



THE GROUNDHOG

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"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

July 2019

BLACK BEARS ARE COMING HOME

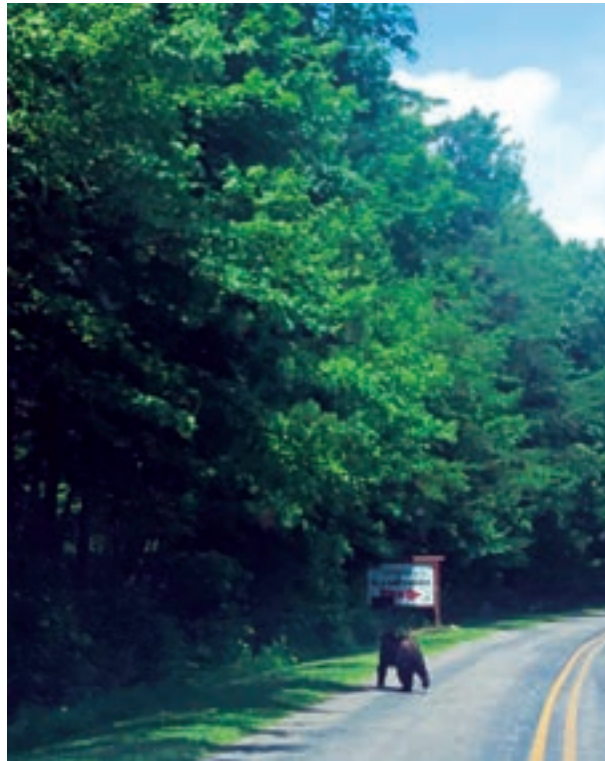
by Kelly Leavitt

On the afternoon of June 19, Crystal Lee was driving along County Road 165, approaching Tranquility Campground near Mentone. She thought she saw a large dog move into the woods at the side of the road, but realized it was a mama bear when a cub circled back onto the road, allowing Crystal to grab her phone from her dashboard and take a picture. "I knew if I didn't get a picture, my husband wouldn't believe me," she said with a chuckle.

Auburn University graduate student Hannah Leeper is currently studying the bears in our area for her master's thesis, which will focus on cub survival and juvenile dispersal. Crystal's photo is the first Hannah has seen that's been taken on a well-travelled road, although she has seen photos from wildlife cameras and heard tales of sightings.

"My study is focused on the reproductive ecology of northeast Alabama's black bears to get a better idea of how big the local population is and how quickly it's growing," Hannah said. "We do know it's growing, but we don't know how quickly, so we're looking at the rate of growth and spatial growth—where are they expanding to." The

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Crystal Lee photographed this bear cub on County Road 165 near Mentone.

Mentone: Where Little River Runs

Documentary Film Premieres July 6

by Kelly Leavitt

In 2018, the Town of Mentone organized a committee to collaborate on a project celebrating the state's bi-centennial anniversary, and the group decided a film would be best suited for Mentone. Holley Midgley has volunteered much of the last year writing, directing and producing a documentary film, "Mentone: Where Little River Runs," about the history of the Mentone area.

In developing the script, Holley said he was surprised about how much photographic and printed material was available. "Zora Strayhorn's book was absolutely invaluable," he said. "Nelda Howell's book came in handy, too. Sometimes things in those publications pointed me in other directions. And people have come out of the woodwork with film, old photographs, old letters, and diaries."

One of the central themes of the film is that Mentone has from its very beginning been a destination town. "Tourists come here to get out of the heat and the hustle and bustle of the city, and to enjoy the scenic beauty that we have here," Holley said. "Tourism has been critical to this town since the very beginning, and still is today."

Little River is another central theme in the film. "It's what drew people here," Holley explained. "It's what people think of when they think of Mentone—that and DeSoto Falls, which is an extension of the river."

Holley was also interested in how people survived in this area in the 19th and early 20th centuries. "I talked with Doug Brandon, DeKalb County's historian, and he gave me some good background. One of the points he made," said Holley, "was that this was an isolated part of the world. It was hard to get here until the railroad was finished in 1870. The roads on top of the mountain were abysmal. Getting around on the mountain was tough. Until A.A. Miller developed the dam at

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TRASH TALKS

by Vicky Patrick

I pick up trash on a regular basis on most of County Road 106. It's over three years since I started. My route is a 9-mile circuit. I've realized that the repetitive trash I pick up tells me a story about the travelers who drive this road.

There is a section of road that I call the bottle graveyard. Scattered along both sides are bottles, half-buried and broken. It looks like the remains of get-togethers by the groupings of the bottles. It's easy to imagine folks sitting around in a circle having a "good old time" partaking of beverages in glass bottles before aluminum cans became popular. Some bottles are new; others are many years old.

Now aluminum cans are more popular, and the typical can I see is a beer can. My copious beer drinkers must be watching their calories and waistlines, as most of the beer is light beer. Occasionally there will be a half case of unopened Natural Light cans right past County Road 177. Makes one wonder if a person is ditching the evidence before going

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THE GROUNDHOG



The Groundhog is published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA). First conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982, *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 37 years. MAPA is dedicated to preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area. MAPA is chartered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

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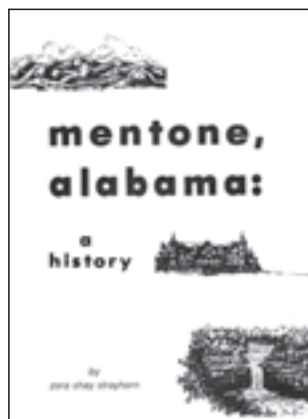
Do you have a story idea?

Perhaps a poem or recipe?

We welcome contributions!

Email groundhognews@yahoo.com

Learn about the History of Mentone



On sale at the Wildflower Café, Moon Lake Library, Green Leaf Grill, Little River Hardware, Mentone Market, DeSoto State Park, Earthly Elements & Bell Battelle. \$15; proceeds benefit MAPA.

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

Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice.

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond



Summer is flying by. The camps are close to being half way through their seasons. Hopefully work on the new water line on Cutler Avenue will be completed in the near future. Construction on the bridge should begin soon on the west side of the river. I have had several recent discussions with Ladd Environmental on the sidewalk project.

At the last meeting the council elected Kristen Emory town clerk to fill Wilma's unexpired term. Hours at Town Hall will be 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. five days a week.

Kristen is a great addition to the town team.



Letter from the Editor

Driving along our mountain roads can be so peaceful. And yet it can also feel rather grueling, especially when I'm driving quickly, as I find myself playing the game of "Is it a stick, or a snake? Is it a caterpillar, or a mark in the road? Is it a rock, or a turtle? A stone, or a frog?" And then there are the kamikaze birds who seem to want to dive for the bugs caught in car grills. Not to mention those indecisive squirrels who can't quickly decide if it's wiser to run for my tire or to the safety of the side of the road. Whew, it can be tough!

But the peace of it all outweighs the tension, for sure. Driving the back roads into Mentone from our home, I regularly see turkeys, deer, cows, foxes, possums, horses, and even the occasional groundhog. I've heard of an ostrich sighting on our road, but I haven't seen it. I've also heard that a mama bear and her cub were seen on our road, but I have yet to see a bear in Mentone.

Growing up in Los Angeles, I remember the first time I saw a squirrel. I was at a friend's house and saw a squirrel running along the power line. I literally thought someone's pet squirrel had gotten loose. Clearly, we didn't have squirrels in our neighborhood.

The city was never a good fit for me, even as a child. I always loved going up into the Santa Monica Mountains and experiencing...dirt. It's as if the

simplicity of it filled my soul.

Most of the places I've lived since I was a child have been more rural than urban, and I'm grateful that's been a possibility for me. To be honest, the more time I spend in the woods in Mentone, the more difficult I find it to be in a city. City light feels harsh to my eyes. What used to be normal now feels so different.

I'm glad to live somewhere where all I need to do is ease on down the road, so I can easily avoid any snakes, turtles, or frogs, and I can enjoy the view along the way. There is a great simplicity to this. Thank you to all of you who have crossed my path and made my life in Mentone a little sweeter. The folks in northeast Alabama are truly some of the kindest I've ever known.

There are lots of opportunities this month to connect with each other. A pop-up art exhibit, farmers markets, a free concert, a book club, guided hikes, a summer social (and pie contest!), wildlife talks, games at the library, and art classes. Perhaps the biggest event of all is the premiere of the documentary Holley Midgley has been working on for almost a year. Many hands have gone into the film, and I expect a huge crowd will gather to watch, together, the story of our town of Mentone. What a great (and simple) way to spend an evening. Enjoy!

—Kelly



Mentone Area Preservation Association by Mark Hoffman

Thanks to all of the MAPA members that came out and attended the annual members' meeting on Sunday evening, June 23. It was great to have the chance for the board and members to spend some time together and talk about what we've been able to accomplish this past year, and opportunities for what's to come in the future. Also, thanks to Moon and the Wildflower Café for donating the food and refreshments, Rob Hammond and the Town Council for allowing us to use the recently purchased "Kamama" building as the venue for the get together! Susan Seago, MAPA Treasurer, spoke about and explained the specifics of all the grants that MAPA was able to make to local non-profit organizations from July, 2018 through June, 2019, which comprises our fiscal year, in the cumulative amount of \$14,492.02. Kelly Leavitt gave a presentation on the "State of the Groundhog" (I'm pleased to report that it is excellent! Thank you Kelly). All current board members then noted their willingness to serve for

another term, and were unanimously re-elected by the members, along with a new additional member, Beverly Haynes, who moved to Mentone with her husband David a little over a year ago. We look forward to her insight and contributions and working with her in our ongoing efforts on behalf of MAPA and the greater Mentone community.

On a sad and personal note, my friend and kind thoughtful, giving man, Charles Flannigan, passed away peacefully in his sleep this past Monday with family members at his side. Charles has meant so much to the Mentone community, and to me personally, for many decades. We will miss him terribly.

In parting, I sincerely hope everyone has a wonderful (and safe!) 4th of July. Hope to see you soon.

Mark Hoffman is president of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.



MAPA Grants Given This Fiscal Year (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019) by Susan Seago

During the past 12 months, MAPA has given grants to five non-profit organizations in Mentone for a total amount of \$14,492.02. Those recipients are:

1. Little River Arts Council for \$200 to restore and repaint the worn out games on Moon Lake School's circular asphalt drive, and enlist the community to help. Monies were used for asphalt paint and supplies.
2. Moon Lake School Library for \$968.47 to update and expand the holdings of the Moon Lake School Library related to the topic of state history and geography. They have added 61 books from Titlewave, a source of library bound books that will last for many years.
3. Mentone Bicentennial Committee was granted \$2,000 to help with producing the video for the bicentennial celebration in July.
4. Little River Waterkeeper was granted a total of \$2,129.10 to purchase testing materials for the summer water testing program and Swim Guide. They post test results on social media sites in order to educate the public about the condition of Little River's most popular swimming areas and raise

awareness about the amazing attributes of Little River and the issues it faces.

5. A total of \$9,194.45 was granted to DeSoto Rescue Squad. \$3,894.45 was requested to replace the failing batteries and charger of their LifePak 12 cardiac monitors used when responding to calls for assistance. \$300 was given to provide food and drink for the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads third quarter state meeting. The remaining \$5,000 was given to provide funds for the rescue squad to build a temperature controlled storage/office in a large metal building on the Captain's property. It will be used for squad business, to obtain DEA licensure, order initial required medications, and order equipment bags to securely carry the new medications. The additional required medications would allow the DeSoto Rescue Squad to be licensed at the Paramedic level and provide on scene care in all situations, including cardiac arrest to the Paramedic level. Currently, they are only able to provide care to the Intermediate level.

Susan Seago is treasurer of the Mentone Area Preservation Association.

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MAPA

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Kristen Emory is Mentone's New Town Clerk



Kristen Emory assumed the position of town clerk for Mentone in late June, following Wilma Fletcher's retirement. Kristen and her husband, Tom, have lived in Mentone for 17 years, having moved from Selma with their children who were 2 and 4 at the time.

"My parents [Jim and Joan Byrum] had bought a second home here, so we visited a lot," said Kristen. "We wanted to move to the mountain and learned the Superette was for sale. We fell in love with Moon Lake School and Dr. Berry. That's really what

(continued on page 4)

Rhododendron Garden Club by Rhea Pirch



Four years ago last April, I was asked if I'd like to go with the Rhododendron Garden Club on their annual tour of the "Pocket," the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail at Pigeon Mountain. I jumped at the chance, since I'd heard so much about its beauty but hadn't been there yet.

I filled my camera with images of the wildflowers that year, both bountiful and beautiful. The wealth of knowledge that came from the members of the garden club was most impressive. What few flowers they couldn't identify, they looked up in a wildflower guide and found their answer quickly.

