations help cover the remaining cost of the insurance, our fuel, training, supplies, and upkeep of the equipment. We are not part of any fire department, and do not benefit from the tax money the fire departments receive.

2020 proved to be an intense year. Covid-19 affected us not only as a medical agency, but also on a personal level. We want to thank everyone for your support throughout the year. We had many fundraising challenges with the festivals being cancelled, and not being able to hold our pancake breakfast or Willie Underwood Family concert. We applied for five grants this past year. We were turned down for four of the grants and received one. The one grant we did receive allowed us to place CPR compression assist devices on our rescue trucks to help provide better quality CPR and allow our personnel the ability to perform other tasks with CPR ongoing. This is an invaluable resource to the community!

Financially, this year we have several goals. First off is to pay down the \$10,000 loan we had to take out in 2020 to survive, which was not a paycheck protection loan, so it is not forgivable. Second, we of course need to continue to purchase medical supplies, medications, and fuel. We still have \$1,500 due for our second half of our insurance payment. We are also trying to find funding to purchase a new rescue truck that will cost about \$45,000. We are also seeking funding to purchase three newer cardiac monitors since we are about three years out from our monitors being unserviceable. That will cost us another \$25,000 per monitor, for a total of \$75,000.

We are planning to hold our Annual Pancake Breakfast on the first Saturday in October and have tentatively scheduled the Willie Underwood Family for a fundraiser concert for September 25. We are also planning to be at Colorfest if it is held.

We are hosting the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads' third-quarter meeting in August here in Mentone. This will bring rescue squads from all over the state to our communities.

We will continue to respond and provide the best care possible in these difficult times.

Financial donations may be sent to: DeSoto Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 517, Mentone, AL 35984 or made through PayPal on our website at desotorecue.com. Thank you for allowing us to serve our communities!



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Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

In 2019, Little River Escape Tiny Home Community was named one of the nation's top 6 tiny home communities by *U.S. News & World Report*. As a result, LRE is now fully occupied by folks who have come from 12 different states and even Venezuela. We have decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership, where tiny homes are available to tour. RRE is now delivering across the nation, as well as developing 4 new tiny home communities on or near Lookout Mountain.

New Tiny Home Communities, come see for yourself:

River Side Escape on the East Fork of the Little River
Mentone Mountain Escape only 3 miles from downtown Mentone
Cloudland Escape on Lookout Mountain Parkway
Silver Hill Escape in Lyerly, GA
Little River Escape (Now Leased out of Lots)



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Memories
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"Floyd" enjoyed dancing with Kay Trimn and her Clogging Ladies



"Barney" Anthony Woods and "Floyd" Allan Newsome

Photos Courtesy of Mike and Eiko Key



L to R: World War II veteran Mr. Glenn Flower, World War II veteran Mr. Tim Colvard, Ronnie "Buckshot" McMahan, Vietnam veteran Mr. Gary Anspach



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DeKalb County Sheriff Nick Welden (former Valley Head police chief) found himself in Barney's jailhouse.

Valley Head Happenings

by Karen Vest

Welcome to the second edition of Valley Head Happenings. Published within each monthly edition of The Groundhog, I hope to update our friends and neighbors with news in and around our town.

As most of you are aware, ALDOT continues the repairs on Highway 117 heading up into Mentone. A mid-June completion date is set for this first phase of the repairs. Please be careful driving and observe all speed limits when using Wade Gap or Tutwiler Gap, as there is more traffic than normal with the road closure in affect.

Valley Head's park pavilion is now open. The restrooms are open and maintained on an as-needed basis. If you notice a problem or would like to report an issue with the park's facilities, please call Town Hall and let us know. If you would like to reserve the pavilion for a meeting or party, please call City Hall at (256) 635-6814. Our City Clerk, Debra, will be happy to take your reservation. Please remember to utilize the numerous trash cans located within the park including the basketball court.

The 4th Annual Mayberry Days Festival was held around the town square and on the field on Saturday, May 1. The weather was picture-perfect and we had a great turnout. I spoke to visitors from all over the State of Alabama, as well as those from Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida. The money is still being tallied, but we are confident that thanks to the many generous contributions throughout the day, our volunteer fire department will benefit greatly. Mayor Mike Key and the entire Town Council would like to thank all volunteers, sponsors, vendors, and all who made this year's festival such a success.

One of our biggest money makers was from the sale of our Mayberry Days t-shirts. With several colors and designs to chose from, both of our sales booths were kept busy with customers all day long. More than 30 items were generously donated to our auction and we were able to raise over \$1,200. The classic car cruise-in brought more than 30 classic and vintage cars to town. Square dancing took place on the street during the car show and the public was able to enjoy it all while strolling through. A highlight of the festival was the Darlings musical family, who loaded up into a vintage truck and rode around town performing some of their favorite songs. Once on stage, they played to a full audience. Barney Fife (Anthony Woods) was spotted kicking up his heels and dancing to their music. Chris Roberts School of Music, Cloggers, The Sharps Quartet, Forever Country, and the Homegrown Band rounded out the entertainment for the day on the main stage. Floyd the Barber (Allen Newsome) was seen

throughout the day offering free trims, shaking hands, and just being his handsome jovial self.

We had many wonderful pies entered in the pie contest and the winners of Aunt Bee's Pie Baking contest were as follows: Fruit Category, 1st Place – Jennifer Harper Brown, Dutch Apple Pie and 2nd Place – Todd Greeson, blueberry pie; Nut Category, 1st Place – Jessica Harper Brown, Derby Pie and 2nd Place – Karen Vest, peanut butter pie; Other Category, 1st Place – Holly LaRock Owen, breakfast pie and 2nd Place – Karen Vest, tomato pie. The winners of the Valley Head Fire Department gun raffle were Jon Burt of Valley Head and Earl Lacy of Henagar.

DeKalb County Commission President, Mr. Ricky Harcrow, presented a check for \$1,000 to Fire Chief Dustin Burt. Senator Steve Livingston and Alabama State Representative Nathaniel Ledbetter presented checks to Mayor Key for the Memories of Mayberry Festival and other departments of the town of Valley Head.

In other news, we are proud to announce the new website for the Town of Valley Head is up and running. We would love to hear from our citizens as to what information you would like to see posted. Please visit it at valleyheadalabama.com.

The city recently replaced numerous street lights with energy-efficient LED bulbs and added an additional 30 new lights within the city limits to improve upon the safety of our town.

Valley Head holds the Town Council meeting the first Monday of each month beginning at 6 p.m. The public is always welcome to attend. A mask is required to attend the meeting.



Dozens of unique cars joined the Cruise-in around the Square.



ony Goggans and the Darlins serenaded the crowd as throughout the festival.



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*Mike Leath, Caleb Roberts,
Amy Justice & Ronnie Highfield*

Mentone Arts & Cultural Center News by Randy Grider

Sculpture garden nears completion; Live events begin in June



of Sequoyah created by artists Carl McCleskey and Betsy Scott. Sequoyah invented the Cherokee syllabary while living in Wills Valley in the early 19th century. The garden will be named in honor of Dr. Stephen Brewer.



The new garden at the Mentone Arts Center.

Downtown Mentone has a new garden area for residents and visitors to enjoy.

At press time, work was nearing completion of the much-anticipated sculpture garden. Final stages include the installation of a bronze sculpture

The garden is funded by a grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama as well as contributions from the Brewer family and the DeKalb County Development Commission. The CFNA grant is part of the Susie Parker Stringfellow's 100 Year Legacy Program in which nonprofit organizations were awarded funds to create Open Spaces Sacred Places gardens in nine Northeast Alabama counties. Other similar gardens are located at

St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain in Mentone and at the Alabama Walking Park in Fort Payne. Thrive Outdoor (formerly Turf Tamer) in Fort Payne designed the sculpture garden.

The impressive entry arbor was done by Jeff Rymer of Southern Styles Log Furniture. Volunteers Paul and Charlette Howell added the rock retaining wall and expanded front area for additional plants. Mary Shurett has volunteered to help with keeping the garden watered.

