

The

# Communicator

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

**BROADBAND:**  
HELPING YOU THRIVE



## ALL IN THE FAMILY

The Parks take over  
New Hope dentist office

## SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Local clinic serving  
needs of residents

## A HIGH-TECH LIFELINE

Telemedicine powers  
up rural health care





— By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO —  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

## A good way to start the New Year

**N**TCA members make a real difference in their communities, and in the lives of the people they serve. I was reminded of this a few weeks ago when the Foundation for Rural Service announced it had awarded \$100,000 in FRS Community Grants to groups throughout the U.S. FRS is the nonprofit arm of NTCA that supports rural telecom companies, consumers and policymakers with educational information, products and programming.

Each year, community organizations apply for FRS grants to help them tackle challenges ranging from accessing technology and improving educational offerings to providing telemedicine and first-responder services to rural areas. Applications are sponsored by their local telco.

It was also exciting to see the USDA award several ReConnect grants and loans to NTCA members toward the end of the year. This program represents yet another option for rural broadband funding, as well as an example of public/private partnerships at work to extend broadband to unserved communities.

After all, investments by federal and state agencies, coupled with the commitment of rural broadband providers, are key to our nation's progress in connecting the millions of citizens still without access to fast, reliable internet service.

These programs, as well as the engagement we saw among policymakers at our Telecom Executive Policy Summit in November, provide a strong start to 2020 and give me great hope for a strong new year for rural broadband. ☑



## Are you ready for a telehealth future?

Story by STEPHEN V. SMITH

**T**he presence of reliable broadband service holds great promise for rural America. While it touches many facets of life, broadband's greatest impact may very well be in the area of health care. Consider this statement from the Federal Communications Commission:

“Advances in telemedicine are transforming health care from a service delivered solely through traditional brick and mortar health care facilities to connected care options delivered via a broadband internet access connection directly to the patient's home or mobile location.”

While reliable access to a broadband network is still out of reach for millions of rural Americans, hundreds of cooperative and independent telecommunications companies across the country are delivering world-class internet service, often over a fiber connection. If you received this magazine in the mail, your local telco is one of those leading-edge providers.

If access to broadband is becoming less of the challenge to telehealth's wide-scale availability, what is the greatest challenge? The FCC recently tasked the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee with studying and reporting on telehealth barriers and incentives. The report stated that “people-based” issues offer the most significant challenges to telehealth adoption. While this includes many factors, such as policy and licensing, broadband adoption is a leading concern.

In other words, the technology is there. Now, people need to embrace it.

“Increasing support must be given to rural and disadvantaged communities so that digital literacy and adoption does not exacerbate the digital divide,” the IAC report states. Quite simply, the presence of broadband doesn't mean patients and doctors are ready to put it to use as part of their health care program.

Are you ready? Do you understand the implications of telehealth? What steps can you take toward enjoying its benefits?

Begin by asking your doctor what programs are available. This could include connected medical devices in your home or something as simple as remote monitoring via an app on your smartphone or tablet. Of course, access to telehealth starts with subscribing to broadband service that will support this life-changing technology. And once in place, broadband has the potential to enhance your life in many other ways as well. ☑

# Knowledge is power

## Does your digital know-how stand up?



Story by NOBLE SPRAYBERRY

Convenience and power. Internet services bring both. Online bill pay eliminates a tedious task. Social media can keep family ties strong or reconnect you with old friends. Streaming services bring a wealth of music, books and more.

But when it comes to digital tools, knowledge is power, and the Pew Research Center's recent "Americans and Digital Knowledge" report found that a majority of adults in the U.S.

could not correctly answer half of the survey's 10 multiple-choice questions.

Questions touched on security and a general understanding of technology. Here are a few of the queries, edited for clarity, focused on security and privacy — good information to know. The answers do include additional context and tips not included in the report.

### **Q** If a website uses cookies, it means that the site ...

**A:** Cookies allow websites to track user visits and site activity. They are common, and you are often tracked across the websites you visit.

### **Q** Where might someone encounter a phishing scam?

**A:** Phishing scams can occur on social media, websites, email or text messages. Each form of communication offers an avenue for exploitation. For additional tips to improve your online security, visit [FCC.gov/consumer-guides](https://www.fcc.gov/consumer-guides).

### **Q** What is the largest source of revenue for most major social media platforms? (Several possible options were listed.)

**A:** Advertising is the largest source of revenue for most social media plat-

forms. Often advertising is personalized to you by information gathered from not only your activities on a social media site but also your actions on other websites.

### **Q** When a website has a privacy policy, it means that the site ...

**A:** Privacy policies are contracts between websites and users about how those sites will use their data. Often long and legalistic, the agreements may outline how your private information can be used to target advertising or whether or not your information can be shared with other companies.

### **Q** What does it mean when a website has "https://" at the beginning of its URL, as opposed to "http://" without the "s"?

**A:** "https://" in a URL means that

information entered into the site is encrypted. Look for "https://" before completing any financial transaction on a site.

### **Q** Many web browsers offer a feature known as "private browsing" or "incognito mode." If someone opens a webpage on their computer at work using incognito mode, who will be able to see their online activities?

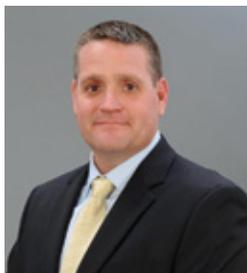
**A:** Private browsing mode only prevents someone using the same computer from seeing one's online activities. In most cases, your internet provider, including your phone wireless provider, can see all digital traffic passing from your device to the internet.