I was intrigued by the appreciation, knowledge, and camaraderie of the group, so I decided to attend my first meeting the following month, then promptly joined the club. I've discovered since then all the benefits this garden club offers its members and the community of Mentone.

The Rhododendron Garden Club is a part of

National Garden Clubs, Inc. Their mission is to "provide education, resources, and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic, and environmental responsibility." The educational goals are met with enthusiasm with each program presented at our meetings. In the past year alone, members have presented programs varying from "Seed Saving" to "Flower Design" to "Moss Gardens" to "Plant Diversity in Alabama." Each month we have a different subject, new and informative to each of us. We also present a monthly horticulture report and conservation report, so we can stay informed of news and trends in these important facets of gardening and the environment.

Further educational opportunities abound through conferences and courses offered through national and state-wide garden organizations. Whether you want to learn more about environmental concerns or delve more deeply into landscape or flower design, visit a garden, or learn more about growing a particular plant or garden of your own, there will most likely be something available nearby.

A most important aspect of the Rhododendron Garden Club is sharing our time and talents to improve our community. Our members volunteer their time to work with Moon Lake Elementary School students in their after-school program, to educate them in gardening and the environment. We have contributed to the Senior Lunch program offered by MERF (providing food and table decorations) and have adopted the flower bed at the post office. We also take part in the yearly Mentone Clean-up Day, picking up the litter along the stretch of Highway 117

from the post office to the site of the proposed Mentone Arts & Cultural Center, and do a yearly clean-up of the MERF House and post office gardens.

There is also the "show-off" aspect of the garden club. The yearly flower show at the DeKalb County Fair gives us each an opportunity to participate in and exhibit the splendid flower designs we've learned to arrange and/or the horticulture we've grown over the year (those dazzling dahlias or resplendent roses), with the anticipation of winning a (blue) ribbon (or two).

If you are already a seasoned gardener, or a novice, or want to learn about gardening, care about conservation and the environment, or simply want to share your knowledge and talk gardens with other garden-minded people, we urge you to join the Rhododendron Garden Club. We meet the second Tuesday of each month at the MERF House in Mentone. Our next meeting is Tuesday, July 9, at 10 a.m. We hope to see you there!

Rhea Pirch serves as secretary for the Rhododendron Garden Club. The Rhododendron Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Region, The Garden Club of Alabama—District II and the Northeast Federation of Garden Clubs.



Kristen Emory: New Town Clerk (continued from page 3)

got us excited about Mentone...the school. "So, we bought the store and moved to Mentone. We moved on Friday and on Tuesday we started running the store, which we renamed Mentone Market." After running it for 16 years, including losing it to fire and then rebuilding, Tom and Kristen sold the store in fall of 2018. Since then, Kristen has been "resting, and housecleaning, and resting," while continuing to serve as the president of the MERF board, a position she has held for the past six years.

"I'm excited about my new job," she said. "I look forward to seeing people again and being out in the public. I love our mayor and think working for him and the town council will be fun. I'm going to be a notary. As soon as my notary stamp comes, I'll be able to notarize things at no charge, just like Wilma did. Trying to fill her shoes will be hard. The town clerk in VH is very supportive and very helpful. She'll come up and help me whenever I need it."

"I'm looking forward to walking to work in the fall," Kristen said. "It's still too hot now, though!"

The Lookout Mountain Knitters



The Lookout Mountain Knitters meets on Tuesday afternoons at 3 p.m. at Moon Lake Community Library. You don't need to be a knitter to join, but if you enjoy any kind of needlecraft, feel free to bring your yarn and needles and enjoy time socializing while doing handwork.

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Fire Department Awarded FEMA Grant by Vicky Patrick and Ken Trowbridge

The North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District was awarded a grant for wildland gear by FEMA. This grant allows the Fire District to purchase fire resistant jackets and pants, boots, canteens, back packs, and fire shelters.

The volunteers were fitted for jackets, boots and pants, and the gear is presently on order. Funds are also

allocated for the purchase of heavy-duty leaf blowers and chain saws. It may seem odd, but one of our most effective firefighting tools are leaf blowers! Since most woodland fires in our forest involve burning leaf litter and underbrush, leaf blowers are very effective in clearing firebreaks to limit the spread of fires.

Mentone: Where Little River Runs (continued from page 1)

DeSoto Falls in the mid-1920s, it was really hard to get to the falls. You essentially walked through the woods."

Holley commented on the impermanence of the structures and other evidence of early settlement in the Mentone area, and credits the photographs that were made at the time as being vital to the process of documentation. "Without the photos, we wouldn't know about much that once existed. There are only a few written accounts, here and there," according to Holley.

"One of the biggest resources I had in doing this program," he continued, "was access to the collection of photographs and postcards that Judge David Raines has, down in Fort Payne. Apparently, in the early part of the century, photographers would come through and make a picture of everything. Anything that was visible, they would make a picture of it and turn it into a postcard. Judge Raines has a heck of a collection of photos he found at garage sales, antique shops, and estate sales. So, for the photographic part of this film, I owe him a great debt. Everybody does."

This project has been entirely funded by grants from the Alabama Humanities Foundation, a state partner with the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA); the Menlo-Tillotson Charitable Foundation; and the Alabama Bicentennial Commission. With a budget of \$10,000, money has been spent on supplies, like ink cartridges and paper, travel, use of a recording studio and musicians for an original song Holley wrote, and editing. In late summer, a DVD copy of the program will be mailed to every home and post office box on the Mentone mail routes. After the mailing, extra copies will be available at Mentone Town Hall until supplies run out.

"Mentone: Where Little River Runs" will premiere on Saturday, July 6, at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the Mentone Inn. Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy live music by Larry Joe Hall between 7 and 8 p.m. A fish fry (\$10/plate) will be served by Fontana Stinson beginning at 6 p.m. The movie will start at 8 p.m.

Little River Arts Council Summer Music Series Kathy Veazey & John Rawlston



FREE Concert for all ages
Saturday, July 13 • 7-10pm

at DeSoto State Park's CCC Pavilion
(in Picnic area across from the Country Store)

Kathy Veazey and John Rawlston are singer/songwriter/musicians from Chattanooga, TN. Both are members of the harmony-intensive group Sistren and the soulful roots-rock band Lumbar Five. A duo performance by Kathy and John shows a softer and jazzier side to their music, featuring songs they don't perform with either group. They take turns with lead and harmony vocals, and play electric and acoustic guitars, keyboard and slide guitar. Sponsored by Little River Arts Council, made possible in part by the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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The Linger Longer Pop-Up Art Series, sponsored by the Little River Arts Council, continues to showcase a local artist the first Saturday morning of each month at the pavilion behind the Mentone Inn. Artists will be at the pavilion with art demonstrations and work for sale from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., but they are welcome to “linger longer” if they so choose. Woodcarver Don Highfield will be featured on July 6 and Meg Tannehill Justice on August 3.

Linger Longer Pop-Up Art Series Schedule

July 6 **Don Highfield** WOODCARVING
August 3 **Meg Tannehill Justice** PRINTMAKING
September 7 **Taylor Allison** BLACKSMITHING
October 5 **Eugenia Johnston** WATERCOLOR & MORE

Don Highfield • July 6

Don began carving in 1995 at Horsin’ Around, the carousel horse carving school in Chattanooga, TN. After carving his own horse, currently on display at Nena’s produce in Valley Head, he stayed on at the school as a volunteer instructor and also carved Olivia, the female ostrich who now graces the Coolidge Park Carousel in Chattanooga. Don soon branched out into walking sticks and canes, Celtic crosses and relief panels, and figurines, as well as cottage signs.



Meg Tannehill Justice August 3

Meg Tannehill Justice is a childhood doodler turned grown-up artist/illustrator. She grew up in the south and currently lives in Scottsboro. She and her husband Jerry share a passion for the mountains and hope to live full-time

in the countryside where I live. Favorite subjects include animals, plants, mysteries of nature and the stories they tell. My creative process always starts with an original drawing, either from sketching in the field or from the imagination. Every drawing has been carved into a linoleum block and is printed by hand. Each one is slightly different from the next, making every print one of a kind and unique.”

You can find Meg’s online Etsy Shop at MegTannehillJustice and follow her art process on Instagram and Facebook.

on their Mentone property soon. An Auburn University graduate, Meg has a degree in fine art and illustration. “I’ve created art for as long as I can remember. It’s always been a part of my life and heart. Most of my art career has been centered around painting,” she explains. In 2016, Meg began focusing on printmaking. “My art is influenced by all things from nature and the



Mentone Home Tour—Call for Homes & Studios

The Little River Arts Council is accepting nominations for its home and artists’ studio tour October 26 and 27. We hope to include at least three homes of artists willing to open their studio space for the tour. If you know of a home that would make a great destination on this year’s tour, email Wil Henry Cobble at wilhenry@boonlink.net or use this link to access an online nomination form: bit.ly/2019LRACTOUR (case sensitive). Deadline for nomination is July 15.

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MERF News

by Sarah Wilcox



The Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF) is grateful for the many people and organizations that believe in the work being done in Mentone. On May 22, the Harland Jones Fund at the Community Foundation in Anniston choose MERF as a grant recipient this next year to provide Arts Education to all ages and to provide free tutoring to the local students.

G 58! "Bingo, Bingo, Bingo—I've got Bingo!" That was the excited voice heard many times on June 13 in the MERF house, where the lunch bunch crew played BINGO with the summer program children at Moon Lake Elementary School's 21st Century Fun. After several rousing rounds of BINGO, the big (seniors) and little kids headed outside when they heard the beloved melodic music of an ice cream truck! Everyone was able to pick their favorite cold, sweet treat, such as firecracker, fudgesicle, cookies and cream, or an orange creamsicle. The "A Little Something Extra Ice Cream" truck was started by Michelle Norwood and her son, Hunter. It is a mobile ice cream business set up at local events created to give social experiences, life skills, and work skills to people with disabilities. Hunter and crew served us well at the MERF house. See their smiling faces on Facebook.

While Bingo was shaking up the MERF house, Anne McLeod, Amanda Massa, Christy Plunkett, Robert Moehr, and Charlie Stone were creating some great footage for a "Big Idea" grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama. It is one-time grant celebrating 20 years of the Longleaf Fund from the Community Foundation. MERF, Little River Arts Council, the Moon Lake Community Library, and many community members worked on the video, which was submitted on June 22. MERF's "Big Idea" (which we call "A Pathway to Community") is to enhance MERF's underused walking trail with outdoor musical instruments, colorful

murals, new Adirondack chairs, picnic tables and benches, a creative, attractive fence, outdoor lighting, and more native plants to make the trail more appealing and enjoyable. Mentone needs a safe place to walk and to connect. The Bingo

group had a starring role in the drone footage by Charlie Stone. We have to wait until November to know if MERF and the collaborating local organization sold the funders on the Big Idea. In the mean time, stop by the library and Kelly Leavitt can show you the 5-minute video. You'll definitely want to join in when the time comes to create some of the ideas, like the murals and the fence.

MERF promises more fun in July, too. Join Paula Easter for an art class on Wednesday, July 17, at 10 a.m., followed by a light but fun lunch with the senior lunch bunch crew at 11:30. And MERF will be participating in the Community gathering hosted by the Moon Lake Library outside on the walking track on Saturday, July 20, from 1 until 3 p.m. Come enjoy and get to know your neighbors! And for any mom with young ones, the MERF moms are meeting weekly at the MERF house on Thursdays beginning at 10. For more info, contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com. Just like ice cream, stay cool and be sweet!



After playing Bingo together, Sydney Crow offers Jack Martin a popsicle from the ice cream truck to "stay cool."



Solei and Hunter, from the 21st century summer program at Moon Lake organized by Mary Lance, drooling over the abundant offerings from "A little something extra" ice cream truck.



My boards may be a little creaky and my paint a little flaky but I am full of life. I continue to open my doors to the young and the wise so my walls are full of joy, laughter and learning.



Kindergartener Merrick learned well from Ms. Paula's teaching about artist Edward Hopper and his love of painting boats like this tramp steamer. After their trip on the Tennessee River, students painted their own with oil paste, watercolor wash and collage.

Sarah Wilcox is Executive Director of MERF, a local 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 our programs, tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 107, Mentone, AL 35984, or you may contribute online at merfhouse.org. Contact Sarah at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-635-8193 for more information.

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The Graceful Giraffe

by Debra Fey

other African countries.

In the fall of 2011, my late husband, Rick, and I moved from Atlanta to Mentone and we brought with us this dream. In the spring of 2013, we opened our shop and The Graceful Giraffe was born!

I am so proud of all the good The Graceful Giraffe has done over these 6 and a half years. Artists from all over the world have been represented in our shop, and the philosophy of fair trade which we follow has empowered many artists, allowing them to better support their families and to improve conditions in their own communities. Global fair trade allows parents to provide better housing, send their children to school, improve their community's sanitation and infrastructure, and so on. We have supported orphanages in some of the poorest districts in Kenya through after school and lunch programs. Our small shop alone has contributed hundreds of school meals. I am very proud of these achievements and how The Graceful Giraffe has touched many lives on a global scale.

