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THE GROUNDHOG

"Neighborly News from the Heart of Lookout Mountain"

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

A Century of Summers: Camp DeSoto Marks 100 Years on Lookout Mountain

BY SARAH HURT AND MARSHA HURT

"I wanna go back, I wanna go back to Camp DeSoto! I wanna go back to the camp I love…"

For generations, this familiar refrain has echoed across the grounds of Camp DeSoto, as campers young and old have added verses celebrating their home away from home on Lookout Mountain. This summer, the words carried special meaning: hundreds of women did go back — to celebrate the camp's 100th summer.

On July 26 and 27, 445 alumnae from across the country gathered in Mentone for a weekend of remembrance, laughter, and song. Spanning seven decades in age — from 16 to 86 — participants greeted one another with squeals of delight and hugs that bridged the years since their last summer together.

For some, the reunion was their first time back since the day they packed up their trunks and said goodbye as campers. Many described the familiar rush of emotion that comes the moment they begin the drive up the mountain to Mentone, a place that has long been a source of comfort and connection. Once inside the camp gates, the celebration was a simple but joyful 24-hour immersion in DeSoto traditions.



More than 400 women gathered in July to celebrate Camp DeSoto's 100th year.

Saturday evening brought line dancing to camp classics like "Elvira," "Let's Hear It for the Boy," and "Rockin' Robin," followed by a picnic on the Playfield, featuring grass-fed beef burgers from The Farm at Windy Hill, a partner enterprise of the camp. Ice cream sandwiches — a post-picnic staple — were enjoyed before everyone gathered in the beloved central pavilion, "The Gym," for 100 Years of DeSoto Stories and Songs.

Seated on familiar wooden benches, alumnae honored the camp's directors through the decades from founder Curtis Springer, who originally established DeSoto as a boys' camp and Eloise Temple, who transitioned it into a girls' camp (and later established Skyline Ranch Camp for Girls), to beloved leaders Bess Heron and Norma Bradshaw, and later Sue Henry, who emphasized Christian growth and intentional living. The Hurt family continues to uphold the camp's mission today. Sarah Hurt is the current director, and her parents, Phil and Marsha Hurt, remain involved as owners and executive directors.

The evening program featured a stage backdrop created by Oxford, Mississippi, artist Carlyle Wolfe Lee (camper '92–'94, staff '97–'01, '04), incorporating a hand-drawn map of the camp layered with botanical designs. Folk musician Caroline Herring of Decatur, Georgia (camper '81-'84, staff '87,'91-'93), closed the program with her songs "Wise Woman" and "I Went for a Month," which reflect both

(See "Camp DeSoto," Page 5)



Yoga has many benefits, both physical and mental. (Photo by Lesa Cummings.)

Yoga in Abundance, On and Off the Mountain

BY ADELAIDE DRENNEN

Our area is filled with so many natural wonders, and one of them is the abundance of yoga class options. For such a small area, there is quite the offering of yoga for locals and visitors, too.

Yoga is an ancient practice that combines breath with movement in a series of poses called 'asanas.' The word yoga in Sanskrit means "to yoke, to create unity." The physical poses require the yogi to clear the mind, and that unifies the mind and body in that moment.

Many people practice yoga at home, and it is very portable; outside settings, traveling, and right in your own living room are all good spots for yoga. The class setting adds another dimension to that practice, as yogis meet and get to know others in the area. There is something about conversations while sitting on a yoga mat that creates a strong bond.

A yoga class is usually around an hour long, with a slow start that focuses on breath and loosening up, and then a "flow" of asanas, ending with savasana, or a complete rest of body and mind. All you need is a mat and some comfortable clothes. Yogis know that every class is easily adapted to their needs; maybe you can't do a certain pose because of an old injury or recent surgery, and so

(See "Yoga," Page 14)

Colleen Duffley's Artful Pivot to Andiamo Lodge

BY REBECCA HENDERSON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Andiamo Lodge isn't just a place to stay — it's a sanctuary that defies categorization. The name, Italian for "Let's go!" signals a call to action: let's go rest, let's go create, let's go connect. Born from the boundless energy and vision of photographer, producer, and branding powerhouse Colleen Duffley and her husband Steve Carpenter, Andiamo is as personal as it is immersive.

Born in Pittsburgh to a British mother and a military father, Duffley's path began behind the lens. "I went to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh 100 years ago and majored in photography and worked for a fashion photographer," she recalls. By her early 20s, she was already deep in the commercial trenches of Miami's advertising world, shooting resort, fashion, and travel campaigns. That versatility earned her a rare early appointment as a senior photographer at *Southern Living* magazine in the mid-1980s.

"I shot for all of Time Warner's publications: *Southern Living, Southern Accents, Cooking Light,* etc.," she says. "I was 23 and I traveled like 220 days a year."

Later, Duffley made the move to Texas to shoot for high-end clients like Neiman Marcus, Crate & Barrel, and Pottery Barn, all while training competitively for the 1992 and 1996 Olympic cycling teams. Yes, you read that correctly. But despite reaching the finals in both Olympic Trials, Colleen's work demands rerouted her path toward

(See "Andiamo," Page 14)



Colleen Duffley and lodge mascot Petey welcome visitors. (Photo by Colleen Duffley.)

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Groundhog woodcut courtesy of Meg Justice/Bee Spring Studio

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Mentone Matters

Welcoming Visitors to Our Town

BY MAYOR ROB HAMMOND

For a town whose population is less than 400, Mentone has a tremendous number of visitors. The summer camps alone bring thousands of young people here to enjoy the natural beauty and to learn and grow. Many families end up coming back in the fall to see the colors.

To accommodate this growing number of tourists, we've seen a surge in rental cabins across the area, well beyond the town limits. The greater Lookout Mountain region invites people to enjoy the mountain air, the environmental treasures, a national preserve, and the best state park in Alabama.

Day trips to Mentone are popular as well, as folks come here from across Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee to visit our shops, galleries, and restaurants.

They are also coming for our events. The upcoming Mentone Fall Festival is a major draw, with thousands coming to enjoy the artists and musicians. The Summer Music Series hosted by the Little River Arts Council keeps growing in popularity. The Mentone Americana Nights is our newest event, hosted by the Town. Despite some stormy weather, the series is off to a great start, bringing many people to the Moon Lake Campus for the first time.

It's not just tourists visiting Mentone. In the past few months, we've welcomed the director of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Kenneth Boswell. Alabama Speaker of the House Nathaniel Ledbetter has visited many times, as has State Sen. Steve Livingston. U.S. Congressman Robert Aderholt has been here on several occasions, as has Ricky Harcrow, president of the DeKalb County Commission. We've even had members of the British parliament here (a special thanks to Moon at The Wildflower Cafe for making sure they were well fed).

These leaders and elected officials are interested in the good things going on in Mentone. When they look at our town, they see one that's being frugal with its resources, faithful to its vision of community, and focused on doing all things — from the smallest tasks to the biggest projects — in a way that will enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

What do all these visitors have in common? Everyone I meet tells me how friendly the people here are. They are made to feel welcome. They sense the real spirit of community that permeates everything we do here. And they appreciate how we work together to preserve our history, celebrate our culture, and promote our area. And as your mayor and a citizen of this town, I appreciate all you do to foster that reputation and those efforts.

Congratulations to Ray Padgett on his victory in last month's town council election. I look forward to working with Ray and the other council members to continue the good work we're doing in Mentone.



Pictured, left to right, during a recent visit to Mentone are U.S. Congressman Robert Aderholt; James Wild and Richard Holden, Members of Parliament; DeKalb County Commission President Ricky Harcrow and his wife, Susan; Mentone Mayor Rob Hammond; and Caroline Aderholt, the Congressman's wife.

Water Line Improvements Begin on 89

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

Work is set to begin in September to install a new water line along County Road 89 North, significantly increasing the water supply for the residents and businesses of Mentone.

Contractors for Fort Payne Water, which owns the system, will first bore under Alabama Highway 117 to run a new 10-inch water line to 89 North. Work will then begin to extend the 10-inch line approximately half a mile along 89 North to the tanks that supply water service to the town.

The new line will replace the existing line along its current path on the east side of 89 North.

Brandon Light, executive director of Fort Payne Water, says the upgrade will quadruple the volume of water available to Mentone. "As fast as Mentone is growing, and with all the camps in the area, this project will benefit the entire town by providing a more solid supply of water," he says. It will also reduce water outages and pressure drops, while supporting fire protection efforts.

The project is funded by a $295,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to Fort Payne Water. Local sources will provide matching funds, bringing the project total to $590,000. The project "is essential for ensuring safe, reliable water service and supporting the town's tourism-driven economy," said Congressman Robert Aderholt in announcing the ARC grant award in January.

Contractors have 90 days to complete the project. Work will be done in sections to minimize disruptions in service. Light says any driveways, flower beds, and yards damaged during the work will be returned to their original condition, or better.

From the Editor

Looking for an Activity with Many Benefits? Take a Hike!

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

Living in one of the most beautiful areas of the world, it's hard for me to admit that I don't get outside enough. We have a National Preserve plus the crown of the State Park System in our backyard, but how many of us take full advantage of these treasures?

I know I don't. And that's why I love the efforts by the Alabama Tourism Department to focus on bringing us closer to nature through its Year of Alabama Trails promotion.

I love this quote from the National Park Service:

"The warm sunshine on your face, the sound of the wind rushing through the trees overhead, and the soft earthy feel of the trail under your boots. Not only are these experiences enjoyable to have, but they're good for you, too. Hiking is proven to have many health benefits, ranging from physical exercise you get when out on the trail, to emotional or mental relief that comes from being in nature."

Physical exercise is the obvious benefit of hiking. But have you thought about the emotional and mental benefits?

