

The Foothills

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

CONNECTION

HIGH-TECH HIGH SCHOOL

Tour Magoffin County's latest resource





CHANGES COMING *to the* LIFELINE PROGRAM

Lifeline is a federal program designed to help low-income Americans pay for vital telecommunications services. Important changes to the program will take effect Dec. 2, 2016, including the addition of broadband services.

For new subscribers, eligibility for Lifeline will be limited to the following criteria as of Dec. 2, 2016:

- SNAP
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- The Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit

Consumers at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and those who qualified previously through any of the Tribal criteria will continue to be eligible for a Lifeline Program benefit.

To find out whether you qualify for Lifeline assistance, customers must fill out standard forms, available at your local telephone company's office, as mandated by the Federal and/or State government. Your telephone company is not responsible for determining who qualifies for these programs or who receives assistance. Customers must meet specific criteria in order to obtain assistance with their local telephone service, and qualifying is dependent upon government-established guidelines. To qualify for Lifeline credit, each customer must apply and provide proof that he/she, or a household member for whom he/she is financially responsible, participates in at least one of the programs listed or that the customer meets the income-based requirements. Additional eligibility requirements may also apply. Consumers are allowed only one Lifeline program benefit per household. Lifeline can only be used for one source of communication — cell phone or landline.

Please see the January/February 2017 issue of this magazine for more details about the new Lifeline program, or contact your local telephone company to apply for this assistance.

Cord stackers are highly satisfied with their video viewing experience

With a broadband connection, there are countless hours of programming available from video streaming services such as Netflix and Hulu. However, a recent study revealed that consumers say one viewing strategy is most satisfying — taking advantage of the latest streaming options but pairing them with the tried-and-true programming found with traditional TV service.

The J.D. Power 2016 Streaming Video Satisfaction Study, released in August, found that 60 percent of streaming customers were “cord stackers,” those who watch streaming video in addition to a traditional paid TV service. This group reported the highest level of satisfaction among all groups, with 826 points on a 1,000-point scale.

Streaming's popularity is due not only to the variety of programming available, but also to the flexibility of being able to watch on smart TVs, tablets, smartphones and other devices.

In the J.D. Power study, satisfaction was lowest among “cord cutters,” those who choose to cancel their paid TV subscriptions.

Source: www.jdpower.com

STACK IT UP!



NTCA THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION RURAL CONNECTIONS

BY SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA—THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION

Senate Caucus focuses on rural broadband issue

Depending on when you've opened this issue of your telco's magazine, the national election is a few days away or has just passed. You may already know who our next president of the United States will be. Regardless of the outcome, however, there will remain much work to do in this country to continue expanding broadband service into our rural regions.

That's one reason I am particularly excited about the work of the Senate Broadband Caucus. Launched this summer, the caucus was formed by U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va.; Angus King, I-Maine; Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn.; Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D.; and John Boozman, R-Ark. to “serve as a platform to engage in discussions across Committee jurisdictions and to inform Senators and their staff about emerging broadband issues,” according to the initial news release from the caucus.

I had the opportunity to moderate a caucus session in September, where the group pulled together representatives of various agencies to discuss ways to invest in rural broadband. It is encouraging to see such interest in rural broadband deployment in the U.S. Senate, especially across party lines. Telecommunications providers like yours have done a tremendous job bringing broadband to parts of rural America, but as we look across the country, there is still much work to be done. We are on the right track! ☑

Hey
telemarketers:
DO NOT CALL!

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have established a National Do Not Call Registry. Joining this registry can drastically reduce the number of telemarketing calls you receive.



JUST THE FACTS ABOUT DO NOT CALL:

- Once you've registered, telemarketers have 31 days to stop calling your number.
- You can register up to three non-business telephone numbers. You can also register cellphone numbers; there is not a separate registry for cellphones.
- Your number will remain on the list permanently unless you disconnect the number or you choose to remove it.
- Some businesses are exempt from the Do Not Call Registry and may still be able to call your number. These include political organizations, charities, telephone

surveyors and businesses that you already have a relationship with.

Strict Federal Trade Commission rules make it illegal for telemarketers to do any of the following, regardless of whether or not your number is listed on the National Do Not Call Registry:

- Call before 8 a.m.
- Call after 9 p.m.
- Misrepresent what is being offered
- Threaten, intimidate or harass you
- Call again after you've asked them not to

ATTENTION LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS:

You must follow the Do Not Call rules

When you own or work for a local business, you likely don't think of yourself as the typical fast-talking, high-pressure telemarketer. However, local businesses that make phone calls to customers or potential customers should be aware that the same National Do Not Call Registry rules and regulations apply to them.

If you are a company, individual or organization that places telemarketing calls, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the operations of the National Do Not Call Registry. Unless you fall under one of the established exceptions, such as telemarketing by charitable organizations or for prior business relationships, you may not make telemarketing calls to numbers included in the National Do Not Call Registry.

For information regarding National Do Not Call regulations, visit the National Do Not Call registry at www.telemarketing.donotcall.gov. You can find the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission rules governing telemarketing and telephone solicitation at 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200 and 16 C.F.R. Part 310, respectively.

OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION:

The Do Not Call initiative, regulated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), requires telephone service providers to notify customers of the National Do Not Call rules and regulations.

