

The



Communicator

JULY/AUGUST 2021



MADE TO ORDER

Fulfilling a dream at
Kaylee's Candy Co.

VOTING VOICES

NHTC's drive-thru annual
meeting a success

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Broadband extends art
beyond the theatre



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Partnering to fend off cyberattacks

In recent years, we've learned even the biggest of corporations, including Microsoft, Target and Marriott, are vulnerable to cyberattack. Then, last year, the pandemic increased the number of remote workers, moving more technology from the office into homes.

"The pandemic gave cybercriminals the opportunity to discover new malware families, successful new tactics and 'double extortion' strategies," says Roxanna Barboza, our Industry and Cybersecurity Policy analyst. "And since then, they have further honed their skills to exploit fear, gather intelligence and attack."

If this sounds like the trailer for a horror film you have no interest in seeing, I promise you, the possible impacts of a cyber breach are much more frightening. So, NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association is working to support the security efforts of internet service providers such as yours.

NTCA initiated CyberShare: The Small Broadband Provider Information Sharing and Analysis Center as a pilot project five years ago. We now have a robust team focused on the critical topic of cybersecurity, and NTCA members are encouraged to join the effort to recognize, analyze and respond to vulnerabilities, threats and other risks.

Also, CyberShare partnerships link us to the owners and operators of critical infrastructure like electric and water systems. More than 90% of CyberShare participants say the information received through the program enhances their ability to combat cyber threats.

It is through programs like CyberShare that we help organizations like your service provider protect consumers by creating a safe, secure digital experience. 📧



Convenience and a seemingly endless supply of options drives online shopping, which is safe as long as you take a few straightforward precautions. The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency offers a few straightforward tips to ensure that no one uses your personal or financial information for their gain.

THE THREATS

1. Unlike visiting a physical store, shopping online opens the doors to threats like malicious websites or bogus email messages. Some might appear as charities, particularly after a natural disaster or during the holidays.
2. Vendors who do not properly secure — encrypt — their online systems may allow an attacker to intercept your information.
3. If your digital device and the vendor's systems aren't properly updated and protected, the risk increases.

PROTECT YOURSELF

- Before providing any personal or financial information, make sure that you are interacting with a reputable, established vendor. In case of trouble, note phone numbers and physical addresses of vendors.
- When shopping, check the address bar of your web browser to be sure the address begins with "https:" instead of "http:" and that it has a padlock icon. These generally indicate a secure site.
- Remember, a legitimate business will not use email to request account information or ask you to confirm a purchase.
- Use a credit card for purchases, which limits your liability for fraudulent charges. Debit cards do not have the same level of protection.
- Keep a record of your purchases and copies of confirmation pages, and compare them to your bank statements. Report discrepancies immediately.
- Before providing personal or financial information, check the website's privacy policy to understand the storage and use of your information. 📧

Summer reading on the go

Before you jump online to order your top picks to round out summer reading, you might consider tapping into what could become your own personal librarian. And you might even keep more money in your pocket.

Most libraries offer free digital resources. So, all you need is a library card, an internet connection and a digital device. Here are a few other resources that could make the digital literary journey for you or the young reader in your family much easier.

OVERDRIVE:

Most libraries buy the digital licenses to book titles they think you would enjoy. Then, you can use your library card to reserve those free e-books. OverDrive can work with apps like Libby so you can send your e-book to a Kindle or other reading device.

overdrive.com

LIBRARY EXTENSION:

If you're crunched for time and enjoy browsing for digital books, Library Extension offers a free browser plug-in so you can see your library's digital book offerings while skimming titles on sites such as Amazon.com.

libraryextension.com

PROJECT GUTENBERG:

The oldest digital library features some of the world's most popular classic literary titles. With more than 60,000 e-books to browse, you can read your favorites online or download them to your device.

gutenberg.org

TUMBLEBOOKLIBRARY:

This interactive reading program takes existing picture books and turns them into talking, animated e-books. It also offers read-along chapter books. And another neat feature is that each book is offered in English, Spanish and French. Many school and public libraries offer the service to students or card holders. There's also a new TumbleBooks app.

tumblebooks.com

SORA:

OverDrive's educational reading app offers students access to e-books and audiobooks in multiple languages through participating school and local libraries. The app allows teachers to track the amount of time students spend reading. Sora makes notes as students read and can share those notes with teachers and classmates.

meet.soraapp.com

SCHOLASTIC SUMMER READING:

If your child needs a more structured summer reading experience, then you might want to check out the Scholastic Summer Reading Program. While mostly web based, it also offers some e-books. You'll have to create a Home Base account for your child through Scholastic. Home Base is a free, kid-safe, online digital community that offers fun reading-related activities.

scholastic.com/site/summer/home.html

NOOK:

The Nook app is another option for finding free e-books for children. Just download it in the app store and look for the "Explore Kids" section. You can scroll through a range of topics to find free digital copies for download. 📖



Uniquely rural

Robust internet service helps us keep pace

I'd like to ask a favor of you. The next time you're driving through our community, take a few moments to reflect on this place we call home. If you're like me, you appreciate the breathing room we have, the natural beauty that surrounds us, our unique small towns and the possibility you might be able to really get to know your neighbors.