Live events will start this month. We hope you can join us.

Book Signing Featuring Jerry Ellis
Sunday, June 6, 1-3 p.m.

Meet the author as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of his renowned book, "Walking the Trail, One Man's

Journey Along the Cherokee Trail of Tears." Born and raised in Fort Payne, where Sequoyah lived when he developed the Cherokee writing system, Ellis was



Author Jerry Ellis



The new garden at the Mentone Arts Center.

the first person in the modern world to walk the 900-mile route of the Cherokee Trail of Tears, where 4,000 Cherokee died in 1838. Ellis' book about his trek was nominated by the publisher for a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award.

Songwriters Round

Monday, June 14, 6-8:30 p.m.

This month's songwriters Round features singer-songwriter Coby Greer, a northeast Alabama native and additional yet-to-be announced songwriters. The round is hosted by award-winning singer-songwriter Craig Hendricks of Mentone. The live round is both entertaining and educational, as it highlights insights on the songwriting craft. Admission is free for June, though tips for songwriters and donations are always appreciated.



Fairy House Workshop

Tuesday, June 15, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Join artist/instructor Barbara Umland for a fun and creative workshop as you create your own magical fairy house. The one-day workshop includes all the supplies (though you are welcome to bring some items from your own yard) and a light lunch. \$75 per student. The class is limited to 10 students. You must pre-pay to be confirmed for the class. To make a reservation, email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

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



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SENIOR HEALTH

Guard Your Covid-19 Vaccination Card

by Lynn Hixon

After you get your Covid-19 vaccine, keep your vaccination card safe—scammers are using the Covid-19 pandemic to try to steal your personal information.

Don't share a photo of your Covid-19 vaccination card online or on social media. Do not give your personal, medical, or financial information to anyone claiming to offer money or gifts in exchange for your participation in a Covid-19 vaccine survey. Be suspicious of any unexpected calls or visitors offering Covid-19 tests or supplies. Do not respond to or open hyperlinks in text messages about Covid-19 from unknown individuals. Ignore offers or advertisements for Covid-19 testing or treatments on social media sites.

You should get a Covid-19 vaccination

card at your first vaccine appointment. If you didn't, contact the provider site where you got vaccinated or your state health department to find out how to get a card. Valid proof of Covid-19 vaccination can only be provided to individuals by legitimate providers administering vaccines.

Beneficiaries should be cautious of unsolicited requests for their personal information. Medicare will not call beneficiaries to offer Covid-19 related products, services, or benefit review.

If someone contacts you to buy or sell a vaccination card, it's a scam.

If you suspect Covid-19 health care fraud, call the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590 and ask to speak to Lynn.

Senior Centers Begin to Re-open

by Emily McCamy

We are very excited to announce that SOME of our programs will re-open in JUNE!

Some Senior Centers will open their doors on June 1 if Governor Ivey releases us on May 31 from the 42-page guidelines. Check with your Senior Center after June 1 to find out when they will re-open.

Those centers will continue to serve meals in June the way they have been serving them. HOT meals will not begin until sometime in July. Each center will discuss the meals with their clients in mid-June in preparation for the changes.

Following is a list of start dates for Activities at the Council on Aging in Fort Payne:

- Ballroom Class—June 7
- Caregiver Support Group—June 3
- Duos & Solos (current members)—June 3
- Line Dance Classes—June 1
- Low Impact Exercise Class—June 7
- Parkinson's Support Group—June 10
- Round Dance Class—June 1 (Experienced dancers start any month. New dancers begin in June.)
- Tai Chi Class—June 15
- Veterans Breakfast Social—June 10

For a full calendar, visit this link:
bit.ly/3oNOLM9.

Emily McCamy is the Director of the DeKalb County Council on Aging.

You are invited to
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
at Moon Lake Baptist Church

June 6 – 11 from 6–8:30 p.m.
For Pre-k through Youth

Contact Karen Holcomb at 256-844-2872
for more information.

Do you worry about
someone else's drinking?
You are not alone.

AL-ANON MEETING
St. Joseph's Church
21145 Scenic Drive, Mentone AL 35984
Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.

Call for Submissions!

The Groundhog is YOUR community newspaper, and it needs your voice! Please consider submitting an article—OR an idea for an article—that you think would interest your neighbors. Do you have a traditional skill you'd like to tell others about? Perhaps a recipe or an original poem or photograph? If so, please mail Kelly at groundhognews@yahoo.com or call 256-289-2002 with any questions. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

Climb I17

Maybe old GA 48.

Slide down I57

Slip in the Parkway

Maybe one of the gaps

Or come up through the Cove

Ease your way down the brow

Take old Beer can road

I've swam Taylor's ford

Camped at the wooden bridge

Fished off the broken dam

Jumped off Alpine bridge

I can take you to Bell Rock

Slipped in the blue hole

I know right where flatlanding ford is

Tied my first drunk on at the pothole

I remember being up at Tom's drive-in

Inside Bowman's old store

How it looked in McGee's

Getting Full service gas at Whatleys

Remember Connie Mack's as Irene's

The Tradecenter as Son Lib

When Bill Russell owned Helena's

William Blackburn's Superette

So if you coming down Cove road

Past the old home place

Hang a right once you pass Johnson's

Instead of heading on Taylor's ford way

If you turn in at the drive-in

Go around by the sawmill

Once you pass Stillhouse road

You'll see the new ground on the left

Coming up through the camps.

Hang the curve past Spud's

Take a right at the ball field

You can't miss us

I've traveled the world

Seen almost all there is to see

Spent most of my life

Doing what satisfied me

I've ran a million miles

Stayed twenty years out

Only to learn I belong

Where I first started out

—ANONYMOUS

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6 FULLY FURNISHED CABINS ON THE BROW IN MENTONE. 7 tracts total approx. 22 acres. Wood exteriors, wood interior walls & floors, vaulted ceilings, gas log fireplaces, full kitchen amenities w/ granite countertops, impeccable cabin decor AND hot tubs on the back decks with focus on the spectacular VIEWS! Cabins are currently in rental program w/ strong rental history. \$1,499,000. MLS #1772318



STORYBOOK HOME built with the mountain's views in mind. 3 BR, 3 BA home with artistic touches throughout. Relaxing large deck, screen porch & sunroom or by the stone fireplace in the cozy living room. Attached garage, attic/storage space, gorgeous siding/stone exterior, full basement and 1 acre +/- lot. Oversized kitchen w/ seating options at bar or breakfast nook, walk-in pantry, and amazing counter space. \$550,000. MLS #1779265



NEW

WATERFRONT! Immaculate one-level residence at Lake on the Brow w/ two lots. Custom-built home w/ hardwood floors, open kitchen/dining/living area, 3 BR, 2 BA. Kitchen w/ large island, corian countertops & backsplash. Living room w/ rock fireplace w/ gas logs. Office & laundry rooms. Screen porch w/ covered deck and a rock patio overlooking the water for entertaining. #339,900. MLS#1780264



THIS 2 BR/2 BA HOME ON 2.3 ACRES is ready for Mentone living. The outdoor kitchen, large front deck and screened back porch are perfect for summer entertaining. Begin your next hobby in the multiuse storage shed or work space. The beautiful wood interior and three fireplaces will keep you warm on those cool nights in the North Alabama mountains. \$179,000. MLS# 1779284



NEW

PICTURESQUE VIEW! One-level home on approx. 3.5+/- acres w/ 180° of breathtaking views. A real gardener's dream! Updated kitchen w/new cabinets, countertops & appliances. Breakfast nook, formal dining room, living room w/gas log fireplace. Sunroom. Attached garage & a detached garage w/bonus room & bath & workshop. Whole house generator. \$435,000. MLS# 1780031



KNOWN AS HIGHPOINT AND ONE OF THE MOST CELESTIAL AREAS FOR STAR GAZING... This 7 BR, 6 BA manor boasts onyx porcelain & tile baths, walk-in showers, granite & marble counter tops/vanities. Attached private living quarters with full amenities PLUS detached guest cabin. \$729,000. MLS #1119192



