

The  
**Communicator**

Vol. 4, No. 3

April 2005

**NHTC UNVEILS NEW LOGO**



This month's issue is filled with community and consumer news, including:  
Kindergarten Pre-Registration • School Calendars • Community Calendars  
Governmental News • Get Your Free Credit Report • Recipes • More!

# By the people, for the people

Greetings again from Team NHTC. We are once again welcoming someone new to our co-op family. Chris and Tammy Weeks (Office Manager) and daughter Gracie (age 4) celebrated the arrival of baby boy Christian Cole on Feb. 11, 2005. Everyone is doing great and we are looking forward to Tammy returning to work in a few weeks.

I hope each of you enjoyed a blessed Easter and congratulations to all of those master egg-hunters who found the prize eggs. May each of you share in the inspiration I find in the rejuvenation symbolized in so many aspects of spring. With new life emerging all around us, it is the perfect time to make positive changes and begin new projects.

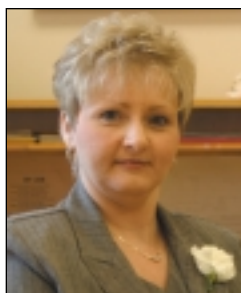
Along with spring, comes the preparation for our annual members meeting to be held on the third Tuesday evening in May. We are once again making noticeable changes, this time in the flow of people traffic for the registration process. Since we have more than outgrown the hallways outside of the auditorium, we are moving the registration process to the Elementary/Middle School lunchroom. There will be directional signs set up on site to assist in acquainting everyone with the changes. There will be a little additional walking; but we will assure you that you will agree the changes are well worth a few extra steps.

Though telecommunications technology has changed drastically over the past 50 years, NHTC began "by the people and for the people" and we still abide by that today. Even some economic principles have endured the test of time. Larger companies still rank providing services to a multi-story office complex much more desirable than making sure one customer at the end of a 15 mile route can call for help. As rural providers, we often hear, "why don't you let

competition come in?" We are in no way standing in the way of other providers offering anyone, any type of service. Economic factors are the only obstacles standing in the way of others offering similar services. Prior to the end of the 'rural exemption' to competition, rural telcos did enjoy a degree of protection from competitors picking off our largest customers. Now any company can compete with us on any service that we provide. Even though years have passed, to date we still have not had a single company choose to provide local service to any of our subscribers.

As we buzz through spring, let us not overlook how blessed we've been to enjoy communication services that otherwise would not have been available. Our cooperative still offers each member a very important local presence, modern technology and the benefit of sharing in its profit margin. We are proud of our heritage and are excited about the aggressive pace we have established. Be comforted that no matter what state or national legislation is passed for regulation or deregulation of services, we will still be providing each member affordable and reliable services. Regardless of any changes our industry may encounter, we will not lose sight that we are still a local cooperative by local people, for local people.

I enjoy ending with a quote. This one is by Grandma Moses (1860-1961) – "Life is what you make it, always has been, always will be."



*Teresa Hunkapiller  
General Manager of  
New Hope Telephone  
Cooperative*

## New Hope Telephone Cooperative

is a member-owned corporation dedicated to providing communications technology to the residents and businesses of New Hope, Grant and Owens Cross Roads.

### Board of Directors

Barry Mefford, President  
*New Hope Exchange*

Greg Glover, Vice President  
*Owens Cross Roads Exchange*

Jeff Cooper, Secretary  
*New Hope Exchange*

David Ayers, Treasurer  
*Grant Exchange*

Jimmy Segler  
*Grant Exchange*

Jeff DeArmond  
*Owens Cross Roads Exchange*

Jim Duncan  
*New Hope Exchange*

Barry Jones  
*New Hope Exchange*

Dennis Pence  
*Grant Exchange*

## The Communicator

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### New Hope Telephone Cooperative

Maria Goodson at 723-3748  
EMAIL: [communicator@nehp.net](mailto:communicator@nehp.net)  
P.O. Box 452  
New Hope, Alabama 35760  
[www.nehp.net](http://www.nehp.net)

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# Logo, tagline point to NHTC's future

The telephone business as we all once knew it is gone. Just read the newspapers, the trade journals, the industry reports. Technology has dramatically changed the way we communicate with each other — it's not just about dial tone any more.

New Hope Telephone Cooperative was formed in an age when many people were not even sure they needed a telephone in their home. Now we stay connected with neighbors across the street and contacts around the globe through email and other Internet applications.

"This industry has changed tremendously since NHTC was formed more than 50 years ago," says General Manager Teresa Hunkapiller. "As we move into a new era in telecommunications, it's important for this cooperative to reflect a progressive image, an image that clearly says we are in business for the long haul, through all the changes, to

keep our member customers connected to the world."

In keeping with those goals, NHTC has unveiled a new corporate logo and tagline. "The symbolism of a horizon is important,"

Hunkapiller says, "because there are some very real opportunities — and very real challenges — on the horizon in this developing industry.

And we are working hard to make the most of those opportunities, while being ready to succeed in the face of the challenges."

A new tagline, *Your Communications Connection*, speaks to the larger role NHTC is playing in the lives of its

members. "We are so much more than a telephone company today," says Hunkapiller. "New Hope Telephone Cooperative keeps its members connected in a number of different ways, from



long distance and email to cable and Internet. And who knows what the future holds."