**Want to see the entire report?**

Do a Google search for "Pew Research Center and Americans and Digital Knowledge."

# We've arrived in the future

**W**elcome to 2020! I sincerely hope you and those close to you had a superb holiday season and that this new year is off to a wonderful start.



**DANIEL MARTIN**  
General Manager

Something about starting not only a new year, but also a new decade makes 2020 feel like a year especially full of promise. For so long, the 2020s have seemed like the distant future. Now, we have arrived!

It's entertaining to look back and see what Hollywood, science fiction authors and big thinkers predicted for the future.

While I'm still waiting on the flying car and weekend trips to the moon that science fiction promised us, I catch myself from time to time thinking about how some of the things we take for granted every day would seem so futuristic to us just 20 or 30 years ago.

Here in the future, all of us carry around personal communication devices in our pockets that allow us to make video calls with

people all over the world.

We can instantly download practically any book, movie or song in the world right to our tablets.

While we don't exactly have Rosie from "The Jetsons," we do have robots that vacuum our floors, manufacture products and even help perform surgeries.

We have software that can share photos around the world, alert us to emergencies and order almost anything we need for home delivery. Our watches can help detect heart problems. Our cars can give us directions to anywhere we want to go. And our homes can turn on lights, lock doors and change the temperature with just the sound of our voice.

Many of these things are becoming a normal part of our daily routine, but the 1990 version of myself would have seen them as straight out of science fiction.

For those of us at NHTC, it's rewarding to know our network is what brings the future to our part of Alabama. Whether it's our broadband service at your home or our network providing vital infrastructure to businesses, we're right at the heart of all of this futuristic technology. We worked hard to make that network and our company even better in 2019. It was certainly a year of meaningful accomplishments and noteworthy milestones for us.

- Expanded our network into the Horse Cove Road area in Gurley.
- Celebrated 68 years of serving our communities' communications needs.
- Launched MobiPro – Mobile Medical Alert System.

Turning the page to 2020, we have some significant goals in mind in order to serve you better.

- Work toward providing a managed Wi-Fi solution, as well as a Whole Home Wi-Fi solution to improve our members' online experience.
- Continue expanding our network build into the Berkley area.
- Complete the removal of aerial plant throughout all exchanges.

Knowing that the only thing certain about the future is change, I think NHTC is primed to accomplish these things and more. We're thankful for the opportunity to serve you in 2020 — and in the future. [📧](#)

## The Communicator

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### On the Cover:



Doctors Kyle and Brittany Parks met in dental school and love treating their patients at New Hope Family Dentistry. See story Page 8.

*Happy New Year!*

**BEST WISHES TO OUR CUSTOMERS  
FOR A GREAT YEAR IN 2020!**

**New directories!**

Phone directories will be delivered in February. Remember, NHTC's members will be listed alphabetically, without the separation of the three exchanges for New Hope, Grant and Owens Cross Roads.



**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY**

Every year, NHTC honors the people who make the cooperative possible. At the Customer Appreciation Day in October, members were welcomed by employees and enjoyed food and activities. "We couldn't do what we do without our customers," says Daniel Martin, general manager at NHTC. "This is just one small way to show our appreciation."

**Lifeline SERVICE**

**LIFELINE IS A FEDERAL PROGRAM TO HELP LOW-INCOME AMERICANS PAY FOR PHONE OR BROADBAND SERVICE**

You are eligible for Lifeline benefits if you qualify for and receive one of the following benefits:

- SNAP
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- The Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit

**DO YOU QUALIFY? Apply today!**

To find out whether you qualify for Lifeline assistance, please visit [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org) or call your local telecommunications provider.

*Mark your calendar!*

Please plan to attend NHTC's annual meeting on Tuesday, May 19.



# TAKE THE RIDE

## Follow the Hank Williams Trail

Story by ANNE BRALY

The road between Georgiana and Fort Payne along the Hank Williams Trail is a journey lovers of country music should make at least once in their lifetime. It tells a story of one of Alabama's most famous sons, from his beginnings as the child of a railroad engineer who was mostly absent from his son's life to the glamour of stardom and Williams' tragic demise at the young age of 29.

Over the span of Hank Williams' life, he recorded more than 165 songs. Though he could not read a note of music, he was a wordsmith when it came to writing hits that have become part of the American songbook.

The trail is a 250-mile trip through history that includes a visit to Williams' boyhood home and ends at a barber shop where he made one of his last stops before dying in his car in West Virginia on his way to perform at a concert in Ohio. "The Alabama Tourism Department has done an incredible job with the Hank Williams Trail, and it's a great way to experience some of my dad's life story," says his daughter, Jett Williams.

### *Here are some trail highlights*

#### GEORGIANA

Thousands of newspaper clippings, photos of family and friends, record albums and 45s, royalty receipts, clothes, one of Williams' early guitars, the old wooden bench he stood on to sing at Mount Olive Baptist Church in nearby Greenville, Alabama — there are too many items to list, and it will take a couple of hours to take in the scope of the collection at the Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum.

Williams lived here from 1931 to 1934. It was in this house at 127 Rose St. that he played his first guitar, having bought it by selling peanuts and shining shoes at the town depot.

