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THE GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
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"Neighboring News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

February 2018

LITTLE RIVER: PROTECTED NOW AND FOREVER

by Kelly Leavitt

Little River is extraordinary in many ways. Its clear waters create deep pools, joyful cascades, and dramatic waterfalls as it runs its 30-mile course atop Lookout Mountain before it flows into Weiss Lake. It is one of the only rivers in the world that runs most of its course on top of a mountain. Its ancient waters created Little River Canyon, whose rim walls measure up to 600 feet high. The river is home to 46 species of fish, and three federally listed species—the blue shiner fish and two plants, Kral's water plantain and Harperella. The rare and endangered Green Pitcher Plant grows in places along its banks. DeKalb County is one of only five Alabama counties where it grows, and DeSoto State Park and Little River National Preserve are home to the world's largest population of this species. Little River provides opportunities for swimming and

paddling on a natural and wild waterway deemed so beautiful that parts of it are protected by state and federal management.

I recently heard about Friends of Little River (FLR), a local organization that formed in the late 1980s. I was curious and started asking questions, and

was immediately impressed by what I learned. This group of dedicated residents had far-reaching impact. Everyone I spoke with pointed me to Desmond ("Des") Disney, who served as president of FLR during its 12-year life. I recently enjoyed a long conversation with Des and was reminded of Margaret

Mead's famous quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Little River has long been protected and cared for by generations of folks who appreciated and respected this unique resource. In 1988, however, the watershed was threatened by a proposed landfill near its headwaters in Georgia. Mayor Rob Hammond

(cont'd on page 2)



Little River Falls

Photo by

National Park Planner | npplan.com

St. Joe's Says Thank You!

by Carl Ferguson

Greetings from St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain. As many of you know, Tuesday, February 13, is the day before Lent. Recalling our Christian tradition, Lent is the 40 days that Christ spent in the

wilderness being tempted by Satan. You know the rest of the story: Satan failed and, following those 40 days, Christ went on to preach throughout the region and establish the great religion we know today as Christianity.

Tuesday before Lent is formally known as Shrove

Tuesday—from the old Middle English word "Shriven" meaning to say I'm sorry for all the wrongs we've done. Two other names for this day are Pancake Day and Fat Tuesday—so named for an old English tradition of using up all the fattening ingredients in the house so that people would be ready to fast during Lent. The fattening ingredients that most people had in their houses in those days were eggs and milk. A very simple recipe to use up those ingredients was to combine them with some flour and make pancakes!

And so, St. Joseph's invites you, our community family, to join us at 5 p.m. Tuesday evening, February 13, for a Pancake Supper. Bring a big appetite—supper is on us. Our Pancake Supper is one small way we say thank you for all you have done and do to help St. Joseph's food and other outreach ministries.

We hope to see you at 5 p.m. Tuesday evening, February 13!



St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain

© Don David

Little River (cont'd from page 1)

moderated a meeting at Town Hall which was well-attended by the community. The meeting featured a panel that included: Dr. Doug Phillips, University of Alabama, Alabama Public Television; Talmadge Butler, Superintendent of DeSoto State Park; and Jim Russell, Administrator of DeKalb County Health Department. The panel addressed the question "Does Little River Need Protection?"

Des explained: "Doug made his presentation and said the river's going to have a lot of demands on it in the future. He suggested that it was time to get together and form some type of organization to help preserve the resource. We scheduled a follow-up meeting to talk about our options. We met and decided to form an organization to preserve the resource. We were clear that it needed to include everybody—not only landowners, but anyone who had an interest in the river and protecting it. We chose the name Friends of Little River because we wanted to be perceived as being for something, and not against something."

One of the first actions Des took as president was contacting the National Park Service (NPS) with a request to do a Corridor Study, a service the NPS offers which allows a community to make a plan for preservation, with considerations for what's most important to the community.

"At the time, Congressman Tom Beville was the representative in the U.S. Congress for our district," said Des. "He was also chairman of the Appropriations Committee back then, so he had the power of the purse, so to speak. He decided he'd like to see a unit of the NPS in the area. So, when he suggested that to the Park Service, they came in and did a study for a national park, as opposed to a Corridor Study."

They were focused on what was, at the time, the Little River Wildlife Management Area. The land (almost 14,000 acres) was owned by Alabama Power, which leased it to the state for use as a management area. "They eventually decided to designate the area



Kayaking offers a unique perspective of the river.

as a national park and presented their plan to the community. However, there was a lot of opposition to this decision."

Citizens were concerned because the proposed national park's boundaries would be extended beyond the existing management area, with private land being acquired through eminent domain. "Another concern we had was that since DeSoto State Park was going to be included within the boundaries of the national park, we wanted to be sure the state park would continue to be managed by the state and not the federal government," said Des. "As an organization, we felt we'd have a better voice talking to our local state representatives rather than those on the federal level."

"Since the land was owned by Alabama Power," Des continued, "it was in private hands, and they

could have sold it to whomever they wanted to. Our reasoning was it's better to have the land protected by the government, as long as it could still be used as it was being used at the time."

"We wanted to be sure people had access to the land they'd had access to for generations, for hiking, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, horseback riding and hunting," said Des. "That was one of our reasons in favor of federal protection, to preserve the river and to get the land set aside so it could still be used for public use. Also, under state management, seasonal hunting was allowed. This was where a lot of folks hunted, and for many this was the only land they could hunt on, unless they belonged to a hunting club or owned their own land."

Through community discussion and activism, the plan for a national park eventually evolved into a bill creating the Little River National Preserve. "You can't hunt in a national park," explained Des, "so the bill specifically allows seasonal hunting, following the regulations of the state of Alabama. It was also specifically written in the bill that there can be no future expansion of the park's boundaries without the consent of the land's owner, and it maintains present recreational use."

At the time, there was "a lot of juggling going on," said Des. While Friends of Little River was working with the National Park Service and the local community to come up with an agreeable plan so that the land could become part of the national park system, FLR also got involved with the Cahaba River Society, a non-profit advocacy organization in Birmingham.

As part of the Federal Clean Water Act, bodies of water are designated by their water quality. The highest designation under that bill is called "Outstanding National Resource Waters" (ONRW). One of the criteria to receive that designation is that the water be of the highest quality—"almost excellent water," said Des. "Even though it was federal law, Alabama never had that designation on the books. They didn't recognize it or have any regulations to manage the

(cont'd on page 24)

Tai Chi Exercise Class

Wayne Gautreau
will present
a 12-week T'ai Chi class
beginning March 6.
The class will meet
weekly on Tuesdays
from 9–11 a.m.
at Rock Ridge Retreat Center
in Valley Head.
The cost for the series
is \$40.
Space is limited;
enrollment ends March 2.
Contact Wayne
at 256-634-4557
to register.



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The Lookout Mountain Knitters



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

THE GROUNDHOG

P. O. Box 387
Mentone, AL 35984

The Groundhog is published monthly by the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA). It was first conceived on Groundhog Day, 1982, and organized April 5, 1982, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the heritage, natural environment and other unique qualities of life in the Mentone area, and is chartered as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.



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or a story idea?
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MENTONE MATTERS

by Mayor Rob Hammond



In this issue of *The Groundhog*, there is an article by Kelly Leavitt on the history of the Friends of Little River. In response to a possible plan to have a landfill near the headwaters of the East

Fork of Little River, we had a panel discussion/town hall meeting to address the question, "Does Little River need protection?" Town Hall was packed and the panelists all did an outstanding job. Businesses, the camps, and many individuals were all in agreement that we should seek protection for Mentone's most valuable natural resource—Little River. It was a grassroots/community-based effort. Success did not come overnight. Under the leadership of FLR president Desmond Disney and with the efforts of many volunteers, ONRW status—the highest level of protection—was obtained for Little River. This was a huge milestone. However, ONRW protection is just one tool in our toolbox we can use to protect the river. Future threats will require a strong local response. I have no doubt the citizens of Mentone will all be ready to further protect the river if the need arises.

Letter From The Editor

Happy Love Month! Valentine's Day may be only one day, but it seems to flavor the whole month of February. And *The Groundhog* is celebrating its 36th birthday this month, which seems appropriate,

since this little newspaper has historically reflected the love of community members for our area.

I recently did an informal poll and asked people what they love about Mentone. The results were consistent (if not predictable). They love the natural beauty of the area. They love the friendliness (and helpfulness) of local citizens. They love having easy access to Little River and wooded hiking trails. They love the open-mindedness and diversity of those who live in the area. They love sunsets on the western brow.

Many responses focused on the arts. People appreciate their artistic neighbors, the variety of arts represented in Mentone, and the frequent availability of arts programs. Even the children concurred—"Artists come and show us things," "Mr. Mickey comes to teach us ukulele," "Miss Paula is the best." Nature isn't far from the young people's minds, either—"I love Mentone's beauty and the changing seasons," "People help us on Earth Day," "I like to go hiking along the river with my family."

Love is shown in so many ways in Mentone. As an example, MERF's Senior Lunches easily come to mind. To enjoy freshly-cooked food that's served with friendliness and laughter, while enjoying music together—this is a priceless experience for elders,

many of whom often feel lonely. The volunteer efforts that make the lunches possible are born of love, plain and simple.

The Food Bank at St. Joseph's also thrives because of the loving volunteerism that is devoted to making sure that all of our neighbors, including the children, are well fed and nourished throughout the year.

Volunteers offer dedicated hours to producing MAPA's two festivals—Colorfest and the Rhododendron Festival—not for personal profit or glory, but to offer Mentone and its visitors a unique and fun experience. The festivals' profits are returned to the community through financial grants given by MAPA. Love makes it happen.

I'd like to express my gratitude to outgoing MAPA president, Anna Mae Horn. Prior to joining the MAPA board, Anna Mae edited *The Groundhog* for several years, and she taught me the ropes well. I'm

enjoying carrying on the legacy of *The Groundhog* as a newspaper that reflects the love our community has for Mentone and the surrounding area. It's certainly a circle of love, because, in turn, it's as if the astounding natural beauty that surrounds us, is actually loving us back.



Photo by Dana Goggans

With love,

Kelly



MAPA NEWS

Be Part of a Great Tradition

by Anna Mae Horn

MAPA had a great response to the Colorfest survey that was mailed out to the 35984 zip code. The MAPA board and festival committee greatly appreciate all the terrific feedback and all those who agreed to be volunteers. It's already time to start planning for the Rhododendron Festival and having additional volunteers will ensure a successful event. We want to extend a special thank you to MAPA board member Holley Midgley for overseeing this project, as well as to board member Domenic Fulginiti, volunteer Linda Stephenson, and volunteer Kathy Casler for 'stuffing envelopes.' If you haven't returned your survey, please feel free to do so. We are always interested in your opinions. You can contact us on the web at mapaMentone.com (where you can also find the latest festival information once we get underway with planning).

Being a part of MAPA means being part of a thirty-plus-year tradition. It means being a part of something that has contributed greatly to the

community in the past and continues to do so going into this new year and beyond. It's been a great pleasure to be a part of this organization, to see all that it has accomplished, and to be a part of *The Groundhog* for a little while. Due to personal reasons, I have resigned as the president of MAPA but plan to continue to support it in small ways as my time allows. It just doesn't seem that there are ever enough hours in the day to do all we need to get done for our wonderful community and ourselves. I'm pleased to see more volunteers reaching out on a regular basis to be a part of MAPA, *The Groundhog* and the annual festivals.

I'd like to thank Rand Hall for volunteering to mail out *Groundhog* subscriptions. It is a big help when volunteers step up to do what they can. I would like to let Kelly Leavitt know that she is appreciated for assuming the role of editor this past summer. Also, thank you Bev Bates for your dedication to *The Groundhog* for over five years as design manager and for all your help with festival handouts. Board members Holley Midgley and Susan Seago have been a great asset for *The Groundhog* and I appreciate their time volunteered.