Development of the new logo and tagline is just one step, says Hunkapiller, in ongoing efforts to position NHTC for continued success in the future. ♦

## NHTC Annual Meeting

# Registration moved to school lunchroom

New Hope Telephone Cooperative has made a change in its Annual Meeting to help relieve congestion during registration.

The Annual Meeting, scheduled this year for May 17, is held at the New Hope Elementary/Middle School. For the first time, the school's lunchroom will be used as the site for members to register their attendance.

"We will be utilizing more of the school's facilities in order to better manage the registration and voting functions," says Teresa Hunkapiller, NHTC

General Manager. "Everyone should go directly to the lunchroom to register and receive their ballots — those coming only to vote and those coming to attend the business meeting."

If a member does not choose to attend the business meeting, they may complete their ballots and deposit them in the ballot box in the center of the lunchroom.

If staying for the meeting, members are encouraged to visit with friends and neighbors, while enjoying refreshments and entertainment in the auditorium.

Members should wait to mark their ballots until nominations from the floor are called. The ballots will be collected during the business meeting.

Registration and voting will begin at 5:00 pm and extend until the business meeting begins at 7:30 pm. in the school auditorium.

Members will vote on Board Positions #2 and #3, both from the New Hope Exchange. Every member who plans to vote is encouraged to read carefully the article, found on Page 5 of this issue, concerning the role of a Director. ♦

# Members should follow proper steps with questions and concerns

As with any public service, sometimes members of NHTC have questions or concerns regarding their service. In order to bring these issues to a quick and satisfactory resolution, members should follow the proper steps.

## STEP ONE

Members should first contact or speak with one of NHTC's Customer Service Representatives, who will be happy to assist you with any question you may have. They are extremely skilled and well trained in handling a wide variety of concerns.

## STEP TWO

If the concerns are not resolved, the Customer Service Representative will advance the request for assistance on to the appropriate department manager and, if necessary, to the General Manager.

## STEP THREE

In the unlikely event that the member has still not obtained satisfaction after speaking with the General Manager, they may request of the General Manager to be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The request must be received at least

eight calendar days before the meeting, which is scheduled the third Tuesday evening of each month. (Even though NHTC does not hold open meetings, like city governments are required to do, we are very willing to address any concerns that need attention.)

It is very important to the Board, Management and the entire staff that everyone understands our mission, and that all concerns be fully resolved in a timely manner. Following these steps will ensure our members receive the attention their issues deserve. ♦

## Past due amount, reconnection fees must be paid before service is restored

New Hope Telephone Cooperative has issued a new policy regarding the reconnection of services on defaulted accounts. Effective May 1, 2005, subscribers who default on payment for services rendered and have service disconnected for non-payment will be required to pay the full past due amount plus a reconnection fee before service will be restored.

This policy applies to all services available from New Hope Telephone Cooperative, including telephone, Internet and cable TV.

## For your convenience, NHTC accepts major credit cards

For those who enjoy the convenience of a credit card, New Hope Telephone Cooperative is pleased to accept the Visa, MasterCard and Discover. Credit cards offer members greater flexibility

in paying their telecommunications bills. From basic telephone and cable service, to long distance and Internet charges, every service you purchase from New Hope Telephone can be billed to your credit card. Simply bring your credit card with you when paying at the NHTC office, or give us a call and have your card and your bill ready. (Sorry, credit card payments are not accepted through the mail or at local banks where NHTC payments are made.)



# What is the role of a New Hope Telephone Cooperative Director?

As the owners of the cooperative, members must understand the role of the board of directors. This ranks as a priority not only because independent telcos now operate in a competitive marketplace, but also because they must blend

## NHTC's photo contest continues next month

There are no Community Photos in this month's issue of *The Communicator*, but they will be back. June's photo theme is "Backyard Fun," and we can't wait to see what our members send in.

To participate in our Community Photos section, please send your favorite photos, matching the theme, to: NHTC • Attn: Maria Goodson • P.O. Box 452 • New Hope, Alabama 35760. If your entry is selected, you'll see your photo in print.

The deadline for the June entry is April 28.

Be sure to include the photographer's name, address and phone number, as well as the name of any people featured in your photos. Do not write on the back of your photos, but rather write your information on a small piece of paper and tape it to the back.

If you would like your photos returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. By submitting your photos: (1) you attest that you are the creator and owner of the photos, (2) you give New Hope Telephone permission to publish your material in *The Communicator*, (3) you agree to offer said photos without the expectation of payment from New Hope Telephone, and (4) you understand that photos are selected for publication in *The Communicator* at the sole discretion of New Hope Telephone, and that submission of your photo does not guarantee your photo will appear in the magazine.

basic exchange operations with the accounting, marketing, and business practices of nontraditional, diversified activities.

Board members must be knowledgeable about the evolving telecommunications industry, telco management, state and federal regulation, the competitive environment, and the company's long-range plans and future prospects. More than ever, telco board members must embrace change, rather than resist it, and respond decisively. Telco stewardship demands vigilant review of industry and economic developments and their effects on the communities the telco serves and the ability to prioritize objectives and delegate authority.