DANIEL MARTIN
General Manager

Much of this nation isn't so fortunate. In fact, our lifestyle is increasingly rare. About 83% of our nation's residents live in urban areas. That's up from roughly 64% in 1950, according to a 2020 report by the University of Michigan's Center for Sustainable Systems. If the projections prove correct, by 2050, nearly 90% of the nation will live in communities considered urban.

What does that mean for places like ours? In many ways, not much. Our way of life is tried, true and much loved. We know who we are and why we live here, and most of us wouldn't have it any other way.

There is positive news, too. A couple of years ago, the National Conference of State Legislatures noted an uptick in rural population.

There was an increase of 33,000 residents for the entire nation. It was a positive sign but not overly inspiring. While the pandemic has some wondering if more people would consider leaving densely populated cities for places like ours, that is a story that will require the next several years to play out.

Meanwhile, we can't ignore the trends that seem to indicate our way of living is increasingly rare. After all, the money usually goes where the people are. Federal and state governments gauge the population to determine where to invest in infrastructure. Private businesses look at demographics to decide where to locate stores, restaurants and more. Where there are jobs, there is growth.

So, we need every tool possible to balance the scales, and it's here where we are not only making up ground but where we also have the potential to excel. The foundation of that success is built on the people you see around you as you travel the local roads, enjoy a picnic, pick up groceries ... those day-in and day-out moments of life.

How do I know this? Well, we're already well down the road. This community makes a company like ours possible. Our one mission is to provide communications services to connect you not only to your neighbors but also to the world. We don't serve a corporate board of directors hundreds, or thousands, of miles away. Instead, we answer to you.

That's why we've focused on offering internet services, which form a bridge between you and a world of opportunities that rural areas simply never enjoyed until now.

It's a system you may well not notice as you drive along our roads. But it's there. And its presence is reflected in the success and happiness of those you know because we're doing what we've always done, which is working together to build a better home.

As you enjoy these long summer days, please do take a few minutes to reflect on all we have. Everyone is not so lucky. ☺

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

Send address corrections to:

NHTC
P.O. Box 452
New Hope, AL 35760
256-723-4211
www.nhtc.coop

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On the Cover:



Heather Hamilton, left, and her 14-year-old daughter, Kaylee, opened Kaylee's Candy Co. in 2020 in Grant. See story Page 8.

NHTC ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Alison Kate Jamison

New Hope High School

Alison Kate Jamison, a 2021 graduate of New Hope High School, was awarded a \$1,500 scholarship from NHTC.

Jamison completed the necessary credits in December 2020 at New Hope High School and officially graduated in May. She plans to attend the University of Alabama in Huntsville and pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing. While at New Hope High School, she recorded a 4.0 GPA, had perfect attendance and was selected for the National Honor Society and for early promotion into the UAH nursing program. She participated in Student Government Association, Anchor Club, Leo Club and Prom Committee, and was a varsity competition cheerleader during her freshman, sophomore and junior years.

Her parents are Farrah and Steve Riccio, and she lives in New Hope.



Emily McBee

Kate Duncan Smith DAR School

Emily McBee, a 2021 graduate of Kate Duncan Smith DAR School, was awarded a \$1,500 NHTC scholarship. While in high school, McBee maintained a 4.52 GPA and obtained dual enrollment hours at Northeast Alabama Community College and Snead State Community College. She plans to obtain an associate's degree at NACC in business, continue her education with a degree in accounting at Athens State University and pursue a real estate license.

At DAR, she was selected for the National Honor Society, the National Society of High School Scholars, Mu Alpha Theta, Capstone Leadership Academy, Spanish Honor Society, UCA Honor Society, Top 9 for KDS Continental Congress and Alabama Governor's School 2020. She was a varsity cheerleader, serving as co-captain her senior year, and was a member of the competition cheer and varsity track teams, qualifying for state in the 4A girls discus throw.

She served in the Student Government Association for four years, filling various offices, and was a member of the Historical Society, Spanish Club, Leo Club, National Beta Club, FCA, FBLA, Math Team, Prom Committee, Drama Club and a Peer Helper. The daughter of Anitra McBee, she lives in Grant.



FOURTH OF JULY!

NHTC will be closed on Monday, July 5, in observance of the July 4 holiday. Have a safe and happy holiday!



Pay your bill online

End the hassle of leaving home to pay your monthly bill!

NHTC makes it easy to pay your bill online.

With SmartHub, you get:

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- 24/7 account access via phone, tablet or desktop.
- Important account notifications.