I've enjoyed getting to know each of the board members and respect the work they do for MAPA and its mission. I look forward to seeing the fruits of labor of this MAPA board and their continued contributions to Mentone and the local area. The current board has been in force a little over six months and has already contributed a great deal to the community through donations to MERF, Boy Scouts, DeSoto Rescue Squad, and the local food bank outreach programs. This is only the beginning of the work they will accomplish.

I'd like to encourage each member of this community to donate time, money, or goods to at least one local non-profit organization this year. One hour of time can make a wonderful difference to the

community or to a person in need. If MAPA is your organization of choice, please contact us through Facebook, mapaMentone.com, or give Kelly a call via the *Groundhog* phone at 256-465-1107 to let her know how you would like to be a part of a great tradition.



**Become a MAPA
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MAPA

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WHO YA GONNA CALL?



by
**Charlotte
Gentry**

The bitterly cold days we experienced in January (and are sure to see for a bit longer this winter) resulted in a lot of headaches for many folks in the Mentone area. Not only was there the concern about secondary roads possibly being unsafe, there were frozen or busted water pipes to contend with, for some.

Who are you going to call? That is the big question that came to mind recently (and in past emergency situations). Who do folks call on to get these little, but very important, things taken care of? It's a question needing an answer.

Who do you call upon to fix a broken water pipe? What if the central heat goes out? Who is the "go to" person to pump out your septic tank? Who does mowing, leaf raking, weed-eating? Who can take care of minor repairs around the house? Who can you trust

to paint one room or a whole house? Who can you call and trust to fix a flat or jump-start your car when the battery is dead? Who does towing, auto repair, body work? Is there any kind of list that can be made accessible in the Mentone area for long-time residents, part-time residents, or even visitors?

There have been business directories in the past and their creators did as good a job as was possible at the time. Wouldn't it be nice to have an up-to-date resource available for yourself and to give out to customers, friends, visitors, etc.? This is just one of the topics of discussion that will be on the agenda for the February meeting of the Mentone Business Association. We will meet at the Green Leaf Grill on Monday, February 12, at 6 p.m. You don't have to be a member of the MBA to join us for this discussion.

The MBA's goal is to be a relevant resource for businesses and about businesses in the Mentone area. We welcome all business owners and those interested in the business of Mentone to join. There are no dues or fees. We also have a Mentone Business Association Facebook "Group" where folks can give and get information about goods and services in our area. A list of "Daily Openings" is available on the web at MentoneBusiness.com. Let's get busy!

Charlotte Gentry is the president of the Mentone Business Association.

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THE LIBRARY AS A COMMUNITY HUB by Kelly Leavitt

Are libraries still relevant? This is a question that will likely continue to be answered for many years to come. While our community library in Mentone doesn't get a huge amount of traffic, when a patron is in the library, it literally feels like the building knows it is being *used*. Its purpose is being fulfilled. What does it mean to "use" the library, these days? We have some regular "bookish" patrons (who largely prefer mysteries and thrillers), and others who regularly borrow movies (we have almost 1,000 to choose from). We have a few regular chess players on Saturday mornings. The MAPA board currently meets there, as do the Lookout Knitters and, occasionally, other groups.

Our library is not a "quiet" library. We talk. And we laugh. Sometimes we laugh a lot. During quiet lulls, I often muse on the lost potential of that time. Moments when a child could be discovering a book, or an adult could be browsing our non-fiction section, which is, truly, a trove of valuable information. Moments when neighbors could be connecting with neighbors, learning about each other, discovering mutual life dreams, or synchronistically being there for the other. That's the value Moon Lake Community Library holds for me...it's not just about books—it's about people. As Librarian, I feel privileged to meet so many interesting people. Recently, a couple who moved to Mentone visited the library, and I learned that he is a retired anthropologist and archaeologist. How interesting would he be to talk with?!

The library has given me the opportunity to get to know community members on a deeper level than when I just run into them at the post office. It's a relaxed space where we can connect with one another. Our library can (and should) be known as our community hub. I've been told that over its 18-year life, there have been waves of popularity and waves of disinterest. I think we're riding a new wave of popularity...of relevance. We want to hear from you: how can the library best serve you? What kinds of programs would interest you? What kind of environment would entice you?

Come on in on Saturday mornings to enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee—we've invested in a quality coffee maker and pounds of organic Balinese coffee beans. We have a cabinet full of strategic board games to play, including chess, backgammon, dominoes, and cribbage. We have immediate plans to create a comfortable, homelike, seating area, and we're researching the cost of offering Wi-Fi. New programs are being developed and will be announced in the near future, so keep an eye on our Facebook page. We want to serve you—each of you.

Nancy Kunhardt Lodge once said, "A library is a place vibrating with ideas." Doesn't that sound like a lovely place to spend time?

Moon Lake Community Library is a community-funded library in partnership with Moon Lake School. Hours are currently Tuesdays and Thursdays 3–5pm (3–6pm during Daylight Saving Time), and Saturdays 9am–Noon. Library cards are free.



Congratulations, Bennett Crow

Congratulations to Bennett Crow on attaining the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. Bennett, 18, has been a member of Mentone Troop 106 since he was a Cub Scout. As a Webelos Scout, he earned the Arrow of Light rank. He is Troop 106's 54th Eagle Scout to date.

For his Eagle Scout service project, Bennett transformed a property located on Alpine Road that is owned by the Boy Scouts. The camping site used to have a Scout House on it, but it had fallen into disrepair. Bennett submitted a proposal and devised a strategic plan to clear the site of boulders and downed trees, install a road that leads to the camp site, and sow grass seed on the property. He communicated with and led other Boy Scout volunteers who helped provide labor, and he made sure the job was complete.

Above: Bennett's mentor, Jan Wilkinson, pinning his Eagle Scout badge



Congratulations to Brant Smith, Valley Head School's 2017-2018 Spelling Bee School Champion! Brant won the bee with the word "rambling". He is in sixth grade and has been competing in spelling bees since second grade. He's also a Second Class Scout in Mentone's Boy Scout Troop 106. His parents, Stacy and Karen, are very proud of him. "He's just a good boy, all around," said Stacy. Brant will be competing in the DeKalb County Spelling Bee on February 7. Good Luck, Brant!

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FESTIVAL CALLING!

by Sharon Habin

The third weekend in May (May 19-20) is the Rhododendron Festival, presented by MAPA. Our festivals are staffed by volunteers and the Festival Committee is currently taking form.

As we put out the call for Vendor Applications, please know we are also interested in Volunteers for key positions that are starting now, such as: 2 Assistant Festival Chairs, Assistant Vendor Coordinator, Music Coordinator, Miss Rhododendron Coordinator, and Sponsorship Chair (who will work with the MAPA board). If you are interested in any of these exciting volunteer opportunities, please email me at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com and enter 'Volunteer' as the subject.

"Many hands make light the work!" There will be many opportunities to volunteer. Those of you who have so graciously volunteered in the past, as well as those who have put their names and emails on various interest sheets, should be receiving an 'Opportunities to Volunteer' email by March 1. If you haven't signed up and/or you would like to attend the early planning meetings, email me at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com.

Although the applications are not ready yet, Musicians are welcome to request an application at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com. Please enter 'Musician' as the subject.

Sharon Habin is the Festival Coordinator for the 2018 Rhododendron Festival.

Mentone, Alabama

2018 Rhododendron Festival, May 19-20

Vendor Application - 12X12 SPACES

Deadline March 15 -- Please Do Not Send Payment at this time

Contact Name _____
 Business Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____ Cell Phone _____
 E-mail _____
 Website Address _____ FB Page _____
 Type of Vendor: ☐ Art/Craft ☐ Food (see back/ pg. 2) ☐ Organization
 Description of Art/Items _____
 Electricity- ☐ YES, number of duplex outlets needed ☐ 110V (\$25) ☐ 220V (\$50) ☐ Water (\$25)
 Number of Spaces _____ **Please Do Not Send Payment with Application**
 Vendor Special Needs _____

Handicap Accessibility Needs

Our Festival Venue is somewhat primitive with uneven ground, porta potties, no parking at vendor spaces, and outdoor weather. We will do our best to accommodate on a case by case basis.

Information: Festival hours will be 9am-5pm Saturday and 9am-4pm Sunday. You may set up your space on Friday, 11am-5pm CT, or Saturday 6:30am-8:30am CT. Please be ready for the Festival to start at 9am. You MUST set up both days. Cars MUST be moved to specified vendor parking area after unloading and by 8:30 each morning. You may break down beginning at 4pm on Sunday--no earlier.

Please provide photos, (digital photos are best), of your work or a current website or Facebook address. Your application will be declined if there is no way to view your work.

Those accepted will be notified no later than March 21. We reserve the right to limit the number of vendors within a category. Spaces will be assigned about a week prior to the festival. Upon arrival check in is required at the information tent. No spaces can be reserved from Festival to Festival. We reserve the right to deny your application. **Payment information will be included with your Acceptance Notice.**

Charges: Booths are \$100. for a 12X12 space. There are additional charges for electricity and/or water, please indicate on the application. To avoid outages, electricity is reserved for food vendors and artists who require it to show and demonstrate their art or craft. (ie. not for lighting or fans). No generators will be allowed.

Please Do Not Send Payment at this time

ALL ART MUST BE HANDMADE BY THE ARTIST. NO READY-MADE MERCHANDISE IS ALLOWED. The Festivals are strictly arts and crafts festivals; therefore, no political or religious organizations will be accepted. Please contact rhododendronfestival@gmail.com if you have any questions. Thank you.

Send completed application form to: MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984

OR Download online at: <http://www.mapamentone.com> Click on Festivals then on Vendors

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MENTONE WOMEN'S MARCH

by Cathy Haven Howard

Approximately 70 people gathered in Mentone to celebrate the first anniversary of the Women's March on Saturday, January 20. It was a beautiful sunny day, after what seemed like a week of subfreezing weather, and the spirit and energy of the group that had convened from all over the region was high and empowered.

Last year, on January 21, 2017, we took part in the first Women's March, and Mentone received global attention when photos from our local march went



viral. Over the past year, momentum has continued to grow for the Women's March. It was reported by Vox that 2018's Women's March may have been the largest coordinated demonstration in U.S. history.

The theme of this year's National Women's March was "Power to the Polls." The Mentone March focused, as well, on this important goal of voter registration, empowering women to run for office and



become politically active.

The Mentone Women's March had its own brand of intimacy and empowerment, in that the smaller number of participants allowed for volunteer speakers to address what is meaningful to them around women's issues. Each of the last two marches have led to a series of speeches and presentations before and after the actual march that were inspiring, empowering, meaningful and uplifting. Young women, older women, women in the middle of life; all have shared from their hearts—and some through their tears—what a difference the Women's March has made in their lives. One of the main themes has been that they learned they are not alone and that they can speak up and have a voice. Another aspect is that women can connect with other women and men allies, and work together on social issues they share in common passion.

The 2018 Mentone Women's March was hosted

in the gallery space that was formerly Kamama. We want to thank owners Ray and Sandra Padgett for the donation of this warm and beautiful space for the march. We had a larger Planning Committee this year and we are so grateful for all of the support and commitment from the following team members: deJoly LaBrier, Lisa Schad, Sharon Habin, Clare Donohue, Claudia Ellard, Marilyn Reese, Paula Tally, Tobey Miller, Trish Michaels, Karole Ohme, Meg Richardson, Robert Moehr, and Debbo Gray.

Corinne West, owner of Plowshares Bistro, and her staff provided delicious gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches for our lunch that followed the march. This was also a time that allowed for continued networking and sharing among the participants. We want to thank the Mentone Town Council and Police Department for their support for this march. We believe that the Women's March has been a favorable event for Mentone, and that many people have become more aware of our town and all that it has to offer.