A director is a trustee or fiduciary of the cooperative. Not merely symbolic in meaning, a director's trusteeship or fiduciary role carries with it responsibilities of obedience, loyalty and due care in making decisions with respect to the rights, properties and interests of the members of New Hope Telephone Cooperative.

As trustees, directors are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure the future of the telco beyond their own terms of service and maintain its functioning status as a "cooperative-based" membership association. Directors are elected to safeguard cooperative resources--plant facilities and equipment, financial assets and human resources and must discharge the duties of their offices in good faith, in a manner each reasonably believes to be in the

best interests of the cooperative, and with the care a prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances.

To succeed in today's marketplace, boards of directors must be fully aware of their responsibilities to the telco, to members and to the community. With the increased financial risk created by the competitive environment, directors themselves are at higher personal risk if they fail to properly understand their role in the management structure. Indeed, the board's legal responsibility mandates that directors remain vigilant to the challenges and liabilities that their telcos and they themselves face.

The success of the board in meeting its responsibilities depends on the success of individual directors in fulfilling their responsibilities as elected representatives. As rural communities vie to be part of the digital age, the ability--or inability--of our cooperative to respond to the demands of our subscribers could lead to increased scrutiny or questions about the performance of directors or, even more basic, about their adequacy to fulfill their role in such a complex industry.

Despite all that has transpired in the telecommunications arena since 1995, one fact of life for rural telcos remains as valid as it was then: The board of directors bears the responsibility to ensure the success of the cooperative, and must be willing to assume an even more pivotal role than was required in the past. ♦

# Time to register your child for Kindergarten & Pre-K

## A Message from New Hope Elementary School

Parents of four- and five-year-olds should register their children as soon as possible for the 2005-06 school year.

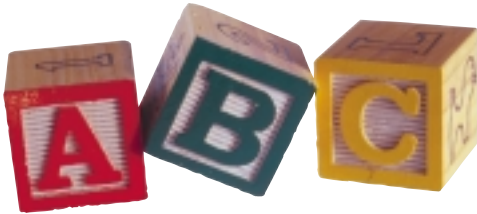
If your child is age five on or before September 2, you should register him or her for Kindergarten. If your child is age four on or before September 2, you should register him or her for the Pre-K program.

Your child will also be screened at time of registration.

When you come to register your child, please bring the items listed below. **IMPORTANT:** Please do not wait to register your child. Even if you are missing one of these items, please begin the registration process. If you have any questions, please call 723-8879.

### Items needed at time of your child's registration

- ✓ Social Security Card
- ✓ Birth Certificate
- ✓ Current Blue Immunization Card
- ✓ Chickenpox Documentation
- ✓ Proof of Residency



# Memorial Day Coloring Contest deadline April 18

April 18 is the last day to enter New Hope Telephone Cooperative's Coloring Contest.

The first-ever contest is being held in recognition of Memorial Day, which honors the brave men and women who lost their lives defending our freedom. The goal of this contest is to help children pay tribute to these heroes with the theme "Their Sacrifice, My Freedom."

Students from first through sixth grade

should color their interpretation of this theme on an 8.5" x 11" sheet of white paper. Each school should choose their winners from each grade and submit them, along with each student's name and grade, to NHTC (call and we'll

come pick up your entries). We will publish the overall winners in the May issue of *The Communicator*.

Remember, deadline for entry is April 18th, so get to coloring!



## School Calendars

### New Hope (Madison Co. Schools)

**April 22**

1st Weather Day (Students/Teachers)

**April 25**

2nd Weather Day (Students/Teachers)

**May 24-25**

Graduation Dates

**May 26**

Last Student Day (Full Day)

**May 27**

Teacher Workday/Staff Development Day

**May 30**

Memorial Day (Holiday - Employees)

### Grant (Marshall Co. Schools)

**April 1**

Scholars Bowl @ Snead

**April 4**

Historical Society touring State Capitol

**April 14**

Marshall Co. Youth Leadership to Montgomery

**April 30**

DAR Prom

**May 12**

Marshall County Youth Leadership graduation for 2005 school year

**May 20**

Football Jamboree (1st ever game for DAR) at Brindlee Mountain High School

**May 20**

Awards Day

**May 21**

Graduation

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## APRIL 2005

### April 4

New Hope City Council Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Contact: City Hall 723-2616

Grant City Council Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Contact: Carolyn May 728-2007

Owens Cross Roads Fire Dept. Meeting  
7 p.m. Contact: Barbara Webster 725-4163

### April 5

New Hope Fire Dept. Meeting  
7 p.m. Contact: Ronald Schrimsher 759-8529

Grant Beautification Committee Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Contact: Samantha Lemley 728-5304

### April 9

Owens Cross Roads Spring Fling  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Contact: Jody Barnett 774-1551

### April 11

Grant Fire Dept. Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Contact: Robert Patterson 723-8866

Owens Cross Roads Fire Dept. Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Contact: Garland Elders 725-4163

### April 12

Grant Chamber of Commerce Meeting  
11:00 a.m. Luncheon. Contact Don Milligan on  
day before meeting at 728-8800

### April 15

New Hope Homemakers Meeting  
10 a.m. Contact Priscilla Scott 725-4397

### April 18

New Hope City Council Meeting  
7 p.m. Contact City Hall 723-2616

Grant City Council Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Contact Carolyn May 728-2007

