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FREE



THE GROUNDHOG

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

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

See You Saturday, October 19!

Welcome to the biggest annual event in Mentone

mentone Fall Festival

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

After months of preparation and anticipation, the biggest day in Mentone is here. Welcome to the Mentone Fall Festival!

Saturday, October 19, will be a day filled with activities, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., offering something for all ages. Held on the grounds of the historic Moon Lake School, the festival will feature art vendors, food trucks, and children's activities. The shops and galleries inside the former school house will be open to visitors and shoppers.

The Shigley Amphitheater will come alive with music, featuring performances by the Mentone Ukes, Lisa Crow, Still Kickin', Judy-Nicole Kirby, and more.

While all this is happening around the Moon Lake campus, events will take place throughout town.

The nearby Moon Lake Trading Co. will host a fall fling with music, vendors, and great Seabolt's tacos. The unique shops inside the Log Cabin Village will welcome visitors throughout the day while hosting live music. Farmers markets will provide produce, meats, baked goods, and other fresh foods. Local restaurants will make sure no one leaves hungry.

The Friday before the festival, a kickoff concert featuring local favorite Will Dooley and Company will be held at the Linger Longer Pavilion behind the Mentone Inn. The event runs from 6 to 9 p.m.

"This is a great event, involving people throughout our town," says Mentone Mayor Rob Hammond. "Beyond our incredible volunteers, businesses are welcoming friends and visitors with their arts, crafts, food, and gift items. It's a true community event."

The Mentone Fall Festival is a great way to kick off the arrival of cooler temperatures and the fall foliage color season. It's also an opportunity to begin your holiday gift shopping by finding unique items you can buy directly from the artists.

The event is hosted by the Town of Mentone, with proceeds going toward the maintenance and renovation of the school campus.

Pages 7 and 8 provide full information about the festival. Check it out and get ready to join us!

See Pages 7 and 8 for Maps, Vendor Lists and More Mentone Fall Festival Information!

Holley Midgley's Legacy One of Leadership and Profound Pride in Community

BY KELLY LEAVITT

To think of someone with a deep love for Mentone, it's easy to think of Holley Midgley. Holley unexpectedly passed away at his Moon Lake home on Sept. 11, 2024, at 76 years of age. He left a significant mark on the Mentone community.

His love for reading made him a dedicated advocate for Moon Lake Library. Chances are strong that if you ever bought a book at the library's book sale during one of Mentone's festivals, you met Holley. He was chairman of the board for Moon Lake Community Library, the subsequent Moon Lake Municipal Library, and Friends of Moon Lake Library. He also served as a board member for the former Mentone Area Arts Council, Little River Arts Council, and the former Mentone Area Preservation Association.

Holley was primarily raised in Gadsden and attended The University of Alabama, where he earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in broadcasting. After college, he moved to Montgomery and found work in marketing and communications. He was a producer/director at Alabama Public Television; chief of cinematography for the Alabama Forestry Commission; director of broadcast relations at Alabama Farm Bureau; and director of public relations for the Medical Association of the State of Alabama. Most of his career was enjoyed serving as executive vice president at the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians.

The Midgley family has had a presence in Mentone since 1945, when Holley's maternal grandparents purchased the property surrounding Moon Lake from Martha Berry, founder of Berry College. Holley liked to recall with a grin, "My first visit to Mentone was as a fetus in my mother's belly."



Charles "Holley" Midgley, Jr. · March 28, 1948 — September 11, 2024
(Photo courtesy of Cynthia Stinson)

He was deeply influenced by his mother, Jeanne Shepard Vance, who taught high school English for 17 years. She also taught ballroom dancing for Arthur Murray's Dance Studios and insisted Holley take lessons.

His father, Charles Holley Midgley, was a bombardier/navigator in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. His B-24 Liberator bomber was shot down over Italy in July 1943. For the following 22 months, he was confined in a German prisoner of war camp and then liberated by U.S. Gen. George Patton's Third Army. (The same camp was immortalized by the book and movie, "The Great Escape.") With pride, Holley participated in Gadsden's "A Walk Through Time" annual event at Forest Cemetary, where his father and other ancestors are buried. He dressed and performed as if he were his father, telling visitors about his life. He accompanied his father for many years to reunions of WWII veterans around the country.

Holley retired to Mentone on April 1, 2008. While still in Montgomery, he had created a newspaper, "The Lookout View," which featured articles and color photographs showcasing Lookout Mountain. After his move to Mentone, his commitment did not wane and he drove to the printer in Montgomery each month to load papers onto a trailer to bring back to Mentone for distribution in the region.

He was enormously proud of the comfortable Little River log home he built at the Moon Lake property. Martha Berry's original couch sits prominently in its living room. Her Moon Lake summer home is now owned by Holley's brother Shep.

(See "Holley Midgley," Page 16)

Moon Lake Kitchen

A New Culinary Venture in Mentone

BY NATHAN CAVITT AND REBECCA HENDERSON

After a long career as a geologist and environmental consultant, Robie York is about to make his culinary dream a reality and share his passion for cooking with the town of Mentone. Moon Lake Kitchen plans to open later this month in the remodeled Moon Lake School lunchroom. The owners hope to open the restaurant in time for the Mentone Fall Festival October 19.

"It's going to be a really warm, inviting space that reflects the character of Mentone," York says. "We want people to walk in and instantly feel at home."

Details are still being finalized, but plans are for the restaurant to open four to five days a week for breakfast and lunch, and three days a week (Thursday-Saturday) for dinner. Dishes will include as many locally sourced ingredients as possible, and will showcase York's Creole style of cooking. Breakfast will feature doughnuts, beignets, and traditional breakfast items. For lunch, the kitchen will craft a mix of simple sandwiches and fare such as gumbo, jambalaya, and red beans and rice. Dinner will echo that New Orleans flair in a rotating menu of seasonal, elevated comfort foods.

York's plan is for a low-key vibe, with acoustic music to occasionally accompany dinner, and affordable prices.

(See "Moon Lake Kitchen," Page 4)

The Groundhog

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The Groundhog has been in publication since 1982. MERF is honored to continue this community tradition.

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The Groundhog is a community newspaper, and as such we encourage submissions from readers. Send story ideas anytime. The deadline for articles is the 15th of each month prior to publication month. Thank you for reading *The Groundhog*!

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GroundhogNews@yahoo.com
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Mentone, AL 35984
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Groundhog woodcut courtesy of Meg Justice/Bee Spring Studio

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American Legion To Host Sunset Socials on the Brow

You won't find better views of the setting sun than on the brow in Mentone. Why not share it with friends? Our local American Legion Post 215 organizes a social for viewing the magnificent colors that put on a show just before dark.

The dates for the socials are set:

- October 17 at 6 p.m.
- December 19 at 5 p.m.
- January 16 at 5 p.m.
- February 20 at 5 p.m.
- March 20 at 5 p.m.

And always the third Thursday of the month, one hour before sunset.

See our Mentone Sunset Social on the Brow Facebook group or contact Barry Morton, commander, at 334-202-8936 (cell and text).

Mentone Matters
Welcome to our Fall Festival!

BY MAYOR ROB HAMMOND



We are entering what, for many people, is the best time of the year. It's been such a hot summer — and as I write this we're still looking at some 90-degree days ahead of us. With fall comes cooler temperatures, college football, family gatherings, and more time outdoors.

And we're all looking forward to the fall color. Mentone (indeed, all of Lookout Mountain) is blessed with an abundance of trees that put on an amazing color show most years. I'm hoping we'll have a spectacular display in the coming weeks, one that takes us into a peaceful Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Mentone's biggest event is just around the corner. I hope to see you at the Mentone Fall Festival on October 19. Get an early start on your Christmas shopping with one-of-a-kind art pieces. You'll find everything from paintings and photographs to pottery, woodwork, jewelry, and clothing.


Photo courtesy of John Dersham, DeKalb Tourism

And don't forget the live music and food. Best of all, you'll spend the day seeing folks you know and making new friends as you enjoy our town's premier event.

The Mentone Fall Festival has additional benefits in that it raises funds to help the Town of Mentone renovate and maintain the Moon Lake campus. This property is an important part of our community's heritage, and by making it available to the community with shops, galleries, education, and a new restaurant opening soon, we are allowing it to continue the legacy that began here a century ago.

While you're in town, stop by the many other businesses who are preparing to welcome you with special offerings and events to celebrate the season. I hope to see you Saturday, October 19.

From the Editor
Lessons in the loss

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

"It's never too late." That's simply not true.

When the phone rang a few nights ago, I knew something was wrong. My friend's trembling voice on the other end confirmed my fears. Through her sobs, she told me that a beloved member of the community had unexpectedly passed away.

And now it's too late. Too late for that visit to his home. Too late for a ride on his houseboat. Too late to learn more about his impressive career.

I met Holley Midgley a few months ago, and we immediately hit it off. We were particularly bound by our mutual passion for capturing and preserving the stories of community leaders. A few feet from my desk sits a box with microphones and a recorder, the gear he was going to use to interview folks as part of a new documentary project we planned to work on together.

And now it's too late.

I regret that we didn't get a chance to start that project. I regret not making time for that visit, for that boat ride.

But more than anything, I regret not having more time to get to know my new friend. He was a fascinating character, and I know my life would have been richer for deepening that relationship.

The feelings of regret and lost opportunity continued with the news that Bruce BonFleur passed away. We had several phone conversations over the past couple of years but never met in person. I am honored to continue the tradition of The Groundhog that he began more than 40 years ago, and I had plans to interview him about the launch of this newspaper (as well as the many other contributions he made to Mentone's culture and community). And now it's too late.

This isn't the first death that has shaken me this year. Two long-time friends died a few weeks apart at the beginning of the year, one just shy of being a centenarian, the other half that age and a former coworker of mine. I said goodbye to both while wishing I had spent more time with them in their final months.

As I write this, in the quiet of a morning, I am once again reminded that the richness of life is in the relationships we build. It's in the visits, the boat rides, the time we spend sharing stories and revealing the layers of what has defined our human experience thus far.

I find myself once again motivated to be more intentional about those relationships. I hope you are, too.

It's never too late to start. Until it is.

Share your memories of Bruce BonFleur

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

As we neared the deadline for this month's edition, we learned the sad news that Bruce BonFleur had passed away. Without Bruce's vision, creativity, and motivation, you would not be reading The Groundhog today. He founded this publication and kept it going for many years. While this was certainly not his only contribution to the culture of Mentone, it is an important one that continues to serve the community today.

We are working on a full feature story about Bruce's life and contributions to Mentone's culture. If you have memories you'd like to share, please leave a comment at readthegroundhog.com/bruce. You can also email your memories to groundhognews@yahoo.com (please use "Remembering Bruce" as your subject line).