Photos by Meg Richardson

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Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to submit? We would love to share it with our readers. Mail it to us at P.O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984, email it to groundhognews@yahoo.com, or send us a private message through Facebook. We look forward to featuring our readers' recipes!

Cabbage Roll Soup

submitted by Debra Champagne

- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1/2 lb. lean ground pork
- 3/4 cup uncooked long grain rice
- 1 medium head cabbage, chopped (core removed)
- 1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 4 cups beef broth
- 1 1/2 cups V8 or other vegetable juice
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 bay leaf
- salt and pepper, to taste



In a large pot, brown onion, garlic, pork and beef. Drain any fat. Stir in chopped cabbage and let cook until slightly softened (about 3 minutes). Add all remaining ingredients, bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium low. Cover and simmer on low until rice is fully cooked (about 25-30 minutes). Remove bay leaf and serve. Serves 8. (If you prefer a thinner soup, add more beef broth to reach desired consistency once rice is cooked.)

HAPPY DAY!

February Birthdays

- Feb 1 – John Lawton
- Feb 1 – Abby Bell
- Feb 1 – Tammy Kirby
- Feb 1 – Walter Brooks
- Feb 1 – Rindy Flannigan
- Feb 1 – Fontana Stinson
- Feb 1 – Thomas Blevins
- Feb 2 – GROUNDHOG DAY!!
- Feb 2 – Beverly Smith
- Feb 2 – Karen Nixon
- Feb 2 – Zeb Kincer
- Feb 2 – Elijah Rogers
- Feb 3 – Melanie Potts Garrett
- Feb 4 – Angela Phillips
- Feb 4 – Carson Frost
- Feb 4 – Brittany Daniel
- Feb 4 – Loree Brownfield
- Feb 4 – Aubree Lewchuk
- Feb 4 – Cameron Norsworthy
- Feb 5 – Yon Hopper
- Feb 5 – Savannah Wallace
- Feb 5 – Cameron Collins
- Feb 5 – Brylen Deal
- Feb 6 – Amanda Blalock
- Feb 6 – Allie McElhaney
- Feb 7 – Haven Stone
- Feb 7 – Jordan Sutton
- Feb 7 – Tristan Rodriguez
- Feb 7 – Haley Stinson
- Feb 7 – Carley Verdon
- Feb 7 – Jase Kirby
- Feb 7 – Norah Underwood
- Feb 8 – Wyatt Blackburn
- Feb 8 – Crystal Smith

- Feb 8 – Helen Brown
- Feb 8 – Annette Johnson
- Feb 8 – Sandy Tate
- Feb 9 – Kara Goss
- Feb 9 – Jonnie Frost
- Feb 9 – Cayden Collins
- Feb 9 – Heath Jones
- Feb 10 – Joe McClure
- Feb 10 – Leonard Keith
- Feb 10 – Katie White
- Feb 10 – Luke Hulan
- Feb 11 – Cayla Wigley
- Feb 11 – Faith Nelson
- Feb 11 – Gentry Grisham
- Feb 11 – Amanda Ditmore
- Feb 11 – Elizabeth Rich
- Feb 11 – Rhett Davis
- Feb 12 – Tara Kirby
- Feb 12 – Nicholas Freeman
- Feb 12 – Sydnee Grider
- Feb 12 – Bubba Browder
- Feb 12 – Petie Gatlin
- Feb 13 – Gretchen Winder
- Feb 13 – Carol Busby
- Feb 13 – Craig Hall
- Feb 13 – Isaac Pangle
- Feb 14 – Valentine's Day!
- Feb 14 – Abbi Gifford
- Feb 14 – Eddie Manning
- Feb 15 – Ashley Coffman
- Feb 15 – Diane Smith
- Feb 16 – Katelyn Busby
- Feb 16 – Mary Jane Gray
- Feb 17 – John David Blalock
- Feb 17 – Trey Moore
- Feb 17 – Tyler Allen
- Feb 17 – Renee Peek
- Feb 17 – Tom Tate
- Feb 18 – Richard Harrison

- Feb 18 – Gail Crider
- Feb 18 – Braden Villarreal
- Feb 19 – Kelly Leavitt
- Feb 19 – Beverly Bates
- Feb 19 – Danielle Powell
- Feb 19 – Aaron Goss
- Feb 20 – Jon Baggett
- Feb 20 – Stella Pierce
- Feb 20 – Joan Byrum
- Feb 20 – Juanita McGuire
- Feb 20 – Adam Battles
- Feb 21 – Wendy Manifold
- Feb 22 – Justin Langston
- Feb 22 – Johnny Mack Ferguson, Jr
- Feb 22 – Corey Blalock
- Feb 22 – Derek McMahan
- Feb 22 – Jordan Bethune
- Feb 24 – Michael Chambers
- Feb 24 – Tom Emory
- Feb 24 – Payton Day Lewis
- Feb 24 – Melinda Easler
- Feb 24 – Susan Collins
- Feb 25 – William Beasley
- Feb 25 – Emily Tate
- Feb 25 – Pam Bettis
- Feb 25 – Dorothy Cyr
- Feb 25 – Johnny Meadows
- Feb 26 – Kylee Elkins
- Feb 26 – Johnny Battles
- Feb 26 – Kate Smith
- Feb 27 – Makayla Mullis
- Feb 27 – David Hilliard
- Feb 27 – Holden Smith
- Feb 27 – Marc Hale
- Feb 28 – Derek Davis
- Feb 28 – Ethan Bailey
- Feb 28 – Russell Odell
- Feb 29 – Ethen Battles



Happy Belated Birthday to Andrew Lea, who turned 83 on January 9! Andrew was born and raised in Mentone.

February Anniversaries

- Feb 1 – Russell & Jan Odell
- Feb 3 – Ray & Sandra Padgett
- Feb 3 - Jeremy & Amy Henderson
- Feb 4 – Larry & Kathy Gray
- Feb 5 – David & Pam Dean
- Feb 7 – Calvin & Myra Lanier
- Feb 7 – Mack & Debbie Flannigan
- Feb 8 – Clark & Genella Tolbert
- Feb 10 – Danny & Sible Hopper
- Feb 14 – Joey & Melanie Garrett
- Feb 14 – Kevin & Connie McElhaney
- Feb 15 – Leonard & Amy Keith
- Feb 17 – Vance & Patti Carden
- Feb 23 – Jeff & LeAnn Bain

What To Do Around Here!

February 2018 Community Calendar

February 2—Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 2pm. 256-997-9577.

February 2—Night Zip Line Adventure. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 6:30–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.

February 3, 17, 21, 24—Rappelling Adventure. Come experience the thrill of rappelling down the sheer sandstone gems of NE AL. Each trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. True Adventure Sports. 10am–2pm. 256-997-9577.



February 3, 5, 17—Extreme Night Hike. This end-of-day adventure does not slow down just because it's dark. Intended for a large group team-building exercise, this hike has a bit of bouldering, and a whole lot of required working together. True Adventure Sports. 6–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.

February 6—Hypothermia Class. This 3-hour class teaches the extreme dangers and how to treat hypothermia. Learn how quickly hypothermia can set in and the signs indicating it is setting in. True Adventure Sports. 1–4pm. 256-997-9577.

February 7—DeKalb County Spelling Bee—Individual winners from each county school as well as the winner from Fort Payne City and Cornerstone Christian will compete in this County event. 8:30 a.m. DeKalb County Schools Facilities Building, 393 Main Street E, Rainsville.

February 7—Cold Weather Survival Class.

Learn tips to prevent hypothermia and death. This class covers the basics for emergency cold weather conditions and



also covers a few tips on how to stay warm and comfortable for everyday cold conditions. True Adventure Sports. 2–5pm. 256-997-9577.

February 8—Little River Waterkeeper Stakeholder Meeting. Anyone with a love for Little River is invited to this meeting hosted by Bill Shugart, Little River Waterkeeper. 6pm. Moon Lake Community Library.



February 8—Bouldering Adventure atop Lookout Mountain. Come experience first-hand what bouldering is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. No prior climbing or bouldering experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 2–5pm. 256-997-9577.

February 8 & 19—Afternoon Rock Climb. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about in the afternoon with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 2–6pm. 256-997-9577.



February 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17—Children's Advocacy Center Annual Dinner Theater. The Children's Advocacy Center presents "Virgil Wins the Lottery!" by Eddie McPherson. The play will be held at the First United Methodist Church, Fort Payne. Ticket prices vary and are by reservation only. Front row: \$35 each/\$280 table; Second row: \$30 each/\$240 table; Third, fourth, fifth rows: \$25/\$200 table. For more information or



tickets, call 256-997-9700.

February 10—Book Making Class with Lydia Randolph. Learn how to create your own book, from creating a cover to hand stitching the binding. Presented by Little River Arts Council. Moon Lake Community Library. 1–4pm. \$12/LRAC members; \$20/non-members. Register at littleriverartscouncil.org.



February 10—Sculpt Your Own Flower. Have you ever wanted to actually sit at the gaffer bench and feel what it is like to shape hot glass? It's all about hands-on experience in a safe and fun atmosphere with a final product we know you will love. Minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5 in each class. 1pm. Orbix Hot Glass. Reservations and full payment are required. \$75 per person. 256-523-3188.

February 10, 14, 20, 22—Rock Climbing / Rappelling Adventure Combo. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing and rappelling is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 10am–2pm. 256-997-9577.

February 12—Advanced Rappelling Class. This 8-hour class reviews rappelling basics, then teaches advanced rappelling. Learn special rigging, mechanical advantage, ascending and rope walking, alternate rappel devices, changeovers, advanced knots, safety procedures, special gear, and backup belaying. You will also do several rappels and a change over before returning to the store for the rappelling test and knot exam. True Adventure Sports. \$145/person. 9am. 256-997-9577.

February 13—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church, Mentone. 5pm. Free.



February 13—Rescue Rappelling Class. This 8–10-hour class reviews advanced rappelling, then teaches you rescue rappelling. Learn rescue rigging, rescue hauls, rescue rappel devices, rescue knots, safety procedures and protocols, rescue gear, and emergency belaying. You will also do several rappels, emergency changeovers, and staged rescues before returning to the store for the rappelling test and knot exam. True Adventure Sports. \$179/person. 9am. 256-997-9577.

February 14—Valentine's Day!

February 14—Concert: Clare Donohue. Presented by Mentone Arts and Cultural Center in the gallery next to Plowshares Bistro. 6:30–8:30pm. \$10 suggested donation.

February 14—Zip Line Adventure. All our zip lines are set up just before the adventure to ford a gorge or cross from one high point to another. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 2:30pm. 256-997-9577.



February 15—"Made in DeKalb" Expo. Business representatives will have the opportunity to network with peers, representatives from education, the Alabama Department of Commerce – Export Alliance, the Small Business Administration, the USDA, the Fort Payne Career Center and others. Students (9th & 12th) from DeKalb County and Fort Payne Schools will have the opportunity to learn about local business career options and about DeKalb County's manufacturers. Northeast Alabama Agri-Business Center in Rainsville. 256-638-1650.

February 17—Papercrafting Class. Work with fellow crafters to create two cards (designs will be provided). Led by Katie Ferguson. No experience



(cont'd on page 10)

What To Do Around Here!

February 2018 Community Calendar

(cont'd from page 9)

is necessary. Supplies are provided. Class held in the gallery next to Plowshares Bistro. 1pm. \$7.50. 205-349-4026.

February 17—Paperweight Class. This class is designed for those who really just want to see what molten glass is all about. Feel the heat, gather from the furnace, sculpt the glass into your own design. It is ultimately about the experience, some experimentation and a couple of nice paperweights to take home or to the office to show your friends. Please join us for some

in-depth discovery at Orbix Hot Glass. Reservations required. \$145 per person. 9am–1pm. 256-523-3188.