Recognizing that Mentone is

a community full of artists, The Graceful Giraffe has also provided a platform for 17 local artists to showcase and sell their work.

We have gladly supported many worthwhile organizations here in Mentone by contributing items for silent auctions, etc. We have proudly donated a portion of our proceeds from some sales to national charities like Friends of the Animals and Doctors Without Borders, and have proudly supported our favorite local charity, the Tri-State Humane Society, through some of our favorite lines of merchandise. Giving back when we are blessed with so much is the foundation upon which my business is based.

Many of you knew my late husband Rick and prayed for him during his five-year battle with cancer, and you prayed for strength and perseverance for me during that time and in the months after he passed. This community and our customers have become friends. Each of you is a blessing.

At the end of July, The Graceful Giraffe will reach the end of her run and begin a hard-earned rest. While



remaining active in the community, I will be closing the door of the shop one last time, and both The Graceful Giraffe and I will be retired.

Closing one door leads to the opening of another. A new journey. A new beginning. Continuing to live happily ever after in the mountain community of Mentone, Alabama.

Thank you so much for helping me realize my dream. You have made The Graceful Giraffe a success! God bless.



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Little River Escape offers **50 acres** of mountain climate, riverside hikes, and tiny community living. We have homes sited for sale, models you can site on the **lot of your choice**, or you can order a custom tiny home from another tiny home builder!

Relax by the pool, **fish** in the East Fork of Little River, **paddle** in one of our kayaks under the bridge to Lake Lahusage, or **hike** around to the swimmin' hole to **cool off**.

Just over an hour from Atlanta, Chattanooga, and Birmingham, we offer a lovely **commute** for residents, or an easy **getaway** for vacationers.

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11987 Hwy 48, Cloudland, GA www.LittleRiverEscape.com



Lookout Mountain Cabin w/11 acres near Little River Canyon. This well appointed 1782sf 3BR/2.5B home has a stone fireplace, vaulted living, wood floors, deck, screened porch, cook kitchen, lots of storage & basement workshop. Tucked among large hardwoods & boulder outcrops the property offers not only 400' of natural brow frontage but a seasonal stream & abundant wildlife. Get back to nature today. Priced to sell at \$279,900.



**610 Lake Loop
Cloudland, GA 30731**

Lookout Mountain Lakefront Living in this 4BR/3B home w/ attached 2-car garage. This well appointed home offers a split plan, fireplace, hardwood throughout living area. Kitchen features granite counters, hickory cabinets, pantry & breakfast area. Separate dining area is accented with arched openings & pecky cypress columns. Master suite has additional sitting area, bath w/ double vanity, jacuzzi tub & separate shower. Bonus 4th bedroom is above the garage with its own full bath. Enjoy outdoor entertaining from the wonderful screened porch & level yard. The waterfront on the lake has a stationary dock and fire pit area. Lookout Highlands connects to 1500+ acres, w/ 600 acres in common area, 4 stocked lakes, waterfalls & hiking. \$399,000



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"Matching people to the property of their dreams"

Valley Head Junior Beta Club Traveled to the National Convention in Oklahoma

by Tara Kirby



L-R; Rose Cox, Principal Heath Kirby, Kendra Burgess, Bailey Pryor, Hayden Knowles, Braylie Callahan, Adleigh Lockett, Abigail Ferguson, Annabelle Gifford, Alyssa Reeds, Sponsor Tara Kirby, Tytan Blevins, Cooper Kirby and Kowen Worthey

The Valley Head Junior Beta Club recently attended the National Beta Club Convention on Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where they competed in 12 competitions after placing in 18 at state.

Twelve students traveled to OKC by both plane and car. Funds were raised through a 10-4-10 raffle, where students received a 100% of tickets sold due to donations they gathered for the

raffle. Sightseeing included the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial, the Firefighters Museum, and the Cowboy Museum. Some of the students also enjoyed White Water Park. This was the first national convention for all the kids who attended this year except for two.

We'd like to thank everyone for their continued support of these students' unique talents throughout the years!



Cooper Kirby and Kowen Worthey designed the BETArade pin that was chosen to be sold at Nationals as a Limited Edition (pictured below).



Rose Cox: 2nd Place Painting



Bailey Pryor: 9th Place Poetry

Congratulations, students!

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NEW



MENTONE, 16 acres of land with 3 BR farmhouse needing some TLC!! Two 42x500 Pullet houses built in 2006. Property has a pond with some fencing in place. Two additional 34x400 chicken houses currently used for storage. 25x50 3-bay shed. \$135,000. MLS#1118712.



KNOWN AS HIGHPOINT AND ONE OF THE MOST CELESTIAL AREAS FOR STAR GAZING... This 7 BR, 6 BA manor boast 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.



NICE, NEAT, AND MOVE IN READY! Double-wide mobile home sitting on 1.82 acres. 3BR/2BA open floor plan with gas fireplace, separate dining, kitchen with ample cabinets, appliances, and center island/breakfast bar. \$79,900. MLS#1119654.

REDUCED



JUST THE PLACE FOR YOU TO CALL HOME! This three-bedroom, 1 bath home features newer CH/A unit, hardwood flooring, fireplace, and rear patio all within walking distance to downtown Mentone. The large lot includes 1.6 acres. \$159,000. MLS#1117032.



MENTONE BROW HOME! 2BR/2BA brow home with tons of character! Enjoy all the extras like hardwood floors, rustic wood walls, gas log fireplace & more. Being sold furnished. Call today! \$295,000. MLS#1076700.



NEW CONSTRUCTION! Don't miss your chance to customize the finishes in this new cabin now under construction in Mentone. Covered front porch, screened back porch, 2 bedrooms, 2-1/2 baths, laundry, open kitchen and living with corner gas log fireplace unit. \$152,500. MLS#1109748.



MENTONE BROW HOME! Just around the corner from DeSoto State Park and Desoto Falls. Home features split bedroom design offering 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, open living and dining combo with vault ceiling, wood burning fireplace, spacious kitchen with breakfast bar. \$350,000. MLS#1099721.



SUNSET EVENINGS are abundant & lovely from this beautiful Mentone home on the brow. Spacious home 3BR (large bonus/4thBR), 2 1/2 BA. Commercial kitchen w/ island prep center/work space, gas cooktop, double wall ovens, side-by-side refrigerator, wine cooler, disposal, compactor & large pantry makes entertaining a pleasure. \$389,900. MLS#1114168.



LOOKING FOR THAT GET-A-WAY that you will NOT want to leave? Take a look at this one of a kind property in Mentone. 1.2 acres with 100-year-old farmhouse and barn. \$199,500. MLS#1119979.



MENTONE COTTAGE! Fully remodeled spacious two bedroom with bath in each room and additional half bath. This home comes completely furnished and just in time for the beautiful Fall season. Only \$179,900! MLS#1102065.



CRYSTAL LAKE LODGE in Mentone... Fifteen breathtaking acres surround you in this one-of-a-kind property. Call today for your private tour! \$570,000. MLS#1070805.



THE HISTORIC CRAGSMERE MANOR on 5+ acres serves as rental lodging and/or event hosting. Perfect setting for large or small groups, 6BR/4BA, Large kitchen, dining, and living area, covered pavilion. \$675,000. MLS#1066481.



3 BEDROOM/2 BATH HOME IN THE COUNTRY AT MENTONE. One-level brick and vinyl home offers updated kitchen and baths, hardwood flooring, central heat & air, office space, large pantry/utility room, rear porch enclosed for great sun porch. \$119,900. MLS#1110832.



GREAT BEGINNINGS & OPTIONS are endless in Mentone with an unfinished home! Approximately 4,800 sq ft on 7.5 acres. Great investment opportunity to create a neighborhood of cabins leading to the Owner's Estate or Common Gathering Area. \$165,000. MLS#1099079.



GORGEOUS COUNTRY SETTING with a Modern 1-level, 4BR/3 Full BR home. Built in 2014! Open floor plan with a split bedroom design. Many upscale touches include a wood-burning fireplace, full stainless steel appliance package, crown molding, tile flooring, security system. \$365,000. MLS#1099363.



OWNER FINANCING CONSIDERED! This tastefully designed cabin comes furnished and decorated! Main living area has open floor plan. Main level master has one-of-a-kind style with reclaimed furniture. Loft bedroom, utility room, screened porch and wood burning fireplace! \$189,900. MLS#1110505.



QUAINT DOWNTOWN BUNGALOW Looking for a new owner to enjoy the character and charm it offers. Built in 1910, the house has been fully restored, updated, and expanded. GREAT location on a quiet street. \$174,900. MLS#1108601.



Happy 4th of July

LOTS & LAND

#1014183—1.5 acres. Brow Lot on CR 89. \$124,900.

#1021165—2-acre lot offering lake and brow footage. \$59,900.

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

#1038089—Own a piece of the Brow! \$99,900.

#1039769—6.32+/- waterfront building lot in Mountain River Estates! REDUCED TO \$44,950.

#1065542—90 acres on Co. Rd. 89 in Mentone. REDUCED TO \$299,000.

#1070628—3.01 acres. 152' on West Fork of Little River. \$49,700.

#1070629—3.01 acres. 152' on West Fork of Little River. \$59,500.

#1073864—Brow Lot! .78 acres. REDUCED TO \$89,500.

#1076239—Cleared & wooded 3.6 acres on Scenic Hwy. REDUCED TO \$74,500.

#1076286—1.75 acre building lot in West

Fork Subdivision. REDUCED TO \$39,900.

#1078140—18.3 acres, unrestricted, partially wooded! \$66,800.

#1079713—Gorgeous lot in Mentone with .81+/- acres in Hunter's Ridge Subdivision. \$15,000.

#1080922—.54 acres, Mentone Bluffs. \$69,999.

#1083789—2.11 acres with 300' of waterfront in beautiful West Fork Subdivision. \$39,500.

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

#1098785—Beautiful wooded BROW lot in Mentone with winter views! \$77,640.

#1099911—LAST CHANCE to buy open land before entering into Georgia!!! \$179,000.

#1100905—A RARE FIND! Don't miss the opportunity to own 239 rolling wooded acres in Mentone. \$669,200.

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#1107408—Build here! \$99,900.

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#1107412—Build here! \$99,900.

#1108339—Better Than a Bargain...this is a STEAL! \$99,000.

#1111628—AMAZING VIEWS! YES, VIEWS!!! REDUCED TO \$81,900.

#1112787—40 acres in Mentone, AL with stream and untouched family owned property since 1923! \$200,000.

#1113936—Looking for a brow lot inside the city limits of Mentone? \$78,500.

#1116127—VISTAS AND VIEWS are breathtaking from this 3.2-acre tract on the brow in Mentone. \$199,900.

#1117656—Just Right! You'll find this 12.10 acre tract mostly wooded with plenty of privacy. Call TODAY for more information. \$41,900.

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#1118229—A great little investment property or place for your weekend get-a-way. \$49,900.

#1118898—BEAUTIFUL LAKEFRONT PROPERTY ON TOP OF WORLD FAMOUS LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN! sloping wooded lot inside gated community. Call Now for more information. \$30,000.

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River Voice by Bill Shugart

Work has started on the Southern Exposure Film about Little River!

As you may know, Southern Exposure is sponsored by the Alabama Rivers Alliance and made possible through the support and partnership with environmental and conservation groups across the state. Southern Exposure Film Fellows who are selected for the program create captivating films that give viewers a sense of how much Alabama has to offer and the importance of protecting its resources.

Just recently, Angie and I met up with Southern Exposure Filmmaker Jeb Brackner and his colleague Matt Grcic, on what was the most perfect 1st day of summer that can be imagined at our favorite spot on Lookout Mountain, The May's Cabin, which overlooks DeSoto Falls. (It might be our favorite spot because we were married there.)

The main topic of the Southern Exposure film will be the process of getting Little River Listed as Wild & Scenic. It will be ready to screen this fall. Little River Waterkeeper has teamed up with the Little River Canyon Center to present this year's debut of Southern Exposure on Thursday, September 26, at 6 p.m. Please mark your calendars. We hope you can join us for this inspiring and informative annual event.

About the film makers

Jeb Brackner is a filmmaker whose roots in Alabama stretch from his childhood as a Montgomery native to his education in film and psychology from the University of Alabama. Nature is one of Jeb's leading inspirations, and he is very passionate about environmental justice, especially throughout his home state. Cinematic storytelling, whether it be narrative or documentary, is another of his passions, and he hopes to make a career out of it through a production company he's creating with two of his college colleagues.