Among the more unusual items in the small house is a stage light used in the Municipal Auditorium for the show "Louisiana Hayride." The Hank Williams Festival is on the grounds the first Saturday each June.

Online: [www.hankmuseum.com](http://www.hankmuseum.com)

#### MONTGOMERY

Montgomery is ground zero for Hank Williams. He called it home from 1937 to 1948 and moved back in 1952. He lived there at the time of his death.



## LAKE MARTIN, ALEXANDER CITY

Hank Williams' Cabin on Lake Martin is a small, white frame affair where Williams and Fred Rose, his friend and a giant in the music publishing business, wrote blockbusters "Kaw-Liga" and "Your Cheatin' Heart."

The cabin is now on the property of Children's Harbor, a camp for sick and disabled children. The two-bedroom building is available for rent.

Online: [childrensharbor.com](http://childrensharbor.com)

## Kowaliga Restaurant, 295 Kowaliga Marina Road

This restaurant, now serving a menu of cheeseburgers and catfish, sits at the water's edge of Lake Martin. Inside, a carved statue of the Indian Kowaliga, whose story was the inspiration for Williams' song "Kaw-Liga" guards the entrance.

Online: [www.kowaligarestaurant.com](http://www.kowaligarestaurant.com)

## BIRMINGHAM

**The Redmont Hotel**, 2101 Fifth Ave. N., is the place where Hank Williams spent his last night in 1952 and is also the oldest hotel in Alabama still in operation. Remodeling a few years ago reconfigured many of the guest rooms, but Williams' room was on what is now the third floor, somewhere around what is now room 304.

Step off the elevator on the third floor and you'll see a wooden plaque with four of Williams' records. This is the only floor displaying any Hank Williams decor and is a silent tribute to one of the hotel's most famous guests.

Online: [www.redmontbirmingham.com](http://www.redmontbirmingham.com)

## FORT PAYNE

On the eve of his death, Hank Williams stopped by Carter's Barber Shop for a haircut and a shave from barber Howard Simpson. He also had a sip or two or three — maybe more — of moonshine while there. When Simpson died, he left the chair that Williams sat in to local barber Alton Beason, who opened his shop at 1719 Gault Ave. It's now on display in a corner of the shop, carefully roped off for all to see but not sit in. ☞



## Chris' Hot Dogs, 138 Dexter Ave.

This shotgun-style eatery is the oldest restaurant in the city and was Williams' favorite place to eat — and drink.

"He'd order two hot dogs all the way — mustard, sauerkraut, onions and Chris' famous chili sauce — and a Budweiser and a shot of Jack," a server said when asked about Hank Williams' favorite dog. Williams' seat isn't marked, but it was one of 12 stools along the counter. There are also booths and tables, so it's not hard to find a seat and eat where the Hillbilly Shakespeare once dined.

Online: [www.chrishotdogs.com](http://www.chrishotdogs.com)

## D'Road Cafe, 121 Montgomery St.

This cafe, the former location of the Elite Cafe, is worth at least a drive-by to see where Williams made his final public performance just four days before he died. The Elite opened in 1911 and was a Montgomery institution before it closed in 1990. Now reopened as the D'Road Cafe, the restaurant allows visitors to sit in the place where Williams last performed.

Online: [droadcafe.com](http://droadcafe.com)

## Hank Williams Museum, 118 Commerce St.

This museum is the tell-all of Williams' life — both public and private. The collection includes thousands of pieces of not only his, but also of his wife's, Audrey's, past — furniture from their house in Nashville and suits, including several handmade Nudie suits. There are guitars, bills and other receipts, and artwork. The collection is massive, but its crowning jewel is the baby blue 1953 Cadillac in which Williams died. It's on loan from his son, Hank Williams Jr.

Take your time touring the museum, but when you're done, browse the gift shop — ticket and shop sales and private donations fund the museum.

Online: [hankwilliamsmuseum.net](http://hankwilliamsmuseum.net)

## Hank Williams Gravesite, 829 Columbus St.

On your way out of town is Oakwood Cemetery. It's here, high atop a hill, that Hank and Audrey Williams are buried. Inscriptions at the base of Hank's headstone remind visitors of his most well-known songs, such as "Kaw-Liga," "I Can't Help It" and "Jambalaya."

Chris' Hot Dogs in Montgomery, Alabama.

# ALL SMILES

## Couple treating patients at New Hope Family Dentistry

Story by LISA SAVAGE | Photography by MATT LEDGER



Dr. Brittany Parks



Dr. Kyle Parks

**D**r. Brittany Parks knew from the time she was a little girl that she wanted to be a dentist. Her husband, Dr. Kyle Parks, on the other hand, had different plans.

He followed in his father's footsteps and obtained a degree in engineering, as did his older brother and sister. However, he and his siblings dreamed of a job helping others and continued their educations. His brother is an orthopaedic surgeon, and his sister is a vascular surgeon. He chose to become a dentist.

The couple met at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Dentistry, graduated in 2013 and worked on a reservation in Arizona before settling in last year at New Hope Family Dentistry.

