

The

Communicator

Vol. 3, No. 1

February 2004

Lineman goes to Iraq



Remembering
Dr. Carpenter



Carbin honored as
Teacher of the Year



Butler retires after
30 years at NHTC

It's hard to believe how fast time goes by. It doesn't seem possible that 30 years have passed since the day I became a New Hope Telephone Cooperative employee.

But here I am, three decades later, writing my final column to you as General Manager. I have officially retired, and you will meet the new General Manager in the next issue of *The Communicator*.

I've thought a lot about what I wanted to say in my final column. How do you say 'goodbye' after 30 years? I've spent more than half my life working for the people of New Hope, Grant and Owens Cross Roads.

As I look back on those 30 years of service, I see times when things were going great, and times when we faced difficult challenges. But through the ups and downs, I had a great bunch of people to work with.

So first I would like to thank the employees of New Hope Telephone Cooperative — past and present — for making this cooperative a success. We have a dedicated group here who give their best for our members, and the people of this area should be proud of what they have accomplished.

I would like to thank the Directors I've served with throughout the years. Board members face a lot of tough situations, and their contributions are not always recognized. I've had the privilege to serve with some

great Board members, and I thank them all for what they've meant to this community.

Of course, I must also thank the members of this cooperative. Your support through the years has enabled this company to grow stronger and become a better service organization. You are the reason this cooperative is one of the most successful and technologically advanced in the state.

Much of the credit for any success I've experienced goes to my family. My wife and children have stood by me through thick and thin, and that support has allowed me to do my best at serving the people of this region.

For 30 years I have worked for the greatest company around, serving the greatest people around. And it has been a real pleasure. I encourage you all to offer the new General Manager the same support you gave me through the years.

I also encourage you to continue supporting this cooperative. Teach your children the importance of the cooperative concept of business, and pass along the great tradition started more than 50 years ago by men and women who wanted something better for their neighbors and family.

God bless each and every one of you. I look forward to seeing you around the community. ■



Tom Butler, Jr.
General Manager

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.

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Thank you, Mr. Butler

The Board of Directors and the employees of New Hope Telephone Cooperative extend our appreciation to Tom Butler for his years of service to this company and the community, and wish him a healthy, productive and enjoyable retirement.

NHTC lineman off to Iraq

When Daniel Martin went to work for New Hope Telephone Cooperative three years ago to begin training for a career as a lineman, he did not imagine that he would one day be practicing his trade in Iraq.

As a Sergeant with the National Guard's 279th Signal Battalion, Martin was recently deployed to help rebuild the war-torn Middle Eastern nation. His unit, based in Arab, joined Mobile's 711th for training at Fort Stewart, Ga., before heading to Iraq.

He will serve in an unspecified area south of Baghdad.

Martin's unit provides tactical communications for the United States Army. In addition to this role, he will be helping rebuild Iraq's telecommunication system, which was damaged by the coalition war that toppled the government controlled by Saddam Hussein.

The deployment is scheduled to last 544 days, Martin said, far longer than any time of service since he

enlisted five and a half years ago. "You don't think much about it during this process," Martin said the

helping take care of our family."

Martin said he will miss Alabama while working in the heat of Iraq.

"But the hardest part will be not getting to see my family," he says. "I'll miss getting to see my girl and the things she does... everything else I can handle."

A deployment ceremony was held January 2 at Arab High School to honor the soldiers headed for Iraq. Among the family members and friends in attendance were numerous elected officials, including Alabama Lieutenant Governor Lucy Baxley and U.S. Congressman Robert Aderholt.

While thinking on his upcoming mission, Martin expressed his gratitude to

another group of heroes. "I appreciate all those soldiers who have gone on and fought before us," he said.

Martin also recognized fellow Grant residents who are serving in Iraq, including Sgt. Michael Austin, Spc. Nick Russell, and Sgt. Reed Patterson. ■



Daniel Martin with wife Marla and daughter Erin at the recent deployment ceremony held in Arab.

week before his departure "You just try to keep up. There's a lot to deal with in getting your family ready."

The Grant native said goodbye to wife Marla and their 17-month-old daughter, Erin. "I really appreciate all the community has done," he said, "all the support they've shown in

Help us honor our local soldiers

We want to help the community say 'thank you' to all our men and women serving in the War on Terror. Send us the name, and a photo, of your family member from Grant, New Hope or Owens Cross Roads who is serving our country overseas. Please include the names of their family members, their branch of service and the unit they are assigned to. We'll publish them in *The Communicator* throughout the year to show our appreciation for their sacrifice. Send material to New Hope Telephone Cooperative, Attn. Tammy Pritchett, PO Box 452, New Hope, Alabama 35760.