THIS DUPLEX OFFERS paved driveway, metal roof, gutters, county water, and well with filtration system. "Big Bear" is 2 BR 2 Bath, central heat and air open kitchen, dining and living room, rock fireplace w/ gas logs, hardwood floors. "Little Bear" is 1 BR 1 BA, recessed lighting, ceiling fans, central heat/air, hardwood floors, smooth ceilings. \$329,900. MLS #1778704



MOUNTAIN LAUREL INN is nestled in the woods above Little River. Main residence w/ BR/BA, living, kitchen, utility & sunroom. Guest house w/ 4BR, each w/private entrance & bath AND a 2-room studio apartment w/ kitchenette. Also included is a Gathering house with living and kitchenette. Approx. 7 acres borders DeSoto State Park. \$379,000. MLS #1153859



NEW

ON THE BROW, facing East to the Georgia Mountains, and looking into Shinbone Valley, this large cabin features 4 BR, 3 BA, great room w/ wooden beams, fireplace, tin ceilings, gathering areas, multiple decks, all new windows & appliances. A perfect family retreat, the cabin also has possibilities as a weekend rental! \$450,000. MLS# 1780743



LOTS & LAND

#1034997—Approx. 6 acres on Middle Fork of Little River. \$48,900

#1076286— Beautiful Building Spot in Mentone! Perfectly located 1.75 acre building lot in West Fork Subdivision with over 400 feet of river frontage! \$39,900.

#1092235—Building lot in Laurel Creek Lakes. \$19,900

#1111628—AMAZING VIEWS! YES, VIEWS!!! REDUCED TO \$79,900.

#1149803—GORGEOUS LOT IN MENTONE with .81+/- acres in Hunter's Ridge Subdivision. \$15,000

#1150871—WHAT AN ADDRESS FOR YOUR NEXT HOME! Enjoy peace and quiet and the sound of rushing waters on this 3-acre lot on West Fork of Little River in Mentone. Bring your plans and move to Mentone today! \$48,500

#1150850—BEAUTIFUL BROW PROPERTY on County Road 103. You are within 5 minutes of Little River Falls! This is a great opportunity to purchase land and build that mountain cabin or dream home you desire! Seller will consider owner finance at full ask price with 20% down at 5.5% interest rate! Priced at \$52,900

#1150900—ATTENTION LAND LOVERS...For those of you seeking peace and quiet surroundings on West Fork Little River here's your chance to build the home of your dreams. This 2-acre tract is too wonderful to pass you by. \$48,500

#1150911— PANAROMIC VIEWS FOR MILES & MILES! Along with views of Battelle below in the valley. Bring your home plans and enjoy nature on this 8.9 tract of land. \$199,500

#1150912—WOW! What Amazing VIEWS you have for miles and miles! Beautiful views of Battelle below. Great place to build your forever home on this 8.8 acres of prime brow property. \$195,000

1156528—9.93 acres with a spring! Great Building Spot! \$65,900

#1774186—Beautiful North Brow in Mentone! 3-acre brow lot with view of the valley below. Build that getaway cabin or the forever home of your dreams! \$125,000

#1776065—Lot 59 in Crestline Park Subdivision in Mentone. This location is just off of the scenic County Road 89. This subdivision offers light restrictions including no mobile homes, no commercial buildings or temporary

structures. Insuring permanent or vacation living only for you and your neighboring properties. Property is owned by a licensed home builder offering "will build to suit". Call us today and start picking out a house plan! \$39,900

#1777646—BEAUTIFUL LOT on Scenic Rd. 89 across from the Brow. Owner is a licensed contractor, and willing to build to suit. The driveway is already in place. Trees are in the process of being cleared for a building spot. \$45,000

#1779301—Enjoy the natural beauty of Brush Creek from your building site on this wooded property. Located on a private road just minutes from downtown Mentone. \$19,900

#1781133 HERE IS A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TODAY! 200 ACRES LOCATED NEAR HISTORIC MENTONE ALABAMA! 200 acres of prime real estate will be sold to one lucky buyer. Mature trees, creek, paved road frontage, minutes from Interstate 59. Land like this doesn't become available very often. Call your favorite Realtor® today! \$1,000,000.

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Farewell Moon Lake *(continued from page 5)*

completed in the year 2000.

At the turn of the century, the non-profit Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF) began providing a teacher who offered weekly art, music, and Spanish classes. The fine arts program remained a part of the school's curriculum until its closing. MERF also arranged after-school tutors and funded field trips and other activities.

Another exciting development for the students, teachers, and the community at large was the completion in 2002 of the library and media center, which was designed to be used by the community during after-school hours. At the time, this was one of two libraries in the State of Alabama to be in a partnership between a school and its community. The library was funded in large part by the citizens of Mentone and other dedicated donors.

Since the school's inception, parents have had a strong interest in supporting the school. A long-standing tradition was the PTO's Harvest Festival, with games, cake walks, and raffles which raised funds that have helped to improve the school building and provide teaching aids. In 2005, a record

\$24,280 was raised at the Harvest Festival. In 2010, central heat and air conditioning were installed in the main building.

Of particular note in the school's history, under the leadership of Principal Mary Lance, was the designation of an "A" grade by the State Board of Education for the past three years. Moon Lake School has been the only school in DeKalb County to receive this recognition.

Through the years, Moon Lake principals have included T.O. Kuykendall, Ralph Mauldin, Premon Hall, Allen Hyatt, Myree Dooley, Maria Ellis, Robert Shigley, Eugene Smith, Curtis Stoner, Pat Priest, Aubrey Elam, Edward Ringer, Kathryn Jones, Charles Bell, Bill Berry, Brenda Wisner, and Mary Lance. Several teachers have had especially long tenures at the school, including Wallace Turner, Ernest Shigley, Charles Adams, Edith Lyday, Foye Jones, Kathryn Jones, Juanita Smith, Joyce Smith, Bill Berry, and Karen Prestwood.

Moon Lake School began as an old-fashioned country school and flourished with the engagement of its teachers, students and families, and with the ever-present support of its community. It has been

difficult for the Mentone community to lose its beloved and historical school, in spite of its long-standing successes, as the national trend toward the consolidation of schools has found its way to this small mountain town.

In this writer's mind, though, it is certain that the Mentone community will continue to find ways to provide educational resources for its future generations of children and offer ways for them to succeed. For the past several decades, the school's motto has been "Firmly planted, forward moving"—a sentiment that has influenced many children, and will certainly continue to do so, no matter where they continue their education.

Farewell, Moon Lake School—and thank you.



In Memoriam

JAMES POMEROY CARMICHAEL JR.

September 6, 1926 ~ May 17, 2021



James Pomeroy Carmichael, Junior, a lifelong resident of Valley Head, passed away on Monday, May 17, 2021.

He is survived by two daughters, Linda Carmichael Thomas (Bob) and Emma Suzanne Carmichael; his grandchildren, William Robert Thomas (Katherine), Kathryn Thomas Lucas (Trent), Lucy Ricketts Steffens (Brandon), John Carmichael Ricketts (Sarah) and Mary Virginia Pauline Ricketts; his great-grandchildren, Stella Elizabeth Thomas, Perry Elizabeth Lucas, Oliver Henry LeFevre-Ricketts and Theodore James LeFevre-Ricketts. He is also survived by daughters-in-law, Betsy Bethea Kopecky and Elaine Ashe Taylor. He is predeceased by his wife of 60 years, Doris Helms Carmichael and his second wife, Betty Smith Carmichael; his sons, James Larry Carmichael and William Gary Carmichael; and

his grandson, James Henry Ricketts.

Mr. Carmichael owned a full-service station in Valley Head and served 47 years on the Board of Directors for the Sand Mountain Electric Co-op. He served his country as a member of the U.S. Merchant Marine Corp during WWII. He was a member of the Valley Head Masonic Lodge and served as a deacon of the First Baptist Church of Fort Payne. He loved Valley Head and was proud to be a part of its civic life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to the James P. and Doris H. Carmichael Family Endowed Scholarship (which will be given to DeKalb students who attend the University of Alabama). Checks should be made to The Alumni Fund (denote the Carmichael Family Endowed Scholarship) and mailed to NAA Endowed Scholarship Program, P. O. Box 861928, Tuscaloosa, AL 35486, Attention: Deborah Parr.