Owens Cross Roads Fire Dept. Meeting  
7 p.m. Contact Barbara Webster 725-4163

### April 25

Grant Fire Dept. Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Contact: Robert Patterson 723-8866

Owens Cross Roads Fire Dept. Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Contact Garland Elders 725-4163

### April 26

Owens Cross Roads Homemakers  
Meeting  
7 p.m. Contact Terri Wilcox 725-2507

Owens Cross Roads City Council Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Contact Barbara Webster 725-4163

## Grant Fire & Rescue Events

### Third Annual Spring Shrimp & Fish Dinner

Saturday, April 16, 2005 • 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Shrimp Plate: \$10 • Fish Plate: \$10

*Eat in or carry out • Meal includes: potato, corn, and drink*

*All proceeds go toward a new fire truck.*

### Poker Run

Saturday, April 16, 2005 • Start time - 9:00 a.m. at Fire Station

Entry Fee: \$10/rider

*Prizes, plus a free shrimp or fish plate & drink provided for everyone entered in Poker Run*

### Upcoming Events at

## South Hampton Nursing Home

### May 6

#### Jewelry Sale

10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Sterling Silver • Proceeds go to the Nursing Home's Activity Dept.

### May 9 - 13

#### National Nursing Home Week

*Theme: Honoring the Employees and Volunteers. Owens Cross Roads Mayor will be present for the Balloon Lift to advertise the Nursing Home. People in the community are encouraged to volunteer to provide entertainment. Those interested should call 256-725-3400 to schedule. All visitors welcome.*



Sponsored by  
**Grant Fire  
Department**

Saturday, May 14, 2005 • 8:00 a.m.

### Twin Lakes Golf Course

3 Man Scramble • \$150 team entrance fee

1st & 2nd Place • 1st & 2nd Flight

*Meal and beverages provided during and after tournament*

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Robert Patterson - 505-1204 • Bob Davis - 728-2698  
or James Fuell - 728-4948

# Food, clothing drive a success

New Hope Telephone Cooperative extends a big 'thank you' to all our members and area citizens who donated food, clothing and blankets during our recent drive. Many of the clothing items and blankets were distributed to needy families through the Blankets From the Heart/First Stop program.

The NHTC office will continue to serve as a drop off point for non-perishable food items. Throughout the year we will collect canned foods and other such food items to help the hungry and needy in our service area. The food will be distributed through local agencies (NHTC will handle collection only and will not serve as a distribution point). The public is encouraged to continue donating, helping us make a difference in lives of our less fortunate neighbors.



NHTC's Paula Hendrix and Susan Eubanks with a huge box of donated blankets and clothing items.

## Lifeline - Link Up

### Government program will pay part of phone bill for Medicaid recipients

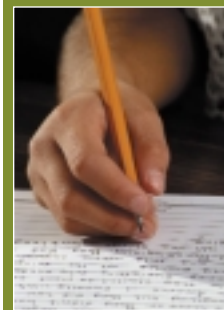
New Hope Telephone Cooperative is proud to be participating in these programs sponsored by the Federal Communications Commission and the Public Service Commission to offer credits to qualified residential subscribers. These credits are intended to preserve and promote subscribership among low income households. To qualify for these credits, the subscriber must verify their participation in Medicaid.

The **LifeLine** assistance program provides recurring Federal and State credits that are applied to the local serv-

ice bills of qualified subscribers. To qualify for this credit, the subscriber must bring or send their Medicaid card and a valid government-issued identity to the NHTC office.

Additionally, the **Link Up** assistance program provides a non-recurring credit to the service connection charges that are applicable when providing residential telephone service. Again, to qualify for this credit the subscriber must bring their Medicaid card and a valid government-issued identity to the NHTC office.

## Local poets wanted



We want to give local writers an opportunity to have their work printed in *The Communicator*, and to share their talents with readers in the area.

We're looking for poetry of various styles and themes, written by the members of New Hope Telephone Cooperative. Submissions should be no longer than 300 words. Please send a copy of your poem; submissions will not be returned. The decision of whether to print a submission is at the sole discretion of NHTC staff and representatives. Send your poems to the attention of Maria Goodson at NHTC.



## Just a Thought

by Roland Roberts



Publications such as *The Communicator* traditionally print stories that are uplifting. The Apostle Paul says in Philippians 4:8 to think on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Therefore, this column will contain thoughts that are in these categories.

On the evening of February 26th, it was my privilege to hear Yo Yo Ma, who is the world's most accomplished contemporary cello player, perform with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. His appearance can be compared to Nolan Ryan, when he was in his prime, pitching in a game for the Huntsville Stars.

One might have expected, due to his exalted reputation, Ma to have been haughty and condescending to the conductor and musicians with whom he was playing. But that was not so. When Ma came on to the stage, the conductor, Carlos Miguel Prieto, followed him. But Ma took Prieto's hand, led him to center stage and they bowed to the audience together.

When Ma began to play, he looked at the concert master, who was seated immediately to his right, smiled as if to say, "I am playing with you."

Ma turned his head several times toward various orchestra members making eye contact with them. At the end of the concert he was given a bouquet of roses. He turned to a violinist directly behind him and gave her the flowers.