Thank you for your help as we prepare to honor the life of The Groundhog's founder and a special figure in the life of Mentone.


A memorial service celebrating the inspirational life of Bruce BonFleur will be held at the Mentone Community Church on Saturday, October 5th at 2 p.m.

Some Advice for Those Driving into the Future

BY BEN SHURETT



Do you ever have flashbacks? Such occasions are generally good ones, when the memories triggered are pleasant, even wonderful reminders of something I enjoyed. The flashback that hit me this week was a bit different but a good one, in retrospect.

It occurred as my Mary and I drove on Interstate 59, headed south for a bit before leaving that byway and turning toward a suburb of Nauvoo, Alabama. As a quick aside before moving to flashbacks, Nauvoo is on the border of Winston and Walker counties. It had a population of 185 in 2020. Just outside Nauvoo is Camp McDowell, the home of spiritual retreats of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. Cursillo is the name of those fabulous gatherings, and Camp McDowell resounds with wonderful and happy hymns during Cursillo. All who attend will have lifelong flashbacks to their experiences there.

Not a bad segue, huh?

As we drove south, it soon became apparent we would overtake both a small sedan and a U-Haul truck, one following the other. I moved to the passing lane and correctly anticipated what I then saw. The wife of what I guessed to be a young married couple was driving the sedan, a bit too closely following her husband as he fought the steering wheel of the U-Haul. Many of us have been in those seats, probably wondering what may lay ahead. It's likely there was a debate about the size of the truck they rented. Would a 20-footer hold all their possessions, or was a 26-foot truck necessary? This young couple was headed for their future and, based on a quick look as I passed, they had many miles and years ahead of them.

My flashback took me to the times I had been in their shoes and U-Haul seats, and I imagined the thoughts they had about their next destination and beyond were similar to mine every time I had moved.

With every relocation, I wondered: who would my friends be, at work and beyond? Might neighbors be the best ever, like in Mentone, or will we even know each other at all? Will we be successful at our new jobs, challenged and fulfilled? New opportunities may come as a result, so how will that be handled? Are there children in the future and, oh my, can we handle the happiness, the heartache, and the challenges of parenting? Will we be blessed with good health, and what illness and troubles are ahead of us?

In those first journeys to a new house, as well as every subsequent new home, I always wanted to find a church I could love and a church family who would embrace us as God would. There are so many benefits to an active church life, and attending church is good advice for many reasons. In so many places, Scripture tells us not to worry and, while I believe in that, I've done too much of it.

But if I could have shared a moment with that young couple I passed on the highway, it might be this: Your troubles always look smaller in your rearview mirrors. They appear to be huge in front of you, but as you get past them, the farther you are from them, the smaller they look. Enjoy the ride. Life is good. Try to make good decisions — the ones that minimize troubles in your path. Don't borrow trouble, but understand the most important thing: Life is good and you are loved.

For more than 30 years, Ben Shurett was a newspaper publisher in Alabama and Iowa. He retired in 2014 and has lived in Mentone since.

Fall Open Enrollment

BY LYNN HIXON

Fall Open Enrollment begins October 15 and ends December 7 each year. During this time, you can make changes to your health insurance coverage, including adding, dropping, or changing your Medicare Advantage or your Part D Coverage for next year. Even if you're happy with your current health and drug coverage, Fall Open enrollment is the time to review what you have, compare it with other options, and make sure that your current coverage will meet your needs for the coming year. If you have any questions or would like to make an appointment, Lynn Hixon, the SHIP coordinator, is ready to assist you at 256-845-8590 at the DeKalb County Council on Aging.

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I'm the Tiara Queen!

BY DEJOLY LABRIER

If you could look into my closet, you'd possibly come to the conclusion that I am the queen of tiaras! It's true! There are people around the area who ask me if something is wrong when I don't wear a tiara out in public!



There's a reason or two for that…

For most of my life, I didn't know my worth. Coming from an extremely abusive home, any significant days or moments were not celebrated. I wasn't congratulated. I wasn't given any awards by my family. My stomach churned on my birthday, a day that was just like any other day of the year in my parents' house.

Then I moved away from that house to enter college. I struggled and found ways to make the money I needed to complete my degree in slightly over the normal four years most people complete a degree. No one came to my graduation to congratulate me for all the work I did… to tell me how proud of me they were. I was met with derision and sarcasm. "Who do you think you are?"

Moving forward, I had relationships and jobs and lots of ups and downs. It took a long time for me to acknowledge my own accomplishments… My own greatness.

A key element of life is gratitude. It's the key to happiness.

Even though there were many times I begged God to put me in the right family (He'd obviously made a mistake by putting me in the one filled with abuse and anger), I found a way to fill my heart with gratitude.

I was grateful that I could see the beauty around me in the smallest observations of nature. I was grateful that I was kind, attributing that to the grace of God. My life transformed from being a victim to being a cheerleader and a conduit for healing others, and I was grateful.

My journey of self-care and self-love turned a switch in me that allowed me to acknowledge myself for the person I'd become, despite the painful life I'd endured as a child. I congratulated myself for overcoming the hardships of the life I made for myself in my evolution as a human being.

I began celebrating the small wins and joys of my life. I gave myself high-fives and special birthday treats. I celebrated who I'd become with days filled with wonder and play.

Several years ago, I was given a beautiful rhinestone tiara for just being me. It was special. I celebrated with a delicious meal out at a new and charming restaurant, along with a dreamy afternoon on a quilt beside the Tennessee River in Chattanooga.

From that day forward, I found myself wearing the tiara at times when I wanted to get a positive boost. Other people responded with smiles and cheerful congratulations.

Thus, I found a new tiara that represented some special day in each month, and began wearing them out in public, not just at home. I became a walking celebration of life. The rhinestone tiara became the one I wear the entire month of October to celebrate my birth month!

Today, with many friends, I celebrate my worth and my accomplishments. How do you celebrate you?

Moon Lake Kitchen *(continued from page 1)*



Robie York is excited to bring Creole and cajun cuisine — along with beignets for breakfast — to the the Moon Lake campus. Photo by Mikel Yeakle.

"We want this to be a place where people can come and enjoy a really delicious, high-quality meal in a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere," he says. "Whether it's a family gathering, a business lunch, or a date night, we want our guests to feel right at home."

Moon Lake Kitchen will be a family affair, as the Yorks' son Carson is moving back to the area from Nashville to help run the restaurant. Carson gained significant restaurant and bakery experience in Nashville-area eateries while attending college and afterward.

"Having Carson join us is a game-changer," York says. "His culinary expertise and experience in the restaurant industry will be invaluable as we get this new venture off the ground."

The Yorks bring years of cooking and catering experience to the kitchen. Even as he worked in the environmental field, York and his wife, Amanda, began cooking for small parties in private homes — eventually growing the effort into a thriving side business.

The Yorks live near Mentone, having moved to the area about four-and-a-half years ago and living here full time for the past two years. Amanda teaches full time in DeKalb County. Their daughter Carrie Grace is in graduate school in Nashville. She will assist with social media and marketing of the new venue.

"We're really excited to have the whole family involved," York says. "Carrie Grace has a great eye for branding and social media, and that's going to be crucial in getting the word out about what we're doing."

York hopes to find an experienced barista to help run the coffee service. He sees the doughnut and coffee offerings as a key draw that will complement the breakfast and lunch menus.

With the recent extension of Northeast Alabama Community College offering classes at Moon Lake School, along with the new artisan shops and businesses at Moon Lake Village, Mentone continues to layer even more dimension for residents and visitors. Moon Lake Kitchen will provide the area another opportunity to bring people together.

"It's just something I've always wanted to do," York says. "And with all the pieces coming together, it just seems like the right time."

Those interested in working at Moon Lake Kitchen can call 678-850-8327 to inquire about open positions.

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Mentone Arts Center

October Brings Songwriters Series, Leaf Painting Class, and Arts Center Intern

MENTONE ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTER

BY RANDY GRIDER

Music on the Mountain Series

The Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series returns Tuesday, Oct. 1 at 6:30 p.m. We will kick off the night welcoming home our regular host, Craig Hendricks, who has been on the road touring for the past few months. Joining Craig will be Jon Kinsey. The two of them will perform original songs, and the audience is encouraged to ask questions and learn more about songwriting and what inspires the writer.

This opening round will pave the way for the night's featured artist, Ricky Randolph. Ricky's musical roots began in North Alabama at age 5 — the first time he picked up a set of drumsticks. He began playing for a living by age 12 and soon learned that he could work twice as much if he played guitar and sang in addition to being a drummer. His music eventually sent him on a journey around the country and around the world. For more than four decades, Ricky has played and toured with some of the biggest names in the music industry, including Gregg Allman, Michael McDonald, Curtis Mayfield, and Col. Bruce Hampton. Ricky has been a session player in some of the most coveted studios in the music business and performed in some of the best-known venues in the world, including opening for Phish at Red Rocks.

Ricky has had numerous songs recorded in recent years, including: "Something" by The Band Perry; "Fill in the Bland" by Trent Tomlinson; "If I Was a Man" by Leah Justine and also by Lee Lewton; and "Always About a Woman" by Roger Adams.

The final 2024 songwriters series will be Tuesday, Dec. 3. The night will feature seasonal songs for the Christmas holidays. Organizers of the series are accepting non-perishable food items, which will be donated to the food pantry at St Joseph's on-the-Mountain.

Grab the Last Spots for Fall Leaf Painting Class

We still have a couple of slots available for the Painting Fall Leaves in Watercolor Pencil class on Saturday, Oct. 26. This one-day workshop, taught by returning artist/instructor Redenta Soprano, runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuition is $100, and class is limited to 10 students. A small supply list will be emailed to registered students.

Class description: Using glorious autumn leaves as subject matter, explore the versatility of these wonderful pencils that can be employed as both a wet and dry medium. You will fall in love with their saturated colors, wide range of applications, and creative potential. Prior drawing experience is helpful but not necessary; just bring a willingness to experiment and have some fun!

About the instructor: Redenta Soprano is an artist as well as a gardener and has degrees in both natural sciences and art. For over 30 years, she has taught various techniques of botanical illustration at different venues, including the New York Botanical Garden, Harry P. Leu Gardens in Orlando, and the John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina.

Welcome to Our Social Media Intern

We want to welcome our new social media intern, Kendall Golden, to the Mentone Arts Center. She is from Dothan and is a sophomore at the University of South Alabama. Last summer, Kendall worked at Camp DeSoto as a counselor, where she became connected to the arts center. Kendall says she is very grateful for this opportunity, and she is eager to work with the center and help spotlight our amazing artists.

For more information on any of the events at the arts center, please see contact info below.