IT'S EASY!
ADD YOUR NUMBER TO THE
DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

Register online at
www.donotcall.gov
or call 888-382-1222.
For TTY, call 866-290-4236.

*You must call from the telephone number
you wish to register.*

Being Authentic

“In this ever-changing society, the most powerful and enduring brands are built from the heart. They are real and sustainable. Their foundations are stronger because of the human spirit, not an ad campaign. The companies that are lasting are those that are authentic.”

— Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

Judging by the success of Starbucks, Mr. Schultz clearly knows a little about business. But the reason this quote sticks with me is the last word: authentic. It's a word that apparently means a lot at the nation's most famous coffee company — and it's a word that means a lot to us here at Foothills Communications.

The first definition from Oxford Dictionaries says authentic means “of undisputed origin; genuine.” I like that, but the second and third definitions are even better: “made or done in the traditional or original way, or in a way that faithfully resembles an original” and “accurate or reliable.” Those last two definitions sum up why being authentic matters to Foothills Communications.

I think authentic is an overused word. We see it used to tout “authentic” Mexican or Italian food or “authentic” arrowheads or fossils at souvenir shops. But do you always believe the claim, or do you just assume it's mostly an empty boast?

In an age in which we're bombarded with companies, politicians and celebrities trying to portray themselves in a flattering way that may be 180 degrees from the truth, it's clear why someone or something being truly authentic carries weight with people.

Here at Foothills Communications, I can assure you that our commitment to our members is authentic. It's genuine, it's reliable and it's a commitment that faithfully resembles the original commitments our founders made to this community decades ago. This authenticity is seen in our work to deliver a better, more connected experience to our members by building a fiber network in our community.

To borrow more words from Mr. Schultz, we are a company that is built from the heart, real and sustainable.

But as Mr. Schultz's quote suggests, it's easy for a CEO to make such a claim. However, you can truly tell if a company is authentic by looking at the way its employees work every day.

Our commitment is demonstrated by our customer service team and installation technicians making sure you get the services you need. It's shown in the way our repair techs will stay late or come out in bad weather to fix problems you're having. It's in our engineering team and accounting staff working hard to maximize the amount of customers we can connect or upgrade for each dollar we invest.

That's how you can tell if a company is authentic. That's how you know Foothills Communications' commitment to you is authentic. And in Mr. Schultz's words, that's what will allow this company to endure and thrive for generations to come. ☺

The Foothills CONNECTION

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

VOL. 3, NO. 6

The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2016. It is distributed without charge to all customers of the company.



Foothills is a member-owned cooperative that has been serving residents and businesses in eastern Kentucky since 1951. In the early days, we only offered telephone service over copper wires. Over the years, we have expanded our network and now provide broadband Internet and cable TV services over fiber-optic facilities to much of our service area. Our service area includes Magoffin County and portions of Johnson County and Lawrence County. We love being part of the communities we serve; our customers are our families, friends and neighbors.

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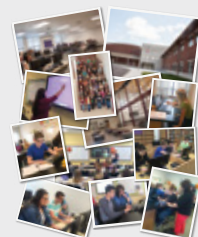
Foothills Mission Statement

“To provide the latest in communications at affordable prices with exceptional service.”

Produced for Foothills Communications by:



On the Cover:



Magoffin County High School students put technology to work, using cameras and smartphones to showcase their new school.

See story Page 12.



GIVE A TOY, HELP A CHILD

Bring a new, unwrapped toy to the Foothills office by Dec. 8, and Foothills will make sure it finds a home with a needy child.

Help Foothills brighten someone's Christmas. Donate now.

Also, all participants will be entered for a chance to win a \$200 Visa gift card.

Don't miss HUGE GIVEAWAYS!

Anyone who signs up for select services before Dec. 31 will be entered into a drawing to win a special prize.*

**CABLE
CUSTOMER**
55-INCH
SMART TV

**INTERNET
CUSTOMER**
AMAZON
ECHO

**PLATINUM
CUSTOMER**
BOSE
RADIO

*Items must be claimed within two weeks of being announced.



HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

- ▶ **Thanksgiving:** Thursday and Friday, Nov. 24 and 25.
- ▶ **Christmas:** Friday, Dec. 23 — closed at noon — and Monday, Dec. 26.
- ▶ **New Year's Day:** Monday, Jan 2.

FREE ACTIVATION

Foothills is offering FREE ACTIVATION during November and December for customers who add special calling features or a premium movie package.

Warm up with Foothills' FREE Movie Weekends

- ▶ Nov. 24-27 — STARZ & STARZ ENCORE
- ▶ Dec. 3-4 — HBO
- ▶ Dec. 10-11 — Cinemax
- ▶ Dec. 17-18 — Showtime
- ▶ Dec. 24-Jan. 2 — All movie channels

A set-top box is required for viewing. Parental control is available.





The Hermitage



Texas White House



Lincoln Birthplace Symbolic Cabin

A PRESIDENTIAL TOUR

See how the South honors the nation's highest office

With the 58th inauguration of America's president just weeks away, visiting presidential homes or museums in person and exploring exhibits, artifacts, documents and photos offer an opportunity that's both educational and entertaining. A trip to any presidential site is a trip through our nation's past.