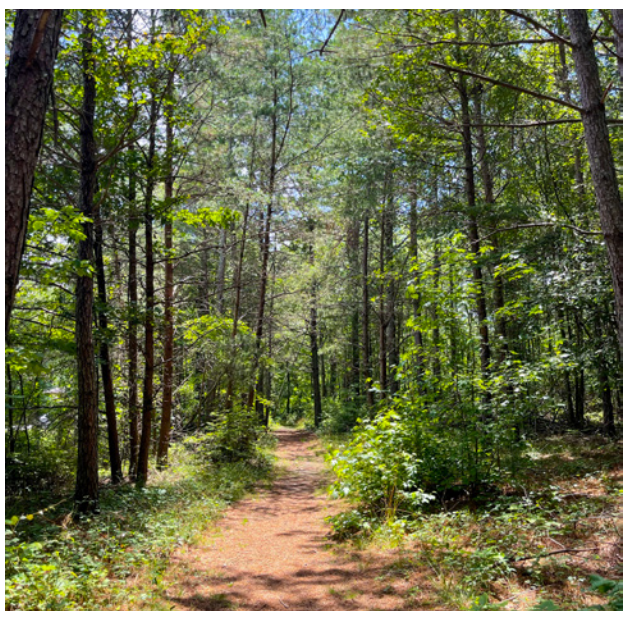
I don't know about you, but there's a lot of noise in my head some days. We all have challenges to face, issues to deal with, concerns to address. But beyond that ... well, have you been on Facebook lately? Have you watched the news? It's easy to stumble backward and become overwhelmed by the tragedies others are facing; the images of war-torn landscapes; the political back-and-forth among pundits, friends, and family members; and the economic uncertainty that impacts us all.

What can we do to restore our souls and bring balance to our inner world? Take a hike, my friend!

The NPS has many great resources to help you take advantage of the natural wonders surrounding us — treasures that we all too often take for granted. For example, visit this website:

www.nps.gov/subjects/trails/benefits-of-hiking.htm

Here you'll find an good overview of the benefits



of hiking. These may seem obvious at first glance. But if they are so obvious, why am I not on the trails more?

• **Physical Exercise:** Hiking builds stronger muscles and bones, improves your sense of balance, improves your heart health, and decreases the risk of certain respiratory problems.

• **Mental Health:** "Being in nature can boost your mood and improve mental health," says the NPS. "Spending quality time in the great outdoors reduces stress, calms anxiety, and can lead to a lower risk of depression."

• **Relational Health:** A hike is a great way to spend time with a friend or group, sharing time against a backdrop of amazing natural beauty.

"We've had so much rain. The weather has been unbearably hot. I've been terribly busy with work and other commitments. My friends have been unavailable. I can't find my hiking boots. And where's that hiking stick I've had for years? I can't hike without my favorite hiking stick!" Pick your excuse. Say it out loud. Then shake it off and go take a hike! Maybe I'll see you out there.

After all, it's the Year of Alabama Trails.

Mulch Magic

BY BILL ADAMS

This is the fourth in a series of articles on regenerative agriculture, featuring local residents involved in the movement.

Mulching is an elegant activity. It produces a host of benefits in the garden, while requiring the least amount of effort. Mulch is a weed killer, moisture and temperature regulator, soil conditioner, bug suppressor, and fertilizer. It accomplishes all this organically, without costly toxic chemicals. It minimizes the use of a hoe or tiller, and moving hay with a pitchfork is more ergonomically fit.

Supplies of mulch are plentiful and close at hand. There is no need for a complicated supply chain. It grows all around us. My wife, Rebecca, and I gardened for over 40 years the "progressive" way, fighting weeds on uncovered soil. The work was productive, but hard and unceasing. One day, a young permaculture teacher named Markus Thompson came by the house. He took one look at our garden and said, "You need to cover it all up." He pointed to the trees around us and added, "That forest stays covered up,



Rebecca Adams pitching hay.

and it has its own protection and fertilizing system. You should try something similar." I was incredulous.

Who was this punk telling me about such an unfamiliar idea? After considering his advice for a while, I realized he was right. We had been doing things backward for a long time. We began mulching with the fall leaves. We covered the walking rows between the raised beds with a thick layer, raked from our yard and driveway. We bought several bales of old hay from a farmer who always harvested before any seeds were viable. The hay covered our raised beds. Short fescue worked well and was plentiful and inexpensive in the Lookout Mountain area.

The first positive effect noticed was a drastic reduction of weeds. We rolled the bales out next to the rows and pitched thick mats of hay onto the raised beds. The unwanted greenery was mostly smothered by the first layer. Extra layers were applied later to kill the few weeds that sprang through thin areas. It took time and continued mulching to break the cycle of residual seeds emerging. Patience and persistence paid off. At planting time, we separated the hay wide enough to make room for seeds. A liberal use of hay is recommended at first. Do not allow weeds to develop seeds before covering them!

We soon saw a change in soil moisture and temperature extremes. Erosion was eliminated, and water retention increased. No more ankle-deep mud following a downpour! Correspondingly, the soil became moist, fluffy, and easy to work in. Our worm population began to increase. They seemed to thrive under the thermal moisture blanket. This protective insulation also helped other organic life thrive. Nitrogen-fixing bacteria produced more nutrients in this regulated environment. Everything in the earth seemed to like being cooler in summer and warmer in winter. It was more of a Goldilocks world.

After the garden had been covered completely for a few years, a new benefit arose. Bug pests diminished steadily. Grasshoppers, crickets, aphids, ants, shield bugs, bean beetles, Japanese beetles, horn worms, and others became almost absent. We theorize that the lack of weeds deprived pests of places to propagate. This is a theory we continue to study. There has also been a decrease in beneficial critters, like preying mantis, ladybug beetles, and assassin bugs. They have less to eat.

Mulch serves one last purpose as it rots over time. It turns slowly into a nutrient-rich fertilizer in the form of compost spread out at the plant roots. It also feeds and protects nitrogen-fixing bacteria essential for terra preta soil. It became apparent that we were transitioning to an easier no-till gardening system. We dug down less and added more on top. We embraced and emulated objective, natural systems and abandoned subjective mechanical, chemical ones. Life has become easier and more satisfying. Happiness is our blessing for hard, productive work.

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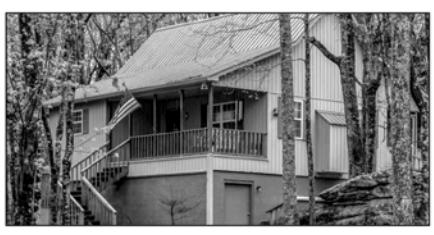
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LOTS & LAND

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Reflection, Transformation, and New Beginnings

BY DEJOLY LABRIER

As the mountain moves into the season of brightly changing landscapes and crisper air, there is a palpable shift in the atmosphere.

We tune inward, with the intention of deep self-reflection. It's a time to embrace personal transformation and celebrate the many changes we made in the past year. It's a time to let go of whatever is not aligned with our soul's purpose, making room in our lives for new beginnings.

The changing colors of our mountain landscape mirror the transformative process that is happening within us.

September is also influenced by the astrological changes, bringing in both Virgo, the sign associated with practicality, organization, and attention to details; and Libra, the sign of balance and harmony. Virgo encourages us to focus on self-improvement, personal growth, and analysis, while Libra ushers in the autumnal equinox, a time when day and night are in perfect equilibrium, inspiring us to seek balance in our relationships, embrace diplomacy, and cultivate inner peace.

September is best known for the abundance of harvest, reminding us to express gratitude for bountiful blessings. It's a time to cultivate a spirit of appreciation for all the possibilities our futures hold, and manifest our dreams and aspirations. We are reminded of the ebb and flow of life as September takes us into the darker months ahead.

The lesson of September is learning the art of letting go as nature is doing with the magically colored leaves floating silently to the ground. Loosening the grip we hold on the past and embracing the transformations we are experiencing allows us to truly create a brilliant new chapter in our lives.

I encourage you to get ready to turn the page!



Durable Medical Equipment Helps with Daily Activities

BY LYNN HIXON

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is covered under your Medicare Part B and is equipment that helps you complete your daily activities. DME includes items such as walkers, wheelchairs, certain diabetes supplies, and oxygen tanks. Medicare usually only covers DME that is prescribed by your doctor and is considered durable, meaning you can use it again and it may last for three years or more. DME is also designed to help a medical condition or injury and is appropriate for use in the home, although you can also use it outside the home.

DME may be purchased or rented. In some cases, you have a choice. If you have Original Medicare, Medicare will usually cover 80 percent of the cost of your DME as long as you use approved suppliers. You or your supplemental insurance will be responsible for the remaining 20 percent. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, your plan can set its own costs and restrictions.

Also, even though the equipment is covered by Medicare Part B, SenioRx is also available to help with those high-cost name brand medications. SenioRx works directly with the doctor



and the drug company to give free medications to those who qualify by age and income. You must be 55 years old or on disability and not have any extra help from Social Security (LIS) or Medicaid. If you are commercially insured and have been denied coverage for a specific medication, SenioRx may be able to help. Contact DiAnne Callahan, SenioRx coordinator at the DeKalb County Council on Aging, at 256-845-8590.

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides individualized counseling and education about suppliers who do and do not participate in Medicare and who do or do not accept assignments, including how that will affect your out-of-pocket costs.

To learn more about your Medicare coverage or to receive assistance, please call the DeKalb County Council on Aging and talk to Lynn Hixon, a SHIP counselor, at 256-845-8590.

The History and Meaning of the Flag of the United States Army

BY BARRY MORTON

This is the first in a series of articles about flag history.



The U.S. Army has its roots in the Continental Army, formed on 14 June 1775 to fight against the British for independence during the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783). After the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress created the United States Army on 3 June 1784 to replace the disbanded Continental Army.

The flag of the United States Army displays a blue replica of the War Office Seal set on a white field. The seal of the War Office is described as follows: A cannon in front of a drum with two drumsticks; below the cannon three cannon balls. A mortar on a carriage, cuirass/breastplate. Above the breastplate rises a plain sword with the pommel and guard supporting a Phrygian cap between an esponton (pike) and an organizational color on one side and a musket with a fixed bayonet and the national color on the other side. Above is a rattlesnake holding in its mouth a scroll inscribed with "this we'll defend." The Phrygian cap is the traditional symbol of liberty. Beneath the seal is a broad scarlet scroll bearing the inscription in white letters, "United States Army." Beneath the scroll, in blue Arabic numerals, is "1775," the year in which the Continental Army was created with the appointment of General George Washington as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

The flag was officially adopted by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on June 12, 1956, via Executive Order 10670 and was dedicated and unfurled to the general public on June 14, 1956, at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on the 181st anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Army by the Continental Congress. The original flag measured 4 feet, 4 inches (1.32 m) by 5 feet, 6 inches (1.68 m).

The Army's mission is "to fight and win our Nation's wars, by providing prompt, sustained land dominance, across the full range of military operations and the spectrum of conflict, in support of combatant commanders."

Most of this information can be found online sources such as Wikipedia. To see what's happening at the Mentone Legionnaire Park, go to the Mentone American Legion Facebook page. Our next month's Groundhog will have the second military service organization's flag — the U.S. Navy.