Randy Grider is executive director of the nonprofit Mentone Arts and Cultural Center. He can be reached via email at mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or by phone at 256-674-3366.



Music on the Mountain Songwriters Series featured artist, Ricky Randolph



Redenta Soprano demonstrates techniques to students during her previous class at the arts center.



Meet our new social media intern, Kendall Golden

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Library Presents Hitchcock Film Series

BY ANNE MCLEOD

The Friends of Moon Lake Library are sponsoring a mini film festival on Thursday nights this month, featuring director Alfred Hitchcock, a master of horror and suspense. We will show three films: "The Birds," "Hitchcock," a biopic about the director himself, and "Psycho." Join us, if you dare! We'll have popcorn and other movie treats, and we'll discuss the films after the showings.



"The Birds" (1963, rated PG-13) October 10, 6 p.m.

The film stars Tippi Hedren in an unforgettable story of our feathered friends suddenly transformed into weirdly aggressive, even murderous furies.



"Hitchcock" (2012, rated PG-13) October 17, 6 p.m.

Anthony Hopkins plays the legendary director as he tries to get support for a new film starring Janet Leigh and Anthony Perkins. When no one will back him, he decides to finance "Psycho" himself. Helen Mirren plays Alma Hitchcock, his wife.



"Psycho" (1960, rated R) October 31, 6 p.m.

The film series culminates on Halloween with this film, known as one of the scariest and most suspenseful ever made due not just to superb performances by Leigh and Perkins, but also to Hitchcock's creative camera work that suggests far more horror than is actually shown. Janet Leigh claimed she never took another shower in her life after filming the infamous shower scene.

Anne McLeod is the librarian at Moon Lake Library.

F. Scott Fitzgerald Scholar to Speak at the Library

BY HAYLEY CROFT



Mary Jo Tate, an F. Scott Fitzgerald scholar, will speak on October 25 at 6:30 p.m. at Moon Lake Library. Her topic: The Composition of a Masterpiece: How F. Scott Fitzgerald Wrote and Revised "The Great Gatsby." Exploring Fitzgerald's composition and revision of the classic reveals his careful craftsmanship as well as his genius. In this behind-the-scenes look at the creation of a masterpiece, you'll learn how Fitzgerald polished his prose and how the novel achieved its structural greatness as he revised and rewrote major sections in the galley proofs.

Tate holds a master of arts degree in English from the University of South Carolina, where she was editorial assistant to eminent Fitzgerald scholar Matthew J. Bruccoli. She worked with Bruccoli on the Cambridge University Press editions of "The Great Gatsby" and "The Love of the Last Tycoon: A Western," the 18-volume facsimile series "F. Scott Fitzgerald Manuscripts," and many other Fitzgerald projects. She is the author of "Critical Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald" and "Flourish: Balance for Homeschool Moms."

As a freelance editor and book coach since 1986, she has worked with authors from five continents. Tate homeschooled her four sons and taught literature to high schoolers in a classical homeschool co-op and middle schoolers in a classical Christian school. She currently teaches both high schoolers and adults online and relishes helping them learn to understand, appreciate, and love great literature.



October 2024 at Moon Lake Library

Weekly Meet-Ups: KNITTING and CROCHET Tuesdays at 2 p.m.; SCRABBLE Wednesdays at noon

Oct. 1 at 3 p.m. - Municipal Library Board, followed by Friends Board at 4 p.m.

Oct. 4 at 6 p.m. - Family Game Night - Bring a snack to share, and we'll enjoy board games and cards at the library.

Oct. 5 at 10:30 a.m. - Little Library Learners. Kids ages 3 to 7 enjoy stories, crafts, and games with Ms. Lynn.

Oct. 10 at 6 p.m. - Movie Night: Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" (PG-13)

Oct. 12 at 10:30 a.m. - Library Book Club: Share a horror book you've enjoyed. For non-fans of the actual horror genre, you can define "horror" very loosely. What scares you? Share a book about it.

Oct. 15 at 6 p.m. - Art critique and discussion group with Mikel Yeakle, sponsored by Little River Arts Council. Let's talk about art. Artists, please bring a piece or two to share.

Oct. 17 at 6 p.m. - Movie Night: "Hitchcock" (PG-13). Anthony Hopkins stars as the legendary horror and suspense director working on his classic "Psycho."

Oct. 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Big Book Sale: Shop our collection of hundreds of used books during the Mentone Fall Festival.

Oct. 25 at 6:30 p.m. - Featured speaker: Mary Jo Tate will discuss "The Composition of a Masterpiece: How F. Scott Fitzgerald Wrote and Revised 'The Great Gatsby.'"

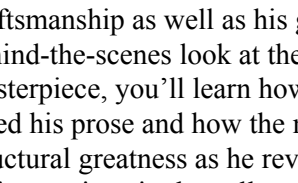
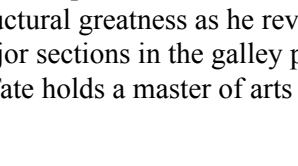
Oct. 26 at 1 p.m. - Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

Oct. 31 at 6 p.m. Movie Night: Hitchcock's "Psycho" (Rated R)

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mentone Fall Festival

OCT 19 • 9-3

at Moon Lake Village

Live Music

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MENTONE UKES

10-10:30 a.m. – The Mentone Ukes



10:30-11 a.m. – Lisa Crow



11 a.m.-1 p.m. – Still Kickin'



2:15-3 p.m. – Judy-Nicole Kirby

AND MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

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LIVE MUSIC AT THE LOG CABIN VILLAGE

FARMERS MARKET AT MENTONE
Next to Mentone Inn
10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Friday Night Kickoff Concert

WILL DOOLEY & COMPANY

Friday, October 18 • 6-9 p.m.

Concert is FREE and Open to Everyone!

Linger Longer Pavilion at the Mentone Inn

Fontastic Foods will be open.

Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy a night under the stars!

Food Vendors

- All Things Sweet
- DeSoto Rescue Squad
- Java Gypsy
- Lemon Shakers
- McIllwain Kettle Corn
- Mobile Snack Bar
- Papi's Roasted Corn
- Stix
- Tacos Town
- Venice Gelato
- Wildflower Fudge

Children's Activities

- Arts & Crafts
- Tie-Dye
- Ball Pit
- Face Painting
- Games & More

Vendors and Non-Profit Organizations

- American Legion
- Animal House Pottery & Crafts
- Art Jewelz
- Artistic Sanctuary
- B&L Crafts
- Barnyard Pics
- Beyond Measure Jewelry
- Blooming Potential
- Botanical Blues
- Bow Ties by Emily
- Chicken & Sweets Southern Yard Bird
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- Eastaboga Bee Company
- EclectArt Studios
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- Erika Pratter, Pottery
- Finding My Niche
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- Gert Wands
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- L & K Authentic Creations
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- Mike's Unique Silverware Jewelry
- Mikel Yeakle Photography
- Mixing Dixie
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- Pam's Craftings
- Papas Yard Art
- Payton's Sweet Treats
- Portraits of Hope
- Rezin Kreation
- Ross Bryant, Pottery
- Sam Cordle, Pottery
- Scout Pack 178
- Scruffy John: Woodturner
- Serenity Gourds
- Shannon Goshorn Pottery
- Simple Creations
- Slightly Different Jewelry
- Smokehouse Foods, LLC
- Sweet Tea Pottery
- The Mason Jar
- Tim Tingle As The Wood Turns
- Tintations
- Town of Mentone
- Vintage Sunflower
- Walker Smith Painter
- Witt's Forest
- Words of Life





Explore mentone Fall Festival

1 - Mentone Inn
Linger Longer Pavilion
St. Joseph's Sacred Garden
Farmer's Market (Sat. 10-4)
Fontastic Food Truck

2- Log Cabin Craft Village (see inset)
Village Ice Cream Shop
Mountain Market & Deli

3- Mentone Arts Center
Wildflower Cafe
Elevation Bistro
Sculpture Garden & Mason Park

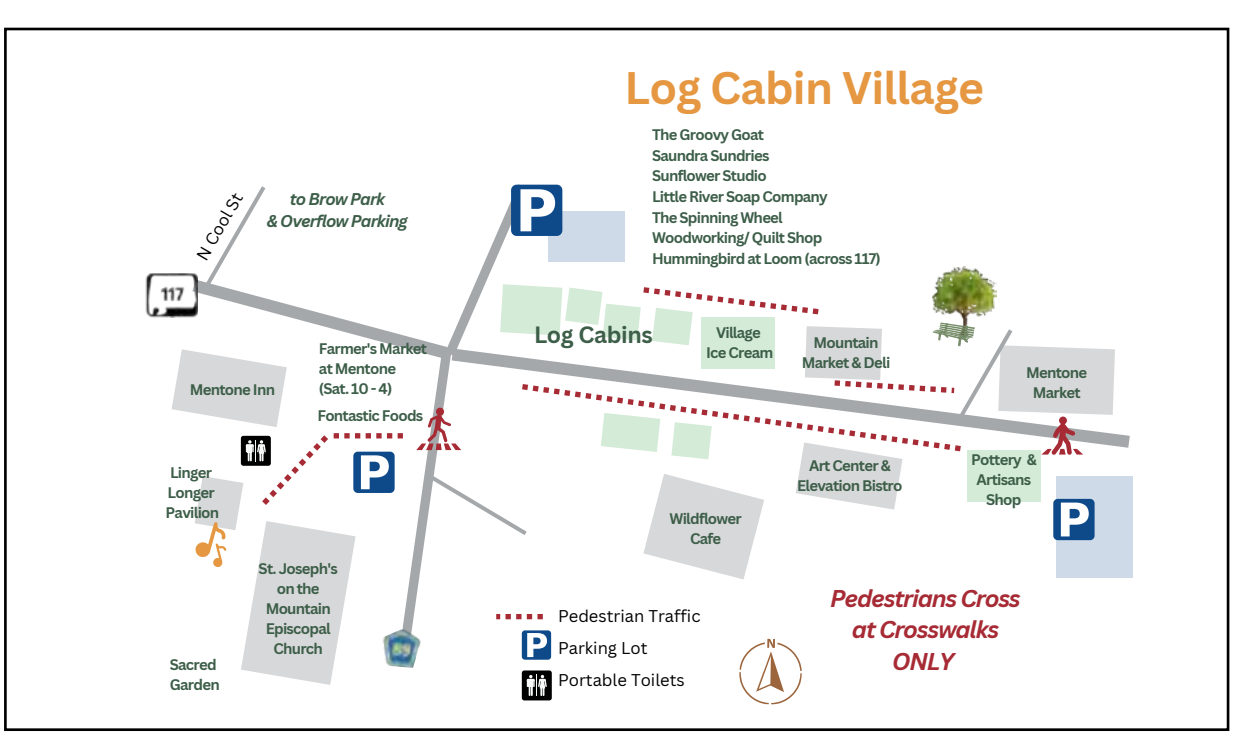
4- Mentone Market
Rocky Top Pottery
Artisans Gift Shop

5- Moon Lake Trading
Little River Hardware
Seabolt's Tacos
Farmer's Market (Fri. 3-6)

6- Moon Lake Village (see inset)
Mentone Educational Resources Foundation
Northeast Alabama Community College
Moon Lake Public Library
DeSoto Rescue Squad

7- Hatter Cafe & Bakery





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19 October

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Falling Forward at MERF

BY ALYCE KENNEY

As October arrives, it is thought that summer is officially over. School kids and their teachers are settled in their new daily routines. Football season is in full swing. A favorite sweater has found its way out of the drawer. The holiday season is inching closer. Change is in the air as the leaves turn their green coats into splashes of gold, orange, and red. Fall is about change, and change can most definitely be good.