JULIA ANN MCMAHAN

January 19, 1945 ~ May 1, 2021

Julia Ann McMahan, age 76, of Valley Head, passed away on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at DeKalb Regional Medical Center. She was born in Mentone on January 19, 1945 to Allie Ernest Gregory and Hattie Mae Hornsby Gregory.

She is survived by her husband, Douglas McMahan; son, Shane McMahan; daughters, Lisa Moore (John) and Lindsey Webb (Jeremy); brother, Joe Gregory (Ethel); nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

WILLIE MEDFORD GASS

March 14, 1939 ~ May 8, 2021



Willie Medford Gass, age 82 of Menlo, GA passed away on Saturday, May 8, 2021 at his residence.

Mr. Gass was born March 14, 1939 in Valley Head to the late Bill and Charlsie Chapman Gass. He served in the National Guard and was a member of Chesterfield Baptist Church. He was retired from Best Manufacturing and was a member of the Best Silver club.

Along with his parents he is preceded in death by his brothers, Hugh Gass and Gene Gass; sisters, Betty Foster and Elouise Melling; and granddaughter, Scarlett Gass.

Survivors include his wife, Glenda Gass; children, Mike Gass, Kay (Scott) Pope, and Julie (Chris Smith) Hunter; grandchildren, Alisha Brock, Tessa Brock, Lee Gass, Kayla Price, Taylor Hunter, Dalton Hunter, Luke Gass, Courtney Trammel; 10 great-grandchildren; and a 14-year-old dachshund named Toby.

AGNES ELIZABETH JOHNSON FARMER

February 25, 1943 ~ May 26, 2021



Agnes Elizabeth Johnson Farmer, age 78 of Menlo, GA passed away Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at her residence.

Mrs. Farmer was born February 25, 1943 in Cherokee County, AL, to the late James Posey and Florence Mae Deering Johnson Farmer. She was retired from Best Manufacturing and loved to sew, quilt, and work in her flowers.

Along with her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband, Doyle L. Farmer; son, John Farmer; grandson, Jesse Smith; siblings, Albert Johnson, George Johnson, Thelma Scruggs, Virginia Nichols, and Gladys Bentley; and nephew, Kenny Black.

Survivors include her sons, Frank (Carrie) Farmer and Matthew Farmer; daughter, Anita (Houston) Smith; sisters, Teresa Jan Black, and Mary (Hammond) Youngblood; and three grandchildren.



MERF News

[Mentone Educational Resources Foundation]
by Sarah Wilcox



Thank you everyone who popped into the MERF house Pop UP shop in May to get their new “Leave Me in Mentone” attire. The most popular t-shirt colors were the purple and the hot pink, so I have reordered those colors and a few more. Little River Hardware and DeSoto State Park Country Store are restocked.

And the Mentone Arts Center will soon be carrying the hats and two colors of shirts. The Arts Center is also adding the hand-painted bird wine glasses donated and painted by Beth Harrison to their great selection of artwork. Any MERF pieces sold in the gallery directly benefit the programs of MERF.

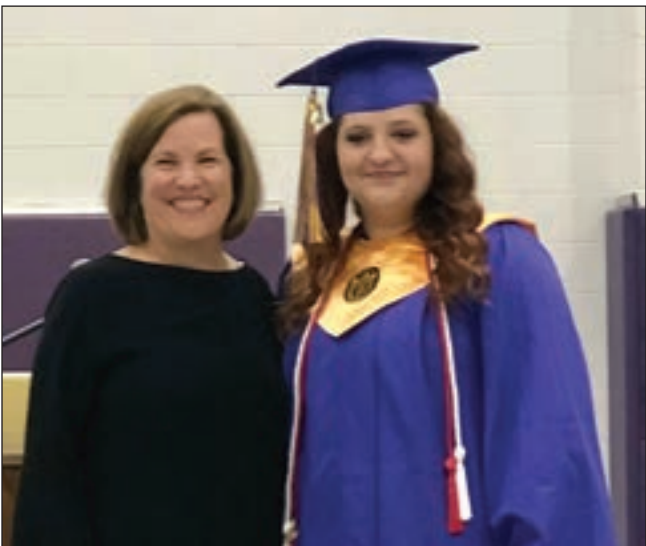
Did you hear all the fun we were having on Wednesday, May 5, as our lunch bunch crew was reunited on the grounds of the MERF house for senior lunch and entertainment! All the tables and chairs were moved outside with colorful tabletops and fabulous hot dogs and hamburgers grilled by the Boy Scouts David Gilbreath, Charlie Runnels, and Bill Berry with lots of help from their kitchen crew. It was so good to be with everyone in person and we will have another lunch in June provided by St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church women. Check Facebook for the date or let Sarah know that you want to be on the phone list for senior lunches. Speaking of lists, if you did not receive a MERF newsletter by email on May 13, email merf.mentone@gmail.com to be added to the newsletter list. Newsletters are emailed when there is news to be known! Such as Congratulations to MERF Board Member, Walt Pullen, on his marriage to the wonderful Gelane Nelson on May 1st! He is one happy man and we are so happy for them both!

As I am writing this in May, last week was busy and bittersweet with Awards Day and the last days for Moon Lake Elementary School students and staff. Jan Wilkinson, Paula Easter, and I had fun getting all the students to do a thumbprint or knuckle print on a picket commemorating the last group of students at MLES. Two pickets also depicted the GOATs (Greatest of All Time) faculty and staff of Moon Lake Elementary School with artistry and word descriptions of them. This set of pickets will have a special spot on the Pathway to Community after they are clear-coated.

Thursday, May 20, was a busy day as Moon Lake Elementary School and Valley Head High School had Awards day at the same time but two different places!

Mrs. Lance graciously put me first on the agenda at Moon Lake so I could then hurry down to Valley Head and present the other awards. I knew Paula Easter had been given a special project to work on, but I never suspected that I would be the recipient as I even offered to help her with it. Fortunately, our good friend Jan could give Paula some assistance and encouragement. The tears would have flowed if I did not need to keep my composure for the great award that I was about to present. To my complete surprise, I was given the most special gift from the school for the many years of serving the school as MERF’s president and eventually as executive director. All the students had painted a special square and signed it, with the middle portion of the picture being a painting of the MERF house in its new colors with my dog, George, and me waving from the front lawn. There could have been nothing sweeter than this gift! I am so grateful to have spent many years working with the students, teachers, staff, and parents at Moon Lake! You all have enriched my life tremendously. Thank you.

Awards day was special this year as I represented the Holland family and MERF in presenting three awards and two college scholarships. As discussed in last month’s Groundhog, the Holland Family has asked MERF to manage the Carter Holland Memorial Educational Fund in memory of their 24-year-old son. The Mountain Spirit Award for a 6th, 8th, and 12th grader is to be awarded to the student who the teachers believed had the same strong qualities as Carter of character, wit, kindness, and leadership. The Moon Lake Elementary School teachers nominated 6th grader, Zach Pullen, to receive the Mountain Spirit Award of a set of Beats by Dr. Dre headphones to enhance his learning. He is witty, a good friend, and a gentle leader, they said. The Valley Head High School teachers elected Cayden Collins for (continued on page 22)



Pictured top to bottom:
Valley Head 12th grader Kylee Elkins receives the Mountain Spirit Award.

Moon Lake 6th grader Zach Pullen receives the Mountain Spirit Award. Zach is a 4th-generation Moon Lake student!

Valley Head 8th grader Cadyn Collins receives the Mountain Spirit Award.

The Carter Holland Memorial Educational Scholarships were awarded to Luke Harrison and Britza Hernandez.



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Mentone Croquet! Contact Barry Morton for time and location—barrymorton74@gmail.com.

