



THE GROUNDHOG

Serving the Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Cloudland & Menlo Communities since 1982

P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984
mapamentone.com/groundhog

Volume 39, No. 6

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

June 2020

Be River Wise by Kelly Leavitt

Little River is a true destination. Its allure brought an estimated 660,000 to the Little River Canyon National Preserve in 2020. People are drawn by the purity of Little River's blue-green water; the beloved rhododendrons, mountain laurel, and other flora that grace the shores; the river's extraordinary biodiversity; its placid swimming holes; and the dramatic rapids on its southern span.

Traversing 27 miles, as the crow flies, the waters of Little River fall 1,250 feet as they flow through shallows, pools, and rapids marked by rocks and boulders formed hundreds of millions of years ago. Over eons, the mountain's river waters have carved out and flowed through Little River Canyon, a 10-mile long sandstone canyon—the deepest canyon east of the Mississippi River.

According to the National Park Service, Little River is the only river in North America that runs its entire length on top of a mountain. The headwaters are atop Lookout Mountain in northwest Georgia, near the Zahnd Wildlife Management Area. Little River is formed by the 17-mile-long East Fork Little River and the 25-mile-long West Fork Little River, which features De Soto Falls and passes through De Soto State Park. It flows for an additional 23 miles from the confluence within Little River Canyon National Preserve and off Lookout Mountain at Canyon Mouth Park, where it eventually flows into Weiss Lake.

Little River...serene, picturesque, and relaxing.

(continued on page 10)



Little River Falls, May 23, 2020 • Photo by Tammy Dunaway

The Historic Closing of Mentone's Summer Camps by Kelly Leavitt

Mentone is truly living history right now, with the closing of the summer camps in the area due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It's a first for all of them. They've been providing healthy and fun summer experiences for children for many, many decades.

As I spoke with some of the camp directors and watched the videos the camps posted on their web sites announcing the closures, one thing was palpable—deep sadness.

It was a hard decision to make. Five of the Mentone camp directors (Alpine Camp for Boys, Camp DeSoto, Camp Laney, Camp Skyline, and Riverview Camp) 'zoomed' every week for about six weeks this spring. "It made it better because we didn't go through it alone," said Rob Hammond of Camp Laney. Camp Juliette Low, Ponderosa Bible

(continued on page 20)

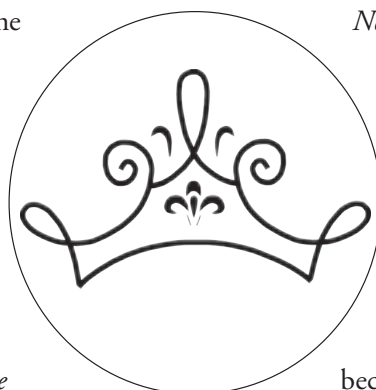
Miss Rhododendron (Virtual) Pageant by Sharon Habin

The Rhododendron Festival has been presented by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) since 1982. Spring festivals in Mentone have a history that extends well before 1982. The first Rhododendron Festival that we know of was in 1941. This is the first time MAPA has cancelled the festival, however we know that the Rhododendron Festival was cancelled at least once before—during World War II, in 1942.

Rhododendron Blossoms in Profusion This Year

Last year just about this time, everyone in Fort Payne and in Valley Head and in Mentone were working with light hearts full of fun and gaiety, in the midst of our Rhododendron Festival, which we hoped to make an annual affair. Well, war changes things—our minds are now on buying bonds and stamps and helping to win this great conflict.

We will not have any Festival this year on account of the war, but that will not prevent entirely making visits to see the flowers and mountain scenery.



Nevertheless war cannot change nature, and our beautiful flowers are still there, and in greater profusion than last year. By this weekend, that is if you have any tires, let the cares of the war be absent from your mind and make a visit to see these flowers while they are in their height of blooming.

Our Lookout Mountain is beautiful, and as nature's historic landmark, it is nearing the season when it bedecks itself with all the gorgeous wildflowers and shrubs.

—DEKALB TIMES, 5-20-42

This year we, too, had to cancel the Rhododendron Festival because of COVID-19 and, just like during that difficult time in 1942, the rhododendrons still blossomed.

Just after MAPA made the difficult decision to cancel the festival, Kelly Leavitt, the editor of *The Groundhog*, and I were talking. She mentioned how sad it was we

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THE GROUNDHOG

Published monthly by the
Mentone Area Preservation Association

MAPA was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and then organized on April 5, 1982. *The Groundhog* has been in publication for 37 years.

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

Groundhog wood cut courtesy of Meg Justice

Do you have a story idea?

We welcome contributions!

Email groundhognews@yahoo.com

Mentone Matters • by Mayor Rob Hammond

Our May council meeting was historic—everyone in the room was wearing a mask and practiced social distancing. As much as we all want to quickly return normal, we should continue to use common sense and best practices when we are in group settings.

The council voted in principle to sell the former Kamama building to the Mentone Arts and Cultural Center for \$289,000. The town paid \$250,000 for the building and invested approximately \$39,000 in improvements. The original offer of \$270,000 discussed at the meeting was based on an incorrect purchase price, so we have subsequently made the correction. Elections will continue to be held there and the town can use the gallery space for meetings. When the town purchased the building, the economy was booming. Now we are in the middle of a pandemic, with an uncertain economy to follow. Sales tax revenues to the town have been drastically reduced. MACC will work with Kevin Dunlap in opening Elevation. The events, workshops, and classes held at the center will help the building come “alive” again. The facility



will become a place where local and regional artists can display and sell their creations. These activities will bring people to the center of town. Local restaurants, shops, bed and breakfasts, and cabins will benefit.

Chief Gene McKee secured a demonstrator speed display sign. Motorists could see the posted speed limit and their actual speed. Red and blue lights warned speeders. The chief monitored the sign and felt most motorists responded to it and slowed down. The council voted to purchase three signs. Two would be stationary on either end of the town and the third sign would be mobile.

Letter from the Editor



I have found, lately, that when I see friends I haven't seen since mid-March, I realize just how terribly glad I am to see them. It makes me think of words Joni Mitchell once sang: “You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.” I surely appreciate all the various people I've gotten to know in Mentone and beyond during the years I've lived here. And I've really missed seeing them. It's nice that things are starting to feel a bit more normal—but, really, we're still a far way from normal.

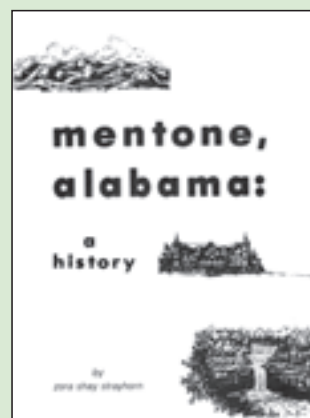
I hope you'll be able to maintain some of your favorite traditions this summer with friends and family, while keeping safe and healthy.

It was fun to be able to continue MAPA's Miss Rhododendron Pageant this year. Sharon Habin did a great job coordinating a unique format for the pageant, and a young woman was able to receive the traditional college scholarship awarded to Miss Rhododendron.

Lots of things seem small but big these days, don't they? Our appreciation for one another; the ability to enjoy social events that we may once have taken for granted; and our basic health and well-being.

Have fun this month! Enjoy the river. Read a book. Make some art. Connect with friends.

Be well. —Kelly



Learn about the History of Mentone

Zora Strayhorn's book, *Mentone, Alabama: A History*, is for sale at the Wildflower Café, Moon Lake Community Library, Little River Hardware, Mentone Market, DeSoto State Park, Earthly Elements, and Bell Battelle. \$15; proceeds benefit MAPA.

Hey everyone – hope this finds you and your family well. I am sitting on my porch early morning on Memorial Day as I write this, and am once again overwhelmed by the beauty and serenity of the woods around my cabin – our woods, the woods of Mentone and surrounding areas of Lookout Mountain. There must be at least a dozen different bird species fluttering about, chirping, talking in their own wonderful and mysterious language, but always a joy to watch and hear. I also can hear the wind rustling through the trees, a tractor in the distance, and the bats in my chimney settling down for the day after a big night out (thank you bats—one thing I don't hear is the buzz of mosquitoes!).

The real focus of my thoughts and attention today, however, is about Memorial Day and what it has come to mean to me as I have gotten older. I grew up at a time when our soldiers were not treated with the respect they deserved, even the ones who had given their life for the country. My birth date put me at the age of 18 where I was a part of the last group of “kids” to be issued a draft number during the waning days of the Vietnam war – but which were never drafted. At



MAPA News
by Mark Hoffman

the time, like so many others, I was unsure as to what I would do had I actually been called upon to serve. I'm thankful that I didn't have to make that decision. I am even more thankful to the ones who did, and who put their lives on the line for the rest of us, whether we believed in the reasons at the time or not. Their memory is something we should never forget.

Thank you veterans for your service and your sacrifices – all of you, from the few of you still around who served in World War II to all of you that have been a part of our numerous recent and present day engagements. I sincerely hope that your Memorial Day was filled with love, appreciation and respect from all of us in the civilian community, and that you had the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and serenity of our Mentone woods, as you and those that made the ultimate sacrifice have so selflessly enabled us to do.