Access through nhtc.coop and click on My Account.



For questions about SmartHub or any other assistance, please call 256-723-4211.



GORGE-OUS

The exquisite scenery of the Red River Gorge

Story by ANNE P. BRALY

Cliffs dominating the skyline, rushing mountain streams and a landscape chiseled by millions of years of wind and water erosion bear witness to the forces of Mother Nature in Kentucky's Red River Gorge Geological Area.

Nestled largely within Daniel Boone National Forest along the Cumberland Plateau, the gorge encompasses 29,000 acres filled with history, wonder, excitement and adventure.

Matt Vogt, information assistant at Red River Gorge's Gladie Visitor Center, has no problem identifying the No. 1 prominent feature of the gorge — the landscape. "It's the gullies, caves, rock shelters, arches, cliffs and all the natural, rugged, scenic beauty," he says. "And many are drawn to the gorge's naturally formed arches."

Vogt says the gorge has up to 150 such arches, the greatest number east of the Rocky Mountains.

Red River Gorge is a photographer's dream, a paddler's fantasy and a hiker's paradise.

Hidden waterfalls and rock houses — rocky overhangs once used as shelter by native tribes like the Shawnee — are the perfect backdrop for a photo to treasure.

The many natural features of the gorge can be found along its 77 miles of trails. Take a short day hike or pack your sleeping bag, food and other essentials and

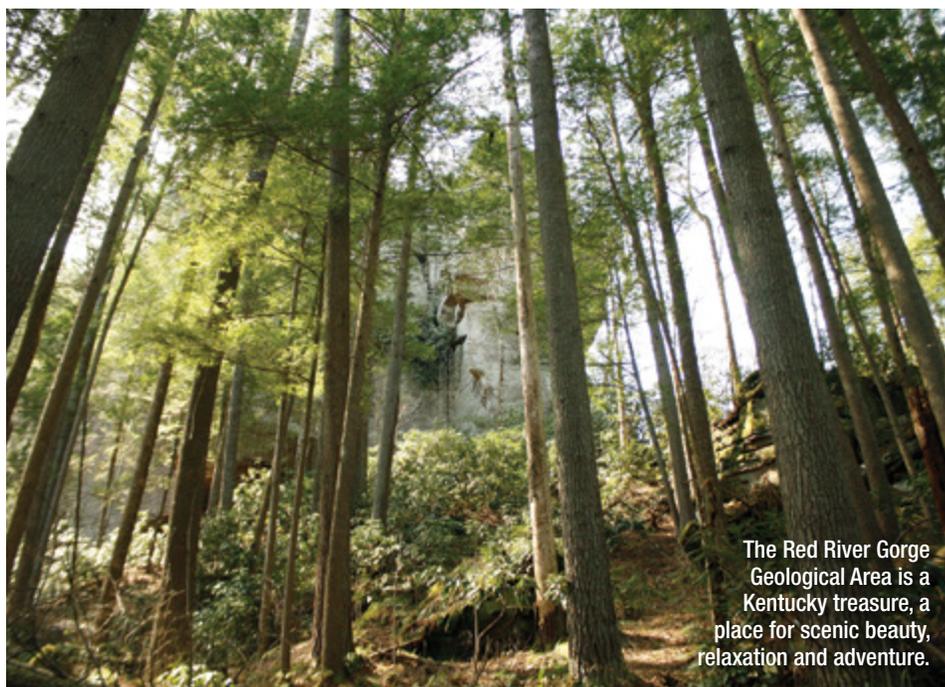
make an overnight, or longer, journey out of it as you explore the thousands of acres of hills and valleys. Campers must have permits for overnight stays, along with proper food storage equipment to keep black bears at bay.

Swift Camp Creek Trail is a good starting point for extended hikes. Descending from the top of the gorge to the lower areas, it's a 7-mile trek that follows Swift Camp Creek. The dramatic scenery includes cascading mountain streams rushing through dense stands of rhododendron and, at one point, flowing under one of the gorge's famous arches.

For even longer treks, the Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail extends 319 miles, starting in Daniel Boone National Forest and ending at Pickett State Park in Jamestown, Tennessee.

At peak season the trails may be busy, but on weekdays and during the colder months you may not run into a soul. The quiet is only broken by a deer foraging through the brush or sipping from a nearby stream.

But there was a time when the raucous sounds of sawmills echoed through Red River Gorge. Early in the 20th century, loggers harvested its hardwood. Sawmills and logging camps sprang up on the hillsides. Railroads snaked through the valleys, and dams were constructed along the Red River and other tributaries to power the sawmills. It was a massive operation. That is, until the gorge was saved, enveloped in the arms of Daniel Boone National Forest in 1937.



The Red River Gorge Geological Area is a Kentucky treasure, a place for scenic beauty, relaxation and adventure.

Photo courtesy of Matt Vogt.

