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THE GROUNDHOG

Mentone, Valley Head, Hammondville, Menlo, Cloudland
P. O. Box 387, Mentone, AL 35984

Volume 37, No. 3

"Neighborhood News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

March 2018

ANNUAL MENTONE COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

by Kelly Leavitt

During the year, litter accumulates along Mentone's roadsides, and it's important to pick it up before the grasses grow and before the litter makes it way to the river. To this end, Mentone resident Lyle Nicely has organized Mentone's annual Community Clean-up every year since 2002.

On Saturday, April 7, at 9 a.m., everyone is encouraged to meet at the Town Square (next to Mentone Inn) to pick up litter grabbers and bags. Lyle will match individuals and groups with locations he's identified that need to be cleaned up. Afterwards, everyone will meet at the Mentone Inn's Pavilion for a barbecue lunch, provided at no cost to volunteers.

"Last year, volunteers collected 147 bags of litter," says Lyle. "This event is successful because of the participation of people who truly take pride in their community."

Community involvement is at a height with this event, both with the clean-up and the lunch. Camp

Laney donates garbage bags. Lowes provides trash grabbers. Joseph Lee hauls away the trash. The Town of Mentone provides electronics recycling. Harvest Roots and Body Maintenance provide drinks. Little River Hardware donates water. Mentone Market donates chocolate chip cookies. Mountain Top Country Store and BJ's FoodMart donate drinks, ice, plates and cups, and AAA Hardware donates cash for other expenses. Members of the Rhododendron Garden Club traditionally pick up between the center of town and the eastern city limits. Boy Scout Troop

106 regularly participates, as well. DeKalb County prisoners pick up trash along 117 coming up the mountain.

Cynthia Stinson of the Mentone Inn coordinates the luncheon. The ladies of St. Joseph's and other volunteers (like you!) bring covered dishes. L.C. Moon of the Wildflower Café donates meat, which

is barbecued by David Mays. Larry Joe Hall entertains with his guitar.

Mark your calendar now to be a part of this important tradition! If you have any questions, please contact Lyle Nicely at 256-996-0169.



MAPA MEMBERS: YOUR WISDOM, VISION AND IDEAS ARE NEEDED

by Joe Piscatelli

It has been proven that when the stakeholders of an organization help in the creation of its vision and mission, the organization is infused with renewed vitality and purpose. The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) board of directors has invited consultant Cathy Haven Howard to facilitate a workshop for MAPA members that will help develop and refine MAPA's vision and mission statement. This session will explore MAPA's role in preserving and protecting the unique quality of life that is Mentone and will help bring passion, clarity, and commitment to future MAPA projects. We encourage all members of MAPA to attend this session on Sunday, March 11, at 3 p.m. at Moon Lake Community Library. If you would like to participate and are not yet a member of MAPA, you may join any time before the session. For more details and an agenda, visit mapamentone.com/vision.

St. Patrick's Dinner at St. Joe's

by Joan Byrum

"May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back! May the sun shine warm upon your face until we meet again..."

It's time for St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church's annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on Sunday, March 18, from 12 noon until 2 p.m. The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) at St. Joseph's cooks and serves an authentic Irish Boiled Dinner to raise funds to help support the Outreach Ministries of the church. Served in St. Joseph's parish

hall, the meal will consist of corned beef, potatoes, carrots, and cabbage, served with corn bread muffins and Irish Soda Bread. There will also be homemade desserts, tea and coffee. Dine in with us and enjoy table service and Irish music—or take out.

Tickets are available now. Get them from any ECW member or the St. Joseph's church office. Adult tickets are \$10 and children are \$5. For more information or tickets, please feel free to call: St. Joseph's Church Office, 256-634-4476; Joan, 256-635-8698; or Marsha 804-564-4260.

Happy St. Patrick's Day, and we hope to see you on Sunday, March 18, for a taste of Ireland!



Spring Farm-to-Table Dinner Series

by Marsha Hurt

The farmers at Windy Hill are hosting farm-to-table spring dinners on the evenings of April 6 and May 4 for everyone to enjoy the farm and a meal featuring some of the first produce of the season.

These evenings will offer relaxed time on the farm through appetizers and a brief tour giving guests time to hear about the work of the farm as well as enjoy its spring beauty. The main feature of the event will be a four-course dinner accompanied by wine pairings selected to fit the season and the menu. Windy Hill has developed a reputation for serving delicious meals by putting the fresh harvest from the farm into the hands of some talented cooks who will be presenting the best of the farm for these dinners. The Farm Market, which is open Friday afternoons from 3–6 p.m. March through November, will be re-opened after the meal for dinner guests to shop the season's produce they have just enjoyed.



Front row left to right: Joy Obanian, Tema and Silas Flanagan, Courtney Nelson
Back row left to right: Brent and Forest Halderman, Meg Halderman, Patrick Flanagan, Jordan Nelson

These dinners will begin at 5 in the evening and end at everyone's leisure around 8:30 p.m. Tickets for each dinner are \$65 and need to be purchased in advance by emailing info@thefarmatwindyhill.com. April dinner tickets need to be purchased by March 28 and May tickets by April 25. If you have any questions about the dinners, you can always find the farmers at Friday Farm Markets or email them at the same address.

The farmers at Windy Hill are excited to invite everyone to these dinners. Support for the farm from the community of Mentone and surrounding areas has enabled the farm to grow, to enjoy good friendships with people wanting locally-grown, organic produce, eggs, and meats, and, upon occasion, to serve as a welcoming spot for people visiting Mentone or just passing through.

Join the Windy Hill team and share in the beauty and bounty of the farm's seasons, people, and food this spring.

Plein Air Painting at the Pocket and a Wildflower Lecture by Jay Clark

by Barbara Umland

"Flowers always make people better, happier and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul." —Luther Burbank

Plein air painting developed in France in the mid-19th century with artists like Monet, Manet, Renoir, Van Gogh and Cezanne. Now, in the 21st century, it is becoming increasingly popular. Plein air artists seek the quality of natural light and atmosphere of the outdoors. Their art work is in direct response to the beauty they find in nature. They use a variety of media from oils to watercolors, pastels to photography.

Landscape painters will soon enjoy a special reason to visit our area. On Saturday, April 7, Little River Arts Council is hosting a plein air event at the "Pocket" on Pigeon Mountain. Whether you simply enjoy painting outdoors, or if you are a professional plein air artist,

we invite you to bring your paint box, easel, and brown bag lunch and spend the day amongst thousands of wildflowers in bloom.

The Pocket is well-known for its profusion of Spring wildflowers. A moderately easy walk up the Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail, part of the Crockford-Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Area, leads flower lovers upstream along a creek to a quite scenic waterfall at the end of the trail. The boardwalk at the beginning of the trail offers many spots to set up and paint, draw, or photograph.

Artists can meet at the Pocket at 10 a.m. CDT, or travel "caravan-style" from Moon Lake Library in Mentone. The caravan will leave at 9:15 a.m. CDT. We will return around 4 p.m. CDT.

There is no charge to participate, but artists must purchase a \$5 day pass in advance. Artists must pre-register at littleriverartscouncil.org. (Details about the permit will be given after registration). Call event organizer Barbara Umland at 256-619-1004 if you have any questions.

To kick off the event, a wildflower lecture and slideshow will be presented by Jay Clark, author of *Wildflowers of Pigeon Mountain*. This free event will begin at 6 p.m. CDT on Friday evening, April 6, at Moon Lake Community Library. An accomplished academic, Jay currently works with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in tracking protected plants of northwest Georgia. He also volunteers as a botanical

guardian for the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance, planting and monitoring the reintroduction of endangered plants to existing sites. Jay and his wife live near Pigeon Mountain in LaFayette, Georgia. There is no charge for this event.



Wildflower expert Jay Clark, leading a tour at the Pocket.



Wild Azalea watercolor by Barbara Umland

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fortpayne@bluejugmarket.com**

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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**Have a Letter to the Editor
or a story idea?
Send it to
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MENTONE MATTERS

by Mayor Rob Hammond



I was honored to represent Mentone twice in the past month. Chief Brad Gregg and I represented the town at the state capitol for the Community Development Block Grant awards. Governor Kay Ivey and ADECA Director Kenneth Boswell presented the check. Representative Nathaniel Ledbetter and Senator Steve Livingston both took time from their busy schedules to join us. Also with us were Lucas Blankenship and Nancy Robertson, our grant writers from TARCOG.

On February 10, the Boy Scouts of America honored Jan Wilkinson for her 50 years of service to scouting. Jan

was awarded the Silver Beaver Award—the highest honor that a Boy Scout Council can bestow upon a volunteer Scout leader. We proclaimed February 10 as Jan Wilkinson Day in Mentone. Jan has served this community in many different ways. We applaud Jan and her late husband John for their dedication to scouting, their community, and their family.

Saturday, April 7, will be Mentone's annual clean-up day. Volunteers should meet Lyle Nicely (256-996-0169) at the Mentone Inn parking lot at 9 a.m. Bobby Hamby of DeKalb Computers will be at Town Hall from 9 a.m. until noon for electronic recycling. A cookout for volunteers will take place at noon at the Mentone Inn Pavilion.



Letter From The Editor

Every year at the beginning of March, signs of spring become more evident with each passing day. What deeply excites me about this time of year is the return of the hummingbirds. I have already begun checking the 2018 migration map (hummingbirds.net) to see if any have yet been spotted on the gulf's northern shores. As I write this, the beautiful ruby-throated hummers are still preparing for their day-and-night-long journey, when they'll flap their tiny wings at 55 flaps per second across the Gulf of Mexico from their winter home in the Yucatan.

They will arrive sometime this month. I've heard that, year after year, they return to the same feeders. Some years I get my feeder set up early as a way of greeting. Some years, I wait until I see the season's first hummingbird whoosh across our deck, and then I immediately get the feeder out. I'm looking forward to feeding these wee creatures for the next six months, until they begin their migration south again.

A few things are important to know about responsibly feeding hummingbirds. While they are attracted to the color red, it's important to not use food coloring in their water. They'll discover the feeder simply because of the sugar it holds. It's also important to not use "raw" or turbinado sugar, because it contains too much iron for the birds to metabolize. White cane sugar is the wisest choice, as it best simulates the nectar provided by flowers.

Hummingbirds don't actually need the sweet water

we give them, but it does help them as they flit about, always at the edge of their energy reserves, in their search for bugs and spiders to sustain them. Isn't it nice that we humans have figured out that by feeding them, we can be so easily entertained?

At times, things can get dramatic with hummers, as they are very territorial. They do get aggressive, but their intentions seem more fiercely protective than malevolent. They stand their ground, but I've never see one harm another. We humans can learn a lesson from these tiny birds. We can be reminded to reflect

on our past whenever we notice a hummingbird flying backwards. When we watch them hover at our feeders, we can remember to savor the sweetness of our own lives. I like to try to follow them after they leave the feeder, and sometimes I'm

lucky enough to watch one alight on a nearby branch. They look so very small in this world as they sit, peacefully. They sit still just as well as they speed about. In fact, 80% of their days are spent sitting still. Another lesson to be learned. With peaceful rest comes potent energy.

May your days be blessed with the joyful presence of hummingbirds this spring and summer,



Kelly



MAPA NEWS AND AN INVITATION

by Joe Piscatelli

On behalf of MAPA's board, its members, and the community at large, I would like to thank past president Anna Mae Horn for her amazing contributions to MAPA and *The Groundhog*. Anna Mae has dedicated a lot of time and heart to helping the Mentone area and is still giving her time as a board member of Moon Lake Community Library.

In August 2017, MAPA (Mentone Area Preservation Association) reorganized due to the resignation of several board members. A new board was formed of volunteers who are excited to continue serving the Mentone community. Great progress has been made, with the contribution of thousands of dollars to several of the local charitable organizations in the area.