Mark Hoffman is the president of Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Join MAPA Today

Help us preserve Mentone's history and impact its future.

The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) is dedicated to preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area.

One of MAPA's key missions is supporting local organizations and projects which seek to improve the quality of life in Mentone. Financial grants are made possible through MAPA

memberships, donations, sponsorships, *Groundhog* advertising and subscriptions, and by hosting annual spring and fall festivals which feature handmade arts and crafts and live music.

Individuals \$20/year • Couples \$30/year

Your membership includes a complimentary subscription to *The Groundhog*.

JOIN AT mapamentone.com

or mail your check to MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984. Be sure to include your name(s), address, phone, and email address.

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

Small Cell Tower Ordinance Approved

The Mentone Town Council passed an ordinance at the council meeting on May 12, 2020, which regulates the erection of small cell towers within the Town of Mentone. A copy of the ordinance is posted on MAPA's community bulletin board outside the Mentone post office. You may also request a copy of the ordinance from the town clerk.

Ryleigh's Closet

Free clothes closet for those in need
Children & Adults

Our normal schedule has resumed.
Open the 2nd & 4th Mondays of each month
4-7 p.m.

Mentone Community Church
(256) 364-0150

We have social distancing guidelines in place and we ask that you use provided hand sanitizer when you arrive. We have also begun accepting donations again. You can contact me through our Facebook page or my cell, (256) 364-0150, to arrange a time to drop off donations. We continue to be blessed by your donations and blessed to be able to help those in their time of need! Thank you!

—Gwen Stone



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FRIAR TUCK comes fully furnished w/ 2BR, 2BA, wood burning fireplace, hot tub, all the appliances and much more. This income producing cabin is ready for you take over and add your personal touches to keep it thriving. \$135,000. MLS #1137900



UNIQUE MENTONE CABIN in walking distance of DeSoto Falls. Detailed rustic finishes. 2BR/2BA cabin with stainless steel appliance package, leathered granite countertops, stacked stone wood burning fireplace and amenities to numerous to mention! \$265,000. MLS #1132320



FURNISHED CRAFTSMAN HOME within walking distance to downtown Mentone! Family room & Master BR include Rock Fireplaces! Screened back porch and All Seasons room for family time, sleeping porch, dining or enjoying the outdoors year round. Property is RESIDENTIAL or COMMERCIAL and in the downtown business district. \$169,900. MLS #1134273



NEW CONSTRUCTION! 3 BED-ROOM 3 BATH CABIN IN MENTONE! We have just about finished this beautiful home in the mountains. Tongue & groove walls & ceilings. Two huge loft areas are connected by a beautiful wooden catwalk. Sitting on over 2 acres, lightly restricted. \$269,000. MLS #1125366



MENTONE BROW HOME! 2 BR, 2 BA hardwood floors, rustic wood walls, gas log fireplace, CH/A, decks, detached storage building. \$288,000. MLS #1130058



PEACE AND PRIVACY ARE YOURS! Three bed/1 bath home within walking distance to downtown Mentone. \$79,000. MLS #1123288



ON THE BROW IN MENTONE 3BR, 2BA brick home. Spacious family room w/ wall of windows, vaulted ceiling, fireplace, dining area & wood floors. Open kitchen, pantry, laundry, separate den w/wood floors. 2.3 acres & large deck for entertaining. \$315,000. MLS# 1139408



CUSTOM LOG CABIN with breathtaking BROW views that will give you all the "feels." Exposed beam ceilings, rock fireplace, office w/ view, sleeping loft, 2 BR w/ 2 full BA & a large back deck for all your entertaining needs. MOVE-IN ready! \$344,000. MLS #1103561



2 BR, 2 BA, also get a 1-room Cottage House. Indoor pool and its own attached screened porch. Large storage shed. Bathroom also serves as storm shelter. Furnished! \$182,000. MLS #1127846



LOTS & LAND

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

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

#1073864—Brow Lot! .78 acres. REDUCED TO \$83,900

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

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

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

#1099911—LAST CHANCE to buy open land before entering into Georgia!!! \$165,000.

#1108339—Better Than a Bargain...this is a STEAL! \$89,000.

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

#1112787—40 acres in Mentone, AL with stream and untouched family owned property since 1923! REDUCED TO \$198,000.

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

#1118808—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118810—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118812—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118813—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#1118815—A GREAT PLACE TO BUILD YOUR GETAWAY NOW! Level wooded lots with underground utilities, inside gated community. Just minutes to Historic downtown Mentone. Call today for more information. \$25,000

#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

#1120910—Five-acre wooded property with stream, across from Lake Lahusage. \$39,900

#1127776—2.41-acre property just steps away from downtown Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$47,500

#1128694—40 acres with 3-acre lake stocked with bream and bass. \$229,000.

#1129833—1.5-acre brow lot in Mentone. \$124,900

#1133689—3.58-acre property just steps away from downtown Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$69,500

#1133690—4.0-acre property just steps away from downtown Mentone. Build your wooded home-site, develop a tiny home community, or invest in the rental business. \$78,500

#1137464—It's a Natural!!! Enjoy 40 acres of country backdrop! This parcel is country pure and simple. Enjoy privacy with lots of trees and a pond. Perfect spot for a rustic or farmhouse retreat. Better take this one seriously because a buy like this won't last long! \$239,900

#1139102—Lot on County Road 89 located on the opposite of the brow. These lots don't come available often. If you are looking to be nestled in the woods on DeSoto Parkway then this lot is for you! \$29,900

#1138874—WAKE UP TO WATERFRONT LIVING on this 6.22 acres with a long and winding stream and frontage on Brush Creek. This property is located in a cul-de-sac and has lots of rock outcroppings and boulders scattered all about. The property has beautiful frontage along the creek and is mostly wooded. \$49,900

#1139471—Ready for that brow view in Mentone? 2.3 acres of untouched land! Make this your new home away from home and build the cabin of your dreams! \$125,000

#1130311—The time to buy is now! Steal of a deal on 2 acres with a seasonal brow view! Build that cabin or home you have always wanted. Priced only at \$29,999.

www.southernpropertiesagency.com

Miss Rhododendron Pageant (continued from page 1)

had to also cancel the Miss Rhododendron Pageant, especially being that Northeast Alabama Community College allows us to award a one-year scholarship. As we continued to talk, the idea of a virtual pageant for the Senior Division was created.

The Senior Division contestants normally have an interview with the judges before the pageant, which becomes part of their score, so I realized that part would be easy to incorporate into the idea of this new Virtual Miss Rhododendron Pageant.

As MAPA's Festival Organizer, I contacted Sherie Grace at Northeast Alabama Community College to ask if we could do the pageant this way and still be able to award the scholarship. She got the official OK.

Now, what about the judges and this new-fangled Zoom stuff online? I contacted the Pageant Committee, our judges, and Miss Rhododendron 2019, Mackenzie Hollimer. We all got on board with this outside-the-box idea of a virtual pageant.

Next, what would replace the gown and stage portion? Rather than dress up in a gown, the girls were asked to prepare as if it were an online job or education interview regarding makeup, clothes, and screen background. They were also

2020

Miss Rhododendron

Madisen Smith

1st Runner-up

Jacy Mae Culberson

2nd Runner-up

Ally Smith

asked to submit a paper, short video, or some type of creative expression showing/telling how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced them.

We had three contestants this year. On the evening of May 26, this year's judges—Teresa Little, Genevieve Wilhelm, and Holley Midgley—held individual Zoom interviews with our contestants. The young women each presented their creative expression to the judges during the interview.

Later that evening, the winner was announced during another Zoom connection, when the contestants each presented their creative expression again. Congratulations to all the contestants, especially to Miss Rhododendron 2020—Madisen Smith!

Thank you to the Mentone Area Preservation Association board of directors, the Pageant Committee, our judges, and Miss Rhododendron 2019.

With the cancellation of the 2020 Rhododendron Festival, we did receive sponsorship for this event, so MAPA became the official sponsor in financing the event. MAPA is grateful for the community's continued financial support through membership, donations, and *Groundhog* advertisements and subscriptions.