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Camp DeSoto *(continued from page 1)*

her daughter's and her own experiences at DeSoto. The night ended in a friendship circle, arms crossed, hands joined, singing "Taps."

Sunday morning began as every camp day does, with Morning Watch, an all-camp devotional at the lakeside Worship Rocks. After a traditional breakfast of blueberry muffins and grits, attendees donned the customary all-white attire for the Sunday worship service in the gym, a long-standing tradition that instantly transported alumnae back to their camper days.

Many young girls have discovered and deepened their experience of God's love during their summers at Camp DeSoto. Sunday worship was especially poignant as generations of women collectively thanked God for the protection and faithful love they feel at camp, the spiritual growth campers are invited into by DeSoto counselors, and the ways Christ is evident in the natural beauty of the mountain. Anna Russell Thornton of Nashville (camper '08–'10, staff '13–'19) preached from Luke 18:1–8; music was arranged by Millie Livingston of Birmingham; the choir was organized by Susan Petty Needler of St. Louis; flowers were provided by The Farm at Windy Hill and Creekside Flower Farm and were arranged by Susan Thompson Tyner of Fort Worth, Texas (staff '12-'23). More than 400 women processed into the gym two-by-two, as generations of campers have done before them.

No Sunday at DeSoto would be complete without a fried chicken dinner, pear salad, and vanilla ice cream with peanut butter and honey. This meal was prepared and offered by DeSoto's dedicated team of cooks and servers, led by Head Chef Margot Messer of Valley Head. While the entire group did not fit into the dining hall, they picnicked together, closing with traditional songs including "The Birds in the Treetops" and the six-part harmony of "Jubilate Deo."

After just 24 hours, goodbyes came too soon. While a summer at Camp DeSoto could never be captured in such a brief celebration, many "DeSoto girls" did feel they got to go back to camp again. As one attendee reflected, "Though we find ourselves changed, the essence of this place and all that we love about it remains the same."

Much of the camp's history is preserved in *Camp DeSoto: A History* by Norma Bradshaw Flora and Norma Flora Cox, daughter and granddaughter of beloved director Norma Caldwell Bradshaw, affectionately known as "Brad." The book is available at the Moon Lake Library and at campdesotostore.com.

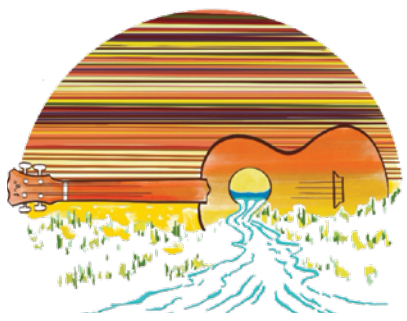
One hundred summers have passed on Lookout Mountain, but for those who have sung the songs, walked the trails, and worshipped in the gym, the spirit of Camp DeSoto remains as vibrant as ever.



Camp DeSoto has made an unforgettable impact on the lives of thousands of young women across its rich history. More than 400 of them gathered in July to celebrate the camp's legacy and its 100-year anniversary.

How the Mentone Ukes Came to Be

BY JERRY MEGLI



When I arrived in Alabama from California in 2017, I had with me a ukulele. One afternoon while spending time with Debra Fey, I placed the ukulele in her hands and said…

"Place this finger on this fret." And she did.

I said, "Now strum once." And she did.

A clear, crisp tone filled the air. I then said, "Congratulations! You just played the C chord! And now you know how to play the ukulele."

Debra said, "That's it?"

"That's it," I said.

She never looked back. After she got her own ukulele, we played every day, putting more and more new chords into our tool box and building a simple catalog of favorite songs. One day a curiosity came to mind: We wondered, are there others in the area who play or would like to learn to play the uke? We obtained permission from the Moon Lake Library to hold a one-time beginner's ukulele session there. After obtaining their support, we placed an announcement in The Groundhog, advising of the event. We recruited Mickey Luck, another Mentone local, to lead the session.



Mentone Ukes Founders Jerry Megli and Debra Fey

On that given day, 20 people showed up, some with their own ukes and some without. We had loaner ukuleles available courtesy of the Moon Lake School. At the end of the session, we asked, "Would you all like to do it again in two weeks?" A resounding YES! was the response.

Folks, that was six years ago. And after having been designated the Official House Band of the Moon Lake Library, we still meet every two weeks, offer beginner lessons at the same time as our regular session, and perform at local events.

The Mentone Ukes will hold practice sessions at the Moon Lake Library on September 13 and 27 at 1 p.m. A free introduction to the ukulele is offered at the same time, and loaner ukuleles are available. Newcomers and beginners of all ages are welcome to attend! We hope you will plan to come out and support your Mentone Ukes on September 27 at 3 p.m. when we perform at the Shigley Amphitheater at Moon Lake Campus as part of the Mentone Americana Nights music series. For more information, you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and on our website, www.mentoneukes.com. Strum and be happy!

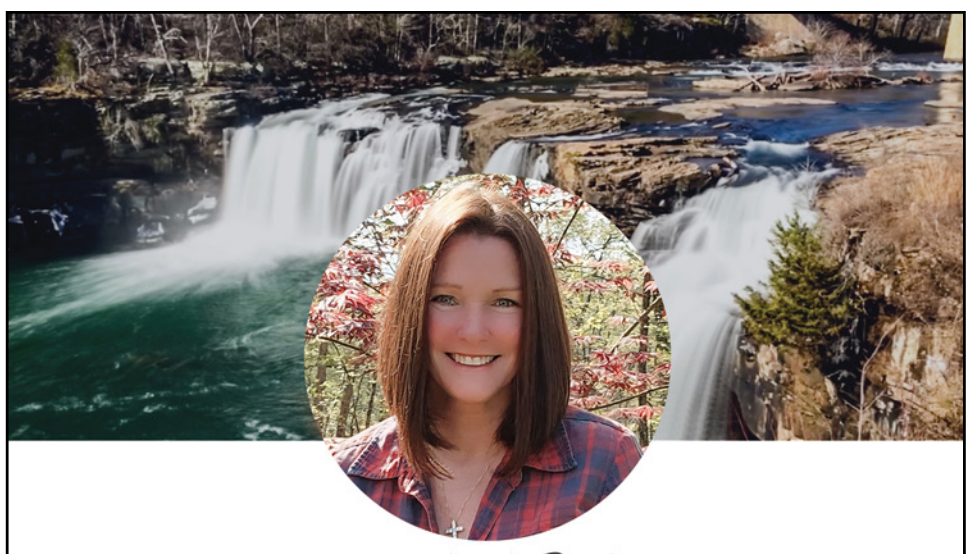
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As the Seasons Shift, So Do We: MERF Readies for a New Chapter

BY KATIE HAND

As the first hints of fall touch the trees and Mentone trades summer haze for crisp mornings, there's a familiar shift in the air. This change in seasons often brings a slower rhythm, a moment to pause and reset. At MERF, we feel that too. Fall kicks off a new pace for us — a return to routine, to purpose, and to the MERF House.

Our little house has seen many seasons and many hands. And while much has changed over the past 30 years, our mission hasn't: to enrich all lives through education, community, and opportunity. The world moves quickly. People come and go, and life often feels more fragmented. But MERF remains rooted and steady, continuing to fill the spaces where connection and support are needed.

This year, we're once again partnering with Valley Head School to offer meaningful enrichment opportunities. We've helped fund trips like SeaLab at Dauphin Island and look forward to returning to the ropes course at Camp DeSoto. For younger students, we're working to expand arts programming in the elementary school.

And of course, we're bringing back one of our favorite community traditions: Senior Lunches. It's simple, but it means a lot — a shared meal that brings people together. My 2-year-old especially loves entertaining the room by enthusiastically banging on the piano. (He's working on his stage presence.)

Beyond the fun, MERF continues to provide grants for teachers, support music and theater performances, and offer scholarships to graduating seniors. These programs may seem small on their own, but together they create momentum. They open doors, spark ideas, and build connections — one effort at a time.

Mentone has always had a way of giving back, of showing up where it's needed. MERF has been lucky to be one of those spaces. So this fall, we're leaning back into the work, grounded in the belief that every act of support creates a ripple effect.

Whether you donate, volunteer, or simply show up: thank you! You're helping us do what we've always done — serve our community and grow with it, season after season.

Katie Hand is executive director of MERF. For more information, visit MERFhouse.org, email merf.mentone@gmail.com, or call 256-979-4962.







MERF is dedicated to enriching all lives through education, community, and opportunity.

Cherokee Word of the Month:
ᏚᎵᏍᏗ (Dulı̱ sdi) The Nut Moon

BY CAROLINE MOORE

As the days grow shorter and the first crisp winds of autumn sweep across the mountains, the Cherokee people knew September as ᏚᎵᏍᏗ (Dulı̱ sdi), the Nut Moon. This was the season when the forest gave some of its greatest gifts: hickory, walnut, chestnut, and acorns. These filled baskets and bellies alike, and ensured that families would not go hungry through the long winter ahead.

The Nut Moon was more than a time for gathering food; it was a time for gratitude and preparation. Families came together to collect and store nuts, while animals like squirrels scurried about doing the same. In Cherokee tradition, the squirrel is often remembered as a wise teacher, showing humans how to notice the abundance all around them and to prepare with care.

A Story to Share

One teaching tale tells of Grandmother Squirrel, who saw the people struggling to prepare for winter. From the top of her hickory tree, she called down to them: "Look around you! The Creator has filled the forest with food." She showed them the nuts hidden in shells, taught them how to crack them, and reminded them to bury some for new trees to grow. Thanks to her wisdom, the people learned to thrive through the cold months, never forgetting to give thanks.