The area also includes Clifty Wilderness, named for its towering cliffs and added to the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1985. The section of the Red River that runs through Clifty Wilderness is a Kentucky Wild River, one of nine such river sections in the Bluegrass State.

Adding to the pristine charm are numerous creeks that rush through the canyons of the gorge and empty into the Red River. The Red River's upper reaches provide Class II and III whitewater canoeing. This Wild Rivers section is generally navigable from December to May, but the Falls of the Red River is a 3-foot drop. Unless you're an expert canoeist, portage your canoe or kayak around them.

Just below the falls is the Narrows of the Red River, which in some places is no more than 6 feet wide and littered with large boulders. This section can also be dangerous when water levels are high. As the Red River continues through the heart of the gorge, it levels out and provides gentle Class I paddling, ideal for



Points of Interest

You'll find Mother Nature at her finest throughout Red River Gorge, but there are a few places where she really shines.

- ▶ **Chimney Top Rock** is easy to reach — a short, quarter-mile hike — and provides one of the most beautiful overlooks of the Red River as it passes through the gorge.
- ▶ **Sky Bridge** is a mile-long road open to vehicles. It offers several good overlook opportunities. The road ends at a traffic circle and parking lot, where you'll find good picnic spots and the start of a 1.5-mile hike to the largest arch in the gorge.
- ▶ **The Grays Arch Trail** is also very popular and leads to one of the most spectacular arches in the forest. It gets busy in peak season, however.
- ▶ **The Auxier Ridge Trailhead** follows a narrow ridgeline where it ends with views of several outstanding rock formations.



Digging the past

Archaeologists have found a treasure trove of artifacts that reveal life as it was 13,000 years ago when Native Americans lived in the Red River Gorge, including pottery, seeds and tools.

In more modern times, the ruins of moonshine stills dotting the hills have been found.

Photos courtesy of Mark Vogt

Sweet treats

Ordering online made simple at Kaylee's Candy Co.



Heather Hamilton opened Kaylee's Candy Co., named for Hamilton's 14-year-old daughter.



Photography by Rachel Brister Photography

Story by LISA SAVAGE

As a child, Heather Hamilton loved helping her grandmother bake. When she was 15 years old, she made her first wedding cake.

It's a tradition Hamilton carried on, baking for family and friends through the years. But when she and her husband, Delane, started a family and were parents to four children under the age of 6, she decided there wasn't enough time in the

day to run her small, at-home business, so she stopped baking cakes for others. She still made holiday treats and special event candies, though, and she never lost her love for baking.

When Hamilton's young daughter, Kaylee, started helping in the kitchen — much like Hamilton had helped her grandmother — she realized they shared a passion and excitement for baking. "I love watching her in action," Hamilton says of Kaylee, now 14. "Her dream has been to own a bakery."

It was an easy decision to open a bakery as Kaylee grew older and Hamilton had help from the rest of the family. When obtaining a permit through the health department for the new business, Hamilton didn't have a name picked out but told the clerk to add Kaylee's Candy Co. on the documentation. And the name stuck.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

When working out the details to establish the bakery, Hamilton learned that Telah Wrenn of Telah's Cozy Cookies planned to retire and had the perfect building already set up, complete with a commercial-grade kitchen. She toured Wrenn's Parker Point Road building, decided it met her needs and reached a rental agreement.

When Hamilton first looked at Wrenn's building, she prayed about starting the business. "I didn't want to bite off more than I could chew," she says. But once she and Kaylee started, it was an exciting time.

"We couldn't wait to get started," Hamilton says.

Kaylee's Candy Co., located just outside Grant, is not designed for stopping by to make a purchase. "You can't just run by and pick up something," Hamilton says. Orders need to be placed at least 48 hours in advance. "This means each treat is made fresh, to order."

NHTC's fiber internet allows for an online presence for the business. Hamilton created a Kaylee's Candy Co. website and a Facebook page where customers place orders for cakes, candies and other treats — especially Kaylee's popular macarons.

"They're very hard to make, but it has become one of her specialties," Hamilton says.

"I first saw someone making macarons in a movie a few years ago and I was intrigued," Kaylee says. "I made them for a 4-H baking competition and placed first. When I first started making macarons, I was nervous, but now I enjoy it."

Kaylee says she learned a lot through 4-H and has always loved to watch cooking shows. She loved watching the Pioneer Woman cooking shows. "She inspired me and I loved watching her creations," she says.



For cakes, the young baker adds accents using fondant, a thick, smooth edible frosting that's great for sculpting cakes and pastries. "She has made some beautiful cakes using fondant, and that's difficult," Hamilton says. "Kaylee comes up with many of the ideas on her own and loves trying new things. She's good at combining flavors. I always have gone by a recipe, but she isn't afraid to try variations in a recipe to see what she comes up with."