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

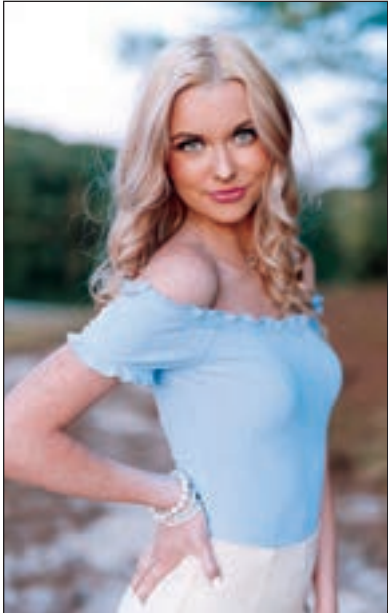
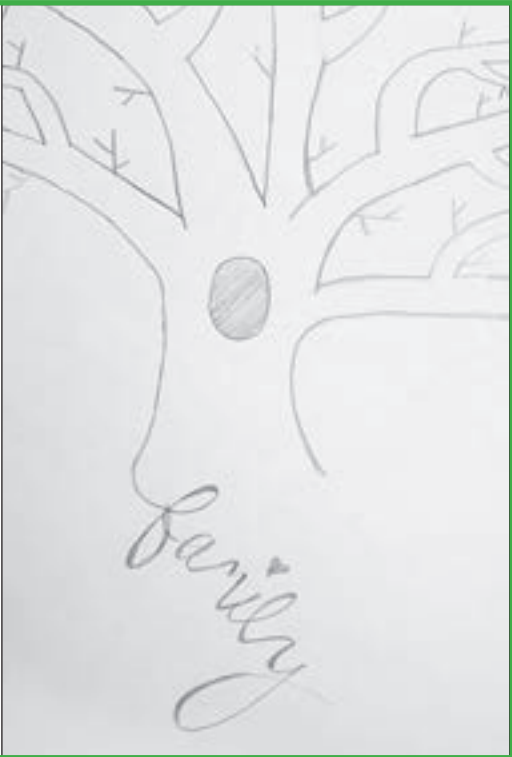


Miss Rhododendron 2020, Madisen Smith, lives in Valley Head and graduated from Valley Head High School. Madisen's hobbies include "hanging out with my friends and family, eating lots of snacks, watching Netflix, making people laugh, attending church camp every summer since the age of 7, helping anyone that I possibly can."

Regarding her future ambitions, Madisen said, "After getting my degree as an Elementary Teacher, I'd like to focus on being the coolest elementary teacher ever, and in the summers go back to the church camp I attended every summer to be a counselor and eventually settling down and having a big happy family of my own that will be surrounded with the love of God that I have been so blessed to be raised in my entire life."

COVID-19
submitted by Madisen Smith

During this pandemic, I have been influenced to put down my cell phone and spend more time with my family. I quickly realized that family is a stronger root system than my cell phone or social media ever will be.



Jacy Mae Culberson lives in Fort Payne and graduated from Fort Payne High School. Her hobbies include photography, painting, and cooking.

Regarding her future ambitions, Jacy said, "I would like to get my Bachelors in business and ultimately be my own boss. I also would love to keep my photography career but use it to help the community instead of for financial support."

Quarantine from the Eyes
of a High School Senior
submitted by
Jacy Mae Culberson

Just 6 months ago, the novel coronavirus now known as COVID-19, was unheard of. Today a global virus that keeps us contained in our homes is already reorienting our relationship to government, to the outside world, even to each other. Quarantine has put on a depression across the world with many losing family members, healthcare workers put on frontlines, and many missing out on key events such as graduation. COVID-19 has affected me directly by affecting my social life, learning to cope with an altered senior year, and helping me understand happiness lies in myself not others.

(continued on page 6)

Ally Smith lives in Mentone and graduated from Valley Head High School. Her hobbies include camping, hiking, kayaking, and spending time with family and friends. Regarding her future ambitions, Ally hopes to "have a successful career, give back to my community, marry and have a big family."

COVID-19
submitted by Ally Smith

Covid-19 has made a huge impact around the world. It has changed a lot of things for me and everyone. This pandemic has impacted my life in many different ways. This year was my last year to be a high school student. Many senior opportunities and experiences were cancelled and I have missed out on a lot with no chance to make them up. I was never really at school this year. This past semester I took all of my courses online and finished school in December. If I could go back and do it over again, I would have chosen to go to school and take my classes on campus rather than online. The Coronavirus has created stress and worry for me and will continue to. Every time I leave the house I try to be cautious, knowing that I am putting myself and family at risk of being exposed. I know now that I should never take anything for granted, even if it is just going to a restaurant and being able to dine-in. Although, the pandemic has affected everyone in so many ways, there have been good things that have come from this pandemic. My family, my friends, and I have gotten closer. We have spent quality time together enjoying outdoor activities and the simple things that life has to offer. I believe that everything happens for a reason and that something good can come from something bad. I truly hope that a cure or a vaccine becomes available very soon and people will not have to suffer from Covid-19.



Miss Rhododendron Pageant—Jacy Mae *(continued from page 5)*

With a mandatory quarantine being enforced, social settings are impossible to come by. In order to keep everyone safe everyone must stay inside their homes with little to no outside contact. Therefore, seeing your friends is not a mandatory event. With many of my friends being home from college, this is hard for my friend group. Knowing that everyone is back in the same city but cannot see each other is challenging. It's hard to keep a positive outlook when the news is making the event seem prolonged.

The quarantine also heavily affects my senior year. I've worked hard my whole life as a student to be able to put on my cap and gown and walk across the stage in front of my town. Many of our last moments together could not happen. My class is very close so this makes it hard of all of us, I've grown with these people. I've seen these snotty nose kindergarteners change overnight to adults ready for college, this is my reality. Fort Payne High School contained our best years, senior year was supposed to be our year. Senior year is so bittersweet, I never thought it would end like this and so soon. This will not define us though, we were born in 2001 with 9/11 changing our country. Now we start our lives in a global pandemic, this can only make my class and I stronger.

The last thing that affects most people the most is their happiness during the virus. Taking care of your mental health is essential, even if your time in quarantine is relatively brief in the grand scheme of things. The isolation imposed by quarantine frequently leaves people feeling that they have no control over the situation. They also feel cut off from the rest of the world and unable to perform their usual duties. Everyone's mental health is deteriorating with quarantine in place. I have learned to find happiness in myself instead of relying on others. Keeping a strong faith and knowing that this is not the end of the world helps me, learning how to keep a positive outlook is vital in quarantine.

Overall it is very easy to let the virus affect you negatively, especially with the media constantly talking about the severity. Teenagers have never experienced a pandemic. This is a very different and hard time for everyone. However, it is also a time of learning and patience. You may not be able to walk the stage now, or spend last moments with friends but through keeping faith and remaining positive in a situation that is out of my control, I can push through.

Special Thanks to Our *Miss Rhododendron Pageant* Judges

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

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

Holley Midgley's family has had a connection to Mentone for 75 years, and he has literally been coming here since before he was born. He is the retired executive vice president of the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians, and earned a master's degree in Broadcast and Film Communication from the University of Alabama. He has previous pageant judging experience. Holley wrote, filmed, and narrated the recent history documentary "Mentone: Where Little River Runs." He has lived in Mentone full time for 12 years.



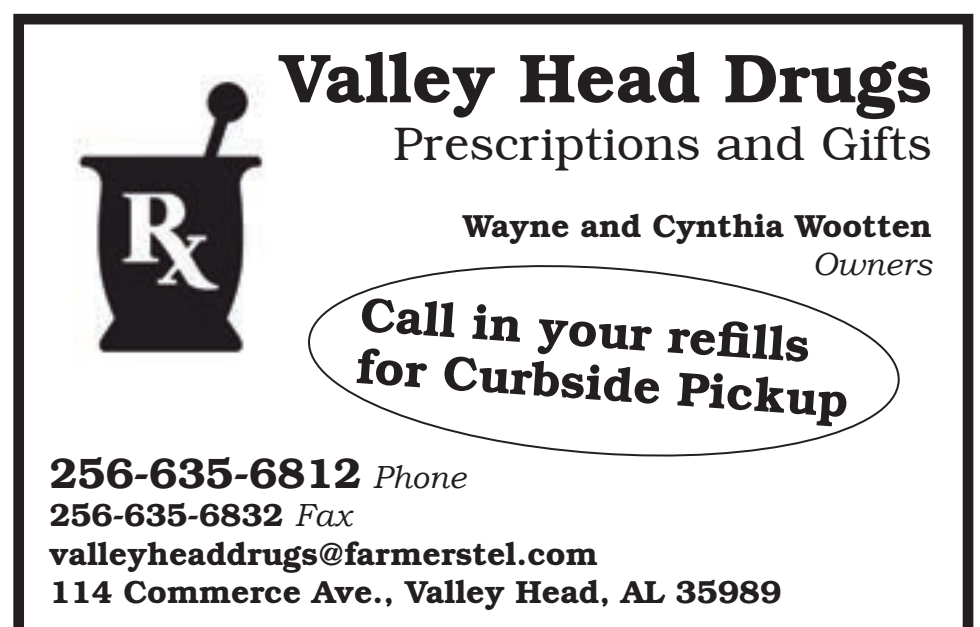
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My wife, Beverly, and I paddled our canoe up the West Fork of Little River to the new Highway 117 bridge (currently under construction). It was a beautiful day for a lazy float amongst the rhododendron and mountain laurel. —Photo by David Haynes, May 14, 2020

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

SENIOR HEALTH

Look Out for COVID-19 Scams

by Lynn Hixon

Scammers are using the COVID-19 pandemic to try to steal your Medicare Number, personal information, and money. They're using robocalls, social media posts, and emails to do it.

Remember, if anyone reaches out to get your Medicare Number or personal information in exchange for something, you can bet it is a scam.

To prevent Medicare Fraud be on the lookout, so you can stop scams before they happen. Here are recent Coronavirus scams to watch for:

- Robocalls offering you respiratory masks they'll never send
- Social Media posts fraudulently seeking donations for non-existent charities, or claiming to give you stimulus funds if you enter your bank account information.
- Fake testing kits, cures, "immunity" pills, and offers for protective equipment

For more information or if you feel you are being scammed, please call the DeKalb County Council on Aging and ask for Lynn at 256-845-8590.