Observing his actions, it came to mind that Jesus told his disciples, that he who would be greatest would be servant of all. Ma's parents chose the perfect name for him because in Chinese, Yo Yo means joy joy.

# There's time to 'cool off'

Under the Federal Trade Commission's "Cooling Off" Rule, you have three business days to cancel any purchase of \$25.00 or more made in your home or somewhere other than the seller's usual place of business, such as a rented hotel room. The "Cooling Off" Rule also provides protection for consumers who purchase items at a product party given in a private home.

However, as with every rule there are exceptions. The "Cooling Off" Rule does not apply to: sales made at the seller's usual place of business; sales made totally by mail or phone; sales for real estate, insurance or securities; and sales for emergency home repairs. The Rule also does not apply to sales that begin as retail transactions at a business establishment, and are completed with the signing of a contract in your home. For instance, ordering carpet at a store and signing the contract when someone comes to your home to measure floors.

In cases where the Rule does apply,

the seller must give you the proper cancellation forms along with any contract or receipt pertaining to the sale. The date of the sale should be noted on the cancellation form, which must read in part, "You may cancel this transaction without any penalty or obligation, within three business days from the above date."

If you decide to cancel the sale, sign and date the cancellation form. Mail or deliver a copy to the address given for cancellation anytime before midnight of the third business day after the date of the contract. Also, keep a copy for your personal records. Since proof of the date you mailed the cancellation form is important, send it from the post office via certified mail with a return receipt requested. You do not need to give a reason for the cancellation.

To avoid having to cancel a purchase, be sure to completely read and understand the contract before you sign on the dotted line. ♦



## Inspiration Corner

There are many who share the inconvenience of being flat footed. When I step a certain way or wear shoes with little support my feet ache by days end. Recently I read where flat feet without proper care can cause severe problems with knees and hips later in life. What an example of how ignoring sin also works in life. If we live by worldly standards, rather than God's teaching, all the aches and pains of sin we ignore will one day add up to the greatest pain of all – total separation from God.

Praise God for Grace and Forgiveness! If you do not yet have a church home where you feel the healing power of God, please find one that will lead you on an eternal walk with The Great Physician. There are more pains in life than physical and God will treat them all if you will trust Him.



*Pastor Michael Carpenter, New Hope United Methodist Church*

## FBI alerts public to email scam

The FBI would like to inform the public to avoid falling victim to an on-going mass e-mail scheme wherein computer users receive unsolicited e-mails purportedly sent by the FBI. These scam e-mails tell the recipients that their Internet use has been monitored by the FBI's Internet Fraud Complaint Center and that they have accessed illegal web sites. The e-mails then direct recipients to open an attachment and answer questions. The attachments contain a computer virus.

These e-mails did not come from the FBI. Recipients of this or similar solicitations should know that the FBI does not engage in the practice of sending unsolicited emails to the public in this manner.

Opening attachments from an unknown sender is risky and dangerous, as such attachments frequently contain viruses that can infect the recipient's computer. The FBI strongly encourages computer users not to open such attachments.

The FBI takes this matter seriously and is investigating. Users receiving e-mails of this nature are encouraged to report it to the Internet Crime Complaint Center via <http://www.ic3.gov>.

# Monitor your records with a free credit report

Soon consumers in north Alabama can request a free annual copy of their credit report. A recent amendment to the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA) requires the nationwide credit bureaus to provide consumers, at their request, a free copy of their credit report once every 12 months. Consumers can make a request by going to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com).

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), consumers who use the [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) Web site will be able to obtain their free report online. Consumers also may request a copy of their credit report by phone or mail. If these methods are used, consumers must fill out a standardized form.

Your credit report is an important financial tool, and it is important to monitor its status. A credit report contains information on where you live, how you pay your bills, and whether you've been sued, arrested, or filed for bankruptcy. The nationwide consumer reporting companies — Equifax, Experian, and Trans Union — sell the information in your report to creditors, insurers, employers, and other businesses that use it to evaluate your applications for credit,

insurance, employment, or renting a home.

Consumers in the southern States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas) can order their free reports beginning June 1.

After September 1, free reports will be accessible to all Americans, regardless of where they live.

There are other situations that make you

eligible for a free credit report. Under federal law you are entitled to a free report if a company takes adverse action against you, such as denying your application for credit, insurance or



employment. You must request your report 60 days after receiving notice of the action. The notice should give you the name, address and phone number of the consumer reporting company.

You are also entitled to one free report a year if you are unemployed and plan to look for a job within 60 days; if you are on welfare; or if your report is inaccurate because of fraud, including identity theft. Otherwise, a consumer reporting company may charge you up to \$9 for another copy of your report within a 12-month period. ♦

*Learn more about ordering your free credit report at*  
[www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/freereports.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/freereports.htm)

## Some services require a visit to our office

Much of your New Hope Telephone business can be handled over the phone. However, sometimes a visit to the office is required for security and privacy reasons.

“Basically, you must come into the office for any service that restricts use of your telephone,” explains Teresa Hunkapiller, NHTC General Manager. These services include:

- Toll restrictions of any kind
- Non-published agreements

Other services requiring a visit include:

- New phone service
- Sign up for DSL or Dial-Up Internet access
- Changing Long Distance carriers
- Making membership joint with your spouse

There are still many services you can access by calling the New Hope Telephone office:

- Adding or dropping Custom Calling Features
- Ordering an additional phone line
- Requesting a disconnect of service

As always, call our office with any questions. Thanks for doing business with your New Hope Telephone Cooperative!