Because of her age, Kaylee doesn't receive pay, but gaining knowledge in helping run a business is more valuable than a paycheck, her mother says. "As much as she loves baking, I think this is a wonderful experience for her."

TASTY TREATS

Last year, Kaylee's Candy Co. made 500 caramel apples with fruit purchased at Crow Mountain Orchard, and all the family pitched in. The Hamiltons' sons — Conner, 18; Landon, 17; and Grayson, 16 — have always helped out and still do with things like dipping strawberries or apples.

Some of the bakery's most popular menu items date back to the days when Heather Hamilton created treats at home. Chocolate cupcakes with cream cheese frosting are among the best sellers. Peanut butter balls are the No. 1 candy. Whether it's strawberry cheesecakes, red velvet cake, candies or other treats, Kaylee's Candy Co. uses only Ghirardelli chocolate and other premium ingredients.

Hamilton still uses tips she learned from her grandmother, Shelby Jean Taylor.

"She cooked for everybody," Hamilton says. "She could make something delicious out of shortening and sugar, and I learned from her that food makes people happy." 📺

About Kaylee's Candy Co.

The bakery and sweets shop is located at 349 Parker Point Road, Grant.

- Kaylee's Candy Co. works to make events more special, delivering delicious treats or scheduling pickups. Owner Heather Hamilton hopes to make some of the goodies available in local stores this year.
- The bakery only does pre-orders and offers free delivery with a \$15 purchase to Grant or Guntersville.
- Specialties include cakes and cupcakes in several flavors, along with caramel-dipped apples, Oreo truffles, peanut butter balls and chocolate-covered cherries or strawberries and millionaire clusters.
- Kaylee's macaron creations come in lemon, chocolate and cream cheese flavors. She makes chocolate mint near the Christmas holidays and plans to add more flavors.
- Peanut butter cookies and lemon-glazed teacakes are also available.
- Medium and large trays and baskets are perfect for special occasions. For custom orders, contact Hamilton to find out about the possibilities.
- Hamilton plans to add themed parties and baking-related classes, such as Crock-Pot and Instant Pot cooking, and candy and cake decorating.

Place orders online at kayleescandyco.com, on the bakery's Facebook page or by calling 256-728-2554.

ON WITH THE SHOW

Virtual platforms keep performances going on and off the stage

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Less than a week before the Northeast Alabama Community College Theatre Department's virtual spring production of "Dear Edwina," the show hit a major snag. With just one dress rehearsal left before the musical's live debut, one of the lead actors had to drop out of the show, leaving assistant director Halle Huber to step in.

It was just one more twist in an already unusual season that saw NACC's Theatre Department in Rainsville, Alabama, put on two virtual productions. Much of the early preparation for "Dear Edwina" occurred over Zoom, an inconvenience that suddenly came in handy when Huber needed to brush up on her part fast.

"Because the video and choreography was already online, I was able to look at those and make sure I understood the correct movements," Huber says. "We even did the vocal rehearsals online, so we had some of those tracks to help me understand what part I needed to sing, as well."

Putting those remote practice sessions together was a challenge for performers used to playing off each other. For Director of Theatre Kayleigh Smith, it often required drawing the movements each

performer needed to make on the back of script pages and holding them up to the screen.

"It's crazy to block a show and do choreography without being on the stage," Smith says. "Once we did get on stage we realized one girl had learned everything backwards. So she had to flip everything around in her head on the fly."

VIRTUAL ESCAPE

The cast's final performance didn't take place in front of an audience but in front of cameras. The entire show was filmed live and made available to stream on demand via the ShowTix4U platform. Additional learning materials for local middle and elementary school students and teachers were also available.

While the remote preparations were a challenge, they forced performers to take an even greater degree of responsibility for their parts. "One of the cast members told me they've never been in a show before where they were this ready and this prepared for the performance," Smith says. "I'm really hoping they carry that with them forever."

With one more virtual show on the schedule this summer, NACC



Photos courtesy of Trey Gilliland and Lauren Cantrell.

A production of "Dear Edwina" by the Northeast Alabama Community College Theatre Department went online to reach its audience.

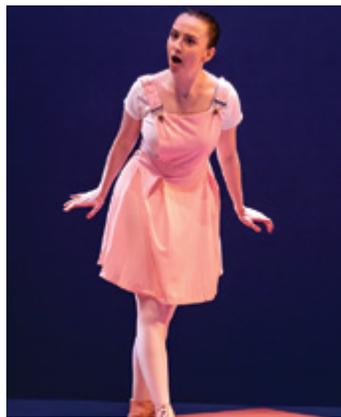
Theatre is on course for its first entirely virtual season. That wasn't the department's ideal plan for the last year but NACC President Dr. David Campbell is impressed with how creatively everyone involved has adapted.

"They have done some outstanding virtual productions that have given our students experience and a way to display their talents, while at the same time, keeping everyone safe through all the COVID-19 prevention techniques," he says.

In addition, the digital format opened the doors to greater accessibility to shows and new opportunities for students interested in film. Smith also hopes that it has provided a respite during the pandemic for people who haven't had the same access to the live experiences they enjoy.

"We were able to provide a little bit of art, and hopefully a virtual escape, safely," she says. "Theater has been healing for us doing it, but also for audiences. I do think it's an escape from what everyone's going through right now and it can be a healing thing." 🗨️

The NACC production of "Dear Edwina" is available to stream on demand through April 19, 2022. Visit showtix4u.com and search "NACC" for more information.



Photos courtesy of Trey Gilliland and Lauren Cantrell.

NEW HORIZONS

For Texas Ballet Theater, digital performances provided an opportunity to expand the horizons of ballet beyond the traditional stage. In its two-part "The Poetry of Expression" series, company dancers choreographed their own pieces specifically for the digital medium, using the entire Dallas-Fort Worth area as their backdrop.

Dancers and choreographers collaborated with local businesses and nonprofits to bring community landmarks and locations with personal significance into the performances. The result was an innovative showcase filmed at familiar locations like downtown Fort Worth, Firestone & Robertson Distilling, the Benbrook Dam and the Kimbell Art Museum. The prerecorded performances were available for streaming in March and April in lieu of the nonprofit dance company's traditional spring lineup.

For more information, visit texasballettheater.org.

"We hope audiences enjoy a new kind of performance experience through these productions," executive director Vanessa Logan says. "They show us all how the beauty and art of ballet can be found anywhere, even in unexpected places."



Digital performances gave the Texas Ballet Theater a new outlet for expression.



SOMETHING NEW

For more information, visit mnopea.org.

More than a year after it put live performances on hold, Minnesota Opera continued to find new ways to connect with its community with the premiere of "Apart Together" in April. The free virtual program featured original performances from members of the opera's Resident Artist Program and the orchestra, ranging from spoken word to piano pieces.

The goal of the project was to give artists a chance to step outside their traditional creative roles within the opera. Resident artists who typically perform pieces composed by others were given the opportunity to pursue their own visions, while audiences could see orchestra musicians perform in a more intimate capacity.

"I really think the future is on the internet, video and how you connect with people through this form we're not used to," says Joey Leppek, resident tenor. "I think getting these kinds of skills in how to create something that's effective on screen is helpful for us, and I hope all artists out there feel permission to get out there and try something new."

Enhanced parental controls

Protect your children online

NHTC's Enhanced Wi-Fi service offers premium parental controls so you stay in command of what your children see online.* With NHTC Enhanced Wi-Fi, you can use the NHTC Wi-Fi Manager app to control your network. Access the NHTC Wi-Fi Manager in the App Store or Google Play.

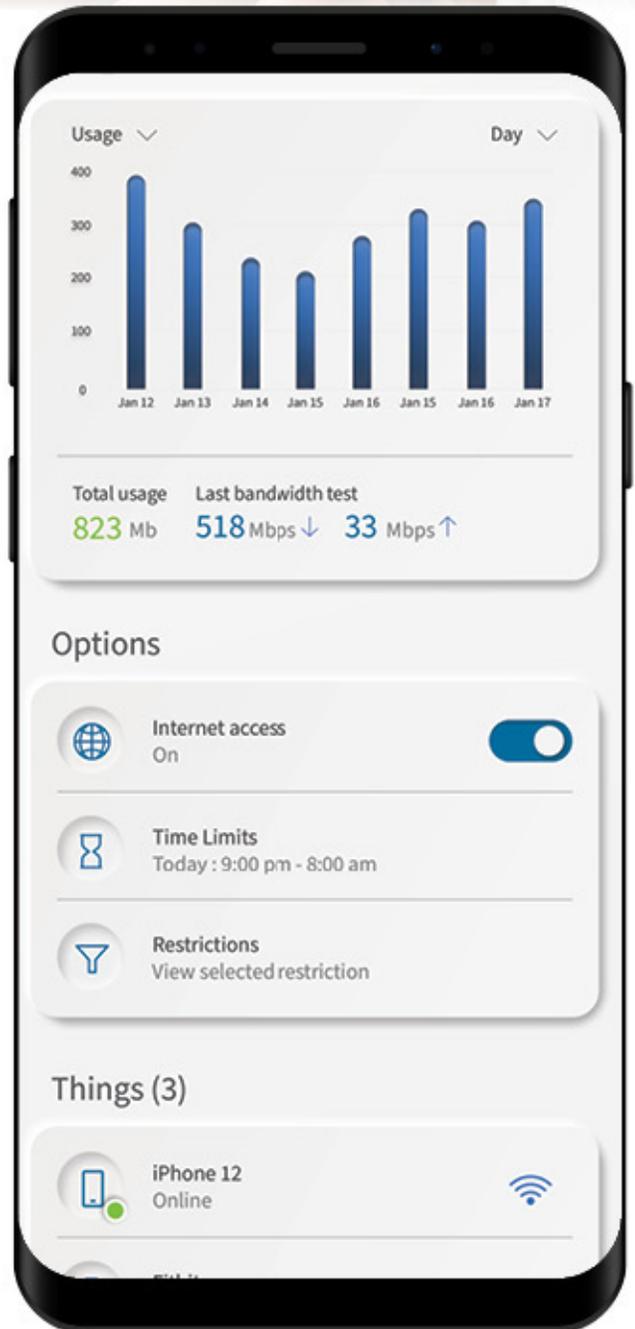
- Create profiles for users.
- Link devices to each profile.
- Once you have set up a profile and linked devices to the profile, you have multiple options to control internet access to the devices assigned in the profile.
- Schedule offline time — set time limits: You can set offline hours for the day. For example, set offline hours for 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. if you do not want to allow internet access to the devices during nighttime hours.
- Add content filters: Block specific content such as violence, nudity, gambling and more.
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- View profile usage to see daily, weekly and monthly usage.
- See the websites your child is visiting.
- Receive notifications about the profile. For example, you will get a notification when your child tries to visit a restricted app or website. 📧

*Devices must be connected to NHTC Wi-Fi.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- Network usage — See how much bandwidth each device on your network is using after running a bandwidth test.
- Speed (bandwidth) test — Test the speed between the GigaSpire BLAST and the internet, as well as between any Whole-Home Wi-Fi mesh units and the internet.
- Protection for the devices on your network — ProtectIQ is available for enhanced network security.
- ProtectIQ works quietly in the background on your GigaSpire BLAST to provide an extra layer of protection against malicious traffic. ProtectIQ will scan data coming into your network for viruses and other malicious content, and you will receive a notification if content was blocked for some reason.
- Add ProtectIQ to your Enhanced Wi-Fi plan for only \$3.99 per month and receive network-level protection against malware, viruses, etc. ProtectIQ protects everything that is connected to your Wi-Fi — smart TVs, phones using Wi-Fi, computers, tablets, etc.

For more information, call NHTC at 256-723-4211.



Enhanced Wi-Fi: \$11.99 per month

Drive-thru annual meeting

Largest crowd ever turns out to vote and register for prizes

Comments like “The voting was quick and easy” and “It’s more convenient for those who work” were voiced by members to describe the NHTC drive-thru annual meeting held in May.

With a record number of members attending — 1,112 — it’s the most successful annual meeting ever, says Daniel Martin, NHTC general manager.

“NHTC would like to thank everyone who helped make this year’s annual meeting the most successful meeting to date,” Martin says. “We believe this helped more members be able to have a voice in the business of our cooperative.”

The drive-thru annual meeting was quick and easy, with a tent set up in the rear parking lot at NHTC for the six-day event. Voters could drive through from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. each weekday and even from 8 a.m. until noon on Saturday, giving more members a chance to participate. NHTC offered a \$20 bill credit to every member who registered and voted, and members who participated in this process were eligible for door prizes.

Employees greeted members at the drive-thru event and then had drawings on Facebook Live daily for the previous day’s winner. Board members approved the previous annual meeting’s minutes and conducted business on Facebook Live at the conclusion of the event on Saturday.

AMENDMENTS

Members also voted on amendments that will mean a change in the NHTC bylaws, which will allow a modification to the annual meeting to make it easier for more members to participate.

Amendments include changing the required quorum for the annual meeting from 5% to 3%. Based on the substantial increase in members, it will be harder to get a quorum in future years for the annual meeting. A quorum is required to conduct business.

Other amendments allow mail-in voting for any motion or resolution to be acted upon, except for the election of Board members. An amendment also allows for the drive-thru voting over the period of a week at headquarters to continue.

“I believe the membership has spoken with the approval of the drive-thru meeting,” Martin says. “It allows the maximum participation that lets the member voices be heard.”

For more information on this year’s annual meeting, go to the NHTC website: nhtc.coop/annual-meeting. 



NHTC board members met after the annual meeting in May to elect officers. Front row, from left, are Mike Whitaker, treasurer; Garland Elders, president; Calvin Bearden, secretary Randy Morrison, vice president. Back row, from left, are Daniel Martin, general manager; Jeffrey Cantrell; Jerry O’Neal; Barry Jones; Jim Duncan; Greg Glover; Caleb Ballew, attorney.

Board places elected in 2021

Place 4 - Barry Jones

Place 3 - Jerry O’Neal

Place 5 - Mike Whitaker

Place 2 - Jim Duncan



Daily prize winners

Day 1 — Richard Brooks (Roku Ultra)

Day 2 — Nancy Barnard (Chromebook)

Day 3 — Joyce Myers (43" TV)

Day 4 — Charles Anderton (Chromebook)

Day 5 — Joseph McGow-Russell (Roomba)

Day 6 — Rodney Quick (iPad)

Grand Prize — Jeremy Walls (65" TV)





A fresh angle on catfish

Catch the secret to a wonderful meal

Catfish holds a special place in the heart of a Southerner, but take a little care to make sure you get the tastiest results.

Bad catfish can be mushy and have a funny, almost metallic flavor. Good catfish is sweet, with firm, flaky flesh. But, go ahead and give your fillets a bath in some buttermilk before cooking to help neutralize any fishy odors. And to ensure even cooking, choose fillets that are meaty with an even thickness from end to end.

No fish dinner screams Southern flavor more than a platter of fried catfish, complete with sides of coleslaw and hush puppies. No well-rounded collection of recipes is complete without a good catfish option, such as this one from Whole Foods Market.



Fried Catfish



FRIED CATFISH

- 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 4 catfish fillets
- Canola oil, for frying

Tartar sauce:

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 small dill pickle, chopped very small (3 tablespoons)
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste
- 1 tablespoon capers, chopped, optional
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Hot sauce (optional)

Combine the cornmeal, flour, paprika, salt and both peppers in a shallow bowl or pan.

Coat the fillets with the mixture on both sides, shaking off excess.

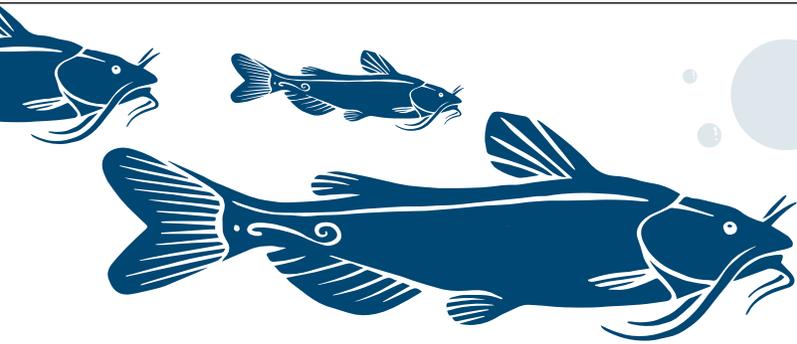
Fill a heavy skillet or large frying pan with about an inch of oil. Heat the oil to 350 F (ready when a small piece of the fish will bubble and rise to the top).

Add the catfish fillets, two at time, and fry until golden, 5 to 6 minutes, turning once. Remove and drain on paper towels. Serve with tartar sauce and a dash of hot sauce, if desired.

To make tartar sauce: Combine the mayonnaise, pickles, lemon juice, capers, dill, Worcestershire sauce and mustard in a small bowl and stir until well blended and creamy. Season with salt and pepper. Taste, then adjust with additional lemon juice, salt and pepper.



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



CATFISH WITH LEMON PASTA

Lemon pasta:

- 1/2 pound fettuccine pasta
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1-2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped (or 1 tablespoon dried)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper



Catfish:

- 4 catfish fillets
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon dried, crushed red pepper flakes
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup dry white wine (or chicken broth)
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley (or 1 tablespoon dried)
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil (or 1 tablespoon dried, crushed)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crushed

Cook the pasta in salted water until tender but still firm. Meanwhile, whisk oil, cheese, lemon juice, lemon zest and basil to blend. Drain the pasta, but reserve 1 cup of the water. Toss the pasta with the lemon blend. If needed, add some of the reserved pasta water. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Season the fish with salt and red pepper flakes. Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the fish and saute, rounded side down, for 3 minutes; turn and saute 3 minutes or until cooked. Transfer the fish to a plate and set aside.

Add the chopped onion to the same skillet and add 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil. Saute until translucent.

Add the undrained can of tomatoes, wine (or chicken broth), garlic, parsley, basil and oregano. Simmer until the sauce is reduced slightly, about 10 minutes.

Gently return the fish and any juice to the tomato mixture to absorb the spices, then spoon it over the pasta. Makes 4 servings.



Catfish With Lemon Pasta

SPICY CHIPOTLE CATFISH SANDWICH

- 4 catfish fillets
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 regular or multigrain sourdough rolls
- 4 slices sweet onion
- Chopped cabbage or Romaine lettuce

Chipotle mayonnaise:

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- Half of chipotle mix

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Mix the lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic and chipotle pepper. Divide equally into 2 bowls.

Rub a small amount of olive oil on the fish. Top the fish with half the chipotle-lemon mixture, then sprinkle it with salt and pepper.

Bake for 8 minutes or until done.

While the fish is baking, make the chipotle mayonnaise by combining the mayonnaise, capers, paprika and half the chipotle-lemon mixture.

Assemble sandwiches with fish, chipotle mayonnaise, onion and lettuce or cabbage. Makes 4 sandwiches.

— Courtesy of Catfish Institute



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