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June

Birthdays

- 1

Sible Hopper
Kayla Hellums
Rebecca Guinn
Braden Busby
Madie Durham
Josh Williamson
Chad King
- 2

Skylar Venable
Steve Tate
Glen Black
- 3

Brittney Coleman
Donald Stephens
Byron Haynes
Jack Johnston, Jr.
- 4

Lisa Crowder
Cecily Goza
- 5

Doris Chamlee
Hannah Filmore
Hadley Gregory
Haley Hilliard
- 6

Angela Valentine
Keegan Johnson
Christy Harrison
Brayden Harrison
Kenneth Busby
Caitlyn Collins
Nick Brown
David Dean
Mike Campbell
- 7

Luke Johnson
Donnie Goodman
- 8

Ethan Harrison
Gail Smalley
Rachel Lusk
David Dean
Vince Wright
- 9

Sydney Vest
Denita Manifold
Brandon Collins
David Hatfield
Lori Walters
- 10

Amanda Gray
Michelle Chappell
Patty Tucker
Joyce Wright
Rebekah Weldon
Lisa Black Smith
Caitie Belle Jennings
- 11

Andrea Woods
- 12

Jim Connor
Emie Sanderson
- 13

Kristi Chambers
Taylor Gardner
- 14

Luke Harrison
Jerry Stokes
Braxton Pridmore
- 15

Campbell Smit
Brad Wright
Barnabas Bettis
- 16

Sara Langston
Kayla Crow
Mason Vest
Emily Hulgan
Ruby Smith
- 17

Hope Turner
Andy Beason
Megan Gilreath
Annie Gilbert
Kindal Hamilton
- 18

Ashley Ingram
Ozell Thornberry
Josh Smith
Carlotta McGee
- 19

Sierra Chambers
Ashley Wooten
Reid Hendon
- 20

Keri Miller
Brandy Rosson
Wendy Holloway
- 21

Katherine McDorman
Nick Langston
Nancy W. Smith
Hannah Stinson
Betty S Morrison
Trey Kincer

Anniversaries

- 1

Wink & Stacie Painter
- 2

Lawrence & Felicia Harrison
- 5

Alfie & Kristi Chambers
- 6

Jo Peterson & Cindy Jackson
Tom & Joyce Tate
- 11

Ralph & Carolyn Baine
- 12

Steve & Debra Rhodes
Tom & Jacqueline Tipton
- 14

Josh & Angel Baggett
- 15

Michael & Jennifer Owen
- 18

Chad & Amber Smith
Phil & Krissy Harris
- 19

Josh & Emmy Smith
John & Trish Sprague
Matt & Traci Hulgan
- 20

Brandon & Sherinda Hawkins
- 22

Andy & Jimmie Sue Beason
- 23

Rusty & Angela Chambers
- 26

Jim & Darlene Rotch
- 30

Dwight & Jean Powell
Michael & Patty Tucker
Donald & Margie Daniel
- 22

Judy Smith
Zachary Potts
Nathan Keith
- 23

Benny Goss
Violet Carden
- 24

Brenda Goss
Kenneth Chambers
Cecily Goza
Patti Watkins
Ethan Black
- 25

Briley Harrison
Stephanie Poe
Jerelyn Turner
- 26

Andrew Crowe
- 27

Ashtynn Carden
Christine Scott
- 28

Josh Baggett
Chris Stokes
Shea Noles
- 29

Jacob Bain
JoAnn Bain
Jean Crabtree
Jacqueline Tipton
Melinda Whitt
- 30

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

Happy Day!

Ongoing Community Calendar

Mentone Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 5pm. The June meeting will be at the community building across from Mentone Town Hall, 5607 AL Hwy 117.. 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.

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 4-8pm. Mentone Community Church, 90 Summerville Rd. 256-634-4210.

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

The Farm Market at The Farm at Windy Hill is open Tuesdays from 2-4pm and Fridays from 2-5pm. Seasonal produce, grass-fed and finished beef, pastured and wooded pork, and pasture-raised eggs. 445 Road 942, Mentone, AL. 256-674-3639.

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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MERF News

by Sarah Wilcox



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.

April showers bring May flowers even at the MERF walking track! Thanks to prep work on the building, with power washing by Vicky Patrick and Ken Trowbridge, and priming by Chuck Peters and Joe Piscatelli; the block building behind the MERF house is blooming! Local artist and friend of MERF, Lydia Randolph, is creating a wonderful mural of native flora on the building to start bringing alive the Pathway to Community. It has been so fun to watch the process as new blooms arrive daily. Make sure you find the moon shining on the walking track with a sly grin. Our start to create the Pathway to Community has been thwarted a bit but the committee hopes to start making some progress while observing good social distancing practices. This week, I wrote a progress report on this grant, and it was great to say that at least the mural and the fence have been started. Thanks to the help from Buddy and Kay Cole as well as Mary Ann and Jay Robbins, the path also has some new Adirondack chairs to rest or enjoy a peaceful place. Thank you also to Diane Kuehl for helping us with storage needs!

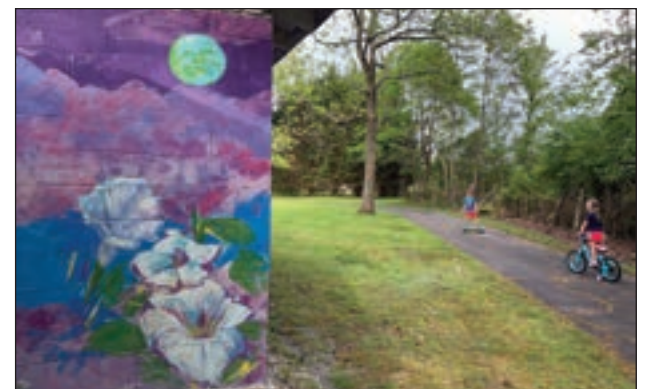
My time, this week, also included a final grant report regarding MERF's tutoring, MERF Moms, and Arts Education programs. It was fun and hard to write, as they asked questions such as how has the community and MERF been changed by these programs, with one example that represents the profound effect of the program. And I am limited to 5,000 characters! Once again, it made me thankful for the many volunteers (tutors and artists) who help MERF, the creativity and the experiences of Arts Education provided by Paula Easter, and the special group of MERF moms and kids. Thank you to Annette Peteck, Bill Rutledge, Mary MacMichael, Ann Bearden, Tom MacMichael, Craig Sheldon, Anna Mae Horn, Kay Cole, Dia White, Victoria and Jim Gaston for giving of their time to tutor on a weekly basis or to be a sub.

Thank you also to everyone who stopped by MERF's Pop Up Shop in May! It was a beautiful weekend with the Rhodies blooming on the Rhododendron Festival weekend for the first time in a while. Hope everyone got outside and enjoyed them and the Mountain Laurel blooming. If you did not get by for a "Leave Me in Mentone" item, contact me

if you need a gift that gives twice. MERF hats are a great Dad present. Little River Hardware also has a selection of MERF shirts and hats, as well as the Country Store at DeSoto State Park.

At MERF's May board meeting, it was decided to wait until spring 2021 to have the Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction as it has been in the past. We are working on auctioning off some of the art that MERF has, so make sure you are on MERF's mailing list. Send me your email at merf.mentone@gmail.com. For those who purchased tickets, you should have received a letter regarding refund options. MERF is so grateful for those who had committed to the auction as sponsors, table hosts, food vendors, and artists. Community builder sponsors were Camp DeSoto and DeKalb County Tourism. The Friends of MERF sponsor was Camp Skyline. Food vendors who signed

campers, Walis Designs, Hummingbird at Loom, Gary White, Barbara Umland, Caroline Nuckolls, Eugenia Johnston, Mickey Luck, Pamela Moniz, Cynthia Luck, Don Pirch, Emily G Collections, and Moon Lake students. Thanks to Mountain Framing for illuminating the great work from our students with wonderful matting and framing. Thanks to Dorma Hutcheson for working on ticket sales and artist donations and Anna Mae Horn on food vendors. Gratitude also for the fun and fabulous decorating committee that came up with a great theme that we will reveal in 2021! Ideas and work from Kat Griffith, Doreen Waters, Beverly Haynes, Mary MacMichael, Vicky Patrick, Ken Trowbridge, Carolyn Nail, Bill Berry, Carol Hazell, Paula Easter, Alyce Kenney, and Charlene Bence. MERF could not do what we do without the support from our fabulous community.



up were Mentone Market, Mentone Inn, Mildred's Meadows, Butter Snob Baking, Blue Jug Water, Fontana's Catering, JoeJohn's catering, Elevation Bistro and Catering, Seabolt's Street Tacos, Paula's Biscuits, Tip Top Bakery Shop, Wildflower Café, Ginni's Cakes, Chick-fil-A and Tiger's Inn. Please say thank you to them and our local artists as well as support them with purchases. Artists who donated work are Kathleen Wheeler, Brad Lackey, Tim Smith, John Dersham, Herman Justice with Camp DeSoto

As you enjoy summer breezes on the mountain, please remember to support our local artists, our farmers, and our restaurants that support so many organizations in Mentone such as MERF. A piece of artwork is a memorable wedding, graduation or Father's Day gift. And enjoying a wonderful meal at a Mentone restaurant or cooking with fresh, locally grown vegetables and meat is time well spent. Let's support our artisans so they can keep creating in our community.