Butler recalls years of NHTC service

The year was 1974, and a young Tom Butler, Jr., came before the Board of Directors for New Hope Telephone Cooperative. The 25-year-old New Hope resident had a degree in marketing from the University of Alabama, and a desire to put his education, energy and enthusiasm to work for the community.

Butler was hired as Assistant Manager. Part of his job was to learn the ropes from veteran telecommunications man C.V. Lee, who was the only General Manager NHTC had ever known.

The young Butler set out learning the operation through and through. He studied the computer system, and plant records. He learned about the federal government guidelines the cooperative must follow, and how the company functioned in its day-to-day operations.

"I worked with all the different departments, and with issues like bad debt and member complaints," Butler remembers. "And I helped with the cable system as well."

For 14 years Butler was second in command, learning from Mr. Lee and assuming his responsibilities when Mr.

Lee was out of the office. "Mr. Lee was a highly respected man, both locally and throughout the telecommunications industry," Butler says. "I learned a good bit from him, and from many other employees, too."

With Mr. Lee's retirement in 1987, Butler was promoted to General Manager. He took the reins on January 1, 1988.

For the next 16 years, Butler led the cooperative through an incredible season of growth. "One of our greatest challenges was converting from a mechanical switch to a digital switch," Butler remembers. While this was a major undertaking for NHTC employees, it made it possible for cooperative members to enjoy faster service and many new features.

"We also expanded the cable system to most of the outlying areas," Butler recalls. "We had about a dozen channels in the late 80's, and today we have a 750 megahertz system offering 60 channels of quality programming."

In looking back over his career, Butler is proud of the technological advances achieved by the company. Members have been connected to the world through NHTC's Internet service, and the broadband power of DSL has brought incredible transfer capacity to the area.

"This year we will have 100 percent DSL coverage," Butler says, "which means every home or business on the cooperative system will have access to high speed Internet. We're ahead of most Bell and independent telephone companies in the state."

Another major accomplishment under Butler's leadership was the formation of New Hope Long Distance. Members now have a cost effective long distance alternative that is easy to understand and simple to use. Best of all, the service gives members a local phone number to call and local people to talk to with questions and concerns about their long distance service.

Butler is proud of the services the cooperative has rolled out to make life



Butler in his early career as New Hope Telephone Cooperative's Assistant Manager.



Butler speaks with a cooperative member at a recent NHTC Annual Meeting.

more convenient for members. He lists among these the many calling features, and the unlimited calling plans into Huntsville and Guntersville.

"As I look back over 30 years, I am most proud that I was able to serve my friends, neighbors and relatives with quality phone, cable and Internet," Butler says. "It is one of the best jobs a person could have."

Butler, who turns 55 in March, plans to stay busy in his retirement. He enjoys fishing and hunting, and plans to play a little golf, too. He also hopes to travel some with his wife, who recently retired from teaching.

You still may see Butler around the office for a few more days as he finalizes his duties and ties up loose ends. "My last day at the office will be February 29th," he says. ■

Remembering Dr. James L. Carpenter

by Sara Ruth Richard Burleson

"Did you know Dr. Carpenter?" Many conversations in my life have begun with that question. My grandfather, Dr. Carpenter, touched so many lives in New Hope and the surrounding communities. Because of his service and commitment to patients over the years, people always seemed to make an instant connection to me and my family. Stories about his care would immediately flow from their heart and I would have another glimpse into the life of a man that I did not know. My hope is that the following story will give you insight to all aspects of his life and it will give those that were not a patient of Dr. Carpenter an opportunity to see life in this community as it used to be.

Dr. Jimmy, as he was affectionately known, was the last of a dying breed in Madison County – he was a country doctor. His father began practicing medicine on horseback in New Hope before the turn of the century. Dr. Jimmy was born in New Hope in 1909 and graduated from New Hope High School in 1927. He graduated from the University of Alabama, Vanderbilt School of Medicine, and interned at General Hospital in Toledo, Ohio. Dr. Carpenter married Anna Ruth Farris from Hampshire, Tennessee in 1935. In 1936, Ruth and Jimmy moved back to New Hope where he followed in his father's footsteps and began his life of service to this community. He spent his days and nights making house calls and traveling between his three offices in New Hope, Gurley and Farley.