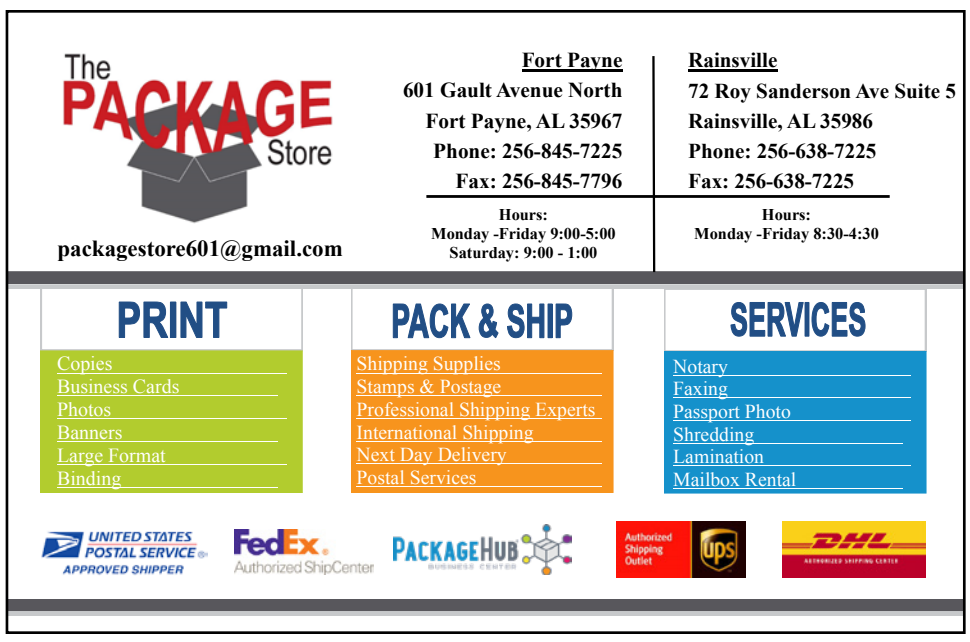
Community Activity: Nut Moon Gratitude Gathering

To honor Dulı̱ sdi, try this simple activity at home or with friends:

1. Go on a nut walk. Collect acorns, hickory nuts, or walnuts you find on the ground.
2. Choose one nut and decorate its shell with paint, markers, or even natural dyes. Write or draw a small symbol of something you're thankful for on the nut's surface.
3. Share your thanks. As you gather, take a moment to name something you are grateful for this season. You can also place your decorated nut in a community basket with others, creating a shared artwork of gratitude.

By practicing gratitude and preparation, we carry forward the wisdom of the Nut Moon and the teachings of Grandmother Squirrel.



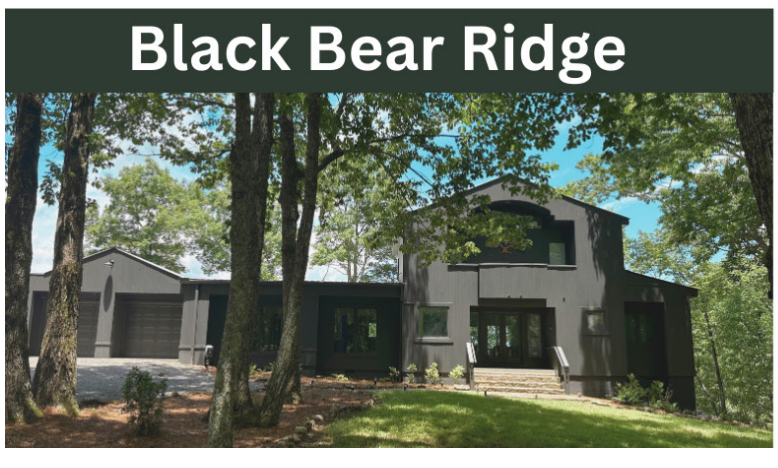








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Dennis Parker Brings James Taylor Tribute to the Mentone Americana Nights Stage

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR





The final installment of Mentone Americana Nights will bring top talent to the mountain and feature music that is loved by generations.

Dennis Parker will headline the event on Saturday, September 27, at the Shigley Amphitheater on Moon Lake Campus. He will be joined by other artists in presenting a celebration of American musical treasure James Taylor.

Parker has been a professional touring and recording artist for most of his adult life. His resume includes stints with artists such as Joe Diffie, Lee Ann Womack, Tracy Lawrence, and Mark Chestnutt.

For fans of bluegrass and traditional country music, Parker is best known for his years traveling and recording with Ricky Skaggs. He was part of Skaggs' band in the 90s, returning in 2016 to lead the band for the past nine years.

Skaggs recently announced Parker's departure on social media. "Dennis is moving on to other opportunities where he feels led," wrote the legendary performer. "And although he is missed, we wish him all the best!"

Those other opportunites include pursuing a solo career that includes presenting the work of one of America's most beloved artists.

"I became obsessed with James Taylor at a young age," says Parker, who grew up in a musical family where bluegrass was the undercurrent of everyday life. "I heard him on a PBS special singing 'How Sweet It Is,' and it was like a breath of fresh air."

The impact never left him. "I loved the way he voiced things," says Parker. "He played like a piano player. There were these rich chords that I just didn't hear a lot. I tried to play like him, to sing like him."

As Parker's career evolved beyond bluegrass festivals, where he won countless awards and regional notoriety, he found himself working among the best in the country music business. Along with that success came personal challenges, which Parker shares openly in his testimony. Yet no matter what he faced, he found Taylor's music as a centering presence.

"In some dark periods of my life, his music was still there," Parker shares. "It comforted me. It was a place of home for me. He talked about love. He talked about doing the right things. There's so much truth in his music."

Songs like 'You've Got a Friend' are universal in their appeal to the human heart, Parker says. "Everybody needs a friend. I think God speaks through music like that just as much as He speaks through the hymns. God is crying out for us to know Him, and for us to be better people, and Taylor's music features so many of these principles that are just true."

One James Taylor song in particular impacted Parker's life in difficult times. "There's a song he does called 'A Junkie's Lament' that is spot on when it comes to addiction," he says, "and what addiction looks like, how awful it is. It speaks to the fact that there's really nothing anyone can do until that person wants to do something about it themselves."

Last year, as Parker began considering what was next for his career, he assembled a group of musicians to explore James Taylor's vast catalogue. They began performing at The Station Inn in Nashville each month, and the show has been a hit.

Joining Parker for the James Taylor Tribute in Mentone will be Jeff Taylor and Brad Benge. "Jeff is a multifaceted instrumentalist," Parker says. "He's played with everyone from Elvis Costello to Kenny Chesney to Bob Dylan. If you hear an accordion on a record from a big artist, it's probably Jeff."

Benge is a renowned sound engineer and bassist. He has toured with such notable acts as Jimmy Fortune of Statler Brothers fame, Sierra Hull, and Tommy Emmanuel.

"I've played in a lot of bands, but I've always been a hired gun," says Parker. "This is my first experience actually putting a band together and trying to keep it together and really pushing for excellence."

He's excited to bring the James Taylor show to Mentone. "I live in Huntsville now, but DeKalb County was home to me for a long time," Parker says. "This is a bit like a homecoming for me. I have a lot of friends in the area, and I hope they can come enjoy the show and say hello.

"I think it's so great, what Mentone is doing to bring more live music to the area, and I'm grateful to be part of it."

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Rhododendron Garden Club

Get Those Flower Show Entries Ready

BY MELLANIE TUTTLE

The RGC meeting in August was all about getting ready for the flower show in conjunction with the DeKalb County Fair. For years, the show was in September, so the August meeting traditionally was the final push to be ready. This year the fair is October 21-25, so we're a month early in promoting things. The theme this year is "Night at the Movies," and all the classes in the five divisions (Horticulture, Design, Botanical Arts, Education, and Youth) have movie titles. Anyone and everyone can enter arboreal, cut foliage, herbs, flowering annuals/perennials, bulbs, container-grown and hanging plants. Adults must bring entries in clear bottles this year since we won't be using the wooden cases. Due to space availability, youth entries will be in a wooden case. We are encouraging the public to enter any and all worthy horticulture that they have grown. Cutting something off the side of the road is cheating! So is stealing something from the neighbor's yard! Some people!

At a recently attended symposium, the horticulture instructor explained how and why the horticulture entry is written with very specific requirements. Common names can be confusing. The common daffodil may be called a buttercup, jonquil, or narcissus in another community. "A rose by any other name" does not work when identifying plants.

Linnaean taxonomy to the rescue. In the 1750's, Carl Linnaeus developed a taxonomy in naming not only plants but animals and minerals as well. You can thank Linnaeus if you've ever answered the question, "Is it animal, vegetable, or mineral?" His Imperium Naturae listed Regnum Animale, Regnum Vegetabile and Regnum Lapideum. His system is a complex but organized way of naming, defining, and classifying groups based on shared characteristics. Latin, being a dead language, was chosen in the naming since its word meanings would be consistent, unchanged, and prevent confusion.

Simply put, botanical nomenclature is a scientific way of naming plants. With Binomial nomenclature (bi meaning two and nomial meaning name in Latin), plants are given two names. The first name is the genus, which is a proper noun. Like your name, it is always capitalized. The specific epithet (replacing species) is an adjective or descriptive word and is NOT capitalized. If being typed, both words would be italicized. Since it's hard to print italics by hand, on the entry card, the genus and specific epithet will be underlined.

The symposium instructor, who was of a certain age and a former English professor, explained the underlining and italicized writing. She reminded folks that italics are used to signal a switch between English to another language or when quoting a book, movie, or song title. During her college, precomputer days, typewriters were the norm. A typewriter had no italics option, so if one quoted a title of a book or used another language (Latin), the shift key was engaged so that the line above the number six could be used to backtrack and underline the passage. Latin as "old Italian" is italicized, and the underlined botanical name is carried over from typewriter days.

Lots of verbiage to explain how someone needs to write an entry card for the upcoming flower show in October. The card must have the genus, specific epithet (formerly species). Ugh. That's too hard. Not so fast, my friend. If you know the common name, it's easy to type "What is the in binomial, scientific or botanical name of ___?" Plant societies have photos with scientific and cultivar names listed for varieties. Online searches do fail sometimes, so knowledgeable, friendly folks at check-in will help in filling out cards. The initial check-in for the flower show will be the covered arena (near to the livestock show and chicken house).

After the genus and specific epithet were determined, folks decided to invent a better mousetrap for plants and started cultivating, hybridizing, or breeding different varieties. That cultivated variety, or cultivar, received an additional special name, put in single quotes. Any plant that has been hybridized (rose, hosta, hydrangeas, zinnias, etc.) needs to have a cultivar name included on the entry card. Coming after the genus and specific epithet, the cultivar name is capitalized, not underlined and enclosed in single quotes.

Say you want to enter a marigold. Genus name is Tagetes. The specific epithet is erecta, (Latin for upright). Cultivar name is 'Jubilee,' so on the card you would write Tagetes erecta 'Jubilee' with the common name



(African Marigold) written under the binomial name.

Just come, bring your plants, and we'll help you get them entered. See the Floral Designs, Botanical Arts Designs, the Education Exhibits, and Youth Division — always my favorite part of the flower show.

Next month the program will be on Roses (Genus Rosa) presented by RGC President Rhea Pirch. Meet at Moon Lake Library on the second Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 10 a.m. Fantastic forum with friendly folks and fabulous food!