Here's a look at several locations around the South that keep history alive.

HERMITAGE, TENNESSEE

Originally a cotton farm with a two-story log cabin, the property President Andrew Jackson bought would become The Hermitage in 1804. There he constructed his mansion and over the years added additional buildings. The buildings are open for tours and offer a window into the lives of the Jackson family before and after the Civil War. Go room by room and see where the former general and president, along with his beloved wife, Rachel, entertained guests with stories of Jackson's military victories. Or see the bedroom where Jackson took his last breath, gazing at a portrait of his wife. A self-guided tour of the grounds around the mansion includes an inside look at slave cabins, the smokehouse, the gardens and Jackson's tomb. Also, stay to view "Born for the Storm," an exhibit using multimedia elements and objects from the extensive Hermitage collection.

"It gives our guests a thorough understanding of the life and times of our seventh president," says Jason Nelson, vice president of marketing.

► **Hours and information:** 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., March 15 to Oct. 15; and 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Oct. 16 to March 14. Online: thehermitage.com.

► **Also in Tennessee:** The home of President James K. Polk is in Columbia, and it has the largest collection of Polk artifacts in the country (www.jameskpolk.com). Also, in Greeneville you can visit the home of President Andrew Johnson and the cemetery where he is laid to rest (www.nps.gov).



TECH-SAVVY TRAVELER:

The National Park Service maintains dozens of historical sites including presidential birthplaces, libraries and other landmarks. Research parks and sites near you at **NPS.gov** or in the **Passport to Your National Parks** app.





Texas White House President's Office

STONEWALL, TEXAS

Take a tour of Texas' breathtaking Hill Country to visit the Texas White House, where former president Lyndon B. Johnson conducted much of his business in his family home. Ranger-led tours take you through his office, Lyndon and Lady Bird's separate bedrooms, the living room where the president met with heads of state, and more.

"It's a walk through time," says Dave Schafer, chief of interpretation for the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park.

The home is on the family's ranch property, where Johnson was born, lived, died and is now buried. Free, self-guided ranch tours are another option that allow visitors to stop by his boyhood home, schoolhouse and family cemetery.

- ▶ **Hours and information:** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., seven days. Online: www.nps.gov.
- ▶ **Also in Texas:** The George W. Bush boyhood home in Midland was also home for several years to President George H. W. Bush (www.bushmuseummidlandtx.com). The Eisenhower Birthplace State Historical Park, which has hiking trails and picnic areas, is in Denison (www.thc.state.tx.us).

HODGENVILLE, KENTUCKY

Most Americans are familiar with the birth cabin and boyhood home of our 16th president, Abraham Lincoln. But did you know that the homes are not the actual ones inhabited by the Lincoln family?

"Most folks are surprised to learn that, but both are historic cabins and are very similar to how the Lincolns would have lived," says Stacy Humphreys, chief of interpretation and resource management at the park.

More than 200,000 people come to Lincoln's birthplace annually to relive

his early life on the frontier and see the first Lincoln Memorial, circa 1910. The memorial includes a replica "birth cabin," and nearby is Sinking Spring, where the Lincoln family got their water.

In addition to the memorial, another favorite site in the park is Lincoln's boyhood home on Knob Creek, about 10 miles from the birthplace memorial and visitors center. It's a big park down a road off the beaten path.

Time your visit for Lincoln's birthday, Feb. 12, and witness a wreath-laying ceremony at about 10 a.m. that morning.

- ▶ **Hours and information:** 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m., seven days. Online: www.nps.gov.
- ▶ **Also in Kentucky:** Zachary Taylor National Cemetery is in Louisville and contains the mausoleum where the president and his wife, Margaret, are interred (<http://www.cem.va.gov>).



Monticello

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

High on the ridge overlooking the city of Charlottesville, Monticello makes a commanding statement. The home of President Thomas Jefferson, the stately plantation with its surrounding gardens, lies in stark contrast to the nearby slave cabins, reconstructed to show a dark but important side of Monticello's history.

Many regard the president's home, built in 1769, as his architectural biography, a structure that shows a mind as adept at engineering and agriculture as it was for politics.

One of the most interesting objects in the home is the great clock that Jefferson designed. It has exterior and interior faces, an hour-striking Chinese gong and a seven-day wall calendar.

"It reveals his desire for order, interest in technology and ability to adapt traditions," says Mia Magruder Dammann,



Into the Storm Exhibit • Hermitage

marketing associate with the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. "By any measure and in any age, Jefferson was a brilliant mind and the founding father who best embodied the American spirit of innovation."

- ▶ **Hours and information:** 10:15 a.m. (first tour), 4:10 p.m. (last tour). Online: www.monticello.org.
- ▶ **Also in Virginia:** Mount Vernon, home of George and Martha Washington, is in Mount Vernon (www.mountvernon.org). The Sherwood Forest Plantation was the Charles City home of the 10th U.S. President, John Tyler, from 1842 until his death in 1862 (www.sherwoodforest.org). Richmond's Tuckahoe Plantation, circa 1733, was the boyhood home of Thomas Jefferson (www.tuckahoeplantation.com).