Dr. Jimmy and Ruth were blessed with two daughters, Henrietta and Jimmie Ruth. Their family time together was surely limited due to the fact that at any time of the night they could be awakened by a frantic knock on the door or a phone call from a patient about to give birth. For

you see a country doctor, unlike those who practice medicine today, was on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Dr. Jimmy delivered an estimated 5,000 babies in the home. He would go to his patients no matter what the weather was outside and no matter what financial state a particular family happened to be in at the time. Can you imagine being paid for your services with a live turkey or a used scope for a rifle? Can you imagine only paying \$2 for an office visit that included medication? I can not, but many did who lived during



the days of Dr. Carpenter. His giving nature may have taken away from time with his family. It may have even taken away from financial fortune that could have been gained like "city doctors." But look at the lives he touched as a country doctor – look at the legacy he has left to his daughters.

I often wonder about those fortunate people who were treated by Dr. Carpenter years ago. Does your mind drift back to the "days gone by?" As you sit in a doctor's waiting room for an hour or two, then wait for another period of time in a patient's room, only to be examined for 10 minutes by a doctor, do you think back to your visits with Dr. Carpenter? Times have really changed for many of you over the past several decades. Hospitals and

specialists have changed the medical profession, but for my generation it is the only way we know. There are insurance papers to file, long waits in doctor's offices, and late night trips to hospital emergency rooms. We do not live in a time when you called a doctor and he came to your home, or you went to his home whenever there was a need. We do not live in a time when "payment for services rendered" was not a priority in the mind of doctor or patient.

For all Dr. Carpenter did for the medical profession years ago, he was also involved in civic organizations and politics. He served many years as the team physician for the New Hope School basketball and football teams. He was a member of the New Hope School Board, the Lions Club, the advisory board of the New Hope State National Bank, the Huntsville Hospital Board, the American Medical Association and the Madison County Medical Society. Dr. Carpenter was also a Mason and a County District 3 Commissioner. What leisure time he did allow himself was spent fishing and coon hunting. He also had a cattle farm in New Hope.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of those who have shared stories of Dr. Carpenter with me throughout the years. Because my grandfather passed away when I was only two years old, you have given me a connection to a man I would have otherwise not known. Remember his life and pass along your special stories to others. Whether you remember going to the porch at his home for help, having him come to your house in the middle of the night to deliver a baby, or walking up the flight of stairs at his New Hope office to get a shot from him, never take for granted the special time you lived in. Never forget what he gave to New Hope and the surrounding communities. ■

NHTC's new 2004 directory has new look, new features

Your new telephone directory from New Hope Telephone Cooperative should arrive in the mail soon (in fact, you may have already received it).

We are very proud of the changes we were able to include in this year's directory. We believe our members will find it to be a helpful resource.

Please note on Page One of the directory that our publisher overlooked

changes in the Board of Directors information. We apologize for this error and any inconvenience it may cause. For the correct information

regarding our Board of Directors, please see Page Two of our member magazine, *The Communicator*.

Remember, don't throw your old phone books away. Put one in a basement or spare room next to a phone. Keep one in your car for those times on the road when you need a phone number.

If you simply don't need the old phone book, stop by our office and drop it

in the recycling box in the foyer. Thank you for pitching in to help keep old phone books out of the landfills.■



Carbin named Teacher of the Year



New Hope Elementary School (kindergarten through 8th grade) recently named Lela Carbin its Teacher of the Year.

Carbin has been a classroom teacher for 20 years. She

has taught for the past 16 years here at New Hope School. During that time she has worked with children in grades 4th, 5th and 6th.

Carbin resides in Huntsville and has two children, Marlayna and Frankie.

"Kids do not care how much you know until they know how much you care," Carbin said in explaining her philosophy on teaching. "I've been in this community so long that the children, and my co-workers, feel like family."

In honoring Carbin, school officials said, "we have certainly been blessed to have her as part of our school and community."■

"Thanks to the Campbell Oil Company and the Hwy. 431 Chevron Station for supporting New Hope High School. For the last two months of 2003, they donated a percentage of their sales to the school."

Brenda Goodwin, NHHS Principal

Beware of Spyware

There's a new villain on the Internet. In addition to viruses, spam and hackers, we now have to worry about Spyware.

Spyware is a small program that gets put on your hard drive without your knowledge. You can get Spyware just by surfing the Web, or by using P2P programs like Kazaa, Bearshare, or others that let you search for and download music.

Spyware is legal. It slows down your Internet surfing speed and can slow down your computer.

Fortunately, there is a solution. Go to www.cnet.com and search for the freeware program "ad aware." Download this program and install it on your computer. When you run it, it will remove all known Spyware. It also has a built in update feature.