As you read in last month's edition of "The Groundhog," MERF is in the midst of change. As we transition to a new logo, new website, new roles, and new plans, we remind ourselves of why we do what we do and why it matters. We have renewed focus on our refined objectives of rural education and community development. Our presence is on the rise, and our purpose invigorated.

One of MERF's resolute tasks is providing scholarships to exceptional students at Valley Head High School. This season, we will be in conversations with the teachers there as they begin to identify students in their senior year who exemplify the qualities of leadership, academic success, service, and more. We will also support them as we are able as they create their "wish lists" for student learning opportunities in the way of science and art field trips and in-school assemblies. In spring, MERF offers a "mock interview" session for students to practice their confidence and communication skills as they prepare for future academic and/or job opportunities. Last month, during a community event, a former student came to the MERF tent and acknowledged that they benefited from the interview experience and are now successfully employed. This message was heartwarming to hear and further strengthened our commitment to provide educational opportunities for our local students.

MERF is also deeply committed to our other seniors. "Lunch and Learn" at Moon Lake Baptist Church has resumed. Each Wednesday in October, our gracious volunteers will help serve a meal provided by a local business or church group to our beloved community members who hold the history of Mentone in their stories and memories. There will be some interesting educational topics shared — from health, art, music, and more. We are always happy to have more volunteers to make this lunch enjoyable. Could you give two hours of your time to assist?

Look for us at the MERF tent, along with other local nonprofit organizations, at the upcoming Mentone Fall Festival. Stop by and say hello and learn more about all the good change happening with MERF and how you can get involved.

As the light of day fades a bit, and you embrace this new season, know that MERF is working diligently to continue "enriching the living and learning" of all those in our community.

Alyce Kenney is the executive director of the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation. For more information or to volunteer, email MERF.mentone@gmail.com, call 256-634-2122, or visit MERFhouse.org.

Enriching the LEARNING and LIVING of our community



Are you currently enrolled in college? Need some financial assistance?

MERF's Sue McLaurin Henry Scholarship is a need and academic-based scholarship for full-time students residing in Mentone and Valley Head Alabama who maintain at least a B average. This scholarship is sponsored in memory of charter board member Sue McLaurin Henry, an educator and advocate of providing educational opportunities for a lifetime of learning.

Applications are open annually from November 1 through the first weekend of December. Scholarships are awarded in December for the spring semester in varying amounts between $300 and $450.

Contact MERF at 256-634-2122 for more information.

MERF
Rural Education · Community Development



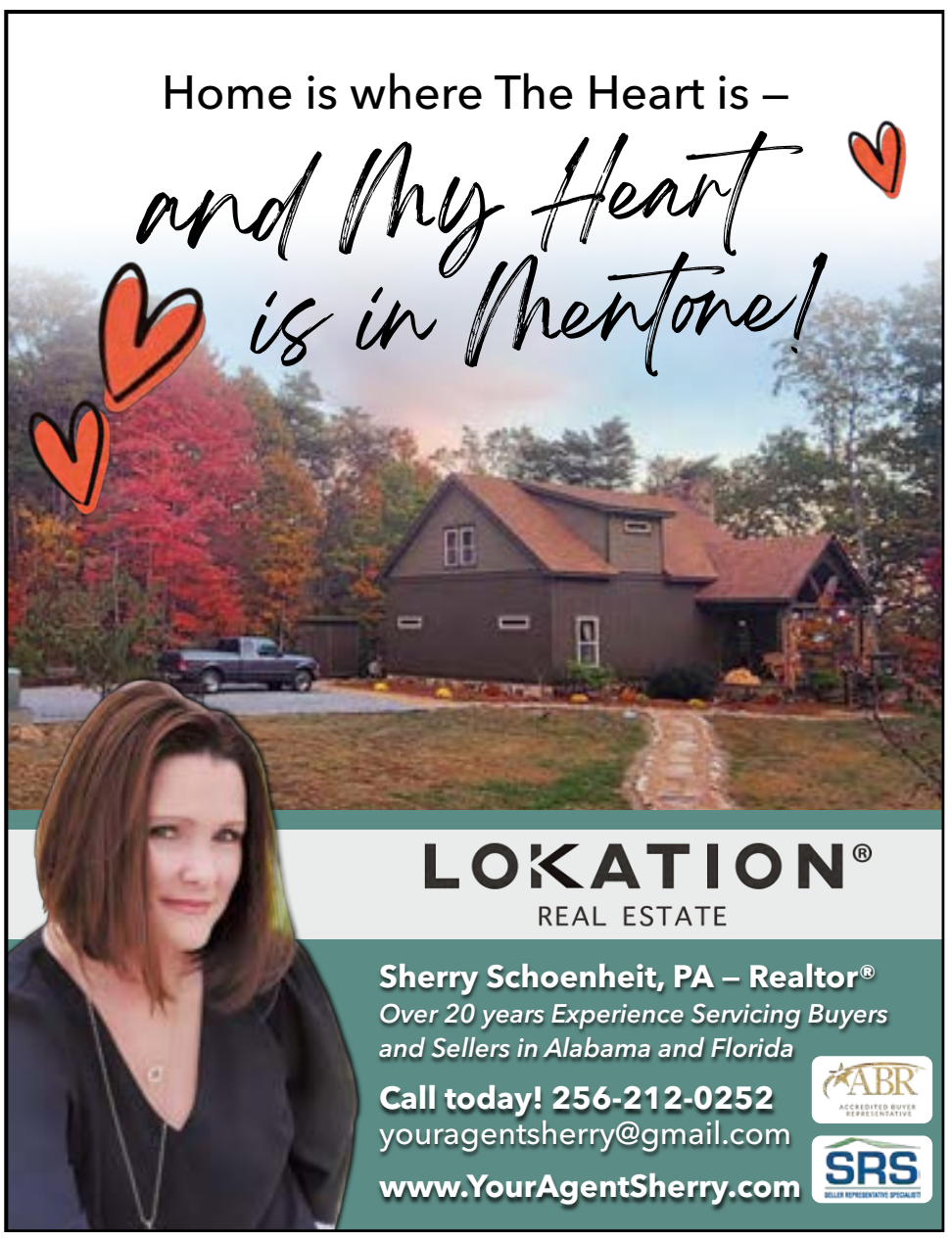
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Rhododendron Garden Club News

A Simple Poem, Fairy Gardens, Birds, and Composting with Worms

BY MELLANIE TUTTLE

A silly poem can be a reminder of simpler times when imagination ruled, fairies were real, and folklore a far more interesting way to explain nature.

"September Elves"
by Lenore Hetrick

Each little elf took a paint pot.
Oh, but the paint was bright!
They painted the leaves fine colors.
They painted all day and night.
September smiled when she saw them.
"What a help you are!" She said.
Each little elf was so pleased
Their faces turned bright red!

Fairy gardens will be on display at the flower show Oct. 14 through 19 at the VFW Fairgrounds. Come by and see the handiwork of all the garden club elves. The public is welcome to enter Horticulture on Oct. 12 and 13.

Horticulture Chair Mary Shurett offered fall gardening suggestions by DeKalb County Extension agent Brian Brown. The checklist included: cleaning up dead plant material (do not add diseased material to the compost); starting a fall vegetable garden; planting spring-blooming bulbs; dividing perennials; and performing yearly maintenance on gardening tools. And aces.edu is a great resource for horticulture-related questions.

Searching for a conservation topic, Mellanie Tuttle found the website alabamabirdingtrails.com.

"With 280 sites covering Alabama from the mountains to the gulf, the Alabama Birding Trails provide a roadmap of the best public lands to watch birds. Over 430 different bird species have been spotted in Alabama," according to the site, which also offers an Alabama Bird Quiz created by M. Keith Hudson, wildlife biologist. Question 15 asked, "What bird found in Alabama — instead of the bald eagle — did Thomas Jefferson propose to be our national symbol?" Members answered with a confident "Wild Turkey." But, alas, Benjamin Franklin, NOT Thomas Jefferson made that proposal. The other 14 questions were challenging but at least not tricky; three or fewer correct answers put one in the "bird brains" category. No bird brains among us!

Club members may not be bird brains, but sometimes focus is scattered while discussing agenda items. Plans were made for hosting the MERF senior lunch on Oct. 9 (lasagna, salad, bread, desserts). Folks volunteered to clerk for the flower show and bring goodies for the judges. There will be no booth at the Mentone Fall Festival, but the club will decorate the amphitheater for the festival on Oct. 10.

President Rhea Pirch spoke on the benefits of vermicomposting. Soon, folks understood the who, what, why, where, and how of vermiculture.

The who: Red wiggler (Eisenia fetida) worms. They love the dark, moist conditions in the bin and are prolific breeders and poopers.

The what: Vermiculture, also known as worm casting or vermicomposting, is the cultivation of worms to produce compost. The worm digestion and aerobic decomposition using the activities of micro and macroorganisms at room temperature produce the nutrient-rich worm castings.

The why: Reduction of food waste in landfills. Vermicomposting produces a rich, organic soil amendment containing a diversity of plant nutrients and beneficial microorganisms. It is sustainable.

The where: A vermicompost bin such as the Subpod (spendy) or one made from a storage tote ($8-$15) with holes drilled near the top allows for air circulation and prevents worms from escaping. Amount of food waste will determine the size of the tote needed.

The How: Bedding material such as shredded newspaper, cardboard, hydrated coconut coir, or straw are added to the bottom of the bin. Moisture is added until the bedding is the consistency of a damp sponge. Next, waste such as food scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells (rinsed well), and used tea bags are added. Food scraps should be cut into 1- or 2-inch squares or run through a food processor or blender. This reduces odor, discourages pests, and is easier for the worms to eat. Layer scraps and bedding material in a 1:2 ratio. Worms are then added to the mix in a ratio of one pound of worms to one-half pound of organic waste scraps. Another calculation is one pound of worms to every square foot of surface in the bin. Just place the worms on top of the food scraps. Cover worms with dampened newspaper.

