

# CONNECTION

## Kentucky Idol

Noah Thompson  
wins 'American Idol'

THE COX  
LEGACY  
CONTINUES

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SMOKED MEAT  
TREATS



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

## Faster broadband benefits rural America

**A**s the chief executive officer of NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, I am proud to represent 850 small, independent broadband providers who are offering some of the highest possible broadband speeds to some of the most remote parts of the country. Thanks to NTCA members, many rural Americans have higher internet speeds than I have where I live just outside Washington, D.C.

We currently have a once-in-a-generation opportunity through billions of dollars of funding recently made available by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other federal programs to bridge the digital divide and bring broadband to those who still lack it. As broadband is deployed thanks to this funding, we must ensure that recipients are using it to provide the best possible services.

Recently, Federal Communications Commission Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel initiated a process to redefine what it means to have broadband-speed internet, raising the standard. This move continues us down the path needed to give rural residents the internet service they not only need but also deserve as they connect to vital resources like telemedicine, online education, employment opportunities and much more.

A new, more realistic, standard provides a range of benefits, including clarifying the true needs of rural areas and the funding required to serve them.

We have long advocated that, as a nation, we need to aim higher and do better when it comes to setting broadband objectives. We applaud Chairwoman Rosenworcel's efforts. We look forward to continuing to work with the FCC and other agencies to bridge the digital divide. 📶

# A bridge to the future

## Your communications provider is your link to vital resources

The digital world increasingly weaves its way into our lives, replacing formerly physical resources, tasks and tools. Consider restaurants, for example. For some, scanning a QR code with your phone to view the options online has replaced physical menus.

Rapid expansion of digital resources was a trend before the pandemic, but it's only accelerated in the years since.

In an article this year for Wired — “The Digital Divide Is Coming for You” — Bhaskar Chakravorti, dean of global business for The Fletcher School at Tufts University in Massachusetts, described having broadband and mobile internet as table stakes. Without those services, you don't exist digitally, he says.

Your rural internet service provider is committed to bridging the digital divide between you and vital resources like these:

### BANKING



### STREAMING TV



### HEALTH CARE RECORDS



### GOVERNMENT RESOURCES



### EVENT TICKETS



### WEATHER ALERTS



### GAMING



### HOME SALES AND PURCHASES



### COLLEGE APPLICATIONS



# What's the password?

## How to build — and remember — strong passwords

It's difficult to do anything online without piling up a few passwords. Using the same one for multiple sites can leave your private information vulnerable to cyberattacks, and devising strong passwords full of random letters and symbols can make them impossible to remember.

A good password doesn't have to be unintelligible, but it does need to be random enough to avoid any clear patterns. Here are a few helpful tips for building passwords that will keep your online accounts secure without forcing you to hit the "Forgot my password" link every time you want to log in.

**At least 12 characters** — the longer your password, the more difficult it will be to crack. In general, you should create passwords with a minimum of 12 to 14 characters. But more is always better.

**Change it up** — using a mix of different characters like numbers, symbols, capital and lowercase letters makes your passwords stronger.

**Avoid full words** — using your favorite team's name as a password

doesn't cut it anymore. In fact, you should avoid using any full words you might find in the dictionary. That goes for any common phrases, too.

**Diceware** — one exception to the above rule is the Diceware method. By stringing truly random words together, you can build a secure passphrase that is easier to remember than a jumble of letters and numbers. To help with this process, search for the Diceware Password Generator. It can randomly select between two and eight words to build your passphrase.

**Avoid obvious substitutions** — "Password" doesn't become stronger if you change it to "P@ssword." Avoid substituting obvious symbols for letters. If it has occurred to you, it has probably occurred to a hacker.

**Go to the manager** — if you're having trouble keeping track of all your logins, a password manager can help. Programs like Dashlane, LastPass and Keeper manage your passwords across numerous sites and devices, making it easier to avoid repeats. All you need to remember is one strong password, and you're set. 🗝



## Tired of passwords?

### Apple may have the answer

At its Worldwide Developers Conference earlier this year, Apple demonstrated a new "passkeys" feature that may spell the end for passwords.

Rather than inputting a password for every site you visit, passkeys would use a biometric sign-in like the Touch ID or Face ID that currently exists on iPhones and iPads. Websites and apps on non-Apple devices would provide a QR code that sends authentication to the user's phone or tablet.

Just a month earlier, Apple joined with Google and Microsoft to support the development of new passwordless logins on both mobile and desktop devices. So, even if passkeys don't crack the code, you may not need to juggle passwords for much longer.