Much of our funding to help the community comes from the festivals we host. After the installation of the new board last summer, we had about 10 weeks to organize MAPA's annual fall festival, Colorfest. Thanks to the efforts of Kerry Breithaupt (Colorfest chair), Anna Mae Horn, Sharon Habin, and many other volunteers, we experienced one of the largest turnouts in the history of Colorfest. The festival had 85 vendors and DeKalb Tourism estimated we had 10,000 attendees. This made a significant contribution to businesses in the Mentone area.

The MAPA board realizes the opinions of community members are important in response to such an influx of visitors. Board member Holley

Midgley conceived of and designed a survey which was mailed to 1,100 residents. The board received a gratifying number of responses that helped us understand what the concerns of the community are, as well as what they feel the benefits are.

MAPA is working with the town and the mayor to create the best remedies possible for concerns such as traffic, i.e., more shuttle services and safer flow patterns. Board member Dominic Fulginiti has volunteered as liaison between MAPA, the town council and the sheriff's department.

Sharon Habin is this year's Rhododendron Festival chair. She brings experience in festival organizing and has long proven her dedication to our community.

The MAPA board would also like to extend a thank you to Kelly Leavitt and Beverly Bates for their collaboration in creating a beautiful local publication. The quality of design and content with the collaborative efforts of Kelly and Beverly are establishing *The Groundhog* as one of the best small community periodicals. This unique small-town publication prints about 4,300 papers every month, more than 200 of which are mail subscriptions. *The Groundhog* is distributed at almost 90 area locations (and growing). If you are considering advertising, remember that *The Groundhog* offers one free month if you sign up for 12 months (with a potential of 51,600 or more views).

If you have a story to tell or you just like to write, we encourage you to submit an article. Our community has a population of unique and talented folks. That includes you!

The Mentone Neighbor to Neighbor Facebook page indicates that we have new Mentone residents every month. Welcome.

At MAPA's board meeting on February 6, the board voted to postpone selecting a new president. As vice president, I am serving as acting president in the interim. The board also voted to have Cathy Haven Howard, a professional facilitator for non-profit organizations, present a "visioning" workshop, which you can read about on page 1. We invite you to join us, whether or not you are a current member of MAPA, at Moon Lake Community Library on Sunday, March 11, at 3 p.m.

Your opinions are welcome. We encourage you to help shape the future of the NEW MAPA, whether you are a member or simply a lover of the Mentone

area. If you are in alignment with MAPA's mission and vision, please consider becoming a member. (You can join at mapamentone.com.) I'll see you on March 11.

Joe Piscatelli is the vice president of MAPA. He is currently serving as acting president.

MAPA GRANT REQUESTS

One of the key missions of the Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) is to support local organizations and projects which seek to improve the quality of life in our town. Organizations which have received funding support in the past are involved in a wide variety of programs; these organizations include Moon Lake Community Library, North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District, Boy Scout Troop 106, Mentone Educational Resources Foundation (MERF), Moon Lake School, DeSoto Rescue Squad, and Mentone Arts and Cultural Center, just to name a few.

Organizations that wish to be considered for a grant should fill out the form at mapamentone.com/grants. Our board of directors meets monthly to conduct the association's business and to consider grant requests. Email mapamentone@gmail.com with any questions.



Become a MAPA Member Today!
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Mentone's history
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Couples - \$30 a year
(includes a subscription to *The Groundhog*)

MAPA
P. O. Box 50
Mentone, AL 35984
www.mapamentone.com

MAPA Surveys Mentone by Holley Midgley

The Mentone Area Preservation Association (MAPA) recently sent out a brief survey to 1,100 residents within the 35984 zip code, and the results indicate strong support for both the organization itself and the two festivals it conducts to raise funds to support community activities.

Eighty-seven percent of the respondents indicated they are age 50 or more; 89% percent said they are full-time residents. More than 60% have attended a Colorfest in the past. Colorfest is the festival held in October of each year and, along with the springtime Rhododendron Festival, raises thousands of dollars which is used by MAPA to support numerous community programs such as the North Lookout Mountain Fire Protection District, Moon Lake School, DeKalb Rescue Squad, senior citizens activities, and the Food Bank.

The success of the festivals has meant increasing pressure on local traffic and parking, which MAPA, town officials, and law enforcement are actively working to alleviate.

Respondents to the survey were also given the opportunity to comment on such open-ended questions as "What are the best things about the festivals?" and "What needs improvement?" Among the best things mentioned were the quality and variety of vendors, children's activities, the opportunity to meet friends, and musical performers. Suggestions for improvement included traffic control and parking, and the need for better toilet facilities.

The MAPA survey was reviewed by board members and festival planners, and has been shared with town officials. A copy of the survey results is available by contacting MAPA at P.O. Box 50, Mentone, AL. 35984.

It's ABOUT TIME



by
Charlotte Gentry

Sometimes it seems the more technology we embrace, the less time we have. We are pulled in so many directions by the persistent lure of a cell phone call, a text message, an email, a "tweet," or some other pressing mode of communication.

We just don't have time any more. That is why it is so refreshing when folks are willing to share this most precious commodity. Mentone has many organizations involving volunteers who give so much of themselves.

The Mentone Business Association has been blessed with one such volunteer in Sharon Habin, who has served as MBA vice-president for the past three years. She resigned that post in February in order to volunteer her time as festival chair of the Rhododendron Festival. The MBA appreciates all her hard work and will help in any way we can to support her in her new role. We believe Sharon's skills will be a real asset to MAPA and result in great success for the upcoming festival, to be held the weekend of May 19 and 20.

MBA will hold its annual election for officers in April. In the interim, Kerry Breithaupt, LMT, NMT, owner of Mentone Massage Therapy, has generously volunteered to fill the post of vice-president. Nominations for president, vice-president and

secretary are now open. If you are a member of MBA, please let us know either by being in attendance at our next meeting or by emailing your nominations to Lisa Schad, MBA Secretary (lisa.schad@gmail.com). Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 12, at 6 p.m. Kerry Breithaupt will host the meeting at her studio, located at 8903 Highway 137 in Valley Head.

The MBA has begun a discussion about compiling a business and service directory for Mentone and surrounding areas (Valley Head, Menlo, etc.). We believe having this directory will be of value to local businesses, property owners and visitors to our area. We hope to coordinate this effort with the help of MAPA and through The Groundhog publication.

Upcoming plans include a "Business Weekend" and Mentone Movie Nights. These will be among the items for discussion on the agenda at our next meeting. We welcome anyone interested in the business of Mentone to join in the conversation and be a part of MBA. Your ideas, suggestions for service projects by MBA, or upcoming sales/events involving your business are welcome. There are no dues or fees to be a part of MBA. 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. How can we share our time and be of help?

Charlotte Gentry is the president of the Mentone Business Association.

hello
spring

In Memoriam Stanley Ervin Lawton

November 10, 1953–February 24, 2018



A beloved member of our community, Stan Lawton, owner of Little River Hardware, passed away on February 24. A memorial service was held February 26, where hundreds of members of our community paid their final respects.

We plan to honor Stan's life and service to our community in a future issue, and would love to hear any special memories you have to share. You may send an email to groundhog-news@yahoo.com.

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March Madness

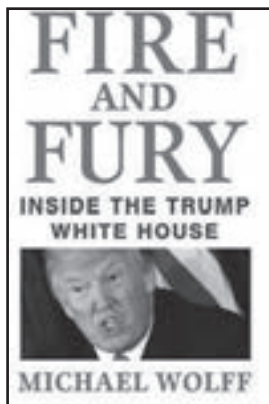
by Barb Stoll

Hello everyone, hope you are staying warm. Things here are happening at your local Community Library. We have new books and DVDs for your enjoyment, plus we have new programs in the works that are sure to please, such as a preschool toddler story time. We are also creating sitting areas for you to come, sit and relax in the comfort of the library. On that note, this is a call for furniture donations of gently used chairs, sofas or small tables so we can make the sitting area cozy and warm. Please contact the library if you have any pieces you would like to donate.

Great things are in the works, so come on by and say hello and see what all the 'madness' is about. And remember to Like us on Facebook!

BOOKS

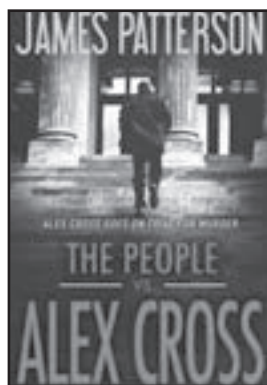
Fire and Fury inside the Trump White House



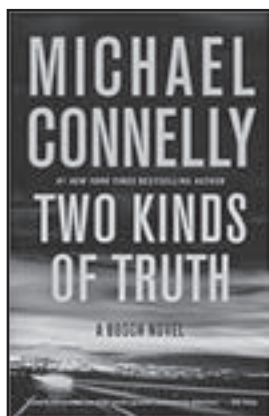
The first nine months of Donald Trump's term were stormy, outrageous and absolutely mesmerizing. Never before has a presidency so divided the American people. Michael Wolff shows how and why Donald Trump has become the king of discord and disunion.

The People vs. Alex Cross

The latest from James Patterson has Alex Cross on the wrong side of the law. Followers of his nemesis Gary Soneji are dead, and Cross is charged with gunning them down in cold blood. The charges are explosive, the evidence shocking, the prosecution relentless, and the accused stands alone.



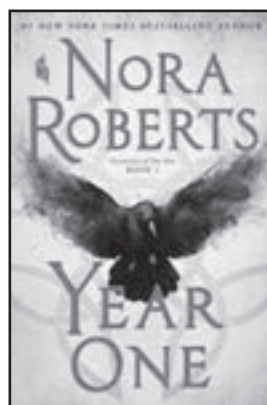
Two Kinds of Truth



The new thriller from Michael Connelly is tense, fast-paced, and fueled by the legendary detective Harry Bosch's unrelenting sense of mission. Bosch risks everything to go undercover into the shadowy world of organized crime and pill mills. "Connelly writes cops better than anyone else in the business." (New York Post.)

Year One

A stunning new novel from bestselling author Nora Roberts—an epic of hope and horror, chaos, and magic, and a journey that will unite a desperate group of people to fight the battle of their lives. The end has come. The beginning comes next.



Limitless

Eddie Morris (Bradley Cooper) discovers a top-secret pill that unlocks 100 percent of his brain's capacity. He instantly acquires mind-bending talents and mesmerizing visions that big him big money, women, and limitless success. But his life soon becomes a nightmare as the drug's side effects take their toll and he finds himself entangled with a cunning broker (Robert DeNiro). Rated PG-13.



The Internship

Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson team up to crash the digital world in this laugh-out-loud comedy. The competition is fiercely funny as Billy and Nick break all the rules at the state-of-the-art Google campus in a hilarious quest to land their dream jobs. Rated PG-13.

Dolphin Tale



Inspired by the amazing true story of *Winter, the dolphin*. A boy discovers a dolphin with an injured tail, without which she may not survive. With the help of a marine biologist (Harry Connick Jr.) and a prosthetist (Morgan Freeman), Winter May receive a second chance at life. Rated PG.

Barb Stoll is a member of the board of Moon Lake Community Library.

D V D s



Taken

When his estranged daughter is kidnapped in Paris, a former spy (Liam Neeson) sets out to find her at any cost. Relying on his special skills, he tracks down the ruthless gang that abducted her and launches a one-man war to bring them to justice. Rated PG-13.



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CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL!

“Many hands make light the work!” There are many opportunities to volunteer for this year’s Rhododendron Festival. Some key positions are still available: Assistant Festival Chairs, Assistant Vendor Coordinator, Music Coordinator, Miss Rhododendron Coordinator, and Sponsorship Chair (who will work with the MAPA board).