At least once a week, check the bin for moisture, making sure it's not too dry. Spray with water as needed. Feed only a small handful of food waste at a time. Look for a healthy color of the worms. Dead worms, escaping worms, and bad odors are failures. Get help. To harvest the compost, flash a light into the bin or move to a light source. The worms prefer darkness and will burrow deeper into the bin, allowing the compost to be scraped off. Wait 10 minutes and repeat. Good references are abanahomes.com, foodprint.org, and Homestead and Chill on YouTube.

Our next meeting is Oct. 8 at 10 a.m. in Moon Lake Library. Folks will go home with a decorated gourd ornament. Plastic gloves, gourds, and alcohol inks supplied. Bring an apron to protect clothing.

Mellanie Tuttle is a member of the Rhododendron Garden Club.



New bridge at Moon Lake Shade Garden

Join us!

The RGC meets at 10 a.m. each month on the second Tuesday. For information, email rhododendrongardenclub@gmail.com and find the group on Facebook.

RGC is a member of the National Garden Club; Deep South, Inc.; Garden Club of Alabama; District II and NE AL Federation of Garden Clubs.





Arts Council Plans Member Social, Art Gallery Opening, and More

BY JULI JORDAN

Social and Grand Opening

The Little River Arts Council membership social and grand opening of Little River Art Gallery is Saturday, Oct. 5, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Due to questionable weather, the September event was postponed. Help us celebrate the artists in our little gallery, enjoy connecting with the community, savor delicious food — and maybe win a door prize!



Little Gallery, Big Art

Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A few surprises await you in this special space. Representing member artists from the area, we'll feature unique pieces not found anywhere else on the mountain, such as Elliott McElrath's masks, Andrew & Jellique Frazier's copper art and jewelry, and Doug and Betty Perkins' walking sticks, brooms & copper roses, to name a few. Rather than a silent auction this year, we hope you will support our gallery artists!

ARTalk

ARTalk is Tuesday, Oct. 15, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Moon Lake Public Library. Lively conversations happen at ARTalk. Every third Tuesday of the month, Mikel Yeakle leads discussions based on who shows up and what art they bring to share. A friendly community has developed around this delightful monthly show and tell.

Mentone Public Art Mementos

If you enjoyed the Make Your Mark on Mentone chalk murals, you will be delighted to learn that the mural designs are now notecards! The cards are 5x7 and, with a frame, make a perfect addition to your home or cabin. Another unique Mentone momento: 6-inch-tall wooden replicas of "Firmly Planted, Forward Moving," the oak leaf sculpture by Deedee Morrison that was recently installed at the entrance to Moon Lake Village.

Fun Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteer gallery sitters are needed for three-hour shifts, Thursday through Saturday. The time flies! If you are interested, click the VOLUNTEER link on our website.

LRAC To Assist During Fall Festival

The gallery will be open during the Mentone Fall Festival, and LRAC will have a tent outside assisting vendors.

Order Your T-Shirts

Did you miss the first round of pre-orders for the new Little Town Big Art t-shirts? Round two is in full swing! Pre-order your shirts at www.littleriverartscouncil.org/merchandise.

The 8th Annual Creative Spirit Market

This year's Creative Spirit Market is scheduled for November 9 and 10 at DeSoto State Park across from the Country Store. Hosted by the park and the arts council, with funding from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, this is an open-air showcase, with artist demonstrations, locally and regionally created fine and folk art, premium hand-crafted goods, live acoustic music, and a free interactive art area where market goers can make their own art.

LRAC Artists at 2024 Finster Fest

It is a great honor that Finster Fest invites LRAC artists to showcase their work at this nationally recognized two-day art festival in nearby Summerville, Georgia. This year, 10 member artists represented LRAC at Howard Finster's Paradise Garden: Kevin Chitwood, Meg Justice, Amy Bluekat, Kevin Watson, Frank Kenney, Elliott McElrath, Jan & Mike Sherwood, Lacy Hope Dobbs, Kelly Farley, and Mikel Yeakle. Though the festival took place in September, be sure to visit Paradise Garden any time of the year! More information at www.paradisegarden-foundation.org.

Juli Jordan is president of the Little River Arts Council.



September chalk artist Jessi Queen created a beautiful tribute to Ruby O'Rear.









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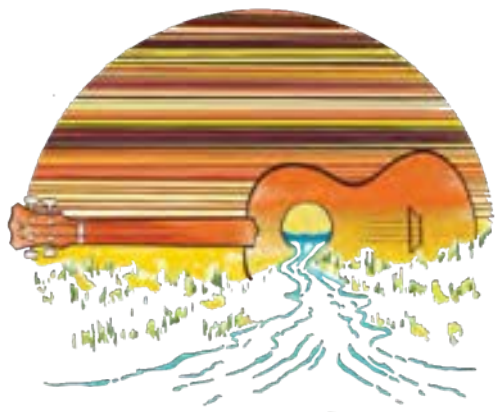
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Mentone Ukes Join Worldwide Day of Porch Music



BY DEBRA FEY

The Ukes hope everyone heard us on August 31, as we played at Little River Hardware to celebrate International Play Music on the Porch Day. Our group joined 70-plus countries and more than 1,000 cities in this annual event that has taken place on the last Saturday in August since 2014. We even put Mentone on the group's world map by registering our participation!

Music on the Porch was begun by Los Angeles-based artist and arts administrator Brian Mallman. As the organizers' website states, "What if, for one day, everything stopped and we all just listened to the music?" Indeed. Think of all the different instruments from around the world whose sounds resonated above all the noise of a typical busy day. Perhaps a sitar in India. A didgeridoo in Australia. A gourd drum in Kenya. A ukulele in Mentone. As we all know, music soothes the soul; touches the heart; and promotes community, faith, and family. Perhaps for a moment there is just joy and peace.

Little River Hardware's porch is one of our favorite spots — it invites you to sit and enjoy the energizing atmosphere. The wood planks creak a little under your feet as you're setting up. Folks coming into the hardware store pause for a minute to chat, cheer us on, sing along, or even dance. On this special day, a visitor had us accompany him while he sang "Cotton Eye Joe." He said, "just play the G chord while I sing!" And that's what we did! That kind of spontaneity makes these informal performances so much fun.



Later that same day, the Mentone Ukes celebrated our fifth anniversary. And later this month, we will celebrate along with the town of Mentone as we perform once again on the Shigley Amphitheater stage at the Mentone Fall Festival. It is an honor and privilege to be included in this event in our ongoing effort to support our community!

FREE ONGOING UKULELE SESSIONS are held regularly at our home base, the Moon Lake Library. These sessions are packed with camaraderie, laughter, and learning new songs, and we offer a beginners introductory class at the same time as our session. Follow us on facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/599438474230051 or on www.mentoneukes.com.

Deep South Herbal Conference Comes to Mentone

The biannual Deep South Herbal Conference will bring a "weekend of herbal discovery" to Moon Lake Village November 1-3. This year's theme is "Return to the Roots of Natural Health" and will focus on herbs and alternative medicine for the home and homestead. The weekend will offer wild food tastings, herb walks, and other educational activities. Featured speakers will include herbal educators Darryl Patton, Suzanne Shires, and Matt St. John, among others. Register between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 1. Visit the conference website for schedule details. Attendees are responsible for their own meals and lodging. Cost for the conference is $250.

For more details about the conference, visit www.deepsouthconference.com or contact darryl@thesouthernherbalist.com.



Breakfast / Lunch
Thursday–Monday 8am–2pm
Dinner
Friday–Saturday 5–8pm

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After Little River Escape Tiny Home Community was named one of the top six communities to downsize in by *U.S. News & World Report*, this community has become fully occupied and folks have come from 12 different states to live within our community.

With Little River Escape being such a success, we have decided to embark on a new journey by creating River Ridge Escape Tiny Home Dealership. At the dealership, tiny homes are available to tour and purchase. RRE is now delivering across the nation and also developing other communities to bring more folks to Lookout Mountain.

River Ridge Escapes now has nine tiny home communities near and atop Lookout Mountain in NW Georgia and NE Alabama. There are several Airbnb Tiny Homes in our various locations to come experience tiny home living, downsizing, the community, and explore the surrounding areas.

Come Experience Tiny Living on Lookout Mountain!

Tours of River Ridge Escape's Tiny Homes — Mon-Fri 10-5 ET or by appointment.
8021 Highway 48, Menlo, GA 30731 RiverRidgeEscapes.com (706) 936-0007

Cruising into a New Era

American Legion Auxiliary Hits the Ground Running

BY STEPHANIE NICOLE

In 2021, when American Legion Post 215 reopened under the leadership of Post Commander Barry Morton, he set many goals, one being to charter an American Legion Auxiliary. The auxiliary's mission is "to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad." Last July, the new group became a reality under the leadership of Unit President Stephanie Nicole, Unit Secretary/Treasurer Lynna Meadows , and the unparalleled guidance of Alabama Department Representative Vickie Thrower-Mills. On Sept.12, Mentone American Legion Auxiliary Unit 215 was presented with our official charter, and we've already begun our community outreach and betterment efforts with multiple events and service projects in the near future. Below are some of the legion and auxiliary events:

Oct. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. is the first 1st Annual Mentone Car Show, held at Moon Lake Village. Online registration is open for both cars and vendors. Onsite registration for VEHICLES ONLY will open at 9 a.m. that day. The car entry donation is $20. All merchant vendors must be pre-approved and registered in advance. For more information and to register, see the flyer in this edition of "The Groundhog."

Nov. 9 from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the legion post at 195 Cove Road in Mentone, we will host a Veterans Day Cookout for the community. Plate costs are still to be determined, and all proceeds will support Post 215. For more information about this event, see the post's Facebook group.

November will begin our Wreaths Across America Campaign. If you are interested in purchasing your own wreath or sponsoring a grave wreath, please reach out to Auxiliary Unit 215 via the contact information below or on Facebook.

As the auxiliary continues to grow, we are seeking more ways to contribute to our community. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at Post 215. If you are a female veteran; a sister, mother, daughter, granddaughter or spouse of a veteran; or a male spouse of a female veteran of the armed forces, with or without wartime service, living or deceased, we would love for you to join us as we continue to create programs and complete service projects with our community in mind. For more information or to contact the auxiliary, follow us on Facebook, call or text 256-516-2652, or email americanlegionunit215@gmail.com.







