

CONNECTION

LOOKING UP

Local funeral homes
change with the times

PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS

Wade's One Stop keeps
adding services

CONNECTING CREATIVES

Artists and artisans unite
through broadband



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO

NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

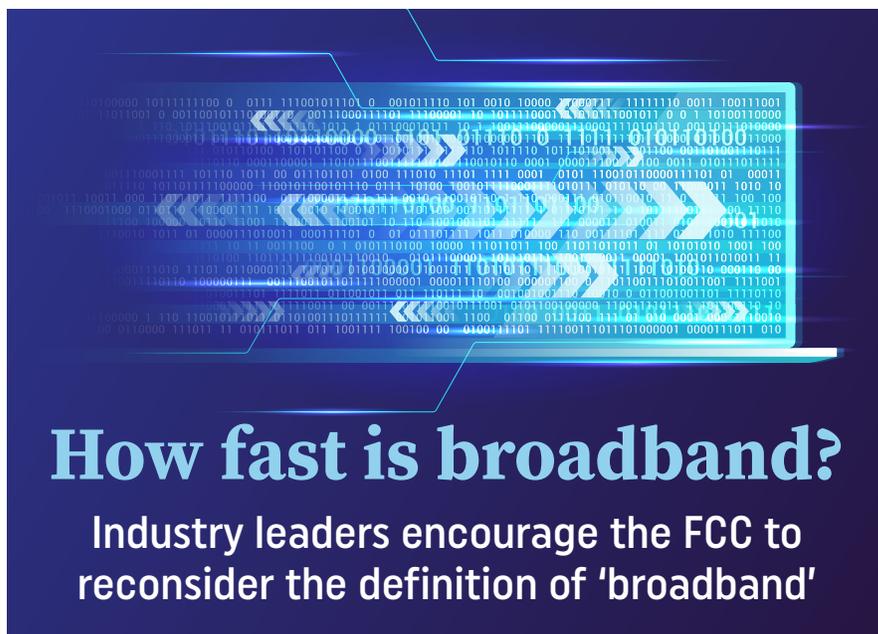
Here's to hope in 2021

The pandemic has made it clear that every American needs broadband to thrive. We need it for work, for school, for health. And we need it for accessing government services, for growing businesses and for building communities. If there is a silver lining to 2020, which was a hard year for so many, it's that more people are now acutely aware of the essential nature of broadband services.

The new year brought new challenges, many of them playing out at our Capitol, a building I've had the honor of visiting many times to talk to members of Congress about the need to support broadband for all of America. But I choose to have hope that better angels of our nature will guide us to rebuild, and I believe NTCA and our members have an opportunity to help that rebuild with the work that we do supporting broadband connectivity and other critical services for rural communities.

The hard-working members of NTCA have made so much progress in the past decade toward solving the rural broadband challenge. There is much work yet to do, but I have hope in the progress they are making. Through federal and state funding programs, coupled with local investments by providers themselves, we are on our way as a country to connecting everyone.

There is a day in our future when we can say that everyone who needs or wants a broadband connection has access. That day is coming, sooner than later. I have hope. 📶



By STEPHEN V. SMITH

We as a nation need to rethink what is considered true broadband connection speeds. That's the message telecom industry leaders recently sent to the Federal Communications Commission.

NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association joined with the Fiber Broadband Association in sending a letter to the FCC in December addressing the definition of broadband. The letter came as the FCC prepares its next report to Congress on the state of broadband deployment in America.

For the past five years, the FCC has considered any connection speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to be the benchmark for broadband.

“By any measure, this benchmark does not reflect what American consumers need today, let alone tomorrow,” wrote NTCA CEO Shirley Bloomfield and Fiber Broadband Association President and CEO Gary Bolton.

In urging the FCC to redefine what speeds are considered broadband, Bloomfield and Bolton wrote that “while all Americans would be best

served by the Commission adopting a gigabit symmetric benchmark ... it should at least raise the minimum broadband performance benchmark for the Sixteenth Broadband Deployment Report to 100/100 Mbps.”

Raising the definition, a benchmark that impacts funding decisions and technology choices, would put the country on a path toward ensuring all Americans have broadband access that actually meets their needs, the letter states. With millions of people using broadband at home to work, participate in school and attend doctor appointments, broadband has become essential to everyday life.

Bloomfield and Bolton further concluded that redefining broadband would allow the FCC to “keep pace with broadband service that Americans both need and want,” while providing “a benchmark the Commission can then use to ensure that we build our networks right the first time by driving investment in future-proof broadband infrastructure.” 📶



To hear an interview with Gary Bolton on this and related topics, visit www.RuralBroadbandToday.com, or search for “Rural Broadband Today” on your favorite podcast app, Spotify or Amazon Music.