MERF News (continued from page 23)

the 8th grade Mountain Spirit Award and Kylee Elkins for the 12th grade Award. Cayden also received a set of Beats by Dr. Dre headphones and Kylee received a check for \$500 to help with college or a future job. Cayden was described as respectful, humorous, friendly, and helpful. Teachers noted that Kylee always thinks of others, is sensitive, a hard worker, always positive and inclusive. It was a delight to award these well-deserving students.

College or technical school-bound graduating seniors also had an opportunity to apply for and to receive the Carter Holland Memorial Educational Scholarship. Luke Harrison and Britza Hernandez both received a \$750 scholarship to further their education. The scholarship committee was impressed with both applicants and how they plan to give back to their community. Luke, while playing football at Maryville College, desires to become a teacher and come back to Valley Head to teach and coach. Britza, studying at Northeast Alabama Community College this next year, plans to eventually pursue a law degree to become an



Senior Lunch bunch crew reunites on the lawn of the newly painted MERF house.



Paula Easter and Principal Mary Lance present a wonderful gift from the Moon Lake students to the MERF lady, Sarah Wilcox

Immigration lawyer. They both exemplify the ambition and giving spirit of Carter Holland. Congratulations to the students for being great examples of good citizens with a concern for their friends and neighbors. Thanks to the Holland family for remembering Carter with these special awards and scholarships.

Sarah Wilcox is the executive director of MERF, the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is "To enrich the learning and living of the community by identifying needs and coordinating resources." If you would like to support MERF's programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984 or contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193.



Miss Rhododendron (Virtual) Pageant

by Sharon Habin



Miss Rhododendron 2021 Emily Wheat is officially crowned by Miss Rhododendron 2020 Madisen Smith

Our Judges

Teresa Little is a resident of Rome, GA, and the owner of Glitz and Glamour Prom and Pageant store. She has been in the pageant industry for more than 25 years and has judged both local and state and national level pageants. She also enjoys organizing and directing local and state pageants. Her two daughters have competed in both local and state level pageants and upheld many titles.

Genevieve Wilhelm has been in the pageant industry for over 15 years and has had multiple state and national titles. After graduating with a degree in interior design from the University of Nebraska, she started her career at the top interior design firm in Lincoln. She and her husband Josh recently moved to Chattanooga, TN, where they are enjoying remodeling their new home and spoiling their fur babies. Genevieve is very involved in her church and has a passion for environmental causes. She hopes to inspire and encourage young women to reach their highest potential in whatever goals they have for themselves.

Ashley Megan Little is a Rome native and a graduate from Kennesaw State University with a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. She currently teaches 2nd grade at Leroy Massey Elementary in Summerville Georgia. Ashley has been married to her husband Jordan for 9 years, they have 2 beautiful children Evie and Jackson. Some of her hobbies include traveling and spending time with her family. She is a huge Disney fan and is a travel agent for Mad Hatter Adventures.

The Miss Rhododendron Pageant, hosted by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA), was held on May 6. Traditionally, contestants range in age from toddlers to high school seniors, but this year only the Senior Division took place. It was held via Zoom.

Judges Teresa Little, Genevieve Wilhelm, and Ashley Megan held individual Zoom interviews with our contestants. Each contestant was required to submit a paper, short video, or other type of creative expression that shows or tells how she has learned to adjust to the changes the coronavirus pandemic has made to her daily life with regard to her school, family, and friends. These presentations followed the interview.

Later that evening, during the award ceremony via Zoom, Madisen Smith, Miss Rhododendron 2020, announced the 2021 winner: Emily Wheat! Congratulations to all of the worthy contestants.

A few days later, the young women gathered at Brow Park in Mentone to meet and have their photos taken. Unfortunately, Lauren Hall was unable to be there.

On May 11, at Fort Payne High School's Award Night for the Class of 2021, Emily was presented with a 2021–2022 full scholarship to Northeast Alabama Community College, a benefit that comes with being crowned Miss Rhododendron.

Thank you to the MAPA board of directors, the Pageant Committee, our judges, and Miss Rhododendron 2020.

MAPA is grateful for the community's continued financial support through membership, donations, and Groundhog advertisements and subscriptions.

A heartfelt thank you to NACC for allowing MAPA to be able to give this scholarship to a deserving Miss Rhododendron each year.

Sharon Habin is the Event Organizer for the Mentone Area Preservation Association.



Miss Rhododendron 2021 Emily Wheat, Contestant Carlie Johnson, and Miss Rhododendron 2020 Madisen Smith

Miss Rhododendron 2021



Emily Wheat graduated from Fort Payne High School and enjoys designing, drawing, hanging out with friends and family, playing outside with her dog, and going on walks in her neighborhood. After graduating from high school, she plans to attend Northeast

Alabama Community College for one year and then transfer to Auburn University to pursue an education in Graphic Design. Emily submitted a Power Point presentation:

The Pandemic... Towards the end of 11th grade, the world was taken over by a virus that nobody had ever heard of. This virus was Covid-19. People from all over the United States were sent into shock because of the pandemic we were facing. This virus has affected many individuals around the world with lives and jobs being lost. While it has affected many grown adults, it has also affected young adults, like myself.

How it went... My peers and I have faced one of the most unusual times that has existed related to education. In May of my 11th grade year, our school system completely shut down due to Coronavirus. My classes were strictly virtual and had to be completed online. I was glad to be getting out

of school, just as every other student was. Had I known what was to come, I would have had a different mindset.

Effects on my education... Completing my work online was a challenge. The actual content itself wasn't very difficult, but retaining that content was harder than ever. I quickly realized how lucky I was to have been learning from an actual instructor earlier on in the year. Another issue that I had when first beginning virtual school was time management. It was very easy for me to lose track of time. The sole responsibility of pacing myself to complete lessons on time was left up to me. Teacher interaction was non-existent and while there are many factors that affected my actual education, beginning virtual learning also altered my social life.

Effects on my social life... Although teaching and learning is an important function of any school, the social aspect

of attending school is also very important. When my school went to completely virtual learning due to Coronavirus, my in-person social life was taken out of my hands. I could no longer talk to my best friends at school. Sports activities were cancelled along with other activities that I was looking forward to, such as the prom.

Missing these special times with my friends is probably what impacted me the most as related to the coronavirus. Although we were able to resume school for my senior year, it has not been normal. Masks have been required the entire school year. Students are required to sit 6' apart. Many activities have been cancelled throughout the year.

(continued on page 25)



Miss Rhododendron Pageant (cont'd from pg. 24)

Effects on family life....My family was very supportive of me when COVID-19 hit the United States. I was scared, just as everyone else was, about the virus and how severe it was. On top of being scared, I was having to continue my education, which was a very difficult task. My parents helped me and reminded me not to worry. While corona had a lot of negative effects, it actually impacted my family and I in a positive way. I got to spend more time with them at home. We all got a little break to enjoy one another's company.

How The Pandemic Has Changed Me....The pandemic has changed me and so many other people in the world. Even though it brought hard times, I grew as a person and learned many important lessons. It has made me more grateful for the little things such as being able to be with family and friends, attend church, shop, and eat in restaurants. I am more thankful and take less for granted. It also taught me to be more considerate and generous to the people around me. I am thankful for the lessons that I have learned as a young adult in this pandemic, and I know it has changed me for the better.



Carlie Johnson graduated from Geraldine High School. She enjoys spending time with her family and loves to workout.

Carlie plans to attend Northeast Alabama Community College to obtain a nursing degree. Her future ambitions are to become an OB nurse and to work at UAB hospital. Carlie submitted an essay:

As everyone knows, when the coronavirus hit the

whole world practically shut down and everyone had to adjust to a new way of living. The year 2020 was a very hard year for many people including myself. Our school year was cut short causing me to miss out on a lot of things, such as prom, banquets, field trips, and not seeing my friends everyday. I had to finish the school year through remote learning which was a little challenging and I had to adapt to staying at home only going to limited places. Even though my family and I enjoyed spending quality time with one another and finding new ventures each day, the uncertainty of the coronavirus and the pandemic it had created was very scary for us all. Not only was I living in scary and uncertain times but I felt disconnected from the world. I wasn't able to see any of my family or friends, attend church, have family get-togethers, no Easter service at church, no Thanksgiving, no Christmas, it all just didn't seem real. I felt like I was living in a nightmare.