# Powerful and capable

Foothills was built to serve you

As I've watched Foothills grow, particularly in recent years as our internet services have offered performance rivaling that found in big cities, I've come to appreciate that we're a true communications hub, linking you to the resources you need daily. And there's no national company willing — or capable — of creating such a network in a rural area like ours.



**RUTH CONLEY**  
Chief Executive Officer

Whether it's fast internet, television, phone or digital tools for businesses, we're here for you. What's more, we do it all with a local touch. Everyone who is a part of Foothills lives here, shops at local stores, sends their kids to our schools and celebrates the wins and losses of our community.

Those connections help make Foothills the company it is — a high-powered technology provider staffed by your friends and neighbors. We've even been recognized for our efforts, earning two national certifications for our fiber optic network.

Foothills was given both the Smart Rural Community award and the Gig-Capable Provider certification from NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association. Receiving these prestigious awards was an honor for our entire team, because they represent not only our hard

work, but also all the good we've done. A high-speed internet connection is essential for this region to compete, and we're pleased we can provide such a resource.

The Smart Rural Community award recognizes independent telcos like Foothills. It also honors the communities served by the telcos for their use of this advanced technology.

The NTCA, which oversees these certification programs, is the premier association representing nearly 900 independent, community-based telecommunications companies leading innovation in rural and small-town America. Foothills joins only a handful of cooperatives across the United States to earn both the Smart Rural Community award and the Gig-Capable Provider certification.

The Gig-Capable Provider certification recognizes telecommunications providers who deliver the top tier of broadband internet speeds available.

There are national studies that show the positive benefits of broadband that we see daily. Areas with access to high-speed broadband experience a higher quality of life in several categories, including job generation, new opportunities in the classroom, greater ability for medical providers to offer higher-quality health care and more efficient government services.

What's more, our fiber network, a system that sends pulses of light along strands of glass the thickness of a human hair, has the capacity to meet the needs of today as well as tomorrow's demand. Our fiber network gives the cooperative the ability to offer internet speeds of up to 1 Gbps, or 1,000 Mbps — about 10 times faster than the average internet speeds across the country. Few communities have such a resource.

For example, a Foothills customer with a 1 Gbps internet connection can download a two-hour, high-definition movie in as little as 25 seconds. Downloading that same movie on a 10 Mbps connection would take about 55 minutes.

Fiber technology also supports a range of other services, including crystal-clear digital television and phone service.

We couldn't be happier to serve you. This is just the beginning, and we look forward to expanding our services to meet your future communications needs as they grow and change. Thank you. 📞



## CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022

VOL. 9, NO. 5

The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2022. 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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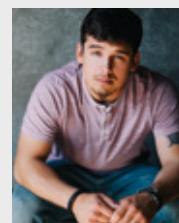
### Foothills Mission Statement

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

Produced for Foothills Communications by:



### On the Cover:



Blaine native Noah Thompson plots out his next steps after winning "American Idol." See story Page 8.

Photo by Easton Schirra

# DON'T BE AFRAID OF SOMETHING NEW!



**GET SPOOKTACULAR COVERAGE  
WITH WHOLE HOME WI-FI FROM  
FOOTHILLS COMMUNICATIONS.**

Call today to get Wi-Fi coverage in every  
corner of your home!



606-297-3501  
foothills.net

## Foothills Communications is a Smart Rural Community

Foothills Communications is proud to announce that it has partnered with NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association to become a Smart Rural Community provider. The SRC program helps rural communities use broadband to improve economic development, education, health care and other vital community services. Foothills joins a network of SRC-designated telecoms that are finding more ways to help rural communities thrive.



**Relax and unwind**

Foothills Communications wishes you a peaceful and fun Labor Day! Our office will be closed Monday, Sept. 5, in recognition of the holiday.



# GETTING AWAY

## *to the farm*

A few days in a pastoral setting can do wonders for the heart and mind

Story by ANNE BRALY

The South's diversity of rolling pastures, mountain vistas, natural springs and lakes makes it an appealing getaway. But why book a hotel stay when you can wake up to the call of a rooster and go to bed with the hoot of an owl?

Farm stays are one of the best ways to absorb nature, eat home-grown food and learn about rural life. Farmers are welcoming guests by turning their barns and unused dwellings into overnight accommodations for a vacation you're likely to remember for years to come. And who knows? Maybe you'll realize farm living is the life for you.