Far Left: Claire Baroni (Veteran) ,Brittany Conner (JR), Krissy Johnson, Becca Mizell, Stephanie Nicole (Unit President), Dr. Lynna Meadows (Unit Secretary/ Treasurer), Sandra Plummer (Veteran), Sarah Conner, Sirena Conner (JR)

Left: Ms. Vickie Thrower-Mills (state dept rep.), Stephanie Nicole (Unit President), Dr. Lynna Meadows (Unit Secretary/Treasurer)

126 County Road 1010, Fort Payne, AL 35968 • $45,000



Watch the sunrise over Lookout Mountain from this Wooded Brow lot in Pell's Gap Development near Fort Payne. Public water, paved streets, restricted to site built homes and only $45,000. MLS# 1799116

1605 Hillcrest Ave NW, Fort Payne, AL 35967• $220,000



New in Fort Payne! Welcome Home to your new 3 BD, 2 BA cottage. This home boasts a living room w/ vaulted ceiling, and spacious kitchen with granite countertops along w/ a private main suite w/ a view of lookout mountain. A porch on the front and rear of the home offer outdoor areas to relax. . MLS# 1833181

4250 Citadel Rock Road, Fort Payne, AL 35967

$90,000



DeSoto Bluffs - West brow of Lookout Mtn. 4.3 acres with Valley and mountains as far as you can see. Plenty of room . MLS# 393614

1344 East Main Street, Centre, AL 35960

$145,000



2 Bedroom 1 bath home recently remodeled and ready to move in. Home is located close to schools and shopping. Make this yours today before its gone! MLS# 21856198

3745 County Road 166, Fort Payne, AL 35967
$265,000

Rustic Stone Cottage on the Brow near Desoto State Park and Mentone. Stone walls, exposed logbeams and stone wood-burning fireplace with the "Old Mentone Look". Detached pavilion and detached carport/shop included. New roof and bath updated. Great view from this 2.3 acre lot. Great for weekend rentals! MLS# 21844538



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May's Gulf Music Festival Returns to the JSU Little River Canyon Center

BY JSU CANYON CENTER

The May's Gulf Music Festival returns on October 19 to Jacksonville State University's Little River Canyon Center with a lineup of great talent and great food. The music series is named for May's Gulf, the former name for Little River Canyon.

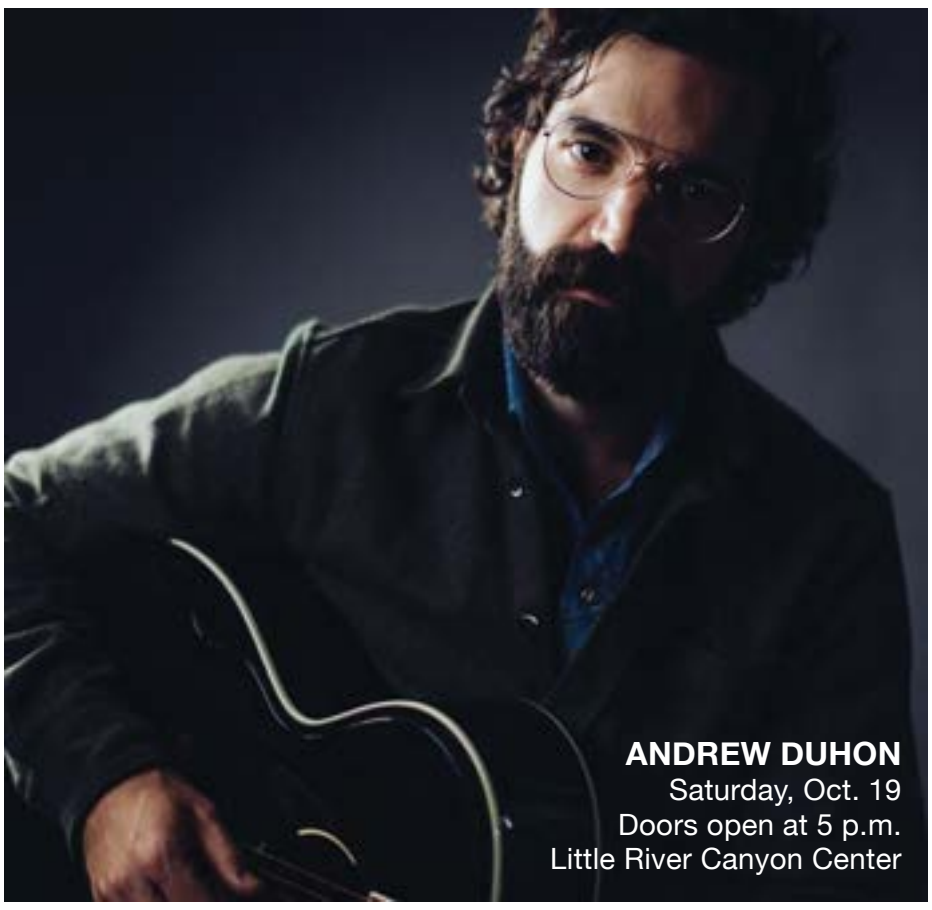
Singer-songwriter Andrew Duhon and his band will kick off the evening with songs from Duhon's introspective album, "Emerald Blue." Duhon, a native of New Orleans, applies the rich blues, folk, and soul that surrounded him as a young artist to new creations that seem timeless. To find out more about Duhon, his performances, and where to find his music, visit andrewduhon.com.

Next up will be a popular treat: The group of local artists who make up Collective Revue will present A Bob Seger Tribute. Seger wrote and recorded many classic rock songs during his prolific career, such as "Like a Rock," "Against the Wind," "Night Moves," and many others.

"As always, our goal is to provide a truly memorable experience set against the stunning backdrop of the Little River Canyon," says Pete Conroy, director of the Canyon Center. "We invite everyone to join us at the May's Gulf Music Festival and enjoy the magic of music in the mountains."

Woody's food truck and Victoria's Tacos & Quesadillas will be on hand to satisfy your appetite as you relax and take in the tunes. Visit canyoncenter.org or call 256-845-7213 for more details and to purchase tickets. You can also buy tickets in the Canyon Center gift shop. Tickets are $25 in advance and $30 the day of the show. The proceeds from the show will benefit environmental education. The doors will open at 5 p.m. The performance is a rain or shine event. Coolers, lawn chairs, and leashed pets are welcome.

For more information about the JSU Canyon Center, visit jsu.edu/epic/canyoncenter/ or contact Director Pete Conroy at 256-282-5784.



ANDREW DUHON
Saturday, Oct. 19
Doors open at 5 p.m.
Little River Canyon Center

Emily Clark Smith

October 1, 1950 – September 18, 2024

Emily Clark Smith, 73, of Mobile, Alabama, died tragically on Wednesday, September 18, 2024.

Mrs. Smith was born on October 1, 1950, in Jackson, MS. She is survived by her husband, Tim Smith of Mobile; her children, Jason Smith of Mobile, Stephen Smith of Asheville, NC, and Em Smith Headley of Athens, GA; and her nine grandchildren: Emily Smith (15), Wes Smith (14), Charlie Smith (12), Lyle Smith (11), and Mary Blythe Smith (9) of Mobile; Pearl Smith (13) and Abbott Smith (11) of Asheville, NC; and Sylvia Headley (6) and Coltrane Headley (5) of Athens, GA. She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Clark and Emily Russell Clark of Jackson, MS.

A devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, Emy's life was centered around her family, faith, and many interests. She was known for her quick wit, acceptance, and commitment to supporting others. Her spirit and love is felt deeply by her family, and she will be deeply missed.

While Emy primarily dedicated herself to supporting her husband and children, she pursued various interests and talents. She was an active participant of Bible Study Fellowship, attended Covenant Presbyterian, and regularly connected with her prayer group. Her faith was unwavering.

Emy was the former editor of Mentone's Groundhog newspaper and a talented journalist for other outlets including the Jackson Clarion Ledger and Destin Log. She was also an avid learner and naturalist with a keen eye for birding, snakes, and animals. Emy had interests in Greek, Italian, knitting, and history as well.



A family memorial service will be held at a later date. Memorial donations be sent to the Women's Resource Center, 718 Downtowner Loop W, Mobile, AL 36609, or to any Christian organization of your choice.

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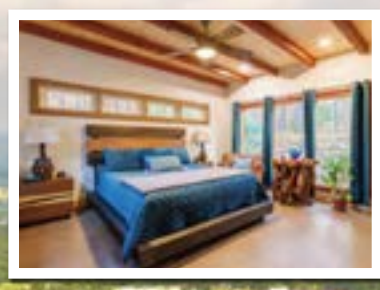


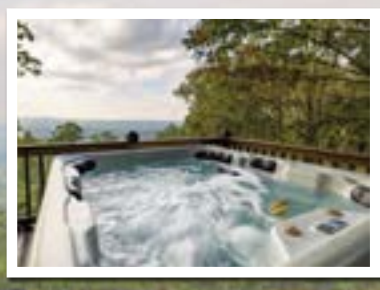
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October Community Events

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

October 3 • 19th Annual Fore the Kids Golf Tournament • Great time to enjoy a great day of golf and help the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) continue their mission to provide hope and healing for abused and at-risk children. All golfers registering for the tournament will receive lunch, snacks, water, and a CAC goody bag! Lil Mole Run Golf Course in Mentone. Lunch at 11 a.m. and shotgun start at noon.

October 4 • Campfire Talk: Cherokee Trail of Tears • Retired JSU professor Kelly Gregg will recount the experiences of Native American people before, during, and after this tragic period in our nation's history. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, event will be located in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required; For details, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 4 • Junior Ranger Adventure Series: Secrets of the Forest Floor • Designed for explorers ages 3 to 103! Participants can earn the coveted DeSoto State Park Junior Ranger Patch while discovering the wonders of nature and the park's historical treasures. DSP Naturalist Brittney Hughes will guide this hike. Moderate hike due to uneven, rocky terrain. Appropriate for all skill levels. Bring a backpack with plenty of water, lunch, snacks, and a journal with a pen or pencil. Closed-toed shoes. 4 p.m. DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne. Meet at the Benefield Nature Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89. Fee: free, but RSVP is required, so we know how many to expect. Preregister here: https://alapark.itinio.com/register/DSP-JR-Adventure.

October 4-5 • Main Street Vintage Market • Outdoor antique and vintage market downtown at the Fort Payne Rotary Pavilion. It's a curator's paradise that offers antiques, primitives, collectibles, and handmade wares. Enjoy a festive time with live music, food, shopping, and fellowship. Presented by Myrtle Jane's, a vintage shop in Fort Payne.

