

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
ARKANSAS
“THE NATURAL STATE”**

Mount Ida is centered in the geographic center of the county with a population of 981 and is the County Seat. Countywide population is about 8,700. Although considered part of Mount Ida, Harbor East is located 15 miles East of Mount Ida in Joplin.

Montgomery County was part of the extensive hunting grounds of the ancient Ouachita Indians. In 1543 when DeSoto learned first hand of the fierce nature that won them the territory, the Caddo Indians dominated this portion of Western Arkansas. Settlers began to arrive in the early 1800's. Arkansas became a state in 1836 and the County was named and designated in 1842. Although Mount Ida is the original County Seat it previously held the names “Montgomery” and “Salem”, having its present name since the 1850's.

Most of Montgomery County lies within the boundary of the Ouachita National Forest, the oldest and largest (1.5 million acre) national forest in the South. Forest products have a huge impact on the economy.

A 49,000-acre lake is a result of a Corps of Engineers project of the 1940's and 50's. It is one of the cleanest lakes in America (and hopefully will remain so), and its 670 miles of shoreline is a result of continuous series of coves and peninsulas created by damming a mountainous area. The lake is the US's second largest volume of water to be captured by an earthen dam. Since there are no homes allowed on the waterfront, visitors can quickly find solitude in an unoccupied cove or on a tree lined island. Lake Ouachita has created “love at first sight” for every lucky person that gazes upon her. Fishermen and women, Sailors, Ski and Jet Skiers, House-boaters, Scuba divers and Campers enjoy what she has to offer.

This is the undeniable “Quartz Crystal Capital of the World.” Mount Ida has a Crystal Festival each October. A few other area activities include; canoeing, hiking trails, bike riding and back road touring. Charlton Camp Area and Hickory Nut Mountain Vista are a must to visit. Trail and back road maps as well as other information may be obtained from the Womble Ranger Station located in Mt Ida.