

# The Communicator

MAY/JUNE 2018

## SAFE AND SOLID

New Hope  
residents enjoy  
a new City Hall

## SMALL BUSINESS WINNER

Keller's Tackle & Grocery  
snags the big catch

## FIND A PLACE TO UNWIND

It's finally time to  
make for the lake

# NTCA THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION

## RURAL CONNECTIONS

BY SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

### Sustaining our rural broadband dollars

It's exciting to see the attention rural broadband has received the past several months. But as we explore ways to extend broadband to unserved rural areas, it is important to consider how those dollars are spent.

The Agriculture and Rural America Task Force in the U.S. House of Representatives held a briefing in March. I was honored to be one of their participants and share insights into rural broadband challenges. We hear a lot about the digital divide, but I spoke with the group about the rural-rural divide — the investments being made by locally-owned broadband providers and the areas where larger carriers are not making the investments their rural communities need.

We have seen several promising steps taken by Congress and the FCC in recent months. Our industry applauded the inclusion of \$600 million for a new rural broadband pilot program to be administered by RUS in the omnibus funding bill that was signed by President Trump. And the FCC recently acted to address some of the immediate budget shortfalls in the commission's High Cost Universal Service Fund (USF), the primary support that allows rural broadband providers to make the business case for sustained deployment and service.

Telecommunications providers like yours have done a great job delivering broadband to rural America with the help of USF. There is still much work to do, and it will take partnerships as well as reliable, sufficient USF funding to ensure the availability and affordability of robust broadband for unserved areas. 📶

# Youthful trends

## A survey spots the habits of rural teens

Participating in social networks, streaming more than five hours of content weekly, and reliance on mobile devices for photos and messaging are some trends defining how rural high school students use modern communications tools and services.

Every two years, participants in the Foundation for Rural Service Annual Youth Tour and applicants to the foundation's College Scholarship Program complete a study about their telecommunication habits.

A total of 1,706 high school students, with 80 percent between the ages of 14 and 19, completed the survey. Here are a few of the conclusions:



### PRICE AWARENESS

**Seventy-two percent** of respondents have their monthly cellphone bill paid by someone else, and **25 percent** have no concept of the size of that bill.

When these young people enter the "real world," they will likely face sticker-shock as they shop for cellphone service.

### STAYING SOCIAL

Participating in social media is, by far, **the most popular online activity** among those surveyed.

While a mobile phone is still important for the basics, such as personal safety and education, the primary draw is the ability to connect to those similar to themselves. Also, online interaction is the preferred means of personal communication, and losing that link is unthinkable to most.



### TEXTING AND DRIVING

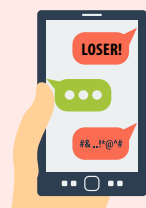
Young people need more convincing about the dangers of texting while driving — **22 percent** of respondents admitted they occasionally texted while driving.

While **95 percent** have seen at least one public service announcement about the dangers of texting while driving, **75 percent** have seen multiple such announcements.

The report concluded that "this informational onslaught needs to continue, and should be supplemented by additional, proven methods of getting this life-saving message across, whether in schools, churches or other places where young people can be counseled."

### BULLYING ONLINE

Cyberbullying is a significant concern, and more than half of all survey respondents know of a cyberbullying incident involving a personal acquaintance. **More than 25 percent** reported being personally affected by cyberbullying. 📱



For more information, visit [FRS.org](http://FRS.org).



# New law aims to improve the quality and reliability of calls made to rural America

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH

**R**ural residents and business owners scored a major legislative victory in February, one that should reduce the rural call completion problems that have long plagued those who live and work in America's small towns and communities.

The Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act was signed into law by President Trump and gives the Federal Communications Commission additional tools to combat call completion failure.

For years, rural citizens have reported problems receiving calls that originate outside their area and from wireless callers. Some calls have poor quality, while other calls simply never come through. A leading cause of these issues is substandard service from third-party, intermediate carriers, known as "least-cost routers," which originating carriers use to route their calls into rural areas. This is done in an effort to lower the costs of delivering a call into a rural community, where terminating costs are higher.

The new law gives authority to the FCC to require providers to register with the agency and to meet quality standards. "I will be working closely with my fellow

commissioners to ensure that rural Americans have what every American expects: a telephone system that works," says FCC Chairman Ajit Pai.

Passage of the act was the result of a bipartisan effort in the U.S. House and Senate. "For too long, rural communities across the country have been suffering from unreliable phone service. Without consistent and dependable service, it is challenging to stay connected to loved ones, run a business, and reach first responders in an emergency," says U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn, who sponsored the bill in the Senate. "Enacting these common-sense standards for providers will ensure that every family can trust that their calls will be completed, regardless of where they live."