October 4-5 • Huey Helicopter Rides • Friday Flights: 1-4 p.m. Saturday Flights: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Flight Time: 8 to 12 minutes. Slots may be altered or chosen by our staff to meet flight requirements, wind conditions, and refueling time. Eighty spots available. (40 per day). Minimum age: 5 with parent or guardian. Meet at True Adventure Sports. Arrive a minimum of 30 to 45 minutes early! $145 per person or reserve a private flight for $1,450 for up to 10 people. Due to fuel cost and FAA requirements, there will be no refunds and your flight must be paid in full. 256-997-9577.

October 5 • Civilian Conservation Corps History Hike: The CCC Quarry • Join DeSoto State Park staff on a moderate hike to the CCC Quarry from the 1930s. Learn how the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the original structures that you can still see in the park today. Moderate hike along mountainous terrain, some rocky terrain. Approximately 2 miles roundtrip. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store on County Road 89. Free & open to everyone; no preregistration required. Weather dependent, so please call the lodge at 256-845-5380 to check on hike status. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for details. www.alapark.com/desoto-state-park/hiking Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open-toe shoes are not recommended).

October 5 • Beekeeping 101 • Join us at the Little River Canyon Center for an Intro to Beekeeping Workshop with Cameron Mitchell. You will learn about pollinators and how to attract them, plus how to take care of them. Great crash course for beginners interested in taking up beekeeping or for those who would just like to learn more. Call the Little River Canyon Center for more information, 256-845-3548. $5 per person: Register https://secure.touchnet.net/C20901_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=299&SINGLESTORE=true.

October 5 • Live Music at the Wildflower Café • Jennifer Lee and her brother Cody Hunt will be performing at The Wildflower Cafe in downtown Mentone. Come out and enjoy some great music along with some amazing food.

October 5 • Heather Webber Book Signing & Dinner • Join us at The Gallery by Andiamo Lodge at Moon Lake Village for a book signing celebrating the launch of Heather Webber's enchanting new novel, "A Certain Kind of Starlight." From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., stop in and meet the author and get your copy signed. Or join us for a special gourmet dinner with Heather at the lodge from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (limited seating, paid reservation required). 214-415-0476. https://www.andiamolodge.com/schedule/heather-webber-book-signing-starlight

October 5 • Serious Skills Series: Dutch Oven Campfire Cooking Demo • Hosted by DeSoto State Park. The Serious Skills series presents a variety of classes and workshops to discover a hidden talent or learn a new skill for personal enrichment. Learn the basics about Dutch ovens, how to clean & care for your cookware, AND cook (& eat!) dinner & dessert at the same time! Starts around 4 p.m. This is a demonstration, so you can swing by anytime. The best time is when food is just coming off the fire! Seating is limited, so bring your own camp chair. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground next to site 93 (gate will open to the public). Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required. For details about the demo, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov

October 5 • Campfire Talk: History of Moonshine • Learn about the history of moonshining in the Appalachian mountain chain. Bring the family along for fresh popcorn! (Sorry, no samples of the moonshine.) Seating is limited, so bring your own camp chair if you wish. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather the event will be located in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required. For details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 11-12 • Pop-up at The Gallery with India Hicks & The Sugar Mill • Friday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Join us for a delightful day at The Gallery by Andiamo at Moon Lake Village as we welcome the iconic India Hicks and the beloved Sugar Mill for an exclusive pop-up event. Explore a curated collection of India Hicks' elegant designs. The Sugar Mill will showcase island-inspired lifestyle products, known for bringing a touch of Caribbean charm to any space. 214-415-0476.

October 11 • Campfire Talk: Hernando de Soto in Northeast Alabama • JSU's Harry Holstein will take you through the adventures of de Soto, as he searches for the ancient town of "Coosa." Seating is limited, so bring your own camp chair if you wish. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, the event will be located in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required; For details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 12 • Trail Trekker Hike: Gilliam Loop • This hike series is for those who prefer company out on the trails with experienced park staff or volunteers. We will hike from the lodge to Gilliam trailhead along the Green trail, then on the Gilliam Loop Trail/ Chalet Trail back to the lodge. Approximately 4.8 miles roundtrip, moderate along mountainous terrain. No major inclines. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Meet at DeSoto Lodge. Free and open to everyone! 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

October 12 • Fall at the Farm • Town Creek Field and Farm announces our first fall festival! Saturday, Oct. 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pumpkins, mums, you-pick sunflowers, local vendors, food, live music, games, some fun surprises, and more! $5/car. Join us for the fun at the farm!

October 12 • Little River Canyon Half Marathon and 1K Salamander Sprint • Join us for the 11th annual Canyon Half Marathon. Race begins at 8 a.m. Possibly one of the most scenic half marathons in the country, the certified course loops 13.1 miles on paved roads, starting and ending at the Little River Canyon Center. Benefits the JSU Field School! The 1K Salamander Sprint is for runners 12 and under. Sign up by visiting: https://www.active.com/orgs/little-river-canyon-half-marathon

October 12 • First Annual Mentone Car Show • American Legion Post 215 will hold their 1st Annual Car Show in Mentone. Witness a spectacular display of vintage wheels and custom rides, each with its own story and history. Held at Moon Lake Village. For more information you can call 256-516-2652 or 334-202-8936. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

October 12 • Gourmet Dinner with India Hicks • Andiamo Lodge will present the second dinner in the "Conversations at the Andiamo Table" series, featuring designer, entrepreneur, author, and mother of five, India Hicks. Ten seats available. 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. India will share stories of growing up royal, her work in the design world from hotels to home collections, and her philanthropic endeavors through Global Empowerment Mission and The Prince's Trust. Experience for two includes seats at the dinner table, signed copies of India's book, "Lady Pamela," a one-night stay at Andiamo Lodge, gourmet breakfast, and specially curated swag bag. https://www.andiamolodge.com/schedule/indiahicks-ladypamela.

October 12 • SAMfest Benefit Concert • Join us under the stars at Sweet Seasons Farm for The SAM Foundation's Sowing Seeds of Hope benefit concert. The show starts at 4 p.m. The lineup will consist of American Idol Winner Taylor Hicks, Jess Goggans Band, The Locals, and two acoustic sets. The SAM Foundation's mission is to prevent suicide through public awareness and education. Purchase tickets: https://samfound.networkforgood.com/events/65198-sowing-seeds-of-hope-concert-samfest-2024

October 12 • Discover Archaeology: Bains Gap Native American Village Site • Join JSU archaeologist Kathryn Catlin for an interesting talk about the fieldwork at the Woodland/Mississippian site at Bains Gap near Anniston. Info about this site gleaned from multiple field seasons reveals storage pits, hearths, and post patterns dating from the Early Archaic up through the early Mississippian periods. Seating is limited, so bring your own camp chair if you wish. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, event will be located in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required. For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 12-13 • Christmas at Eddie's • Over 150 Christmas trees, each sporting a different theme; ornaments ranging from western to whimsical, cartoons to retro, Victorian to collegiate; and festively decorated rooms. Eddie's is at 9112 Alabama Hwy. 40 in Henagar. 256-657-3841.

October 13 • Sacred Harp Singing • Sacred Harp is a uniquely American tradition that brings communities together to sing four-part hymns and anthems. It is a proudly inclusive part of our shared cultural heritage. All events welcome beginners and newcomers, with no musical experience or religious affiliation required. Visitors welcome to participate as listeners. Biannual event takes place at Council Bluff School. https://www.landmarksdekalbal.org/.../the-council-bluff.../

October 14-19 • DeKalb County VFW Agricultural Fair • Rides on the midway, great food, live entertainment, livestock exhibits, agricultural displays, awards, and so much more. Held at the VFW Fairgrounds. Gates open at 5 p.m. 256-845-4752.

October 15 • ARTalk • Join us Tuesday, Oct 15 from 6-8 p.m. at Moon Lake Library for an art discussion. Mikel Yeakle, with the Little River Arts Council, leads an informal conversation about art. All are invited to bring their artwork and share their process and inspirations. The conversation is open to anyone who is drawn to art (pun intended) not just creators of art.

October 17 • Canyon Kids – Nocturnal Predators - Hoo's Who • The fall semester of Young Explorers meets the third Thursday of August, September, October, and November. Children ages 7 to 12. Creatively learn about animals, plants, bugs, and more with JSU Field Schools. Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne. 10:30 a.m. to Noon. $8 per class or $25 when registering for entire semester. Registration required. Limited availability. https://secure.touchnet.net/C20.../web/product_detail.jsp... For more details, email rmtaylor@jsu.edu or call 256-845-3548.

October 18 • Campfire Talk: Backyard Habitat for Wildlife • Join Mercedes Maddox, nongame wildlife biologist from the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries, to learn how to create a wildlife-friendly backyard. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, event will be in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required. For details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 19 • Mentone Fall Festival • We are delighted to announce the 2nd Annual Mentone Fall Festival Saturday, Oct. 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Moon Lake Village. Funds raised will offset festival expenses and repairs needed for the school building. Kick off Friday night with Will Dooley & Company performing from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Mentone Inn's Linger Longer Pavilion. We anticipate enthusiastic crowds ready to purchase a variety of artwork and other offerings on Saturday. The event will also draw crowds for the fall-themed, family-friendly games and drawings of donated items.

October 19 • Serious Skills Series: Finger Weaving Workshop • Join instructor Keena Graham to learn the basics of finger weaving, and you'll be making your own bracelets, belts, and bags in no time. Materials furnished. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne. Benefield Interpretive Center next to the Country Store on County Road 89. $55 includes all supplies. Class space is limited to 12; preregistration is required for attendance in this class. https://www.alapark.com/DSP-SSS-Fingerweaving

October • 19 Third Saturday Cruise-In • Third Saturday Sunset Cruise-In will be an afternoon of fun family activities in the Main Street District of Fort Payne. This public event will include food, live music, motorcycles, an antique car show, and much more.

October 19 • May's Gulf Music Fest • Join us at the Canyon Center Amphitheater for May's Gulf Music Fest. Doors open at 5 p.m., music at 6 p.m. Featuring Andrew DuHon | The Collective Review: A Bob Seger Tribute. Tickets $25 in advance, $30 the day of the show. Rain or shine event. Coolers and leashed pets welcome.

October 19 • Campfire Talk: Golden Eagles • Join Mercedes Maddox, nongame wildlife biologist from the AL Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries, to learn about Alabama's golden eagle research. 7 p.m. DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, the event will be located in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area.) Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no preregistration required; For details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 25-26 • Spookapalooza Weekend at DeSoto State Park • Trick or treating, games, live animals, storytelling, and more are in store during this popular annual event. Grab your favorite costume, bring the family, and come stay with us! All events are free to the public and great for all ages! More details to come. DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne. Call 256-997-5025 or see www.alapark.com/DSP-Spookapalooza for complete details.