Many other jobs are available. Those of you who have so graciously volunteered in the past and haven’t received an “Opportunities to Volunteer” email OR if you haven’t volunteered in the past and are interested in exciting (and some not-so-exciting) volunteer opportunities, please email me at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com and enter ‘Volunteer’ in the subject line.

We will have a Festival Volunteer meeting on Thursday, March 15, at 1 p.m. at the Green Leaf Grill. If you can’t attend but want to participate, please send me an email.

Musicians are welcome to request an application at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com. Please enter ‘Musician’ in the subject line.

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

Mentone, Alabama

2018 Rhododendron Festival, May 19-20

Vendor Application — 12x12 Spaces

Deadline March 15, 2018 — Please Do Not Send Payment at this time

Contact Name

Business Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Cell Phone

E-mail

Website Address

Facebook Page

Type of Vendor: Art/Craft Description of Art/Items: Organization

Food: list all food and drink you will be selling

If using a trailer: Length, including tongue Service window opens from: Passenger side Driver side

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 (all times are Central). You may set up your space on Friday 11am–5pm, or Saturday 6:30–8:30am. 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. (i.e., 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. Send completed application form to: MAPA, P. O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984 OR download online at mapamentone.com (click on “Festivals”, then on “Vendors”). Thank you.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Contact List Rec'd Ck# Emailed Approved Declined Reason

Festival Volunteer Meeting
Thursday, March 15 at 1 p.m.
Green Leaf Grill, Mentone

The Lookout

Restaurant and Tea Room

All-you-can-eat Fish Fry
with Coleslaw, French Fries & Hush Puppies
~ Each Saturday night ~

“Southern Night”
A special dish will be prepared each Thursday.

HOURS (Eastern)
Thursday & Friday 5–9pm
Saturday 10am–2pm / 5–9pm
Sunday Brunch/Lunch 10am–4pm

706-862-3060
41 Atlanta Avenue, Cloudland, GA 30731
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Miss Rhododendron



Presented by
Mentone Area Preservation Association

Friday, May 11, 2018 at 6 p.m. CDT

Mentone Community Church, Family Life Center
90 Summerville Road, Mentone

Miss Rhododendron is part of the annual
Rhododendron Festival, May 20 & 21

Six Age Divisions for Girls Ages 0 – 18

Miss Rhododendron (Senior Division) will win a One-year Scholarship
to Northeast Alabama Community College
(NACC admission requirements apply)

For more information and entry packets,
please email rhododendronfestival@gmail.com

MISS RHODODENDRON PAGEANT

by Sharon Habin

The Miss Rhododendron Pageant is a Semi-natural Pageant. Pageant dress is strongly recommended. Hair and makeup should be “age & stage” appropriate. Absolutely NO flippers or hair pieces are allowed.

Natural Pageants began in the late 1800s and then became more popular in the early 1900s. Natural Pageants focus more on the contestant’s overall natural look. When looking at the history, they started off encouraging women to be leaders in their communities, and build their confidence and self-esteem.

The Miss Rhododendron Pageant is an exciting opportunity to:

- Practice good sportsmanship (bad sportsmanship by contestants or family will not be tolerated)
- Dress up
- Practice being brave—for some it may be their first time at a pageant
- Experience being on stage in front of an audience
- Experience a short interview with judges.

Winners will receive a crown and sash. Alternates will receive a medallion. The Miss Rhododendron winner will receive a one year’s scholarship covering full-time tuition and fees at Northeast Alabama Community College.

Are you wondering about flippers? I had to google ‘flippers pageant’ to find out. Pageant flippers are false teeth, or veneers.

For more information, contact me by email at rhododendronfestival@gmail.com or mail: MAPA Pageant, P.O. Box 50, Mentone, AL 35984.

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Rhododendron Festival Parking

by Sharon Habin

Last year’s Colorfest was so successful that it created traffic conditions, especially on Saturday, that were not only frustrating but also potentially dangerous. Colorfest and the Rhododendron Festival are the main fundraisers for the Mentone Area Preservation Association. MAPA board members, along with the Colorfest chair, met with the mayor and the chief of police shortly after the festival to begin discussing plans to alleviate some of the challenges of a small town with little public parking. Developing solutions are currently being discussed and preliminary plans are being drafted. There will be changes for Rhododendron Festival public parking. The April *Groundhog* will have more information.

HAPPY DAY!

March Birthdays

Mar 1 – Ally Smith
Mar 1 – Jonathan Cuzzort
Mar 2 – Jimmie Sue Beason
Mar 2 – Dewayne Pierce
Mar 2 – Holley Midgley
Mar 3 – Kama Jade Blalock
Mar 3 – Dawson Bone
Mar 3 – Charity Crowe
Mar 4 – Corey Ingram
Mar 4 - Jeff Bain
Mar 4 - Lance Woods
Mar 4 – Clara Lee
Mar 4 – Becky Stott
Mar 4 – Durrell Owens
Mar 5 - Ashley Gifford
Mar 5 – Maci Hammon
Mar 5 – Eiko Key
Mar 5 – Daxton Stone
Mar 5 – Beth McKinney
Mar 6 – Annabelle Grider
Mar 6 - Randy Hilliard
Mar 6 – Inez Guffey
Mar 6 – Josh Gregory
Mar 6 – Clint Phillips
Mar 7 – Paige Ware
Mar 7 – Kisha Moore
Mar 7 – Bella Stokes
Mar 7 – Easton Ferguson
Mar 8 – Whitney Smith
Mar 8 – Mayson Bailey

Mar 8 – Rhett Dean
Mar 9 – Adalynn Phillips
Mar 10 – David Rape
Mar 10 – Autumn Hulan
Mar 10 – Frances Day
Mar 10 – JD Clements
Mar 11 – Bo Hammond
Mar 11 – Jay Chadwick
Mar 11 – Lauren Everett
Mar 12 – Tonya Shanklin
Mar 12 – Jeremy Hope
Mar 12 – Krystal Johnson
Mar 12 – Tommy Hairel
Mar 12 – Emily Allen
Mar 13 – Josh Pullen
Mar 13 – Kelsey Wade
Mar 13 – Gracie Shank
Mar 13 – Julia Ross
Mar 13 – Adam Brown
Mar 14 - Elizabeth Hodge
Mar 14 – Hunter Robertson
Mar 14 – Benton VanPelt
Mar 14 – Bonnie Ware
Mar 14 – Mike Neel
Mar 15 – Carter Wright
Mar 15 - Ronnie Hilliard
Mar 16 – Raymond Coots
Mar 16 – Jesse Bone
Mar 16 – Johnny Crider
Mar 16 – Van Battles
Mar 16 – Finley Darwin
Mar 16 – Debra Williamson
Mar 17 – Camden Bell
Mar 18 – Sydney Johnson
Mar 18 – Jeremy Henderson

Mar 18 – Kendall Israel
Mar 18 – Alexis Nance
Mar 18 – Sherryl Lewis
Mar 19 – Dean Freeman
Mar 19 – Olivia Harrison
Mar 20 – Zach Jones
Mar 20 – Hobson Kirby
Mar 20 - Koley Thompson
Mar 20 – Greg Wheat
Mar 21 – Mary J. Chambers
Mar 21 – Paul Peppers
Mar 21 – Reese & Sam McCurdy
Mar 21 – Aimee Grace Smith
Mar 21 – Wanda Black
Mar 21 – Ariel Bolton
Mar 22 – Kallie Ingram
Mar 22 – Lue Smith
Mar 22 – Jon Bain
Mar 22 - Steve Patton
Mar 22 – Robert Baker
Mar 23 – Guy “Squeak” Smith
Mar 23 – Wyatt McGee
Mar 23 – Lori Blackburn
Mar 23 – Roberta Cash
Mar 23 – Cutter Battles
Mar 23 – Kathy Graham
Mar 24 – Dylan Lee
Mar 24 – Jimmy Phillips
Mar 24 – Lydia Wright
Mar 24 – Bobbie Zakary
Mar 25 – Vickie Blackburn
Mar 25 – Evelyn Graves
Mar 25 – Skylar Haney
Mar 25 - Skeeter Hilliard
Mar 25 - Robert Smith

Mar 26 – Anna Carden
Mar 26 – Sandra Boehringer
Mar 26 – Beth Hawkins
Mar 26 – Samantha Blalock
Mar 27 – Abby Davis
Mar 27 – Jamie Darwin
Mar 27 – Dudley Easler
Mar 28 – Holly Owen
Mar 28 – Cindy Bethune
Mar 28 – Arden Shanklin
Mar 29 – Sara Lee
Mar 29 - Donna Hilliard
Mar 31 – Lyli Wright
Mar 31 – Marlana Beasley
Mar 31 – Lindsey Blalock
Mar 31 – Chad Wooten

March Anniversaries

Mar 3 – Darrin & Amanda Smith
Mar 3 – Jimmy & Gaynell Worthey
Mar 7 – Tommy & Ruth Battles
Mar 7 – Blake & Brittany Villarreal
Mar 8 – Garrett & Amanda Collins
Mar 10 – Tom & Alice Shanklin
Mar 11 –Hobson & Martha Kirby
Mar 18 – Rodney & Christine Ballenger
Mar 19 – Tommy & Joan Harrison
Mar 23 – Nick & Tina Langston
Mar 25 – Tommy & Christie Langston
Mar 27 – Shaunathan & Abby Bell
Mar 28 – Danny & Kim Stone
Mar 30 – Chris & Melissa Stokes

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Sun 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.



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BREAKFAST Entrées include your choice of toast or biscuit and breakfast potatoes.
Grandma's Biscuits & Gravy Two eggs over easy served with two homemade biscuits, smothered in hearty gravy. \$5
Classic Sunrise Two farm-fresh eggs served to your liking. \$6
Inside the Fence Two farm-fresh eggs served to your liking, served with a choice of sausage, bacon or ham. \$7
Breakfast Pizza Scrambled eggs, sausage, peppers, onions, covered in cheese, served on grilled Greek pita bread. \$8
Barney Special Ham, bacon, sausage and eggs scrambled together in a heap of breakfast potatoes and covered in cheese. \$9
Eggs Benedict Homemade biscuit, poached egg aand a slice of ham served under a blanket of Hollandaise sauce. \$10
Omelettes Served with your choice of American, Swiss or Cheddar cheese, toast & potatoes: **The Homestead** Classic ham & cheese. \$8 **The Western** Ham, onions & peppers. \$8 **The Veggie** Greens, reds, yellows & pinks! \$8 **The Philly** Shredded steak, onions & peppers. \$9 **The Bacon Blues** Bacon & bleu cheese. \$9
\$2 Sides Sausage, bacon, ham, toast, biscuit, homemade muffin, stone grits, breakfast potatoes
Drinks Coffee, hot tea, orange juice, cranberry juice, milk, water

LUNCH Entrées include Housemade Chips or a \$2 side of your choice.
Field Burger 8oz. prime beef patty with Cheddar cheese, tomato & fried onion strings, drizzled in Honey Mustard BBQ sauce on a roasted Brioche roll. \$12
Farmer's Burger 8oz. prime beef patty with caramelized pineapple, fried onions, tomatoes, greens, over-easy egg, honey chipotle sauce. \$12
Rueben Burger 8oz. prime beef patty headed with Swiss cheese, sauerkraut, thousand island dressing on toasted rye bread. \$10
Down Home Pork Tenderloin Sandwich Premium pork cutlet, breaded & fried, topped with lettuce, tomatoes, pickled onions & Cheddar cheese, signature Honey Mustard BBQ sauce. \$10
Blackberry Bacon Jam Grilled Cheese Homemade bread grilled with three cheeses and stuffed with blackberry bacon jam. \$10
Chicken Salad Sandwich Free-range chicken breast, dill, celery & spring mix served on grilled wheat bread. \$10
\$10 Paninis: **Turkey** Thick turkey breast with mushrooms & Swiss cheese. **Cuban** Crispy pork, succulent ham, artisan pickles, mustard. **Vegetarian** with greens, reds, yellows & pinks! **Cordon Bleu** Free-range chicken, ham & Swiss.
\$2 Sides Sauerkraut salad, broccoli & cauliflower salad, Southern “confetti” corn salad
Drinks Coca-Cola, Dr. Pepper, Sprite, sweet & unsweet tea, coffee, water

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What To Do Around Here!

