

THE MOUNTAINEER



Newsletter of the Georgia Mountaineers Chapter of FMCA

**December 7, 2017
Christmas Luncheon
The Smith House
Dahlonega, GA**

Hosts: Birts and Armstrongs



Thanks to our Hosts!

This year's Christmas Luncheon was held at The Smith House in Dahlonega. This house was established in 1899, and has a very interesting history. During a not too distant renovation, a round hole was found under a concrete floor. On further investigation, the hole turned out to be a mineshaft to the famous Dahlonega gold vein. The mineshaft is inside the building and can be seen from the entrance to the dining rooms on the ground floor. For those of you who do not know, the gold that covers the dome of the Georgia State Capitol Building in Atlanta came from the gold mines in Dahlonega. Maybe you didn't know but the first US gold rush began right here in Dahlonega, Georgia. The bricks in the old court house have gold particles in them.

Members Attending: Ken & Margie Alexander, Van & Miriam Armstrong, Ted & Martha Barrett, Bob & Eva Bielemeir, Raymond & Donna Birt, Dorris & Ethel Carpenter, Chris & Stella Christopher, Don & Peggy Crump, Ed & Patricia Durrence, Don & Marquita Haines (care helper Phillip Dorn), Virginia Jackson, (granddaughter, Melonie and friend Laura), Bill & Jo Anne Lyles, Jim & Karen Mathis, Jerry & Irene McKellar, Mike and Kathie Newton, Scott

& April Phillips, Roy & Kathy Perry, Sam & Dottie Reese, Harry & Linda Sasser, Jack White (guest Zelma Turner), Doug & Sherry Wright, Greg & Rose Zaic. Guests were Patricia Voyna. Patricia is the SEA Regional Vice President for Georgia. Also attending was Paula Nick from **The Community Helping Place** in Dahlonega, the charity which we were supporting with Christmas gifts for children.

Our luncheon was scheduled from 12:00 AM until 2:30 PM. Although a long drive for some, many started arriving before 11:30. In no time the parking lot was busy with the activity of everyone greeting each other and unloading “Santa” packages for the needy children of the area. In total there were 48 people in attendance to close out our 2017 camping year and celebrate the Christmas season.

Ed Durrence, the chapter president, opened the meeting welcoming everyone with a hearty “Merry Christmas”! Our Vice President, Raymond Birt asked the blessing, then the kitchen staff started bringing out the food. We were served fried chicken and steak with gravy, accompanied with mashed potatoes, green beans, niblet corn, fried okra, collards, and rolls. The meal was topped off with strawberry shortcake.

After the meal our guests were introduced to our group. Ted Barrett introduced Patricia Voyna, SEA Regional Vice President for Georgia. Patricia thanked us for the invite. She said her husband Marvin was on a mechanical emergency helping a friend and couldn't come. She mentioned the SEA rally coming up in February in Lakeland, Florida and



the FMCA rally in Perry, Georgia in March. We were all invited to go. Jack White introduced his friend Zelda who also came last year. Virginia Jackson introduced her granddaughter Melonie and friend Laura. Don Haines introduced their friend and care helper, Philip Dorn.

Miriam introduced Paula Nick, Director of Client Services with **Community Helping Place** who spoke to our group. We were given some background information about their organization. Paula was overwhelmed at the amount and quality of the gifts donated by our group. There was enough to fill up the corner of the room under the Christmas tree.



Ed then re-opened the program with the Installation of Greg Zaic as our Alternate National Director. Greg was unable to attend the November Rally where the other officers were installed.

A Thank You for hosting our luncheon was made to the Birts and Armstrongs followed by a big round of applause.

This year several of our long serving and outgoing officers were recognized by President Ed Durrence and given certificates for their service to the Georgia Mountaineers. Bob Bielemeier was recognized for eleven years of outstanding service as our sheriff. Bob did say that due to Eva's health that they have stopped traveling in their RV and in fact were going to sell it. They plan on bobtailing in some next year. Next, Jack White was recognized for serving as second VP and Wagon Master for ten years. Jack will continue as Wagon Master in 2018. Jack is a big asset to our chapter. Next, Don Crump was recognized for five years as our Treasurer and did an outstanding job. Don did not offer to return as Treasurer but was instrumental in getting Darlene Knowlton to serve in that capacity. Next, Martha Barrett was recognized for her many years in several jobs in our chapter. Martha has served one year as recording secretary, three years as Newsletter Editor, four years as Sunshine Reporter, and Ted with his health issues. Martha did an outstanding job wherever she served. Lastly, Ted Barrett was recognized for his exemplary service as president for five years total and as webmaster for eight years. Ed asked everyone to be seated after picture taking, except Ted and Martha. We had a very touching moment as Ed presented Ted and Martha a contribution gift from all of the Mountaineers of \$525. This was an expression of appreciation from everyone for Ted and Martha's dedication and hard work for our chapter.



Ted and Martha were both overwhelmed by the generous gift as Ted expressed their love for this organization and what it meant to them. On a lighter side, Ed presented Ted with a Mexican sombrero with everyone's signature on it. Ted proudly wore it and maybe will do so to their next Mexican restaurant meal. Thanks to all who signed the hat!

The program then moved to Miriam who began the drawing of names for the **generous** door prizes provided by **several of our campgrounds and restaurants which we frequent during our rallies.**

My, how the time flew! By the time the door prizes were distributed, our allotted time for the room was approaching. Alas, it was time to say our goodbyes for this year. It was during this time that Paula along with our help gathered up all the presents and wished them off to waiting children.

Wishing all a safe journey home and a Merry Christmas, we all departed. So Merry Christmas to all, and hope to see you at our Pine Mountain Rally in April.

One other thought, Jack White reminded us that today was **Pearl Harbor Memorial Day!** Our hearts are eternally grateful for those who gave their lives and fought for our freedom.

*Patricia Durrence,
Newsletter Editor*

PS, assisted by Ed. We do apologize for the poor quality in some of the pictures but will try to do better in the future.

HAPPY TRAILS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

YOU BELONG HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Rally Reminders:

April: 18th thru 21st **Pine Mountain RV Resort, an RVC Outdoor Destination.** Pine Mountain GA. Reser Req. 706-663-4329. 8804 Hamilton Road, Hwy 27. Directions: From I-185 Exit 42 to US-27, go 8.5 miles, enter on the right. See <http://www.rvcoutdoors.com/pinemountainga> **Hosts: Gibbs & McKellars**

May: 17th thru 20th **Top of Georgia Airstream Park.** Helen GA. 14255 Highway 75N, Helen, GA. Reser Req. 706-878-3590. GPS coordinates: 34° 46' 12.64" N -- 83° 44' 46.49" W See <http://topofgeorgia.net> **Hosts: Perrys**