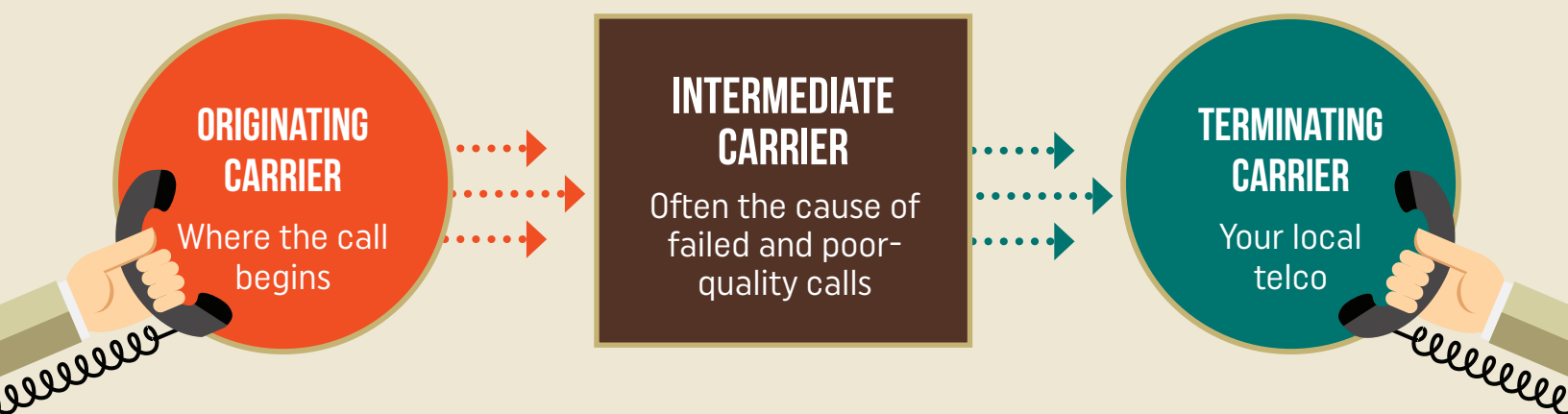
U.S. Rep. David Young, R-Iowa, sponsored the bill in the House. "Improving rural call completion rates and quality

are important to ensuring the survival of small towns and granting Americans the choice to live and thrive in whatever community is best for them and their family, rural, urban, or anywhere in between," says Young.

The legislation came in part due to combined efforts of America's rural telecommunications providers, who have worked the past several years with elected officials and regulators to solve the rural call completion problem. "Passage of this bill reaffirms the power of advocacy," says Shirley Bloomfield, CEO of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, which represents nearly 850 cooperative and independent telcos in rural and small-town America.

"Rural providers do more than deliver technology to their customers; they take their concerns to Washington and educate lawmakers on bills that impact their lives and livelihoods," Bloomfield says. "This measure will bring greater transparency to the call routing marketplace and send a bipartisan message about the importance of on-going efforts to solve call completion problems that threaten the general well-being of countless Americans." 📞

## Legislation targets cause of many rural call completion problems



# Counting on small businesses



**JIM COOK**  
General Manager

**H**ave you ever thought about what our community would be like without small businesses?

For starters, half of us would be out of work because small businesses employ 48 percent of U.S. employees, according to the Small Business Administration.

On a national scale, without small businesses the economy would grow stagnant. According to estimates, 64 percent of new private sector jobs come from small businesses.

The downtown areas of our communities would certainly look very different if they were completely shuttered, as small businesses make up the heart of most business communities.

And while it may not be so obvious, think of the sports teams, community events and charitable organizations that count on donations and sponsorships from our small-business community.

I would even argue that many small businesses, such as NHTC, are what help give our communities their identities.

In short, we need our small businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration has declared April 29-May 5 as National Small Business Week. It is a designation that goes back to 1963, aiming at celebrating small businesses locally and around the nation. Please join me in supporting them and commending them for the long hours, dedication and commitment to their customers that have made them a part of the fabric of our communities.


At NHTC, we're proud to be one of those small businesses, but we're also proud to support many small businesses throughout our region with our advanced broadband network.

As you've seen in the pages of recent magazines, there are plenty of examples where local small businesses rely on a broadband connection to place orders, send emails, interact with customers on social media, improve efficiency in their operation and stay competitive regionally and globally.

Broadband helps make the world a smaller place, which helps small businesses. Did you know that 98 percent of the companies that export products overseas are small businesses? In fact, according to the Department of Commerce, one-third of U.S. merchandise exports are from small and mid-sized businesses. I think it's safe to assume that when small businesses communicate with customers or suppliers overseas, they aren't sending letters — they're using their broadband connection from providers like NHTC.