Matthew J. Grcic is an award-winning filmmaker and a photographer who participated as a film fellow for the 2016 Southern Exposure Films and since then moved to Birmingham, Alabama to work for Alabama Public Television. He volunteers his time to assist Southern Exposure Film Fellows during their internship. What I really like about Matt is his love of environment. I am hoping to learn how to tell stories with film from Matt.

Over the next 6 weeks, we will explore in and around the Little River Watershed to document how this amazing river has impacted the community historically, culturally, and economically to build the case for why Little River should be designated as a Wild and Scenic River. If you have a great story about how Little River is a part of your life, please email us at wyshugart@littleriverwaterkeeper.org. We would love to hear it. We will choose a couple of lucky submissions to be interviewed for a spot in the film!

Why Wild & Scenic?

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act safeguards the special character of these rivers, while also recognizing the potential for their appropriate use and development. It encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection.

A Wild and Scenic designation would further protect the river's scenic and recreational values as the surrounding area grows. It would ensure that the experiences and economic benefits Little River provides today will be there for future generations.

Little River Swim Club

Weekly Water Tests from 9 favorite swimming spots have been consistently clean this summer with only a few exceptions. Last week, we observed a spike in e-coli tests on the East Fork of Little River at Lake Lahusage that registered >2419.6 col./ 100ml, Dangerously high and over the maximum number the test can detect. The EPA and State level for "Do not Swim" is 235 col./ 100ml. LRW continued to monitor the spike as the lake returned to safe levels over the next week. The cause of the spike was undetermined. Subsequent tests confirmed the spike was not a testing error. You can find weekly test results on Little River Waterkeeper's website. <https://littleriverwaterkeeper.org>. Become a member of Little River Swim Club. Your \$10 donation directly sponsors one e-coli test and we give a shoutout on social media to you!

Bill Shugart is the Little River Waterkeeper. He can be reached at wyshugart@littleriverwaterkeeper.org.

Trash Talks (continued from page 1)

home or anticipating being stopped. Oh, and Bud Light is not good to the last drop, as there is almost always a swallow left in the can!

The soft drink travelers don't care about calories. They must be going for taste. Coke, Mountain Dew, and Dr. Pepper are the favorite drinks thrown out. The interesting fact is that most people don't finish their Dr. Pepper. Go figure!

Changing the subject from drinks, there are two types of tobacco users—spitters and smokers. The spitters of tobacco have their favorite spots to throw out the plastic containers and cans filled with the tobacco drippings. This compares to the cigarette smokers and small cigar smokers, who deposit their butts along the whole route.

People who throw out their fast food bags are fast drivers; I know this because the contents typically scatter out of the bag. Wrappers, Styrofoam containers and cups, and the five customary napkins spill out onto the ground for all to see the culinary intake. The wrappers are crumbled and the Styrofoam cups are complete with a lid and straw inserted. If there is a Styrofoam cup by itself, it is usually shredded to pieces. Are these passengers nervous due to their fast drivers?

The travelers of this route enjoy their candy. Chocolate is the best, and Reese's Cups and M & M's are the favorites. Juicy Fruit is the favorite gum.

Now along the Lake Lahusage route, there are travelers who are dreamers, evidenced by the number of Lotto tickets thrown out. They are forever hopeful, as the number of tickets never decrease.

Folks who work travel this route. Some of the travelers perform manual labor. You can tell by the plastic wrappers from cases of water, or the gloves and shirts by the side of the road. There have been wood frames, insulation, and porcelain pieces found after taking flight from the bed of a pickup.

Unfortunately, some of the travelers have issues with drugs. Syringes with needles and crack pipes have been thrown out along the road. Fortunately, they are not typically found.

So you see, trash does tell you about the travelers, and I listen as it tells me various stories, much as an archaeologist would study artifacts from long ago!

Vicky Patrick is the treasurer for the North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District and serves on the board of directors of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation.

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Moon Lake Community Library News

by Kelly Leavitt

Many thanks to Joe and Tessa Hughes for their generous donation (which will be matched by Tessa's company). Thanks also to Kenneth Shigley for his donation of Moon Lake School yearbooks from the years 1952 and 1953. If you'd like to see them, please feel free to come by the library and have a look.

Everyone was enthralled by Mike Ellis' magic show in June...many thanks to Mike for presenting his fun and inspiring program, "The Magic of Reading." (Did you know...he learned how to do magic from a BOOK?!)

We have many programs slated for July, both fun and educational. Our summer social was so much fun last year that one of the grandmothers who brought her grandchildren asked for the date in early May, saying she wanted to plan their summer schedule around it. It's on Saturday, July 20, and I hope you'll find it as fun as she did. If you fancy yourself a pie baker, please enter our pie contest! This year's pie judges will be Mentone Police Chief Gene McKee, Fire Chief Joseph Lee, and DeSoto Rescue Squad 2nd Lieutenant JD Trammell. Mentone Town Clerk

Kristen Emory will coordinate the contest for us. Once the winning pies have been picked, everyone can gather around and eat them! As well, MERF has arranged for an ice cream truck to be at the social, so bring some money for your favorite cold summer treat! (Everything else is free.)

Some of our patrons have been asking for help with their Kindle e-readers, so if you, too, would like some assistance, we'll be happy to help. Bring your Kindle to the library during open hours and we can give you a brief tutorial on how to use it.

Don't forget...we have computers and a printer/copier for your use at no charge. People have used them for job applications, tax forms, signing up for utilities, and other purposes. You might be surprised by how many travelers on Hwy. 117 stop in and use the computers for directions. It's been very helpful to have them available to the public, and the library remains grateful to MAPA for funding the grant to purchase them.

We've received many donations of books recently, and we've bought many as well, so stop by and see what's new.

If you're a movie buff, we have well over 1,000 DVDs. Our children's case contains movies rated G, our family case is where you'll find the movies rated PG, and our general cases contain everything else, including documentaries and TV shows/series. It's an impressive collection.

Library cards are free to all, regardless of where you live. Since we're a true community library, run by a board of directors as a non-profit organization, we are not tied to the county system, so our rules can be more flexible.

The Lookout Mountain Knitters continue to meet each Tuesday at 3 to enjoy knitting and crocheting together, often helping one another suss out a complicated pattern. They've also been helping newbies refine their technique. There's always a lot of laughter around the tables when they're there. Feel free to join them if you're interested.

We are open Tuesdays and Thursday from 3-6 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. See you at the library!

Kelly Leavitt is the librarian at Moon Lake Community Library.

Moon Lake Book Club 7/20 @ 10:30 am



Join fellow book lovers on for a discussion of *Magpie Murders* by Anthony Horowitz. Time magazine says, "Anthony Horowitz's *Magpie Murders* is catnip for classic mystery lovers... With its elegant yet playful plotting, *Magpie Murders* is the thinking mystery fan's ideal summer thriller."

The book club will meet on Saturday, July 20, at 10:30 a.m. at Moon Lake Community Library in Mentone (where the book is available for check-out). Everyone is welcome to join the discussion. Coffee and hot tea will be served.



Dot Mandala Rock Painting Saturday, July 13 @ 1 pm

Painting dot mandalas on rocks is a very relaxing activity that produces a beautiful piece of art at the same time. Kerry Breithaupt has offered to donate smooth river rocks and she'll teach us how to paint on them using tools that provide perfect circles. All supplies will be provided. A \$10 donation is suggested. Pre-registration is required by emailing kerryblmt@gmail.com.



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Mentone Wedding Chapel



*Candle Lite Ceremonies
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Nestled in the woods atop Lookout Mountain, near Mentone, Alabama, this quaint little chapel is surrounded by ferns, forest and flowers. The chapel is a scaled version of traditional Appalachian churches of days gone by. Stained glass windows filtering soft forest sunrays and soft organ music accent an ambience fitting the wedding ceremony. Inside, wooden pews will seat approximately 60 guests.

Linda Patterson, owner of the chapel, said the idea for it began with a bell, and now that bell rings as newlyweds exit the door of the chapel.

**To arrange your wedding or renewing of your
wedding vows, call
256-634-4181**

Summer Community Social + Pie Baking Contest! 7/20 @ 1 pm

Join your friends and neighbors for lawn games and other fun on the MERF Walking Trail next to the library on Saturday, July 20, at 1 p.m. If you'd like to enter a pie in the contest, you must pre-register by emailing moonlakecommunitylibrary@yahoo.com before 7/18. Look for details on our Facebook page or our web site at moonlakelibrary.org.

Author Talk: Lanier Isom 7/22 @ 6:30 pm



Author Lanier Isom is a part-time Mentone resident who co-wrote *Grace and Grit: My Fight for Equal Pay and Fairness at Goodyear and Beyond* with Lily Ledbetter.

Lilly was born in the small town of Possum Trot, Alabama, into a home without running water and electricity. She eventually secured a position in management at the Goodyear

plant in Gadsden, one of the first women to be hired at this level. No matter how well she performed in her position, though, Lilly faced daily sexual harassment and pranks, and an unconcealed reluctance to work alongside (or below) a woman.

Lilly pressed onward, believing that eventually things would change, that her hard work and high performance would make a difference. Instead, the more she achieved, the worse she was treated.

Nearly 20 years after her first day at Goodyear, she received an anonymous note in her mailbox that revealed she was making thousands less per year than the men in her position. She filed a sex discrimination case against Goodyear and won—and then lost on appeal.

Incredibly, her case made it all the way to the Supreme Court, where she lost again: the court ruled that she should have filed suit within 180 days of her first unequal pay

check—despite the fact that she had no way of knowing that she was being paid unfairly all those years. In a dramatic moment, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg read her dissent from the bench, urging Lilly to fight back. And fight Lilly did, becoming the namesake of President Obama's first official piece of legislation: the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act.



Lanier Isom will speak at Moon Lake Community Library on Monday, July 22, at 6:30 p.m. about her experience writing this important book, and about her life as a writer. (She's currently over 200 pages into writing a memoir.) This program is free and open to all ages.

Light refreshments will be served. The library is located at 4607 AL Highway 117 in Mentone.

Community Game Night 7/26 @ 6 pm

Another fun evening is in store as we gather around the game tables. Bring your favorite game or come learn how to play a new one. Games are good for your brain, and playing them with others is good for your spirit. Bring a finger food to share in the pot luck. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. All ages are welcome.

Summer Family Programs

Games and Legos Saturday 7/13 ♥ 10 am

Children and adults alike are invited to come out for a Saturday morning Game and Lego Day. Put the electronics away and sit down for a round of Apples to Apples, dominoes, chess, checkers, and other fun games. Get ready for some intergenerational competition as you try out new games and enjoy old favorites.

ALL About Bears Saturday 7/27 ♥ 10 am

The whole family is invited to this special program on black bears with Auburn University graduate student Hannah Leeper, who is currently studying the bears in our area for her master's thesis. Get expert advice on what to do if you spot a bear, and learn about their habitats and behaviors. Hannah will show photos of her work with the bears, and also describe what it's like to "catch" one!



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We Accept



Lookout Mountain Plein Air Group

Artists Don David, Barbara Umland, and Eugenia Johnston have formed the Lookout Mountain Plein Air group, a group of plein air artists who has been meeting weekly at locations in and around Mentone to paint out-of-doors. The group meets on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. and then enjoys going out to lunch together after painting for a few hours. Observers and all levels of painters are welcome. If you have any questions or would like to join the group, contact Barbara Umland at 256-619-1004.