March 2018 Community Calendar

Mar 1, 9, 23, 26—Rock Climbing / Rappelling Adventure Combo. 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.

Mar 1—Make Your Heart Smile Blood Drive. Skelton Orthodontics is hosting a blood drive to support your love for smiles! Everyone that donates will be entered into a drawing for a prize. We would LOVE for you to donate with us for a good cause and to be entered to \$200 cash! 12–6pm. 256-844-8221.

Mar 1 & 2—Overnight Camping Skills Class.

Most needed camping skills are brought to you as well as advanced skills such as how to find dry fuels, how to build a fire without smoke, how to start a fire without matches or flint, lean to construction, and safety barriers. True Adventure Sports. 5pm–9am. 256-997-9577.



Mar 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.

Mar 3, 10, 17, 29—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. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 256-997-9577.

Mar 3—Chicken Basics. Join us for a free class as Jason chats about Chicken Basics. He will discuss what you need to prepare for spring chicks. We will also have chick packages available for purchase. Everything you need to start and grow a healthy flock. This class is scheduled one week before our first delivery of baby chicks in order to give you time to prepare. We hope you'll join us for a morning of family friendly learning. Fort Payne Feed & Garden. 10am–2pm. 256-845-5946.



Mar 3, 9, 16, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30—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.

Mar 5—Celestial Navigation. This two-hour class is a basic introduction to navigation by the stars. Learn how to navigate without the use of a compass or GPS with the same rules used for almost six thousand years. Meet at True Adventure Sports. 6:30–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 6—Advanced Rappelling Class. 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. 10am. 256-997-9577.

Mar 6—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, some scrambling, some spelunking, and a whole lot of required working together. True Adventure Sports. 6–8:30pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 7—Rescue Rappelling Class. 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. \$179/person True Adventure Sports. 9am. 256-997-9577.

Mar 7—Take a Hike: Waterfalls Tour & Easy Hike. Join JSU Field School and DeSoto State Park staff on a tour exploring Little River Canyon National Preserve and DeSoto State Park waterfalls. Easy-to-moderate hikes on rocky dirt trails. See some well-known waterfalls as well as some hidden treasures. Trip is dependent on water level. Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Little River Canyon and Desoto State Park. Meet at JSU's Little River Canyon Center. 9am–2pm. JSU Van shuttle for tour; lunch at Desoto State Park Lodge (included in price). \$25/person; pre-registration required by 3/2. Call 256-845-3548. Limit 9 participants.

Mar 7 & 17—Night Zip Line Adventure. 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. 7:30–9:30pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 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. 9am. 256-997-9577.

Mar 8, 28—Sky Swing Adventure. This is an adventure of a lifetime. Enjoy the thrill of the swing. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 12–2pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 9—Star Party. NASA Educator John Weis is back for a star party night! We will be discussing common local constellations seen this time of year and then heading outside with the telescopes to see what is on the big screen. Join us for this family friendly free event. JSU's Little River Canyon Center. 6pm–8pm. No fee. Contact info @ www.jsu.edu/epic/canyoncenter

Mar 10—Creature Feature: Frogs. Join the one-and-only "Dr. Frog" George Cline for an unforgettable evening of romance and songs from the first amphibian voices of the season. Learn to identify frog songs and possibly get a hands-on experience with these slippery creatures. Little River Canyon Center. 6–8pm. No fee; call Dr. Niki Wayner at 256-845-3548 for details.

Mar 10—Serious Skills Series: Longleaf Pine Needle Basketry Class. Learn the basics of

pine needle basketry, an old craft with a long history.

Join artist

Brittney Hughes to learn the basic steps to making a coiled basket from longleaf pine needles. Each participant will learn the basic skills of pine needle basketry and take home their very own creation. The art of coiling baskets is universally common to indigenous peoples. Coiling is the technique of creating baskets and art from pine needles and was a part of pre-Columbian Native American crafts. Today, pine needle baskets and art are made primarily for decorative purposes. DeSoto State Park Nature Center, next to the Country Store on County Road 89. 10am–3pm. \$25 supply fee on due day of class. All materials (pine needles, thread, and small center for basket) will be furnished. Ages 10 and up. Pre-registration required; class number limited to 12. 256-997-5025.



Mar 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. There is a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 5 in each class. 10:30am & 12:30pm. Reservations required. 256-523-3188.

Mar 10—Spring Frog Pond Adventure. Experience "love" from a frog's point of view! Join the one-and-only "Dr. Frog" George Cline for an unforgettable evening of romance and

songs from the first amphibian voices of the season. Learn to identify frog songs and get a hands-on experience with these slippery creatures. Participate in Frog Watch USA. Subject to water level/weather conditions. Frog Pond near White Plains School. Little River Canyon Center. 6–8pm. \$5/person. 256-845-3548.

Mar 11—Flower Arranging Class for Beginners. Basic flower arranging. All supplies furnished. Sweet Magnolias, 140 Main Street West, Rainsville. 2pm to 4pm. Registration MUST be paid prior to the class. \$35. Email magnoliasstore@gmail.com.

Mar 12—Afternoon Rock Climb. 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 needed. True Adventure Sports. 2–6pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 12—Canyon Talks: Ray Morgan. The Venom Interviews. JSU Field Schools are proud to host Ray Morgan at the Little River Canyon Center for our 2018 Canyon Talks. Ray Morgan has been a private-sector reptile enthusiast for more than 40 years. Originally from Southern California, he now lives at Lake Arenal in Costa Rica and provides the local community with educational programs on local snakes, as well as relocation of snakes that get a little too close to human habitation. In 2016, Ray released The Venom Interviews, the first documentary film of its kind about the work and science of venomous herpetology. His current project is a series of training videos for the African Society of Venimology to help medical professionals manage snakebites in Sub-Saharan Africa. Free. Little River Canyon Center. 6–7:30pm. 256-845-3548.

Mar 13—GPS Basic Training and Navigation Class Part 1. Learn how to use a map, compass, and a handheld GPS. Learn basic navigation and how to pinpoint a location for quick return, or quick rescue. Also learn how to search by waypoints or coordinates. True Adventure Sports. 10am–4pm. 256-997-9577.



Mar 13—Zip Line Adventure. 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. 4:30pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 14—Basic Climbing Class. Come experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about with guides who are fun, safe and energetic. This trip includes all the gear plus

(cont'd on page 11)

What To Do Around Here!

March 2018 Community Calendar

(cont'd from page 10)

basic instruction. No prior climbing experience is needed. True Adventure Sports. 10am–4pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 15—Rock Climbing Adventure. Experience first-hand what rock climbing is all about with



guides who are fun, safe and energetic. Trip includes all the gear plus basic instruction. No prior climbing experience needed. True Adventure Sports. 2–6pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 16, 28—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, some scrambling, some spelunking, and a whole lot of required working together. True Adventure Sports. 7:30–10pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 10—Boston Butt Sale Fundraiser. Order today and reserve yours for Easter dinner! 8–10 pound fully cooked Boston Butt by Sally's Smokin' Butt BBQ. \$35. Deadline to order & pay: Friday, 3/16 or while supplies last. A limit of 50; and quite a few have already been sold! Cause: Support local Marine volunteers in their community veteran outreach work. (This is not a Toys for Tots fundraiser.) Pickup date: Good Friday, 3/30, from 10am–5pm at Sally's Smokin' Butt BBQ, 2904 Gault Ave. So. Our red Marine Corps League canopy will be set up out front of the restaurant. Payment due at time of order. The Marine Corps League is a 501c3 non-profit. All gifts tax deductible. To order, call Paymaster Jean Reed, 256-996-1039.

Mar 13—Moon Lake Kindergarten Registration. 8am–12pm.

Mar 17—Annual Spring Quilt Show. Menlo Lawrence Center Menlo, GA. 9am–2pm. For more information, call Glenda Hamilton, 706-862-2240.

Mar 17—Paperweight Class. This class is

designed for those who really just want see what molten glass is all about. Feel the heat, gather from the furnace, sculpt the glass into you own design. Please join us for some in-depth discovery at Orbix Hot Glass. Reservations required. \$145/person. 9am–1pm. 256-523-3188.

Mar 17—Take a Hike: Waterfalls Tour & Easy Hike. Join JSU Field

School and Desoto State Park staff on a tour exploring Little River Canyon National Preserve and Desoto State Park waterfalls. Easy to moderate

hikes on rocky dirt trails. Will see some well-known waterfalls as well as some hidden treasures. Trip is dependent on water level. Bring plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks/lunch, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. Little River Canyon and Desoto State Park. Meet at JSU's Little River Canyon Center. 9am–2pm. JSU Van shuttle for tour; lunch at Desoto State Park Lodge (included in price). \$25/person; pre-registration is required by 3/2, 2018 by calling 256-845-3548. Limit 9 participants.

Mar 18 – St. Patrick's Day Dinner. Enjoy an authentic Irish Boiled Dinner. \$10 adults, \$5 children. St. Josephs'-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church, Mentone. 12–2pm. 256-634-4476.

Mar 20—Zip Line & Sky Swing Adventure. Our zip lines and sky swings 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.

Mar 21 & 22—High Adventure Trip. This is a 3-day adventure including a Wild Cave Tour, Rock Climbing, an Extreme Night Hike and end with a relaxing canoe trip. Price includes all



activities, attractions, permits, fees, gear, and guides. True Adventure Sports. 10am. 256-997-9577.

Mar 22—Spring Showcase. Students from the DeKalb County Fine Arts Academy will present two one-act plays —“Us and Them” by David Campton and “The Insanity of Mary Girard” by Lanie Robertson at the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center's temporary site (former Kamama Art Gallery in Mentone). Admission is a suggested \$10 donation. Proceeds will benefit DeKalb County Fine Arts and the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center. 6:30–8pm. For reservations, email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3333.

Mar 24—Blow an Ornament. Come design and blow your own ornament with the help of one of our glass artists. No reservations are needed; first-come, first-served basis. 9am–4pm. Orbix Hot Glass. \$38 per ornament blown. 256-523-3188.

Mar 24—Community Egg Drop & Carnival. 15,000 eggs dropped from a helicopter, so bring your basket! Inflatables, carnival games & snacks, and lots of prizes. Sponsored by local businesses, summer camps and Mentone churches. Mentone Community Church campus. 10am–1pm.

Mar 24—Zip Line Adventure. 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. 10am. 256-997-9577.

Mar 24—Debbie Bond in Concert. Singer, guitar player and songwriter Debbie Bond has been paying her dues in the Alabama backwoods for over 30 years. Influenced by the famed sounds of Muscle Shoals, her impressive musical story includes years of performing with older traditional Alabama blues musicians, including Johnny Shines, Sam Lay, Eddie Kirkland and Willie King. Her immersion in Alabama blues has deeply flavored her guitar playing, soulful voice and original song writing, yet her sound is contemporary and original, incorporating soul, blues, and jazz influences. She has toured extensively in Europe including France, Switzerland, Italy,

Belgium, Luxemburg, England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. She is the co-founder of the award-winning Alabama Blues Project, an educational non-profit devoted to preserving and promoting Alabama's rich blues heritage. Admission is a \$15 donation that will benefit the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center. For more information, call 256-674-3366 or email mentoneartscenter@gmail.com.