A recent report revealed small businesses that access global markets over the internet have a 30 percent higher survival rate than similar businesses that aren't connected.

We live in an exciting time when a small startup company or even a longtime family business has access to a local, regional, national and even global market because of broadband.

Our community counts on small businesses, and small businesses count on NHTC. We are proud to support them with the technology needed to thrive in today's economy. 

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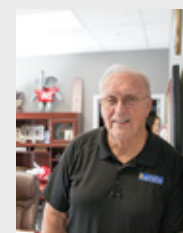
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### On the Cover:



New Hope Mayor Butch Taylor is proud of the new City Hall that took two years to build and saved the city money. See story Page 9.

# KEEPING IT CLEAN

New Hope Lions Club — along with the support of the New Hope and Owens Cross Roads city councils, Leo Club, church groups, school clubs, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and neighbors — removed a truckload of litter during the Annual Spring Clean Up 2018. The businesses listed below sponsored this campaign in some way, and without the support from the community, this cleanup day would not have been the success it was. Please support your local businesses. To learn more, contact Ava W. Cambron at 256-723-4695 or 256-479-0184 or any Lion neighbor. **Your help is appreciated.**

## The Lions Club would like to thank the following businesses for their donations:

- ALFA
- All Star Pools
- Baker Hardware
- Betty's Boutique
- Brown's Wrecker Service Inc.
- Cadence Bank
- Citizens Bank
- Click Construction
- Cooper's Small Engine
- D & M Automotives
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- Masters Car Wash/Cleaners
- New Hope Auto Sales
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- New Hope Grocery
- New Hope Family Dentistry
- New Hope Funeral Home
- New Hope Telephone
- Old Vienna
- Perfect Timing Bar & Grill
- Piggly Wiggly
- Pit Stop Beverage
- Royal Rooster's Trading Post
- Salon On Main
- Shell Food Mart
- Stapler Construction
- Stapler Furniture
- Subway
- Styles by Beverly
- Tara Graphics
- Wavaho
- W&W BBQ



**Offices closed:** NHTC offices will be closed on Monday, May 28, in observance of Memorial Day.



## Owens Cross Roads Farmers Market is open for business

The Owens Cross Roads Farmers Market is a perfect place to buy locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Shoppers can also find fresh eggs, baked goods and crafts, and farmers can conveniently sell produce to friends and neighbors.

The Farmers Market is open to local vendors from May 1-Sept. 29, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. On Saturdays, the market is open from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Yard sales and solicitation of live animals are not allowed.

For selling guidelines and more information, please contact the Owens Cross Roads town clerk.

## ENJOY LIVE MUSIC AT THE GAZEBO

Tuesdays in May and June can now be Tunes-days!

Relax and enjoy local talent during New Hope's summer concert series in beautiful downtown New Hope, Tuesday nights from 6-8 p.m., weather permitting. Food vendors will be on-site. Take a night off from cooking and treat yourself to some great food! For more information contact Dennis Martin at 256-658-1457.

The event is at 5496 Main Drive, New Hope.





Lake Jocassee,  
South Carolina

## Enjoy a refreshing dip

Southern lakes  
offer a break  
from the heat

If you're only looking to the Southern coasts to wiggle your toes in the sand and cool off this summer, you're missing out on glorious watering holes: our lakes. Not only do lakes make the perfect swimming spots with their calm waters, but they're also often ideal for wetting a line, canoeing, kayaking or camping. Try some of the best lakes in the South. Jump on in, y'all.

### Lake Jocassee, South Carolina

Lake Jocassee may not be the largest lake in South Carolina, but what it lacks in size, it makes up for in thrills. Jump off a high cliff, stand beneath a magnificent waterfall, or take a hike along a mountain path. Or, just take it easy and set up your lounge chair on the beach at Devils Fork State Park while the kids swim in water made crystal clear by mountain streams that feed the lake.

"With the clarity of the water, the beaches can resemble the Caribbean," says Ken Sloan, president and CEO of Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau.

To fully appreciate all the lake has to offer, rent a pontoon boat and take the family on a tour. Or, rent a canoe, paddle board or kayak and take off on your own. The primary outfitter for watercraft rentals is Eclectic Sun ([eclecticsun.com](http://eclecticsun.com)).

While the lake is secluded — you gain entrance through Devils Fork State Park — there are several restaurants within a short drive. One of them is Keowee Towne Market, a five-minute drive away, where you can order a pizza or a plate of great barbecue and chow down there or pick up the fixings for a picnic to enjoy along a mountain trail. The state park offers villa-style lodging and two campgrounds for both RV and primitive camping. The lake's clear water also makes it a destination for scuba diving.