# NHTC offering Web content filtering service

The Internet is a powerful tool that can bring learning aides and entertainment into a home or business. There are hundreds of thousands of Web sites out there with useful and interesting information to share.

However, there are many Web sites in cyberspace that feature material with objectionable, obscene and vulgar content. Unfortunately, it is too easy for unsuspecting Internet users to stumble across such sites.

New Hope Telephone Cooperative’s DSL customers can now access a powerful server-side content filtering program that can make the Internet a safer place to be. For only \$5 extra per month, members can know that most adult-rated content will be inaccessible on their computer.

There is nothing to install on your computer. Those subscribing to the program will be instructed how to make a simple change in their system to enable the filtering tools.

NHTC’s content filtering service is available to DSL customers only.

“This program is certainly helpful, but it

is not a babysitter,” says Rusty Bright, Internet Administrator for NHTC. “Our new content filtering service will block access to most adult-content Web sites, but it is no substitute for parental supervision and involvement.”

When the Internet is in a home where children are present, parents or guardians should observe these common sense tips:

- Apply the same guidelines to your children’s Internet usage that you use in dealing with strangers or selecting what to watch on TV or video
- Place the computer in an open area, such as a living room or den, instead of a private room like a bedroom or play room
- Keep up with what your children are doing online - ask questions
- Visit different Web sites with your children, and help them find quality sites
- Discuss your family’s values while exploring the Internet - remember that they will have access to the Internet in other locations, such as school and with friends.



## Internet tech support around the clock

Help is just a phone call away, no matter what time of day you need it. Remember, New Hope Telephone offers Internet tech support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The phone number below is the one to remember when you need Internet help:

- you just signed up with NHTC Internet, and need help setting it up
- you have a new computer and are trying to configure it to log on
- you’re experiencing general problems getting on the Internet

**24/7 Internet Tech Support**  
**723-8940**

# A legislative update with Sen. Hinton Mitchem

Based on results of the 2000 Census, Senate and House districts across Alabama were adjusted to maintain a balance of population among them. With that change, most of the New Hope Telephone Cooperative service area fell into Senate District 9. Encompassing portions of Blount, Madison and Marshall counties, this district is represented by Hinton Mitchem.

*The Communicator* recently spoke with Sen. Mitchem about the current session of the Alabama Legislature. With the session at its halfway point, Sen. Mitchem says the state's financial condition is still the most pressing issue facing lawmakers.

"We have a \$1.5 billion General Fund budget, and it's \$200 million short," explained the Senator. He said it is difficult for the public to understand such a shortfall when the \$4.5 billion Education Fund budget has between \$300 million and \$400 million dollars more than anticipated.

The Education Fund receives its money from sales tax, income tax and other such growth taxes. "You don't have any growth taxes in the General Fund," said Sen. Mitchem. "And it funds things like mental health, Medicaid and the prison system."

These programs take quite a bite out of the General Fund budget. "Medicaid is a big chunk of it," he said. "And it takes \$200 million for the prisons alone. We have 28,000 people in jail."

Finding the money to fill the gap will be difficult, Sen. Mitchem admitted, especially with an election year around the corner. "It's gonna be a miracle to get any tax measures passed," he said. "But one thing being looked at is a soft

drink tax, something like 5¢ per container. That would bring in a lot of money, which would probably be all earmarked for Medicaid."

Next year's forecast is even less encouraging. "Next year is going to be even worse," said Sen. Mitchem, "because we used some one-time money that is not going to be available next year to balance this year's budget."

Sen. Mitchem said he was pleased to finally see passage of a bill he has worked on for four years. The bill seeks to amend the state constitution by defining marriage as being between one man and one woman.

"The polls show that 80 percent of Alabamians are opposed to same-sex marriage," Sen. Mitchem said. "The bill goes straight to the Secretary of State to be placed on the ballots in June of 2006 for voters to consider."

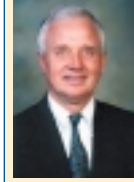
Sen. Mitchem said Alabama has a law against same-sex marriages now, but making it part of the state constitution would prevent it from being thrown out by the courts.

"This is very important," he says. "It sends the message that Alabama is interested in family values."

Sen. Mitchem said he worked so hard to get the bill passed because he believes it is in the best interest of Alabama's children to stop exposing them to the issue. "I think it was so important that we put this to rest, that we get this issue on the ballot and get it behind us."

In closing, Sen. Mitchem said he has enjoyed representing the new areas in Madison County added to District 9, and that he welcomes contact from those concerned about state issues. ♦

## Profile of a Senator



Sen. Mitchem served in the Alabama House of Representatives from 1974 to 1978, when he was elected to the Alabama Senate. Voters have returned him to that seat in each election since.

In the state Senate, Mitchem serves as Deputy Chairperson of the Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee. His other committee assignments include: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry; Confirmations; Commerce, Transportation, and Utilities; Finance and Taxation Education; Small Business and Economic Development.