The price of entertainment

Consumers can tap into a rushing stream of content delivered across devices ranging from TVs to smartphones. Sports, news, movies, comedies, dramas, music — the list of options is seemingly endless.

But there is a cost. And for many consumers that price increases each spring. If you have it handy, take a moment to review a bill for your TV programming from three years ago. Compare it to today, and in most cases the difference is obvious — television programming is pricier.

The increases are not limited to traditional cable TV providers either. Streaming services have seen prices spike, too. When Google launched YouTube TV, the monthly price was about \$35. Now, it's \$65.

In cases such as Google, as well as other providers, adding new, desirable content channels helps drive the increases. For traditional networks, investment in higher-quality programming has become essential to compete with streaming services like Netflix, Amazon and HBO Max. Those costs are then passed on to cable providers and their customers.

But more content is not always the root

cause of the higher prices. In fact, for many providers, such as the rural communications companies serving much of America, the increasing cost of content is an annual struggle to hold prices down. It's not a push to increase profits, and their efforts to control prices illustrate the give and take behind what you see on your bill.

For these companies, only a small portion of a monthly television subscription fee goes to personnel costs, equipment upgrades and tasks such as equipment maintenance. So, where does all the money go?

Much of the cost is wrapped up in agreements allowing TV providers to bring content to you. Networks like ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox regularly renegotiate these agreements. In many cases, these are annual negotiations.

A 2019 analysis of cable TV rates by Consumer Reports found that while advertised rates generally increased by 3% to 4% annually, fees for the major networks and channels airing live sports climbed between 8% and 10% each of the previous four years.

How are those rates determined? Essentially, the TV provider must pay

networks a fixed fee for each subscriber of the service. But each year there are fewer traditional TV subscribers to carry that load. In 2020 alone, about 6.3 million people dropped their cable or satellite TV service, according to investment research firm Moffett Nathanson.

Without an expanding subscriber base to offset these increasing costs, TV providers often pass the expense on to consumers in the form of fees added to advertised prices, according to the FCC's 18th Annual Video Competition Report.

When it comes to these hidden costs, there is one bright spot for consumers. The Television Viewer Protection Act passed at the end of 2019 requires cable and satellite companies to disclose the total monthly price of subscribers' TV bills, including all individual fees and charges, when they sign up.

That transparency won't make your bill any lower. But it will give you an accurate picture of the full cost of your monthly TV bill. 🗨



Equipping and enabling vibrant rural communities

The 2020 census data will be coming out this year — and despite what the numbers may show, I'm here to tell you that rural America is alive and well.

As you may remember, I urged everyone to participate in the 2020 census. The population counts go a long way in determining our representation in Congress and the statehouse, as well as funding for state and federal programs.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

According to the 2020 census website, 2020census.gov, the census will help shape the future of our community for the next 10 years. There's no doubt that an accurate population count is critically important.

And while census numbers will contribute to the allotment of funding and political clout, they will also help to tell the story of rural America. The 2020 census should provide definitive evidence of the trends shaping communities like ours. Regardless of the trend lines the U.S. Census Bureau suggests, parts of rural America are more vibrant and offer more opportunities today than ever.

Some communities have, no doubt, fallen on hard times. But many others are very much alive. According to experts at places like the USDA and the National Council of State Legislators, about one-third of rural counties are growing, one-third are stable and one-third are shrinking. Researchers point to 2016 and 2017 as years where many rural areas began showing growth after many years when the number of residents diminished.

Will all of the news and research taken from information contained in the census be positive for everyone in rural America? Most likely, it will highlight some of the challenges communities like ours face. We'll know for sure once the data is released, but the 10-year scope of the census may well show a continuation of the gradual, decades-long shift to fast growing cities and suburbs from small towns and rural areas.

However, a few troubling statistics should not be sufficient to raise concerns about the future of rural America and our small-town way of life. Census numbers — a comparison across decades that may not fully acknowledge recent positive changes — do not tell the whole story.

Events such as the pandemic, among other things, have left some city dwellers intrigued by the benefits of living in rural areas. In many ways, the people of rural America have more opportunities now than ever before for business, education, health care, entertainment and overall quality of life. And I'm proud to say broadband makes many of those opportunities possible. We believe in the potential of rural America.

In fact, our confidence in that vitality and belief in the future is why we've invested millions of dollars into improving the telecommunications infrastructure in our communities. You'll never find a stronger group of advocates for our communities than our team here at Foothills.

We're proud of the rural areas and small towns we connect to the world — and we work hard every day to make our communities even stronger. 📶

The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2021. 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, which 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:



Paintsville funeral homes discuss how high-speed internet service helps them heal their community. See story Page 8.

Congratulations!