**For more information:** [lakejocassee.com](http://lakejocassee.com).

## Douglas Lake, Tennessee

Douglas Lake winds its way through four scenic Tennessee counties — Jefferson, Cocke, Sevier and Hamblen — all in the Smoky Mountains.

Less than 20 percent of the 40-plus miles of shoreline have been developed, making the lake a paradise for boaters and water skiers. It is one of the most popular lakes in the country for fishing for crappie and largemouth bass.

Jump in from your boat for a deep swim, or take the family to the sandy beach at Douglas Dam Headwater Campground on the western side of the lake. It not only has more than 60 campsites with water and electricity, but it also boasts a public swimming beach. About 30 acres of hardwood forest back up to the beach and campground. Trails lead to views of the dam, birding areas, wildflower-strewn meadows and limestone sinkholes. There are restrooms and picnic tables at the beach.

With the close proximity to Dollywood and Gatlinburg, your restaurant and hotel choices are numerous. However, there are also lake and mountain cabins for rent by the night or the week, allowing you to make your own meals and save some cash.

**For more information:** [www.douglaslakeinfo.com](http://www.douglaslakeinfo.com) or [visitsevierville.com](http://visitsevierville.com).

## Lake Guntersville, Alabama

Lake Guntersville is an ideal aquatic playground close to home for Northeast Alabama residents.

With 67,900 acres and nearly 900 miles of shoreline, the lake is known for its fishing, but it also offers activities such as pleasure boating, kayaking and eagle watching.

Guntersville Lake Hydrofest, a popular power boat racing event expected to attract thousands to the area, is set for June 22-24. Visit [www.guntersvillelakehydrofest.com](http://www.guntersvillelakehydrofest.com) for more information.

Lake Guntersville State Park, a 6,000-acre natural playground, offers camping, lodging, hiking, horse trails, boat rentals, zip lines, fishing, swimming at the beach and an 18-hole golf course.

The park lodge — with a full-service restaurant, hotel rooms and convention center — overlooks the lake and provides a beautiful view.

Goosepond Colony Resort near Scottsboro has two 18-hole championship golf courses, lakeside cottages, a lodge, a waterfront campground and a full-service marina. The Docks, a popular restaurant at Goosepond, features waterfront dining. Guntersville's Top O' The River is known for some of the best catfish around.

**For more information:** [www.alapark.com](http://www.alapark.com).

## Lake Texoma, Texas

The name alone will tell you that this favorite lake lies in two states — Texas and Oklahoma — making it one of the largest reservoirs in the country, as well as one of the most developed. And with a spread of 89,000 acres, there's room for the more than 6 million people who head to its shores each year. Eisenhower State Park's beach, tucked away in a beautiful cove surrounded by cliffs, is the ideal spot for swimming.

Fish for more than 70 species, golf at one of several nearby courses or sail on an 1800s-style pirate ship. Hike or watch wildlife at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, one of two refuges along the lake.

When you get hungry, there are a number of restaurants — some on the waterfront — as well as eateries at most of the local marinas. When it's time for bed, overnight choices range from cabins at marinas to hotels and resorts dotting the lake.

Lake Texoma is an hour's drive north of Fort Worth.

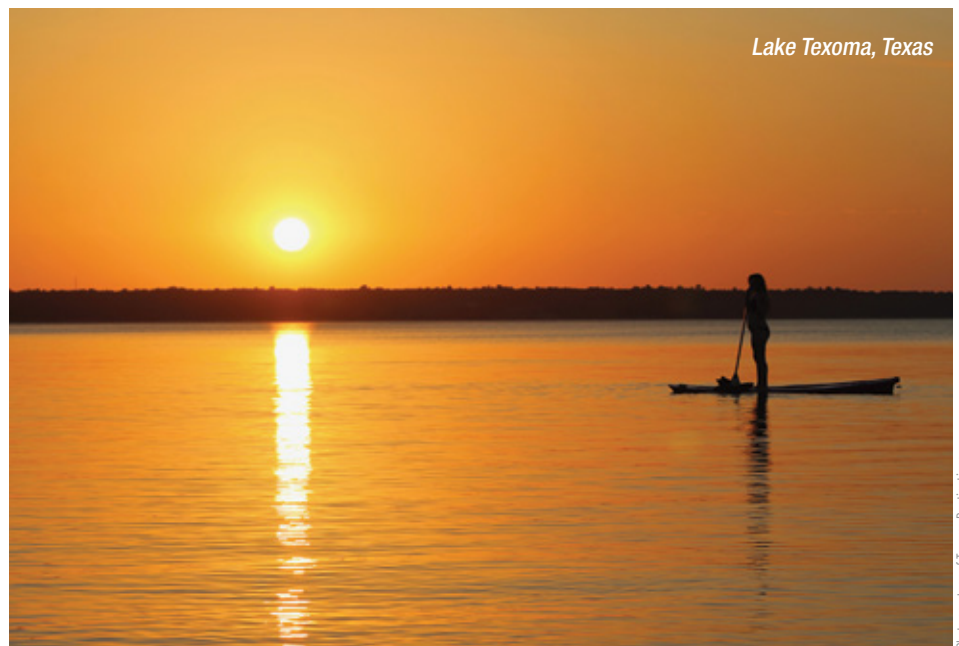
**For more information:** [www.laketexomaonline.com](http://www.laketexomaonline.com).