Sen. Mitchem has operated a commercial and agricultural tractor and equipment company in Albertville for 40 years. He is also in the rental condominium business in Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, where he also operates the Adventure Island park.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### State House

Room 733 • 11 S. Union Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
(334) 242-7876

#### Business

P.O. Box 297  
Albertville, AL 35950  
Phone: (256) 878-1631

#### Home

P.O. Box 297  
Albertville, AL 35950  
(256) 878-1534

#### Email

legislator@mclo.org

# Shelby assumes chairmanship of Appropriations Subcommittee

WASHINGTON, DC -- Following negotiations to restructure the Senate Appropriations Committee, U.S. Senator Richard C. Shelby (R-AL) announced that he will assume the Chairmanship of



the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee. Senator Shelby had the following statement:

Senator Shelby said, "I look forward to serving as Chairman of the newly created Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee. This subcommittee will provide me an opportunity to immerse myself in new issues that have great importance to Alabama and the nation. The subcommittee's jurisdiction includes the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Economic Development Authority (EDA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the Department of Justice among others."

"My tenure as Chairman of the Transportation, Treasury and General

Government Subcommittee gave me the opportunity to assist the state of Alabama in extraordinary ways. We made great progress in infrastructure development, airport expansion, and higher education development. As a member of the Transportation, Treasury, and Housing Subcommittee, I will continue to support infrastructure development in Alabama," Shelby concluded.

Senator Shelby will remain a member of the following subcommittees: Defense; Foreign Operations; Homeland Security; Labor, Health and Human Services, Education; and Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary and HUD. ♦

## Cable Connection

Watch NHTC's **Channel 24** for special video presentations from Sen. Richard Shelby, presented each quarter as a public service of NHTC.

## Phishing scams fraudulently using the IRS name

Lately the BBB of North Alabama has received significant phone calls about a fax that supposedly is being sent from the IRS. Here is a sample of what the fax mentions:

"Dear Sir, Our records indicate that you are a non-resident alien. As a result, you are exempt from United States of America Tax reporting and withholding on interest paid to you on your account and other financial dealings. To protect your exemption from paying tax on your

account and other financial benefits held in USA and to update our records. We are required by law to update our records and you need to rectify your exemption status.

To do so, we need you to review, and if necessary, complete Form w-8BEN, and return it to us as soon as possible through the fax number indicated."

Please be aware that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) does not fax out requests in order for residents or non-

residents to update IRS data. If you have received any unsolicited faxes representing the IRS, please contact them immediately. Completing any forms provided from an unknown company or individual representing a company can lead to potential identity theft. Depending on your financial situation, there are numerous forms to be completed. In order to verify any forms or update any tax information, feel free to contact the IRS directly by calling 1-800-tax-1040 or you may log on to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). ♦



## Cook of the Month

Do you know a great local cook? Maybe it's you! We're looking for a few good cooks to be considered for our Cook of the Month feature. We will soon begin featuring a Cook of the Month in each issue of *The Communicator*. And we're not just looking for southern fare — gourmet chefs are welcome, too.

To be considered for this new feature, please send us four to six recipes, along with the name and contact information for the cook. Feel free to tie recipes to a specific holiday, event or theme. We plan to feature a Cook of the Month in each issue, so start sending in those recipes! Mail to Maria Goodson at NHTC today!

Note: Submission does not guarantee publication. Please send copies, not originals. Submit only 'tried and true' recipes that have been kitchen-tested.

### Apricot Nectar Cake

1 pkg. yellow cake mix  
4 whole eggs  
1 pkg. lemon Jell-O  
3/4 cup apricot nectar  
3/4 cup Wesson oil

Mix well and bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes in angel food pan.

For icing, mix together:  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 cup lemon juice.  
Pour over cake while hot.

### Fresh Apple Cake

1-1/2 cups Wesson oil  
2 cups sugar  
2 eggs  
Beat until creamy.

Sift together:  
2-1/2 cups flour  
1-1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp soda  
2 tsp baking powder

Add to first mixture. Fold in the following:  
3 cups chopped apples, peeled (with lemon juice poured over apples)  
1 cup nuts  
2 tsp. vanilla.

Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees.

### Cheesy Sausage Muffins

1/4 lb. Sausage (cooked & drained)  
3-oz. cream cheese (chopped)  
1/2 cup cheddar cheese (shredded)  
1/4 cup green onions (chopped)  
1 cup Bisquick Mix

Grease muffin tin. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix well all above ingredients.

Then, combine:  
2/3 cup milk  
2 large eggs (slightly beaten)

Make a "well" in the sausage mixture; pour milk & egg mixture into the "well". Stir just until all is moistened. Fill muffin tin 2/3 full. Bake for 35-40 minutes. Remove from pan immediately.  
Muffins freeze well.

### Cream Cheese Danish

2 cans Crescent rolls  
1 egg yolk (save egg white)  
2 8-ounce pkgs. cream cheese  
3/4 cups sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 tsp. lemon juice

Mix cream cheese and sugar until smooth, add egg yolk, vanilla, and lemon juice.

Cover bottom of a lightly greased 9x13-inch pan with 1 can crescent rolls; pinch perforated edges together. Top with cream cheese mixture. Then, cover with second can of crescent rolls. Brush top with egg white.

Bake in 350 degree oven for 25 minutes.

While warm, glaze with:  
1 cup confectioners sugar, plus a couple Tbsp. of milk — just enough to make mixture smooth, not liquefied.  
ENJOY!!!!!!