With school being cut short in 2020 it made it very difficult to get started this school year.

I didn't know what to expect plus we had been out of school for over four months and I felt as if I had fallen behind because I had missed a lot academically due to the early shut down. It was definitely different and there were many changes. We could only walk one way in the hallway, some days we had to eat lunch in the classroom and other days we would eat in the lunchroom, our desks were six feet apart in the classroom, social distancing was practiced everywhere

on campus and we were required to wear masks all day, every day. Also virtual (e-learning) and Zoom meetings became the new way of doing things. Even though this course of action was the best alternative for our learning, it came with many challenges. First, I was not prepared to complete all of my learning online, I completed some of my work and assignments online at school before shut down, but not an entire day of work, therefore my online class workload was much larger than regular class. Secondly, the internet service was an issue, some days it was good and other days you had no service at all which made it very difficult to complete my assignments. Thirdly, not having a teacher present was challenging because I couldn't just raise my hand in class and ask a question, I had to send an email to my teacher and wait on a response.

Lastly, the lack of interaction with my classmates, teachers, and coaches was an uneasy feeling.

In a normal school setting I had routine chats with my teachers, friends and coaches throughout the day. We would talk about assignments, sporting events, and of course everyday gossip. With remote learning being implemented all of my everyday interactions were taken from me. My friends and I could still talk through social media but not being able to hang out or have face-to-face conversations will leave you feeling isolated.

Even though I have had to make changes to my everyday life due to the coronavirus pandemic, I feel like it has made me stronger. With the challenges and loss I have faced over the past year I feel I can overcome any obstacle life throws at me through prayer and an optimistic attitude.

Lauren Hall graduated from Plainview High School in Fyffe. Some of her favorite ways to pass time include art activities like Bible journaling, sidewalk chalking, and painting. She also enjoys playing tennis, hanging out with friends, hiking and canoeing.

Regarding her future ambitions, she said, "My first goal is to attend the local community college. For years, I have hoped to also participate in the Disney College Program because I love Disney, the feelings it creates through beauty, music and film and the way it helps families celebrate the best parts of life. In order to participate, applicants must have completed one year of college. I hope that Miss Rhododendron will help me get that year of college accomplished.

"Beyond my education, I hope to someday have a family, be a mom and wife and homemaker. Family is my favorite part of life. I hope to be blessed with my own and get to serve them with all of my gifts and knowledge." Lauren submitted an essay:

While this pandemic has impacted everyone, it has really been a test in patience for me as a high school senior. This year has been filled with changes like wearing masks at school and missing the tradition of a family Christmas dinner. Determined to finish well, my classmates and I have made a point to make the very best of it. We have all learned how to be flexible for the well-being of others.

In March of 2020 my classmates and I were juniors just hearing about a novel virus that had arrived in



our country. The national news reports soon became local news reports and we knew our lives were about to change. School was cancelled and masks became the norm. Over the summer my friends and I followed the updates concerning the spread of Corona and the rising death toll. We were hopeful that by summer's end the World Health Organization would find and supply a solution that would return normalcy to our lives. Summer came and went but the virus was here to stay. School started with talk of social distancing, required face coverings and many new regulations within the school building like off limit water fountains and unavailable lockers to lessen social engagements. We were told that many of the activities that make senior year so memorable would not be possible. Pep rallies were outlawed but ball games remained. We definitely brought our school spirit to the football stands! Since we had been unable to enjoy themed pep rallies, we had themed spirit nights at the games. Because the student section was our only opportunity to display our school spirit, everyone was eager to participate. The first game of the season four of my fellow seniors brought 50 five-gallon barrels and sticks to help cheer on our team. By the last game they had developed an unmatchable, synchronized rhythm. From that point on our student section became known as "the Gallons of Sound". By winter, the virus was at a new peak. Basketball games were lower in attendance and left us feeling the loss. Adapting to the rise in cases, school was becoming more strict with the mask mandate. Students were being sent to in-school suspension if they were caught without a face covering. Moral was at an all-time low. However, we would soon find refreshing hope in news no one expected. Sitting in class, our principal announced we would be having a mandatory meeting for all juniors and seniors. Everyone knew he was going to address prom. Eagerness was evident on all of our faces. As our meeting drew to an end, he finally told us that we would get to have a prom with the stipulation that each individual have their temperature taken at the door and masks worn. My senior prom wasn't typical, but we were so thrilled to have one it didn't matter. Again we made the best of what we were given.

The new normal for everyone is not knowing. This pandemic has taught many of us how to better deal with the unexpected. The most significant event to any senior is graduation, the day you have strived toward for the past twelve years. Last year, as a junior I watched my senior friends have to choose who would get to watch them receive their diploma. I'd hoped that wouldn't be the case for the class of 2021. As of the present, my graduation ceremony will not be limited. However, our principal has made us aware that plans could change at any moment. Being unsure is a very common feeling for me now.

So many of us are longing for the world to be as it was two years ago. We have all experienced loss, disappointment, and fear throughout this pandemic. The simple joys of life, like spending time with my grandparents or standing beside my friends at a pep rally, will not be taken for granted in the future. I am not a patient person by nature, so the past year has taught me things I will carry the rest of my life.

Thankfully, vaccinations have become available to the public. The physical well-being of our country as well as its mental stability is climbing up from the dark place to claim victory once again.

This period of adjustment may have been the most valuable part of my high school education. I am aware so many people have faced devastating loss due to Covid-19 but I am thankful for the lessons that came with the difficulties of the past year.

..... Recipes from Our Neighbors

Crab and Corn Bisque (in a hurry!)

Submitted by Fran Woulard

- 1 can cream of shrimp soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 2 cans creamed corn
- 2 cans shoepeg corn
- 1 container either lump or claw crab meat. If unavailable, can substitute petite shrimp or crawfish tails.
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 ribs chopped celery
- 2-3 large cloves of minced garlic
- 1 stick butter
- Italian seasoning and parsley; enough to just cover the top of bisque
- 1-2 capfuls of liquid crab boil depending on heat you want
- 4 oz. or half an 8-oz. block of Velveeta
- Low-fat half and half
- Rice to serve on top of, because literally everything you cook in Louisiana goes on top of rice. I use Jasmine as it is less sticky.

Saute onions and celery in butter.

Add all cans of soup, corn, seasonings, liquid crab boil and crabmeat.

While simmering, slice up the 4 oz. of velveeta and add. Stir till melted and mixed, then turn off heat.

Add half and half until the thickness is what you desire.

Serve in bowl and put a scoop of cooked rice in center, because everything in Louisiana, my home state, is served with rice.

Green salad and garlic bread to the side.

Crawfish tails can be purchased at Sams, as can the petite shrimp and crab.

Chicken Cheese Dip

Submitted by Tessa Hughes

One large can of chicken breast meat, drained and mashed/separated with a fork

1 and 1/2 boxes of cream cheese, softened

1 small Vidalia or sweet onion, chopped

1 cup of Parmesan cheese + extra for topping

1 cup of sour cream

Dash of Worcestershire sauce

1/8 tsp of garlic

Dash salt & pepper

Combine all ingredients in glass baking dish.

Sprinkle extra Parmesan cheese on top. Bake at 350° until bubbly. Serve warm with Wheat Thins or Fritos. Enjoy!

Yum Yum Sauce

Submitted by Cat Findley 1 cup mayonnaise

- As a dipping sauce for shrimp
- Drizzled over fried rice and noodles
- With grilled chicken, meat and seafood
- Slathered on hamburger and hot dog buns
- With French fries and sweet potato fries
- As a dipping sauce for potstickers and wontons
- As a vegetable dip
- With sushi and rice balls
- In pasta salads

2 Tbsp tomato paste

1 Tbsp rice vinegar

1 tsp paprika

1 tsp garlic powder

1 Tbsp sugar

1 Tbsp melted butter

salt and pepper

2-3 Tbsp water

In a small bowl whisk the mayonnaise, rice vinegar, tomato paste, paprika, garlic powder, sugar, butter and salt and pepper.