Foothills Communications would like to congratulate our big-prize giveaway winners! Three lucky customers won prizes after signing up for select services. Their names were then entered into a drawing. Here are the winners:

ROGER HUFF

Winner of the Platinum Customer award

Prize: \$250 Visa gift card

Platinum customers get to experience the best of everything Foothills Communications has to offer, including telephone, fiber broadband service TV.

CLARENCE BOGGS

Winner of the TV Customer award

Prize: Big-screen TV

As a Foothills Communications TV customer, Wilks enjoys some of the best programming around with many different packages to get the viewing experience you want at the price you can afford. Foothills offers three levels to choose from – Essentials, Expanded and Complete.

JEFF ADAMS

Winner of the Internet Customer award

Prize: PlayStation

Foothills Communications provides some of the fastest fiber optic speeds in the country. With four different packages to choose from, our internet services are not only fast and reliable, but they'll also fit into any budget.

For more information on our services, visit us at foothills.net or call 606-297-3501.



Happy Easter!

Foothills Communications offices will be closed on Friday, April 2, in observance of Good Friday. Everyone at Foothills wishes you and your family a joyous Easter holiday weekend.



Spring forward!

Daylight saving time begins at 2 a.m. on March 14. Don't forget to move your clocks forward one hour.

What is CPNI?

A special notice regarding your account information

Foothills Communications knows the importance of privacy. Federal law requires telecommunications companies to explain the use and disclosure of information gathered during the course of providing service.

WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION?

Customer Proprietary Network Information, or CPNI, are details such as the calling features, options and plans to which you subscribe; billing information; and the identity of the long-distance carrier you have chosen. You have the right, and Foothills Communications has the duty under federal law, to preserve the confidentiality of this information.

HOW IS THIS INFORMATION USED?

We only use CPNI to let you know about changes in services you currently buy from us. With your permission, we may use your CPNI to tell you about other services that may interest you. We will never share your CPNI information with third parties unless required by law.

HOW DO I PROTECT MY CPNI?

Foothills Communications has tools in place to protect your CPNI information, including passwords. Foothills Communications is adamant in protecting the privacy of our members, utilizing password-protected accounts to validate that we are speaking with the person authorized on each account.

If you have not set up a password, please call the business office at 606-297-3501.

A rider navigates the Tunnel Trail in Sumter National Forest.

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR RIDE

How to safely blaze the ATV trails

Story by ANNE P. BRALY

In coming weeks, ATVs and other off-road vehicles will come out of hibernation, and riders will be hitting the trails more than any other time of year. There's something about early spring that makes for great riding — cool mornings, mild afternoons, pleasant evenings, new growth appearing all around you. They all come together to make an ideal day as you ride trails through the forests of the South.

"I think the best part about riding is getting to see so much of the forest and so many different habitats in a short period of time," says David Baldwin with the U.S. Forest Service at South Carolina's Francis Marion National Forest. There's one main thoroughfare, the Wambaw Cycle Trail, that's 40 miles long with two different loops — one north and the other south.

"Within a 19-mile section of the north section, you'll witness Carolina Bay trees, hardwood ponds, longleaf pine stands and a variation in terrain that is rare in the low country," Baldwin says.

But if you're new to the sport, how do you know which all-terrain vehicle is best for you? Alice Riddle, an outdoor recreation planner at Sumter National Forest, says it's important to ride vehicles that are age- and size-appropriate. One size does

not fit all. ATVs come with a warning label, clearly stating the minimum age of the rider. Not sure where to look? The label is affixed so riders can easily read it when seated in the proper operating position.

If you're new to the sport, talk with local shops and other riders, and do your homework ahead of time. The internet is a good resource, Riddle says. There are also training courses for both ATV and dirt bike riding. Check with your local bike shop.

It may seem as though the sounds of motorized vehicles are incongruous with

the peaceful sounds of nature, but it's all part of the plan the Forest Service offered when the trails first went in, says Riddle. "National forest lands provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities," she says. "Motorized trails are one of these opportunities. There are many hiking trails or general forest areas that one can go to in order to find a peaceful hike or solitary experience. Motorized trail bikes are only allowed on designated trails for motorized use on National Forest Lands. With national forests encompassing many thousands of acres, there are opportunities for all to enjoy." 🗨️



Choosing an ATV properly fitted to you is a key for safety.



TOP TRAILS

There are two national forests in South Carolina open to the public with well-maintained trails: Sumter National Forest in the Piedmont region offers a gently sloping topography with elevations up to 400 feet, and Francis Marion National Forest in South Carolina's low country — a flat sandy environment with many bogs that the trails skirt. Both offer trails for different levels of ability.