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.

Be River Wise (continued from page 1)

Even its name makes it sound harmless. While the river might be at its most beautiful after a rain, that is also when it is potentially most deadly.

Too often, a beautiful afternoon spent in the river's cool waters can quickly take a turn. Since April, three swimmers have drowned in the Little River, a kayaker was nearly drowned at the base of the river's only low head

dam, and someone was swept over Little River Falls at the head of the canyon.

"Even a strong swimmer can be overcome by a wild river like Little River," said Matt Switzer, Park Ranger and Public Information Officer for the Little River Canyon National Preserve. "Whether it's swift water or flat water, water is tricky, especially if you're not

a strong swimmer, or if you let your guard down."

Currents can develop swiftly, and rocks can be submerged. Being knocked against a rock can cause loss of consciousness, and being pinned under water by a rock or other debris can cause drowning.

Some people certainly take to heart the warning signs at spots like DeSoto Falls and Little River Falls. But others do not.

In May 2019, two swimmers drowned in the basin below DeSoto Falls. Over the years, others have died when they've jumped into the basin from the bluff by the falls. Underwater debris, usually trees and rocks, can become deadly traps.

First responders are well respected in our area, and for good reason, especially when they are responding to a drowning or missing swimmer, because it often means they are also risking their own lives.

The day I spoke with Ranger Switzer, our interview was interrupted by a call on his radio reporting that a woman had been swept over Little River Falls and was clinging to a slippery rock in the middle of the falls. This was Memorial Day, May 25, when thousands of people had flocked to Little River. We continued speaking, and soon the vehicles of first responders were racing past us, sirens blaring—



ALEA helicopter during a recovery on Little River

National Park Rangers, Fischer Rescue Squad, Fort Payne Fire Department, DeKalb Ambulance Service—one after another after another. A 21-year-old woman from Douglasville, GA, had been walking on the rocks above the falls. When her footing slipped, the water carried her away. The ensuing rescue took many hours. She was airlifted from the canyon by an ALEA (Alabama Law Enforcement Agency) helicopter, which had flown 45 minutes from its base in Cullman, and then she was flown to an area hospital. The water that day was flowing at three times its average rate for the date.

The day before, on Sunday, May



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Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

In 2019, Little River Escape Tiny Home Community was named one of the nation's top 6 tiny home communities by U.S. News & World Report. As a result, our community is now almost fully occupied by folks who have come from 12 different states. Little River Escape has decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership, where 6-8 tiny homes are available to tour and purchase. RRE is now delivering across the nation, as well as developing other communities to bring more folks to Lookout Mountain.

A new development is coming to Mentone, only 3 miles from town. Mentone Mountain Escape will be a tiny home neighborhood with +/-20, 1/2-acre wooded lots per house and a common area with a dog park, patio, and firepit area.



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the River on April 3, 2020. Photo by Matt Switzer

24, a 24-year-old man from Indiana jumped off a rock ledge at Little Falls (aka Martha's Falls and Hippie Hole). He never resurfaced. First responders located his body about an hour later. Little Falls is accessed via a ¾-mile trail and 137 steps. Rescue and recovery personnel have a real challenge when there's a water incident there. The Preserve recently closed the parking lot for Little Falls, and they heard from many who were upset about that—people who likely did not realize that the reason the lot was closed was so emergency vehicles could gain access in case of an accident at the popular

swimming hole.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, May 19, a 19-year-old from Kennesaw, GA, lost his life below Little River Falls. The following statement from the National Preserve illustrates how many responders become involved in rescue and recovery missions.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, May 19, 2020, around 2:15 PM, a 21-year-old female and a 19-year-old male, both from Cobb County, Georgia, were swimming in the swift waters in the pool beneath Little River Falls. Both individuals became caught up in the current; the female was able to escape, but the male did not resurface. First responders were immediately dispatched and on-scene within minutes and a search and rescue operation was initiated.

National Park Service rangers, Fischer Rescue Squad, Fort Payne Fire Department, DeKalb County Sheriff's Office, Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, Cherokee County Rescue Squad, Cherokee County Emergency Management Agency, Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) State Troopers, ALEA Aviation, ALEA Game and Fish

Law Enforcement, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Law Enforcement, Cherokee County Coroner's Office, and DeKalb Ambulance Service all responded to the scene for the rescue and recovery.

Above-average flows on the river from recent storms, with associated low-visibility in the water, created circumstances which made it impossible for Fischer Rescue Squad divers to locate the victim in the area he was believed to be, and approaching nightfall caused the rescue attempt to be suspended until the following day. A foot search along the river below the falls, coupled with an aerial search conducted by an ALEA Aviation helicopter, eliminated the possibility that the victim may have been down-river of his expected location.

Unsafe diving conditions persisted on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency delivered and operated an underwater remote operated vehicle to continue the underwater search without risking additional personnel. Strong and unstable currents proved too powerful even for the vehicle and the attempt to locate the victim was once again suspended for the evening.

River conditions let up enough for continued dive attempts by the morning of Thursday, May 21, 2020.

The victim was located and recovered by Fischer Rescue Squad divers at 8:50 AM and extracted from the canyon by Fischer Rescue Squad and Fort Payne Fire Department. The victim was turned over to the Cherokee County Coroner's Office at 10:30 AM.

It was a long week for the park rangers, whose primary job is to help people safely enjoy the Preserve, and for the other first responders, some of whom are volunteers. Switzer said the last three weekends in May have been especially crowded and that the water is still quite cold and fast-flowing due to this spring's frequent rainstorms.

Being a mountaintop river, Little River is heavily dependent upon rainfall for its water. Because of this, the flow of Little River can vary greatly throughout the year, with flows of less than 1 cubic foot per second (cfs) in the summer to a record high flow of over 40,700 cfs on October 5, 1995.

The waters of Little River come from creeks and tributaries all across the mountain—an area of approximately 200 square miles.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) operates an automated river gauge at Blue Pond, at the southern end of the river at Canyon Mouth Park. The gauge monitors the river's height and discharge and reports the flow

(continued on page 12)



Private Little River Canyon Cabin waits for you. Do you long to wake up to the relaxing sounds of nature? This is it. Set on the edge of Little River Canyon this open plan log cabin calls you to the simple life. Well appointed with 3/BR 3B the 1982sf Cabin is set on over 5 acres fronting on the Canyon & backing up to wildlife management. The vaulted living area as well as the bedrooms offer an airy feeling with generous windows that link you to the great outdoors. Master on the main level features private bath with walk-in tile shower. A river rock fireplace highlights the vaulted living area for a cozy feel & the open plan with covered porches flow for easy entertaining. \$315,000.



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Be River Wise (continued from page 11)

rates every 30 minutes. (See waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?02399200 for the Blue Pond report.) The report may not accurately convey the conditions at any given moment at any point upstream because heavy rainfall upriver can cause large and rapid surges in the flow of the river. Since the USGS began gauging the river 58 years ago, the average flow rate on the date of May 25 has been 179 cubic feet per second.

The rains we got during the last week of May quickly raised the river up. To illustrate how dynamic the river's flow rate is: On Wednesday, May 27, at 7:30 a.m. the flow was 388 cfs. By 1:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 28, it shot up to 3,510 cfs before it began a generally steady decrease of about 60 cfs per hour.

Little River is a wild river that is not controlled by a dam that regulates its flow. It may look placid on the surface, but strong currents may be under the surface. "If you've been out quite a bit during the day—it's hot out, you're dehydrated—it's easy to become tired from swimming. Even a strong swimmer can be overcome by a wild river like Little River," said Switzer.

"It's deceptive, because you think it's just water," he said.

"The young man who lost his life on May 21 probably thought the pool below the main falls looked swimmable," said Switzer. "With as much rain as we've had, both sides of the falls are

running, so the two currents come together. From the surface, it doesn't like much of a whirlpool. It looks placid in that area in between the falls, but that's also where you have a lot of tumbling and hydraulics underneath. That's what he got caught up in."

"Personally, I avoid swimming near waterfalls," Switzer continued. "You don't know what's under there. You don't know how deep that water is. You don't know if there's a shelf. You don't know what the currents are doing. There are drop-offs, strong currents, and hydraulics [undertows] all along the Little River. This isn't a movie set. It's a wild river. A river is unforgiving. It doesn't give a lot of second chances. It's unfortunate, but it's how rivers are."

None of those who drowned recently wore a personal flotation device (PFD). "If you know you're not a strong swimmer, you should definitely wear a PFD, or even just hold on to a pool noodle," Switzer said. "You want your friends or family—whoever you're with—to keep an eye on you, and you need to keep an eye on them. The river doesn't have lifeguards. So, your buddies are your lifeguards, essentially."

"But," he emphasized, "everyone has to keep themselves safe. You don't want to jump in to try and help someone, and find yourself pulled into a whirlpool. We don't want to compound the problem by having somebody else

jump in to save us. It's our job to keep ourselves safe."