Mar 26–30—Moon Lake School's Spring Break

Mar 27—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. 2–6pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 30—Mountaineering Adventure. This 4–6 hour adventure starts with a rappel into a low light maze where we will stop and anchor part of the way down the rock wall and travel on the rock face mountaineering style to get to our main destination. True Adventure Sports. 10am–1pm. 256-997-9577.

Mar 31—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.



Mar 31—Zip Line Adventure. 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. 2:30 & 5:30p.m. 256-997-9577.

Mar 31—Night Sky Swing Adventure. This is an adventure of a lifetime. Enjoy the thrill of the swing at night. Pre-registration required. True Adventure Sports. 7:30–9:30pm. 256-997-9577.

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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!

Irish Soda Bread

Recipe and original watercolor submitted by Joan Byrum

Around since the early 1800s, Irish Soda Bread is one of the favorite traditions from the Emerald Isle. Made from the simplest ingredients, even very poor families could make Soda Bread daily. The “quick bread” dough is shaped into a round loaf and baked in a cast iron skillet. Before baking, a cross is cut on top of the loaf giving thanks and asking for blessings for the household. Served warm along with the meal, it was the mainstay of the Irish farm family’s diet. This recipe brings the traditional taste of Irish Soda Bread across 200 years of time to our tables.

4 to 4 ½ cups all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp sugar
1 tsp salt
1 tsp baking soda
4 Tbsp butter, cubed
1 cup raisins
1 large egg, beaten
1-3/4 cups buttermilk

Preheat oven to 375°. Mix all dry ingredients in a large bowl. Using a pastry cutter (or clean fingers) work butter into the dry ingredients. Add raisins.

Make a well with the mixture. Pour in egg and buttermilk. Stir with a wooden spoon until dough is too stiff to stir. Dust hands with flour; knead only to form a ball. (Add more water if too sticky. Make it like biscuit dough.) Transfer to greased iron skillet, shaping into a round loaf. Make a sign of the cross (X) with a serrated knife 1-1/2” deep.

Bake for 35–45 minutes or until it sounds hollow when thumping. Be careful not to get too brown. Cover with foil tent and continue to bake until done, if necessary.

Special Note: Irish Soda Bread will be served at the St. Patrick’s Day Irish Dinner at St. Joseph’s-on-the-Mountain, Sunday, March 18, at noon.



Ongoing Calendar

MAPA Board meets on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 6pm at Moon Lake Community 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 in the Town Square (Al Hwy. 117 & CR 89).

The Farm Market at Windy Hill sells fresh produce, eggs, beef, and pork every Friday from 3–6pm Central. 445 Road 942, Mentone.

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 on Saturdays from 9am–12pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3–5pm (until 3-8) and 3–6pm (starting 3-11).

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 10am. Enjoy complimentary organic coffee, chess and other games of strategy. Moonlakelibrary.org.

Yoga classes at Moon Lake School are held every Wednesday afternoon from 4–5pm in the school gym. There is no charge. This class is taught by video. Call 256-634-4113 for more information.

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. Join us at Moon Lake Community Library on the 1st Thursday of each month at 3pm. Call 256-635-8775 for details.

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

Lookout Mountain Strummers mountain dulcimer group meets on alternate Thursdays at 1pm at St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church. For a schedule and directions, send an email to normbaker194@gmail.com. Beginners are welcome.

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

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

The Little River group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Saturday & every Tuesday night at 6pm at St. Joseph’s-on-the-Mountain Episcopal Church in Mentone. 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.*

What’s Happening at the Library?

by Kelly Leavitt

Spring’s rebirth is certainly in the air at Moon Lake Community Library. We’re happy to announce we now have a website (moonlakelibrary.org), where you can access our online catalog and browse ALL of our books (8,000+) and DVDs (900+) at your convenience. Parents and children also have online access to Moon Lake School’s collection, from which anyone in the community can borrow. On the site, you can join our email list, see our calendar of events, and submit your comments or questions.

We’re in the process of culling our reference shelves and moving a selection of books to our sale shelves. This will make it easier to see what we have to offer in non-fiction (a lot!). We plan to replace many

of these books, so come by and see what’s new.

Bookmark reviews have been popular at the library. When you check out a book, we tuck a bookmark into it. It has five blank stars on it which you can fill in after you’ve read the book (and add your comments on the back, if you like). Leave the bookmark in the book when you return it, so others can see your “review”. Many of our readers have enjoyed both offering their reviews and reading those of others.

We’re ready to create a seating area with comfortable chairs. Before we go chair shopping, we thought we’d put out a call for donated chairs. If you have clean, sturdy, attractive, comfortable reading chairs you’d like to donate (or sell), email us at moonlakecommunitylibrary@yahoo.com. If you’d

like to donate financially to this cause...well, we always appreciate donations.

The library is open Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Game time begins at 10 a.m. Hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays are from 3 until 5 p.m. (after March 11, our hours will be extended to 3 until 6 p.m.). Come by anytime and enjoy a cup of coffee, camaraderie, and connection.

Kelly Leavitt is the librarian at Moon Lake Community Library.

Books and Bricks

by Angela Hadley



Calling all Lego maniacs! Last month, Moon Lake Community Library began hosting “Books and Bricks”, a free program for school-aged children which promotes literacy concepts and reading. It’s been so well-received, we’ve scheduled another 4-week session on Friday afternoons from 3:30–5:30 p.m. beginning March 16.

During the February session, I asked the kids at the first class to raise their hands if they were a writer and only half raised their hands. After the second class, I asked again and they all quickly shot their hands up in the air.

The children use Legos to recreate the settings and characters of their favorite stories and share their creations with the group. The program focuses on helping children understand character and plot development, the importance of setting in telling their stories, and the use of technology to create books. The children write their own stories, use Lego building bricks to create the settings and characters, and then upload photos of their creations onto laptops using the Lego software. They then plan the layout of their book pages, add background scenery, incorporate dialogue, and print a hard copy of their original story.

The program is limited to 10 participants and pre-registration is required. Visit moonlakelibrary.org to register your child for this exciting program. If you have any questions, email moonlakecommunitylibrary@yahoo.com or call me at 256-634-2062.

Angela Hadley is a member of the board of Moon Lake Community Library.



EVERYONE A TWISTED TREE
BENT AND BROKEN AND DISEASED
CLIMBING STRIVING TOWARD THE LIGHT
UNDER SKY SO BLUE AND BRIGHT

WANTING WARMTH, A PLACE TO GROW
NEEDING MOSTLY JUST TO KNOW
THEIR ROOTS ARE SAFELY IN THE GROUND
WIND AND STORMS WON’T KNOCK THEM DOWN

AND THAT EACH MORNING
WHEN IT COMES
THEY CAN TURN TOWARDS EARLY SUN,
THOUGH BENT AND TWISTED DOWN BELOW,

WITH RAIN AND LIGHT
THEY CAN
STILL
GROW

- LYDIA RANDOLPH

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.

What a day of love and fun! It is February 14 as this article is being written and the first senior lunch for the Spring was a blast. The 1st and 2nd graders from Moon Lake Elementary School began the day with a cute rendition of “Love Monster” with singing and great air guitar. How could you not be in love with them all? Then Colton and Gunner Hadley delivered handmade Valentines to everyone. What thoughtful boys. And of course, Camp Skyline Ranch for Girls provided

a delicious lasagna lunch followed by a spectacular Valentine cake and roses for everyone, with a great crew to help. There was so much love in the room, it was hard to breathe. Hoyle Smith and Peggy Pullen entertained with Danny Boy and Amazing Grace. And of course, the Black Hat Poet reminded us of his girlfriend, Magdalena Hagdalena, with one tooth pointing north and the other south. Thanks for everyone (especially the kitchen cupids) who made it a true day of love and joy!

I’m sure Ms. Paula will tell you more, but on February 2, a trip to the Huntsville Symphony Young People’s concert was such a treat. The 3rd, 4th and 5th graders enjoyed the orchestra and a theater group’s rendition of “Peter and the Wolf”. Ask the kids who their favorite character was and how spectacular the costumes were. My fave was the cat. They were also in awe of the precision of the musicians and their theater etiquette was exemplary! Thank you, Ms. Paula, for discovering such a worthwhile field trip.

Where will be the best place to be on Saturday, April 7? At MERF’s fabulous 6th annual Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction in the Moon Lake Elementary school gym. Come support MERF and its programs while enjoying a great event celebrating that “It takes a village to raise a child...and a community to make a difference.” Local restaurants and caterers will showcase their culinary artistry by providing a “taste

of the mountain” treat for ticket holders, and local artists from Moon Lake School and the professional art community will be providing great pieces for the silent and live auctions. Tickets need to be purchased in advance from a board member or at the Mentone Market. A table of 8 is \$250 and a single ticket is \$35. MERF’s Facebook page will showcase auction items. Food vendors that are committed are JoeJohn’s Catering, Fontana’s Catering, Mildred’s Meadows, Mentone Market, Wildflower Café, Paula’s Biscuits, Plowshares Bistro, Green Leaf Grill and Valley Head High School culinary team. Come join the fundraising celebration and make a difference!

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 contribute online at www.crowdrise.com/MERF. Contact us at merf.mentone@gmail.com or 256-634-4673.



MERF's Taste of the Mountain and Art Auction



My Country, 'tis of thee
Sweet land of LIBERTY
Of thee I sing
LAND where my fathers died
LAND of the Pilgrims PRIDE
FROM EVERY MOUNTAIN SIDE
LET FREEDOM RING

APRIL 7, 2018 • 6 PM • MOON LAKE GYM

News from the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center

by Randy Grider

March will be a busy month for the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center (MACC), with several events on tap. Things kick off with the MACC Spring Arts Season Kickoff during the second weekend of the month. It will be the first of a seasonal “art swap out” at the former Kamama Art Gallery that is now the temporary home of MACC (until construction of the permanent facility is complete). The new art gallery will feature the works of local and regional artists.

Following the initial kickoff, artists will rotate out their art the second weekend of each season: March (Spring); June (Summer); September (Fall); and December (Winter). The public is welcome to come meet the artists and enjoy music and refreshments. Please check the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center Facebook page for more details.

On Thursday, March 22, MACC will host DeKalb Fine Arts Academy’s Spring Showcase from 6:30–8:30 p.m. Students from the DeKalb County Fine Arts Academy will present two one-act plays—“Us and Them” by David Campton and “The Insanity of Mary Girard” by Lanie Robertson. Both plays are thought-provoking and challenging acting pieces that the students are excited to take on. Nationally acclaimed actor Sandra Lafferty, who serves as MACC’s artist-in-residence for theater and film, has been working with the students at the academy as well as the Fort Payne

High School drama department. MACC will be able to expand the efforts of the outreach program thanks to a grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts. Admission to the Spring Showcase is a \$10 donation, and the proceeds will benefit DeKalb County Fine Arts Academy and the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

On Saturday, March 24, Debbie Bond will perform from 7–9 p.m. An accomplished singer, guitar player and songwriter, Debbie has been paying her dues in the Alabama backwoods for over 30 years. Influenced by the famed sounds of Muscle Shoals, her impressive musical story includes years of performing with older traditional Alabama blues musicians, including Johnny Shines, Sam Lay, Eddie Kirkland and Willie King. Her immersion in Alabama blues has deeply flavored her guitar playing, soulful voice and original song writing, yet her sound is contemporary and original, incorporating soul, blues, and jazz influences. She has toured extensively in Europe, including France, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Debbie is the co-founder of the award-winning Alabama Blues Project, an educational non-profit devoted to preserving and promoting Alabama’s rich blues heritage. Admission is a \$15 donation that will benefit the Mentone Arts & Cultural Center.

For more information or to reserve a seat at any of the events, please email me at mentoneartscenter@gmail.com or call 256-674-3366.

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



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

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Come see if tiny living fits your big life!