Mellanie Tuttle is a member of the Rhododendron Garden Club.

Join us!

The RGC meets each month on the second Tuesday. We are currently meeting in the Moon Lake Library and gather at 10 a.m. Please join us for connection and conviviality. RGC is a member of the National Garden Club, Deep South, Garden Club of AL, District II, and NE AL Federation of Garden Clubs.









Uncovering History's Secrets: "The Uprising of '34"

A Documentary about the 1934 Textile Strike with Program by Dr. Anne McLeod



Photo courtesy of Wayne State University Labor Archives.

On Sunday, Sept. 7 at 2:30 p.m., the library will host a showing of "The Uprising of '34," along with a short program by Moon Lake Librarian Anne McLeod. The documentary tells the history of a strike that proved to be a pivotal point in the Southern labor movement, though its story is little known today. It was the secrecy surrounding the strike that first drew Anne to the subject when she was an undergraduate at the University of Georgia in the late 1970s. At the program she will discuss how she first became fascinated by the strike and how she integrated it into her doctoral dissertation 32 years later.

"Just before I graduated in 1978, I was working on a family history project for a Georgia history course. We had studied the transition in the South from an agricultural economy to one based on industry, including textiles. My paternal great-grandmother's husband died in 1916, leaving her with 10 children and a cotton farm in Gaylesville, Alabama. During the Great Depression, as the children grew up, they began moving to the town of Trion, Georgia, to work at the cotton mill that was then Riegal and is now Mount Vernon. Eventually, the entire family moved and Nona sold the Alabama farm. I figured this was an excellent example of the shift from farm to town, and I'd be able to interview my grandmother and her sisters about their lives on the farm and later in Trion," Anne explained.

"One of my grandmother's sisters mentioned the 1934 strike, and I noticed her daughter had a funny look on her face, almost like she didn't want her mother to say anything about it. Then my aunt told me not to ask my grandfather about it because, 'He won't talk about it.' I was immediately drawn to the story and wanted to find out more," Anne said. "It had happened about six weeks after my father's birth, and I could only imagine the tough decisions that the young workers faced during a chaotic time. Then I learned that the first people who died during the strike were killed right there in Trion. In fact, I knew the daughter of one of the victims. I was hooked."

When Anne first learned about it in 1978, there were limited accounts of the strike, mostly primary sources such as newspaper accounts. "I read what I could in the newspaper archives at UGA, but there were no histories of it that I could find, which was frustrating."

Fast-forward to 2004, when she returned to Athens to start a Ph.D. in language and literacy education. "My advisor was also a history buff, and he encouraged me to integrate this history that had captured my imagination into my analysis of how the American labor movement is represented in novels for young people. By then two books about the strike had been published and the documentary 'The Uprising of 1934' had come out. George Stoney, Judith Helfand, and Susanne Rostock had produced this documentary in 1995 that included interviews with mill workers, and I was able to use it as one of my sources," she said.

"I learned that workers had been sworn to secrecy about the strike by mill management. People promised to never mention the union again, and they didn't. The interviews in this video bring this almost-forgotten history to life again. I think it's hard to understand the history of workers in the South without being aware of what happened in early September of 1934," Anne said.

Anne will introduce the film, which lasts 87 minutes, and will then discuss some of the historical research she did related to the project. The program is free and open to the public. Parking is available in front of the library, around the corner at Moon Lake Campus, and on the grass beside the library.

What Do Your Kids Need From the Library?

BY LYNN VANDERHOFF



We need your input to shape Moon Lake Library's services for children. For the past four years, we have offered free Little Library Learners programs of storytime, games, songs, videos, and outdoor activities. The topics ranged from nature, history, kindness, community building, and art, just to name a few. Initially, separate programs were offered to kids ages 3-6 years and 7-9 years. In the past two years, we have catered to the 3- to 6-year-olds and changed the date and time. We recognize that families have kids of all ages and lots of extracurricular activities competing for the family schedule. And as the kids aged out, we have had fewer attendees.

How Can We Help?

We are here to support our community, especially in the area of reading, the key to most school learning. So how can we help you and your kids? Is it through storytime, homework help, or tutoring in small groups or individually? We have many former teachers and librarians who are ready to help, but we need to better understand your specific needs. What school topics are your kids struggling with? Is reading comprehension holding them back? Are math skills challenging?

Ideally, we would offer services for free, at times convenient for your family during library hours (Tues-Fri 12-4:30 p.m. and Sat 10 a.m. -1 p.m.). Now is the time to kick off the school year right. Please let us know how we can help your kids have fun learning! Contact us at info@moonlakelibrary.org or contact Lynn Vanderhoff at 404-783-6771.

See Page 13 for a list of all August events at Moon Lake Library.







First Friday, Finster Fest, and Art All Around Us

BY JULI JORDAN

FIRST FRIDAY
Sept. 5 at Moon Lake Campus • 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. (new fall hours)

September with music, food, and shopping after hours! If you haven't explored Moon Lake Campus yet, this is the perfect opportunity. The evening has an open-house feel that will make you want to return again and again. Discover Faith & Mustard Seed, Cloudland Framing, Coming Up Violets, OtherWorld Gifts, Sacred Earth Studio, The Gallery by Andiamo, Moon Lake Kitchen (serving up tasty eats and specialty cocktails), and the Little River Art Gallery. Just next door, the Moon Lake Library has cornered the market on gourmet mocktails! At the Mentone Arts Center, the Friday Pickers will be strumming until 5 p.m.



LRAC Returns to Finster Fest!
Sept. 20-21 • Paradise Gardens, Summerville, Georgia • 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern • $10 Admission.

The Little River Arts Council is honored to return to Finster Fest, joining more than 70 artists at Paradise Gardens. A dozen talented artists will be featured in the LRAC tent this year: Randall Castleberry, Kelly Farley, Meg Justice, Frank Kenney, Doug & Betty Perkins, Jan & Mike Sherwood, Michele Smith, Layne Stone, Barbara Umland, Victoria Wheeler, Ed Wofford, and Mikel Yeakle. Festival goers will also be able to step inside the newly renovated World's Folk Art Church, open to the public for the first time this year.

Little River Art Gallery: Featured Artist – Erika Prater

Hailing from Oxford, Alabama, Erika Prater works primarily on the wheel, creating forms that are both functional and decorative. She enhances her pieces with subtle textures and carvings on large surfaces, finishing them with either simple glazes or spontaneous, layered glaze combinations. The result is a collection of pottery that speaks to both seasoned collectors and anyone who appreciates the beauty of handmade craft.



LRAC featured artist Erika Prater



Aug./Sept. Make Your Mark on Mentone chalk artists Blair & May Newman

Make Your Mark on Mentone:
August–September: Unity, Memory, Resilience by Blair & May Newman

"The camp flags surround Camp Mystic, circling and holding it at the heart of Mentone, and in the hearts of us all. Woven into this heart quilt is the collective love of a community bound by loss and strengthened by remembrance." Blair & May invited the community to sign the mural's support board in solidarity with Camp Mystic.

Next up: Lisa Sulkosky! The Make Your Mark on Mentone mural project is located on the grounds of the Mentone Inn, at the corner of AL Hwy 117 & CR 89, right at the flashing light. This project is made possible by a grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Monster Mash Member's Social
Thursday, Oct. 30 • 5 to 7 p.m.
Moon Lake Campus

Get ready for a spooky new twist on LRAC's annual Member's Social! Costumes are encouraged — spooky, silly, or "so-fisticated" — with prizes awarded for the best looks. This gathering is the perfect chance to connect with fellow art lovers, hear the latest



Coming soon: the Moon Lake Arts Collective!

LRAC updates, and maybe even renew your membership. Expect good food, good friends, and good ghouls!

Have you heard about LRAC's latest project? The Moon Lake Arts Collective will be Mentone's first public-access pottery studio and will also feature a flexible space for a variety of art classes. Visitors can enjoy "Make Your Own" experiences and leave with a one-of-a-kind Mentone memory, while local artists will benefit from pottery guild memberships, giving them a creative home without the heavy cost of equipment.

At LRAC, "We Believe Art is for Everyone." That's why artists will have the option to exchange volunteer hours for studio time. The collective will serve as a vibrant hub for creativity, learning, and connection, bringing together artists and community groups alike. If this vision excites you, we invite you to help make it a reality. Visit the Moon Lake Arts Collective tab at www.littleriverartscouncil.org to learn more and become a recognized contributor to this inspiring project.

Juli Jordan is president of the Little River Arts Council.







Mentone Arts Center

Arts Center Fall Social and Celebration of Artists

BY RANDY GRIDER

We begin the autumn season with our Fall Social, honoring two very talented artists. The social will spotlight August Artist of the Month Leanne Sharp, who creates popular stained-glass treasures that incorporate vintage dishes, bowls, and other items, and potter Max Mitchell, our September Artist of the Month. The social will be Thursday, Sept. 18, from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Chuck Sennett Center for the Arts. Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be available. The event is free, and everyone is encouraged to join us.

September Artist of the Month

Max Mitchell is known around the gallery for her ceramic bell chimes and bird chimes. Her creations have been a popular mainstay for more than two years. Mitchell, who calls Mentone home, started her career up North. She has art coursework and degrees from Ball State University (ceramics), Butler University (figure drawing), Chicago School of Art (drawing and intro painting), and School of Art Institute of Chicago (BFA – visual communications major, letterpress drawing).

"After 10 years working as in-house designer for Riverside Theatre & Productions Co., in Milwaukee as well as designing playbills, promotional print materials, show books, and other stage theater merchandising materials, during and after attending SAIC, my heart pulled me back to the fine arts," Mitchell said. "Relocating from Chicago to Mentone, I focused on painting and drawing but still longed to revisit my interest in ceramics. After setting up studio space for working with stoneware, I was driven to tread outside the norm of the usual ceramic forms. I followed my love of chimes and bells and strove to create new designs and forms from the imagination and from the natural world around me."

Upcoming Class

Our next art class will be November 8-9. Visiting artist/instructor Lucy Thomas will lead a two-day floral acrylics class, "My Five Favorite Flowers: Florals in Negative Space."

"In the class, I'll show you how I paint florals in a loose, expressive style," Thomas said. "We will paint some specific flowers that I like and also work from small fresh flower arrangements. We can also use our imaginations to add any finishing touches. I primarily use a technique called negative space painting. I'll show you how to do this as we paint our florals. This is not a class on realistic painting, and drawing ability/experience is not necessary."