It's a win-win for guests and farmers. These stays give guests a few days off the beaten path, and they allow landowners to bring in income while educating the public about working the land. "It's a way for farmers to show the inner workings of their farms, what it takes to grow food for their tables, who we are and the stories we

hold. Also, it's nice to welcome city dwellers to our farm to bridge a growing urban-rural divide and offer them our countrysides for relaxation, calm, play and connection," says Scottie Jones, a farmer and founder of the U.S. Farm Stay Association.

And for small farmers, it's a way to make much-needed money for new equipment and for upkeep and repairs of old farm equipment. The extra funds also help with costs like insurance, retirement savings and college funds.

"In the last decade, the concept of hosting guests on one's farm has risen to the surface, especially as booking sites such as Airbnb and VRBO have made the daunting task of taking reservations much more easy to handle," Scottie says.

So, if you're considering something different for your vacation this year, here are some Southern farms opening their gates to overnight guests.



Photo courtesy of By Faith Farm



Devoted to feeding the hungry, By Faith Farm creates opportunities for visitors to pitch in and help.

Photo courtesy of Lori Birkhead





Photo courtesy of Lori Birkhead



Photo courtesy of Kokovoko Breeding Farm

## REVIVAL HILL FARM

### Cullman, Alabama

Milk cows, pick herbs from the garden, gather eggs from the henhouse or just sit back and enjoy life at Revival Hill Farm. The farm stay has one bedroom and a roomy living area with couch, television chairs and kitchenette. It's attached to the farm store/milking parlor with a private outdoor entrance and access to farm animals, garden, fire pit, pond, pasture and woodlands with numerous trails for hiking. If you need more space, Revival Hill also has a house you can rent. This three-bedroom, two-bath accommodation is located across the street and has a full kitchen, laundry room, open-concept living area and beautiful covered back porch.

The farm is a stone's throw from Smith Lake Park, so tow your boat. There's plenty of boat parking at the farm.

*Nightly rate: \$172*

*Reservations: Airbnb*

## STONEWOOD FARM

### Ridgefield, South Carolina

Enjoy life at a slower pace at this farm with its menagerie of goats, chickens, horses, dogs and friendly felines. The farm offers overnights, glamping-style, in a 14-by-20-foot tent on a raised platform with an outdoor dining area set up for roasting s'mores at night or for drinking your coffee in the morning. The tent sleeps six and comes complete with lanterns, heaters, snacks, a coffee maker and a television with a large selection of movies.

The farm is located in the South Carolina Lowcountry, not too far from Charleston and Hilton Head, so you can

spend a day touring the city and then come back to the country to unwind.

*Nightly rate: \$95*

*Reservations: Airbnb*

## BY FAITH FARM

### Joelton, Tennessee

This farm works a little differently than some others. With a mission to grow healthy food for those in need, 100% of your nightly rate will go toward feeding the hungry in surrounding communities. It's a farm stay with a purpose.

Stay in a 1,500-square-foot, two-bedroom, two-bath modern loft apartment with kitchen and living room above a red barn. Wander the fields, hike the trails or sit beside a pond and reflect on your peaceful surroundings just 15 miles outside the busyness of Nashville.

Pick vegetables from the donation gardens or help harvest food for By Faith Farm's food bank collections.

*Nightly rate: \$275*

*Reservations: Airbnb or byfaithfarm.com*

## KOKOVOKO BREEDING FARM

### Corinth, Kentucky

Pop a tent out in the open fields or make reservations for the carriage house. Either way, you'll spend time in the beautiful outdoors of Central Kentucky's horse country.

Swedish Gotland ponies and Lincoln Longwool sheep graze over 150 acres of Kentucky rolling hills and forest. It's unspoiled. It's organic. It's totally natural. Bring your binoculars — the bird-watching is great. Or sign up for a fiber workshop. And helping out with the farm chores is always appreciated.

**Left:** Visitors to By Faith Farm enjoy an interactive experience.

**Middle:** At By Faith Farm in Joelton, Tennessee, the goal is to grow healthy food for those in need, and money raised from visitors helps feed the hungry.

**Above:** The carriage house at Kokovoko Breeding Farm can sleep five — perfect for families or friends traveling together.

The carriage house can sleep five, so bring the family — but leave your electronics at home. They won't work here. This is a chance to immerse your family in a totally different way of life. Stroll down the country roads, look for wildlife, play in the creek, baa at the sheep and visit the ponies — they always love a good brushing.