Switzer pointed out that even if someone goes to a spot on the river they're familiar with, things may have changed since their last visit. "When we have big storms upriver," he said, "there could be a new boulder, there could be a new tree underwater at your favorite spot. Rains after dry spells bring much debris. There are any number of things

under there, and you don't know.

Especially if the rain's been recent and the water's still cloudy. In between rains, it takes about three days to water to settle down and get nice and crystal clear again. It's not always easy to judge the true depth of a rock you're looking at underwater."

"With the river," Switzer said, "you can never be too safe."

Enjoy the Little River safely, but do not underestimate its power.

Little River is primarily a rain-fed river, with miles of river north of the park and numerous tributaries along the length of the river. Because of this, water levels can change rapidly and with little warning, as storms may be occurring upriver, sight unseen.

Keeping an eye on the weather is the key to knowing how safe the river will be. Check the weather before you come—severe weather can move in quickly and you may not receive an alert on your cell phone due to poor cell signal on the river. The sky may be bright and sunny where you are, but a storm as far upriver as Chattanooga can quickly raise the river with little to no warning.

If river levels are higher than the summer norms, stay out of the water! Don't enter the water if the current is strong or you are not a strong swimmer.

- Never swim alone. There is safety in numbers.
- Let someone trusted know where you are and how long you expect to be gone. If you're paddling, leave a float plan with them (where you're putting in and taking out, and how long you plan to be gone).
- If kayaking, be practiced in basic canoeing and kayaking skills before you go on the river.
- Wear a personal flotation device (PFD or lifejacket)—they can save your life! Life jackets should fit snugly and not rise above the chin or ears when in the water.
- Don't leave children unattended. They often don't recognize danger—young children can drown in relatively shallow water.
- Never blindly jump in. That decision has cost many lives.
- Two tips to remember: If the current catches you, swim diagonally towards shore. If headed towards rapids, float with your feet pointed downstream.
- Always wear sturdy shoes—there are sharp objects in the water that will cut bare feet.
- Do not mix swimming with drinking alcohol.
- Wear brightly colored clothing, if possible. Should you become injured or incapacitated, this will assist first responders in locating you and giving aid.
- Wear sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat, even on cloudy days.
- Avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of water.
- In the event of severe weather, such as strong winds, heavy rain, and lightning, get away from the river as soon as possible and seek shelter. If you hear thunder, leave the water for 30 minutes, or 60 minutes if you see lightning. Lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from the storm.
- Exposure to cool air and cold water can lead to hypothermia, even when temperatures are above freezing.
- In case of emergency, call 9-1-1. In the backcountry, carry a back-up emergency signaling device such as an emergency whistle—cell service is not available on all portions of Little River.
- Be safe on the river banks—accidents often happen to waders and "rock-hoppers."



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Little River Arts Council News by Rhea Pirch



The Little River Arts Council Board of Directors met recently to discuss summer plans to bring art to the community and assist area artists during these uncertain times.

The first step forward is to continue our partnership with MERF (the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation) on its Pathway to Community project. It's time to paint the pickets! The picket fence will be hand-painted by community members

with creative and whimsical figures. Artists are preparing some of the pickets in advance by drawing designs on them which people can then paint. If you would like to contribute to this fun project, please email pathwaytocommunity@gmail.com and you'll be added to the Pathway email list. If you'd like to create your own design, please include in your email a simple sketch of your idea, so we can make sure it will be harmonious with the overall style of the fence. There are over 400 pickets to paint, so even if it may take some extra time, the project will be completed following social distancing guidelines, while still allowing community participation. Watch email and Facebook announcements for specific dates when we'll be painting the pickets in small groups.

Also coming to the MERF trail is the Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest, to be held Saturday, June 27. This event offers another opportunity for the community to get together (using social distancing precautions) and have some creative fun by transforming the walking trail into an art exhibit. And there will be ice cream involved!

If you are an artist seeking a way to connect to the community, consider joining our Artist Registry. Information and registration can be found on our website at littleriverartscouncil.org/registry. The registry will be listed on our web site and will include information about the artist, along with sampling of their work. The registry will be helpful for the public who are looking for a particular kind of artwork from area artists.

Little River Arts Council will be participating in FinsterFest 2020, the yearly folk/craft and music festival held at Paradise Garden in Summerville. The event,



normally held on Memorial Day weekend, was moved to September 5 and 6 and will feature over 60 artists and live music on three stages.

We are working diligently to 'pivot' and decide how to best serve the community, our membership and local artists during this unusual time. Ramping up our presence on Facebook and featuring artists on Instagram are two ways we stay in touch. We encourage you to visit, like and follow us often on these formats. Becoming a member of the Little River Arts Council is one way you can help us continue our mission. If your membership has lapsed, or you'd like to join, please visit the member page at littleriverartscouncil.org. You don't have to be an artist to join, and each membership enables us to provide the financial resources necessary to offer arts programming and operational support for artists, children and adults in our community. While you're there, check out our new t-shirts! Available for \$20, in light grey and light blue, they are 100% cotton long sleeved shirts that feature our logo on the back.

SAVE THE DATE!

Mini Music Festival in Mentone
All Day Saturday, September 5
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Presented by the Little River Arts Council

SIDEWALK CHALK ART CONTEST

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MERF Walking Trail

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Saturday June 27
10am 'til Noon

- **Colored sidewalk chalk will be provided** (or please feel free to bring your own)
- Come **prepared with ideas** of what you'd like to create :)
- Each individual or family will have a **20' space on the path**, so we can keep safe distances. The path is about 4' wide.
- **Come to view the art and vote** for the "best of" in different categories. Voting will be tallied at 11:30 AM and **prizes** will be given for the various categories.
- All entrants will enjoy a **FREE** treat from the **ice cream truck** that will arrive at 11 AM. (For all others, treats cost \$3.)
- **Pre-register** at littleriverartscouncil.org/chalkart by Thursday, June 25, so we'll be able to mark off your safe spot. Limit 50 entrants.

LET'S GET OUTSIDE & MAKE ART TOGETHER!



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Holly Watson-Houston
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256-996-0552



Melody Sellers
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A CABIN FOR EVERY SEASON. 2BR/2BA on 1.75 wooded acres. All wood interior; wood-burning fireplace w/stone hearth in vaulted living; handy galley kitchen; 2 screened porches; welcoming front porch w/swing; large deck w/added supports (for future hot tub); mostly furnished. Property is wooded, borders a small creek, & has a great outdoor fire ring w/benches for chilly evenings around the fire. Located in Laurel Creek Lakes which offers lakes for canoeing & well-maintained walking paths. \$179,900 (1128107)



LIVE YOUR MENTONE DREAM! This unique home sits atop Lookout Mountain, built on the edge of the brow. Open style w/windows throughout both sides & both floors of the entire home, the top floor is a full open loft w/2 sep bedrooms each w/balconies above the main deck for sipping coffee or a glass of wine while watching the sun set. Galley style kitchen + butlers pantry w/ top of the line stainless steel appliances+washer & dryer. Outside-screened porch with hot tub, fire pit w/cedar chairs/tables, circle drive & wooden fence. On top of all this, it's also being sold fully furnished. (And it's quite nicely furnished!) Great rental history, too! \$325,000 (1138642)



NOW THIS IS A MOUNTAIN CABIN! 3BR/2BA, 1900 sq ft cabin built w/locally-sourced woods; cedar kitchen cabinetry; cedar-lined closets; peeled pine railings/spindles on staircase & loft; pine plank flooring; pine slab siding exterior. Great room w/ stunning vaulted ceiling & stone, wood-burning FP. 2 bedrooms on main level; 2nd level has huge loft area for game room; and a 3rd BR. Metal roof; 3/4 wraparound, covered & uncovered porch; extended back deck; 1.56-acres. \$239,900 (1143954)

..... LOTS and LAND

COOL, GREEN AND SHADY. One of those special woodland places where simply being there gives a certain feeling of serenity and peace. 4.1 acres of unrestricted beauty is just about the perfect location for your dream lot. On a quiet, after-noon drive down town, a gravel driveway/easement in place, goes through property, with circle turn-around. Wet-weather stream. \$41,000 (1120916)

10 ACRES OF WOODED LAND, WITH SPRING. Public water/power avail nearby. A driveway was cut into the property several years ago, still viable. If you've been considering building your own cabin in the woods, this might just be the place to start. \$65,000. (1137280)

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. \$19,000. (1109345)

11.03 UNRESTRICTED ACRES IN MENTONE, cornering 2 county roads (one paved, one gravel) with driveway. W/level-to-r level-to-r life. Ideal place to park a few acres, build, do a little hunting, too. \$60,000 (1132226)

UNIQUE, YEAR-ROUND NAVIGABLE RIVER LOT AT DESOTO FALLS Lake area. 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! Survey & perc in file. \$155,000. (355152)

Mentone is still a very active market, but listings are few! Give us a call today and let us help you sell your property.