July 2—Tall Meadow Rue
July 9—Mountain Cove Farm
July 16—Paradise Garden
July 23—Moon Lake School
July 30—Old Mill, Fort Payne

Photo at right: Original plein air painting by Mentone artist Mickey Luck





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GOOD THINGS OFTEN COME IN TWOS. 2BR/2BA cabin; 2+ acres, with 2 porches (each is 8' deep). One-level, all-wood interior & exterior cabin has had 2 owners, yet still looks like brand new! Vaulted great room; large breakfast island; attractive mountain stone fireplace w/gas logs. Walk-in pantry. Small bonus room, heated & cooled, could be a 3rd BR or office. Cabin sold furnished. Need more land? 2nd lot avail. \$202,200 (1120253)



"MOUNTAIN CABIN"...DEFINED AND REFINED. All the elements you might have imagined come together in perfect harmony in this 2BR/2.5BA cabin (bonus loft area for add'l bedroom or living space). Locally-sourced woods inside & out. Wraparound porch/deck w/ hot tub & porch swing. Vaulted great room w/striking, stone Fplce; wide-plank pine floors; rugged beams; intriguing "live-edge" pine trim. This cabin was designed & built for these owners; beautifully furnished & well cared for. Detached 30x30 shop/garage with floored loft area & lean-to addition. Mostly-wooded 1.69-acre lot; 3 miles from downtown Mentone. Furnished. \$259,900 (1121928)



CUTE CABIN & 1.4 AC OF WOODLAND! If you're looking for a personal retreat that could also be used as a rental, this could be the cabin for you! Combination of rustic & civilized elements: HW floor & mtn stone, WB Fplce in LR; spacious BR; galley kitchen; shower bath; CH/A; lg laundry; new roof; updated ext paint; HUGE screen porch w/hot tub; timber-frame pavilion for garage or gatherings! \$133,500 (11045)



UNIQUELY MENTONE RIVER-FRONT HOME. Intriguing spaces inside & out. Pagoda-inspired gated entry; privacy fence. Open, vaulted great room w/corner windows & seating; large, masonry & stone, wood-burning fireplace; hardwood & pine plank floors on main level. Inviting outdoor areas w/many native & transplant species & moss garden. Paths down to swimming hole w/big rock river access. \$334,500. (1098813)



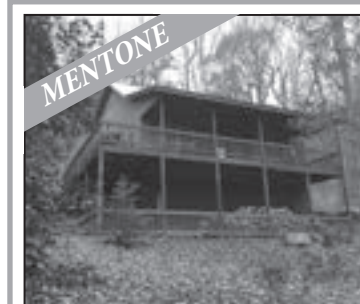
A SIMPLE LOG CABIN W/ PORCHES ON FRONT & BACK. Comfortable, cozy & cute! This is pretty much the ideal little getaway. It comes with a stone fireplace, a small kitchen, a bathroom, and a bedroom. Logs are hand-hewn, & half dove-tail jointed. Attached dble carport. Fenced area for the pets, too. Sited on 1.4 mostly-wooded ac. \$129,000.(1119105)



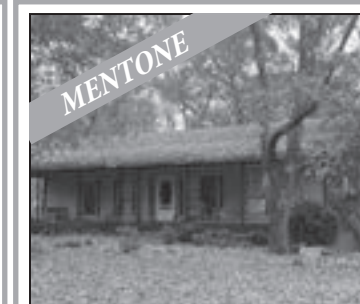
IRIS MEADOWS FARM. 3BR/3BA, beautifully-updated, one-level cottage; on 8 delightful acres, pasture & woodland, w/small pond, seasonal waterfall, fruit trees & 22'x24' workshop w/pavilion area. Land is unrestricted & mostly fenced. Cottage features fab kitchen w/lots of counter & cabinets; wide-plank pine floors; dining nook w/built-in benches & hand-made plank table. Large dog kennel area. Now \$264,999 (1109864)



A MOUNTAIN HAVEN ON A PRIVATE, WINDING LANE. Drive in through the wrought-iron gate, meander through the woods & you'll find this charming, one-level 3BR/2BA cabin home. Approx 1500 sq ft; all wood interior; mtn stone wood-burning Fplce w/insert; front & back porches (10' deep screened back porch) with a pleasant view of neighboring lake. Best of all, this property contains approx 15 acres of wooded land. \$284,500 (1120418)



FURNISHED CABIN ON 5 WOODED ACRES. 3BR/2BA, approx 1800 sq ft; wood-burning fireplace; open living/dining; spacious kitchen w/lots of cabinets. Beautifully furnished, including locally-crafted table & benches. Front porch & side deck. Land is lush with native holly trees, huge boulders, large hardwoods. PLUS this property offers a river-side park area across the road with OVER 300' ON W FORK LITTLE RIVER. There's a nice launch site for kayaks; river-side deck; level areas for picnicking, camping, outdoor adventures of all sorts. Newly-installed driveway & convenient parking. \$229,000 (1086017)



THREE FEATHERS RANCH is the name given this beautiful, 34-acre (+/-) Mentone property featuring a 3BR/2BA house with 2 bonus rooms and a bath in finished basement! Land is approx 1/2 woods & 1/2 pasture, fenced & cross-fenced; 2 small ponds; tractor shed; picturesque ranch entry way with gently-curving driveway leading to house. Satisfying views of pond & pasture from the front porch. Located about halfway between Mentone & Alpine area near DeSoto State Park! Not many properties like this come on the market at Mentone. \$299,000 (1107782)



..... LOTS and LAND

COOL STREET brow-front property with beautiful old stone fireplace chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. New survey. An original Mentone summer home once stood here, owned by the same family since early 1920s. Ap-prox 0.45 acre lot in an area where properties are seldom available. Now \$118,000 (1070474)

30 ACRES (+/-) IN MENTONE of mostly hardwood forest, some pasture land. Slight slope to offer a great elevation for future cabins, a farm, hunting cabin or whatever your Mentone dream dictates. \$105,000 (\$3,500 per acre)

DESOTO FALLS AREA LAKE-FRONT LOT with approx. 94' frontage on the prime part of W Fork Little River, the truly navigable part where you can canoe, kayak or pontoon all the way to Mentone! So much natural beauty, so rarely available. \$155,000 (355152)

HISTORIC EAGLES' NEST PROPERTY! 5 acres. Over 600' brow frontage; more than 1/4 mile paved road frontage; near Mentone Brow Park. Envision a cabin, or two, or three...maybe a compound... But, wait! How about condos? Is that at all possible? Who knows? Go ahead & dream it, build it! \$375,000 (1117380)

LIBBY LANE. It's one of those almost secret places in Mentone; sort of in the heart, but with no traffic; lending itself splendidly to quiet strolls along shaded Libby & East River Rd. 1.47-acre lot; mostly hardwoods, level, public water & power available; paved road. \$39,900 (1095291)

REDUCED! NEED A BIT OF EARTH? Well, here it is! Less than 5 minutes from downtown Mentone. Public water & power avail. A single acre, unrestricted, has been very hard to find in this area until now. \$22,000. (1109345)



Mr. Charles Cleveland Flannigan

June 26, 1939 – June 24, 2019

Mr. Charles Flannigan passed away on June 24, 2019. His survivors include his wife, Rindy Flannigan; sons Charles Cleveland Flannigan Jr. (Angela) and Steven Flannigan (Lynn); grandchildren Sara Gregory, Trevor Flannigan, Caleb Flannigan, Chase Flannigan, and Ben Flannigan; and sister Louise Lance. He was preceded in death by his wife Mary Ann Flannigan. A funeral service was held on June 27 at Burt Chapel in Valley Head, with Dr. Don Brock & Rev. Jeff Ford officiating. Pallbearers were David Battles, Tommy Battles, Darrell Wells, Mack Flannigan, Bobby Browder, and Jesse Crabtree. Burial was at Little River Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Church of God of Prophecy in Mentone.

Cloudland News by Pat Johnson

Cloudland's Fun Run with Barbecue and Yard Sale on July 6
Note: All times are Eastern Time!

Cloudland's fourth annual 5K Fun Run, Barbecue, and Yard Sale will be held July 6, 2019. The Fun Run course will start at Cloudland Community Park on Gadsden Ave. in Cloudland, GA, and make a loop through Gadsden Ave., Atlanta Ave., Golf Course Rd., County Road 103, and Cloudland Drive, which are all within the Cloudland community in both Georgia and Alabama. The course includes moderate to steep hills. We welcome runners, walkers, and children on bikes of all ages and experiences.

If you would like to participate in the Fun Run, the registration fee will be \$30 when you register on the day of the event. Runners and bikers will receive a complimentary t-shirt and a goody bag. Bikers must also register and must wear a helmet.

The run will begin promptly at 7:30 a.m. Remember all times are on Eastern time! All runners and bikers will need to arrive early enough to sign in and be ready to go by 7:30 a.m. Registration begins at 6 a.m.

After the run, there will be entertainment from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. featuring The Ukulele Band of Alabama. Barbecue plates for sale, and individual yard sales will be set up. The barbecue plates will cost \$5 and include a pulled pork sandwich, baked beans, coleslaw, and a drink.

We are including a community yard sale from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. with the festivities this year. Bring your items for sale and set up in the park. Due to there being no car traffic during the race, there will be no car access to the park until 9:30 a.m. No registration for yard sale is required, but donations are welcomed.

All proceeds go to Cloudland Community Park toward the upgrade of the toilet facilities, the kitchen, and the playground equipment. Anyone wishing to make a donation or interested in renting the park for a family or other event please see contact list below.

Mail: P.O. Box 277, Menlo, GA 30731

Phone: 706-862-3040

Email: CloudlandCommunityPark@yahoo.com

Face Book: Cloudland Community Park

Cloudland Community Website: cloudlandcommunity.wix.com/park

Reflections on Menlo's Lawrence Park

by Tim Day, Menlo City Clerk

School is out now, and the kids have begun their vacation—to spend the lazy, hazy days of summer in fun and play. In late May, on one of the very last days of school, one of the classes, a kindergarten class, spent most of the day in Menlo's Lawrence Park, which was named for the founder of our fair town who donated the park “as a playground for the children of the generations forever.” I knew about this because one of the teachers came to city hall to borrow a key to the restrooms. I just happened to be outside the office when the kids, walking in single file, arrived at the park under the careful attention of the accompanying adults. Upon entering the park, the kids were given free run of the place and the play equipment. I couldn't help but look out the window from time to time to enjoy the beehive of excitement the youngsters brought to the place. Later, I went over to check on them and to make sure they had plenty of supplies. It was impossible not to become caught in the excitement as I heard the happy sounds of so many children at play. It made me go back in memory to my own childhood—to the simplicity of the time in which I had grown up, and of my own fun in the park. For some reason, I also remembered reading an article about the entire school body marching down “the school-house hill” for a special dedication of a flag which had been placed in the park on a huge pole. This was in 1915, over 100 years ago, when the park was still a young place. They had a ceremony that day, as the students and teachers stood around the flag pole. I recall reading of recitations, songs, solos, and speeches. After the ceremony, the students marched back up the hill to the school.

Many years have elapsed between the flag dedication in 1915 and the recent visit of the kindergarten class. The times have changed, and people have changed, as one generation has given way to another. All through the years, though, Lawrence Park has remained a popular place for children to play, just as Menlo's founder had hoped and envisioned. It is also popular for adults, who enjoy walking the track or relaxing on the benches beneath the shade of the sturdy elms, which were planted by the founder.

About 2:30 that afternoon, the kids were in line for the walk back to the school. From my window, I watched them until they walked from my limited view. They returned to the school to close out another school year—to reflect on their accomplishments of the year and to go forward. A little later, I went back to the park to ensure that everything was locked up. This visit was quite a contrast to the earlier visit, when the happy noise echoed throughout the old park. Now, it seemed almost eerily quiet and very lonesome. As I was checking on things, there was a light breeze stirring in the park, and I noticed a couple of empty swings moving with the wind. For a moment, it seemed a little melancholic that the fun day had come to an end, but I knew there would be plenty of fun times ahead in the park for other children who would be enjoying it during the summer. Just as those kids did in 1915, and those kids did in May, future generations of kids will enjoy Lawrence Park, and it will remain a place of old memories and a place to make new ones.

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July

Birthdays

- 1

JohnTyler Lawton
Marilyn Slaton
Patrick Coots
August Shanklin
Patrick Long
Nicholas King
- 2

Karen Potts
Byrum Emory
Virgil Battles
- 3

Nick Black
Jared Webb
Allison Powell
Josh Rosson
Craig Hughes
Mason Tubberville
Reba Coleman
Johnnie Lewchuk
Randy Fowler
Luke Milford
- 4

Jack Carden
Bennett (BJ) Browder
Deb Smith
Ashley Hulkan
Lana Miller
- 5

Steven McElhaney
Chris Underwood
- 6

Dawson Crow
Dustin Burt
Corey Powellll
- 7

Jim Blalock
Loretta Bain
Marcus Crider
LaShae Jones
Zoe Moon
- 8

Daniel Phillips
Kathy Gray
Eian Bain
Doug Kiker
Donna Bailey
Sheila Smith
- 9

KayLee Kilgore
Skylor Dutton
Mia Woods
Braylie Callahan
- 10

Steve Lanier
Addison McClure
Ryan Tramel
Caroline Baty
Alan Bell
- 11

Kanissa Smith
Brooklyn Carroll
Lacie Keith
Kori Willingham
Dylan Carter
Garrett Collins
Clare Donohue
- 12

Charles Gray
Cindy Harrison
Juliegh McKenzie
- 13

Jordan Goza
Sissy Crider
Brody Battles
Myles Battles
Tracie Pullen
- 14

Will Blackburn
Dave Vest
Jeffrey Hopper
Park Nelson
Paul Crawford
Teena Bain
Bella & Ava Harrison
Dylan Flannigan
Sheila Meadows
Courtney Stone
- 15

Jason Dean
Tatum Lanier
Paul Zulker
Will Battles
Chelsea Stephenson
Lana Harris

- 16

Nathan Hargrove
Margie Daniel
Tricia Shankles
Kendall Shankles
Johnny Lewchuk
- 17

Christopher Black
Valerie Burt
Justin Battles
Waylon Burton
Nolan Stinson
Kristen Wilborn
Hannah Carden
- 18