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

A charming Southern town, Columbia lays claim to the only presidential site in South Carolina — the boyhood home of President Woodrow Wilson, our nation's 28th president. Recent renovations returned the structure to its original blueprint with furnishings and decor that closely match that seen by Wilson when he lived there as a teenager in the 1870s.

"Two very important things make this museum unique," says Fielding Freed, director of historic house museums for Historic Columbia. "First, it was the home of teenage Tommy (Woodrow) Wilson. Secondly, it's the only museum in the country that focuses on Reconstruction, a period that is often misunderstood but is a very important part of American history, from 1865 to 1876."

- ▶ **Hours and information:** 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. (Tuesday-Saturday tours); 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. (Sunday tours). Online: www.historiccolumbia.org.

NEIGHBORS

helping neighbors

Your guide to volunteering or receiving help from some of the area's food pantries



JOHNSON COUNTY

THE BREAD OF LIFE OUTREACH POST

- **Phone:** 606-297-2433
- **Address:** 7840 Kentucky Route 40 W., Oil Springs
- **To help:** Call if interested in volunteering or donating. Volunteers prepare food baskets, stock shelves and clean.
- **For help:** The post is open from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. each Tuesday through Thursday. Walk-ins are welcome, but the primary distribution days are the first and third Thursday of each month.
- **Special holiday giving:** The post strives to provide a ham or turkey to each family in need, and additional volunteers are appreciated during the season.

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY FOOD BASKET

- **Phone:** 606-789-6433
- **Address:** Highland Church at 1813 Euclid Ave., Paintsville
- **To help:** The food basket helps nearly 360 families monthly. Cash donations, which are always welcome, are used to buy food at a discount to stock the pantry.
- **For help:** The charity is open every Tuesday from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Proof of identification and residency are required.
- **Special holiday giving:** Through November and December, the goal is to provide food baskets containing items for holiday meals, such as sweet potatoes, corn, cake mix and icing.

LAWRENCE COUNTY

GOD'S FOOD BANK

- **Phone:** 606-634-4861
- **Address:** Louisa, Kentucky
- **To help:** Volunteers are needed at the food bank from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each Thursday. Help is needed to pack and carry food boxes. Donations of cash or nonperishable food are always appreciated.
- **For help:** An individual or family may visit the food bank one Thursday each month, and proof of Lawrence County residency is required.
- **Special holiday giving:** Extra-large food baskets are distributed at Christmas.

BLAINE OUTREACH MINISTRY

- **Phone:** 606-792-1938
- **Address:** Highway 201 S., Blaine
- **To help:** Donations of canned goods are welcome, as are items such as soap and toothpaste. Anyone interested in volunteering should call.
- **For help:** Please call to arrange food pickups. For those unable to travel, a volunteer may deliver food. The ministry can also often provide furniture items and clothing.
- **Special holiday giving:** The ministry provides toys to children during the holidays.

FALLSBURG FOOD PANTRY

- **Phone:** 606-686-2712 or 606-483-1206
- **Address:** 6011 N. Highway 3, Fallsburg
- **To help:** Volunteers are needed to pick

up, sort and organize food, much of which comes from community partners.

- **For help:** About 65 families receive food boxes each month. The program extends beyond the food pantry and includes close ties to the local school system.
- **Special holiday giving:** The pantry prepares special baskets for Thanksgiving. And the Louisa Rotary Club and the Fallsburg Elementary School support the various programs.

MAGOFFIN COUNTY

WATER INTO WINE FOOD PANTRY

- **Phone:** 606-349-6301
- **Address:** Lakefront Church of God on Route 30, Salyersville
- **To help:** Volunteers help people carry food to their vehicles, pack boxes and more. All volunteers also receive a hot meal. Donations of cash are appreciated, allowing the charity to buy quality food in bulk.
- **For help:** The charity feeds 600 families each month, typically the third Tuesday — reserved for the elderly — and Thursday of each month.
- **Special holiday giving:** The pantry works to raise enough money to provide turkeys or hams.
- **Key Dates:** Visit the pantry's website for details: www.waterintowinefoodpantry.weebly.com. 📱



HAMMERING OUT A TUNE

A band embraces classic, upbeat bluegrass

By JOHN CLAYTON

Hammertowne is more than just a name. It's a one-word critique of the Eastern Kentucky born-and-bred band's signature style of bluegrass music.

"You can blame me for that," says original member Dave Carroll of the name Hammertowne. "People always talk about our style of music, that we hammer, and we do. We play up-tempo, hard-driving, straight-ahead bluegrass music. We write a lot of our own songs, so we're still a very traditional bluegrass band, so I guess that's where I got the Hammertowne thing

from. All the guys loved it, and that's what we ended up going with.

"We're high-energy. We have a lot of fun onstage. It's indicative of the style we like, and folks have been real receptive to it."

The group came together after agreeing to work on a solo project by lead singer Scott Tackett, who previously performed with his own group, Kentucky Sunrise, as well as Dave Evans and Riverbend.

When planning his solo album in 2011, Tackett turned to Carroll, an old high school friend, to help him with the recording.

"We gathered up what we thought were a good group of studio musicians," Carroll said. "We all had other musical interests at the time . . . Long story short, we all got together

for that recording session, and it was one of those occasions as a musician that just doesn't happen very often. We had such a great time doing that album. We just hated for it to end."