Add water as needed to get the desired consistency.

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Triple Layer Banana Cream Pie Bars

Submitted by Sandy Pruitt

1-1/2 cups crushed Nilla Wafers
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1/3 cup butter, melted

Mix and press into a 9" x 13" pan. Bake at 325° for 8 minutes. Cool 10 minutes.

3 bananas, sliced
3 cup cold milk
2 small pkg. instant vanilla pudding
2-1/2 cup whipped topping

Top cooled crust with banana slices. Pour milk into a large bowl. Add pudding mixes and beat with a wire whisk for 2 minutes. Spread 2 cups pudding over the banana layer. Gently stir 1 cup of the whipped topping into the remaining pudding. Spoon this mixture over the pudding. Top with remaining whipped topping. Refrigerate 3 hours before serving. Serves 12.

Strawberries

Submitted by Susan Van Apeldoorn

Nelda Howe loved to entertain. She was a member of the garden club and the bridge club. These recipes were some of the snacks served at those meetings.

Aunt Neddo probably got this recipe from Brownie Clay.

Shape Mayer Liver Sausage into strawberries. Roll in cracker crumbs which have been colored with red food coloring and allowed to dry at room temperature (day or two.) They will appear dark red—but don't worry, just distribute coloring evenly through crumbs with fingers or fork and get out the lumps (I would say 1 cup crumbs—1 teaspoon coloring). Place a small piece of parsley for leaf. Spread a cracker or bread round with cream cheese and place berry on this. Brownie used American Harvest Snack Crackers (Nabisco). They were really delicious and pretty.

Cheese Crackers

Submitted by Susan Van Apeldoorn

1/4 lb. butter
1 lb. sharp cheese, grated
2 cups flour
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp cayenne pepper (I only use 1/2 tsp)
1 cup shredded nuts

Cream butter and cheese. Mix salt, pepper and flour & add to mixture. Add nuts. Make into a ball. Wrap in waxed paper and chill for 12 hours. Slice. Bake at 350° for 5 or 6 minutes.

This dough may be wrapped around dates that have been stuffed with pecan halves. Omit nuts in the batter. Pinch a small amount of dough off and flatten in the hand. Roll around dates and bake like cheese crackers.

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River Voice by Angie Shugart

"We must begin thinking like a river if we are to leave a legacy of beauty and life for future generations."

-David Brower

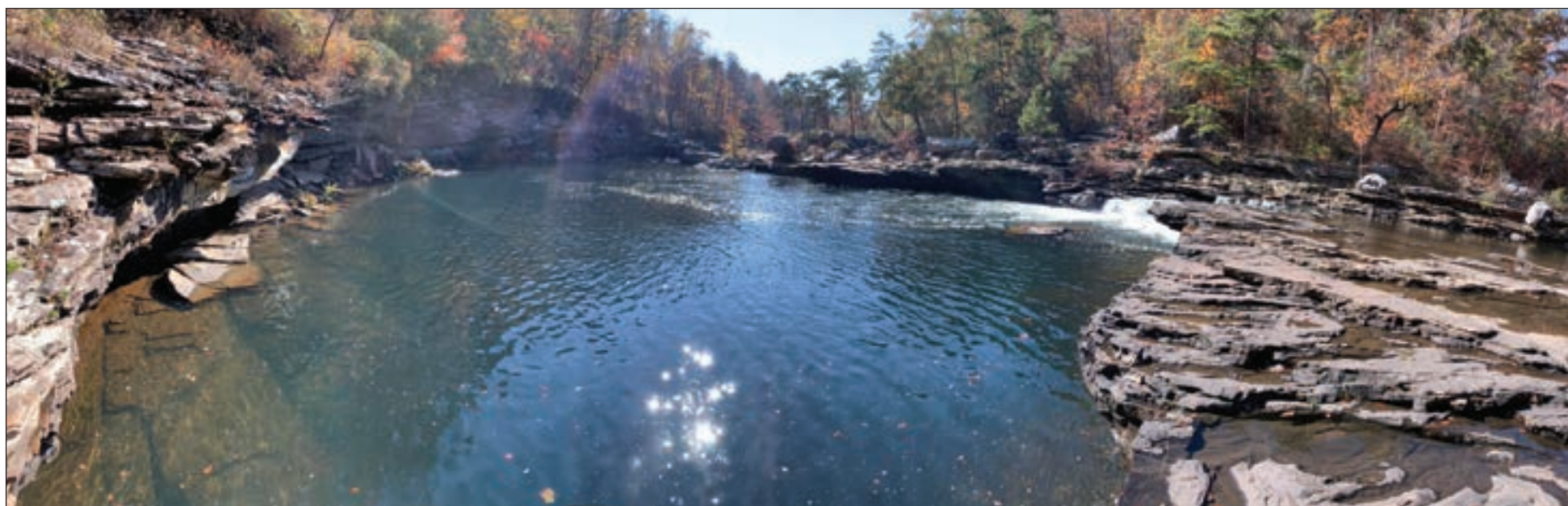
Little River is unique. Little River is special. Little River in its entirety, is worth protecting. In 2019, we created a documentary with a group of extraordinary filmmakers about Little River to raise awareness about a campaign that will preserve the Little River corridor for future generations. The film is called "Something About Little River." While filming, we talked about the economic benefit that Little River brings to the community, the flora and fauna that can't be found anywhere else, the history, and that feeling you get when you enter the imaginary gates of Lookout Mountain. The takeaway was not only a beautiful film full of heartwarming stories about the lifeblood of our community, but a call to action. Keep Little River Wild is the campaign underway to designate Little River as a National Wild and Scenic River. The rivers that are nominated for this designation must possess one or more of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values: Scenic, Recreational, Historical, Cultural, Fish and Wildlife, and Geologic. Little River has them all! Since the campaign started, we have gauged public

interest and the results are resounding: YES, protect Little River! Over the past year, we have gathered letters of support for this effort from the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, the DeKalb County Commission, the city of Fort Payne, DeKalb Tourism, and we have met with our Congressional leaders in the state in order to get legislation passed for a three-year river study that will determine its eligibility for inclusion in the list of National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The designation would allow funding to pass through the National Park Service each year for projects that enhance and protect the river within the communities surrounding Little River. This would be a big win for our area and the river!

Time for Summer SwimGuide

Little River Waterkeeper will keep you up to date on weekly water quality results. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, we take water samples on Little River from your favorite swimming holes to determine weekly water quality. Each

(continued on page 31)



Mentone United Methodist Church



We welcome you to join us each Sunday
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 11 a.m.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.—Romans 15:13

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Birthdays

1

Sible Hopper
Kayla Hellums
Rebecca Guinn
Braden Busby
Madie Durham
Josh Williamson
Chad King
Lizzie Kate Williams
Jacob Lee
Blade Cowart
Andrea Stephens
Dolas Bain

2

Skylar Venable
Steve Tate
Glen Black

3

Brittney Coleman
Donald Stephens
Byron Haynes
Jack Johnston, Jr.
Missy Wooten

4

Lisa Crowder
Cecily Knowles

5

Doris Chamlee
Hannah Filmore
Hadley Gregory
Haley Hilliard
Aileen Robinson
Micah Wooten

6

Angela Valentine
Keegan Johnson
Christy Harrison
Brayden Harrison
Kenneth Busby
Caitlyn Collins
Nick Brown
David Dean
Mike Campbell

7

Luke Johnson
Donnie Goodman
Austin Cox
Nicole Phillips
Brantley Hawkins
Tony Garner
Camille King

8

Ally Chadwick
Ethan Harrison
Gail Smalley
Rachel Lusk
David Dean
Vince Wright

9

Sydney Vest
Denita Manifold
Brandon Collins
David Hatfield
Lori Walters

10

Amanda Gray
Michelle Chappell
Patty Tucker
Joyce Wright
Rebekah Weldon
Lisa Black Smith
Caitie Belle Jennings