- **Cedar Springs Trail at Sumter** is 11 miles long and offers moderately challenging trail loops.
- **Parsons Mountain Trail** at Sumter is 10.3 miles long and easy — a good one for beginners.
- **Francis Marion has one main trail** — the 40-mile Wambaw Cycle Trail — with two loops. The north loop has more technicality in terrain and is best for more advanced riders than the south loop. On each of the loops, riders will approach signage where the trail forks and have the ability to choose to continue on or head back to the trail head.

MAP IT



One of the primary rules for off-road safety is carrying a trail map with you.

You'll find maps for Sumter and Francis Marion National Forests online at fs.usda.gov.



Volunteers groom trails by pulling a cluster of tires to flatten the path.

SAFETY FIRST

On nice days, trailheads can fill up quickly, says David Baldwin with the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest Service maintains the trails in South Carolina's two national forests. And since there are different loops and trails that riders can take, they do not get terribly congested, he adds.

Keep in mind, though, the trails are not race tracks. "Riders need to be aware there could be hazards that occur along the trail, and they need to be ready to stop on a moment's notice," warns Alice Riddle, an outdoor recreation planner at Sumter National Forest. "Riders must be in control of their bikes at all times. They are responsible for their safety and others. All trails have passing areas, so wait for those opportunities and don't create new impacts to the trail. If it's your first visit to a trail, start off with the loops closer to the parking area until you become familiar with the trail system."

Here are some additional rules of safety and etiquette to be considered when riding the trails.

- Keep in mind that there are going to be riders of all different skill levels around you. So, whether you are a seasoned professional who is training for your next race or a first-time rider who is learning to ride, everyone shares the trail.
- Do not ride above your ability. This practice prevents you from getting injured and keeps other riders safe, as well.
- There are spots on the trails where other riders may pass if they need to, so slow down, let them pass, or pull over if need be. This safety rule keeps the trail flowing nicely during busier days.

The new normal

Local funeral homes offer new ways to help in changing times

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by JIM ARNETT



Funeral homes in Paintsville have adapted to include higher tech offerings while keeping traditional personal services.

Bill Phelps started in the funeral services business in the mid-1960s, when few could even dream of a computer sitting in their home, much less in the palm of their hand.

In those days, people found out about the passing of a loved one by a phone call or a knock on the door. Others might see an obituary in the local paper or hear about it while getting groceries. They'd learn the date and time of the funeral. They'd know when to call the family or bring some comfort food.

CHANGING TIMES

But as newspapers dry up and local restaurants and grocery stores close their doors, people increasingly rely on the internet to get their community information. Today's funeral homes know that, too. "Social media is so prevalent these days," says Phelps, owner of Phelps & Son Funeral Home in Paintsville. "It's what 90% of people look at right now."

Mike Preston, owner of Preston Funeral Home & Preston Monuments in Paintsville, agrees. Preston, who has also been in the business since the mid-'60s, says his funeral home staff have been

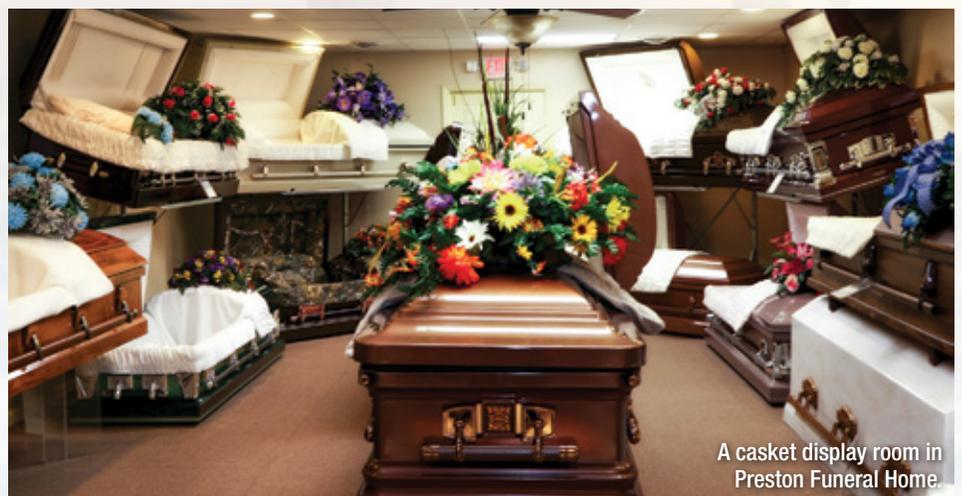
using the internet for years. With permission from families, they post obituaries on their website and social media. They also perform a variety of tasks with their Foothills Communications internet service, including contacting newspapers and working with families from out of town.

Preston's son, who is in charge of the monuments side of the business, offers a program for families to design monuments. "It can show them the colors, the fonts and lots of other options," Matt Preston says. "They can sit at home and design it. Then, it will send it to us for pricing."