Loy Langston
Lily Cash
Kaye Kiker
Stone Cross
Laura Catherine Moon
- 19

Danny Cross
Anna Bobo
Avery May Kilgore
- 20

Becky Langston
Lindsay Black
Bailee Carter
Jeff Clure
Craig Hulkan
Paul Whittle
- 21

Tonya Hilyer
Paxton Harper
Brianna Powell
Peggy Johnston
Tony Hammonds
- 22

Linda Clark
Ian Hilyer
Emily Norman
Charlie Runnels
- 23

Amanda Smith
Taylor Blalock
Logan Chambers
Emmie Chambers
Reid Davis

- Marc Pardue
Chris McMahan
Sandra Ward
Jim Pullen
- 24

Phyllis Bailey
- 25

Rylee Vest
Bill Berry
Jeremy Webb
Kali Haynes
Austin Cuzzort
Jenny Lewchuk
Taylor Filmore
- 26

Claire Wilkinson
Pam Dean
Gracie Carol Butler
Megan Smith
Maggie Chaney
- 27

Dexter Smith
Kelley Hughes
John David Nelson
- 28

Debbie Flannigan
Kelly Owen
Sam Shanklin
- 29

Eli Shanklin
Trip Battles
Kayla Hamilton
- 30

Zack Dean
Zach Bain
Rachel Collins
- 31

Hunter Battles
Matt Lee
Paige Wright
Gunnar Elkins
Koopar Elkins
Bella Smith

Anniversaries

- 1

Casey & Tracy Cartwright
- 2

Ladon & Donna Willingham
- 3

Brooks & Haley Moore
- 7

Justin & Jamie Shankles
- 9

Al & Vickie Blackburn
- 13

John Paul & Teresa Verdon
- 16

Josh & Ashley Coffman
Gene & Karen Potts
- 18

Zach & Tamara Bain
- 20

Charles & Amanda Gray
- 22

John & Lisa Moore
- 23

John & Alisha Lawton
Craig & Greta Hall
- 24

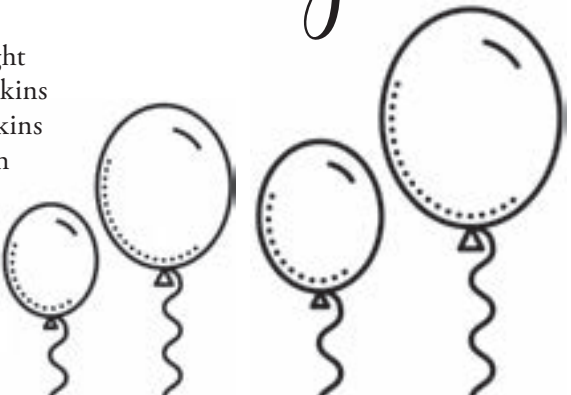
Jamie & Gequetta Darwin
Don & Yvonne Brock
- 25

Donald & Karen Saferite
- 27

Trey & Allison Kincer
- 29

Heath & Amy Jones

Happy
Day!



SENIOR HEALTH Home Health Services with Medicare by Lynn Hixon

You can use your home health benefits under Part A and/or Part B to pay for home health services. You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount, and the Part B deductible applies, for Medicare-covered medical equipment.

Medicare covers medically necessary part-time or intermittent skilled nursing care, and/or physical therapy, speech-language pathology services, or continued occupational therapy services. A doctor, or certain health care professionals who work with a doctor, must see you face-to-face before a doctor can certify that you need home health services. A doctor must order your care, and a Medicare-certified home health agency must provide it.

Home health services may also include medical social services, part-time or intermittent home health aide services, durable medical equipment, and medical supplies for use at home. You must be homebound, which means:

- You have trouble leaving your home without help (like using a cane, wheelchair, walker, or crutches, special transportation, or help from another person) because of an illness or injury.
- Leaving your home isn't recommended because of your condition.
- You're normally unable to leave your home because it's a major effort.

For more information, please contact your SHIP Counselor, Lynn Hixon, at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590.

Read The Groundhog online at
mapamentone.com/groundhog



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Ongoing Community Calendar

Mentone Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm at Mentone Town Hall. Everyone is welcome.

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

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.

Mentone Farmers Market is open year-round on Saturdays from 10am-1pm in the Town Square.

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.

The Farm Market at The Farm at Windy Hill is open Fridays from 2-5pm and Saturdays from 12-2pm. Seasonal produce, grass-fed and finished beef, pastured and wooded pork, and pasture-raised eggs. 445 Road 942, Mentone, AL.

Moon Lake Community Library is open on Saturdays from 9am-1pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-6pm. Visit moonlakelibrary.org.

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

The Lookout Mountain Knitters meet each Tuesday at 3pm at Moon Lake Community Library. All are welcome.

Writing anyone? NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN JULY. Point of the Pen is a small, supportive writing group that welcomes anyone to join us for a casual sharing time with other writers interested in life stories, poetry, and fiction. Come to Moon Lake Community Library on the 1st Thursday of each month at 3:15pm. Call 256-635-8775 for details.

Lookout Mountain Strummers mountain dulcimer group meets on alternate Thursdays at 1pm at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church. For a schedule and directions, send an email to norbaker194@gmail.com. Beginners are welcome.

Beginning yoga classes are taught by certified teacher Jamie Baugh on Wednesdays at 1pm. \$5. St. Joseph's Parish Hall, Mentone. 256-634-4476.

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

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

The Little River group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Saturday & every Tuesday night at 6pm at St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church in Mentone. Open AA Discussion Meetings. Anyone who thinks they might have a problem with alcohol is welcome. Questions? Call 256-638-7308.

Hope Faith-Based Recovery Ministries, a Christian-based support group, meets each Friday at 6pm at Church of God of Prophecy on Hwy. 117 in Mentone. 706-331-7359.

*All times are Central unless otherwise noted.
Calendar entries are subject to change.*

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July 2019 Community Calendar

All times are Central unless otherwise noted. Calendar entries are subject to change.

July 2—Fort Payne Independence Day Celebration. The City of Fort Payne invites you to a wonderful celebration with free hot dogs, soft drinks, American flags, live entertainment, and a fantastic fireworks display. Event takes place at the Fort Payne Sports Complex and begins at dusk.

July 2 & 18—Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required at True Adventure Sports by 6pm the day before the adventure. 10am–12pm. 256-997-9577



July 4—Sand Mountain Potato Festival. Sand Mountain is well known for its rich diversity of agricultural products, including potatoes. Celebrate our heritage with live music, arts and crafts, entertainment, games and fireworks. Event begins at 10am and culminates with a beautiful fireworks display. 256-657-6282.

July 4—Annual Farm-to-Table BBQ. The Farm at Windy Hill will be serving BBQ plates featuring our own pastured pork, fresh-picked-vegetable sides, and homemade pound cake. We will also have more of those great local musicians as well as lawn games for all! We will be selling plates of food (BBQ plates and sandwiches, with a senior discount offered on plates), and the event is free for all to attend. 4–7pm.

July 5—Mini Survival Adventure for Kids with JSU Field Schools. Has your child ever wanted to learn more about being outdoors? This class presented by Robert Wilson of

Seven Pines Survival is perfect for them! The Mini Survival Adventure for children ages 8–12 years is a day-long class on all things survival, with a focus on Shelter, Fire, and Water. Children will learn about outdoor, fire and knife safety, how to build different shelters, how to build campfires, and many other basic outdoor skills all while having fun! We don't provide meals for this little adventure, so pack 2 snacks and a lunch for your kids' day out. Don't forget a water bottle filled with water and also bring sun and bug screen (and don't forget to help your child to check for ticks when they get home). Proper clothes: we would suggest pants and hiking boots, a hat if they wish, and some gloves if they want. We will be tramping around in long grass, briars, and mud (aka having a blast!). 9am drop off, 3pm pick up. Meet at JSU's Little River Canyon Center. \$20/person. Pre-registration is required, as class size is limited to 10. Call 209-559-0040.

July 5 & 6—DeSoto State Park's Annual Independence Day Events. This annual event is fun for both children & adults! Celebrate Independence Day and enjoy good old-fashioned fun at DeSoto State Park. Participate in the flag making contest, sit back and enjoy DeSoto's parade, and eat home-made ice cream at the annual ice cream social. DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne. Free to the public; great for all ages! For event details, see alapark.com/DSP-independence-day-events.

July 5, 13 & 19—Tumbler Glassblowing Class. This introductory glassblowing class at Orbix Hot Glass teaches many fundamentals through the process of making a small tumbler (cup). Plenty of hands-on experience from choosing colors, gathering, paddling, blowing and shaping is gained in this four hour experience. Class size is maximum of four students so everyone has adequate time at the bench working. Some safety material is provided before the class for you to review. Please join us for some in-depth discovery. Call us at 256-523-3188 or email info@orbixhotglass.com

for more information or to make a reservation. Reservations and full payment required. 9am. \$145. 2–4 students. Minimum age is 13 years old with parent.

July 6—The Linger Longer Pop Up Art Series. The Linger Longer Pop Up Art Series is hosted by the Little River Arts Council and features an artist of the month at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the Mentone Inn. July's artist is woodcarver Don Highfield. 10am–1pm, or when the artist decides to leave.

July 6—Moon Lake Library's Pop Up Book Sale. New and used books, DVDs and CDs for sale. Near the Linger Longer Pavilion and Mentone Farmers Market. 10am–1pm.

July 6—"Mentone: Where Little River Runs" Documentary. To celebrate Alabama's 200th birthday during 2019, enjoy this wonderful documentary almost a year in the making. Enjoy an evening under the stars with a film viewing, entertainment by multi-instrumentalist Larry Joe Hall, and a fish fry. Bring a comfortable camp chair or blanket. Fish Fry starts at 6pm, film showing starts at 8pm. On the lawn at the Linger Longer Pavilion, behind the Mentone Inn. Fish fry is \$10/plate, film and entertainment are free and open to everyone.

July 11—Cloudland Park's 4th Annual Star Spangled 5K Fun Run. Barbeque, yard sale & live music. Cloudland Community Park. Details at cloudlandcommunity.wix.com/park.

July 6 & 7—Women's Overnight Survival Class at DeSoto State Park. Learn the basic survival skills needed to survive in the wilderness (don't worry, this is a challenge by choice, and you will have camping gear to fall back on!). Discover important skills related to survival, including shelter building, water pasteurization, core temperature control, rescue, medicinal and edible plants, and other skills you need to know to help you survive in the woods. Hiking is moderate. Check in 8am on the 6th, check out the

afternoon of the 7th. Location given at registration. \$85 includes all equipment and camping food. Pre-registration is required, as class size is limited to 6 participants max. Call 209-559-0040 or email Robert Wilson for details: sps@sevenpinessurvival.com.

July 6, 13 & 20—Blow An Ornament. Enjoy Christmas in July and come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed, it is on a first-come, first-served basis. 9am–2pm. Orbix Hot Glass. \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.

July 6 & 26—Sculpt a Flower. Have you ever wanted to actually sit at the gaffer bench and feel what it is like to shape hot glass? It's all about hands-on experience in a safe and fun atmosphere with a final product we know you will love. There is a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5 in each class. Orbix Hot Glass. 10:30am & 12:30pm. Reservations required. 256-523-3188.

July 9—Courtyard Concert: 80s Night. Courtyard Concerts (every 2nd and 4th Tuesday) feature local, regional, and special guest artists. Admission is free. Cash bar. Gates open at 5:30pm, show begins at 6pm. Adjacent to the Historic DeKalb Theatre, Fort Payne.

July 11—Poisonous Plants of Alabama Class. This class is a brief overview of many poisonous plants in Alabama. There are many types of poisonous plants, learn how to spot them and what to do if you are affected by them. True Adventure Sports Training Center. 2–4pm. 256-997-9577.

July 12—Snakes of Northeast Alabama. Join guest speaker Amanda Glover from Lake Guntersville State Park for a fun campfire talk about the common snake species of NE Alabama, both venomous & non-venomous. Learn how to identify them and what to do if you encounter them or are bitten. Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish. 8pm. DeSoto State Park's Campfire Ring in the Improved

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July 2019 Community Calendar

Campground (In case of inclement weather, will be located in Benefield interpretive Nature Center) Campground gate will open 30 minutes prior to program. Free and open to everyone. Great for all ages! No pre-registration required. For details, call 256.997.5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

July 12-14—Kids' Lookout Mountain Exploration Camp. Set out for adventure on the big rock we call Lookout Mountain! For 3 days and 2 nights, kids will experience their backyard like never before! Climbing sandstone boulders, hiking through the forest, sleeping beneath the stars and observing natural beauty away from technology! They will make lifelong friends while learning about Lookout Mountain in this challenging but very fun adventure. Recommended for boys & girls, ages 11-14. Meet at Bruce's Foodland, Fort Payne at 9am on 7/12; return at 3pm on 7/14. \$190 includes transportation, equipment, meals & snacks. To register, call 256-634-8370 or email angie@oneworldadventureco.org.