11

Andrea Woods

12

Jim Connor
Emie Sanderson
Rooke Abernathy

13

Kristi Chambers
Taylor Gardner

14

Luke Harrison
Jerry Stokes
Braxton Pridmore

15

Campbell Smith
Brad Wright
Barnabas Bettis
Hernan Cruz

16

Sara Langston
Kayla Crow
Mason Vest
Emily Hulgan
Ruby Smith

17

Hope Turner
Andy Beason
Megan Gilreath
Annie Gilbert
Kindal Hamilton

18

Ashley Ingram
Ozell Thornberry
Josh Smith
Carlotta McGee

19

Sierra Chambers
Ashley Wooten
Reid Hendon

20

Keri Miller
Brandy Rosson
Wendy Holloway
Megan Bain

21

Katherine McDorman
Nick Langston
Hannah Stinson
Betty Morrison
Trey Kincer

22

Judy Smith
Zachary Potts
Nathan Keith
David Meja
Ellie O'Daniel

23

Benny Goss
Violet Carden

24

Brenda Goss
Kenneth Chambers
Cecily Goza
Patti Watkins
Ethan Black

25

Briley Harrison
Stephanie Poe
Jerelyn Turner

26

Andrew Crowe
Paige Simpson
Kirk Watkis

27

Ashtynn Carden
Christine Scott

28

Josh Baggett
Chris Stokes
Shea Noles
Connor Hill

29

Jacob Bain
JoAnn Bain
Jean Crabtree
Jacqueline Tipton
Melinda Whitt

30

Cooper Hilyer
Rebecca Crawford
Levi Hulgan
Naomi Garcia
Roy Stalvey
Gavin Gatlin

Anniversaries

1

Wink & Stacie Painter

2

Lawrence & Felicia Harrison

5

Alfie & Kristi Chambers

6

Jo Peterson & Cindy Jackson
Tom & Joyce Tate

11

Ralph & Carolyn Baine

12

Steve & Debra Rhodes
Tom & Jacqueline Tipton
Levi & Jordan Hulgan

14

Josh & Angel Baggett

15

Michael & Jennifer Owen

18

Chad & Amber Smith
Phil & Krissy Harris
Benjie & Pam Mason

19

Josh & Emmy Smith
John & Trish Sprague
Matt & Traci Hulgan
Neal & Melinda Whitt

20

Brandon & Sherinda Hawkins

22

Andy & Jimmie Sue Beason

23

Rusty & Angela Chambers

26

Jim & Darlene Rotch

30

Dwight & Jean Powell
Michael & Patty Tucker
Donald & Margie Daniel



Community Calendar

Mentone Town Council

meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm at 5607 AL Hwy 117, across from Town Hall..

Valley Head Town Council

meets monthly on the 1st Monday at 6pm at Valley Head Town Hall.

Hammondville Town Council

meets monthly on the 1st Tuesday at 6pm at Hammondville Town Hall.

DeSoto Rescue Squad

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

The North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District Board

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

FREE FOOD for eligible persons and families.

Wednesdays, 9–11am. New applicants are welcome during these hours. Joint effort between St. Joseph’s-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church (Community Outreach Ministry) and the Food Bank of North Alabama.

Ryleigh’s Closet

is a clothing closet that provides men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing to those in need on 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 4–7pm. Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

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Valley Head Town Hall
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Little River Waterkeeper (continued from page 28)

Friday, we post test results for: E coli, total coliform, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, conductivity, and nitrates to determine if the site meets state water quality standards. Results can be found on our website at littleriverwaterkeeper.org/swimguide and theswimguide.org/affiliates/LittleRiverWaterkeeper

Join Swim Club

Sponsor a weekly water sample for only \$10 by becoming a member of Swim Club! Your financial support helps us monitor Little River. By joining Swim Club, each \$10 donation funds one test site. You may choose to make a one-time or a recurring donation. Your generous gift will be highlighted on our social media pages with a picture of the sponsored water sample. Just go to our website and click on SwimClub in the "Get Involved" page.

How to Stay Safe on Little River

Little River is great fun but can be very dangerous. Each year, we lose lives in Little River because of drownings. This can be avoided by following simple guidelines.

Avoid strong currents! Little River is full of undertows. The river can fluctuate fast after a rain event. You can check the river flow on a river app such as Flow Alert. The gauge at Blue Hole/ Little River is the most accurate and measures flow at cubic feet per second. If the water is flowing more than 500 cfs, take caution and wear a life jacket! Once the river is at 800 and up, do not swim.

Do not drink alcoholic beverages.

Unfortunately, most drownings occur when a swimmer is under the influence of alcohol.

Stay Hydrated. Dehydration leads to accidents. Choose water or sport drinks. Avoid alcohol, sodas and energy drinks.

River Etiquette

Leave No Trace. Take pictures, leave only footprints is a saying that is simple and easy to remember.

Do Not Litter. Take pride in the natural beauty and pack out everything you bring in. Scan the area and make sure you leave nothing behind. Leave the river better than you found it.

Private Property. Respect landowners in the river corridor and do not exit your boat onto private property unless there is an emergency.

**UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENT...
Chef & Brewers Dinner on Little River**

Join us for a Chef and Brewers Dinner on Little River. Summer on Little River has arrived and we have cabin fever! Please gather with us on Friday, June 25, for our upcoming fundraiser, "Chef and Brewers Dinner" at Nippersink Lodge in Mentone, on the West Fork of Little River! It's going to be a wonderful night of musical entertainment with our featured guest, Terry Hutcheson, and an extraordinary farm-to-table four-course meal, catered by Roadside Que. Also, when you purchase a ticket, you will get a chance to win a weekend getaway to your choice of two special cabins in Talladega National Forest or the Bankhead National Forest. Check out the menu below. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please RSVP by Friday June 11, at eventbrite.com/e/chef-and-brewers-dinner-on-little-river-tickets-154333047299.

Menu**Hors d'œuvres**

- House Cured Bacon Wrapped Royal Red Shrimp
*Featuring Fudge Family Farms
- Caprese Skewer with Heirloom Tomatoes, Fresh Mozzarella and Balsamic Reduction

Soup and Salad

- Summer Strawberry Soup *Featuring Mountain Sun Farm
- Local Green Salad with Cherokee Purple Tomato and Microgreens with Brisket & Bleu Cheese
*Featuring Barn House Farms, Cumberland Bleu Cheese, and Tennessee River Market

Main Course

- Grilled Red Snapper with a low country fish rub and mango citrus relish, served with Seasonal Vegetable. *Featuring Mountain Sun Farm

Dessert

- Hibiscus Lavender Gelato

Beverages

- Each course will be paired with a craft beer or wine and we will serve water, sweet tea or unsweet tea.

Angie Shugart is the executive director of Little River Waterkeeper, a 501(c)(3) water advocacy program and a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a global clean water movement. Learn more at littleriverwaterkeeper.org. Donations are tax-deductible. 215 Grand Ave. SW Fort Payne, AL 35967.

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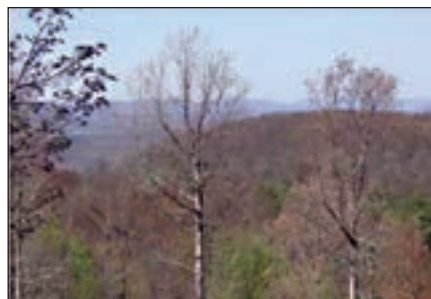
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Fort Payne, AL 35967 #808434

A view from Lookout Mountain with owner financing available! Wooded Bluff lot with 1.3 acres, paved road frontage, city water and only \$30,000.

4621 CITADEL ROCK ROAD
Fort Payne, AL 35967 #600562

DeSoto Bluffs - Citadel Rock Road - Near DeSoto State Park - 1.07 Acre wooded tract, perfect for cabin. Across the road from the brow and Only \$17,500.

4200 CITADEL ROCK ROAD
Fort Payne, AL 35967 #788861

DeSoto Bluffs. Just south of DeSoto State Park. Brow lot on Citadel Rock Road on Lookout Mtn. Overlooking North Fort Payne, 4-acre tract, partially cleared with driveway. Lots of room and great view. Only \$85,000.

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