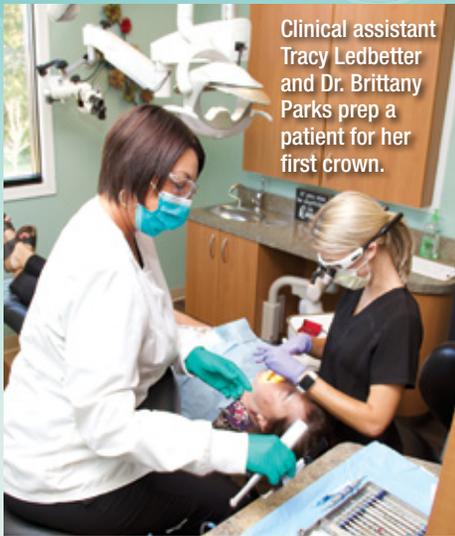
### A PERFECT MATCH

Brittany Parks' parents graduated from the University of Alabama, but their jobs took them to the Atlanta area, which is where she grew up. She earned a degree in biology from The University of Georgia.

Kyle Parks grew up in Decatur and went to Mississippi State University. The couple met in the spring at UAB's dental school before classes began. In a class of 55 students, Kyle Parks stood out, his wife says. "He is 6 feet, 2 inches, and he's attractive, but I was driven and I said, 'I'm not going to date anyone while in school,'" she says.



New Hope Family Dentistry owners are Dr. Kyle Parks, top, from left, and his wife, Dr. Brittany Parks. The staff, front, from left, are Anna Kissinger, Tina Treece, Tracy Ledbetter, Lori Whitaker and Marilana Hunt.



Clinical assistant Tracy Ledbetter and Dr. Brittany Parks prep a patient for her first crown.



Dr. Kyle Parks reviews a patient's digital records before the oral examination.

The two started studying together and soon realized their differences complemented each other. The relationship blossomed, and they later married. Not long before dental school graduation in 2013, they learned about the Indian Health Service, a program that repays qualified student loans in exchange for a two-year service obligation to practice full time at a Native American health program site. “We were newly married, we love the Southwest, and we thought this would be a great way to repay our tuition costs,” she says.

The couple moved to Flagstaff, Arizona, where they lived for three years, serving the Navajo and Hopi Indian population at Tuba City Regional Health Care. They gained experience in dental care and dental emergencies and learned an appreciation for different cultures. “We saw quickly there is a big need, and there is extreme poverty,” Brittany Parks says. “They’re an amazing group of people, and we learned so much about their incredible culture.”



Doctors Kyle and Brittany Parks were able to fit in some sightseeing while working in Arizona.

### COMING HOME

After the Parks welcomed their daughter, Claire, in 2016, they decided to return to Alabama and seek work locally. They settled in Gurley, and Kyle Parks commuted to Guntersville, where he worked for Dr. John Rutland. He later worked at Grant Dental Care and still works there part time.

“He loved the small-town feel at Grant, and we knew that’s what we wanted to do,” Brittany Parks says. When Dr. Dugald McMillan decided to seek training to become an endodontist, the Parks bought his practice, New Hope Family Dentistry.

“Dr. McMillan didn’t want to sell to a corporation or chain,” Brittany Parks says. “The timing worked out well for all of us.”

### THE PRACTICE

The Parks’ differences also bring an advantage to the New Hope practice. “There’s a benefit in that there are two of us and that we are different,” Brittany Parks says. “We can have another set of eyes or another opinion. We see things differently. He still has the engineering mind, and he’s a problem solver.”

They both do root canals, extractions and restorations, but each discovered a niche. She likes working with children, and he likes implants. Their team of hygienists takes care of cleanings and other treatments. “We’re doing what we can to keep people from having to go into town if they can help it,” Brittany Parks says.

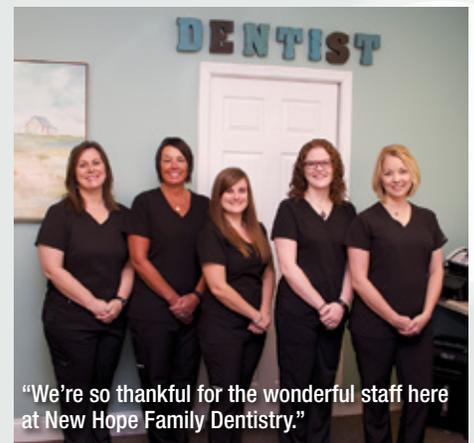
The advanced technology in dental care

makes the overall patient experience much better, she says. Digital X-rays, including 3D scans, make procedures go much faster and help in the accuracy of implant placement or diagnosis of other issues. “It helps make the overall experience a better one for our patients,” Brittany Parks says.

Each treatment room has a smart TV mounted where patients can see their X-rays. “It helps us educate and explain to the patients, and they’re seeing what we’re seeing,” she says. The Parks plan to upgrade to digital impressions soon to provide a better experience for patients who need an impression to make a correct fit for an implant or crown.

Both doctors and the staff are passionate about their patients and making sure they receive the best care possible. Marlana Hunt works at the front desk, and hygienists are Tina Treece and Lori Whitaker. Dental assistants are Anna Kissinger and Tracy Ledbetter, and Maranna Parsons works part time.

“We are so thankful for the wonderful staff here at New Hope. We literally could not do what we do without them. They work hard and are committed to having a wonderful patient experience,” Kyle Parks says. “They do little things and big things every day that are over and beyond. They truly are like family to us and to the patients.” 📱



“We’re so thankful for the wonderful staff here at New Hope Family Dentistry.”