## Rough River Lake, Kentucky

The lake at Rough River Dam Resort State Park is open to all during the warm months of summer. The name, Rough River, may sound scary, but fear not. The waters are mostly calm with gentle waves rolling in thanks to a nice breeze on most days. There is a bathhouse open for public use. When hunger strikes, the park restaurant, Grayson Landing, serves massive plates of catfish and other local Kentucky dishes.

The neighboring woods offer birding and hiking, or you can wet a line in the lake — the fishing is great this time of year. Overnight accommodations include lodge rooms with views of Rough River Lake and two-bedroom cottages near the lake and in the woods. Resort guests have use of the pool overlooking the lake, too.

**For more information:** [parks.ky.gov](http://parks.ky.gov). 



Lake Texoma, Texas

Photo courtesy of Texoma Destinations.





## KELLER'S TACKLE & GROCERY

**Owner:** Sam Patel

**Year Founded:** More than 50 years ago

**Description:** Keller's Tackle & Grocery is a mom and pop store that offers live bait and fishing tackle of all kinds. Bait sales include minnows, crickets, red worms and nightcrawlers. The shop also offers a grocery store and deli, which provide sandwiches and daily specials.

**Location:**  
33043 Highway 431 S.  
New Hope

**Phone number:**  
256-723-4054

*"Our entire community benefits from small businesses like Keller's Tackle & Grocery. Their efforts show why locally owned businesses matter so much, and we are happy to name them our Small Business of the Year."*

**-Jim Cook**  
NHTC General Manager



Keller's Tackle & Grocery is the Small Business of the Year. Employees from left, are Jennifer Dunn, Jerry Selvage, Brandy Antwine and Misty Hill.

## Keller's Tackle & Grocery

### A fishing tradition in Alabama

#### WHAT LED YOU TO START THIS BUSINESS?

Keller's Tackle & Grocery in New Hope opened more than 50 years ago to provide supplies to area fishing enthusiasts. "We are one of the stores closest to Lake Guntersville, providing tackle and bait, and gas, as well as groceries for those going to the lake," says Manager Brandy Antwine.

#### WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

"Working with the public and helping customers is something very personal for me," Antwine says. "I like finding what they like and what they need when it comes to fishing supplies. I like learning from them and interacting with them, too. They brighten my day."

#### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SHOP LOCAL?

"We have things people just can't find in a big chain store," she says. "Sometimes it's specialized things, and sometimes it's stuff that's been discontinued. We're also one of the very few bait shops in this area, and we're so much more convenient to the river."



## CELEBRATING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

April 29-May 5, 2018, is National Small Business Week. America's 28 million small businesses account for about half of all jobs in the private sector. NHTC is proud to celebrate their contributions by spotlighting our Small Business of the Year. Congratulations to **Keller's Tackle & Grocery** and to all the small businesses we are honored to serve!



# A new home

It's easier now to do business at New Hope City Hall



The new City Hall is located beside the former location in downtown New Hope.

BY LISA SAVAGE

**N**ew Hope Mayor Butch Taylor had a vision. As he and his wife dined one night at a local restaurant, he picked up a napkin and sketched the design for a new City Hall.

During meetings, Taylor and the council members discussed the need for a new facility. The old structure, a historic building dating to the late 1800s, needed improvements. The bricks were crumbling; the basement held water, causing mold; and the floor joists needed replacing.

Taylor took that napkin to an architect for preliminary drawings, and the plans started to move forward after the council approved construction. Two years later, New Hope has a new building for all city offices, including the police department, and Madison County satellite revenue office.

“We wanted to make the facility a better,



The New Hope City Hall boasts a large and bright lobby.

safer work environment for our employees and to make it easily accessible for our residents and those who have business at City Hall,” Taylor says.

City Hall has fiber internet, security and phone services through New Hope Telephone Cooperative. City operations such as accounting, business licenses and court operations are internet-based. Cameras are placed throughout the building, and the alarm system is connected to a cellphone for the security system.

The city is one of the first NHTC customers to have NHTC Business Solutions’ voice over IP service, which provides phone service through the internet. “Just about everything we do is through the fiber internet here,” Taylor says.