July 13—Family Summer Program: Games & Legos. Free and open to ALL AGES! Come play games with your friends and neighbors. 10am. Moon Lake Community Library, 4607 AL-Hwy 117, Mentone.

July 13—Dot Rock Painting Class. Taught by Kerry Breithaupt. 1pm. \$10 suggested donation. Moon Lake Community Library, 4607 AL-Hwy 117, Mentone. Pre-registration required—email kerryblmt@gmail.com.

July 13—Summer Music Series. Jazz duo Kathy Veazy and John Rawlston from Chattanooga will perform at the CCC Pavilion at DeSoto State Park (across from the Country Store). This couple, who also play with Lumbar Five and the vocal group Sistren, soften their style and selections to the jazzier side, featuring songs they don't perform with either group. Sponsored by Little River Arts Council. 7-10pm. Free & open to everyone! For any details, email info@littleriverartscouncil.org.

July 13—Bald Eagles of Alabama. Join guest speaker Amanda Glover from Lake Guntersville State Park for a fun campfire talk about America's national bird & symbol—the American Bald Eagle. Amanda will talk about Bald Eagle habitat, restoration, identification, & more. Seating is limited, so bring your own comfortable camp chair if you wish. 8pm. DeSoto State Park's Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather will be located in Benefield Interpretive Nature Center.) Campground gate will open 30 minutes prior to program. Free and open to everyone, Great for all ages! For details, call 256.997.5025.

July 13—Serious Skills Series: YES, I CAN! Canning Fruits & Vegetables Workshop. Hosted by DeSoto State Park. Learn all about home canning jams & pickles. This is a "hands-on" workshop and at the end of the day students will leave with 2 jars of finished product, recipes, confidence and knowledge of how to can at home. Taught by Mary Alice Stout, who has canned and taught canning for over 55 years! Bring a paring knife & a brown bag lunch. Limited to 10. Open to all ages. 10am-3pm. \$20/person. Pre-registration is required. Call 256.997.5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

July 13, 15, 27, 30—Rappelling Adventure. Come experience the thrill of rappelling down the sheer sandstone gems of NE AL. Each trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. True Adventure Sports. 10am-2pm. 256-997-9577.

July 17—Afternoon Rock Climb. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about in the afternoon with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 2-6pm. 256-997-9577.

July 19-21 & 26-28—"Driving Miss Daisy". Northeast Alabama Community

College Theatre presents one of their annual productions. Sandra Lafferty stars in the lead role. Call 256-638-4418 for more information.

July 20—Moon Lake Book Club. Open to everyone. Discussion of "Magpie Murders" by Anthony Horowitz. 10:30am. Moon Lake Community Library, Mentone.

July 20—Community Social & Pie Contest. Enjoy lawn games, summer family fun, and delicious pie on the MERF Walking Trail. 1-3pm. Moon Lake Community Library, Mentone. If you'd like to enter a pie in the contest, email moonlakecommunitylibrary@yahoo.com.

July 20—Alabama Wildlife: Bears, Birds, & More. "Black Bears in NE Alabama"—Learn about the increase in Black Bears in NE Alabama including DeKalb County and areas around DeSoto State Park and Little River Canyon National Preserve. Learn about the research program DCMR is conducting with Auburn University on the DeKalb County Black Bear populations, human interaction with Black Bears, resident bears, and more. "Bald and Golden Eagles in Alabama"—Learn about the many resident eagles that we have in Alabama, where you can see them, etc. "Wildlife in your Backyard"—learn about human-wildlife interaction that can occur in your own yard. Learn about Whitetail Deer and issues humans face with deer, small mammals such as opossums, raccoons, squirrels, and such, and how to enhance your yard for more observation opportunities or how to handle problem wildlife. 7pm. DeSoto State Park Lodge. Free & open to everyone. For info, contact Brittney Hughes, DeSoto State Park Naturalist.

July 21—Plant Discovery Hike at DeSoto State Park. Join naturalist Robert Wilson "The Traveling Herbalist" from Seven Pines Survival for an experiential journey within the forest, taking in every opportunity to learn more about the natural world. On this meandering hike Robert will identify many

native plants of the southern Appalachians and will be teaching you how to recognize the natives found in the park. Journey though out DeSoto State Park to see what can be seen along the trail. Easy to moderate meandering hike. 9am. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Free and open to everyone! Have questions? Email Robert at sps@sevenpinessurvival.com or call 209-559-0040.

July 22—Author Talk: Lanier Isom. Co-author with Lily Ledbetter of "Grace and Grit: My Fight for Equal Pay and Fairness at Goodyear and Beyond." Moon Lake Community Library, 4706 AL-Hwy. 117, Mentone. 6pm. Free. Light refreshments will be served.

July 23—"Courtyard Concerts: 90s Night". Holy jeans, flannel shirts, and Mr. Belding. Back to Bayside High and back to our regular programming, we're featuring a decades' worth of tunes. From grunge to Garth Brooks, our local troop has a variety to suit all your musical needs. Be there! Courtyard Concerts takes place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday at The Courtyard (located beside DeKalb Theatre). Featuring local and regional artists performing a variety of themes, styles, and genres. A cash bar is available, as well as food, drink, and merchandise. Gates open at 5:30pm, show begins at 6pm.

July 27—Family Summer Program: Black Bears in NE Alabama. Hannah Leeper will present a multi-media discussion of black bears in this family-friendly program. Bring your questions! Moon Lake Community Library, 4607 AL-Hwy 117, Mentone. 10am. Free.

July 27—Craft Your Own Paperweight. This class is designed for those who really just want see what molten glass is all about. Feel the heat, gather from the furnace, sculpt the glass into your own design. Please join us for some in-depth discovery at Orbix Hot Glass. Reservations required. \$145 per person. 9am-1p.m. 256-523-3188.



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Mentone Area Church Directory

Mentone, Alabama

Cove Road Baptist Church invites everyone in the Mentone and Cloudland Communities to services—Sunday School 10am (GA time) Morning Worship 11am (GA time), Wednesday Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 5:30pm (GA time). Bro. Brian Keith is the pastor. 2415 County Road 631.

Howard's Chapel (Church in the Rock) has regular services at 10am each Sunday. You are invited to attend these services or visit the church at other times. Casual dress is always acceptable. County Road 617.

Mentone Church of God of Prophecy has Sunday School at 10am, with Worship at 11am. Evening services begin at 5:30pm on Sunday and 6pm on Wednesday. Bro. Whitney Smith invites everyone to attend. AL Hwy 117 (across from Mentone Post Office).

Mentone Community Church invites you to Crosswalk Sunday School (K through Adult) 9:15am, Adult Worship Service 10:30am, JC Kids Worship Service 10:30am. Pastor Tim Miller. Van Ministry for Children pick-up/take home, ages K–12, for all surrounding areas 8:15am (please call Donna Bunn 706-398-0720). Wednesday small group study 6:30pm. 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

Mentone United Methodist Church invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday our worship service is held at 11am and is led by Rev. Heidi C. Bender. Sunday School is at 10am. The service of Holy Communion is held the first Sunday of each month and fifth Sundays are a service of music with a pot luck lunch afterwards. 415 Cutler Avenue. 256-634-8006.

Moon Lake Baptist Church is a growing community of believers from various walks of life who endeavor to share the light, life, and love of Jesus with all we meet. We gather together for practical Bible study at 10am on Sunday. You can count on an encouraging and life-engaging message at 11am each Sunday. At 6pm, on Sunday, we enjoy a time of praying together. On Wednesdays at 6pm, we have groups for our children, students, and adults. 4671 Al Hwy. 117. 256-634-4568. Connect with us on Facebook at "Moon Lake" or Pastor Mike at "Mike Ellis".

St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church welcomes everyone to 10:30am Sunday service of Holy Eucharist. Open for daily prayer and thanksgiving. Supporting our community with outreach. 256-634-4476. 21145 Scenic Highway. stjosephmountain.dioala.org.

Spirit Expression Ministry, a Chapel of the Alliance of Divine Love, invites you to sit with us in sacred circle on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 11am Central at Heartwood Center, 7 miles from downtown Mentone. Reverend Cathy Haven Howard facilitates a spiritual wisdom topic. Email havenhoward1@gmail.com for directions and questions.

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

Hammondville, Alabama

The **Church of God 7th Day** invites you to Sabbath School classes at 9:30am and Worship Service at 11am. Visitors are always welcome. Located just off Hwy. 11 N. at corner of Hwy. 117 and Palmer Road. 256-717-5040.

Greater Vision Ministries Church of God invites you to Sunday School 10 am, Sunday Worship *10:45 am, (*Nursery & Kid's Church). MidWEEK re-charge Wednesday 6:30pm. Pastor Tim Coppock. 38623 US Hwy 11. 256-601-0679.

Valley Head, Alabama

Lea's Chapel Baptist Church welcomes you to worship with us. 10am Sunday Bible Study, 11am Morning Worship, 6pm Evening Worship. Wednesday 6–8pm Awana (ages 4–18); 6:30pm Praise and Prayer time. 4212 County Road 751. 256-635-1001.

Valley Head Baptist Church invites you to come and worship with us. On Sunday, Bible Study is at 10am & Morning Worship is at 11am; Kidz Connection is at 5pm, Evening Worship at 6pm. Kidz Connection & Youth meet on Wednesday from 5–6pm & a snack supper is provided. On the second Wednesday of the month, there is a church-wide covered dish Fellowship Meal at 6pm. 265 Church Street. 256-465-1242.

Visitors are always welcome at **Valley Head United Methodist Church**. Please join us each Sunday morning for a traditional worship service at 9:30am. Tony Gunter is the Pastor. All are welcome. 146 Church St.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, holds services in the Woodmen of the World Hall. All are invited to attend. Sabbath School and Song Service 9:30–10:45am, Worship Service 11am–12:15pm. Pastor - Wilbur Atwood; Lay Pastors - James Hartley and Ryan Bunnel.

*Peace be to you.
and peace be to your house.
and peace be to all
that you have.
—1 Samuel 25:6*

Fort Payne, Alabama

Since 1889, worshippers have gathered at the **Historic First Presbyterian Church PC (USA)** at 300 Grand Avenue North. We invite you to join us for worship this Sunday at 10:55am. 256-845-2915.

The **Fort Payne Christian Center** and Pastors Ken and Elaine Hollman invite everyone to join in Worship on Sunday at 10am, Wednesday evening at 6pm. 3610 Grand Ave. SW. 256-997-0047.

Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) invites you to Sunday School at 9:45am; Sunday Worship at 10:55am. 256-845-4756. 5760 Gault Ave. NE.

Gravel Hill Baptist Church welcomes you to Sunday School at 10am & Worship Service at 11am each Sunday. All are welcome. Wednesdays at 6pm, we have supper and a brief devotional time together. Pastor George Moses. 14701 Hwy 11 South.

New Oregon United Methodist Church is located just off DeSoto Parkway, 1/4 mile south of Fischer Crossroads. We invite you to worship with us on Sundays. Sunday School for all ages 9:45am, Traditional Worship 11am, and Sunday Evening Service 6pm. Sunday Evening youth meet at 5:30pm. We have Wonderful Wednesdays during the school year with Bible

studies for all ages, meal at 5:30pm and classes at 6:15pm. We also have Wednesday morning Bible study at 8:45am, and knitting every Tuesday at 9am. Pastor Ian Conerly. 1204 New Oregon Drive NE. 256-845-7446.

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church holds Sunday mass in English at 10am and 1pm in Spanish. Tuesday at 6pm in English, Wednesday at 5pm bilingual, Thursday at 6pm in English, Friday at 9am in English and Saturday at 6pm in bilingual. 2910 Gault Ave. N. 256-845-4774.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church holds regular Worship Services at 10am Sunday. Clifford Herd, Pastor. Everyone is welcome. 1519 Smith Gap Road (County Road 85). 256-845-4842.

St. Stephen Anglican Church invites you to attend service on Sunday mornings at 8am. 411 SW Grand Ave. (in the basement of Killian & Killian Attorneys). Father Rodney Jackson, 205-405-0055; Deacon Jack Gilbreath, 256-845-2605.

Walnut Grove Baptist Church, on Highway 11 north of Fort Payne, welcomes everyone at Sunday School 10am, Worship Service at 11am, Wednesday night youth meeting at 6pm, and Wednesday night Prayer Meeting at 6:30pm. 3606 Greenhill Blvd NW. 256-996-0929.

Cloudland, Georgia

Cloudland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Jan Warren-Taylor. Bible Study Sunday at 9am (Eastern) and Worship at 10am (Eastern). 150 Partain Road.