## NEW HOPE FAMILY DENTISTRY

5487 Main Drive, New Hope  
256-723-8833



# Telemedicine changes the health care landscape

## Broadband makes a difference daily

Imagine a world with greater health care accessibility, as convenient as contacting a physician from your home. Or consider a medical system where rural communities can easily connect in real time with specialists based dozens, if not hundreds, of miles away.

Broadband technology provides the key link between you and medical providers needed to make those innovations and others possible. That more convenient, healthier world is becoming a reality for rural communities across the nation.

The systems are not yet what they one day may become, but every day more and more people are receiving the benefits of telemedicine. And the results are often profound.

Kentucky veterans have easier access to important care. Changing laws in states such as Texas allow greater access to telemedicine. Telestroke programs in Minnesota and North Dakota save vital minutes when patients most need care. And those are just a few examples of broadband technology changing health care for the better.

### KENTUCKY VETERANS

In rural Kentucky, getting to and from an appointment at any medical specialist can often require hours of travel. But when you're a veteran trying to get to a Veterans Administration Medical Center in a metropolitan area, travel times can increase even more. And a veteran might need multiple doctors and have multiple appointments scheduled on different days.

An innovative pilot program in a mountainous section of eastern Kentucky is helping to change that. The Virtual Living Room program, which started in 2017 in McKee, offers vets a comfortable and private room in their local library complete with high-speed internet access to visit with VA health care providers located more than an hour's drive away.

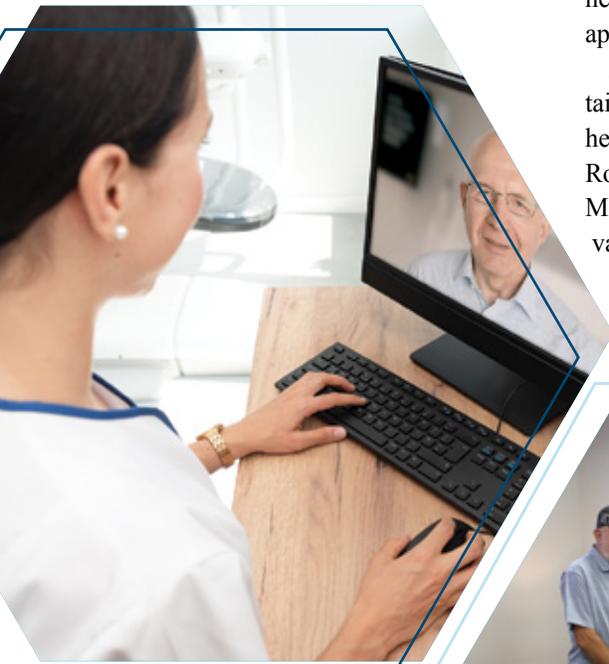
The program, available for setup at other qualifying sites, not only illustrates the potential of telemedicine but also shows the efforts being made to create a system capable of benefiting as many people as possible.

The McKee Virtual Living Room is a collaboration among four organizations: the VA, NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, the rural telecom provider Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative and the Jackson County Public Library. The VA has provided telehealth services for several years, but it can't happen if vets don't have access to high-speed internet connections either in their homes or nearby.

"The rest of the country, like us, really admires our veterans," says Keith Gabbard, chief executive officer of PRTC. "Before the project, we saw veterans spending the day in a waiting room at the hospital, and when they live an hour and a half away, it's pretty much an all-day event for a veteran to get health care."

Fast fiber optic internet networks make telemedicine a realistic option for more and more communities, and the cooperative was a leader in establishing the Virtual Living Room at the Jackson County Public Library.

"We've done a lot to promote it, and the library staff and the veterans are really proud of it," Gabbard says. "It's a source of pride for our community, and it continues to grow. The Virtual Living Room is a beautiful area where veterans, even



◀ From left, Veterans Donald Barrett, Jim Bryant, Mike Montgomery, Bobby Lakes and Danny Robinson attend the ribbon cutting for Virtual Living Room in McKee, Kentucky.

if they don't have a doctor's appointment, can go and read a book. It feels like it's their home."

### CHANGING LAWS

While faster internet may provide the foundation for telemedicine services, the legal and regulatory framework of each state can play a role in determining the effectiveness of the programs.

In May 2017, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed a bill into law that leveled the playing field for telemedicine physicians and doctors who work in traditional office settings. In part, the law eliminated a requirement for a patient to first visit a physician in person before receiving care through telemedicine.

"The bill removed a lot of barriers, and we've seen an increase in queries about telehealth," says Becky Bounds, program manager for the TexLa Telehealth Resource Center in Lubbock, Texas. The federally funded center works to provide resources and technical assistance to telehealth programs in Texas and Louisiana.

Bounds says the internet-based tools offer key services. For example, Lubbock is home to the Timothy J. Harnar Regional Burn Center, which often receives patients injured while working in the industries of West Texas. After treatment and returning home, follow-up visits to Lubbock could require drives of five to six hours. However, a telemedicine-equipped clinic on the campus of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in El Paso allows patients to virtually visit with specialists in Lubbock.

"About 12% of the state's population lives in West Texas, and telehealth matters,"

Bounds says. "We are producing cotton, beef, oil and more, and we need health care for the workforce producing those products for the rest of the state and the nation."

### THE GOLDEN HOUR

When it comes to treating a stroke, doctors have a saying: Time is brain. It's a reminder that every minute that passes between the event and treatment can lead to irreversible damage. Fortunately, telemedicine technology already gives doctors a fighting chance to begin treating patients before the critical "golden hour" passes.