February 19 - President's Day

February 14—Concert: Matty Croxton. Presented by Mentone Arts and Cultural Center in the gallery next to Plowshares Bistro. 6:30–8:30pm. \$10 suggested donation.

February 23—“Lunch and Learn” Event. Hosted by Family Services of North Alabama. Come and learn more about

the services we provide in DeKalb County. Lunch will be provided. All are welcome to attend. Vintage 1889, Fort Payne. 12–1pm. RSVP: heather@familyservicesna.org or 256-630-3898.

February 24—Little River Arts Council



Membership Social & Open House. Learn about LRAC's upcoming programs. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar,

artist demonstrations and live music by The Vegetaters. DeSoto State Park Lodge. 5–7:30pm. Info at littleriverartscouncil.org.



Ongoing Calendar

MAPA Board meets on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 6pm at Moon Lake Library.

Mentone Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday every month at 6pm at Mentone Town Hall. Everyone is welcome.

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

Mentone Farmers Market is open year 'round on Saturdays from 10am–1pm.

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.

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.

The Mentone Business Association (MBA) meets the 2nd Monday of each month from 6–7pm at the Mentone Inn.

Moon Lake Community Library is open to the community on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3–5pm and Saturdays from 9am–12pm.

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

The Lookout Mountain Wholistic Center meets monthly on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays at Rock Ridge Retreat Center in Valley Head at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome!

Coffee, Conversation & Games at Moon Lake Community Library on Saturday mornings at 9am. Enjoy complimentary organic coffee, chess and other games of strategy.

Writing anyone? Point of the Pen is a small, supportive writing group that welcomes anyone to join us for a casual sharing time with other writers interested in life stories, poetry, and fiction. Come to St. Joseph's the

1st Tuesday of each month at 1 pm. Call 256-635-8775 for details.

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

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

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

Gluten Free/Diabetic All Natural Cooking classes with Brenda Trace are held at Little River Hardware at 6pm on Wednesdays. Classes \$10.

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. Both meetings are Open AA Discussion Meetings. Anyone who thinks they might have a problem with alcohol is welcome. Questions? Call 256-634-3060.

AL-ANON family and friends support group meets every Tuesday at 6pm at St. Joseph's-

on-the-Mountain Church in Mentone. Same time and location as the AA Meeting. Come join us and help us grow!

JHH & CLC meet at 9am each Friday at the DeKalb County Council on Aging, followed by a quilt-making class that is open to the public.

Exercise Room is open at the Dekalb County Council on Aging each week, Monday through Friday (except for certain holidays), from 8am to Noon.

Ballroom dancing lessons are offered at DeKalb County Council on Aging on Monday nights from 6–8pm. 256-845-8590.

Line dancing lessons are offered at DeKalb County Council on Aging on Tuesdays from 1:30–3:30pm. 256-845-8590.

Free Square Dance Lessons offered most Thursdays, 6:30pm, at Tom Beville Center in Rainsville by Duos and Solos Dance Club. 256-638-2780.

*Calendar entries
are subject to change.*

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MENTONE ARTS & CULTURAL CENTER SPONSORS TWO BIG PERFORMANCES IN FEBRUARY

by Randy Grider

February is the month of love, and the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center has two shows that audiences will adore. Utilizing the former Kamama Art Gallery (adjacent to Plowshares Bistro) as its temporary home while working on phase one of construction at its permanent site along Highway 117, MACC will continue to host live performances and educational classes and workshops during the upcoming months. MACC held two shows in January that included classically trained singer Loree Brownfield and Russell Gulley, whose Muscle Shoals background is legendary.

On tap for Valentine's Day (Wednesday, February 14) is jazz sensation Clare Donahue from 6:30–8:30 p.m. Her appropriately-themed “Songs and Poems of Love” show is sure to melt hearts. Donohue's unique, sultry sound easily reminds one of the greats: Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Nancy Lamott, Anita O'Day, Diane Schur, Keely Smith and others. Her two greatest influences were Billie Holiday and Doris Day, and you can hear both of them in her voice.

Donohue performs jazz, torch/cabaret, standards, and much of the Great American Songbook. She has the clarity of Frank Sinatra as well as the heavy New York accent when she speaks. Growing up in Brooklyn, NY, Donohue sang back up for a couple of rock bands and performed all over New York City. She sang with “The Real Joey Leone” in his original

act 911 and was improvising in the studio at 19 years of age. She later teamed up with Bonnie Cameron (known for her soundtracks) doing “acoustic soul” around Greenwich Village and the Upper West Side.

On Friday, February 23, MACC will feature singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Matty Croxton from 6:30–8:30 p.m. Croxton has spent the last decade



performing across the Southeast as a solo artist as well as a founding member of Pioneer Chicken Stand, Trade Day Troubadours, and Matty and the Matadors. His first solo EP, *Southern Discomfort*, was released in 2016. He is currently touring to promote new music and is making plans to

release a full-length album in the near future. Croxton attended Valley Head High School and currently lives in Fort Payne.

Admission to each performance is a suggested \$10 donation. Proceeds go to the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

MACC also is working to expand our outreach program to area schools. Artist-in-Residence for Theater and Film Sandra Lafferty currently is working with Fort Payne High School drama students. She is nationally known for her roles in films like *The Hunger Games*, *Walk the Line* and more than 60 others. We hope to bring her talents, influence and expertise to other DeKalb County schools in the near future.

Please remember donations to MACC can be made “In Honor” or “In Memory” of a loved one or distinguished citizen. You can find more information online by visiting mentoneartscenter.org or by emailing me at mentoneartscenter@gmail.com. My phone number is 256-674-3366.

We invite you to “Join the Journey”—our latest campaign that features more events and educational opportunities. Please check our Facebook page regularly for updates.

Randy Grider is executive director of the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center



Candies for a Cause



Have you seen the colorful Mason jars filled with pink, red, and white M&M's at Mentone Market, Moon Lake Library, or St. Joseph's Episcopal Church? They're the newest project of brothers Colton and Gunner Hadley, who have teamed up once more to raise funds for an important cause in our community. Through February 13, a dollar buys a guess at how many M&M's are in the jar. The winner will be contacted on the 13th, just in time to take the jar home for Valentine's Day. The other “winner” in this fundraiser is St. Joseph's “Snack in a Backpack” program.

Each Friday during the school year, about 13 children from our area receive a backpack snack (a two-day meal kit) to take home for the weekend. The program was started by St. Joseph's and MERF in conjunction with local school personnel. “The cost of the program is a little more than \$200 per month (\$4 per child per week), or about \$1,900 per year,” explained Liz Baker, coordinator of the Snack in a Backpack program. “This program is St. Joseph's costliest food ministry, on a per person basis, because

we cannot use out-of-date or salvaged goods, and all foods must be free of possible exposure to allergens, such as peanuts. We try to purchase the freshest and highest quality food for the children.”

The program began in the fall of 2014 with \$2,000 raised by MERF and St. Joseph's, and a matching grant from the Food Bank of North AL, an agency of Feeding America. “Once these funds were exhausted,” Liz said, “the church became the sole source of funding for the program.” Mentone United Methodist Church soon began contributing monthly. Last summer, MAPA donated \$1,500 to the cause, providing most of the funds needed for one year. Since every little bit counts, the Hadley brothers' efforts are meaningful, for them personally, as well as for the “Snack in a Backpack” program.

Other churches occasionally support this program, as does St. Joseph's Food Bank, which serves about 40 local families each week. “We could not provide these programs without support from the Mentone community, which has been generous to us,” said Liz. Colton and Gunner are providing a strong lead for our entire community.

This Old House: MERF Community House



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.

The MERF board spent an afternoon planning, dreaming and assessing all that is MERF recently. After 25 years, is MERF still viable and necessary in Mentone? What are the needs of the community? Can MERF improve in meeting those needs? Let us know what you think and how you can help us meet those needs.

A creative crew has gathered and begun great plans

for MERF's Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction on Saturday, April 7. Moon Lake students have been creating wonderful pieces of art for the highest bidder to claim. And thankfully, local artists and chefs will make the night spectacular too! Please contact Sarah or any MERF board member if you have abilities (even sweat equity) to be used to make this evening the best one so far. Watch our Facebook page for updates and when ticket sales begin in March. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Don't miss out on a great evening that supports all that MERF is doing while highlighting the Arts Program at Moon Lake Elementary School.

What do Valentine's Day, Ash Wednesday and the middle of February have in common?! It's finally the day for the senior lunch bunch crew to get back together again! Lunches will start back on Wednesday, February 14, weather permitting, at the Moon Lake Baptist Church fellowship hall. We look forward to seeing everyone again after such a long and cold winter's nap.



many years. Shirley knew the gift of giving back and always believed in the mission of MERF. MERF is thankful for the many friends that have been a part of our mission.

MERF: Mentone Educational Resources Foundation is a local non-profit with the mission "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 POB107 Mentone, AL 35984 or contributed online at www.merfhouse.org. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-634-4673.

Above: Five of the seven Sue McLaurin Henry Scholarship recipients for spring semester: August Shankles (JSU), Devin Leps (UNA), Brooke Moore (UNA), Kara Goss (JSU), and Josie Grider (JSU). Not pictured: Sarah Blalock (Athens State) and Angela Hadley (NACC).

Left (clockwise): Shirley Hussel enjoying MERF's Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction 2017; Shirley tells Santa what she wants for Christmas at MERF's Christmas Party 2016 for the senior lunch bunch crew at the MERF house; Shirley enjoying her duty as a kitchen elf for MERF.



Unfortunately, the lunch bunch crew has lost two of its friends this winter. We will miss John Wilkinson's constant smile and quick wit. We are so thankful that he has been a part of our days. And one of our most faithful kitchen elves and great MERF supporter, Shirley Hussel, lost her battle in early January. Shirley has been a volunteer with MERF, both as a tutor and as the most excellent dishwasher at the MERF house, for

Save the date!
MERF's
"Taste of the Mountain
and Art Auction"
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Little River Arts Council News

by Kelly Leavitt

The Little River Arts Council will hold its annual Membership Social and Open House on Saturday, February 24, from 5–7:30 p.m. at De Soto State Park's Lodge. We'll meet in the beautiful dining room, featuring historic stonework laid by the men of the CCC in the 1930s. The fireplace will be lit and the outside deck will be heated. Hors d'oeuvres will be served, and a cash bar will be available. The full dinner menu and salad bar will be available for purchase. We will briefly review our activities of 2017, and discuss our plans for 2018. Several artists will demonstrate their

skills throughout the evening, and live music will be performed by "The Vegetaters." This event is open to all. We look forward to socializing with our members, as well as with those interested in learning more about the Arts Council.

Lydia Randolph's Book Making class last month was such fun that many participants asked for another class to be scheduled...sooner rather than later. In this spirit, we have another class slated for Saturday, February 10, from 1–4:30 p.m. at Moon Lake Community Library. Learn how to make your own

non-members. All materials will be supplied. Visit littleriverartscouncil.org to register.

Artist (and LRAC board member) Barbara Umland will facilitate a "plein air" painting event on Saturday, April 7. Enjoy painting outdoors amongst Spring's wildflowers at the popular "Pocket" on Pigeon Mountain. Mark your calendar; details will be forthcoming.

Many other events are currently being planned for the year, so please join our email list at littleriverartscouncil.org if you'd like to stay informed.

If you are an artist in the Little River area, please contact us. We'd like to have a current registry of local artists (of all kinds). We're here to support you however we can.