So, it didn't.

CREATING A BAND

Tackett's solo album soon gave birth to Hammertowne. Mountain Fever Records approached the group about recording an album of its own.

Hammertowne released its debut self-titled album in 2013. That recording was followed by *Highways and Heartaches* in 2015. A third yet-to-be titled album is scheduled to be released in early 2017.

Tackett says the members of Hammertowne are all good friends, and he believes that friendship comes across in

their music and performances.

"One thing I've noticed about playing with this bunch is we have such a good time together on the road, onstage and backstage," Tackett says. "We have a great time, and our music is full of life." 🎸

☆☆☆ MEET ☆☆☆ HAMMERTOWNE

- **BRYAN RUSSELL** is the latest member of Hammertowne, replacing an original member on bass. The Salyersville native is also a songwriter and composer. The bassist has played previously with the Cumberland Gap Connection.
- **BRENT PACK**, who was born in Ashland and raised near Louisa, joined in on "Papaw" Jack Priode's picking sessions and settled on the banjo, launching his professional career at the age of 15. He has been influenced heavily by Earl Scruggs, J.D. Crowe and Ron Stewart.
- **DAVE CARROLL** is an Ashland native who has performed for more than 33 years and is recognized as an "elite songwriter and rock-solid musician and vocalist."
- **CHASTON CARROLL** is Dave Carroll's son but is also recognized as one of the top mandolin players in bluegrass at the age of 22.
- **SCOTT TACKETT**, who was raised near Olive Hill, counts Keith Whitley among his musical influences.



With two albums complete and one on the way, the members of Hammertowne produce upbeat, classic bluegrass. They are, from left, Bryan Russell, Brent Pack, Dave Carroll, Chaston Carroll and Scott Tackett.

Chris Nease

ENTERTAIN *with* ELEGANCE

A Q&A with Chris Nease, a blogger from Richmond, Virginia, who has entertained readers with her party ideas since 2008.

Check out her blog at
CELEBRATIONSATHOMEBLOG.COM

Q: How has blogging changed your life?

CN: I started my blog as a way to curate ideas for my new party styling business and found that I preferred the creative outlet that a blog provided over the party business. So when it began to take off and make money, I dropped the business to do the blog full time. It's been the dream job I never knew I wanted.

Q: What will readers find at your blog?

CN: Inspiration and ideas for the home hostess. The main focus is on home entertaining, party design, tips, recipes and do-it-yourself ideas.

Q: What is the primary thing a hostess can do to ensure her party runs smoothly?

CN: Have a properly cultivated guest list. When you bring together the right mix of people, the party practically runs itself.

Q: What is your favorite way to entertain during the holidays?

CN: I like to dress it up a little but still keep things fun, not stuffy. We've been hosting an annual Christmas cocktail party since 1998, and it's become one of my favorite days of the year. Everyone dresses up in cocktail attire and mingles over drinks and heavy hors d'oeuvres, and we end the night with some dancing. It's such a fun time!

Q: Is it best to stick with tried-and-true recipes?

CN: I love to break that rule! I'm known for trying new recipes for dinner parties or holidays because what better way to get a good gauge of how well it goes over?

Q: What can be done to dress up a party without too much fuss?

CN: Serve water or juice mixers in pretty decanters or pitchers; add fresh herb garnishes to food platters; fill glass vases or pretty bowls with ornaments; or make special ice for drinks using shaped silicone trays by freezing juice or adding berries to the water molds.

Q: Is it a good idea to count on guests to bring dishes if they offer?

CN: It really depends on the type of party. If I've already planned out the menu, I usually only take up offers of food from my closest friends. Otherwise, I'll suggest they bring a bottle of wine.

Q: What's an economical idea for a holiday centerpiece?

CN: This is my no-cost favorite: Lay a wide ribbon down the center of the table like a runner. Then add evergreen clippings down the center and fill in with pine cones, ornaments and candles. 📺



OTHER ENTERTAINING BLOGS:

► **PIZZAZZERIE.COM**

Nashville-area blogger Courtney Whitmore entertains readers with her wit and passion for parties.

► **EVERYDAYLIVING.ME**

A faith-based blog that shares decorating tips and homespun recipes from Alabama for a memorable holiday gathering.

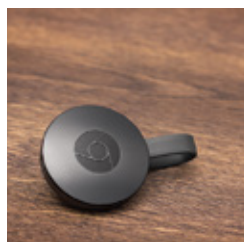
A high-tech wishlist

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE LATEST GADGETS

Christmas isn't about the getting — it's about the joy of giving! Getting someone the perfect gift could be the highlight of the season for them and for you. Here's a guide for some of the hottest technology items this season.

STREAMING TV BOX

Three brands currently dominate the streaming entertainment box marketplace: Roku, Apple TV and Amazon Fire. Once set up and connected to your home broadband router, each will allow viewers to stream Netflix, Hulu and other subscription-based video services and channels straight to their TV. Features on different models vary, but some distinctions — like Amazon's voice-command remote, Apple TV's features when linked to other Apple products, and Roku's price and versatility — give each one its own advantages.