One of the leaders for this technology in the Midwest is Essentia Health, which established telemedicine capabilities in each of its 17 hospitals, 70 clinics and eight nursing homes throughout Minnesota and North Dakota. With its telestroke program, emergency medical technicians can identify stroke patients on the way to the hospital and even begin treatment.

Essentia Director of Telehealth Services Laurie Hall recalls an ambulance picking up a rural patient nearly 90 minutes from the nearest hospital. In the past, serious brain damage would have been a near certainty for such a patient. But thanks to telestroke technology, EMTs diagnosed a stroke and began treatment about 45 minutes after the stroke occurred.

"The goal is to shorten that window from the time the patient has the event to the time they actually get those

clot-busting medications or the clot is removed," Hall says. "Getting that done so quickly is profound when you think about the injury that could happen from just those few extra minutes. It helps these patients get out of the hospital much quicker and to get on with their normal lives." 





# NEW HOPE MEDICAL CLINIC

## Dr. Henderson serving the area for 38 years

— Story by LISA SAVAGE | Photography by MATT LEDGER —

**D**r. Stephen Henderson always knew he wanted to practice family medicine in a small-town atmosphere where he would know the patients he served. “To me it’s about serving the community,” he says. Now, almost 40 years since he first began practicing, he continues to do just that.

Henderson serves at New Hope Clinic and at Lakeshore Family Practice in Guntersville. He’s also the team doctor for the New Hope High School football program, and he cares for patients at several area nursing homes. And he doesn’t plan to retire anytime soon.

He’s never short on things to do, even outside his work as a doctor. He owns a small cattle farm and participates in triathlons. “I really enjoy being outdoors, and I get outside anytime I can,” he says.

### HELPING OTHERS

Henderson grew up in Guntersville and graduated from the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in 1979. He did his residency at the Huntsville location of the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, specializing in family practice.

He first came to New Hope in 1982, working for 25 years alongside Dr. Thomas Darnell, who left New Hope to work with the Veterans Administration seven years ago. Now, Henderson practices at the Guntersville location and works in New Hope two days a week.

In New Hope, he started working with the football team, treating players and advising on sports injuries and other ailments. He’s on the sidelines at the football games and provides medical assistance as needed during the week.

Henderson’s love for sports medicine led him to seek additional education to become board certified in that specialty. Board certifications indicate a doctor has met the specific requirements set by a field’s national medical specialty board.



Dr. Stephen Henderson plays an active role in the New Hope Community.

Photo courtesy of Rick Finch.



The staff of the New Hope Clinic collaborate as a team to tend to the health needs of their patients. From left are office manager and certified medical assistant Autumn Stapler, Dr. Stephen Henderson and LPN Kaylee Lang.

He also became board certified in geriatrics and treats patients at several nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities, such as South Hampton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Owens Cross Roads. “I have a heart for helping treat our older patients,” Henderson says. “I enjoy caring for them.”

As a physician in a rural community, he knows the importance of making sure residents in such areas have access to quality health care. Statistics show that patients in rural areas face more obstacles in finding the right level of medical service. “It’s a big geographical area, and it’s difficult for people to just walk in at a clinic,” he says.

Transportation to specialists and other medical services can be an issue because of the distances involved. Henderson’s desire to promote more health care availability in these areas led him to provide clinical training for medical students interested in working in a rural setting. A medical student trains with him twice a year. “It can be a lot more difficult for patients in rural areas, so we have to make sure these patients have access to quality health care,” he says.

### TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

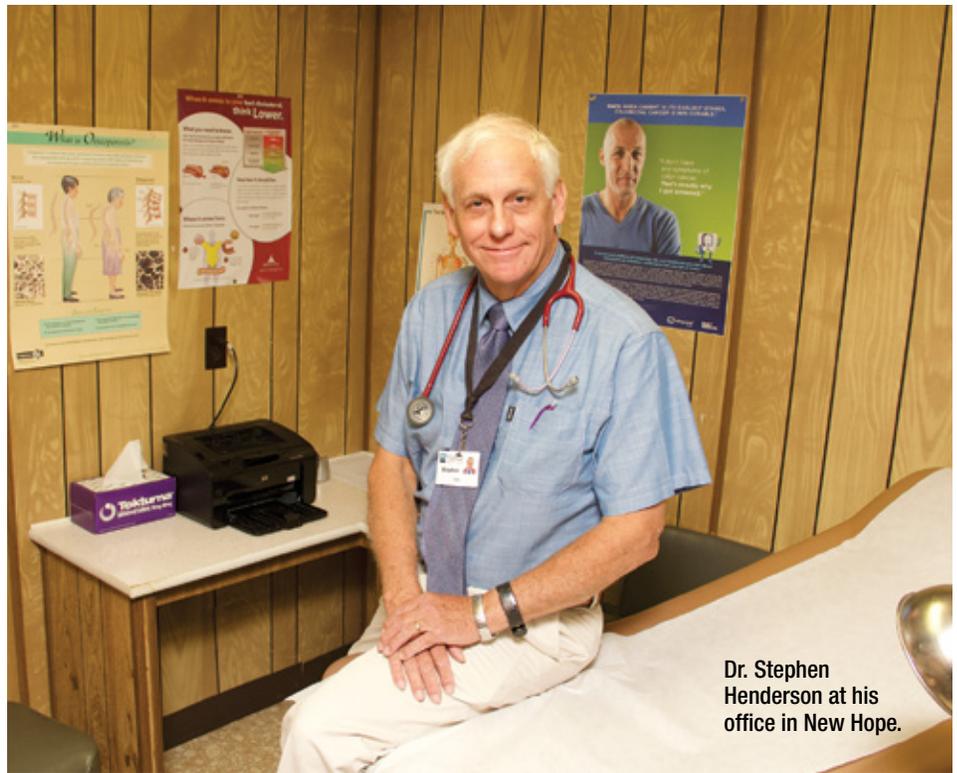
Henderson has seen many changes in technology through the years and recalls implementing the use of computers in the medical offices in the early 1990s.