## A FRESH START

The last remodel of the old City Hall was in the 1980s, and a new renovation would have cost between \$1 million and \$3 million. “We didn’t really have a choice,” says Taylor of the decision to build a new structure. “We couldn’t see

putting that much money into the old building.”


There was some community sentiment about saving the historic building, Taylor says, but it just wasn’t practical. The cost of new construction was \$825,000, and the city now has no construction-related debt associated with the new building.

City workers did much of the labor, and the city allocated money in the budget for the structure. The state also provided some funds. “We did a lot of things to cut costs without sacrificing quality,” Taylor says.

## A FUNCTIONAL DESIGN

The City Hall has an auditorium-style room in the center with a small kitchen. It can be used for council meetings or other events.

The new building is much more accessible to residents, Taylor says. Only a few parallel parking spaces were available at the old facility, but there are now about a dozen angled spaces outside the new building. The new City Hall is also handicapped-accessible, and the inside is energy-efficient, reducing the cost of the monthly utility bill.

“We want to do everything we can to improve our facilities for our people. That’s what is important,” Taylor says. 



# LIFELINE SERVICE

**Lifeline is a government assistance program that can help pay a portion of your telephone, mobile phone or internet bill each month. Consumers are allowed only one Lifeline program benefit per household.**

## DO YOU QUALIFY?

**Stay connected with a Lifeline discount.**

**Apply today!**

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



### How much will Lifeline save me?

If you qualify for Lifeline, you will receive a credit of \$9.25 each month on your bill.



### What services are covered by this credit?

You have the choice (where applicable) of applying your benefit to one of three types of service offerings:

- Fixed or mobile broadband
- Fixed or mobile voice-only
- Bundles of fixed or mobile voice and broadband

NOTE: Lifeline can only be used for one source of communication from the list above.



### Can I receive more than one Lifeline credit?

No, consumers are allowed only one Lifeline program benefit per household.



### How do I qualify?

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.

Additionally, consumers at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines will continue to be eligible for a Lifeline program benefit. (State determinations of income will no longer be accepted.) There are no changes to the eligibility criteria for Tribal programs.

**NOTE: Some states have additional qualifying programs, allowances and stipulations. Check with your local telecommunications provider for information about benefits that may be available in your state.**



### How do I enroll in the Lifeline program and start receiving this benefit?

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

**NOTE:** Your telephone company is not responsible for determining who qualifies for these programs or who receives assistance. Consumers must meet specific criteria in order to obtain assistance with their local telephone and/or broadband service, and qualifying is dependent upon government-established guidelines.



# Web Crafty

## Try online tools for creative hobbies

I have been sharing my stories of technology and doling out advice on how to be more tech-savvy. I hope you feel as if you have gotten to know my family and me during the past couple of years. So now it only seems right to admit the other side of my personality that you may not guess. Whenever I have a free moment, I am usually at my sewing machine working on a quilt, bag or purse. I may also be working away on a cross-stitch wall hanging or embroidering a household item. I'm an old-fashioned, low-tech crafter whenever I get the opportunity.

So, how does that fit into this technology column? Well, I suspect many of you reading this article may have similar hobbies. If it isn't sewing, it may be baking, woodworking or jewelry-making. What I've been discovering is there are lots of websites, apps and technology tools available to help you create and sell your masterpieces! Here are some of my favorite "crafty" websites and why I love them:

### CRAFTSY

Craftsy is one of my newest favorites, accessible through both a website and an app. It gives you access to patterns for



many types of crafts but also includes video instructions. I'm working on a project that takes me step by step with video, written instructions and a pattern. This is a wonderful site if you are looking to learn something new. You'll find instructions on lots of topics, such as sewing, painting, cooking, cake decorating, photography, gardening and much more!

### CUSTOM MADE

I've promoted this site for many years. If you are looking to sell your craftwork, or if you are looking to buy a very

specific, specially made item, I encourage you to take a look at this website to see if it would be a good fit for you to sell your skills to potential buyers.

### CRAFT GOSSIP

Craft Gossip is a website that hosts a collection of blogs from crafters in all sorts of categories. You can find fun ideas for oodles of projects no matter what your skill set is. You can also find projects based on holiday themes. New content is added all the time, so you can always find a new project.

I believe that technology is

going to help revive the craft and hobby lifestyle. So many of these skills, once passed down through the generations, have been abandoned or forgotten. Now, one person can share his or her skills with millions by putting the instructions online. So try something new today! 📱



**CARISSA SWENSON**  
IS A TRAINING  
AND EDUCATION  
CONSULTANT  
FOR CONSORTIA  
CONSULTING.



Don't forget about the most common sites, such as **YouTube**, **Pinterest** and **Etsy** for tutorials, patterns and craft buying and selling. These sites are frequented by crafters for a reason!



