

THE MOUNTAINEER



Newsletter of the Georgia Mountaineers Chapter of FMCA

**December 6, 2018
Christmas Luncheon
The Smith House
Dahlonega, GA**

Hosts: Steve & Joy Ridenour

Once again this year's Christmas Luncheon was held at The Smith House in Dahlonega. This is the third year in a row our luncheon has been

held here. The Smith House is located in the town of Dahlonega, Georgia, about an hour north of Atlanta, and was established in 1899. The first major US gold rush began in Dahlonega. Deer hunter, Benjamin Parks, tripped over a rock 2-1/2 miles south of what is now Dahlonega and upon inspecting the rock, discovered that it was full of gold! Gold was so plentiful around that time that it could be found just laying on top of the ground. It had been washing off the mountainsides for centuries. Shortly after Mr. Parks' discovery, some 15,000 miners rushed to Dahlonega to find gold for themselves. In a recent renovation to The Smith House, a round hole was found under a concrete floor. It turned out to be a mineshaft to the famous Dahlonega gold vein. Most of the gold mining operations of years past are now gone but the tunnels deep below in gold bearing rock still remain. Tours are conducted daily and the tour guides are actual miners. What an exciting way to spend a day in the town of Dahlonega! We may have to visit yet another year to see what we missed.



Members Attending:

Van & Miriam Armstrong, Raymond & Donna Birt, Dorris & Ethel Carpenter, Ed Durrence, Terry Gibbs (and her sister Gayle Porterfield), Virginia Jackson, David & Nancy Jones, Nick & Darlene Knowlton, Fred & Shirley Lee, Johnny & Kat Martin, Jim & Karen Mathis, Jerry & Irene McKellar, Mike & Kathie Newton, Roy & Kathy Perry, Scott & April Phillips, Sam & Dottie Reese, Steve & Joy Ridenour, Jack White, Doug & Sherry Wright, and Greg & Rose Zaic.

Guests were: Patricia Voyna, SEA Regional Vice President for Georgia and her husband Marvin. Also attending were Jessica Dudley, Director of Client Services, and Paula Nick from **The Community Helping Place** in Dahlonega, the charity which we were supporting with

Christmas gifts for children. In addition, Mr. Dean Woodruff from Integrity RV Service Center was there. He has been very supportive of the Georgia Mountaineers Chapter in a variety of ways to include door prizes for our 25th anniversary celebration in Dillard, GA as well as door prizes for our Christmas Luncheon and his company provides excellent RV repair service to our members when needed.

Our luncheon was scheduled from 12:00 noon until 2:00 pm. Although a long drive for some, many started arriving before 11:30. As each everyone arrived they were greeted with a warm “hello”. Even though our last rally was less than a month ago there was a lot to talk about to catch up with the busy activities of the Thanksgiving season and the upcoming Christmas holiday. AND as everyone arrived the pile of “Santa” packages kept growing. Before long the packages were spread beyond the Christmas tree almost to the end of the large fireplace in the dining room. In total there were 42 people in attendance.

Raymond Birt, the chapter president, opened the meeting welcoming everyone with a hearty “Merry Christmas”! We had a few minutes before the kitchen staff was ready to serve our meal (we had a couple of late arrivals so we held off until they were situated). Raymond went ahead and introduced Patricia Voyna, SEA Regional Vice President & her husband, Marvin and Dean Woodruff from Integrity RV Service Center. Raymond then asked the blessing and the kitchen staff started bringing out the food.



We were served fried chicken and roast beef and gravy accompanied with mashed potatoes, green beans, cream corn, fried okra, collards, yams, and rolls. Strawberry shortcake was the perfect dessert to top off our meal.

After the meal our guests were introduced to the rest of the group. Raymond Birt introduced Patricia Voyna, SEA Regional Vice President for Georgia and her husband Marvin. He also introduced Dean Woodruff from Integrity RV Service Center. Terry Gibbs introduced her sister, Gayle Porterfield.

Steve Ridenour introduced Ms. Jessica Dudley, Director of Client Services, and Paula Nick of **The Community Helping Place** who spoke to our group. Jessica provided a little background information about their organization and the different types of services they provide to the local community. Both of the ladies were once again overwhelmed at the amount and quality of the gifts donated by our group.

Raymond then re-opened the program with the Installation of Steve Ridenour as our Vice President. Steve was unable to attend the November Rally where the other officers were

installed. Raymond also called Ed Durrence to the front of the room and presented him with the Past President plate and a certificate showing his year of service.

A big 'Thank You' was given to Steve & Joy Ridenour for their hard work in planning and hosting the luncheon followed by a round of applause. Steve surprised everyone with a stained glass teardrop sun catcher that he had made. Everyone was quite pleased.

Jack White then passed the 2019 Rally Schedule around the room so folks could sign up to host one of the upcoming rallies. Jack said that all rallies are 'hosted' except for three of them.

Steve Ridenour took the floor at this time to begin drawing the names for the door prizes provided by several of the campgrounds and the restaurants which we frequent during our rallies. We also had door prizes from Integrity RV and The Smith House. A friend of Steve and Joy contributed a hand painted Santa sign as a prize. Dorris Carpenter and Ed Durrence helped Steve draw the numbers and hand out the prizes.

Before we knew it our allotted time was close at hand. It was time to say our goodbyes and help Jessica and Paula gather the presents and get them back to The Community Helping Place. Everyone pitched in and in no time two SUVs were loaded and ready to go.

After Raymond wished everyone a safe journey home and a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year we all departed.

Hope to see everyone at our Scenic Mountain RV Park Rally in April.

Ethel Carpenter
Newsletter Editor

Rally Reminders:

April: 17th thru 20th Scenic Mountain RV Park Campground. Milledgeville, GA. Reser Req. 478-454-1013. Directions from I-20 in Madison Ga. Take US 441 south, at Milledgeville turn right on US 441 Bypass, in about 7 miles, turn left on north US-441 BUS. Park is about ¼ mile on right. See <https://www.scenicmountainrv.com>

Hosts: Birt, Jackson, & White

May: 15th thru 18th Great Outdoors RV Resort. Franklin NC. Reser Req. 828-349-0412
Directions: From Franklin take US441/23 north five miles, then left on Echo Valley Rd, then an immediate right onto Thumpers Trail. See <http://www.gorvresort.com>

Hosts: