

The Communicator

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New Hope
Telephone Cooperative
Your Communication Connection



Inside:

OCR School earns Blue Ribbon

Life really is sweet for Melisa Hall

Chamber members benefit from new website

The Communicator

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New Hope Telephone Cooperative

P.O. Box 452
New Hope, AL 35760
www.nhtc.coop

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or email communicator@nehp.net

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New Hope
Telephone Cooperative
Your Communications Connection

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

On the cover:

Melisa Hall of Grant has turned her dream of owning a bakery/catering business into a thriving reality where Life is Sweet.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Challenges with television programming

Do you remember when there were only three television networks? I do. They stopped broadcasting at a certain hour, and if a national event was taking place, that was the only thing you could see on TV. Today, we have dozens of channels and thousands of shows. We have an overwhelming amount of choices when it comes to what we want to watch.

Despite all the choices, most families only have a few shows they like enough to schedule a time to sit down and watch as it airs. We record, or we catch a re-run at a more convenient time. Most TV shows simply have a hard time fitting into our busy lives.

While our hectic schedules may not change anytime soon, the way we access those television programs will. In fact, the way we watch television is already changing.

Our customers with certain receivers can now pause, rewind and record their favorite TV shows. Some television networks such as Fox or ABC have websites where you can stream entire full episodes of popular programs right into your computer's browser.

Through devices like the Apple TV and the Google TV, or an online rental service such as Netflix, picking and choosing what you want to watch at any given time is becoming the norm.

These changes are just the beginning of a revolution in how we interact with our televisions, and the key to all of these new features is going to be access

to a reliable fiber network. This is one of the reasons NHTC is working to build a new fiber network throughout our service area.

As fiber becomes more widespread across the county, we will see television programming adapt to a more personal, customized experience for its viewers.

Despite the large number of channels included in today's television packages, most of us spend our time watching only a handful of channels. A future where we can offer television service that is customized to your liking could be more convenient for your family.

This would allow smaller telephone cooperatives — often subject to higher fees from big television networks — to operate at a lower cost, passing the savings on to our members.



TOM WING

*General Manager,
New Hope Telephone
Cooperative*



WELCOME BABY

NHTC employee Bobby Morrison and his wife Jennifer welcomed their new son, Jacob Logan Morrison, into the world on September 23, 2010. He weighed 7 lbs, 10 oz. and was 19 inches long.

Jacob joins big sister Haley Morrison and brothers Jarred Morrison and Adam Kelley.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Keeping service running for members is this teams priority

At NHTC it takes teamwork to keep operations running smoothly. Whether it's telephone, Internet or cable television service, there are many departments that must work together to accomplish a single goal — excellence.

Most people never think about what it takes to provide these services — until they have a problem. That is when the Repair Service Department goes into action.

Phillip Cooper and Paula Hendrix have more than 30 years of combined service with NHTC. Their knowledge is put to good use whenever a problem arises.

The team answers calls from members whose telephone or cable service isn't working properly. Cooper or Hendrix take the information, create a service order and dispatch a repairman to



Phillip Cooper and Paula Hendrix work in the Repair Service Department for NHTC. When trouble with phone or cable service arises, this team is responsible for taking the information and dispatching repairmen to the site.

fix the problem — usually all within the same day. Once the repairs have been made, the service order is closed and forwarded to the billing department.

"It's a great satisfaction when you know you've solved a problem quickly," says Cooper.

Hendrix agrees. "I love the interaction with members and knowing they appreciate our efforts."

The Repair Service Department also takes calls from businesses and individuals that need to locate buried lines.

They will take the location information

and a serviceman will be dispatched to mark NHTC's buried utility lines. Members should always call 8-1-1 before they plan a project that involves digging. "The law requires that they locate buried utility lines marked before digging," says Cooper. "This way, no one accidentally cuts a utility line which could disrupt service to hundreds of customers. They also avoid fines associated with accidentally cutting utility lines." ▲

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An advertisement for Williams Air Conditioning and Refrigeration. It features a man in a blue polo shirt standing next to a white service van. The van has a large 'W' logo and text that reads: 'WILLIAMS Licensed Air Conditioning AND REFRIGERATION Bonded and Insured Phone: 256-426-9779'. Below the van, there are logos for MAYTAG and TRANE. At the bottom, it says 'Two of the best names in the business' and lists services: 'Service All Makes and Models • Custom Installation & Repair • Refrigerator and Freezer Service • Maintenance Agreements'.



Building a network for the future

NHTC's website is a great resource for Internet users. Members can visit www.nhtc.coop to find useful information about how to set up DSL, NHTC's complete Internet use policy and information about how to set up spam filters. If you can't find the help you need online, Tech Support is a free call and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 256-723-8940.

Antivirus software is one of the most important purchases you can make for your home computer. Viruses are a constant threat to your computer's security. Antivirus software can help ensure that your private information is kept safe and that your computer's ability to operate is protected. Installing an antivirus program on your computer – and keeping it updated – is a strong defense against dangerous viruses. Popular programs include AVG Antivirus, Norton and McAfee.

Windows Update will inform you whenever there is an update for your Windows operating system. Your computer can be set to install the updates automatically, or you can read information about each update and install them at your convenience. NHTC recommends you install all Windows patches. New viruses are revealed almost daily, and many of these updates protect your computer from these vicious attacks. Learn more about Windows Update at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/downloads/windowsupdate>.

Now, more than ever, a reliable high-speed Internet connection is becoming a necessary part of our daily lives.

As new technologies continue to appear, the amount of bandwidth needed in the home is outpacing what a traditional Internet connection can handle.

The U.S. economy has grown increasingly reliant on Internet services. Today it is rare to see a business without a website, or one that does not use the Internet for ordering inventory or conducting research. NHTC is committed to keeping our members and their businesses on a level playing field with any other area of the country, and part of that commitment is broadband.

Broadband means more than just business. For many people, working from home has become possible thanks to high-speed Internet access.

According to a recent study done by the Fiber To The Home Project, 13 percent of broadband users report being able to work from home more often thanks to the Internet. Broadband also makes it possible to stream movies through your Apple TV, play an intense online game on your Xbox or telecommute to your new job based in Seattle (or anywhere else on the planet).

The Internet is changing, and users are demanding more performance from their providers. Facebook, video sharing and downloading music are now normal activities for our members, and NHTC wants to make sure you have the reliable access to high-speed Internet you need to make this possible.

Online gaming is a growing market that has started to rival Hollywood. Millions of people log in every day to play games like World of Warcraft or Call of Duty, paying billions of dollars a year to do so. Broadband access is a must to play these games without "lag" (the slow, sluggish game play that comes from having a low-

bandwidth connection).

Movies, TV shows and video podcasts are now also readily available on the Internet. For those who want to avoid a drive to the movies or a rental store, services such as Netflix are now offering a cheaper, faster alternative through online rental services. If you or your family enjoys gaming or watching movies, you will appreciate the advances NHTC is bringing through broadband Internet.

We fully expect the demand for these services to increase over the coming years. That's why we are dedicated to "future-proofing" your Internet connection by building a fiber network across our service area.

While download speeds of one or two megabytes seem fast now, in the next decade the demand for bandwidth could reach into the gigabytes. Such connection speeds are not possible over copper, and will require fiber.

Right now, a single fiber cable no larger than a pencil could carry the entire world's communications traffic. That staggering fact shows why building a fiber network across our area is important. It will ensure that no matter what new demands that result from our digital lifestyles in the coming decades, NHTC will be ready.

A decade ago, it seemed more like science fiction for people to stream movies onto their computers in real time, or to take music lessons live with other students around the world.

We are not sure what the Internet will look like in the coming years (no one is), but we do know that high-speed broadband access will be essential to participating in the economy of tomorrow.

In the future, entertainment, education, medicine and other facets of our lives will rely on the quality of our Internet connection. With NHTC's fiber project, we will be ready for that future. ▲

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STOP TELEMARKETING CALLS

The National Do Not Call Registry is a free, easy way to cut down on the number of unsolicited calls received from telemarketers. These frequently asked questions will provide you with information about how the program works and what is covered by the registry.

Q. Who regulates the National Do Not Call Registry?

A. The National Do Not Call Registry is managed by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency. It is enforced by the FTC, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and state law enforcement officials.

Q. How soon after I register will the calls stop?

A. After registering your phone number with the National Do Not Call Registry, telemarketers have up to 31 days from the date of registration to stop calling your number.

Q. How long will my number remain on the Registry?

A. Any number registered will remain there permanently unless you have it removed.

Q. Can I register my cell phone number?

A. Absolutely. Personal cell phones and residential home telephone numbers can be included in the National Do Not Call Registry.

Q. I have more than one phone. Can I register them all?

A. You can register up to three non-business phone numbers at one time.

Q. I registered my number but I'm still getting calls. Why?

A. Because of limitations in the jurisdiction of the FTC and FCC, calls from or on behalf of political organizations, charities and telephone surveyors would still be permitted, as would calls from companies with which you have an existing business relationship.

Q. Is there a way to stop those calls?

A. You can stop calls from companies with which you have a relationship by requesting that they place you on their own do not call list. They must honor that request. Keep a record of the date the request was made. Political calls are not covered by the registry. Calls from charities are not covered either unless they are from a third-party company calling on behalf of the charity. In that case, you can request to be removed from their calling list. If your request is ignored, the company could face a fine of up to \$16,000.

Q. How do I file a complaint?

A. If your number has been registered for at least 31 days and you are receiving telemarketing calls from a company you believe to be in violation of the National Do Not Call Registry, you may file a complaint. To file online go to www.donotcall.gov and use the File a Complaint page. By telephone call 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236).

Ready to stop unwanted telemarketing calls?

CALL: 1-800-382-1222
TTY: 1-866-260-4236

VISIT: www.donotcall.gov

NHTC adds Fox Business Network to cable line-up



Channel 71 is the new place to turn for the latest business news. Fox Business Network has stock quotes, news on the economy and business in general. Programs featured on the channel include Imus in the Morning, Stossel, Bulls & Bears, Follow the Money and The Willis Report.



Rate increase on the horizon for two premium packages

New Hope Telephone Cooperative is increasing the rate for two of its premium channel packages. NHTC has always tried to avoid increases and keep rates competitive. Both HBO and Cinemax have increased the rate they charge NHTC for services. Unfortunately, NHTC has no choice but to pass along this increase to our members.

HBO will increase from \$12.95 per month to \$14.95. Cinemax will increase from \$9.95 to \$11.95 per month. The new rates take effect February 1, 2011.

NEED MONEY FOR COLLEGE?

NHTC scholarship program helps two seniors annually with college expenses

New Hope Telephone Cooperative is proud to make scholarship opportunities available to seniors at New Hope and DAR High Schools.

NHTC will award a \$500 scholarship to one senior from New Hope High School and one senior from DAR High School. Applications are available through the guidance counselor at both schools.

Students may also apply for a scholarship through the Foundation for Rural Services (FRS). Founded by the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (of which NHTC is a part), the FRS seeks to strengthen the ties between rural communities and their families and businesses. The FRS is heavily involved in youth education and empowerment, public information campaigns and educational initiatives.

If a New Hope or DAR High School student is awarded one of the 25 available FRS scholarships, NHTC will contribute an additional \$500, bringing the total scholarship award to \$2,500.

Applications for the FRS scholarship are also available through the guidance counselors. These scholarships are made available without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender or disability.



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OCR Elementary earns Blue Ribbon Award for innovation

"We're a 21st century society, and there's no reason that these kids can't compete and do everything just as well as any other school in the United States."

**-- Scott Weeks,
Asst. Principal
OCR Elementary**



What if you could have used a touch screen in Kindergarten? Or known how to operate both a Mac and PC by the time you were seven? At Owens Cross Roads Elementary School, that's just another day in the classroom.

Owens Cross Roads Elementary School has recently been awarded a national title for their innovative use of technology. They have been named a Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School. The title was given by the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence initiative, which seeks to recognize schools that are using new and exciting teaching methods to educate the leaders of tomorrow.

The Blue Ribbon Lighthouse schools are meant to serve as examples of how education should be done. They are the high-performing institutions that other schools should try to imitate.

"We started working on getting the certification about two years ago," says Assistant Principal Scott Weeks. "Dr. Goode is our principal here, and she's been a real go-getter for the kids. She does everything she can for this school and this community, and I think the award just helps to show that dedication."

The school went through a long review process before receiving the award. After a school shows interest in being considered for the award, they are visited by someone from the Blue Ribbons Schools of Excellence. After a thorough review, the representative will make a list of suggested actions for the school.

"They gave us a checklist with some really great goals on it," says Weeks. "That was our starting point. From there, we got the students, teachers and parents to give us feedback. We asked how we could make this school better, and they were excited to get involved."

When the inspectors returned two years later, they were impressed with what they found. "They said what we were doing was very unusual," says Weeks. "We had all this

great technology, and we actually had it in the hands of our students. Our kids were interacting with these devices every day."

In addition to pencils and paper, students at Owens Cross Roads Elementary School have access to iPods and Smartboards that serve as interactive tools. They use sound, video and applications to enhance learning. Netbooks in the classroom help students become familiar with how to use a computer, as well as giving teachers yet another way to engage their students.

"Another thing we do is virtual field trips," says Weeks. "which uses a large television you can interact with. It's just like the commercials you see on TV today where the kids call a classroom in China. We actually do that here."

Last year, students were able to take a virtual field trip to a classroom in Britain, where a teacher showed them various toys. They have also taken a virtual trip to the Rainforest.

"We wanted to get a video set up with South Korea, but with the 16 hour time difference the kids will never be awake at the same time," says Weeks. "We do all this to show these kids that there's a huge world out there, and that it's a neat place."

The school also features a lab with both PCs and Mac computers. The computer lab helps students get hands-on experience using all types of software, not just Windows. It has been an adjustment for several teachers, as well as some of the administration. "I'm still having to learn how to use a Mac myself," jokes Weeks. "We use the Macs for making our school podcast, and for our morning video broadcasts."

Video broadcasts are one of the many things that helped Owens Cross Roads Elementary School earn its status as a Blue Ribbon Lighthouse institution.

"We actually have a full broadcasting studio," says Weeks. "We have a Broadcast Club that meets on Thursday afternoons and learns how to speak on camera, how to act

and what sort of questions to ask on an interview.

"Every morning they do a broadcast," says Weeks. "They have even started interviewing teachers on what they do in their classrooms."

Weeks says he hopes the broadcasts will eventually be available for parents to watch each morning via the school website. "We just have to find a way to make sure that the video stays protected. We wouldn't want just anyone to be able to view these."

Riverton Elementary is also starting to have a morning broadcast. There are plans next year for the two schools to have segments featuring activities at each school. "It's all about community," says Weeks.

Unique activities such as virtual field trips and morning broadcasts do more than help keep students' attention. For the administration, this program is about putting their students on the same footing as anyone else in the country. Just because Owens Cross Roads is a rural community does not mean that students there should have any less of a modern education than those living in larger cities.

"The whole point is to give these kids every opportunity that we can," says Weeks. "We're a 21st century society, and there's no reason that these kids can't compete and do everything just as well as any other school in the United States. We want our students to experience as much during their years here as possible. I like to think we're broadening horizons, giving choices and giving options."

The success of the program was a team effort across the whole school. Along with Principal Goode and Assistant Principal Weeks, Owens Cross Roads Elementary School has a dedicated Technology Coordinator in Davina Mann.

"We call her our technology coach," says Weeks. "The teachers come up with great ideas on how to use their iPods or their Smartboards, and they tell Ms. Mann. She comes in every Monday and helps the teachers figure out how to use the various tools they have. That keeps

us moving in the right direction.

Weeks had taught at schools with technology programs before, but none like he has seen at his current job. "I'm constantly blown away by what we're doing here," he says. "I've worked at a Title One school in Virginia, with great access to technology, but we never were pushed to use it. Here, that's not an option." Ms. Mann is instrumental in helping to push teachers and faculty to make the most use of the choices available to them.

At the same time, the faculty of Owens Cross Roads Elementary School understand that technology is just one tool in the classroom.

"It's not the answer to every problem," explains Weeks. "If you don't have teachers who are always willing to go the extra mile, all the technology in the world won't help you keep students engaged. All our teachers work incredibly hard. They're here on the weekends; they're here after six. We have to kick them out and make them go home."

The teachers understand that to reach their students, they need to use every approach they can. "I really think everyone here is on board," says Weeks. "We're trying something different, and so far it's been great."

The school was so innovative that the president of the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, Bart Teal, was contacted and told he had to visit Owens Cross Roads. "He was very excited by what he saw when he was here," says Weeks. "He spent a lot of time in our classrooms and seeing how we operate. It was flattering." ▲

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INNOVATION IS THE NORM at Owens Cross Roads Elementary School. On the right (top) you can see a teacher using a Smartboard in her lesson. Below that is a picture of the fully functional news studio where students take part in making daily video announcements. The Tree House pictured below that provides a place for outdoor learning. The computer lab (bottom) lets students become familiar with both PCs and Mac computers.



Grant Chamber of Commerce

Newly redesigned website is added value for members

Since it began in 1999, the Grant Chamber of Commerce has steadfastly become an important and influential asset to the town of Grant and its business community.

The chamber's members have worked tirelessly toward influencing people to not only shop in Grant, but also to relocate to the growing town.

Recently, the chamber has undergone some improvements which are a direct result of the hard work and dedication of its members. Chamber Vice-President Josh Barnes of Peoples State Bank in Grant says the strides the chamber has taken should prove significant to Grant's economy in the coming years.

A welcoming place

"First of all, we raised money to do some much needed repairs and cosmetic work to the chamber building," says Barnes, "and Shirley Baggett, our new executive director will now be working at the office at least two days a week.

"That is wonderful to have her there to answer the phones and talk to tourists who may come in to see what Grant is all about," he adds.

Baggett herself was drawn to the town by a helpful volunteer when she was looking to relocate to the area from Atlanta

in 2001. Now, as the executive director, Baggett proudly keeps the office beautiful and inviting for passing visitors.

"The city council has received calls about how nice it is to have someone in the office," says Paula Henderson, chamber treasurer.

"Shirley keeps coffee made when she is there and has a big open sign in the front window to let people know," she says. "For some reason, people have taken to blowing their car horns when they pass the office and see the sign," she adds. "She just loves that."

Volunteers needed

Besides keeping the office open and available to potential visitors, the chamber is hoping to add volunteers to answer phones and give information to callers when needed. "It is just another service we'd love to provide," says Henderson. "We need people who have some time to give and just love to talk to people. It would be a great job for some of our older residents who have lived here a long time and know a lot about the town. That would be wonderful."

The marketing arm

The chamber welcomes their own members to stop in and leave any litera-

ture or business cards pertaining to their business inside. Baggett distributes the information to anyone who may be looking for a service the members provide.

"The chamber is an excellent marketing arm for the community," says Barnes.

"That is a huge part of the service we provide," adds Henderson. "Anytime someone calls and wants to know about where to find something, we always recommend our chamber members first."

New website

"The biggest change we have made besides having Shirley there," says Barnes "is our completely new website. We had an independent web designer set it up for us and it really saved us a lot of money. It's also very easy to navigate so people who need information about Grant can get it very easily."

The new site, www.grantchamberofcommerce.com, which is the same address as before, was created by Robert McQuaig of Deviant Developments in Huntsville, Ala. McQuaig explains the unique features of the site.

"The website is built with a Content Management System (CMS), that allows the web owners to easily go in and manage the content of their site," says McQuaig. "Everything for layout, pages,



Throughout the year, the Grant Chamber of Commerce supports their town by hosting breakfasts and participating in local events like parades and ribbon cutting ceremonies for new businesses. The photo gallery on the chamber's new website often shows familiar faces like NHTC's General Manager, Tom Wing. (last photo, back row on right.)

verbiage, and pictures can be modified with just a few simple clicks.

"The information is database driven," he continues, "which allows plenty of room for the site to grow and not be held down due to size and content."

Member benefits

Some of the new features of the site include a member directory, photo gallery, chamber news and events page. The chamber is really excited about the site's member directory which has the potential to draw new members and help existing ones increase sales.

"It is free advertising for our members," says Henderson. "Each member gets a personal page and a write up about their business. That is a fantastic feature for any business because most of them do not really have an advertising budget."

Henderson adds that the site also categorizes members and has a search feature which pinpoints key words and links to businesses.

"Along with the site search," says Mc-

Quaig, "the member pages are also available to Google, so the business effectively gets a 'mini-site' so that it will be seen on Google search results."

News and events

The news section of the site will allow the chamber to write articles and publish them on the site, and provide a place to post any information as it relates to the community or chamber.

"The events section shows the upcoming events and allows the user to download them and add them to their calendars," says McQuaig.

Henderson says the site will function as an automatic email system so members will get an email newsletter whenever updates are added to keep them informed. Further, Henderson says the site is connected with Facebook and Twitter making it even more accessible.

Photo Gallery

Visitors to the town of Grant frequently comment about the many beautiful and

historic sights the town has to offer. The chamber wisely recognizes the town's scenic beauty as a key selling point when people are looking to relocate.

Places like Kate Duncan Smith DAR school with its grand buildings and manicured lawns in Grant can be seen on the chamber's website in the photo gallery.

Photos of the Scenic Overlook in Grant with its views of Grant's natural beauty show why it remains a popular spot for visiting tourists.

The photo gallery also features favorite snapshots of the chamber members taken at special events throughout the year. ▲

*Join the Chamber!
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This shop owner's distinctive cakes and candy confections have everyone saying

Life is Sweet

Melisa Hall of Grant always dreamed of opening her own business, but for years all she seemed to do was plan, practice and procrastinate. Cautious by nature, Hall says she let small worries keep her from doing what she wanted most – until her family stepped in to help.

and getting together to eat gave her plenty of experience in the kitchen.

She dreamed of running a full-time catering business where her cakes and cooking would all come together. Although she had the skills, she admits she worried too much about starting such a specialized business in her small hometown.

"I really didn't think there would be a demand for it in Grant," she says. Hall's sister, Regina Filmore, says her family could see that Hall was anxious about stepping out and opening the business, but they believed if anyone could make a go of it, she could. "Melisa had a passion that everyone else could see," Filmore says, "but she couldn't see it."

Filmore says the family realized what Hall needed was some encouragement and a push in the right direction. Once they talked her into getting a building, the biggest hurdle was cleared.

A dream come true

Life is Sweet opened its doors in April 2010, offering cakes, catering and chocolate from a beautifully refurbished portable classroom that had once belonged to DAR school.

Hall's father, Elmer Saint (a retired DAR maintenance supervisor), outfitted Hall's building with everything from new flooring to the installation of regulation sinks required by the Health Department. "Without him, I never could have done it," says Hall.

Her entire family pitched in to help, and the building was finished in just one month. Opening day was a dream come true.

Formal events

The business offers a full array of specialty cakes and chocolates made to order, as well as complete catering services for any size event.

"We have our own tablecloths and chair covers," says Hall. "We also bought all of the formal china and the beautiful glasses. I wanted to own them instead of renting them, because that way I'd always have what the customers needed right here. I didn't want to risk not being able to find what they might need."

Hall says her first weekend at Life is Sweet, she and her family staff could not believe how much business seemed to pour in at once. "We made six graduation cakes," she says, "and catered four events in that one weekend."

"There is a moment right before the catered events," Hall adds,



Melisa Hall, owner of Life is Sweet in Grant, creates cakes, chocolates, candies and caters weddings and other events.

Hall had a natural talent for designing unusual cakes and believed she could turn it into a profession. "I always made cakes for my sons, Clay and Bobby," she says, "and people would see them and ask me if I could do one for them."

Besides making cakes, Hall also loved to cook. She came from a large, close-knit family where traditional Southern cooking

"when I get all jittery and nervous, but Regina always calms me down. Then when the people start coming in, I love talking to them and seeing how excited they are."

Creativity is part of the fun

Besides the excitement of being a professional caterer, Hall says she has had a lot of fun with some of the unusual cakes she has been asked to create. "I did a bottle cake that was several feet tall for a birthday party," she says. "I actually carved it into the shape of a bottle out of several layer cakes. I have to get pretty creative sometimes."

Hall says she has been surprised by some of the things people come up with for cakes, but she enjoys the challenge. "I don't like the idea of having a book with photos in it and saying 'pick this or that,'" she says. "I like to say 'what do you want?' and then make each cake for the individual."

Going the extra mile

The staff at Life is Sweet provides services that extend beyond the usual food and set-up customers expect from larger catering businesses. "I like to put a special touch on things," says Hall. "My customers are friends and I like to surprise them by going the extra mile."

To learn more about Life is Sweet visit www.melisalifeissweet.com or call 256-728-2790.



Life Is Sweet offers one-of-a-kind cakes, a variety of molded chocolate candies (like the hamburger pictured above) and much more. They also offer catering services for events of any size.

Recipes

Mounds Candy

- 2 (14 oz.) bags coconut
- 2 sticks margarine
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 package chocolate almond bark

Heat margarine and milk until margarine is melted, add coconut. Stir and chill. Shape into balls, then chill. Melt almond bark. Dip refrigerated balls into almond bark chocolate, then place on wax paper to set.

Chocolate Cheese Fudge

- 1/2 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed
- 1 cup butter
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 2 (16 oz.) boxes confectioners sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa

Lightly grease bottom of 9" x 13" baking pan. Melt cheese and butter together, stirring constantly, until smooth. Remove from heat. Add vanilla and nuts. In large bowl, sift together sugar and cocoa. Pour cheese mixture into the sugar and cocoa mixture, stir until completely mixed. Pour mixture into prepared pan. Cover and refrigerate until firm. Cut into squares and serve.

Chicken Salad Log

- 1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 drops hot sauce
- 2 cups chopped cooked chicken
- 2 boiled eggs

Combine all ingredients in large bowl. Mix well. Place in plastic wrap and shape into a log. Refrigerate the log overnight. Garnish with green pepper and pecans.

Country music singer John Conley introduced a song in the 80's titled Common Man: "As the Maid poured wine and we began to dine, I knew I was feeling out of place, at a table as large as a river barge and I love you written all on your face. I appreciate your hospitality but I wish that we would go. Let me drive us to McDonalds and I'll talk to you, concerning something you should really know. I'm just a common man....."

Having experienced out-of-place feelings before, I can imagine what it felt like for such diverse people visiting a Baby born in a stable. Shepherds, considered one of the lowest classes of working people, were invited by an angel to go see the Baby in Bethlehem. While they might not have felt out of place visiting a stable, the angel had to counsel their fear, for they had never been in the presence of angels. But they went. Kings, seeking the same Baby, were guided by a heavenly star. Kings were not used to visiting stables, much less one

that housed a newborn baby. But they went.

Like angels inviting Shepherds and a star guiding Kings, you are invited to go somewhere out of place. Beginning Friday, January 7 at 10:30 a.m., the CARE Center on Main Drive in New Hope will host a Life Application Bible Study. Who knows, you just might find something worth feeling out of place for, and you're always invited to attend a church near you. Whichever you choose, have a Spiritually blessed New Year.



*Michael Carpenter,
Pastor of New Hope
United Methodist
Church & Oak Bowery
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My First Haircut COMMUNITY PHOTOS



▲ Travis Carter (left) and his twin brother Clint both get their first haircut on August 3, 2010. The photos were submitted by their mother Veronica Carter.



▲ Kolton Hardin sitting in mom Alicia's lap as beautician Aunt Nicole cuts his hair. His Grandmother Kedia Page submitted the photo.



▲ Scott Adams gives baby Allison Burleson her first haircut (2001). She sits in mom Sara's lap while Beverly Prince took the photo.



▲ 27 years ago Grandpa Franks gave Todd Franks his first haircut. Photo submitted by mom Janice Franks.



▲ Issaic Anderton's first haircut. Photo submitted by Betty Anderton.

"Best Friends" is the photo theme for March/April. Send to: NHTC • Attn.: Communicator Photos • P.O. Box 452 • New Hope, AL 35760, or e-mail your photo to communicator@neh.net. Follow these guidelines for publication: (1) Photos must match theme. (2) Photos must be high resolution. The resolution offered by some printers is not high enough for publication. (3) Do not write on the back of photo. Include names of persons in photo, as well as, photographer, address and phone number on paper taped to back. (4) Include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like your photo returned. (5) The Deadline for March/April is January 30th. 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.

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