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Top Right: Debbie Bond
Middle and Bottom Right:
Students of DeKalb Fine Arts
Academy



Friday Farm-to-Table Dinners

The Farm at WINDY HILL
MENTONE, AL

MARCH 2 / APRIL 6 / MAY 4

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PURCHASE TICKETS
CONTACT INFO@THEFARMATWINDYHILL.COM

Feeder Frenzy!

I was recently sitting in a friend's home, enjoying a leisurely cup of coffee and conversation, when I noticed a frenzy of activity at the bird feeder that hangs right outside her kitchen windows.

After filling her feeder with black oil sunflower seeds, we enjoyed being entertained by the birds that just kept coming. Her gourmet morning breakfast meal was standing room only!

Flitting back and forth to the trees with their seeds, some even tried to eat them at the feeder, banging their bills against the wooden tray. I was transfixed.

The black-capped chickadees were aplenty. They fluttered in, grabbed a seed, then hightailed it. I couldn't imagine how they eat those seeds as quickly as they come and go at the feeder. It turns out that they hide their food, then go back later to eat in leisure. They can remember thousands of unique spots where they have hidden goodies, and each Fall they allow brain neurons containing old information to die, replacing them with new neurons so they can adapt to changes in their social flocks and environment, even with their tiny brains! Pretty amazing.

I wondered how these small creatures make it

through the harsh winters, and read that they hide their food for the winter months and excavate their homes in small cavities in rotten wood that has fallen or may still be standing. They burrow in and stay warm, coming out only for the food at the feeder or other tasty morsels they might find on warmer days.

Suddenly, a lone white-breasted nuthatch appeared, strikingly different from the smaller, rounded chickadees. It was so big that it nearly tilted the feeder up in the air! I noticed that the nuthatch takes its seed in its long bill and flies off to the nearby tree trunk where he lodges his seed into the bark and begins hammering it until it "hatches" out of the hull. They love large nuts such as sunflower and peanuts, and delightful suet. I know that many birds fly in flocks, but the nuthatch is territorial and stays paired for life. They may even invite one or two of their offspring to stay around, but they pretty much are the same ones at the feeder each year if they've adopted your feeder.

Soon, the word was out in the neighborhood about this delicious meal and tufted titmice swarmed the feeder. I have learned that in the winter, white-breasted nuthatches have a tendency to join foraging flocks led by chickadees or titmice. It's thought that

they join the flock so food will be easier to find, and so predators can be more easily spotted. One study found that when titmice were removed from a flock, nuthatches were warier and less willing to visit exposed bird feeders.

Titmice are hoarders. They grab and go, grab and go—storing their food within 130 feet of the feeder. They use holes in trees that are already there, since they can't excavate like the nuthatch. It makes me grateful that there are so many dead trees that have fallen in the woods outside my friend's home.

Something interesting that I didn't know about the titmouse: tufted titmice often line the inner cup of their nest with hair, sometimes plucked directly from living animals. The list of hair types identified from old nests includes raccoons, opossums, mice, woodchucks, squirrels, rabbits, livestock, pets, and even humans. Isn't that amazing?

My day became filled with thoughts of those tiny birds filling their bellies with the bounty of the feeder, knowing they were safe in their little cubbyholes in the trees nearby. Large birds have long held an interest to me, but these smaller birds have now captured my heart, and I will pay closer attention to them as well.

by deJoly LaBrier



Black-Capped Chickadee



White-Breasted Nuthatch



Tufted Titmouse

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Mentone Wedding Chapel

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

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

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

Rhododendron Garden Club

by Mellanie Tuttle



The Rhododendron Garden Club met on February 13 at the Boy Scout House and was treated by hostess Mary Shurett to an early Valentine's Day celebration. Three heart-shaped candy boxes stood behind a Valentine-themed array of delicious food that overflowed to a second table. If the sizes of those candy boxes indicate depth of feeling, Mary is one well-loved lady.

President Mellanie Tuttle called the meeting to order. After pledging allegiance to the flag, the meditation followed with Sharon Harris sharing thoughts and research on the benefits of gardening. Garden aerobics reduces stress and depression and she quoted, "Gardening is medicine that does not need a prescription and has no limit on dosage." During Roll Call, Hyacinth, Daffodils, Money plant, Rhododendron, Hellebore, Yellow Crocus, Moss and Evergreens were all mentioned as being in bloom or providing color in the winter garden.

Horticulture Chair (and Master Gardener) Martha Wood's theme for the year is "The Healthy Garden." To provide that healthy garden and pollinator interest, native annuals, perennials, vines, grasses, shrubs and trees should be planted so that food and shelter is

available year-round. Conservation Chair (and Master Gardener) Marsha Merrell related that gardens and other green spaces were linked to better health. Living near green spaces increases activity in the amygdala, which is the part of the brain that controls emotions and lowers people's risk of dying. Children who live near green spaces score higher on attention tests. Design Chair (and Master Gardener) Mellanie Tuttle proposed that the club have a small flower show with the inclusion of students from the after-school program at Moon Lake.

The after-school program is a joint effort between the RCG, Master Gardeners and the school. So far this year, students have: seen a slide show about snakes and spiders by ranger Larry Beane; planted flower seeds in flats; created two container gardens; and made potato-print Valentine cards.

Old and new business was discussed, along with second and third trips to the refreshment table. Members decided to plant a pollinator garden at the library and maintain beds at the Post Office, as well as plant a Rhododendron in the Mason Park in memory of Shirley Hussell. The meeting was adjourned.

RCG member Rhea Pirch gave a timely PowerPoint slide show on Mosses. The first slide showed a lovely moss garden that was the envy of all, with a few claiming it was a photo of their yard! Moss is a small, green flowerless plant that lacks true roots and reproduces by spores. The scientific division is *Bryophyta* with 12,000 species (specific epithet replaces species in the new flower show handbook). Moss forms in clumps or mats and prefers damp, shady locations. It goes into dormancy during periods of drought and requires only two minutes of AM water to grow. All mosses can be classified as two types: *Acrocarpous* and *Pleurocarpous*. The *Acrocarpous* mosses

are usually unbranched and erect, forming a mounding colony. They are slower growers and because of their thickness and tightly packed stems, weeds are less likely to invade. *Acrocarpus* examples are *Polytrichum commune* (Hair cap moss), *Leucobryum glaucum* (Pin cushion) and *Campylopus introflexus* (Heath Star). The *Pleurocarpus* mosses tend to form spreading carpets. They freely branch in a chaotic manner, grow faster and quickly regenerate from broken fragments, and attach to stone. *Pleurocarpus* examples are *Hypnum imponens* (Sheet moss), *Thuidium delicatulum* (Fern moss), and *Plagiomnium cuspidatum* (Baby tooth moss). To make a moss garden, remove existing plants, spray with a pre-emergence, grade and contour. Use stones where run-off occurs. Moss is not particular about soil pH but will not grow in sand. Place companion plants like hosta, ferns, and crocus first and then put in mosses last. Adding a handful of moss to one cup each of buttermilk and water in the blender and mixing can make a moss slurry that can then be poured wherever moss is wanted. Rhea's last slide was a "moss lady" sleeping on her side. She suggested Googling moss sculptures for inspiration and beauty. "The moss sits hedgehog-like on the stone, softly hibernating, gently green."

The next meeting will be on March 13 at the Boy Scout House at 10 a.m. Dianne Kuehl will be speaking on Hummingbirds. The March hostess suggested that everyone eat well before the meeting because she will not be furnishing the quantity or quality of food provided by Mary! Join us next month as all ages, shapes, sizes and appetites are welcome.

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., National Garden Clubs.

• Daffodils

● by Pete Halupka

- There is a time of year in the chilly South
- Where memories of warmth lie scarred and tattered
- The same place where history I was told didn't matter
- It emerges in the most surreal yellow
- that a god could possibly conjure up in a couple days

- I speak of a yellow preceded by green
- and green preceded by the humid cold
- A kind of cold that gives bones a memory
- Daffodils emerge in the oldest fields known to us

- Each spring
- they etch an extraordinary and persistent history
- as clear as day
- Surrounding each old home site, they shine
- They are the light shone
- on multitudes
- of different histories, and connect us to
- the idea that this Earth will spin no matter what

Yes.

No old home, greyed by the elements
is without a diligent Oak
With its Mast crops
Its Ubiquitous seed sprouting
in some wide, poetic array by squirrels
It's caring medicine, far beyond bark and leaf
Best exemplified when
waking late in the morning under sun
rolling through its trickling reach

But.

No old homesite is without a path
of daffodils leading us up to its story
Planted by young and old hands forever ago
I can feel them
moving aside cold soil so fertile
I know I can eat it, in my dreams

The flowers rise like Lookout
when no single soul could believe their arrival
How brave they are
How confident to bloom when all signs point to wait
They feel as old as humankind
And they will lead us to a real heaven
if we follow





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.

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 our 10:30am Sunday service of Holy Eucharist. We are open for daily prayer and thanksgiving, and support our community with outreach. Easter Holy Week Services: Maundy Thursday Service, Thursday, 3/29, 6pm; Stations of the Cross, Good Friday, 3/30, Noon; Easter Celebration with Communion, Easter Sunday, 4/1, 10:30am. ALL are welcome! 256-634-4476.

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.

SUMMERVILLE

Redemption Worship Center invites you to "Find Love, Encouragement, & Purpose!" Wednesdays: Hour of Power Bible Study 6:30pm; Chosen Generation Youth 6:30pm. Sundays: Sunday School 9:30am; Morning Celebration 10:30am. Pastors Dr. David & Penny Reeves. 174 West First Avenue, Summerville, GA 30747. 706-808-0909.

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 Bunnell.

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



Candy Report



My husband and I would like to thank everyone who donated to our sons' M&M candy fundraiser for St. Joseph's children's food program. Your individual donations reinforced the values that we strive to teach our boys: compassion and care for others and the power of the individual to make big things happen. Our community came together and raised \$600 through this fundraiser (\$300 from the contest and a matching donation of \$300 from one of the winners) and this will fund the Snack in a Backpack program for 12 weeks! Colton and Gunner thank you for participating and I thank you for showing my boys that they are part of a wonderful community. — Angela Hadley

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 REDUCED 1.8 ACRES on East Fork of Little River. Easy access to river from common trail that runs along the banks of the river. Bluff views. County water available. Gated community. \$65,000 (1063624)	 SOLD Hidden Brow Tract. 5.1 acres of level, wooded East brow views of Shinbone Valley. Located in Cloudland, GA. \$127,500 (23213)	 COTTAGE ON LITTLE RIVER CANYON. What a peaceful setting and private. 2 bdrm with sleeping loft, 2 baths. Great room with Rock Fireplace. Covered front porch and grilling deck. Adjoins on the back side Wildlife management and in the front the canyon preserve. Private access. Appt Only. \$140k (22865)	SECLUSION AND TRANQUILITY are nestled in this 2 story luxury 3BR/3BA Heritage Log Home. Located on 20 acres of breathtaking views & woods on the East Brow of Lookout Mountain, Cloudland, GA. This furnished home features vaulted ceilings in the great room and kitchen/dining room, both of which have hand-crafted rock fireplaces. Fully equipped kitchen with granite and concrete countertops, stainless steel appliances, and eat-in bar. Amenities include 4 CHA units, laundry room, and separate potting shed/workshop. The detached 2-car garage has a full upstairs 1BR/1BA and extra storage room. An ideal mountain escape! Craftsmanship and attention to detail makes this property one of a kind. Appointment only. \$699,000. (1046635)	 REDUCED	LOTS AND ACREAGE Oakwood Subdivision - 6.1 acres. Wooded, level, lightly restricted. \$37,500 REDUCED WOODED 3.4 ACRES located in established subdivision called Oakwood in nearby Mentone. Restrictive covenants. \$20,500. LEVEL BUILDING LOT in downtown Menlo, GA. Great site for Residential or Commercial use. Non-restricted. Many possibilities! \$12,500 REDUCED





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Good Old Days

by Doug Kiker

When I was a lad,
I would often hear this phrase.
“That was in the good old days.”
Then, granddaddy would tell of the ways
That made things so different,
and now, I’m amazed.
I think he was telling me,
we’re just going through a phase.
Right now, this moment, this time,
to us can become the
“Good old days.”