October 26 • Fall Vendor Market • Join us for our Fall Vendor Market at Straight Creek Studio in the Log Cabin Village in Mentone! It is never too early to start Christmas Shopping. We are currently accepting vendor applications. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

October 26 • BATS ALIVE! • Vicky Beckham Smith of A-Z ANIMALS presents a program about those night creatures people either love or hate....Bats! A little-known fact is that the bat plays an important role in many ecosystems. Bring the family to see the live collection of bats. Bring your own camp chair or blanket, as seating is limited. Crafts/activities will follow: 10 a.m. DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne. CCC Pavilion in Picnic Area, across from the Country Store. Free and open to everyone. For info call 256-997-5025 or email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

October 26 • Run Domestic Violence Out of Town 5K • This 5K is hosted by Comprehensive Counseling Associates. Meet at the Rotary Pavilion in Fort Payne. Event is from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and the 5K run will be 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Shirts and medals for all participants if signed up by October 12.

October 26 • Archaeology Tour and Hike • Come along with JSU archaeologist Harry Holstein for a guided van tour and hike throughout Cherokee and DeKalb counties. Visit the 19th century Cornwall Iron Furnace, a Spanish contact site at Coosa village, a rock shelter in use as early as 3,000 B.C., and much more. Bring your own food and drinks. Transportation is provided. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Meet at the Little River Canyon Center. $40 per person. No refunds after October 14. Van tours and hikes can be difficult for individuals with mobility issues. If you have any questions, please call the Canyon Center to discuss if this tour will be a good fit for you. We offer a variety of programs, so we are confident that we have something to meet your needs. Register today: https://secure.touchnet.net:443/.../product_detail.jsp...

THE FOOD PANTRY
at St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church



Open every Wednesday to Mentone/ Valley Head/ Hammondville residents from 9-11 a.m.

We do close four Wednesdays a year. (Holy Week, World's Longest Yard Sale Week, Thanksgiving Week and Christmas Week.) We also welcome pantry volunteers and donations. For questions, call 256-634-4476.

A "Force of Nature" for the Library

BY ANNE MCLEOD

I try to imagine how to begin something I never expected to have to write. I'd have sooner expected Holley to be the one to stoically type out all our tributes and obituaries. Sadly, that is not the case.

At 76, Holley Midgley showed few signs of slowing down. But after fracturing his tibia ("Just a fracture, thank goodness, it's not broken!" he'd insisted) in late August while trying to launch his boat, he'd been largely confined to home, a frustration for such a social creature. Still, his phone rang off the hook — so much so, he admitted he had to turn it off to work in a nap.

The two-and-a-half weeks since his injury were almost certainly the longest stretch of time in which he had not breezed into Moon Lake Library, where he'd served as board chair since October 2020. But the work of the library continued, and I was looking forward to showing him the progress in our computer lab renovation when he was able to hobble in again.

Holley had a soft spot in his heart for libraries. His mother had turned him into the most avid of readers when he was young. A library, he believed, was an important institution in any community, and Mentone deserved a library worthy of its rich heritage.

Although we'd worked together on the Little River Arts Council, it wasn't until after I was hired at Moon Lake Library in October 2021 that I got to know Holley well. It was a time of change at the library. Moon Lake School had closed that spring. Kelly Leavitt, who, along with Dianne Kuehl, had guided the library through the first year of the pandemic, had decided to step down. The two of them had established Moon Lake Library as the heart of the community through strong programming and making updates to the library's collection.

The town was just about to take ownership of the Moon Lake school campus. The pandemic was in a new phase — still there, but no longer as pervasive as it had been earlier. People were getting out more. The library could once again be a gathering place.

Holley had secured grants from the Alabama Humanities Alliance, the Tillotson-Menlo Charitable Foundation, and a large private donation, assuring the board that the library's financial situation was stable for the time being. But what would come next?

The board members were open to pursuing public library status in hopes of accessing additional sources of funding. It would mean negotiating a relationship with and commitment from the Town of Mentone, writing up a vast collection of plans, policies, and procedures, and satisfying the executive board of the Alabama Library Service that we met their standards.

It was a challenging process, even after Holley had gotten the town's support and we'd completed the stacks of paperwork. There were frustrating delays, but Holley got letters of support sent to the executive board. Perhaps they would help make our case.

Finally, in November 2022, Holley and I were in Montgomery, signing in at APLS headquarters, PowerPoint and handouts at the ready. Our APLS consultant met us in the lobby and whispered, "Y'all are good. No problem. They're approving you."

Holley and I looked at each other, unable to believe it. "We're still gonna do that PowerPoint," he told me.

Driving north that afternoon, we felt celebratory. We had shown the PowerPoint, said our piece, and the vote had gone our way. Funding was assured, not just from the state but from county and potentially federal sources, too. It meant that the original library board that had run the library since it opened in 2002 became the Friends of Moon Lake Library, and the Mentone Town Council appointed a municipal board of trustees. The Friends group was charged with fundraising and volunteering, while the municipal board handled administration. Holley would become the chair of both boards.

By fall of the next year, we knew we'd picked a tough time to join APLS. Libraries were coming under attack from groups angry about content in books for children and teens. When APLS accepted public comments regarding proposed rule changes for Alabama libraries, Holley was willing to drive down to Montgomery to voice his objections.

His remarks received more media attention than any others that day. He was quoted in AL.com and his comments were shown in some television coverage. He was the only speaker during that long and contentious day to get a laugh from part of the crowd when he noted that Clean Up Alabama's Facebook group had fewer followers than the page for our local ukulele group, the Mentone Ukes, who meet at our library. He also described the ideals his father had fought for during WWII and decried censorship.

The staff at Alabama Public Library Service had already noted how hard he'd worked for our application to their board, but his appearance at the hearing cemented his reputation. Our APLS consultant called me the Saturday after Holley's death to express condolences and offer any help he could. I recalled what another consultant I'd met while at a recent training in Montgomery had said about Holley. "Your board chair," she told me, "is a force of nature."

I couldn't agree more.

Roll Tide, Holley. And thank you.

Anne McLeod is the librarian at Moon Lake Library.



Holley at one of his favorite places, "The Pocket," at the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail on Georgia's Pigeon Mountain.

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Barbara Umland's Fairy House Workshop







A creative and fun time for all was had at the Fairy House workshop by Barbara Umland (left) held at St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain parish hall in August. Lesa Cummings (top center) invited friends from Anniston to attend. Robin Corbin created a tableau with the addition of greenery, rocks, a fantasy tree, and a tiny stone pathway. Each fairy house was unique and personalized with shiny trinkets, including a tiny fairy tale book as well as a tiny cross over the entrance.

Barbara Umland has been a lifelong artist and lover of art. She is a fine and mixed media artist. In 2020, with the advent of the Covid virus that shut down the world, she turned toward the natural world of nature in which she lives.

Barbara transforms unfinished wood bird houses into charming, elegant, and complex fairy houses. She uses materials from nature such as wood bark, lichen, moss, twigs, pieces of lichen covered branches, pine cone scales, little bare cones (after squirrels have had their way), feathers, dried flowers and grasses. Glue guns and glue sticks are also furnished.

Fairies, as you might know, are drawn to bright and glittery objects and may even steal them to embellish their own deep-in the-forest dwellings! They may use beads, single earrings, broken jewelry, colored glass, broken pottery, or anything that catches their eye!

Her fairy houses are sold and on display at Moon Lake Trading Company in Mentone, Alabama. She has also presented workshops at the Mentone Art Center and St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain parish hall.

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Holley Midgley *(continued from page 1)*



Holley portrays his father at the "A Look Back in Time" event at Forrest Cemetery in Gadsden.
(Photo courtesy of Ginger Beshears)

Holley began expressing his musical talent in high school, when he played drums and sang in a band he formed called "The Concussions." He and Shep formed a band at The University of Alabama, "Buffalo Rock," which toured through the Southeast for three years. Later on, he played guitar and often entertained at friends' homes. He had a penchant for The Eagles, The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, and the music that came out of Muscle Shoals during its heyday.

He was an avid Alabama football fan, known to sometimes rewatch old games again and again. Saturday afternoons in the fall were sacred days for Holley.

He had a deep love for history (especially the Civil War era) and archaeology. Being something of a wordsmith, he enjoyed occasionally writing "Groundhog" articles pertaining to area history.

To commemorate Alabama's bicentennial in 2019, Holley was supported by a committee of local residents as he produced and narrated the film, "Mentone: Where Little River Runs." The impressive 90-minute documentary features Mentone and its history; it is available for viewing on YouTube. Many hands were involved in the project, but none more so than Holley's. In essence, it is his love letter to Mentone.

Holley enjoyed a wide social circle and was part of a group of men who have met weekly for many years to enjoy breakfast together. He lovingly referred to the group as the "yack pack." He was a regular attendee of most events happening in town, from concerts to art shows to council meetings. He planned to run for a position on Mentone's town council in 2025.

His love for nature was a constant. He kept a daily log of precipitation measurements. Each spring, he kept an ear out for the Wood Thrush, one of the area's first migratory songbirds. He was a loyal visitor to "The Pocket" at the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail on Georgia's Pigeon Mountain, often traveling many times during each spring season to enjoy the bloom cycles of the ephemeral wildflowers. His visits there went back to his days as a teenager, when he enjoyed camping above the waterfalls.

He docked a pontoon boat on the Little River bank of his property and often invited guests, both friend and stranger, on boat rides to DeSoto Falls and back dozens of times a year. In his later years, Holley bought larger pontoons and boated on some of the South's biggest rivers, including the Tennessee, the Tombigbee, and the Alabama.

He had also become an avid bicyclist in recent years. He devoted one day each week to take his bicycle to the Chickamauga Battlefield in northwest Georgia, where he rode around the expansive park, always finding a place by the creek to sit and read a book.

Holley's mindset was captured well by a friend: "What adventure is next?" As he is now on to a new adventure, Mentone has lost one of its greatest advocates.

All Are Invited to "Holleyday"

Holley's life and contributions will be celebrated at "Holleyday" on **Sunday, Nov. 3, at 3 p.m.** at DeSoto State Park's restaurant. Everyone is invited to attend and reminisce with others whose lives were touched by Holley's humor, generosity, philanthropy, and friendship. Given his love for Alabama football, wear something crimson and white, if you like.

Holley is survived by his son, Charles "Chas" Holley Midgley IV, and granddaughter, Carter Holley Midgley, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, as well as his younger brother, Charles Shepard "Shep" Midgley, with whom he had a particularly close relationship; the two spoke nearly every day.

Donations in memory of Holley may be made by check to Moon Lake Library, P. O. Box 481, Mentone, AL 35984, or on the "Support" page at moonlakelibrary.org.