The company switched to Foothills Communications services when the option became available. "It's been a tremendous asset to us," he says. "The service is great, and they're a local company. Their customer service is very prompt."

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

Like many local businesses, funeral homes are often family affairs. James Andrew Preston, owner of Jones-Preston Funeral Home Inc., followed in the footsteps of his father, the late James R. Preston. The elder Preston started in the



A casket display room in Preston Funeral Home.



Michael and Matt Preston at Preston Funeral Home.



Jeremy Hyden is the funeral director at Jones-Preston Funeral Home.



Staff at Phelps & Son Funeral Home includes, from left, Grant Cantrel, Billy Taylor, Jenny Phelps and Billy Phelps Sr.

business at Jones Funeral Home in 1948 before a military tour of duty in Korea. When he returned from the service, he resumed his former career. In 1954, the company changed its name to Jones-Preston Funeral Home.

Jones-Preston has changed with the times, now offering services that include cremations and online funeral notices — but only at the families’ request and with their permission. But James Andrew Preston says it’s still important to preserve the old ways. Face-to-face contact continues to be the best way to help families during a sad and often confusing time, he says.

“What we do is valuable to the community,” he says. “We allow families to have some closure. It allows people to be able to go through the process of grieving with some guidance. Everyone needs it at some point in their lives, but they might only do it two or three times. They always have a lot of questions, because they won’t do it much.”

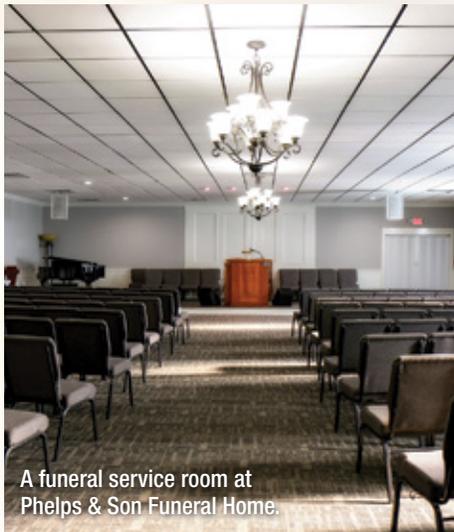
HELPING HANDS

Of all the sacred ceremonies in life, few stand out as more important than the rituals surrounding the death of a loved one. But like so many things, even memorializing someone’s passing has changed because of the internet.

“We know it’s our job to help a family out during the worst time in their life,” says Billy Phelps, who runs Phelps & Son Funeral Home with his father, Bill. The

company provides online funeral services on Facebook Live for families who request it. The funeral home also offers interactive memorials that allow the public to send condolences for family members to read.

“It’s important to have the last memory of their loved ones be something they can look back on and be proud of,” he says. “We’re celebrating a person’s life, and we want to help them through it.”



A funeral service room at Phelps & Son Funeral Home.



A funeral service room at Jones-Preston Funeral Home.

Paintsville funeral services

To learn more about the funeral homes referenced in this article, contact them at the following locations:

- **Jones-Preston Funeral Home**
807 S. Mayo Trail, Paintsville
606-789-3501
jones-prestonfuneralhome.com
You can also find them on Facebook.
- **Phelps & Son Funeral Home**
1701 Euclid Ave., Paintsville
606-789-8989
phelps-sonfuneralhome.com
You can also find them on Facebook.
- **Preston Funeral Home & Preston Monuments**
136 Main St., Paintsville
606-789-4212
theprestonfuneralhome.net
You can also find them on Facebook.

CREATIVE SPACES

Artists and craftspeople find community online

Story by DREW WOOLLEY



Jessica Sanders, left, and Addie Moore keep ETX Creatives running along with Lisa Horlander, who is not pictured.



The online community is home to 350 artists and creatives.



ETX Creatives welcomes artists and visitors at in-person events.

Addie Moore just wanted to know a schedule for local art shows. A mixed media artist and art teacher at Chapel Hill High School, she and her friends knew there was a need for better communication among creatives in Tyler, Texas, and beyond.

“I heard it enough times that eventually I realized, ‘OK, I guess I have to do it,’” she says of her commitment in 2018. “Our first meeting we just went out for a beer and decided to make a Facebook group.”

That group became ETX Creatives, an online community of artists and artisans throughout East Texas. Today, the curated Facebook group is home to 350 creatives who use the space to share their work, offer inspiration and encouragement, or share news about upcoming exhibitions.

“We’re a largely rural area, so you have your friends from high school, church or that you’ve met over time. But it tends to happen in pockets,” says Moore. “There aren’t a lot of public spaces, so the internet provided a space for us to connect, express what we’re doing artistically and to let people know you’re not alone in Edom or your small town. You have a community.”