CHROMECAST

Chromecast allows you to send the video you're watching on your phone or tablet straight to your television. The small hockey puck-shaped dongle turns your television into a giant monitor for TV shows, movies, music, sports and games. But that's not the end to the Chromecast lineup. Chromecast Audio allows you to turn any speaker into a Wi-Fi-enabled network of sound. One device allows you to connect a speaker to your phone or tablet wirelessly. More dongles mean more speakers can be linked to synchronize your music across multiple rooms of your home. Both Chromecast and Chromecast Audio are \$35.

SMART WATCHES

While connected timepieces were a novelty last Christmas, they are moving into the mainstream for this gift-giving season. While many consider the Apple Watch (\$350-\$10,000) to be the top of the class, others, like the Samsung Gear S2, the Pebble Steel (\$150) and the Moto 360 (\$300 and up), offer similar features to keep you connected with their own unique style.



SAMSUNG GEAR VR

Technology enthusiasts have been talking about (and wishing for) good virtual reality devices for years. Now, they may have arrived with the Samsung Gear VR (\$100).



Insert your Samsung phone into the device in order to play games and watch movies in an entirely new experience.

GIFT CARDS

Don't forget that many online services offer gift credits that allow the recipient the chance to pick out exactly what they want. Here are a few gift card ideas for:



Music lovers: Pandora, Spotify, iTunes



Shoppers: Amazon Prime Membership (for free shipping)



Gamers: Steam



Movie lovers: Netflix, iTunes, Amazon



Photo lovers: Shutterfly, Snapfish



Book lovers: Amazon Kindle Store, iTunes (for iBooks).

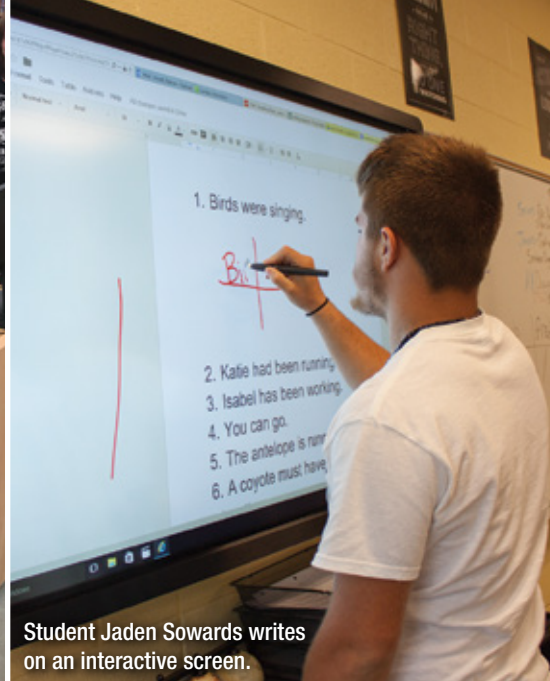
DRIVING DATA INTERPRETERS

A handful of gadgets, led by the Mojio (\$99), allow users to basically connect their car's engine to their smartphones. The device plugs into the car's OBD2 port (where the mechanic reads the "Check Engine" codes) and connects to a mobile app that can provide information on how the car is running, where it has been and what it may need in order to keep putting on the miles. Open this gift early if you've got some holiday travel in your plans.





Students, from left, Jenna Elam and Dakota Salyer work on new computers.



Student Jaden Sowards writes on an interactive screen.



Teacher Jason Arnett uses a CleverTouch display during anatomy class.

SPEEDING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Students at the new Magoffin County High School rely on the latest technology

BY NOBLE SPRAYBERRY

The day's lesson called for a discussion of the Battle of Gettysburg, widely considered the turning point in the Civil War. And the students in Justin Bailey's social studies class at Magoffin County High School were about to receive a new view of the historic Pennsylvania landscape.

Instead of a chalkboard or a television showing a video, the veteran teacher approached the 65-inch CleverTouch screen found in most of the school's classrooms.

"The kids can step right up to it, and it's all touch-screen, just like you had an iPad," he says. "So when we were going over the battle, we were able to pull up Google Maps and use that to view the battlefield, and the kids could actually interact with it and move around. They could see those features in 3D."

For the new school that opened in August, technology is a critical part of the day-to-day life of students. In fact, the school was essentially built around technology when it was constructed after tornadoes swept through the county.

That technology is put to good use every day in classrooms such as Bailey's. A

student can write on the screen, showing the work to the entire class. A scanner can digitize a student's work, making it viewable by everyone, a function that allows immediate positive feedback. "It gives a boost to the kids who do well," Bailey says.

The setup can record all lectures in high-definition video, which a teacher can later upload to YouTube. "If you have a child who is sick, he could watch the entire lecture the same day and not get too far behind," Bailey says.

A STORMY DAY

The twister struck on March 2, 2012, a devastating storm that ripped through Salyersville. While no one died in the town, the county's middle school, as well as the football facilities, were among the many structures destroyed.