*Nightly rate: \$50-\$200*

*Reservations: farmstayus.com*

## THE SHAGGY GOAT

### Waleska, Georgia

Pet the goats, feed the chickens, learn about beekeeping, try your hand at gardening or hike or bike the nearby mountain trails. Or just spend the day lolling in your hammock. It's up to you. Your time is your own at The Shaggy Goat, a farm in the beauty of the Southern Appalachians of North Georgia.

Overnight accommodations are in a one-bedroom cottage on the property with views of the working farm, so join in and learn a thing or two. There's a pool just a few yards from the cottage — don't forget your bathing suits. On warm days, take your pillow outside and nap on the sleeping porch. Bring your own food, but don't be surprised to find the makings for s'mores in the evening or fresh-from-the-farm eggs and honey for breakfast. 🐐

*Nightly rate: \$226*

*Reservations: Airbnb*

# A STORYTELLER IS BORN

**'American Idol' winner  
brings it home**

Story by JEN CALHOUN

**A**s Noah Thompson sang his first song for “American Idol” 2022, the show’s superstar judges — Luke Bryan, Katy Perry and Lionel Richie — looked at each other and smiled knowingly. They realized immediately the kid could sing. They also seemed to understand that Noah would go very, very far.

“You’re the American dream,” Perry told him, while Richie commented on his “real-life, storytelling” voice. Bryan simply looked at the then-19-year-old construction worker from Blaine and said, “You’re why this job is cool.”

Four months, dozens of performances and 16 million votes later, Noah went on to win the 20th season of the national singing competition that has launched dozens of careers, including those of Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, Adam Lambert and Jennifer Hudson. “My heart is beating out of my chest,”

he told the audience at the finale in May. “This is crazy.”

## **HOMECOMING**

A few weeks later in a phone interview, Noah was more relaxed but still in shock. It was early June, and he had returned to his home in Blaine to spend time with his grandmother, Karen Thompson; his girlfriend, Angel Dixon; and their baby son, Walker. “It’s a lot, man,” Noah says. “I’m just happy to be back home and seeing my family. I’m taking it all in.”

He’d also started planning his next steps. During a trip to Nashville, he met with people in the music industry and performed his debut single, “One Day Tonight,” at the CMA Fest. “I’m getting an idea of what I’m going to be doing soon,” he says. “I’m not writing much in the way of songs yet, but I’m looking forward to sitting down and having the

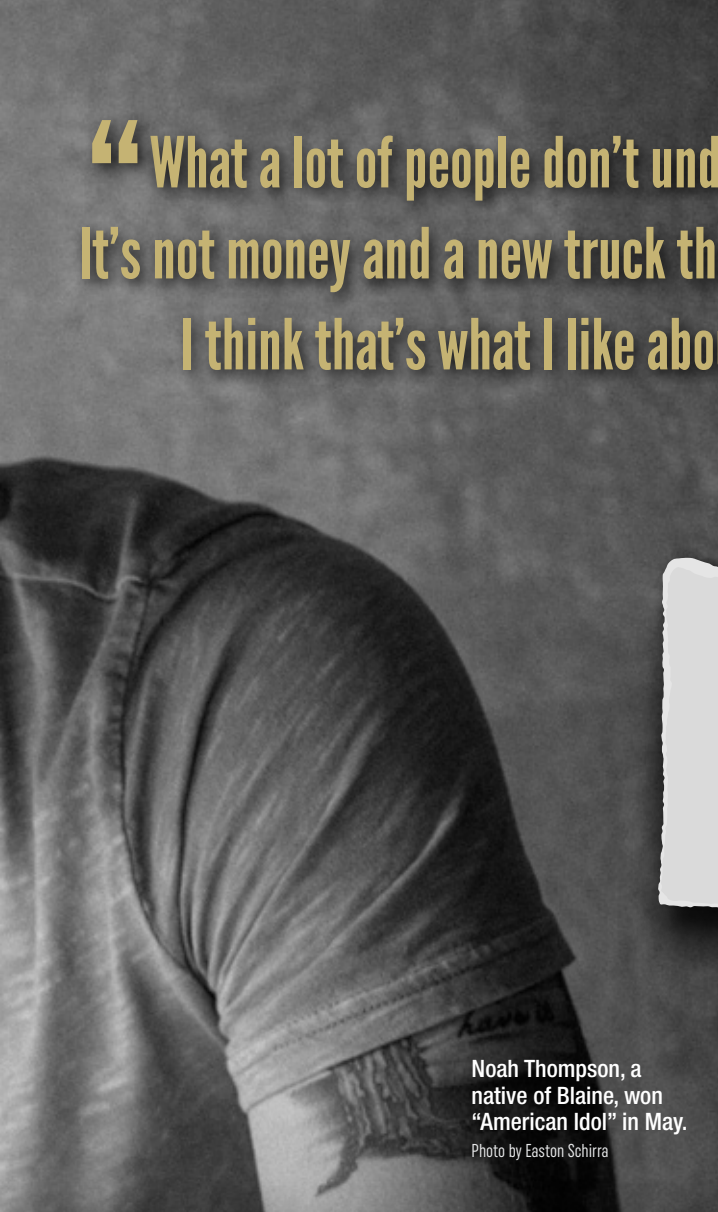
time to write some music since I’m not working a full-time job anymore.”