Left: Imogene Thomas and deJoly LaBrier enjoying January's Book Making class

Below: Linda Espy and deJoly LaBrier's handmade books



personal book, from decorating the cover, to creating the signatures, to stitching it all together by hand. Bring anything you'd like to use for decoration—photos, drawings, inspirational quotes, ribbons, beads, buttons, etc. There is no limit to the creative possibilities. The cost is \$12/LRAC members or \$20/

Papercrafting

I have always enjoyed playing with school and office supplies. When I worked in an office I had a color code system for my files. Each color represented a different subject matter. This helped me find a specific file when it was mixed in with others on my desk. I knew what color I was looking for! I liked pens and markers, and different kinds of hole punches and tools. In addition, I have enjoyed sewing and working with beautiful fabrics.

Over the years, I have also played with making cards. When my kids were little, we made Valentine's Day cards for their grandparents. The supplies that were available where we lived consisted of construction paper, scissors, white school glue, and basic large colored markers. I longed for simple paper doilies to use on some of the cards. I knew such things existed but none could be found in the stores where I shopped.

Then, about 12 years ago, I was introduced to a papercrafting company that had a large catalog, packed with all kinds of fabulous, high-quality supplies that could be mail ordered (remember this was before the Internet!)—cardstock, colorful printed papers, rubber stamps, inks, quality markers with fine tips and brush tips, ribbons, embellishments, all kinds of tools—and it all coordinated. I was hooked! Not only did they have great supplies but I met people who had wonderful ideas on how to use it all. In addition

to cards, I discovered how to use the supplies to make 3-D items such as boxes, treat holders, and banners.

I have learned a lot over the years and I love getting together with



by Katie Ferguson

of fun. I create the card designs and bring all the supplies. The attendees bring themselves and a \$7.50 fee. No experience is necessary and most attendees have none when they first arrive. If you want to know more about papercrafting or making cards, or to get on our group email list, email cottagepaper@bellsouth.net or call 205-349-4026 and leave a message.

Far Left: An example of a card the group has made

Left: Annette Williams, a member of the card-making group, making a card.



others to play with all my fun supplies. Today, I lead a group that meets once a month at the former Kamama gallery in Mentone. Barring a conflict,

we meet at 1 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month, make two cards for various occasions, and have lots





Rhododendron Garden Club

by Mellanie Tuttle

The Rhododendron Garden Club meeting was held at the Boy Scout House on January 9 at 10 a.m. Refreshments were provided by Dianne Kuehl. For the meditation, Mary Shurett read "The Seasons" from the book *Devotions from the Garden, Finding Peace and Rest from Your Hurried Life*. Members were reminded of the fickleness of human nature—if it's cold, we want warmth; with rain, we prefer sunshine. We are always seeking that which we do not have. Perhaps in that moment of wanting we can choose to stop, take a breath and release a prayer of gratitude instead.

President Mellanie Tuttle called the meeting to order and asked members during roll to name an evergreen tree or shrub growing in their yard. The mountain is touched by shades of green with Spruce, Hemlock, Rhododendron, Cypress, Arborvitae, Holly, Mountain Laurel and Eleagnus. Members were also asked to bring a seed or seedpod to share. Karen Kruse shared water lily seeds as well as a handout with information on how to grow iris from seed, so we have no excuses. Horticulture Chairman Martha Wood shared columbine seeds and announced that the topic for 2018 would be the healthy garden and plantings for pollinators. Her handout listed flowers, shrubs, vines and trees that hummingbirds and butterflies prefer. The butterflies are especially fond of Blazing Star, and Lantana; hummingbird favorites are Cardinal Flower, red Monarda, Salvia, and Trumpet Creeper.

Planting Mexican Sunflower and Phlox would benefit both pollinators. Conservation Chair Marsha Merrell warned that chemical insecticides and pesticides are endangering bees. "Bees are the 'canaries in the coal mine' warning us of an imminent and frightening threat to our food," she explained. Members received a handout listing 52 popular brands that use neonics such as Acetamiprid, Clothianidin, Dinotefuram, Imidacloprid and Thiamethoxam. Be

sure to check labels and help save our bees!

"Seed Saving and Preserving Genetic Diversity" was Marsha Merrell's program topic. (Marsha graciously gave me a copy of her PowerPoint presentation, so the following content is edited and directly copied.) Bill Duesing, in *Living on the Earth*, states, "Seeds are critical to our success as gardeners and farmers. They are compact packages of genetic information and stored food reserves, just waiting for the conditions found in warm, moist soil in order to germinate and create tomatoes, beans and thousands of other delights out of sunshine, air, water and soil." Selection and saving of seeds led to a genetic diversity



of crops and created a large base for our food supply. Unfortunately, the diversity has declined from 7,000 to 150 plant species and with the rise of modern agricultural practices, our crops are more vulnerable to pests, diseases and changes in climate. Conservation techniques such as the creation of seed banks and seed exchanges among farmers, gardeners, and even nations, play an important role in preserving ancient, heirloom varieties of important food crops—there are currently more than 1,000 known seed banks, collaboratives, and exchanges around the world. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault acts as the safeguard for all seed banks. Located in the permafrost of the North Pole, the seed bank can hold up to 2.25 billion seeds, with priority given to food production seeds. We learned some interesting seed facts. Sizes vary—orchid seeds are the size of dust, while the Caco de Mer weighs 40 pounds! Seed production varies from year to year in response to weather changes, insect populations, diseases, and internal cycles within the plant itself (think acorns or pollen production each year). The oldest carbon-14 dated seed, a Judean date palm, was germinated in

2005 and by May 2015 was nine feet tall and producing pollen! Save your seeds and share with neighbors. Wish I had thought about seed saving before my grandmother was gone. She had the tiniest, tastiest little green pea.

After several postponements, a date was set (rain or shine) to honor Madelon Houghland with the planting of a Rhododendron bush. A foggy, misty morning arrived but club members, along with Madelon's sisters, son and husband, managed to get the bush into the ground between rain bursts.

"The song is ended but the melody lingers on" (Irving Berlin). Another longtime member, Shirley Hussel, passed away on January 7. One of Shirley's gifts to the club and the community was her volunteer work. She helped serve "Senior" lunches at the MERF House when she was well into her eighties and was very particular about how things should be done, so we learned order and obedience. Saturday or Sunday (and sometimes both days) she volunteered at the fall flower show, where her attention to detail assured that the horticulture was always placed correctly. She met with the Tuesday knitting group and worked her needlepoint, which I'm told was exquisite. She was thoughtful and well-spoken, and we traded stories about growing up in the Cincinnati area. When we plant a Rhododendron for Shirley, we'll remember, "It takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, and a day to love them, but it takes an entire lifetime to forget them."

The Rhododendron Garden Club is a member of Northeast Alabama Federation of Garden Clubs, The Garden Club of Alabama, Inc., District II, Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc., and National Garden Clubs.

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

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SAGE ADVICE: A WINTER RETREAT

by Susan Seago



The temperature this morning is in the teens. For the last week, Mentone has had extreme cold, with some snow and ice. I, for one, have taken refuge in my warm, cozy home, watched TV, read some books and magazines, and otherwise been a little productive. Now that the forecast is for warmer weather, the gardener in me turns to thoughts of spring, with planting new plants and getting old beds ready for the season.

I know many of you enjoy hiking or walking in the woods. This can be done in the local parks or even in your own backyard. A path lined with a variety of evergreens and flowering shrubs, as well as seasonal blooming plants, would be great in your landscape. Along the path, have a bench to sit upon and enjoy the view. A birdbath provides water for small animals and the birds, and pleasure in simply watching the activity of the animals. Holly bushes give the birds a nesting spot and some protection from bad weather and predators. Add a bird feeder on a limb or pole and

place some wind chimes through the forest for music while you walk. Time spent walking through your woodland forest will refresh your spirits and your body. In the Japanese culture, this is known as shinrin-yoku or "forest bathing". The thought is that the trees and the calm will wash your soul.

A themed garden such as a Zen garden or a flowing fountain with colorful perennials around it are good projects and can be enjoyed three seasons of the year. A Zen garden requires some extra maintenance but is very soothing to the soul. Both gardens will take some time and effort to add to the landscape, but early spring is a great time, with the cool weather to help as you work and dream.



Perhaps a simple area under a large shade tree with a patio of stepping stones furnished with a table and chairs surrounded by several evergreens or blooming shrubs would be more to your taste. Add some large planters filled with perennials or small grasses and you have a wonderful outdoor retreat. Mornings are especially good with a hot cup of coffee on a winter day. Sharing it with a friend or loved one is even

better!

No matter which path of gardening you choose, may you feel the joy of the outdoors, even in winter.

BE PART OF THE GROUNDHOG TEAM!

We always welcome our community's contributions to The Groundhog. If you enjoy writing or have ideas for stories that you think would interest our readers, let us know!

Do you enjoy talking to others about local history or memorable events? Do you recall with fondness certain people who made Mentone what it is today? Help us sustain The Groundhog's tradition of preserving Mentone's history and serving its current population.

The Groundhog staff and MAPA board are here to assist you if you will help us get these important stories and biographies written down to share and save for posterity. (If you are worried about your writing skills, everything is edited before print.)

We'd also appreciate your ongoing submissions of photographs, artwork, poetry and recipes. Email us at groundhognews@yahoo.com or give us a call at 256-465-1107 to let us know how you would like to be a part of this great paper.

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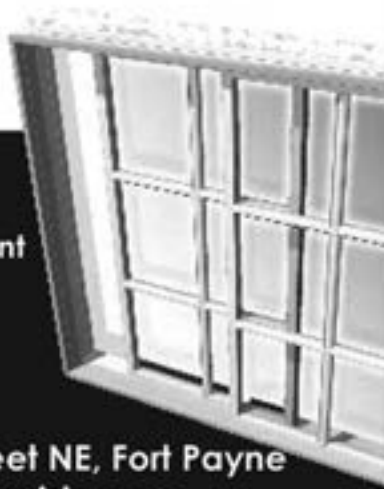
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CLOUDLAND

Cloudland Presbyterian Church welcomes everyone to come join us for services, with Pastor Roger Kvam. Bible Study Sunday at 9am (Eastern) and Worship at 10am (Eastern). 65 Florida Ave., Cloudland, GA.

FORT PAYNE

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

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, Fort Payne.

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, Fort Payne. 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., Fort Payne. 256-845-4774.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church holds regular Worship Services at 10am Sunday. Bible class or Lent/Advent services every Wednesday at 6:30pm. Steve Schrader, Pastor. Everyone welcome. 1519 Smith Gap Road (County Road 85), Fort Payne. 256-845-4314.

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, Fort Payne. 256-996-0929.

HAMMONDVILLE

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, Hammondville. 256-717-5040.

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

MENLO

Alpine Community Church Pastor and Rev. Rodney Blaylock welcome each and every one to worship service Sunday morning at 11am GA time; Sunday School 10am GA time; Wednesday night Bible Study 7pm GA time. 115 Hwy. 337, Menlo, GA. 706-862-6641.

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

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

MENTONE

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, Mentone.

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, Mentone. 256-634-4210.

Mentone United Methodist Church invites you to come and worship with us. Each Sunday, our Worship Service is at 11am and Sunday School is at 10am. Tony Gunter is the pastor. The service of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of each month, the second Sunday is Youth Sunday and Fifth Sunday is a service of music and pot-luck lunch. Bible Study Wednesdays at 6:00pm. 415 Cutler Avenue, Mentone. 256-634-8006.

Moon Lake Baptist Church invites you to worship with us. Sunday School begins at 9:45am, with classes for all ages. Morning Worship is at 11am. The Lord's Supper is observed on the first Sunday of September, December, March and June at the morning worship hour. Discipleship Training is at 5pm and Sunday Evening Worship at 6pm. On Wednesdays, Team Kids, Youth Bible Study, Adult Bible Study and Prayer Meeting are all at 6:30pm. Pastor Mike Ellis. 4671 AL Hwy. 117 Mentone. 256-634-4568.