BREAKING THE BLOCK

Having a community of people who understand the struggles of the creative process has been especially important over the last year when artists and creatives have been hit hard by the economic challenges of the coronavirus pandemic.

“It’s a great place for us to say, ‘I’m having some creative block,’ or ‘How are you staying positive during this

time?’” says Moore. “I think having this creative community that knows what we’re going through and can give suggestions if we’re stuck or having trouble with a particular process has been a great support.”

ETX Creatives also hosts a blog on its website, etxcreatives.com, where visitors can find updates on the latest events and shows across East Texas. The site also allows promotion of items ranging from handmade ceramics and jewelry to clothing and one-of-a-kind paintings. The group also produces the “ETX Creatives Podcast” to showcase local artists and to delve into the creative process.

Before the pandemic, ETX Creatives hosted in-person exhibitions and workshops where hundreds of visitors from throughout the state could try their hand at printmaking or creating their own T-shirts. While those meet-ups have been put on pause, the group has continued to raise funds for local artistic projects.

And the best may be yet to come. Along with her ETX Creatives partners Jessica Sanders and Lisa Horlander, Moore is working to organize their informal group into an official non-profit. Once established, they can raise money for their own space, where they aim to continue hosting public events, have a permanent gallery and provide studio space for short-term artist residencies.

“My ultimate goal is to influence an economy among the creative community so people want to buy from local artists,” says Moore. “It can create appreciation and community support beyond just a space for us to talk to each other.” 

THE FUTURE OF ART

When it was founded in 1961, the Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen promoted local creators with a traveling "Guild Train" that exhibited their work across the state. The Guild Train no longer runs, but the organization still brings artists, craftsmen, collectors, galleries and other interested parties together.

In recent years, the guild's transformation has seen it harness the power of the internet to build social media communities and host online collections, where visitors can view and purchase work from member artists. Greg Lakes, who joined the guild after he and his wife opened the Clover Bottom Bed and Breakfast in McKee, hopes organizations like the guild continue to see the value of online communities for their members.

"Those places are where you have to be now to be viable as a selling artist," he says. "We have a lot of great artists in the area who come to the guild, and I think the groups that are going to survive are the ones who develop their online presence."

For more information, visit kyguild.org.



CREATIVE VOICES

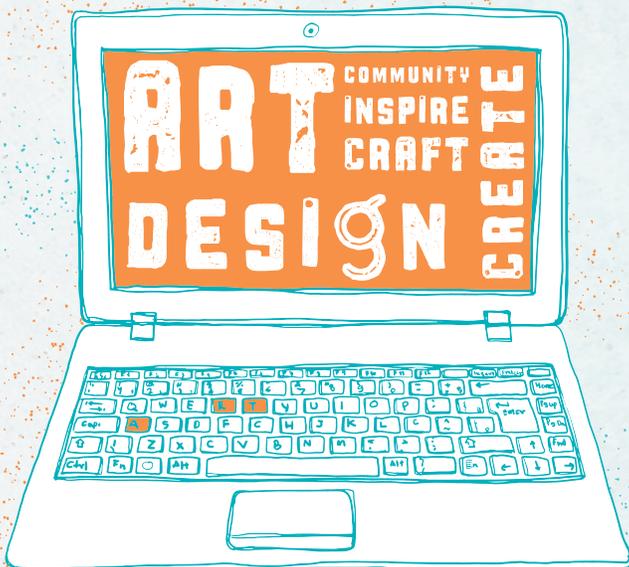
Access to fast internet services creates fresh opportunities for creators in rural communities throughout the nation.

"I've never had to advertise. I just use Facebook to let people know when the classes are, and people usually use that to save a spot."

— Tammie Franklin, owner and teacher at Tammie's Treasures Painting Classes in River, Kentucky

"It helps us stay connected, and we reach a larger audience. It's one of the best ways we have to spread the word about what we do."

— Debra Ruzinsky, director of the Appalachian Center for Craft in Smithville, Tennessee





Wade's One Stop, a convenience store and market in Flatgap, has expanded over the years to include a gun shop and pawn shop. From left, employees Blair Blanton and Macy Jordan help Betty and Wade Castle run the shop.

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by JIM ARNETT

GAS, GROCERIES AND ... GUNS?

Wade's One Stop expands its offerings

Like many Kentucky coal towns, Flatgap has seen its share of highs and lows. But Wade and Betty Castle, owners of Wade's One Stop, won't give up on their town or its people.

"I grew up in the area, and I knew everybody, and everybody knew me," Wade Castle says. "I didn't want to have to leave here to get work. I was 23 when I bought the store in 2000. It was something I wanted to try, and I did."

CONVENIENCE STORE AND MORE

Since he bought the store, plenty has changed in the region. Many of the coal jobs that employed the majority of the working population went away, and fewer people were around to shop at the little gas station and convenience store.