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SAGE ADVICE: SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER



by
**Susan
Seago**

Gardening may be fun and enjoyable, with great results, but it is hard work. Whether digging by hand or using mechanical means, it is still a lot of work. Many days can be spent preparing beds for both vegetable gardening or flower gardening. While I like the looks of plants in the ground, I am at the age that the easier and quicker I can garden, the better it sounds. Now that the weather “appears” to be improving for Spring, I have found another way to garden, with maybe even better results.

Raised bed gardening has been around for years. Europeans have worked with raised beds for many years. Who knows, maybe even some of the pioneers used raised beds. What do I mean by “raised beds”? These are beds that are built with walls to raise the level so that gardening can be more efficient and easier. They are good for growing smaller amounts of veggies and flowers, especially for a single adult or small family. There are no pathway weeds to pull, and soil can be kept from eroding or washing away during heavy rains. Less soil is needed to replenish the beds each year. And, watering can be kept to a minimum, going only to those plants in the beds. The soil is usually warmer and better drained in the beds so that Spring planting can be started earlier.

Raised beds do not have to be square or rectangular but should be at a one- to two-foot level to make it easier on the back when bending over. If the wall is wide enough, the gardener can sit while working. Weeding this way becomes less of a hassle, especially for older adults. I have been to nursing homes that had beds raised to three feet so that even those who are wheelchair bound can enjoy gardening.

Beds can range from very expensive store-bought kits to simple materials found in your backyard or the woods. The basics are the same, however. Most beds should be two feet tall or less. Twelve inches of soil is sufficient to grow most vegetables and flowers.

Yes, carrots can be grown in raised beds! Taller beds require greater support in the walls, such as being nailed together to prevent collapse. It's best to use 2"x12" naturally rot-resistant wood, like red cedar, black locust, or redwood. Treated wood has not been proven conclusively safe for use in vegetable gardens. The rot-resistant woods can last 10–15 years, depending on conditions, before deterioration begins. Another choice would be recycled composite plastic lumber, available in several sizes and colors.

I want to try a raised bed built from logs, which are in abundance in my yard. We are doing some clearing and can use the logs from those trees. They need to be peeled, which can be done with the proper cutting tool. Peeling helps the logs last a long time. The recommended width of raised beds is four feet to allow ease in reaching to the center of the bed. (If you are six feet or taller, you can make yours six feet wide!) For straight beds, eight to twelve feet in length is good. For hillsides, beds need to be higher on one side so the soil can remain level. Depending on the amount of soil you want in the beds, 2"x6" or 2"x12" boards are good. 24" rebar is great for anchoring the logs or boards in place. Or you can use VERY long anchor screws when stacking two or more boards or logs. Ladies, a good battery-powered drill makes it so easy to build these beds.

An old European style of gardening known as “hugelkultur” uses logs and sticks piled alternately and covered with leaves and soil. In a sunny spot, dig a shallow trench, if possible. Add wood that rots (no dogwood, black locust, or cedar). Pile smaller sticks or limbs on top of that. Cover with leaves and any

available soil until the sticks are covered. Add ash if you have some, and water well. As the logs rot, the soil is enriched and the plants grow happily. I like this method because it helps to clean up fallen debris and recycles natural elements.

The best location for any vegetable garden is a flat surface with at least six hours of direct sun a day. Flower beds can be either located in the sun or shade, depending on the choice of flowers. Because the beds are not humongous, choice of location is much easier than the usual ground bed.

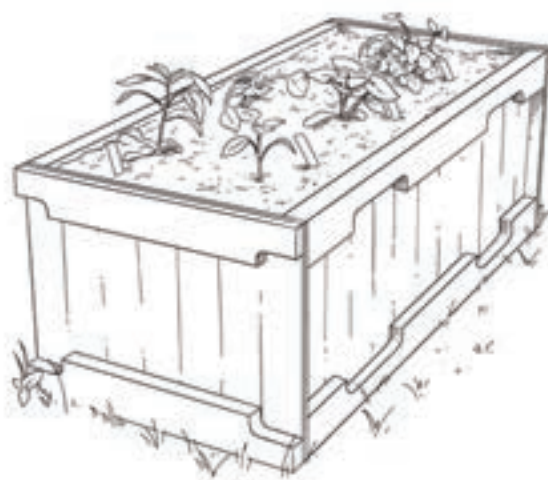
Soil is the most important part of a raised bed. A good idea is to have your soil tested at the County Extension office (aces.edu/anr/soillab). They have little kits so you can gather a small amount of soil from the areas where you want to garden. These samples are then tested and results sent to you within a reasonable timeframe. Some of the mountain topsoil may need only a little soil amendment, but most of it

will need quite a bit. Bagged or bulk soil amendment can be purchased to add to the topsoil in your beds. Very well composted soil (six months or longer) can also be used. Check with your local garden shop for more advice on your soil. We will talk about creating your own soil in another article.

Raised beds are easier to keep free of grass than ground level beds. The soil does not become compacted because it

is not stepped on while tending to the garden. Mulch can be added to the beds to help with water retention and keep weeds at a minimum, and it will stay in place.

Finally, watering is so much easier in raised beds. You may choose to hand water or install a simple drip system that reaches each plant. The drip system can be put on a timer on a faucet so you do not have to stand holding the hose. Either way, the water goes only to the plants in the beds, with no waste. While all your gardening may not be done in raised beds, I think you will find much enjoyment in using them. Happy Spring!



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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. \$159,900. #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. \$189,900. 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.	

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#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.

#1038089 - 6 1/2 acres with approx. 250' of road frontage and 1-1/2 acres of level land for a secluded home site.

#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.

#1073864 - Brow Lot! .78 acres. \$104,000.

#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.

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#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.

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1082245 - Two building lots totaling 10+ acres with fabulous view! \$109,900.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

DeKalb County Red Cross—Then and Now by Tobey Miller

There was a time when the American Red Cross (ARC) was a major force in this area. The archives show that ARC activity in DeKalb County started as far back as 1917. Old newspaper clippings show Red Cross support for victims of a tornado in Fyffe in 1935. American Red Cross activity increased significantly right after Pearl Harbor. Elders in our community may remember making surgical bandages at a Red Cross office in Valley Head in 1942. Perhaps the period of 1960 through 1990 was the heyday of Red Cross activity in the county. The Red Cross Roll Call over those years shows the names of many well-known families in our community; names like Isbell, Shugart, Beck, McCurdy, Hilyer, and Rains. There are headlines about blood given for Viet Nam soldiers and about Red Cross helping members of the armed forces get in touch with loved ones here at home. In the 2000s local companies contributed thousands to the Red Cross after 9-11 and local service organizations like Kiwanis and the Girl Scouts partnered with Red Cross on safety programs. There are Red Cross volunteers and workers whose names appear in news reports again and again and one, Ms. Jean Harper, joined the Red Cross as a hospital volunteer in 1960 and still serves as a Red Cross volunteer today.

The American Red Cross and DeKalb County have both changed, and grown, separately since that time. But with the tornado season fast approaching, now is a good time to consider renewing and restoring the



great relationship that these two entities once shared. While there is no longer a separate DeKalb County Chapter of the ARC, we are part of a thriving and active chapter for North Alabama. There is still a Red Cross office in the DeKalb County Activities building

and there are still dedicated volunteers who are ready 24/7 to provide immediate assistance to victims of home fires. There are Red Cross volunteers at the DeKalb County Medical Center. There are DeKalb County volunteers who helped in flooding in Baton Rouge in 2016 and in Hurricane Harvey in Houston last year. But we don't have enough volunteers to provide the kind of help we and our neighbors will need if we have a tornado outbreak like the one in April, 2011. And to take full advantage of all the services that ARC provides we need more volunteers to help with home fires and large disasters; we need volunteers to help with Service to the Armed Forces, blood drives, and administrative activities like staffing the office. The good work that needs to be done is now being shouldered by a few.

As the Community Volunteer Leader for Red Cross in DeKalb County, my challenge is to tap the giving spirit that is so strong here and help make DeKalb County "Red Cross Ready" once again. I am working to establish relationships between ARC and DeKalb County service organizations, government offices, religious groups and businesses. We need volunteers with special skills as well as volunteers who can only offer their strength or their time. Red Cross will train you for free for whatever service you wish to provide. You get to choose when and where you want to volunteer. March is National American Red Cross month and is a perfect time to join. Please email me at tobey.miller2@redcross.org or call at 561-302-2243 for more information.

Medicare Savings Program

by Lynn Hixson

Medicare Savings Program is a Medicaid-sponsored program for people with Medicare. Each state runs different Medicaid programs for various groups of people. If you have Medicare and Medicaid, you likely have Medicaid for individuals who are aged, blind, or disabled. This is the most common type of Medicaid that Medicare beneficiaries

have. State Medicaid programs also run the Medicare Savings Programs, including the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program, that help cover some Medicare costs.

If you qualify for Medicare and Medicaid, the two programs work together to cover your health care needs. People with Medicare and Medicaid are known as dual eligible. If you are a dual eligible and have no other coverage, Medicare pays first for your health care services and Medicaid pays second. Medicaid is the payer of last resort, which means it pays for your health care costs after all other insurance has paid. Other than QMB, Medicare Savings Programs also include SLMB and QI-1 programs.

In general, an MSP pays for your Part B premium

and includes Extra Help. Extra Help is a federal program that helps you with your prescription drug costs. It pays for your Part D plan premium up to a certain amount, and you will have very low copays at the pharmacy.

The takeaway point is that if you have Medicaid, you should likely receive assistance from an MSP and/or Extra Help. If you think that you qualify for one of these programs but you are not enrolled, contact your SHIP Counselor, Lynn Hixson, at the DeKalb County Council on Aging at 256-845-8590



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NEW LISTING! JUST ENOUGH IS JUST RIGHT. And we think you'll find this 11.9 acres to offer just enough land, privacy and elbow room. Public water is right there at the road, so is electricity. If you're resourceful enough, you might even find there's plenty of timber on the property to have milled into the lumber you'll need to build. Not too much, not too little, & at a perfect price. \$41,900 (1087348)

9.07 WOODED ACRES CORNERED BY 2 COUNTIES across from the historic First Church where a many Dollar is buried. Beautiful hardwoods. Price a \$ per acre. \$45,350. (108722)

OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE! 2 WOODED ACRES with a tiny little rustic one-room camping cabin (no plumbing, water or septic installed). Sort of a getaway or place to stay until you're ready to build your mountain home. Restricted. \$39,700 (1034503)

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

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

READY FOR YOUR DREAM HOME! 2.75 unrestricted acres less than 3 miles from the heart of Mentone. Power, water & septic already in place! Just waiting for you to build your dream home or pull in a camper of mobile home. Close to it all but nestled quietly into the woods away from it all as well! \$23,500 (1086608)

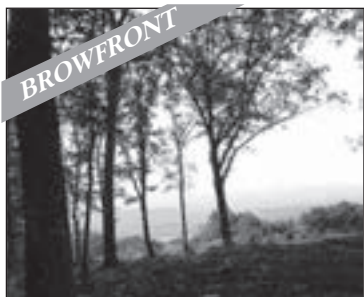
SOUTH COOL STREET brow-front property with a beautiful old stone fireplace chimney, part of the foundation, plus a small garage. New survey. An original Mentone summer home once stood here, built and owned by the same family since early 1920s. Approx 0.45 acre lot in an area where properties are seldom available. Build your own memories! \$125,000 (1070474)