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, Mentone. stjosephmountain.dioala.org.

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.

VALLEY HEAD

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, Valley Head. 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, Valley Head. 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., Valley Head.

Wildwood Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mentone Chapter, holds services in the Woodmen of the World Hall in Valley Head. 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.

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



COYOTE CAME ‘A CALLING

by deJoly LaBrier

In the distance of the half-moon night, a yip-yip-yip breaks the sweet silence. A cool breeze wafts across your face, sending a shiver up your back. Then again, the yipping comes, only there are more voices this time—a whole chorus of quick yips, playful and warning. It’s time, you think, to be sure that your pets and livestock are securely safe.

The other day I was coming home from a meeting in town at mid-afternoon, when I turned the corner to my road and found a coyote just standing there. He looked at me square in the eye. I slowed my car to a crawl because Mr. Coyote wasn’t moving. As I inched forward, he slowly turned in the direction I was headed and sauntered off into the woods. He wasn’t in a hurry and he made his presence known. I listened to my inner voice that said, “What is Trickster doing here? What is my lesson here?”

My Lakota elders have taught me that the coyote is the “Trickster” reminding me to laugh at myself. “Don’t take yourself too seriously,” they say. “If coyote comes across your path, you need to lighten up. It is a reminder that you have asked Spirit for help,



thought to be only meat eaters, but they are actually omnivores—they eat meat and vegetation. When they aren’t snacking on bigger prey, they will eat snakes, insects, fruit and grass. Coyotes have been known to kill livestock and pets, but they usually help control agricultural pests, such as rodents. In cities, coyotes will eat pet food or garbage.”

In some instances, people have been bitten while trying to rescue their free-roaming pet from a coyote attack. Less often, people are bitten by cornered coyotes or, even more rarely, rabid coyotes. Another interesting fact is that there have only been two recorded incidents in the United States and Canada of humans being killed by coyotes.

So, when you’re relaxing on the porch in the evening and you hear the yips of the coyote off in the distance, remember they are the Trickster in our lives, reminding us to lighten up.

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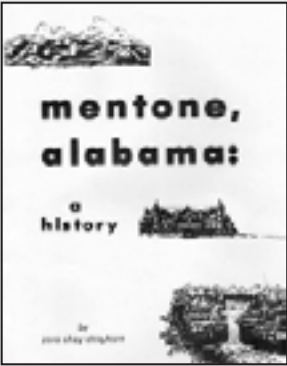
now let it go.”

The spirit of the coyote also reminds us to seek more balance between wisdom and playfulness. The wisdom delivered by the coyote spirit animal is rarely direct. The way of the coyote is to teach through ways that don’t appear straightforward. The elders say that “if coyote enters your life, you must look at something you have been avoiding. They are mirrors for the lessons you must learn so you are able to walk a good sacred road. The mirror will be held up until you finally get the picture.”

What is it about the coyote that both fascinates us and brings a chill to our bodies? Their howl touches our soul at a primal level. While hunting at night, coyotes howl to communicate their location to the rest of their group. They live in the sides of hills or in underground dens where their family is pretty much safe from other predators. Although they prefer open grassland and thinly wooded brush, they are able to adapt to almost any environment. When hunting prey, the coyotes don’t use speed, but rather they pounce and snap their jaws.

We typically think of this sacred animal in terms of old stories of damaging behavior, like skulking around a farmer’s cattle or harassing family pets. Livescience.com explains that “they are typically

LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF MENTONE



Originally published by MAPA in 1986, Zora Strayhorn’s book, “Mentone, Alabama: A History” is chock full of history, trivia, and anecdotes, with a section devoted to photographs. It is currently for sale at the Wildflower Café, Moon Lake Community Library, Green Leaf Grill, Little River Hardware, Mentone Market, DeSoto State Park, and Bell Battelle. The cost is \$15; proceeds benefit MAPA. Our supply is limited, so purchase your copy while they’re available!

Chapter 1: An Overview

Chapter 2: A Description of the Mountain

Chapter 3: Mentone’s First Inhabitants, the Indians

Chapter 4: The Explorers

Chapter 5: The Civil War

Chapter 6: Post Civil War Times

Chapter 7: The Turn of the Century

Chapter 8: Heyday to the Depression

Chapter 9: The Camps

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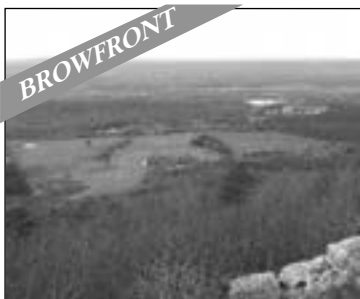
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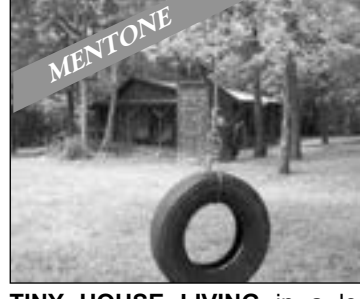
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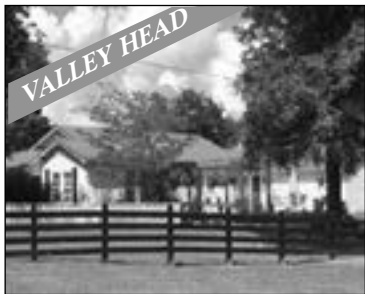
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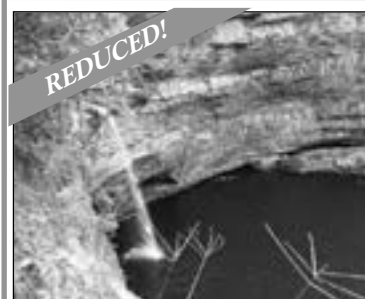
COUNTRY BUNGALOW. Country-flavored niceties like a screened porch; picket fence; shade trees; garden areas; pergola & patio; back yard; all on 1/2 acre. Built in 1920s. Property was taken over in 2015 with new kitchen, granite, new appliances, new ceiling, hard wood floors & more); new paint; new dining; lots of upgrades! \$159,000 (1082607)



SPACIOUS, IMMACULATE & BEAUTIFUL CABIN on 3.81 acres on Middle Fork, Little River. Custom-built 2640 sq ft home w/WB Fplce; pine floors; high-end windows & doors; pro-quality gas range w/elec convection oven; on-demand hot H2O; custom cellular window shades; 3BR/3BA+loft 4thBR. Main-level Master suite. Move-in ready! Screened porch, covered & open decks on two sides. Three levels, incl finished, walkout basement guest suite w/den & bar; french doors leading outdoors where the pathway winds down to the bluff areas & wet-weather stream bed w/fabulous stones, ledges, & multiple falls; then on to beautiful Little River. \$229,900 (1019875)



7.3 ACRES WITH APPROX 245' BROW FRONTAGE. Approximately 3.5 acres on top, 3.5 down the mountain. Top is gently-sloping with good topography. The bottom part of the property is an amazing view of the mountain. One of the best views you could see. Expected to be a great investment. Great building site right up close to the mountain edge. Just listed for \$165,000. (1084897)



HOW DOES ONE PUT A PRICE ON SOMETHING SO SPECIAL? To be right there at DeSoto Falls. To hear it, to see it, to be able to experience it from your private back deck. It's an amazing thing. To be able to fish most any time or put in a kayak most any time from the public launch at DeSoto Falls Lake. Nothing compares. Then there's the log cabin home with its heart pine floors; 3BR/3BA; library; wood-burning mtn stone fireplace; large kitchen; hand-made doors...the list goes on. Rock formations, woods and a fence separate the property from State Park-owned land. So much beauty! So rarely available for sale. Asking \$450,000 (1052152)



CABIN ON 5 ACRES WITH OVER 300' ON W FORK LITTLE RIVER with a nice launch site for kayaks; river-side deck; and level areas for picnicking, camping, outdoor adventures of all sorts. One-owner cabin has 3BR/2BA, approx 1800 sq ft; wood-burning masonry fireplace with stone hearth; open living/dining; spacious kitchen with lots of cabinets & counter space. Beautifully furnished, including locally-crafted dining table & benches. Full front porch and side deck. Land is covered with gorgeous native holly trees, huge boulders, large hardwoods. A place to use as a cozy mountain retreat or a family gathering spot. What are you waiting for? \$248,500 (1086017)



In Memoriam

James Thomas Jones
1928-2017

Mr. James Thomas Jones, age 89, of Mentone, passed away at his residence on December 6, 2017. Jim was born on September 26, 1928, the tenth of eleven children born to Fred Jones and Bertie Chester Jones. He married Dallyne Tilley on June 23, 1945. He is survived by wife, Mary Dallyne Jones, of Mentone; daughters, Sharon Harris (Jim), of Mentone, Glenda Jones (Roy Smith), of Maylene, AL, Rita Carr (Terral), of Gadsden, and Susan Manning (Alan), of Valley Head; son, Carl Jones, of Huntsville; son-in-law, Mike Dewees, of Lascassas, AL; sister, Marjorie Berry, Mentone, AL; and 14 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by daughters, Myra Nell Jones and Debra Dewees; and grandson, Daniel Harris.

John Wilkinson
1933-2017

John Wilkinson, 84, of Mentone, passed away on December 20, 2017. He was born in Fort Worth, Texas, on August 5, 1933. John attended the University of Texas and the U.S. Military Academy.

He served two tours of duty in Vietnam as an infantry officer and Airborne Ranger. He earned a master's degree in chemistry and a doctoral degree in education from Penn State, and then went on to teach at West Point. John retired from the Army after 22 years of service, and then became Director of Military Programs at Southern Illinois University, where he worked for 17 years. He retired and moved to Mentone in 1992. John was a Rotarian and served on the Troop Committee for Mentone's BSA Troop 106. He loved to travel the world with Jan, his wife of 58 years. He was the father of three sons, Bob, Ed, and Ransom, and grandfather to eight.

Shirley Ann Hussel
1930-2018

Mrs. Shirley Ann Hussel, age 87, of Mentone, passed away on Sunday, January 7, 2018 at her residence. She was born on July 7, 1930, to the late Harvey F. & Ruby Muncie Lanter in Cincinatti, Ohio. Shirley was a member of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church and an active volunteer member in our community, especially with her service to St. Joseph's Food Bank and MERF's Senior Lunches. Shirley was a gifted needle pointer and a member of the Lookout Mountain Knitters. Her quick wit and girlish smile

will be missed by her many friends. Shirley is survived by her son & daughter-in-law, Paul & Melissa Hussel; daughters & sons-in-law, Amy & Grant Gordon and Karen & David Blaine; grandchildren, Jacob, Sara, Elizabeth, Melissa, Valerie, Jeffrey, James, and Jason; great-grandchildren, Adeline Marie, Holden, Eli, Eloise, and Leo. She was preceded in death by her husband, Oscar James Hussel in 2010; daughter, Jenny Rogers; and one sister.

Evelyn McGee
1948-2018

Evelyn F. McGee, 69, of Mentone, passed away Monday, January 8, 2018. She was born in Mentone on April 26, 1948, to the late James B. and Edris Smith Flairty. She is survived by her daughters, Charlotte McGee, Carlotta McGee, Rosetta Pannell and husband, Phillip, and Jacqueline Tipton and husband, Thomas; son-in-law, Jamie Pannell; brother, Wesley Flarity; sisters, Judy Owen and Lucy Moore; twelve grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Charles McGee; daughters, Mattie Georgette McGee and Loretta McGee; and grandson, Jr. Turner.