That didn't stop the Castles, however. In the two decades they've been in operation, the family continued to add products to Wade's One Stop, including propane fuel, plants, fertilizer and feed, pizzas, ice cream by the scoop, and take-home foods,



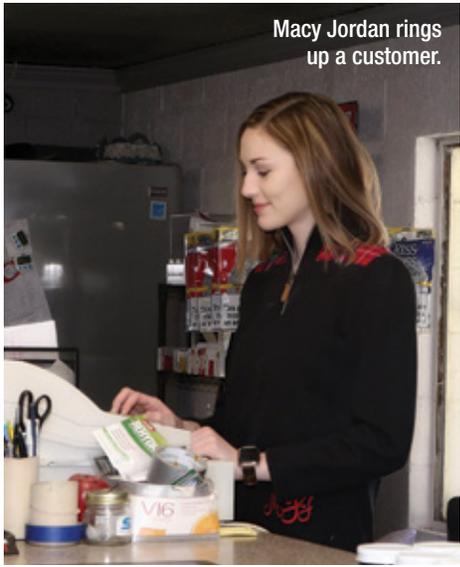
Wade Castle, daughter Macy Jordan, and Betty Castle.

like hamburgers and french fries. "It's continually gotten harder through the years," Castle says. "We've had to diversify. It's a challenge to stay competitive with corporate America sweeping everybody up."

In 2016, the couple also decided to start a pawn and gun shop, One Stop Pawn, under the same roof. "We did that to survive," says Betty Castle, who works in the shop when she's not working part time at the local electric company. "But it's also a service to the community. People will come in here and pawn something to make ends meet. When they get back on their feet, they come back for it if they still want it."



Blair Blanton offers up an ice cream cone for a visitor. Wade's One Stop started selling ice cream as another way to diversify the business.



Macy Jordan rings up a customer.

NEED FOR SPEED

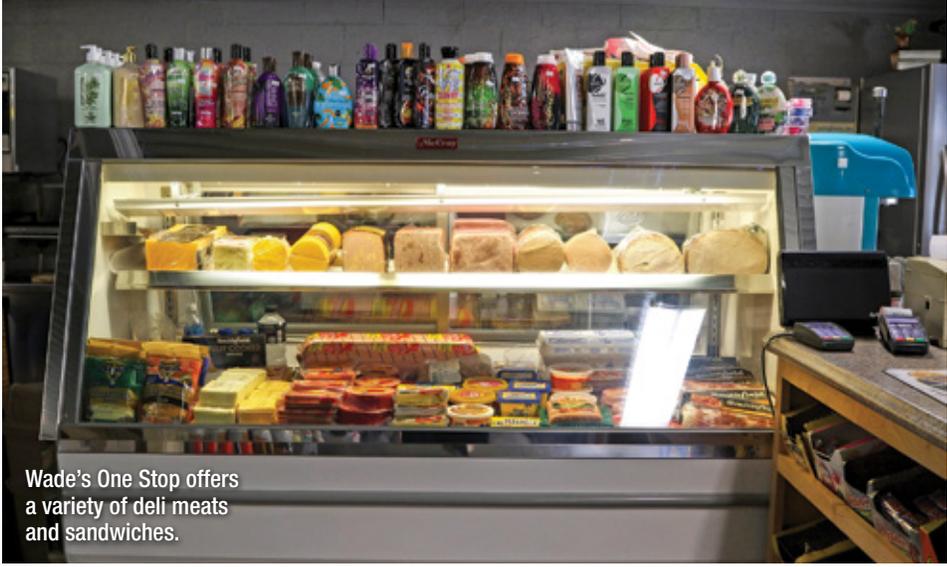
The business additions created an increased need for technology at the shops, Wade Castle says. Whether for resupplying products or doing background checks for gun purchases, the high-speed fiber internet connection from Foothills Communications is no longer a perk. It's a necessity.

National gun sales in 2020 broke the previous record from 2016, prompting 17.2 million background checks by November, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Without access to a reliable internet service, the Castles' new gun shop might not be doable. Background checks for guns are done online, after all.

Fast internet service also helps keep the family from working harder than they already have to. While his wife, his daughter and an employee help out, Wade Castle works about 80 hours in the stores in a typical week. Then, he works quite a few more just keeping them supplied. If his internet service were to lag, that time would increase and create problems.

COMMUNITY WATCH

The family also delivers to some of their older customers or to people who can't get out easily. Generally, the delivery service is open to longtime customers and people who need it. During the coronavirus pandemic, they needed a way to make it more



Wade's One Stop offers a variety of deli meats and sandwiches.

convenient for people in the community who couldn't drive and didn't have access to other delivery services. "We love our community," Betty Castle says. "We want to help people and do things for them when we can."