### Easy Sausage Casserole

2 pkgs. crescent roll dough  
1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
1 pound sausage

Brown and drain sausage. In 9x13-inch dish, roll out crescent dough and pinch perforations together. Mix softened cream cheese & sausage together. Spread on crescent roll dough in pan. Roll out other pkg. of dough and place on top of sausage mixture. Bake at temperature listed on crescent roll package until golden brown. Easy & yummy!

## Chicken and Dressing

- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 1 large can white chicken meat
- 3 Tbsp. onion flakes
- 1 Tbsp. sage (or to taste)
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1 soup can of water
- cornbread

Mix all ingredients except cornbread in saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook for about 5 minutes. Crumble cornbread into mixture until the consistency of a medium sauce. Mix well and allow to set for about 15 minutes for cornbread to absorb liquid. Add more water if necessary to maintain medium consistency. Bake at 375 degrees for about 45 minutes.

## Tortilla Soup

- 1 large diced white onion
- 3 large diced tomatoes
- 4-1/2 cups of chicken stock or bouillon
- 2 cups of Picante Sauce
- 3 chicken breasts
- Salt, Pepper and Cumin to taste
- 1/2 cup of chopped Cilantro

Bring the chicken to a boil in the chicken stock. Once the chicken is cooked, remove from chicken stock. Add tomatoes, onion, Picante Sauce, salt, pepper and cumin to the chicken stock. Let broth simmer for 10-15 minutes. Dice cooked chicken and add to broth mixture. Simmer for another 10-15 minutes. Once soup is done, then add Cilantro.

Cut corn tortillas in strips and fry in olive oil until crispy. Place tortilla strips, guacamole and cheese in a bowl. Serve soup and ENJOY!  
Serves 4-6 persons.

## Icebox Fruitcake

- 1 box vanilla wafers
- 1 box graham crackers
- 1 8-oz. can evaporated milk (not Eagle Brand)
- 1 bag marshmallows
- 1/2 cup each of pecans and walnuts, chopped
- candied cherries and other candied fruit, as desired

Mix milk and marshmallows in an extra large mixing bowl. Heat in microwave approximately 3-4 minutes or until marshmallows are melted. Place vanilla wafers and graham crackers into a food processor and process into fine crumbs. Add milk mixture to crumbs and stir until dry ingredients are moistened. Allow to cool until mixture can be mixed with hands. Leave mixture in bowl and mix with hands until smooth. Small amounts of water may be added as necessary. (Tip: keep hands wet while kneading mixture.) Add pecans, walnuts, cherries and other desired candied fruit to mixture. Place into a buttered tube pan and allow to cool in refrigerator. To remove from pan, immerse pan in hot water 20-30 seconds. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator.

## Microwave Lasagna

- 8-oz. ground beef (browned and drained)
- 1 32-oz. jar of spaghetti sauce (I use Prego fresh mushrooms)
- 8 lasagna noodles (uncooked)
- 1-1/2 cup cottage cheese
- 1 egg
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup water

Mix ground beef, spaghetti sauce and water. Place 1/2 cup of meat mixture in bottom of lasagna dish.

Place 4 of the noodles on top of sauce. Mix cottage cheese, black pepper and egg together. Spread 1/2 of this mixture on noodles and sprinkle on 1/2 of the mozzarella cheese.

Repeat layers ending with sauce mixture. Cover tightly with plastic wrap. In microwave, cook 8 minutes on high and 32 minutes on medium.

Uncover & sprinkle with parmesan. Recover and let stand 15 minutes.  
*This is a really great quick and easy meal...It seems like a lot of work but once you make it you will see how easy it really is!*

## Sausage Onion Cornbread

*I get so many requests for this and no matter how much I make it is consumed before it has a chance to cool.*

- 1-lb. sausage hot or mild
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1-1/2 cups corn meal mix
- 1 17-oz. can cream corn
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
- 3/4 cup milk

1. Preheat oven 425 degrees.
2. In skillet, brown sausage and onions; drain. Set aside.
3. Mix other ingredients, except cheese.
4. Grease 10-inch iron skillet or 2-quart casserole dish.
5. Pour half of batter into hot skillet. Top with drained sausage and onions. Add cheese on top of sausage mixture. Then add rest of batter.
6. Bake 30 to 40 minutes. Makes a meal by its self.

# INTERNET SERVICES FROM NHTC

## The *Business* Connection... The *Family* Connection

Diane Boyd is an independent consultant with a beauty control company. During the day, she spends as much time as possible with her two grandsons. In the evenings she runs her home-based business right from her residence — thanks to Internet Service from New Hope Telephone Cooperative.

"I do all my ordering online, I monitor my client records and keep up with my spa parties," Diane says.

When making the switch to NHTC's Internet Service, Diane received plenty of help from her cooperative. "The support I have gotten has been wonderful," she says. "I can call the cooperative, and they walk me through it one thing at a time."



*Diane with grandson Parker Sellers*

Discover what Diane learned about NHTC's Internet Service...

- Reliable service
- Fair price
- Outstanding customer service from neighbors and friends at YOUR cooperative

Sign up today! Call 723-4211

**New Hope Telephone Cooperative**  
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