"THE BURREN." Surrounded by intriguing rock formations, huge boulders & woods, this 3BR/2.5BA mountain retreat cabin is found just off the DeSoto Pkwy. The features you want such as metal roof; screened porch; wood-burning mtn stone fireplace; private back deck w/hot tub; 2nd floor balconies. Convenient to DeSoto St Park & Mentone, yet privately nestled on 1.9 acres. There's room for lots of folks (even has a bunk closet!!); but it also lends itself nicely to quiet evenings around the fireplace for two. Large screened porch offers expanded living area outdoors. Furnishings negotiable. New hot tub installed 2018. Active vacation rental with great rental history! \$185,000 (1087665)



CLASSIC BUNGALOW-STYLE COTTAGE in the heart of Mentone, built in 1910. Fully restored & updated in 2003. Light & airy spaces, lots of windows. Open living with library area & adjacent sunroom; two large bedrooms; one bath. (There's a huge closet off MABR that would make a perfect master bath & laundry area!) Kitchen with breakfast bar & large pantry. Separate dining room. Beautiful wood floors and locally-made terra cotta tiles. Front sun porch, back screened porch. Approx 2 acres with mature shade trees & wet-weather stream. Older single-wide mobile home on the property, currently used for storage, to be renovated or moved away leaving room for a cottage/guest house or shop. \$177,500 (1086659)



OH MY! THE POSSIBILITIES! What could one do with this marvelous old Mentone heritage property, with approx 210' of brow frontage and spacious gardens & walkways?! At one time, this was a tea house where Mentone society reportedly gathered on the porches or inside to catch up on all the news. Currently 3BR/2BA, with formal dining room, sitting room, den & sun porches. Unfinished "grandma's attic" area with intriguing angles and nooks. Wood floors throughout. Mostly wood walls & ceilings, some sheetrock. Situated on 2.66 ac (+/-), with plenty of room for an additional cottage to be built. Wildlife love the natural setting. \$248,500 (1074930)



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)



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)



THE VIEWS, THE SPACE, THE LOCATION...it's all here. Lovely frame & stone cottage on the brow at Mentone. Over 3000 sq ft; 3BR/4BA; lg bonus room for 4th BR, office, exercise or play room. Main-level Master Suite with wall of windows to enjoy the view. Huge kitchen is a dream for those who love to cook & entertain: granite counters, commercial gas cooktop, double wall ovens, wine cooler, disposal, compactor, gas fireplace, enormous pantry. Large dining room opens onto brow-side screen porch & decks. New wood floors & ceiling; new paint; new windows in MA BR & Living. Detached 3-car garage w/efficiency apartment & shop. Wrought-iron gated entry; circular, paved drive. \$495,000 (1084334)



N · E · W · S

by Kelly Leavitt

Little River Arts Council enjoyed a successful membership social on February 24 at DeSoto State Park Lodge. It was wonderful being surrounded by so many supporters of the arts. The room was filled with the sound of spirited conversation, laughter, and music.

Artist Lydia Randolph set up her easel and painted during the event; her completed painting is featured on page 13 alongside her poetry. Fiber artist Katelyn Worley spun yarn and explained the process with interested guests. Board member and DSP Naturalist Brittney Hughes displayed many of her woven baskets and demonstrated how she weaves with reed and long-leaf pine needles. Carver Jim Marbutt displayed (and sold) several of his wood sculptures. Musician Elisha Tatum entertained the crowd with traditional and original compositions on his guitar. We are deeply grateful to each of them for

sharing their strong creative energy with us all.

Board members Rhea Pirch, Bill Rutledge and I received a scholarship from South Arts and will be traveling to Chattanooga in mid-March to attend the Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit. We are excited about attending this conference which explores shaping the character of a town around arts and cultural activities. The Arts Council plans to offer classes each month throughout the year and plans are in the works for several public art projects around town. Our fifth annual summer music series will begin in June. At each of the series' concerts, we will offer opportunities for attendees to make art while listening to the music. To learn more, visit littleriverartscouncil.org.



Front: Cynthia Stinson; Left to right: Wil Henry Cobble, Kelly Leavitt, Barbara Umland, Rhea Pirch, Jessica Harper-Brown, Bill Rutledge, Brittney Hughes, Kim McKenzie, Paula Tally, Holley Midgley

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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.

"Tinker Hollow" was originally part of Mentone's art colony near the river at Alpine.

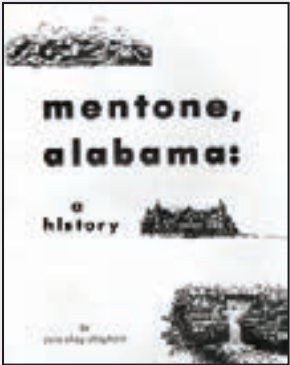


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LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF MENTONE



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

Bell Battelle, DeSoto State Park, Green Leaf Grill, Little River Hardware, Magnolia Rose, Mentone Market, Moon Lake Community Library, and the Wildflower Café. 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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- Chapter 12: The Decade of the Centennial

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Moon Lake School News

by Kelly Leavitt

Our local students at Moon Lake Elementary School are quite fortunate. My recent conversation with principal Mary Lance revealed some exciting things happening over the next several weeks.

- The school's new greenhouse will be completed by the first week in March, and volunteers are requested to help set up tables and get things organized. Call the school at 256-634-4113 if you'd like to help.
- Before-school students have been practicing yoga from 6:45 until 7:15 a.m. Each day, between 20 and 30 students participate. Mrs. Lance said it's evident the children are more relaxed, with blood flowing to their brains, as they prepare for their school day. The community is invited to participate in after-school yoga classes from 4–5 p.m. on Wednesdays in the school gym. There is no charge. This class is taught by video.
- On Friday, March 16, students will be treated to

a performance of Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" by a troupe from Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF). A workshop with the actors will follow the performance, which has been made possible by funding from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and Little River Arts Council. Miss Paula has begun preparing the students for the play with material provided by ASF.

- Earth Day will be celebrated on Thursday, April 19, and volunteers are needed! Plants will be planted and flower beds will be remulched. Misty Watters of Moon Lake Trading Co. traditionally provides plants at a reduced cost for planting around the school. If you'd like to donate a flat (or two!), please let the school know.
- Kindergarten registration for the 2019–2020 school year will be held on Tuesday, March 13, from 8 a.m. until noon.
- The school will be closed for Spring Break the week of March 26–30.



February's MLES
Student of the Month
is Carson Bullock

Grant Process Worth the Daredevil Experience

by Paula Easter

My mom always called me "her little daredevil" in my younger years, as it always seemed that I was up to something that I should not be doing or was not afraid to do. Imagine that...

(I know, I hear you all laughing and saying that, too). For instance, my mom thought placing the suckers on the shelf above the stove would keep me out of them until I could earn one. That didn't suit me at all. Obviously, she had forgotten about my climbing ability. As my mom walked out on the back porch, I slammed the door behind her, navigated my way up the drawer handles, walked across the counter, and stepped carefully through the stove burners as potatoes boiled. Reaching my destination, I grabbed a sucker and carefully turned around, saying to my mom, who was desperately yelling at me through the door window, "Look mommy, sucker!" To which my mom said, "No the sucker is standing outside this locked door!" My poor daddy had to come home from work and let my mom back in the house. Needless to say, there weren't any suckers for me for a long, long time. True story, my friends, and, unfortunately for my parents, many others like this exist.

I have to admit that taking chances and my daredevil ways have followed me on through the years...but, with age, that has changed...somewhat. For instance, when Mrs. Sue Hayes, who was curriculum director at Trion City Schools, came to me and said, "I would like to start a music program at Trion Elementary, and I want you to help me do that," I was dumbfounded. Never in any sense of the imagination did I ever consider myself a teacher. Me, teach...

what was she thinking??? But after much thought, that daring side of me decided, "I've grown up with music, studied music, sing and play an assortment of instruments—I can do this—I'm going to do this!" As I finish my 14th year at Moon Lake Elementary, as most of you know—the rest is history. To be



honest, every day when I walk into my classroom it is a challenge, but one that this "daredevil" dearly loves.

All this leads me to my latest "daredevil" experience—taking a chance and writing a grant. I received an email from the Target Corporation

about field trip grants that they offer to elementary schools. Now, I've been with Sarah Wilcox as we presented a request from MERF for a grant from the Alabama Arts Council in Montgomery, but Sarah did all the written work. I've watched Mrs. Lance, Moon Lake principal, write and receive numerous grants—but me...this was definitely uncharted waters for me. With Sarah encouraging me on, I took the chance and completed writing my grant to Target. When I started writing about Moon Lake and its students, it became easy to write from the heart. I completed writing the

grant and sent it on its way. Then all that was left was waiting to hear if we had received the grant or not. In December, I received the best present ever, the notification from Target that we had indeed received a \$600 field trip grant! This grant allowed me to take 32 Moon Lake students to see the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Young People's Concert in February, and provide the transportation for the trip and lunch at Wendy's for everyone.

This year's concert was a performance of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf", with the Huntsville M.E.T. and the Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater acting out the character parts. It was a wonderful trip for everyone. I'm very grateful to the Target Corporation for providing us with the grant for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

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A Special Day for Jan Wilkinson

by Kelly Leavitt

One day in early January, Jan Wilkinson came into the library and suggested I mark my calendar for Saturday, February 10. She thought I might want to bring my camera to the Boy Scout House. When I asked about the event, she humbly mentioned that she'd be receiving her Wood Badge beads and Silver Beaver Award. I honestly didn't understand the weight of these awards until I heard them discussed at the ceremony, which I'm grateful to have attended. They are each impressive awards, indeed.

Standing in front of a blazing fire in the stone fireplace at Jim Berry Hall, Troopmaster David Gilbreath opened the ceremonial program. "We are gathering here to honor a special lady," he said. "Jan Wilkinson is a lady who should be honored. Some honor is way overdue and some honor she has just earned."

Troopmaster Gilbreath introduced Mayor Rob Hammond, who read a proclamation that henceforth designates February 10 as "Jan Wilkinson Day". The audience was quick to applaud, and Jan appeared to be enormously touched by the outpouring of approval.

The Wood Badge is a training course for adult Scouters. The first course dates back to 1919 at

Gillwell Park, north of London, England. The first Wood Badge course in the United States was in 1948 in New Jersey, with William "Green Bar Bill" Hillcourt serving as the first Scoutmaster. Green Bar



Jan Wilkinson with her sons, Ed and Ransom Wilkinson

Bill authored many pages of the Boy Scout Handbook. The first Wood Badge course was mainly about scout skills, scoutcraft, and pioneering. In 1973, the focus of Wood Badge shifted from scoutcraft to leadership development. In 2000, the focus shifted again to give

Scout leaders the latest leadership tools.

Jan's son, Bob Wilkinson, received his own Wood Badge beads during the joint ceremony. "Very rarely do a mother and son share the joy of receiving their beads together," said David. "The joy of two becomes the joy of all." Dr. Larry Lee, a Scoutmaster from Gadsden who was Jan and Bob's mentor through the course, made the presentation of the beads, accompanied by members of the Wilkinson family.

Jan was also honored with the bestowal of the Silver Beaver Award, the highest honor a Boy Scout Council can award a Scout leader. This award was introduced in 1931 and is for leaders who have made an impact on the lives of youth through service given. Jan and her late husband John both served as advisors on the Troop Committee for Troop 106. Jan taught the Communication badge (required for Eagle Scouts) and the Public Speaking merit badge. "There's no telling how many boys Jan has taught merit badges to," said David. "Years ago, Jan had the honor of pinning the Eagle Rank on her sons. It is only right, proper, and fitting that Ed, Bob, and Ransom present the Silver Beaver award to their mother. She should have received it 40 years ago."

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