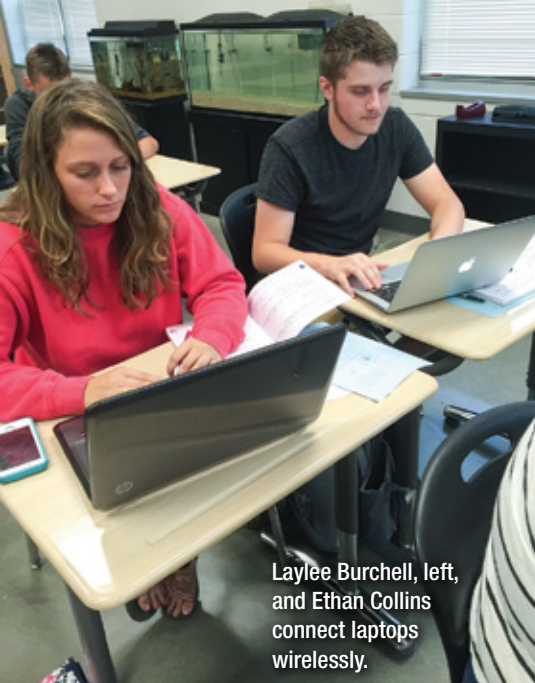
Educators, though, recovered quickly, moving the middle school students to the existing high school.

"We were hurting in the county because of the devastation," School Superintendent Scott Helton says. "We combined two schools and had classes started within two weeks. I want to commend everyone, particularly the teachers. They made it the best possible situation that they could. We had very few problems."

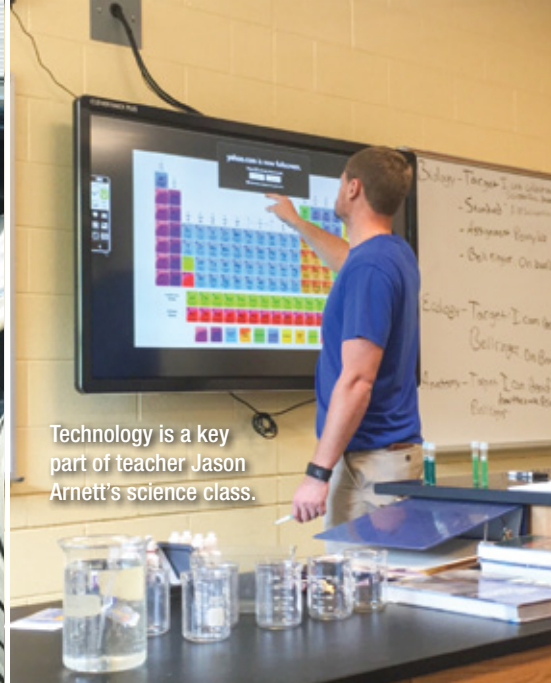
Helton, who is in his first year as superintendent, worked in the system's district office during the move. Superintendent Joe Hunley retired the summer after the tornado, and Superintendent Stanley Holbrook ran the district during reconstruction.

Holbrook's plan was to build a new high school, as well as upgrade many of the school system's facilities. The result was nearly \$40 million worth of development, including a football stadium, weight room and more. The new Magoffin County High School, however, is the centerpiece of the development, and its opening was welcome.

The middle school has about 350 students, and the new high school has about



Laylee Burchell, left, and Ethan Collins connect laptops wirelessly.



Technology is a key part of teacher Jason Arnett's science class.



Student Jaren Lovely is surrounded by technology in his class.

625 students. During the four years of construction, those students shared one school. "There was a sigh of a relief when we could finally move into the new building," Helton says. "Now, everyone can stretch their wings and be creative."

The school includes math labs with high-rise tables that can be combined for group work. There are four well-equipped science labs. Art and family living classes each have dedicated rooms. There is a shop for agriculture students, as well as a dedicated classroom.

The school is a focal point for the community. "Where there's a lot of economic stress, people don't see a lot of tangible things they can take hold of," Helton says. "This school is something that they can be proud of, and so can our students."

GOING TO WORK

The new school is Chris Meadows' first as a principal. "To move into a brand-new building, I feel fortunate, and I feel some pressure, too," he says. "Everyone knows we've been handed a silver platter so to speak, and we have to keep it polished."

Foothills Communications provides the fiber network necessary to connect all of the technology to the internet, and that high-speed access is essential. "Broadband is the basis now for a classroom," Meadows says. "It's one of the key factors in providing optimal instruction. We're dealing with students who have lived in a technological world, and everything has

been at their fingertips. If you don't stay up with technology, you lose their attention, and you lose it quickly."

With the CleverTouch screens, which can be as large as 75 inches depending on the classroom, teachers can turn lectures into interactive tours.

"An art teacher can take students on virtual museum tours — places we could never actually take them," Meadows says. "Or, if you need to have them look at something in New York City, it can come up and be right at their fingertips."

In Bailey's social studies classes, technology is becoming a fundamental tool. For example, he might use Google Forms to create a quiz, such as those with multiple-choice or true-false questions.

Then, he can take the class to one of the school's four computer labs, where each student can take the quiz. The online software grades the quiz as soon as the test is completed, providing immediate feedback to the student and to Bailey. He or other teachers can then record the result into the Infinite Campus system, an online tool available to all Kentucky school systems. As soon as the teacher enters the grade, a parent can check a child's results from a smartphone app. "They can see it almost instantly, which means a parent can be more involved in a child's education," Bailey says.