OWN YOUR OWN LITTLE CANYON with Johnnie's Creek cascading through the forest below and 36 acres of beautiful, mostly-wooded land (on both sides of creek) & a fabulous, custom-built, cypress-sided home. Approx 3600 sq ft of deliciously-designed living inside, tremendous tree-top decks & porches outside! Two wood-burning fireplaces (one w/insert); Brazilian floors, windows galore, fab light fixtures throughout. Huge, open kitchen/living area. Tons of cabinetry, commercial-grade gas range, granite countertops; large pantry. A mountain escape, with simple luxury in a residence, hunting lodge or getaway. \$599,000 (1010510)



PRIVATE CABIN IN THE WOODS WITH CREEK, walking paths, peace & quiet. Gated entry, lined with trees, leading to a cedar-sided, 3BR/2BA cabin on 3.17 wooded acres. Sit on the screened back porch or the covered deck and listen to the creek that runs behind the cabin. Inside is a stunning, vaulted greatroom with knotty cypress floors; pine walls & ceilings; stone fireplace. 2BR/1BA on main level; Master suite upstairs. Ceramic tile baths; pantry; laundry closet. Kitchen features handy work island, hickory cabinets & stainless appliances. Cabin comes fully furnished. Landscaped with native & cultivated plants, stone steps leading to backyard. Large garage/shop. \$269,000. (1144579)



SPACIOUS CABIN HOME ON 3.31 ACRES, with pleasant, winding, private drive. 3BR/2.5BA, 2500 sq ft, one-owner home features a welcoming front porch & a deep, oversized back porch for easy entertaining outdoors. Open living/dining/kitchen features an efficient, wood-burning heater; hardwood floors. Main-level master suite. First level also offers a laundry room & 1/2 bath. Upstairs are two large bedrooms & guest bath. Two new CH/A units in Aug 2019. Outdoors, the property includes a well-equipped workshop/garage; a large pole barn for firewood with an attached chicken coop; and a combination of cleared/wooded land. Add'l land avail. \$264,500 (1128526)



KNOCK, KNOCK! Who's there? Well, it could be you! Cute & cozy cottage w/private upstairs guest quarters. Furnished front & back porches. A swimming pool, a hot tub, a fire pit, a grill, a gazebo, a swing set, a play set, a tree-house-feel, efficiency apt w/claw-foot tub nook, privy" closet, wood floors & multiple beds. Storage bldg. Near DeSoto Falls, State Park, Comer Scout Camp. Just off the parkway. \$119,000 (1124542)



IT'S SOUTH COOL STREET, and it's pretty special! Brow-front property with a beautiful old stone fireplace chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. Newly surveyed. An original Mentone summer home once stood here, built and owned by the same family since early 1920s. Approximately 0.45 acre lot in an area where you're in town, but private & properties are seldom available. Build your own memories! \$118,000 (1070474)

ST. JOSEPH'S ON-THE-MOUNTAIN

2020 Van McCary Scholarship Recipients by Kat Griffith

WooHoo!! Double congratulations are in order for these eleven deserving students receiving the St. Joseph's Van McCary Scholarship! These dedicated and perseverant young people have managed to excel academically in spite of the ongoing restrictions and uncertainties in the year of Covid-19. Presenting the 2020 award winners!

Rachel Collins is a 2020 graduate from VHS who has enjoyed an illustrious high school career. Her talents as a natural leader are evident! Rachel will journey to Jacksonville State University to seek a major in Biology. We will see great things from Rachel.

Byrum Emory is one St. Joseph's is proud to claim. His natural talent and abilities are evident and we support him in his endeavor to pursue a career in Business. Byrum is a second-year recipient and the Mentone community looks forward to seeing his gifts well utilized.

Saddler Emory is one of St. Joseph's flock. She has stayed true to her gifts as she pursues a degree in Communications from UNA. This is Saddler's third year to receive this award and we are looking forward to her professional career in journalism.

Avion Gelfenstein completed the required hours for a high school graduation in December, 2019. She has shown her loyalty to the Mentone community as a volunteer with MAPA and the fire department. Avion is an officer in Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society at NACC. We encourage her to continue to hone both her leadership skills and her academic excellence.

Jordan Henderson has the inviting, warm smile of one who possess the rare qualities to excel in teaching young children. Jordan has already received college credits at NACC and will continue there in the fall as she pursues a degree in Early Childhood Education.

Daisy Hernandez finished her high school career and began her college career with her own fireworks show. She received Math, English and Science awards at VHS and has an impressive GPA already at NACC. Daisy will be seeking a career in Human Resource Management, a degree to which she is evidently well suited.

Devin Leps is a fourth-year recipient who is pursuing a BS degree in Nursing from the University of North Alabama. He graduated Valley Head High School with honors but has excelled even greater as a Dean's List Scholar in his chosen field of professional study. We are grateful to partner with Devin and look forward to the expertise he will share with the community.

Aaron Moore must have had some excellent teachers in his high school career at VHS. He is choosing the field of Education at Shorter University. Aaron excelled in both academics and athletics and we hope he will continue to apply himself as diligently as he has so far.

Brianna Powell has managed to juggle both work and school as a third-year recipient, striving for a degree as a Medical Assistant at Northeast Alabama Community College. She has been inducted in the honor societies of Sigma Kappa Delta and Phi Theta Kappa at NACC.

Ally Smith was a very busy senior at VHS when the issues of COVID-19 rudely interrupted her final high school year. She will seek an associate degree in Business at NACC and then hopes to pursue a Bachelors degree at JSU.

Julie Smith has not slowed in her drive to excel academically! She was the VHS Salutatorian and has kept a stellar GPA at North East Community College during the many challenges of our past spring. Julie pushes forward to obtain a degree in Psychology and to apply for a post graduate degree in Occupational Therapy.

Moon Lake Community Library News by Kelly Leavitt

"Never put off till tomorrow the book you can read today." — Holbrook Jackson

The library remains closed, but our curbside service is working well. Browse the library's catalog at bit.ly/moonlake-catalog to select your books. (DVDs and children's books are NOT available at this time.) Then, visit moonlakelibrary.org/curbside to reserve your books and choose your preferred pick-up date. A plastic bag with your name on it will be waiting for you on a table on the library's front porch. Patrons may borrow three books for a period of two weeks. Books should be returned to our blue drop box outside the front doors.

They will be isolated before they are returned to our shelves.

We are also offering a virtual book sale. Browse the photo gallery of our fiction books that are for sale at moonlakelibrary.org/virtualsale, then reserve your books and choose a convenient time when you can come pick them up. A plastic bag with your name on it will be waiting for you on a table on the library's front porch.

Kelly Leavitt is the librarian of Moon Lake Community Library.

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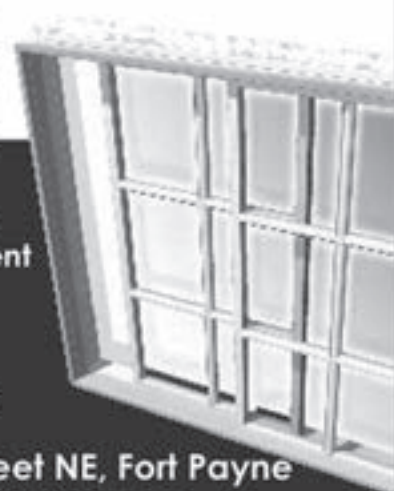
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Mentone Area Church Directory

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".

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church offers Sunday School on Sunday mornings at 10am (EST) and Worship Service at 11am (EST). Pastor Jack Green. 10090 County Road 103. 706-862-6221.

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.

*We suggest you
contact the churches
to inquire about how
they are currently
holding services.*

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 Moon Lake Baptist Church's dining 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.

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 (EST) and Worship at 10am (EST). 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 (EST); and Wednesday night Bible Study at 7pm (EST). 1104 Hwy. 337, Menlo GA. 706-862-6641.

Menlo Church of Christ invites you to attend 10am (EST) and 11am (EST) Sunday services and evening services at 5pm (EST) on Sundays and Wednesdays. Visitors are always welcome.

Menlo Presbyterian Church (ECO) invites everyone to attend services with us. Sunday School at 10am (EST) and Worship Service at 11:15am (EST). 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 (EST); Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm (EST). Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am (EST); Morning Celebration 10:30am (EST). Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue. 706-808-0909.

Summerville Seventh Day Adventist Church invites you to worship with us. Saturday morning Sabbath School classes at 9:30am (EST) and Worship Service at 11am (EST). Everyone is welcome. Services are held at the First Presbyterian Church, 116 College Street. The Pastor is Dr. Edward Skoretz. summervillesda.com

Please send any changes to
The Groundhog
at groundhognews@yahoo.com
or P.O. Box 387
Mentone, AL 35984



River Voice

by Angie Shugart

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

—David Brower

Little River is unique. Little River is special. Little River in its entirety, is worth protecting. This time last year, we were creating a documentary with a group of extraordinary filmmakers about Little River to raise awareness about a campaign that will preserve the Little River corridor for future generations. The film is called "Something About Little River." While filming, we talked about the economic benefit that Little River brings to the community, the flora and fauna that can't be found anywhere else, the history, and that feeling you get when you enter the imaginary gates of Lookout Mountain. The takeaway was not only a beautiful film full of heartwarming stories about the lifeblood of our community but also a call to action. "Keep Little River Wild" is the campaign to designate Little River as a National Wild & Scenic River. The rivers that are nominated for this designation must possess one of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values: Scenic, Recreational, Historical, Cultural, Fish and Wildlife, and Geologic. Little River has them all! Since August 2019, we have gauged public interest and the results are resounding, YES, protect Little River! The next step is to gather a river coordinating committee to create a river corridor management plan. The committee will consist of public land managers, government agencies, community leaders, and river stakeholders. Once the plan is created, we will draft legislation to fund and implement the plan. The benefits are included in the diagram below. I ask you to consider supporting this campaign, as it takes a lot of research and time and boots on the ground to be successful.