Kyle Davis, rehabilitation director, works with a resident on gait training and walking to gain strength.

# NATIONAL RECOGNITION

## South Hampton Nursing and Rehabilitation honored

BY LISA SAVAGE

Della Hardin sat at a table, eating waffles and sipping coffee with about a dozen other residents at South Hampton Nursing and Rehabilitation in Owens Cross Roads. The brunch was a special treat, one of many monthly activities to enhance the residents' quality of life.

The facility has been Hardin's home for the past few years. "It's about like being at home," she says. "It's nice having people wait on me."

Patient care is just one of the reasons South Hampton Nursing and Rehabilitation was recognized nationally in 2017. The facility earned the Bronze National Quality Award presented by the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living. The program honors facilities from across the nation that demonstrate a commitment to improving quality of care for seniors and people with disabilities.





Katrina Montague, community education coordinator, helps to ensure the residents enjoy quality dining in a welcoming atmosphere.

Michael Thrower is part of the skilled nursing staff dedicated to providing the best care possible for residents.



South Hampton is an 81-bed facility offering skilled nursing care and physical therapy services to residents of New Hope, Owens Cross Roads and Hampton Cove, as well as areas of Madison, Marshall and Jackson counties.

While the award recognized the commitment to quality care, the application process itself focused the staff on strategies to best help residents, says Katrina Montague, the facility's community education coordinator.

"Our goal is to provide the best quality of life in later years," she says. "The application for the award causes you to look at the quality of care and look for things that you can do to achieve an even higher standard."

### STAYING ACTIVE

Events such as the waffle brunch add to the quality of life of the patients. The monthly activities calendar is packed with a range of unique and interesting activities designed to cater to the differing needs of South Hampton's residents.

Hardin, for example, relies on a wheelchair and needs some assistance with her meals and activities. She participates in group exercise programs designed for the wheelchair-bound residents. She attends the weekly church service and singing, and she sometimes listens in on karaoke.

She enjoys watching television in her room, but she also likes activities, such as

the brunch, in which she interacts with others.

Tiffany Amman, activities director, coordinates monthly events that include arts and crafts, singalongs and games such as bingo, trivia and Name That Tune. "We do as many activities as we can that promote their memory and motor skills," she says.

But sometimes, residents just want to watch television and enjoy being with others. Some of their favorites are the "Andy Griffith Show" and movie night.

A monthly party celebrates residents' birthdays, and weekly worship services and holiday celebrations are favorites. School groups from Owens Cross Roads Elementary, which is next door to the facility, also appear for special events. "They love it anytime the children visit," Montague says.

The residents love pampering, too. There are manicures and makeovers, as well as regular visits by hairstylists for cuts, perms and other styles.

Many activities are geared toward older residents, and entertainment and music reflect their tastes, Montague says. While the average resident's age was once about 72, there are now more younger residents. "We're also gearing more activities toward the younger generation," Montague says.

While many residents are older, the facility also has residents who range in age from 33 to 60. Some have brain injuries or

physical injuries from accidents. The age of Alzheimer's patients is also dropping, Montague says.

The facility has short-term care for rehabilitation for patients recovering from injuries, surgeries or impairments caused by medical conditions such as strokes. An additional 20 beds will be added this year for short-term rehabilitation residents, Montague says.

### NEW FACES

There are some new faces in key management positions at South Hampton. Kathy Smothers is administrator. Wendy Singleton is the director of nursing. The late Stacey Venable was administrator at the time the award was presented.

"It's an honor to be recognized for our commitment to delivering quality care," Venable said at the time of the presentation. "Going through the process of achieving the bronze award has made our organization stronger."

Receiving the bronze award qualifies the facility to apply for the silver award, a target that will have them focused on even higher performance and innovative ideas.

"It's our goal to improve the life of every person we touch by exceeding their expectations," Montague says. "We hope to extend their years of life by providing the best quality of life." 📞



# The art of low and slow

## BBQ Boot Camp grads now smoked-meat experts

There are few foods as American as barbecue, and for true meat lovers, the only question is how to save room for seconds. But when firing up the grill this summer, let's get one thing straight: Merely throwing meat on a grill does not produce barbecue. Newcomers to the grill may believe that anything covered in barbecue sauce counts, but the real thing is cooked in a smoky universe for a really long time, and that factor, says Chris Huffman, is key to smoking meats.

"The name of the game is patience," he says.

Huffman is executive chef at Blair House Inn, a charming bed-and-breakfast in Wimberley, Texas. The inn offers intensive, three-day cooking classes every month, drawing both experienced cooks and novices into the kitchen. They work to improve their culinary skills at barbecue, as well as cuisines from around the world, depending on the month they choose.