Bailey, who started teaching nine years ago, says the school is well-positioned in a world in which technology is reshaping

education. "When I came into teaching, we just tried to make sure we had enough textbooks for the kids, and it was all very paper-oriented," he says. "Now, I can see we're getting closer and closer to the paperless classroom." 📱



STUDENTS SHOW THEIR CRAFT

The students of the Magoffin County High School Yearbook staff put technology to work, using cameras and smartphones to provide all of the photos for the story about the technology found in their new school.

TALENTED AND TASTY

A baker gives her recipe secrets

The scent of freshly baked bread wafts through the air every time the door to Blackbird Bakery opens, and during the holiday season it never stops opening. Breads are the centerpiece of many holiday meals, and no one knows this better than bakery owner Carla Perkins.

“We sell lots of bread for both personal enjoyment and for gifts,” she says.

Apple-cinnamon, Tennessee sweet sourdough, jalapeno cheddar — they’re just a handful of the tempting breads filling the bakery just off the main road through Bristol, Virginia’s historic downtown.

Take a seat inside and feast your eyes on the confections housed within the bakery’s cases. Cookies, pies, doughnuts, cakes, tarts, cupcakes and yes, breads — all freshly made daily.

You’d think Carla has spent a lifetime learning her craft. Not so.

“I grew up around some of the best bakers — my mom and sister,” she says. “But I never took an interest in it until I got married.”

But even then, baking was more a curious, albeit delicious, hobby rather than a career. But before long, baking became her passion. She left her job as a special education teacher and opened the bakery



Carla Perkins, who opened Blackbird Bakery with her husband, Randall, shows off a loaf of Cranberry Nut Orange Bread.

with her husband, Randall.

“I’ve never looked back,” she adds.

That was in 2008 after spending a year renovating the old building. It’s now a shining example of urban renewal, revealing its former life as a Masonic temple building with a handsome staircase, high ceilings and expansive windows. But since opening day, even more work has been put into the business, expanding it a couple of times. There’s been a demand for extra seating and a space for parties and other private events. Also, the kitchen is now on its third expansion. And the baking continues.

Perkins says that the bakery’s success is quite a triumph due to the fact that she’s had no formal training. But some people are born to it. And Carla Perkins was.

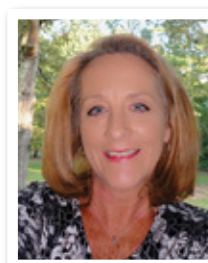
“I never turn down an opportunity to gain more insight and knowledge of the baking process, though,” she says. “At the Blackbird, I am surrounded by lots of talented bakers who continue to show me

new and better ways to do things.”

So when baking bread at home, something she enjoys doing during the holidays when and if she has the time — “The continued popularity of Blackbird leaves me very little time to do so,” she says — Perkins has learned that using ingredients, such as eggs, at room temperature is the key to success.

“Also, the creaming of butter and sugar cannot be understated,” she adds.

Here are some of her favorites, recipes you may make at home and that will likely become holiday traditions. 📖



Food Editor **Anne P. Braly** is a native of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Prior to pursuing a freelance career, she spent 21 years as food editor and feature writer at a regional newspaper.

CRANBERRY NUT ORANGE BREAD

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) salted butter
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 1/2 cups chopped cranberries
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan. In a large bowl, sift together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Combine well. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a separate bowl, stir together egg, orange zest and orange juice. Gradually stir in flour mixture. Stir just until flour is moistened. Gently fold in cranberries and nuts. Pour into prepared pan and bake for 60-75 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer to wire rack; let stand

for 5 minutes. Remove bread from pan and place on wire rack. Cool completely before slicing. Makes 1 loaf.

SWEET POTATO BREAD

- 1 1/2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes (Approximately 2 medium or 1 large sweet potato)
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- Pinch of salt

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan. Set aside. Peel sweet potatoes and cut into medium-sized cubes. Place

in small saucepan and cover with water; bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat. Cook until fork tender; drain and mash with fork or mixer. Cool completely before using. Once cool, combine sweet potatoes, eggs, oil, buttermilk and vanilla. Mix well and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients and whisk to combine. Add wet mixture to dry mix and stir just until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 60-70 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand in pan for 10 minutes before removing to rack to cool. Makes 1 loaf.

Note: This recipe can be altered by adding 1 cup of golden raisins or 1 cup of chopped nuts. A nut-based streusel added to the top of the batter before baking would also be delicious.

PINEAPPLE NUT BREAD

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups canned crushed pineapple, drained
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) salted butter, melted
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup shredded, sweetened coconut
- 1/2 cup macadamia nuts, chopped

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan. Set aside. In a medium bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking powder, ginger, baking soda and salt. Set aside. In a medium bowl, combine pineapple, milk, melted butter and egg. Mix well. Add wet mixture to the dry mixture and mix until just combined. Fold in coconut and nuts. Spread into prepared pan and bake for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing. Remove from pan and cool on a wire rack. Makes 1 loaf. 📖





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**Thursday, Dec. 8
from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

The Foothills Communications team wants to thank every customer. So, don't miss our annual Customer Appreciation Day.

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- ★ Live radio remote with WSIP
- ★ Door prizes
- ★ Cookies, punch, popcorn and drinks
- ★ Bring the kids to see Santa from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. and receive an ornament personalized by Santa's helper.