The class, which will be at Moon Lake Campus, is limited to 10 students; tuition is $195.

A supply list will be sent to students upon registration. Thomas said she started painting at 47 after a discouraging medical diagnosis. Before long, art became her full-time job.

"Since then, my work has been in galleries across the Southeast. I teach at the Huntsville Museum of Art, Revelry Fine Arts in Nashville, and online through my website," Thomas said.

She lives in the Nashville area with her husband, Garner, and their dogs, cats, and a tortoise named Steve.

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





Max Mitchell is known for her ceramic bell and bird chimes.



Artist and instructor Lucy Thomas creates beautiful florals.

Scarecrow Competition Celebrates "The Spirit of Mentone" at Fall Festival

The annual Mentone Fall Festival returns on Saturday, October 18 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the historic Moon Lake Campus, and this year introduces a new activity — the Scarecrow Competition!

This year's theme, "The Spirit of Mentone," invites participants to showcase what makes Mentone magical. Whether it's through depictions of local artists, woodland creatures, mountain musicians, outdoor adventures, or colorful community characters, scarecrow entries should reflect the creativity, beauty, and personality of our mountain town.

The competition is open to all — individuals, families, community organizations, and school or church groups. Scarecrows will be displayed throughout the festival grounds, with ribbons and prizes awarded in categories like Most Creative, Best Use of Recycled Materials, and People's Choice.

Bring your scarecrow to Moon Lake Campus on Friday, Oct. 17, between 1-5 p.m. There's no entry fee, and sign-up forms will be available on-site or online in advance. Follow the Mentone Fall Festival page on Facebook for more details to come, including a link to a sign-up form.

Along with scarecrows, the festival offers kid-friendly activities, including hands-on arts and crafts and a special Fall Art Show featuring work from talented local 5th and 6th grade students.

Join us for Mentone's biggest event of the year — a day of live music, art vendors, food trucks, and family fun.

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Valley Head Happenings

Much to Look Forward to This Fall

BY MAYOR KAREN VEST



A taqueria owned by the Reyes family from Albertville is coming to Valley Head.

There's a lot of excitement in Valley Head this fall! As we've mentioned, our downtown is about to welcome a new restaurant — a taqueria owned by the Reyes family from Albertville. The family also operates restaurants in Boaz and Albertville, and we are thrilled they've chosen Valley Head for their newest location. The taqueria will be moving into the former barber shop space downtown, and we look forward to the delicious food and the new visitors it will bring to our community.

Mark your calendars for the next Hot Rods in the Valley, happening Saturday, Sept. 27 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. around the square. Tiger's Inn and Side Street Deli will be open with dinner specials, so come out and enjoy an evening full of classic cars, good food, and great company.

We're also continuing to move forward on important infrastructure improvements. With the help of TARCOG, we are pursuing grants to pave four more streets within the town limits — an investment in the safety and future of our community.

We are happy to welcome Scott Pepper to the town council, and look forward to working with him. The new council and I will be sworn in on November 3 at our regular council meeting, which begins at 6 p.m. A reception will follow, and everyone is welcome to attend. And don't forget — our annual Trunk or Treat will take place on Saturday, Oct. 25, in conjunction with Hot Rods in the Valley. Bring your little ghosts, superheroes, and princesses for a fun, family-friendly evening on the square.

Finally, a reminder: Town Council meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at Town Hall. As always, the public is welcome to attend.

I look forward to seeing you all at these upcoming events and continuing to work together for the good of Valley Head!

NACC Classes at Moon Lake

Northeast Alabama Community College continues its series of popular courses at Moon Lake Campus with "The Art of Hospitality: From Kitchen to Celebration."

Classes begin September 9 and run through the end of the month. Topics include:

- Social Graces: Everyday Etiquette
- Sugar and Style: The Art of Cookie Decorating
- The Art and Science of Baking the Perfect Cheesecake
- From Harvest to Home: Autumn Floral Art

The cost for the series is only $25 per person, with 15 spaces available.

The popular Social Dance classes have returned, held on Friday afternoons through December. Intro to Art Mediums will spark creativity. And a new Vocal Ensemble class will culminate in a Community Chorus Christmas program.

To learn more about each program, and to register for all NACC classes at Moon Lake Campus, visit nacc.edu/about-nacc/moon-lake-campus









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September Community Events

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

Sept. 5 Hike with a Naturalist: DeSoto Scout Trail - Come on out and enjoy the great outdoors! Things to bring: Plenty of water and/or sports drink, snacks, hiking poles/staff (optional), sturdy shoes (open toe shoes are not recommended). Please be sure to dress appropriately according to seasonal temperatures/weather. WEATHER: As with all outdoor events, if it's raining/stormy or very poor trail conditions, we may have to cancel. If the weather is questionable, please check with the park before leaving home. Please make every effort to arrive early or on time. Meet at JSU's Little River Canyon Center, Fort Payne.

Sept. 5 Campfire Talk: Sandstone Glades of Lookout Mountain - A glade is an open area where the bedrock is at or near the surface, and where soils are so thin, trees and shrubs find it difficult to grow, yet you'll find thriving rare and unique plant communities that depend on the chemistry and conditions the environments provide. Join naturalist Michelle Reynolds for a slideshow on sandstone glades of Lookout Mountain, Little River Canyon, and DeSoto State Park. Learn about this unique environment and the rare and beautiful plants that inhabit it. At 8 p.m. DeSoto State Park. Campfire Ring in the Improved Campground. (In case of inclement weather, we'll be located in the CCC Pavilion in picnic area). Campground gates will open 30 minutes before the program. Free and open to everyone; no pre-registration required; For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Sept. 6 Yoga on the Brow - Yoga on the Brow is hosted by Soul Shine Yoga & Wellness Studio. Join in on a relaxing outdoor class under a pavilion in Mentone's Brow Park off of Cool Street. Class is for all levels; just bring a mat and enjoy a morning flow to awaken the senses and energize the body. Donation/tips appreciated.

Sept. 6 Falconry with Matt Whitfield - Matt Whitfield, president of the Alabama Hawking Association, returns to Moon Lake Library for a program about falconry. This was one of our most popular sessions last year, and we are happy to bring Matt back! He will bring his hawk with him. All ages are welcome. Additional parking is available on the grass beside the library, as well as around the block at the Moon Lake Campus parking lot. 10:30 a.m.

Sept. 6 Meandering Moonlight Guided Paddle - DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided moonlight paddle trip on scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the waters of the West Fork of Little River. This trip is approximately 4 miles roundtrip on flatwater; spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period; and includes kayak, paddle, and personal flotation device. Participants must be able to paddle upstream and back (no current). Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles, 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult. What to bring: Appropriate clothing for weather (you may get wet), headlamp or flashlight, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water. 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack (about 7 miles from main park area of DeSoto State Park); $30 for single kayak rental (2 person-tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for $50; email to check availability). Pre-registration closes September 1. Pre-registration is required. www.alapark.com/kayak-little-river

Sept. 12 Hernando's Adventure Storytime Hike - Join DeSoto State Park staff on a meandering hike along the Azalea Cascade Interpretive Trail in DeSoto State Park. Hike along and stop at points along the trail to hear the tale of a little raccoon named Hernando. Hernando's Adventure is a short book for children in which the ways of the woods are explained so that kids from pre-school to elementary school can understand them. Trail is approx. 7/10 of a mile long on slightly rocky terrain. Bring snacks/drinks/daypack if you wish. 4 p.m. DeSoto State Park. Meet at DeSoto's Country Store & Information Center on Co. Rd. 89. $2 per person. For ages 3 to 103. Participants should bring lunch/snacks/water, clothes & footwear suitable for the river. Pre-registration is required.

Sept. 12 Park After Dark Fireside Chat - A laid-back evening around the campfire with s'mores, good conversation, and the serene sounds of nature. Join DeSoto State Park staff to get to know the park after dark, talk about any critters we wish, and enjoy the sights and sounds of the night. Just a quick walk along a dirt road to the pond area; closed-toed shoes are preferred. Seating is on the ground or on rocks, so bring your own comfortable camp chair or ground blanket if you wish. You can even bring a hammock. Come hang out with us! 8 p.m. Meet at the frog pond, near DeSoto's south entrance. Turn down Blalock Drive to go toward the lodge, and park in the first gravel parking lot on the right. Dirt path to pond is a quick walk. Free & open to everyone, no pre-registration required. Weather dependent; call the lodge at 256-845-5380 beforehand to check on status of fireside chat.

Sept. 13 Glow Run - Get ready to shine at the Movin' for Main Street GLOW RUN – a 5k like no other! Hosted by Fort Payne-Main Street in Historic Downtown Fort Payne. Join us at the Rotary Pavilion for an electrifying night of fun, fitness, and glow-in-the-dark excitement! Registration is now open! https://raceroster.com/.../movin-for-main-street-glow-run... $39 + tax – The first 100 runners will receive an official race-day shirt! All runners will receive GLOW sticks, bracelets, necklaces, and much more!

Sept. 13 Young Eagles Flight Introduction - Held at Fort Payne Municipal Airport, Saturday Sept 13, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Sept. 18 Mentone Arts Center Fall Social - Join us for the Fall Social, where we'll celebrate Leanne Sharp and her inspiring journey from music educator to full-time artist. And don't miss the Porch Pickers, playing every Friday from 2 to 4 p.m. at the gallery — with extended hours and refreshments to enjoy while you shop!

Sept. 18 Bear Aware! A Growing Population - If friend shaped, why not friend? Black bears may resemble a beloved childhood stuffy but they can be 4- to 6-feet long and weigh upwards of 600 pounds! Black bears are a keystone species, meaning their species makes a large impact in the ecosystem! With a rapidly growing population in Alabama, it is important to be aware of precautions to take while camping to ensure our animal friends don't become dependent on our leftovers! Join the park naturalist to learn more black bears, how to live with them, and the consequences of a "nuisance" bear! 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne. Campfire Circle. Free and open to everyone; no pre-registration required. Contact Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov for any details.

Sept. 19 Campfire Talk: Firefly Facts & Flashes - Join us for a fun campfire talk in the great outdoors! Campfire Talks are a series of educational & entertaining programs for all ages. Each talk has a different subject, from snakes to vultures to insects, and so much more. DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne. Campfire Ring in the Campground. (In case of inclement weather, we'll be in the CCC Pavilion in the picnic area). Free. No pre-registration required. For any details about the talk, email Brittney.Hughes@dcnr.alabama.gov.