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the moon she also rises, just like her sister sun
orange, large, glowing and beautiful when she is at her best
but even at her darkest, she simply lets the stars shine instead
the moon always returns, each night then each month
she shows her face and sides, then disappears when the time comes
cycles through darker and lighter, as we all must
the sun she brings us hope, this is true
but the moon shows us how much beauty can appear
even after days or months of darkness
our sun lets us see, illuminates each tree and each leaf
lets us see the beauty and life all around us, here on earth, grounded
the moon lets us see above, what is greater than us or our earth
each star we see under her our moon, another world
whole other galaxies and universes surrounding us
the moon lets us know how small we truly are
and as the sun rises, we rise with knowledge gained from the night
and when we walk among the grass and daisies in the daylight
we feel our connection to this world, to the earth, to each other
and as the moon once again shows her face, we see that
our experience is relatively small, because out there are many other worlds
we learn how relieving it feels to be almost insignificant
we gain the strength to walk again in the daylight
to walk among the other people, to connect, to think, to spread our own small light
to limit our loneliness, to know that we all come from the same earth

life is all about the balance between dark and light
the knowledge that we are small, but the strength to get up anyways
the ability to see millions of universes, and still return to our own

—Mellie Lemmon

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 NEW A WELCOMING ESCAPE from the city bustle! One bedroom, one bath cottage on 2.6 acres with BROW VIEW! \$195,000. MLS #1085360.	 NEW RELAX & ENJOY the ambiance of a true mountain home on the west brow of Lookout Mountain on 3.7 acres. \$275,000. MLS #1085355.	 NEW BEAUTIFUL COTTAGE with open floor plan. Fully remodeled spacious 2 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath. Comes completely furnished! \$245,500. MLS #1085122.	 CHARMING, cozy and convenient on a quiet street. You'll love this one level, one bedroom, open floor plan cabin with vaulted ceilings, gas logs and hardwood floors. \$149,000.	 CRYSTAL LAKE LODGE in Mentone... Fifty breathtaking acres surround you in this one-of-a-kind property. Call today for your private tour! \$899,995. MLS #1070805	 Vintage bungalow, completely remodeled, zoned Commercial/Residential w/250' on Hwy 117. Bright & sturdy 1940's-era, 3BR/1BA gem. Wood walls; period trim details. Updated with new electrical, plumbing, floors & cabinets. \$125,000. MLS #1046940.
 PRIVATE MENTONE COTTAGE! You'll love this gorgeous Mentone cottage that feels like a private retreat. Hardwood & tile floors, woodburning FP, covered porches, & more! \$154,900. MLS #1072513.	 MENTONE BROW HOME! 2BR/2BA brow home with tons of character! Enjoy all the extras like hardwood floors, rustic wood walls, gas log fireplace & more. Being sold furnished. Call today! \$339,000. MLS #1076700.	 ENJOY SUNRISE & SUNSET VIEWS in this cozy Mentone home located on Scenic Hwy. Open family room, dining and kitchen. Call for appointment today! \$325,000. MLS #1069365	 WHIPPOORWILL FARM. 2BR/2BA rock/log home w/sunroom, FP, updated kitchen. Historic barn, stable w/1BR/1BA apt. Screened sleeping cabin, garage, fenced pastures, trails, rock walls/patio, gazebo, outdoor shower, old spring house & fire pit. \$995,000. MLS#1042624	 BEAUTIFUL Mountain Get-Away with gorgeous view year round. 3 bedrooms, 2 bath, shake-sided outside w/low maintenance metal roof. Deck. \$235,000 MLS#1000691.	 REDUCED LAKEFRONT LIVING! Custom decks & walkways to your dock on Lake Lahus-age. 2BR/2BA, pine floors, gas or wood burning fp and screened porch, 2-story. 2-car garage w/apt. potential. \$227,500. MLS#654813.
 SWEET LIT' MENTONE HOME! Life is sweet in this two bedroom two bath home! \$109,900. MLS #1068148.	 3.3 ACRES of historic property in the heart of Mentone. Starting at \$325,000. Call for details. MLS #1045206.	 UNBELIEVABLE brow home on 1.95 acres. 4BR/3BA, open living/kitchen area, formal DR., numerous decks and screened porch. Many gorgeous rock formations, a detached 2-car garage/workshop and more. \$323,900. MLS#1048899.	 A RARE FIND! Mentone home w/acreage & guest home! 2BR/1.5BA, wood walls, hardwood floors, new appliances, Trane CH/A system. Fisher cast iron wood stove, tankless water heaters w/city & well water. 20 acres. \$199,500. MLS #1075132.	 THE HISTORIC CRAGSMERE MANOR, on 5+ acres serves as rental lodging and/or event hosting. Perfect setting for large or small groups, 6BR/4BA, Large kitchen, dining, and living area, covered pavilion. \$749,000. MLS#1066488.	 REDUCED One of the most photographed landmarks in Ala....The iconic "Red Boathouse" on Little River is less than 500' from Desoto Falls. One-acre w/186' on navigable part of the river. Mid-century wood cabin w/ living & dining, 3BR/2BA, eat-in kitchen, rock FP, & screened porches. \$289,000. MLS #1054645.
LOTS & LAND	 TWO-STORY Mentone cabin w/2 BR/2BA, loft, dining area & lge. living. Screened front porch, 9' ceilings, pine floors, & fresh paint! Sleeps 10 comfortably. Great rental investment. \$169,900. #1062659.	 Golden Opportunity! Let the tenants pay your mortgage. 5 apartments, large retail space and storage building located on Hwy 117 just minutes from downtown Mentone. Sitting on 1.5 acres, totally fenced. Appointment only! \$187,500. MLS #1013991.	 BEAUTIFUL MENTONE CABIN w/2BR, 2BA, oak flooring and woodburning fireplace. Extra's include large screened porches, large walk-in closets, marble bathroom floors. \$199,900. MLS#1066473.	 Incredible Opportunity! Beautifully perched atop the West Fork of Little River in Mentone, AL, this large tract, scenic property presents a compelling opportunity to own a significant piece of paradise. Over 1,400 ft. of waterfront amidst 157 total acres. \$2,900,000. MLS #1077059.	

#1011734 - .69 ACRE wooded lot on Brush Creek. **REDUCED TO \$24,900.**
 #1014183 - 1.5 ACRES. Brow Lot on CR 89. \$124,900.
 #1021165 - 2 ACRE LOT offering lake and brow footage. \$59,900.
 #1027934 - Lot on River Lane. \$29,900.
 #1034997 - Approx. 6 ACRES on middle fork of Little River. \$48,900.
 #1039769 - 6.32+/- waterfront building lot in Mountain River Estates! \$49,950.
 #1057228 - 5 acres overlooking Little River Canyon. \$69,999.
 #1057429 - 4 acres in Valley View Forest. \$79,900.
 #1061943 - 5 acres on Hwy 117 just before GA line. \$40,000.
 #1065542 - 90 acres on Co. Rd. 89 in Mentone. \$360,000.
 #1065504 - One acre on Co. Rd. 89 in Mentone. **REDUCED TO \$139,900.**
 #1069783 - Building lot with possible view. 2.11 acres. \$38,000.

#1070628 - 3.01 acres. 152' on west Fork of Little River. \$49,700.
 #1070629 - 3.01 acres. 152' on West Fork of Little River. \$59,500.
 #1072189 - Lake on The Brow, \$39,000.
 #1073207 - .62 acres. \$23,500.
 #1073864 - Brow Lot! .78 acres. \$109,500.
 #1074480 - 5.45 acres on CR 89. \$79,500.
 #1076191 - 12.10 acres mostly wooded. \$38,720.
 #1076239 - Cleared & wooded 3.6 acres on Scenic Hwy. \$76,500.
 #1076286 - 1.75 acre building lot in West Fork Subdivision. \$42,000.
 #1076577 - Lot 6, Hunter's Ridge. \$16,900.
 #1078002 - Brow view, 4.4 acres. **REDUCED TO \$125,000.**
 #1078140 - 18.3 acres, unrestricted, partially wooded! \$66,800.
 #1079713 - Gorgeous lot in Mentone with .81+/- acres in Hunter's Ridge Subdivision.
 #1080922 - .54 acres, Mentone Bluffs. \$59,999.

#1081506 - 7 wooded acres within walking distance to DeSoto State Park. \$70,000.
 #1080381 - Lot 43, Hidden Lake Subdivision. \$35,000.
 #1080377 - Lot 42, Hidden Lake Subdivision. \$35,000.
 #1083789 - 2.11 acres with 300' of waterfront in beautiful West Fork Subdivision. \$44,900.
 #1085244 - 1.5+/- acres in Mentone! Wooded tract with paved road frontage. \$19,000.
 1082245 - Two building lots totaling 10+ acres with fabulous view! \$109,900.

Happy
Valentine's
Day

The Put-off

by Doug Kiker

Country farm folks all through the ages really believed in the sayings of old sages.
If there were a list of these, the number one page would be in bold letters for everyone to see.
"Idol hands and idol minds, that's where the devil will be."
Even when night would come, and a lamp lighted so they could see,
Grandpa and Grandma used their hands to do things,
At least one, often two, sometimes three.
Anyway, this is what they told me.
But my old friend down the road, eye to eye with them he did not see.
He had a saying...it, from him I'll borrow..."Don't do today what you can put off 'til tomorrow!!"



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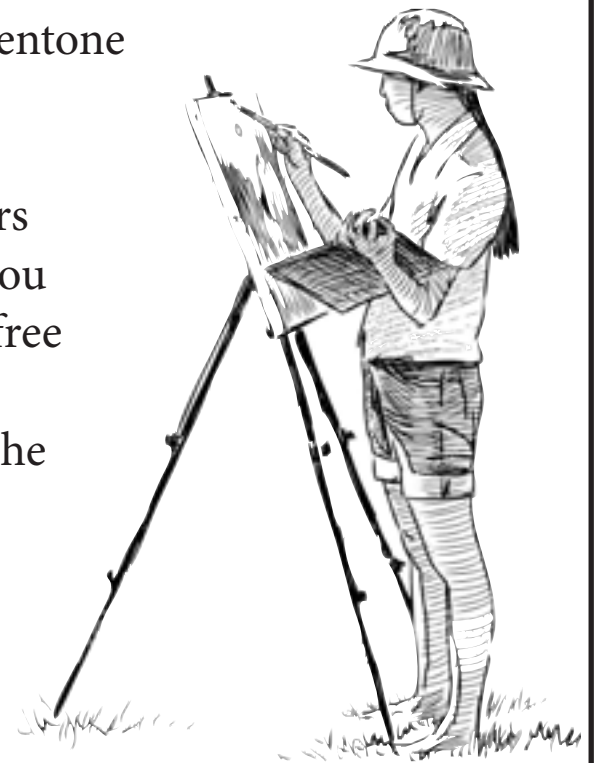
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On Saturday, February 17,
members of the group "Alabama Plein
Air Artists"

will be visiting Mentone
to set up their
easels downtown
and paint outdoors
(en plein air). If you
see an artist, feel free
to stop and say
hello, and watch the
progress of
their painting!



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POTATOES & VEGETABLES ♥ DESSERT AND DRINK
\$55 / COUPLE ♥ RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

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Saturday 11am-2pm / 5-9pm

Sunday Brunch/Lunch 11am-4pm

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Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program

The Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides eligible seniors with fresh fruits and vegetables, cut herbs, and honey from certified farmers markets in the state of Alabama. To be eligible to receive vouchers worth \$30, the applicant must be 60 years of age or older the day of application AND the recipients' gross household income (income before taxes) must not exceed the following limits:

- \$1,658 monthly.....for a household of 1
- \$2,233 monthly.....for a household of 2
- \$2,808 monthly.....for a household of 3
- \$3,383 monthly.....for a household of 4
- \$3,957 monthly.....for a household of 5
- \$4,532 monthly.....for a household of 6

Applicants must apply online at fma.alabama.gov. If you need assistance or do not have access to a computer, you may have someone assist or apply for you.