But despite all the high-tech improvements and new offerings, Wade's One Stop and One Stop Pawn continue to be mom-and-pop operations — the little place down the road where friends are made. People can still hang out to catch up on the events of the day or talk about sports. It's still one of the best places to get a Kahn's bologna sandwich or pick up some tenderloin, hamburger meat or pork chops.

"Most of our customers are repeat customers," Wade Castle says. "We may have

75% of the same customers throughout the year. There just aren't a lot of people traveling through.

"The places where people can just sit out on the porch and talk to each other just don't exist anymore," he says. "But that's what we are. We'll get you checked out quick, but if you want to sit and talk, well, that's all right, too." 📞

EVERYTHING UNDER ONE ROOF
Wade's One Stop and One Stop Pawn are at 6863 KY-172 in Flatgap. For more information or for hours, call 606-265-3500, or visit their Facebook page.



Sunny side up?

Mix it up in the morning

Ham and eggs just go together — you rarely think of one without picturing the other. And they are so often seen together on an Easter menu.

But what do you do once the Easter lunch is over and you're faced with leftover ham and lots of eggs?

For starters, make sure that you've handled all the food safely. With a lot of cooks in the kitchen prepping so much food, sometimes safe food handling practices fly out the window. Make sure you're preparing — and storing — food properly, so all of your guests leave with a full tummy and not a sick stomach.

While you're boiling eggs to dye for Easter, boil some extras, and make sure you keep them in the refrigerator until you're ready to use them.

Don't serve or eat any eggs that have been at room temperature for more than two hours.

As for your ham, if it's ready to eat then, you simply have to warm it up. But if you have to roast it yourself, make sure the internal temperature reaches 145 F.



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HAM AND EGG CASSEROLE

- 2 medium cooked potatoes, peeled and sliced
- 4 hard-boiled large eggs, chopped
- 1 cup diced fully cooked ham
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 large egg
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 1/4 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted

In a large bowl, combine the potatoes, eggs, ham, salt and pepper. Combine the raw egg and sour cream. Add to potato mixture and gently toss to coat. Transfer to a greased 11-by-7-inch baking dish.

Toss bread crumbs and butter. Sprinkle over casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350 F for 20 minutes or until bubbly and cooked through.

CREAMED HAM AND EGGS

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 1/4 cups milk
- 1 cup diced cooked ham
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- 4 biscuits

Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Stir flour, mustard, salt and pepper into butter until mixture is smooth and bubbly. Remove from heat and add milk. Return to heat and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil until mixture thickens — about 1 minute.

Stir ham and eggs into milk mixture and cook until heated through. Spoon creamed ham and eggs onto biscuits and serve.

PUFFY HAM AND EGG QUICHE

- 1 (17 1/3 ounce) box frozen puff pastry
- 8 ounces ham, chopped
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
- 8 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 1 beef bouillon cube
- 1/4 cup evaporated milk, warm
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, grated

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Roll one sheet of puff pastry into a pie dish. Sprinkle ham on the bottom of the pie. Add a layer of sliced hard-boiled eggs and a layer of the mozzarella cheese.

Dissolve the beef bouillon in the warm milk and mix with parsley, beaten eggs and Parmesan cheese. Pour over ham, eggs and cheese. Cover the pie with the second puff pastry. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown. Let it sit for 5 to 10 minutes before cutting and serving.



Hard boiled eggs benedict

- 4 hard-boiled eggs
- 2 English muffins (split half)
- 4 slices ham
- Chopped parsley (optional)

Hollandaise Sauce:

- 4 large egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 cup butter (very slightly softened, cut into 5 pieces)
- Pinch of salt
- Dash of cayenne pepper (optional)

Prepare hollandaise sauce by placing a heat-proof bowl over a pan of gently simmering water (about 1 1/2 inches of water). The bottom of the bowl should not be touching the water. Alternatively, a double boiler set can be used. Add egg yolks and lemon juice to the bowl and whisk vigorously until the mixture becomes shiny/glossy and thickens. Whisk in

one piece of butter until fully incorporated into mixture. Repeat with remaining pieces, one at a time.

Whisk in a pinch of salt and a dash of cayenne, if using. If mixture is too thick, whisk in a bit of warm water, a tablespoon at a time. Remove from heat and use immediately.

In a hot skillet, over medium heat, heat the ham. Toast the English muffins until lightly browned. Cut each hard-boiled egg into fourths. Assemble by placing an English muffin half on a plate (cut side up), topping with 1 slice of ham, 1 egg (cut into fourths), and drizzle with 1/4 of the hollandaise sauce. Topped with chopped parsley, if desired, and serve warm.

Alternately, to make this dish a little easier, buy an envelope of Knorr's hollandaise sauce mix and follow package directions.



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