Barbecue varies by region, and in Texas, it's all about the beef. "Brisket is big around here in the Hill Country," Huffman says.

But side dishes are also a regional thing in Texas, he adds. "My wife is from South Texas, and her family serves pico de gallo, borracho beans and Mexican rice," he says.

A recent BBQ camp at Blair House Inn drew folks with varying backgrounds from all around, but all came with a common interest: to learn how to properly smoke meats.

"I'm going to make barbecue sumo wrestlers out of you, so pace yourselves," Huffman told the class during their first few minutes in the kitchen. "I want you all to come and do all of this yourselves. It's not a dog and pony show."



Chef Chris Huffman's monthly three-day cooking classes provide an intense introduction to the techniques that make barbecue a favorite dish throughout the country.

The menu for the three-day class included eggs Benedict with smoked pork tenderloin as well as cherry cola-glazed pork ribs and other meats. Sides included chayote and jicama salad with mango vinaigrette and warm potato salad with bacon and mustard.

BBQ camp began early each morning with students taking on a different element of each recipe, working as a team to prepare their daily meals. "This class is all about me showing you how to make things and having you go home and play and

experiment and have many happy accidents," Huffman says.

Students started out as strangers in the kitchen and ended as friends in the dining room, sharing meals and stories.

The next BBQ camp is scheduled for June 18-20 and again Aug. 6-8. Here are some of the recipes you may learn to make at home.

### CULINARY CREATIONS

Interested in learning more about cooking classes at Blair House Inn? For a complete list of classes offered, as well as other information, log on to [blairhouseinn.com](http://blairhouseinn.com).



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





“Brining is an important first step for your smoked meats. It imparts flavor and tenderness to chicken and pork.”

—Chris Huffman

## ALL-PURPOSE BRINE

- 1 gallon water
- 1 cup sea or kosher salt
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- 2 cloves
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Place all ingredients in a large, nonreactive pot and bring to a boil over medium heat while stirring. Reduce heat to simmer, and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool. After cooling, stir well to ensure that all ingredients are evenly mixed. Make sure meat or poultry is completely

submerged, weighing it down with a plate if necessary. Let soak for at least 2 hours but no more than 8. Lightly rinse meat before placing in smoker.

## SMOKED BRISKET

- 1 (12-pound) brisket
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons black pepper
- 1 tablespoon granulated garlic

Prepare smoker, heating to 225 F. Rub spices on brisket and place fat side down in smoker for 8 hours. Add wood chips and more charcoal as needed. Remove from smoker and wrap in heavy-duty aluminum foil; return to smoker or place in 225-degree oven, fat side up, for 8 more hours. Let brisket rest for 30 minutes before slicing. Slice against grain of meat. Makes 8-10 servings.

## CHERRY COLA-GLAZED PORK RIBS

- 2 racks of ribs
- 4 (12-ounce) cans cherry cola

- 2 cups cherry jam
- 2/3 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce

Remove silver skin from underside of ribs, if desired. Salt and pepper ribs. Boil cherry cola in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat until reduced to 1 1/2 cups, about 45 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients, reduce heat to medium, and simmer for 5 minutes. Makes about two cups of glaze. Place ribs onto smoker rack. Do not stack directly on top of each other. Fill the smoker pan with wood chips and bring to 270 F. Smoke for one hour. Brush the ribs with the glaze and continue doing so every 30 to 45 minutes until the meat is no longer pink and begins to shrink back from the bones, 3 to 4 hours. Brush the sauce on the ribs for the last time 30 minutes before the ribs are ready to be taken off the smoker. Once the ribs are done, wrap them in aluminum foil and allow to rest 10 to 15 minutes to allow juices to reabsorb into the meat and make the ribs moist. 🍷





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# 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

MUSIC, FOOD, FUN AND DOOR PRIZES

## MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE 2018 NHTC ANNUAL MEETING!

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 15 • Voting begins at 5 p.m., with the business meeting starting at 7:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** New Hope Middle School gymnasium

**ENTERTAINMENT:** New Hope School Show Choir "The Pride" at 5 p.m., followed by "American Idol" contestant Brandon Elder at 6 p.m.

**DOOR PRIZES:** Door prizes will follow the business meeting.

**BOARD ELECTIONS:** Place 1 incumbent Greg Glover and Place 8 incumbent Randy Morrison.  
*Bring your admittance ticket and a valid photo ID to participate in the board elections.*



**AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE  
DURING THE BUSINESS MEETING. MAKE SURE  
YOU'RE ONE OF THE FIRST TO HEAR THE EXCITING NEWS!**

256-723-4211  
nhtc.coop