Vouchers can be redeemed at State Certified Farmers Markets, including Mentone Farmers Market, which is open year-round on Saturdays from 10am–1pm.

This program is administered by the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries, Farmers Market Authority. For more information, contact the Alabama Farmers Market Authority at 877-774-9519 or fma@agi.gov.

Shop local!
Mentone Farmers Market
Open year-round
Saturdays 10am–1pm
Town Square



SENIOR HEALTH: SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIODS (SEPs)

by Lynn Hixson

A Special Enrollment Period (SEP) allows you to change your Medicare Advantage Plan or your stand-alone Part D plan (PDP) outside of Medicare's regular enrollment periods. (You may also see these called Special "Election" Periods.)

Usually you can only make changes to your coverage during the Open Enrollment Period, which runs October 15 to December 7 of each year, with coverage starting January 1 of the following year.

You may qualify for a SEP if you feel you have Contract Violation. A contract violation means that your plan did not follow Medicare's rules. Your SEP begins once Medicare determines that the violation occurred and extends for 90 days once you disenroll from your current plan.

Examples of contract violation are: your plan did not give you information about its benefits in a timely manner; your plan did not provide benefits that meet quality standards; or your plan gave you misleading information.

If you qualify for an SEP, you can change your coverage outside of the Open Enrollment Period. You have the right to an SEP during specific and limited times.

For help understanding SEPs and how an SEP might be applicable to you, contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) at DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590.

Classified Ads

WALL BEDS (Murphy Bed style) - We have all size Wall Beds. Great for spare room and small areas. Come see our showroom in Collinsville, AL on Hwy 68 at the Alabama Mattress Outlet. Store 9-5 Mon. – Sat. Call 256-523-3622 or Andy Crow 256-490-4025.

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ATTENTION GROUNDHOG READERS!

The Groundhog is available at the following locations:

MENTONE Body Maintenance Clip Joint Community Library Graceful Giraffe Gourdie Shop Green Leaf Grill Hair @ The Village Little River Hardware Log Cabin Village Lookout Mountain Realty Lookout Mountain Outpost Magnolia Rose Mentone Inn Mentone Market Mentone Realty Mentone Town Hall Moon Lake Trading Company Mountain Properties Plowshares Bistro Southern Style Log Furniture Wildflower Cafe	VALLEY HEAD Alabama Organics Bell Battelle Burt Funeral Home Citizens Bank Coffee Shack by the Tracks Dave's Antiques Hammondville Quick Stop Headquarters Beauty Salon Miracle Pottery Tigers Inn Valley Head Drugs Valley Head Food Mart Valley Head Town Hall Victory Fuel Water Board Winston Place	Brown's Cleaners Bruce's Foodland Chow King Days Inn DeKalb Library DeKalb Tourism DeSoto State Park Lodge DeSoto State Park Country Store First Federal Fischer X-Roads Store Ft. Payne Chamber of Commerce Hampton Inn Holiday Inn Huddle House Priceless IGA Quality Inn "S"-House Antiques Southern Gold & Silver Southern Properties The Spot Coffee Shop The Strand The Wishing Well	Waffle House Waffle King GEORGIA Auto Parts (Menlo) BJ's State Line Store Handi Mart (Menlo) Ingles (Summerville) Jim's Family Restaurant (Summerville) Little River Escape Tiny Homes Menlo Healthmart Menlo Lucky's Menlo Town Hall Mountain Top Country Store Menlo Restaurant The Lookout Restaurant OTHER Alabama Welcome Center Little River Canyon Center Ralph's Grocery
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"Moon Lake = Community"

by Paula Easter

In a meeting with DeKalb County school principals, Superintendent Dr. Jason Barnett assigned each school to create a display showcasing their school and its achievements. These projects would be displayed over several nights in the lobby of the Rainsville Civic Center during the basketball championship games. Awesome, right!?

When Mrs. Lance talked to me about helping with the project, I immediately began to think about what makes Mentone and Moon Lake School special. I

could think of so very many things that answered that question for me. In further thinking on this question, I decided to go where I know I always get the best answers ever—my Moon Lake students!

My students never cease to amaze me. As my students and I began sharing our ideas together, a common equation began to emerge: "Moon Lake = the community of Mentone." Many students shared that same idea. The fact that these young students realize the importance of the town of Mentone to their school and education is very rewarding to me, as

a teacher.

From our thoughts, I had the idea to use the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child", and then I added "and a community to make a difference"—because you, Mentone, certainly do make a difference in the lives of these Moon Lake students. For myself, I can't ever begin to thank you enough for the years of love, support, and help that you have always given to me.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD



Above: Drawing by Cade Hawkins



Above: Drawing by Tucker Smith



Left: Drawing by Zane Crouse



Above: Drawing by Aydn Heinrich



Below: Drawing by Daxson Crow

AND A COMMUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



Top: The smaller hearts feature the names of Mentone's community organizations and businesses written on them, because 'Moon Lake = the community'

DeSoto Falls Basin Cleanup & Trail Work Day

"Not everyone can be famous but everyone can be great, because greatness is determined by service."

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On each Martin Luther King, Jr. Day since 2007, Bill and Angie Shugart have volunteered to pick up roadside litter near Little River. In 2010, their organization, One World Adventure, made it an official community service event, called #ErasetheWaste, with the first cleanup alongside County Road 106 and Lake Lahusage. The effort was inspired by the annual Mentone Community Cleanup, which is led by Lyle Nicely each April. Angie says, "To us, it is a way to address environmental issues through positive action. It moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a Beloved Community."

Litter in our waterways is a serious issue in DeKalb County that affects our health and the health of water and wildlife. "Keeping litter out of our waterways is a responsibility that falls on each citizen," said Angie. "As an organization, we raise this awareness and create opportunities for citizens to become involved."

The most recent cleanup, on Monday, January 15, was no exception. Volunteers from our local area met



near DeSoto Falls, and were joined by others who love this area and Little River and had travelled from Birmingham and Chickamauga, GA. The event was co-hosted by DeSoto State Park, which provided tools and the post-cleanup meeting space in the Lodge.

Volunteers spent the morning picking up litter along the DeSoto Falls Basin Trail; water bottles, beer cans, and clothing filled several bags. Once in the basin, they worked together to move broken deck debris to a sandy beach, where it was burned while the volunteers shared snacks and stories.

After hiking out, the group met at the DSP Lodge for a chili potluck lunch and Little River Waterkeeper Stakeholder meeting. Bill and Angie Shugart led a discussion about the health of Little River and issues that the program addresses, including upcoming litter cleanups.

If you are interested in getting involved, visit facebook.com/LittleRiverWaterkeeper or oneworldadventure.org/civicminded.

The next Little River Waterkeeper Stakeholder meeting is set for Thursday, February 8, at 6 p.m. at Moon Lake Community Library.

Photo by Brittney Hughes

Little River (cont'd from page 2)

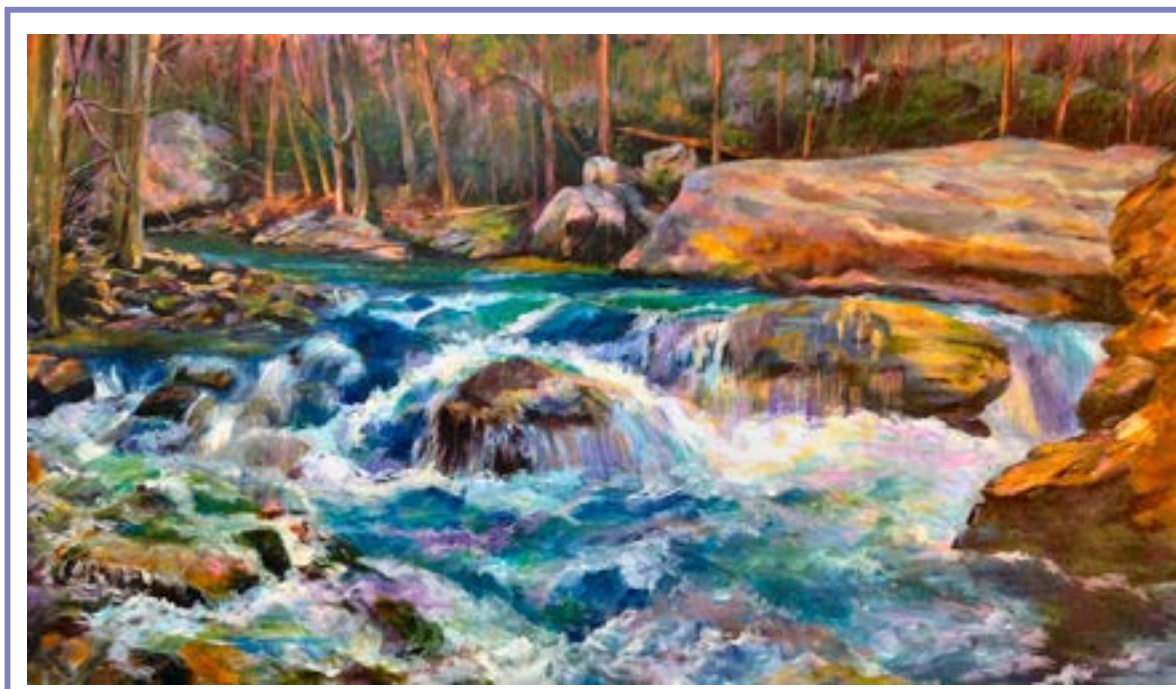
designation."

For years, the Cahaba River Society (CRS) had been speaking with Alabama's Environmental Management Commission to get the state to recognize the ONRW designation and determine what the requirements would be to protect it. Des continued, "CRS contacted us and told us there was going to be a vote on establishing, or recognizing, the designation. They wanted us to have a petition ready when they voted on it, requesting that Little River be designated an ONRW. Some FLR members and I went to Montgomery and presented our petition, which was accepted. They did studies and such and finally voted to designate Little River as an ONRW, so it became the first river in Alabama, and perhaps the Southeast, to gain that designation. It's a water quality issue, strictly water quality. Federal law mandates that the state must maintain the water quality at the current standards."

Friends of Little River applied to have the entire Little River watershed designated as ONRW. This included the West, East and Middle Forks, as well as all tributaries that feed into the river until it empties into Weiss Lake. Each state, however, has to designate its own waters, so the river is protected only after it flows

into Alabama from Georgia.

"Federal law requires that Georgia cannot ignore the water quality of the water coming from upstream of Alabama," Desmond explained, "and it completely prohibits any kind of point source discharge into the river. Nobody can ever come in and put in a waste treatment plant or other industry in the watershed and discharge the effluents into the river or its tributaries."



It wasn't too long after Little River National Preserve was established that Friends of Little River disbanded. Throughout our conversation, Des repeatedly expressed how essential the support of the local community was to these efforts. "If not for Rob Hammond, FLR would not have been created," said Des. "Bill Adams, previous owner of Adams

Outdoors, came up with the name 'Friends of Little River' and introduced us to the Fischer Rescue Squad, especially members Joe Wright and Don Lucy. They joined FLR and through their support gave us an 'in' to the local community and allowed us to use their facilities for our meetings. They also served as members of our Board of Directors."

Through the diligent efforts of many people, over the span of a little more than a decade, the land gained protection by the National Preserve, and the water became protected by the ONRW designation.

At the end of our conversation, Des summed it all up, on a personal level: "My daughters spent their summers swimming in the river. That's where Kathie, my wife, taught them to swim. Weather permitting, the first thing they did after getting home from school was to head to the river. One of my driving forces was my desire to see my grandchildren be able to swim in as clean a river as my family and I were swimming in at the time." The efforts of Friends of Little River have clearly paid off.

Painting by Lydia Adele Randolph

lydiarandolph.com