By 2006, the offices converted to fully electronic health records. Having access to electronic records enables faster, more efficient care, and the technology continues to expand and improve.

Although Henderson’s office isn’t using telemedicine yet, he is able to view X-rays and other medical information easily, and he can send prescriptions electronically, which shortens the time it takes for patients to access their medications.

“Sometimes, a patient can have an X-ray, and we can look at that image and order treatment without the patient having to come back in,” Henderson says. Lab results can be sent more quickly, speeding up the process to get a patient started on the right medications.

Patients can now access their records,



Dr. Stephen Henderson at his office in New Hope.

test results and other information through an electronic portal, which helps them stay involved in their own care. “Even when I’m at home and I get a call about a patient, I can log on and pull their chart and see useful information that makes a difference in what treatment I prescribe,” Henderson says.

Before online communications, insurance approvals for tests or other treatments sometimes took days. Now it’s usually much faster. Before, staff recorded the charting information directly to the electronic records system. The pages had to be scanned digitally and then uploaded. That sometimes meant dozens of pages for each patient, and the process to scan and upload was time consuming.

Henderson says a standardized electronic records system would streamline the process when it comes to transferring records. “We have a lot of people moving into Madison County from all over the United States, and when that patient has 200 pages of medical records, it can be somewhat difficult,” he says.

Henderson is on staff at Marshall Medical Center North in Arab and also at Huntsville Hospital, where some of his patients go for emergency treatment.

“It’s helpful to have the technology available that we do because I can access and see what’s going on with a patient,” he says. “And at the end of the day, it’s about providing the best care possible for our patients.”

**“Sometimes a patient can have an X-ray, and we can look at that image and order treatment without the patient having to come back in.”**

— Dr. Stephen Henderson

**New Hope Medical Clinic**  
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# Ooey gooey chewy — Pizza

Warm up a cold day with a perfect slice



Chris Stone and Andrea Clark make the Lookout Mountain Pizza Company a dining destination.

**P**izza is one of those foods where when a craving hits, nothing else will do. It's been an American favorite for decades. And now, people in the Rising Fawn area of Lookout Mountain, Georgia, are satisfying those cravings at Lookout Mountain Pizza Company.

A pilot for American Airlines for 32-plus years, Chris Stone jettisoned himself into a new career as a pizza maker. And it's not just any pizza. It's the artisan pizza that brings people from as far away as Atlanta and Birmingham, and as close by as Chattanooga and Mentone, Alabama. "It's really become a little destination place," Stone says.

When asked how he jumped from piloting to pizza, Stone says he's always loved to cook. "Before 9/11, I was based in Washington, D.C., but after 9/11, I ended up in New York for about five years, and one night, I ended up taking a pizza class."

He was hooked then, although he waited to turn it into a career. "It took me about 10 years to figure out exactly what I wanted to do with it," he says. Stone continues to fly European routes weekly Monday through Wednesday. On Thursdays, he's home to open his pizzeria with the help of a well-trained staff. They know how to make the pizza dough from scratch and heat up the wood-fired pizza oven to

its optimum heat: 750 F at its base and 1,000 degrees at its dome. The oven bakes pizza to perfection in under two minutes.

The class he took in New York, under renowned bread baker Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery, taught the art of making Roman-style pizza crusts. On his many trips to Europe — Italy is on his route — he learned about Neapolitan pizza and began working with the dough at home. "I ended up building a pizza oven in my kitchen at home," he says.

In 2016, he found a location for his pizzeria, an old building that had housed an art shop, church and mechanic's shed at different times through the years. After spiffing the place up with some paint, a new roof and other renovations, he opened Lookout Mountain Pizza Company in July 2017, and it quickly became the place for pizzas that feature quality ingredients like wheat flour from Naples, Italy, along with canned tomatoes from a town near Italy's Mount Vesuvius and Wisconsin cheese. "It's not the cheapest pizza to make, but you need to use good ingredients to make a good pizza," Stone says.

The dough is a simple mixture of flour, water, salt and a little yeast. The pizza sauce is made from scratch. Onions roast in the wood-burning oven and function as a topping for pizzas named after Italian women. Sophia is the house favorite, with

## Here are some helpful hints for home pizza cooks:

- Use a good flour, such as King Arthur. "Some people use bread flours with plain flour and stuff like that, but I've found it really makes no difference. But you'll need to add a little oil to the dough to get it to brown up," Stone says.
- Do not overwork the dough. You want the dough to "pop," and overworking it will make it tough. You want the dough to be airy. Pizza dough is a very dynamic thing. It changes with the humidity and temperature. The texture won't be the same from one day to the next.
- Get your hands on a copy of Lahey's book, "My Pizza: The Easy No-Knead Way to Make Spectacular Pizza at Home," and watch some of his cooking videos on YouTube.

wood-roasted onion tomato sauce, fontina cheese, Italian sausage and Peppadew peppers. The Maria, with pepperoni, onions and portobello mushrooms, is another top seller. All pizzas are 13 inches and have a marvelous crispy, blackened edge to the dough that softens as you reach the center.