Swim Guide

Little River Waterkeeper will keep you up to date on weekly water quality results. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, we will run tests from samples taken on Little River from your favorite swimming holes. Each Friday, we will post test results by the end of business for: E Coli, Total Coliform, Temperature, pH, Dissolved Oxygen, Total Dissolved Solids, Conductivity, and Nitrates to determine if the site meets state water quality standards. Results can be found on our website at littleriverwaterkeeper.org/swimguide and theswimguide.org/affiliates/LittleRiverWaterkeeper.



Little Falls, also known as Martha's Falls and the Hippy Hole

Swim Club

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

River Etiquette

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

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

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

Angie Shugart is the executive director of Little River Waterkeeper, a 501(c)(3) water advocacy program and a member of the international Waterkeepers Alliance. All donations are tax deductible. Visit littleriverwaterkeeper.org to learn more. To report pollution, call 256-634-8370.

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In Memoriam

JAMES BOYD



Mr. James Boyd died in Menlo, GA, on April 7, 2020. He was 75 years old and lived his whole life around Menlo. For the last 19 years he had been the Security Guard for the town. He loved his job and took pride in working every day. His wife passed away about five years ago, and he often stated that his job and the Town of Menlo helped him survive without her. The day he died, he had wanted to come in to work, but because of the chest pains he was having, his son talked him into staying home to rest. He was buried in his security guard uniform. His nickname was "P-George," which is the CB handle for Menlo.

He will be missed by all the citizens of Menlo. He loved his family, wrestling, and Menlo. He is survived by his four sons, James Jr., Marty, Rickey, Chuck and many grandchildren. —Pat Johnson

BUFORD DANIEL "DANNY" WILCOX

November 8, 1953 – May 2, 2020



Mr. Buford Daniel "Danny" Wilcox, age 66, of Mentone, died Saturday, May 2, 2020, at his residence. Mr. Wilcox was born November 8, 1953, in Centre, AL, son of the late Buford Daniel and Mamie Lucile Jenkins Wilcox. He was a member of Berryton Baptist Church, and prior to his retirement, was employed with Fruit of the Loom. In addition to his parents, Mr. Wilcox was preceded in death by a sister, Marie Duncan.

Survivors include his wife, Esther Jones Wilcox; sons, Chris (Ashley) Wilcox, Bryan Wilcox, Josh (Alyse) Wilcox; a daughter, Ashley Wilcox; brothers, Rickey Wilcox and Tommy Giles; sister,

Teresa (David) Crawford; 8 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren.

Private interment was held at Mount Calvary Cemetery with Rev. Mickey Skates officiating. Pallbearers were Lance Buice, Drew Dotson, Raymond Jones, Jr., Harley Elliott, Lance Gazaway, and Kenny Lowenberg.

TERRY EUGENE SAINE

April 22, 1949 – May 17, 2020

Mr. Terry Eugene Saine, age 71, of Mentone, died Sunday, May 17, 2020. He was born April 22, 1949, son of the late Homer Lawson and Annie Laura McGill Saine.

Mr. Saine was retired from Mount Vernon Mills in Trion, GA and was a veteran of the United States Marines. He was of the Baptist faith.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by a brother, Charles Richard Saine and a sister, Linda Faye Cooper.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret Ann Saine; One brother, Homer Saine; six sisters, Carol Brown, Mary Ann (Jackie) Smith, Sharon (Eugene) Cluck, Laura Ann (Marty) Dawson; brother-in-law and sisters-in-law, Dwight (Jean) Powell, Kay Sentell; Five grandchildren also survive.

At Mr. Saine's request he will be cremated and all services will be private. Honorary pallbearers will be Bud Johnson and family. In lieu of flowers the family request donations be made to St. Jude.

KURT LEE WINN

October 16, 1965 – May 11, 2020



Kurt Lee Winn, 54, of Valley Head, passed away Monday, May 11, 2020. He was a 1984 graduate of Fort Payne High School. Kurt had an exceptional work ethic; he worked over 20 years with Earthgrains/Sara Lee Bakery and then later with Johnnie Hairel Construction and Greener Side. He was currently the operations manager for Inspec Labeling in Valley Head. He was a member of Whitehall Methodist Church.

Kurt loved sports. He loved Braves baseball, but what he loved most was any sport his son,

Griffin, played. Since Griffin was four years old, Kurt coached him and his teammates in soccer, t-ball, rec league baseball and basketball and the Fort Payne Crusaders travel baseball league. He loved each teammate and treated each boy like he was his own son.

He leaves behind his beloved wife, Staci Large Winn, and son, Griffin Winn; mother, Sharon Mahaffey and husband, Don; stepmother, Leda Winn; grandfather, George Breedlove; brother, Darrel Winn and wife, Susan, and their sons, Brody and Brayden; sister, Tammy Riley and husband, Matt, and their son, Andrew; stepbrothers, Donnie Mahaffey and Scott Mahaffey; stepsisters, Pam Breternitz and husband, Roger, and Trina Snoddy and husband, Brian, and their son, Logan, and Leslie Bennett; uncle, John Breedlove and wife, Cinde, and their daughter, Carrie; aunt, Gina Oliveira and husband, Steve, and their daughters, Katy and Sara; and his father-in-law, Kenneth Large.

He was preceded in death by his father, Jerry Winn; nephew, Nathan Coe; and mother-in-law, Carolyn Large.

The family plans schedule a Celebration of Life service to honor Kurt at a later time.



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Camps Closed (continued from page 1)

Camp, and Valley View Ranch Equestrian Camp for Girls have also cancelled their sessions.

In making this year’s difficult decision, the directors engaged in community dialogue, and had conversations with medical professionals, clinical counselors, camping advisors, and legal and insurance counsel.

Among a host of other regulations, the state of Alabama requires campers to stay six feet apart at all times.

“There’s not enough time to get everything ready to meet all the guidelines,” said Larry Johnson of Camp Skyline. “Even if we could, the guidelines don’t let camp look like camp. For instance, they want groups to stay together. That works for some camps, but our campers each pick their own schedule. Meals would take forever, because we’ve have to spread out and do them in shifts. We feed nearly 400 people, counting counselors and staff.”

Rob Hammond agreed. “Even if we did everything they ask, which is nearly impossible, we would exhaust ourselves. And we’d still have no guarantee the virus wouldn’t be spread, especially since we have campers coming from all over the country. It’s just too great a risk to have the kids come together.”

Camp properties are expensive to maintain, and they had already invested significantly in their preparations for the summer. “We have to not only survive until the doors open in 2021, we have to refund or roll over the tuition that parents have already paid for this year,” said Hammond. He thinks the local camps will be able to stay afloat this year but said, “It would be really hard to stay in business

if we miss two summers.” The camps have business interruption insurance, but it only covers losses if the camp has shut down after an incident (like a virus outbreak). It doesn’t cover preventative measures.

Beyond the financial impact on the camps themselves, countless people’s income will be affected. All types of businesses are affected by the loss of camp season.

“There’s a definite ripple effect,” said Hammond. “Hundreds of kids don’t have jobs this summer. Same with each camp’s kitchen staff. Vendors are impacted, including the

food companies. Phillip Brown of Brown’s Cleaning and Laundry has done all the camp laundry for all the camps for years. He hires extra help in the summer to handle that, and those kids won’t have a job. And Phillip won’t have an income from the camps this summer. Ginny Wooten, who owns five school busses that ferry the campers to local sites, will lose her summer’s income.”

“Camp Skyline employs 75 counselors,” said Larry Johnson. Many people in the community work at the camps in the summer. Parents and counselors spend a lot of money in town on lodging, food, and gas—even buying t-shirts. The tax base revenue will not be what it has been. Closing camp will have a big impact, more than just to the campers.”

The directors and their lead staff members have been thinking creatively about ways to stay connected with their campers, many of whom return every year and have established close bonds with camp leadership and fellow campers. Camp will “move” to the internet, with skits and camp activities like cooking, arts & crafts, and survival lessons being offered on Facebook

and Instagram. Even the beloved tradition of the evening campfire will be virtually shared. It’s an innovative way for the campers to feel connected.

Rob Hammond hopes that families will be able to offer their children summer activities such as backyard campouts, and trips to the lake or the river. “Kids need to be outdoors, playing if they can,” he said.

Hammond said, “It hasn’t really sunk in yet that they’re not going to be here. I’ve never had a summer off. I really have no plans.”

The camp horses do. They’ll all enjoy a summer of free-range grazing.



Campers from Riverview Camp for Girls enjoying Little River (in a 'normal' year)



Valley Head now has a “Blessing Box.” If you are in need or know someone who is in need, point them in the direction of Valley Head Baptist Church at 265 Church Street and the sign will lead them to the “Blessing Box. Food and essential items may be found there. If anyone wants to contribute, please feel free.



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