Sept. 20 Yoga on the Brow - Yoga on the Brow is hosted by Soul Shine Yoga & Wellness Studio. Join in on a relaxing outdoor class under a pavilion in Mentone's Brow Park off of Cool Street. Class is for all levels, just bring a mat and enjoy a morning flow to awaken the senses and energize the body. Donation/tips appreciated.

Sept. 20 Boom Days Heritage Celebration – 3rd Saturday - This annual art and musical event displays citizens of Fort Payne taking a second look at their past and the heritage passed down to them through the arts and crafts of our area. Many events will take place the week prior to the celebration. The Boom Days Heritage Celebration will feature many of these facets in the presentation of musical performances as well as art displays in City Park. 256-845-1524

Sept. 20 Annual Book Sale - Need to replace a Landmarks publication, or just add to your collection? Come by and see us during Boom Days at the Richard C. Hunt Reception Hall for our Annual Book Sale. Everything will be 1/2 off!

Sept. 21 May's Gulf Songwriter Series - This small-stage concert series celebrates the artistry of local and regional singer-songwriters, bringing their original music to life in a unique and personal setting. Join us from 3 to 5 p.m. at the beautiful Little River Canyon Center for an afternoon of extraordinary performances featuring Pat Byrne and Jordan Gillis Band. Tickets: $25 in advance | $30 at the door; Coolers welcome. Bring your favorite refreshments! Rain or shine, the show goes on!

Sept. 25 Plant Discovery Walk - Join DeSoto State Park staff for a meandering walk in the park, taking in every opportunity to learn more about the natural world. On this walk we will identify many native plants of the southern Appalachians and will be teaching you how to recognize the species found in the park. Bring a notebook/camera if you wish, and discover what can be seen along the way. All ages welcome. We will be walking from the Lodge to the H. Stanley Sims Native Plant Area, which is a 1,000-yard loop. Easy terrain, approx. 1 mile total. 2 to 4 p.m. DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne. Meet outside DeSoto Lodge. Free and open to everyone; no pre-registration required. Weather dependent; please call the lodge at 256-845-5380 beforehand to check on the status of the walk.

Sept. 27 Mentone Americana Nights - Free concert series bringing live music to the Shigley Amphitheater on the Moon Lake Campus. The event starts at 3 p.m., giving you plenty of time to explore the artisan shops and galleries and grab a bite at Moon Lake Kitchen, which serves up Cajun and Creole favorites.

Sept. 27 Daybreak Flatwater Paddle Trip - DeSoto State Park staff offers this relaxing guided morning paddle trip on scenic Little River. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature as we paddle upstream on the West Fork of Little River. Learn about this outstanding water source with its clear water, plant & animal life, and about the history of the area around DeSoto Falls. This trip is approximately 4 miles round-trip on flatwater under your own power & spans a 3 to 3 1/2-hour period. Includes kayak, paddle, & personal flotation device. Participants must be able to paddle upstream and back (no current) Weight limits: 300 pounds for singles & 450 for tandems. Ages 8 to adult. What to bring: Appropriate clothing for weather, bug spray, snacks, and drinking water. 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. DeSoto Falls Picnic Area-Miller's Bend Paddle Shack (about 7 miles from main park area of DeSoto State Park). Fee: $30 for single kayak rental (tandem kayaks are available on a limited basis for $50 email to check availability). Pre-registration: https://reserve.alapark.com/register/DSP-Daybreak-Paddle

Sept. 27 Valley Head Cemetery Run - The Cemetery Association hosts a race each year to help cover the cost of mowing and maintenance on the cemetery grounds. This will be year 10 for our race. We started running on the paved driveways in the cemetery with a 5k and Fun Run. We recently added a 10k by request and relocated the races to begin on the Valley Head Town Square at the Robert Johnson Roofing & Construction Office. The route will take runners through the valley following the railroad tracks on a scenic run up Violet Hill Road and back to the town square. Runners can choose between a 5k, a 10k, or Kids 1-Mile Fun Run. Registration forms are available at Valley Head Town Hall and Hammondville Town Hall, our Facebook page, at early pickup or at registration on the morning of the race; or you can request one by mail by calling Sherryl at 256-657-1616. Online registration closes Sept. 25. Race-day registration and packet pickup will open at 7 a.m. Packet pickup and early registration on Friday Sept. 26 from 6 to 7 p.m. at Robert Johnson Roofing & Construction office on the square.

Sept. 27 Wildflower Watercolors for Beginners - Fall Blooms - Discover the beauty of native wildflowers through the art of watercolor in this beginner-friendly class. Designed for those who think they can't draw a stick figure, this course focuses on easy-to-learn techniques to capture the delicate charm of local flora. Using simple brush strokes and basic color mixing, you'll create vibrant, nature-inspired artworks while exploring the unique features of native wildflowers. No prior art experience is required — just bring your enthusiasm and a willingness to experiment. By the end of the class, you'll have a collection of small watercolor paintings and newfound confidence in your artistic abilities. 2 to 5 p.m., DeSoto State Park. Nature Center next to DeSoto's Country Store & Information Center on Co. Rd. 89 $55 includes all supplies. Ages 12 to adult. Class space is limited to 10; pre-registration is required for attendance in this class. Pre-registration: https://forms.office.com/g/5AbY5jsUVT

Sept. 28 Weaving a Reed Handbag Basket - Join artist Brittney Hughes to discover how to weave a large reed basket; learn how to set up & form the basket, start & stop weaving techniques, and how to add a rim & handles. Complete basket kit will be provided, as well as all tools & supplies to use. This class is for ages 12 to adult. Wear comfortable, casual clothing (this can get messy), and bring a sack lunch if you wish. This workshop emphasizes the use of hand tools; students should have moderate hand strength. JSU's Little River Canyon Center 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. $130 supply fee. Pre-registration required by August 24. Space is limited to 5 participants. Pre-registration required by emailing Brittney Hughes (NOT via Facebook/social media). For details and to pre-register email Southernchick888@hotmail.com

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Sept. 4 at 3 p.m. - Poetry Club with Dekie Hicks

Sept. 5 at 4 p.m. - Join us for First Friday at Moon Lake Campus. The library will serve mocktails with a literary twist. Donations accepted.

Sept. 6 at 10:30 a.m. - Falconry with Matt Whitfield. All ages welcome.

Sept. 7 at 2:30 p.m. - Screening of the documentary "The Uprising of '34" about the General Textile Strike of 1934, with program by Dr. Anne McLeod

Sept. 13 at 10:30 a.m. - The Moon Lake Library Book Club! Read a book published in the decade in which you were born and share it with the club.

Sept. 13 at 1 p.m. - Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

Sept. 14 at 2 p.m. - Constitution Day with attorney Paul Howell

Sept. 20 at 10:30 a.m. - Little Library Learners: Kids are invited to join Ms. Lynn for story time and activities.

Sept. 26 at 6 p.m. - Friday Night @ The Movies: "Fried Green Tomatoes" (1991, PG-13)

Sept. 27 at 1 p.m. - Mentone Ukes offer free ukulele lessons for all experience levels.

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

Yoga *(continued from page 1)*

you make your own modifications. Teachers help you with learning new poses and proper alignment.

The benefits of yoga are wide-ranging and numerous. Jane Patton, of Mountain Aire Yoga Studio, says, "Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned yogi, there are many benefits you can experience with a yoga practice." Mental and emotional health improve with clearing of the mind, a renewed focus, and greater happiness. It is true — more happiness comes from yoga!

Physically, yoga increases the yogi's breathing capacity, as deep breathing is emphasized. It is like getting more mileage out of each breath, as you take in more oxygen. Imagine the effect of that over all of the millions of breaths you take. Improved balance serves to reduce the risk of injury and falls. Stronger posture and core strength help with back issues and overall physical strength.

Flexibility definitely comes from yoga practice. Often, folks will say, "I can't do yoga; I am not flexible." It is a "chicken or the egg" question. Try some yoga and see how much it helps. Even just picking up something you dropped on the floor is easier!

Yoga is for all ages, and for men and women alike. Older folks can take it up, having never practiced yoga, and experience benefits right away. And little kids love the movement and the common names of asanas, like "cat and cow" and "lizard."



If you have never tried yoga, give it a whirl! You might be truly surprised at how much better you feel, and you are sure to meet some like-minded folk. Lookout Mountain and Fort Payne are loaded with opportunities, including:

- **Mountain Aire Yoga Studio in Mentone:** Jane Moore Patton, teacher. Check Facebook for schedule.
- **Soul Shine Yoga & Wellness in Fort Payne:** Janie Hale, teacher. Check Facebook for schedule.
- **Life is Better with Yoga in Mentone:** Adelaide Drennen, teacher. Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:30 a.m., Brow Park Pavilion (and other locations).
- **St. Joseph's Episcopal Church yoga class in Mentone:** Jamie Baugh, teacher. Mondays at 11 a.m.; church parish hall.
- **Yoga on Main Street in Henagar and Fort Payne:** Courtney Willingham, teacher. Tuesdays at 6 p.m.; various locations.

ALL TIMES LISTED ARE CENTRAL TIME

Yoga curious? Need more information? Email adelaidedrennen@gmail.com

Andiamo *(continued from page 1)*

entrepreneurship and artistry. Her branding studio, Colleen Duffley Productions, would go on to earn national acclaim.

Duffley has received multiple national Addy Awards, recognition from *Print Magazine*, and was named one of the top 10 photographers in the country by PDN (Photo District News). Her culinary photography and food branding also led to recognition from the James Beard Foundation — underscoring her lifelong attention to detail and elevated aesthetics.

Her credits are illustrious, but she's never been about the money. Throughout her life, creativity and a spirit of adventure have propelled her.

A Serendipitous Trip

In 2020, in the stillness of the pandemic, Duffley and her then-partner Steve — owner of the beloved Crabby Steve's restaurant on 30A in Florida — took a detour through Mentone. Duffley had been familiar with the area through coworkers who had visited and through her bike rides from Birmingham. Steve and Colleen were initially headed to look at property in Chattanooga, but they fell in love with Mentone and ended up buying a house on Little River.

"I started posting pictures of our spot on Little River. Just on social media, as you do. And a lot of our friends were like, where are you? Where is this place? We want to come see you," she says. The couple wondered where they would house these future visitors.

They often passed the then-closed and unfinished Shiloh Lodge on County Road 106. They noticed the "for sale" sign lying in the grass. Something clicked.

"We figured it was small enough that people would come because they still wanted to travel [during the pandemic], but not near crowds, so they felt safe," Duffley explains.