Menlo, Georgia

Alpine Community Church Pastor Jeremy Stroop welcomes each and everyone to worship service Sunday mornings at 11am GA time; Sunday School 10am GA time; and Wednesday night Bible Study at 7pm GA time. 1104 Hwy. 337, Menlo GA. 706-862-6641.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend 10am and 11am Sunday services and evening services at 5pm on Sundays and Wednesdays. Visitors are always welcome. Annual Homecoming and Gospel Meeting on July 14–17, 2019: Sunday Services 10am & 11am & 5pm EDT; Homecoming Covered Dish Meal Spread at the Lawrence Center at noon on the 14th; Weeknight Services Mon–Wed 7pm EDT. Visiting Evangelist: Bro. Gary McCurdy of Piedmont, AL.

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

Summerville, Georgia

Redemption Worship Center invites you to "Find Love, Encouragement, & Purpose!" Wednesdays: Hour of Power Bible Study 6:30pm; Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm. Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am; Morning Celebration 10:30am. Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue. 706-808-0909.

Send any changes to *The Groundhog*
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or P.O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984.

Colorfest

Saturday October 19 • 9am–5pm
Sunday October 20 • 9am–4pm

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mapamentone.com

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Type of space: ☐ Art/Craft maker ☐ Food Vendor ☐ Organization
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Contact's Last Name _____ First Name _____ Business Name _____

Email address _____ Cell or other Phone _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Number of 12x12 Spaces needed _____ Facebook and/or Website Address _____

Art & Craft Makers \$120 *All Art Must Be Handmade By The Artist. NO Ready-Made Merchandise Is Allowed.*
Medium / Product _____
Please provide photos of your work to MentoneColorfest@gmail.com or provide a current Website/Facebook address above. Make sure your photos show your work clearly. Your application will be declined if there is no way to view your work. Digital photos emailed are preferred to mailing. Please put last name of contact on pictures sent by mail.

Food Vendors \$125 List all food & drinks _____
If using a trailer: Length, include tongue _____ Serving window side: ☐ Driver's side ☐ Passenger Side
☐ WATER add \$25 ☐ ELECTRICITY 110V (\$25) Number of duplex outlets needed _____ 220V (\$50) Number of duplex outlets needed _____ *To avoid outages, electricity is reserved for food vendors and those who require it to show and demonstrate their Art or Craft (not for fans, etc.). No generators will be allowed.*

Requests Our Festival Venue is somewhat primitive with uneven ground, portapotties, no parking at vendor spaces, and outdoor weather. *We will do our best to accommodate on a case-by-case basis.*
Requests/Special Needs & Handicap Accessibility _____

Add additional pages as needed. **Questions?** Please email mentonecolorfest@gmail.com.

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Performer Application **Deadline August 29, 2019**
Apply online at mapamentone.com.

We pay a small stipend of \$50 per performing member of your group. Your performing time will be 45 minutes long. Performances will be spaced to allow time before performance and after performance for set up and take down. We will also provide a table close by where you can have someone to sell CDs, etc.

Contact Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Type or Genre _____ Group Name _____

Name/s of Performers _____

Website Address _____ Facebook Page _____

Address _____ City State Zip _____

- Notification of acceptance or waiting list by email on September 9. We appreciate your effort to submit the following:
1. This application
 2. A picture to be used for media. Email to MentoneColorfest@gmail.com OR Mail to MAPA, P.O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984
 3. A performing sample. This could be a CD OR video OR a link to Facebook, or website, or YouTube. It will be used for our selection process.
 4. A short biography (100 words or less) that we can use for promotional purposes.

Applications and pictures sent by regular mail should be addressed to MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984.
Please email MentoneColorfest@gmail.com with any questions.

Classified Ads

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- FURNITURE REPAIR** • Restoration • Refinishing • Repainting • Heirlooms • Almost antiques • Mid-century modern • Flea market finds. In-home work on cabinets, panelling, mantles, staircases, all trimwork. 35 years' experience. Pick up and delivery available. Call Allen Treadaway at 706-857-4977 or 706-528-3476.
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- Mountain Properties
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- Triple G Tradin Post
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 - Headquarters Beauty Salon
 - Tigers Inn
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 - Valley Head Food Mart
 - Valley Head Town Hall
 - Water Board

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 - Big Mill & Vintage 1889
 - Blue Jug
 - Boom Town Makers Market
 - Brown's Cleaners
 - Bruce's Foodland
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Days Inn
 - DeKalb County Library
 - DeKalb Tourism
 - DeSoto State Park Lodge
 - DSP Country Store
 - First Fidelity Bank
 - Fischer X-Roads Store
 - Hampton Inn
 - Holiday Inn
 - Huddle House
 - Priceless IGA
 - Quality Inn

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 - The Strand
 - Waffle House
 - Waffle King

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 - Ingles
 - Jim's Family Restaurant
 - Judy's Herb Shop
 - Little River Escape Tiny Homes
 - Menlo Handi Mart
 - Menlo Healthmart
 - Menlo Lucky's
 - Menlo Town Hall
 - Menlo Restaurant
 - Mountain Top Country Store
 - Reece Tire
 - The Lookout Restaurant
 - The Vineyard Cafe

- OTHER**
- Alabama I-59 Welcome Center
 - Little River Canyon Center
 - Rim of the Canyon Café & Grocery

Book Review by Anne McLeod

What I Found in a Thousand Towns: A Traveling Musician's Guide to Rebuilding America's Communities—One Coffee Shop, Dog Run, and Open-Mike Night at a Time by Dar Williams, Basic Books, 2017



What I Found in a Thousand Towns offers Dar Williams's unique perspective on community building—and rebuilding—in towns and cities facing economic and societal challenges. What makes some communities thrive, while in others, one shuttered shopfront leads to another and another? As a touring musician, Williams has played all over the country, returning over and over to certain places whose residents speak of their town not just with pride but with real affection.

Her own town of Beacon, New York, in the Hudson Valley, is one such place, which, after a series of stops and starts, at last came into its own with a vibrant downtown scene. Interestingly, the development of a world class museum in Beacon was not by itself enough to launch the town's revival. Instead, Williams notes that the right mix of friendly and accommodating cafés, coffeehouses, and bars along with public spaces like small parks and sidewalks made for a town where people had opportunities to interact with one another, creating the "positive proximity" that built community.

According to Williams, promoting positive proximity depends on three factors: spaces that facilitate interaction; an understanding of the town's social/cultural/historical identity; and translation, which she defines as "acts of communication that open up a town to itself and to the world." The book offers overviews of towns and small cities that have made the most of their assets, such as the natural beauty of Moab, Utah, the waterfront of Wilmington, Delaware, the arts community of Carrboro, North Carolina, the farm-to-food movement in the Finger Lakes region of New York, and others. These examples support the idea that thoughtful and sustainable development comes from knowing one's own community and all its resources, and then harnessing creative energy to solve problems or to meet goals.

In recent months, people have come together in Mentone to consider "creative placemaking" and what it might mean to our town. While that is not a phrase Williams uses in this book, those who are looking for a better understanding of what creative placemaking involves would do well to read *What I Found in a Thousand Towns* to see what the results of those efforts might look like.

What I Found in a Thousand Towns by Dar Williams is available for checkout from the Moon Lake Community Library.

Anne McLeod is the Moon Lake School librarian.

July in Mentone's history...

Compiled by Annette Stone

1982

The Garden Club has plans underway for the planting of rhododendron along the roadside in the town proper and later, along DeSoto Parkway.

1983

The Town Council voted yes to provide full-time police protection at their last meeting. An officer will go from 25 hours a week to 40 hours a week, being on call 24 hours a day.

1985

The Groundhog reported on the newly installed fire hydrants—seven in all—in town. Located at Moon Lake School, Camp DeSoto, Mentone Superette, Clyde's Beauty Shop, Hobson Kirby's home, as well as 2 others. These 7 new hydrants help make residents safer, as well as lower insurance rates.

1986

From July 1 until July 3, Mentone had no water at all due to a leak in the water main, near the rock bridge

just above DeSoto State Park. The leak was repaired and water began to flow adequately on July 5.

1987

The Town Council approves cable TV installation in Mentone.

1992

Historic Mentone Springs Hotel was up for sale, at a reduced price of \$165,000.

2000

Mentone is included in the new guidebook titled National Geographic, "Guide to Small Town Escapes."

2001

Moon Lake School Library building has begun. The site preparation began in June with the projected completion date of Dec 2001. "Guide to Small Town Escapes."

Source:
Groundhog archives

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Black Bears (continued from page 1)

Hannah Leeper caught this black bear in the cage on the trailer seen behind her.

study Hannah is working on is funded by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Historically, bears were native to all of Alabama, but they were nearly extirpated through over-harvest and habitat manipulation. Steady reports of their presence began in 2012. A study that began that year and ended in 2015 showed that bears are migrating from Georgia and recolonizing Alabama, coming back to where their ancestors once lived. The study determined there were 35 bears in our area.

"Bears are going to become part of the habitat around here, and so it's important for people to understand that and know what they can do to prevent nuisances," said Hannah. "Bears are opportunistic omnivores. We consider them to be like large raccoons. If a raccoon will go for something, then a bear likely will, too. The most important thing is letting them know that you're there, so flip a light on before you send your dog out at night. When feeding your pet outside, only serve the portion your pet will eat and don't leave any remainder. Making a little bit of noise as you go outside will let a bear know you're there, if one's in your yard. Generally, there won't be any problems."

"The big thing with bears is startling them," she continued. "That's when they become a little bit more aggressive. As long as you let them know you're there, bears don't generally cause a problem at all. Don't put your trash out until it's ready to be picked up, leave your barbecue grill clean and lock it up in a shed if you can. Leave bird feeders up high. If a bear finds your feeder, take the feeder inside for a couple of days. You want to prevent the reward. If a bear is rewarded with food, he'll keep coming back. But if you eliminate that, he'll find a new food source and quickly leave you alone."

Hannah hasn't heard of many nuisance problems, but did hear one report of a bear getting into a bee hive. "Generally, people think bears are going for the honey, but that's just a sweet surprise," she said. "They're actually going after the larvae, because it's such a rich supply of protein. If that's a problem for people, the easiest solution is to install an electric fence and move the hive away from any forested areas, so it makes it riskier for a bear to be in open space. If they find your deer feeder, let it be empty for a while before you fill it up again."

Bears tend to stay near water, using tributaries and creeks as travel corridors. They can travel several miles within the span of a couple hours, and it's

common for them to branch off a creek and go to higher ground for a day or two and then return to the water. "They're pretty active and they cover a lot of ground," said Hannah. "Right now, they're travelling during the day and night, looking for food."

"Cubs stay with mom for a year and a half," Hannah explained. "We're just past that time when the year-and-a-half-year-olds are getting kicked out. So those cubs are still trying to find an area they call their own right now, and they're covering a lot of ground, trying to establish a home range. Like a teenager being sent out, they're trying to find their way. It's a little bit more risky for them this time of year, but they'll establish a range and start settling down. The females stick around closer. They'll tend to share a home range boundary with their mother."

Bears are crepuscular, which means they prefer dawn and dusk. "To avoid

humans and the day's heat," said Hannah, "they tend to travel more at night, but this time of year we see them out during the day as well."

Hannah's study is mainly focussed on the areas of Mentone, Fort Payne, Little River, and DeSoto State Park. She has caught seven bears this year. "Some are really close to town," she said. "I think people would be surprised to know how close bears are to town and that some of these bears are passing through their back yards. Bears are very, very secretive. For being such large black creatures, they do blend in to their surroundings really well. They do a good job of concealing themselves and staying away from humans."



It is illegal to shoot bears. If you're having a problem, or if you see a bear, contact Hannah at hzl0122@auburn.edu.

A trap is a cage the size of a golf cart which sits on a trailer. It has bait in the back and when a bear pulls on it, a door falls down and traps it inside. The trap has a satellite camera, and Hannah is alerted when a bear has been trapped. She has helpers from the state park and national preserve, as well as volunteer land owners who help with the actual work-up, but Hannah does the baiting, setting up the trap, and scouting by herself. When she and her team of helpers arrive at the trap, Hannah anesthetizes the bear through holes in the side. "We pull it out of the trap, weigh it, and measure its body. It gets a PIT tag, an ear tag, and a GPS collar," she explained.

The largest bear Hannah has caught weighed 314 pounds. "I wouldn't be surprised to see or hear of a 400-pound male," she said, "but that's about as big as they get. Females are generally a lot smaller, more like 200 pounds. The yearling cubs might weigh about 75 or 80 pounds."

I asked if bear spray would be helpful for people to have. "It's a personal preference," said Hannah. "If it helps people feel more secure, they should have some. I'm a firm believer in letting your presence be known. Talk while you're walking in the woods, make noise so the animals around you know that you're coming through. They'll move off before you even know they're there. If you happen to see a bear, don't be scared, just enjoy the sighting."

Hannah Leeper will present a free multi-media program for children and anyone else interested in knowing more about bears on Saturday, July 27, at 10 a.m. at Moon Lake Community Library in Mentone.