FOOD EDITOR  
ANNE P. BRALY  
IS A NATIVE OF  
CHATTANOOGA,  
TENNESSEE.



## Artisan Pizza

*Though this is not Lookout Mountain Pizza Company's recipe, it's a good one for beginners.*

- 3 cups plus 3 tablespoons lukewarm water (100 F or below)
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon granulated yeast
- 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 7 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Combine warm water, olive oil, yeast and salt in a 5-quart bowl, preferably a lidded, but not airtight, plastic container. Measure the flour using a "scoop and sweep" method. Reach into the flour bin with your measuring cup, scoop up a full measure all at once, and sweep it level with a knife. Mix until all of the

flour is incorporated (kneading is not necessary) using a wooden spoon or a food processor with a dough attachment. Cover with a non-airtight lid. Allow to rise at room temperature for 2 hours. Do not punch down. You want to retain as much gas in the dough as possible. A reduction in gas will make your pizzas and flatbreads dense. Refrigerate and use over the next 14 days. Refrigerate at least 3 hours before using.

**To make:** A half-hour before you're ready to bake, place a pizza stone in the bottom third of the oven and heat it at your oven's highest temperature. Prepare and organize your toppings. Dust a pizza peel or a large cutting board/flat cookie sheet with enough flour or cornmeal to easily transfer the pizza over to the hot stone. Pull up and cut off a

1/2-pound (orange-size) piece of dough. Using a little flour (enough so it won't stick to your fingers), stretch and shape the dough into a ball. Sprinkle your work area with a little flour. Using your hands or a rolling pin, roll out and stretch the dough until it is approximately 1/8-inch thick and 12 inches wide.

Place the finished dough onto the prepared pizza peel. Then, add the toppings of your choice. Carefully slide the pizza onto the hot stone. If it isn't sliding, sprinkle more flour or cornmeal between the pizza and the pizza peel until the pizza moves. Check for doneness after 8-10 minutes — it may take a few minutes longer. Turn the pizza around if one side is browning faster than the other. Allow to cool slightly on a wire rack before serving. 📌



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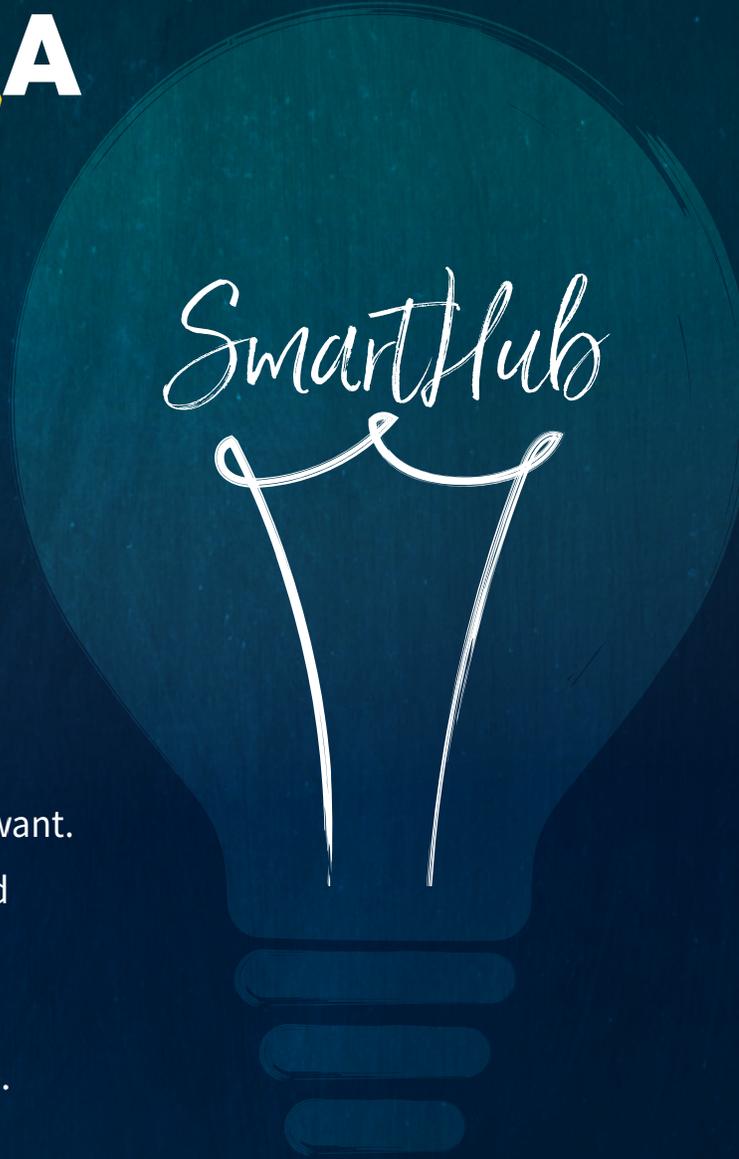
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