In 2021, after thoughtful renovation, Andiamo Lodge opened its doors, not as a typical bed and breakfast, but as an intentional, curated experience designed to inspire guests creatively and personally.

A tour of the lodge website is in and of itself a vacation, as you imagine yourself unpacking in one of the lux rooms, sipping a "Welcome" cocktail at sunset, and taking a seat at the 12-person dinner table to enjoy local and regional ingredients creatively transformed into something magical.



Steve Carpenter preparing to make some guests very happy. (Photo by Colleen Duffley.)

"We're not a bed and breakfast, per se. We're a lodge with experiences," she says. "We're known for our food, for the art, for everything that happens here." The main lodge, with its gourmet kitchen, great room, and massive stone fireplace, immediately lets you know that you are there to be nurtured. The six rooms in the main lodge and three separate cottages are only the beginning. What truly defines Andiamo is what happens within and around them. Each visit offers guests the chance to participate in immersive, hands-on experiences, making it a magnet for creatives, food lovers, and lifelong learners.

"We have an Asian chef from L.A. coming who specializes in Wafu cooking. We've had a British master chef here three times. We have a French wine pairing dinner coming up. We have an editor of *Better Homes and Gardens* doing a Sunday supper," Duffley says.

Guests can take art classes, attend cooking lessons, sign up for photography workshops, or simply enjoy interesting conversations with visiting entrepreneurs, winemakers, or musicians. There's even a series called "Conversations at the Andiamo Table," where guests share a meal with a guest artist, chef, or innovator and dive deep into their personal stories.

"We do as many private classes as we do dated ones," she adds. "If someone says, 'I've got a group, and we want to learn to make pasta,' we make it happen."

Colleen and Steve have integrated the lodge with its natural surroundings, arranging outdoor excursions from fly fishing to hang gliding to paddle boarding to horseback riding. Andiamo recently announced a women- and couples-focused clay shooting event, paired with gourmet cuisine and fine wine — a perfect example of how Duffley weaves together adventure, artistry, and culture. It's easy to see why *Garden & Gun* magazine called Andiamo a summer camp for adults. In fact, some parents who are dropping off their kids at Mentone's camps drive straight to Andiamo for a stay.

Making People Feel Special

Though Duffley never formally trained in hospitality or food, her time producing high-end commercial shoots for luxury resorts around the world prepared her for exactly this. She is also a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier and serves on the Industry Advisory Board of the Horst Schulze School of Culinary and Hospitality Management at Auburn University. "To me, producing a photo shoot and hospitality are not a whole lot different," she says. "It's all about attention to detail and making people feel special."

Guests regularly return not just for the location, but for the people they meet and their hosts at the lodge. "Our guests are interested and interesting," she says. "They come back three, four, five times. They say, 'If you weren't here, I wouldn't even come.'"

Even their dog Petey, a pit-pointer stray who appeared during renovations, has become the lodge's beloved mascot and an adorable extension of the brand, appearing on t-shirts and recently gracing the cover of *Edible Nashville*, which featured Andiamo in its June 2025 issue.

While the days are long ("16 hours sometimes," she notes), Duffley has no regrets. "I haven't been anywhere 13 weeks in a row since I was 17 years old," she says. "But I love it." Steve and Colleen still make time for travel. They feel it's important to get out and keep feeding their creative spirits, which in turn is reflected in all that happens at Andiamo.

The couple recently celebrated their fourth wedding anniversary, a side story typical of the magic that happens so often in Mentone. They wed on their rock on Little River, with Petey as Best Dog.

So what's next for Duffley?

"I want to direct a movie one day," she says. "Who knows, maybe it'll be about a little town in Alabama where a couple opens a lodge." If so, she won't have to write much fiction. Andiamo is already the kind of story you can't make up.

See our "Mountain Kitchen" page for recipes from the lodge, courtesy of Colleen Duffley.

ANDIAMO LODGE
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The Mountain Kitchen
Recipes from Andiamo Lodge

BY REBECCA HENDERSON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

I couldn't interview Colleen Duffley without politely begging for a couple of her recipes and photos. Many thanks to her for her time and generosity. I'm adding these two dishes to my favorites folder! To read about Colleen and Steve's journey, see Page 1 of this issue of *The Groundhog*.



Photo by Colleen Duffley

BAKED EGGS WITH GRUYÈRE CHEESE GRITS

Grits
1 cup grits
2 cups whipping cream (or milk)
2 cups chicken stock
2-3 tablespoons butter
Red pepper flakes
2 cups shredded good-quality white cheddar (she uses Gruyère/cheddar blend)
(Colleen sometimes adds roasted garlic.)

1. Combine first 5 ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer, and cover. Stir often.
2. After 15 minutes, add the cheese and, if desired, roasted garlic. Cover and keep stirring for about 10 minutes until desired consistency.

Baked eggs
Vegetables you have on hand
Desired number of large fresh eggs (can do individual dishes with one egg or a dish to share with 2 or 3 eggs)
Desired amount of cheese for topping
Fresh herbs for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Sauté vegetables, such as mushrooms, onions, and red and yellow peppers, until tender.
3. Spoon grits onto bottom of a baking dish.
4. Scatter vegetables over grits, then break eggs over top. Do not stir.
5. Top with desired amount of cheese.
6. Bake until the eggs are the consistency you desire. (Colleen prefers them runny or jammy.)
7. Garnish with herbs … done and dusted! Serve with toast soldiers or bread.

APPLE-CIDER BUNDT CAKE OR MUFFINS

"Living on Lookout Mountain, we have access to so many fresh, seasonal things," says Colleen. "We love to give our lodge guests food that is in season and picked by us. We are so lucky to have a you-pick apple farm right in Mentone. Little River Orchard has so many varieties to choose from. For this recipe, I used Honeycrisp and Jonagold. Here is the website for info and for you-pick dates when in Mentone: https://www.lrorchard.com. Our honey is from Shinbone Valley Bee Company: https://www.facebook.com/Shinbone2020/."

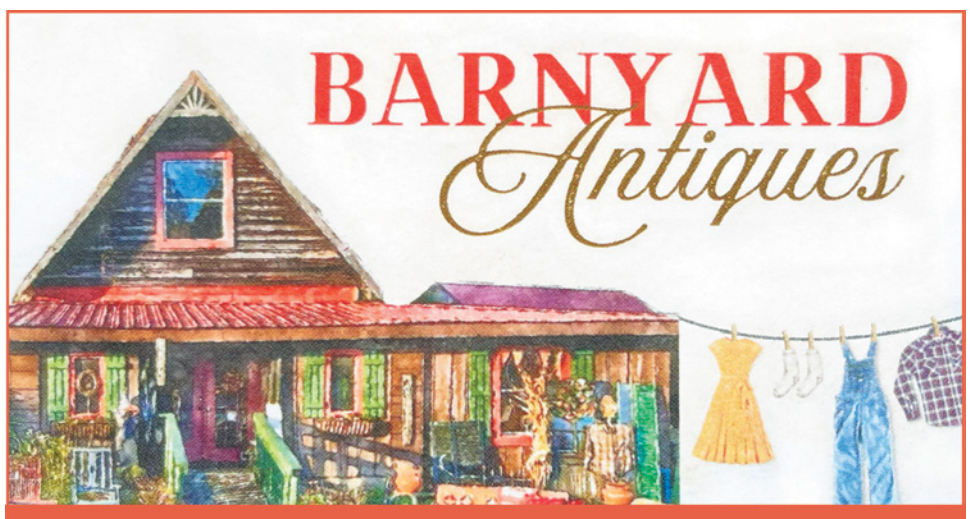
For the Cake
1 ¼ cups mild-flavored oil
1 ½ cups granulated sugar
⅔ cup lightly packed brown sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 tablespoon hard apple cider
3 eggs at room temperature
2 cups packed grated apple, plus 2 cups apple chunks (about 4 medium apples)
2 cups all-purpose flour, plus 1 tablespoon for tossing with apple chunks
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
¾ teaspoon kosher salt

Honey Glaze:
¼ cup granulated sugar
3 tablespoon honey (Colleen uses local honey from Shinbone Valley Bee company)
2 tablespoons hard apple cider
¼ cup heavy whipping cream
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Pinch of kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Generously grease and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan. Set aside. (If you use a small pan, you can use the rest of the batter for muffins or use all for muffins.)
2. In a large bowl, combine the oil, sugar, brown sugar, vanilla, hard cider, and eggs with a spoon. Stir in the grated apple.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together 2 cups all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Add dry ingredients to the apple mixture, and mix only until it all comes together in a smooth batter.
4. Toss apple chunks and 1 tablespoon flour, then fold the apples into the batter.
5. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Gently tap the pan on the counter several times to make sure the batter has fully settled into the nooks of the pan.
6. Bake for about 1 hour and 15 minutes or until a tester comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan for 15 minutes, then turn out onto a serving plate.
7. Combine all glaze ingredients in a saucepan, and bring to simmer for 2 minutes.
8. Drizzle half of the glaze over the warm cake. Save the remaining glaze to drizzle over the cake when it is fully cooled and ready to serve.



Photo by Colleen Duffley



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Three On A String to Headline Mentone Fall Festival

Singer/Songwriter Pierce Pettis set to perform in his hometown

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

Alabama's ambassadors of music and mirth are coming to Mentone, bringing their songs, laughs, and signature style to the Mentone Fall Festival.

Three On A String will headline the music portion of the Mentone Fall Festival on Saturday, October 18. These talented musicians were inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, and they travel the country sharing their unique blend of music and comedy.

Also confirmed to grace the stage of the Shigley Amphitheater is Pierce Pettis. A long-time Mentone resident, Pettis has enjoyed a storied career in music that includes numerous albums on



Compass Records and a touring schedule that takes him across the country. Beyond his own albums, Pettis' songs have been recorded by the likes of Joan Baez, Art Garfunkle, Susan Ashton, and Dar Williams. Garth Brooks had a huge hit with Pettis' song, "You Move Me."

In addition to a full day of music, the Mentone Fall Festival will feature more than 80 art vendors, featuring pottery, paintings, photography, fabric art, and a wide variety of handmade items.

The festival brings thousands to the Moon Lake Campus. It also raises money to help maintain and restore the historic property, which has been converted from a closed elementary school to a home for shops, galleries, a restaurant, and college classes.

Businesses and corporations are encouraged to support this work by becoming a sponsor. "Together, we are creating something that will impact the cultural and economic future of our region for generations," says event coordinator and artist Deedee Morrison.



Would you like to be a sponsor?

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