Visit the New Hope Telephone Web site (www.nehp.net) for the latest information regarding Internet security. A little knowledge can help prevent problems later.

Town forum to focus on meth problem

The Partnership for a Drug-Free Community and Madison DON'T (Drugs Offer No Tomorrow) will host a town forum Thursday, February 12, at the New Hope High School Library. The forum is scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m.

'Don't Meth Around' is a forum designed to increase public awareness of the growing methamphetamine problem in our communities. Meth is a powerfully addictive stimulant that hooks people of all ages.

Among the forum panelists will be representatives from the Huntsville Police Dept./Huntsville-Madison County Strategic Counter-drug Team. For more information, call 539-7339.

Sweetheart Photo Winners



Top: Birthday Kiss
Garrett Dudley (son of Shane & Nikki Dudley) steals a sweetheart kiss from Lily Whitaker (daughter of Albo & Evie Whitaker) at her first birthday party.
Photo by Evie Whitaker.

Right: Remember When
Dusty Yarbrough and Leslie Carlisle enjoy their prom.
Photo submitted by the grandparents.



PHOTO CONTEST: We're looking for your favorite **Spring photos** to use in the April issue of *The Communicator*. Send them to: NHTC • P.O. Box 452 • New Hope, Alabama 35760. We will select winners for publication in our next issue! If your entry is selected, you'll see your photo in print, plus receive a free gift from NHTC.
Deadline for entry: February 27, 2004.

NOTE: Be sure to include photographer's name, address and phone number, as well as name of any people featured in your photos.

All submissions become the property of New Hope Telephone Cooperative and will not be returned. 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.

RECIPES

Ro-tel Cream Cheese Dip

1 8-oz. Cream Cheese
1/2 lb. sausage, cooked & drained
1 can Ro-tel

Melt cream cheese in microwave with Ro-tel, mix well; stir in sausage and serve with plain tortilla chips.

—Submitted by Nikki Dudley

Sausage Onion Cornbread

1 lb. sausage, hot or mild
1-1/2 cups corn meal mix
2 eggs
3/4 cup milk
2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded

1 large onion, chopped
1 17-oz. can cream corn
1/2 cup vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Brown sausage and onions and drain. Mix other ingredients, except cheese. Grease 10-in. iron skillet or 2 qt. casserole dish. Pour half of batter into hot iron skillet. Top with drained sausage and onions and cheese, then cover with rest of batter. Bake 30 to 40 minutes. Makes a meal by its self.

—Submitted by Patsy Martin

CORRECTION: In the last issue of *The Communicator*, there was a mistake in the recipe for Maw Belle's Sour Cream Coconut Cake. Following is the corrected recipe. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Maw Belle's Sour Cream Coconut Cake

1 box Duncan Hines cake mix (butter) 1 cup water
1 small box instant vanilla pudding 4 eggs
1/3 cup Crisco oil

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease & flour 2 round cake pans. Blend all ingredients in large bowl. Beat at med. speed for 2 minutes. Bake 38-43 minutes in 8-in. pan or 33-38 minutes in 9-in. pan.

Filling:

2 cups sugar 1 cup sour cream
1/4 cup Cool Whip™

1 lg. pkg. frozen coconut (less 1/4 for top)
Mix all together and save out one cup for icing. When cake is cool, split layers to 4, and put filling between all layers, but not on top.

Icing:

1 medium tub Cool Whip™, thawed 1 cup filling

Mix together and spread over entire cake and use remaining coconut to sprinkle on top. Keep refrigerated. I also make these cakes ahead and freeze.

—Submitted by Era Belle Pritchett

New Hope Long Distance



*Your simple
long distance
solution.*

Call us today to join your
friends and neighbors who have put
New Hope Long Distance to work for
their family or business

One Bill — Your long distance charges are added to your monthly New Hope Telephone bill. That's one less bill to pay, one less envelope to mail.

Flat Rates — Don't worry about what time you make your calls. You pay the same low rate during the day as you pay for nights and weekends. Anytime, anywhere in the country.

Keep It Local — As an NHTC member, the money you pay for long distance helps your company to grow, while earning capital credits for you.

Outstanding, Local Service — First-rate customer service from someone right here in New Hope, Alabama. Talk to a real person, *in person*, or over the telephone.

**Simplify your life. Put New Hope Long Distance to work for you.
Call 723-4211 today!**

**NHTC's Unlimited Residential Calling Plan to Guntersville is
NOW AVAILABLE! Call for details about our newest residential plan.**

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