## **FROM DRYWALL TO HOLLYWOOD**

Noah’s entry into “American Idol” positioned him more as a country singer than anything else. But country music was relatively new to him at the time. “I grew up with a dad that was in a band,” he says. “So, I was always listening to my dad’s music, which was more rock ’n’ roll — like Nickelback and Creed.”

It wasn’t until the 2020 Lawrence County High grad started working on a construction crew for Addiction Recovery Care Centers that he gained a true appreciation for country music. “My co-workers — all they did was listen to country music, and I really started getting into it,” he says. “I realized that country music, to me, is storytelling, and that’s what I want to do.”





**“What a lot of people don’t understand about me is I’m such a simple guy. It’s not money and a new truck that makes me happy. It’s just simple things. I think that’s what I like about being back home. You don’t need much.”**

**— NOAH THOMPSON**

## Finding Noah

Noah Thompson's single, "One Day Tonight," hit the iTunes country music's Top 10 earlier this spring. He is scheduled to perform at the Black Gold Festival in Hazard on Saturday, Sept. 17, at 8 p.m. To keep up to date with his latest releases, appearances and more, follow him on Instagram and TikTok at [noahthompsonmusic](https://www.instagram.com/noahthompsonmusic), and the Noah Thompson Facebook page. You can also find videos of Noah's performances on YouTube.

Noah Thompson, a native of Blaine, won "American Idol" in May.

Photo by Easton Schirra

His buddies instantly spotted Noah's talent, too. They posted videos on social media of him singing at their job sites and in the car. "They kind of forced me into it," he says. "It was my first job, and every one of those boys played guitar or some kind of instrument. So, they kind of jumped in and pushed me."

His friend and co-worker, Arthur Johnson, also entered him into "American Idol." "Noah's just got pure, raw talent," Arthur told the judges. "He's not born to be working with us doing drywall. He's gifted."

### ON THE ROAD TO FIND OUT

Noah says he's ready to get started on whatever his future holds, but he'll never be too far from home in his heart. When asked about Lionel Richie's comment on his "storytelling voice," Noah says, "That's what I was kind of shooting for, man. I mean, any compliment you can get from Lionel Richie is cool, but that's what I want — I want to tell stories. And everybody around here's got a story to tell." 🗨️

## THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

When "American Idol" filmed Noah Thompson coming home to Eastern Kentucky, he asked the film crew to stop on the side of the road in Lawrence County. "This is it," Noah says in the video, pointing to a U.S. 23 Country Music Highway sign honoring Larry Cordle, Ricky Skaggs, Don Rigsby, Keith Whitley and Tyler Childers. "This is the big sign I'm telling everybody about all the time — the one with all the big names, with all the guys I look up to."

The highway, dotted with tribute signs and visitor attractions, is an ode to the rich musical heritage of the people of Eastern Kentucky. It spans seven counties in the region and includes names of the natives who made it big in the music world — names like Loretta Lynn, Keith Whitley, The Judds, Chris Stapleton, Tom T. Hall, Dwight Yoakam and Patty Loveless, among others.

Noah has been honored with his own sign at the Lawrence County-Johnson County border. It reads, "Lawrence County, Home of Country Music's Noah Thompson." Noah's name is also expected to be added to both Country Music Highway signs in Lawrence County, pending legislation.

For more information on the Country Music Highway, visit [kentuckytourism.com](https://kentuckytourism.com).

# Find your wavelength

Podcasts let you tune in to your passions



Podcasts have seen an explosion in popularity in recent years, thanks to their variety and the connections hosts forge with their listeners. If you've never listened to a podcast before, you can think of them like prerecorded radio shows on your favorite topics.

But, because listeners can download podcasts to a phone or computer and play them at any time, audiences can go as deep or as light as they want on a given topic. Podcasts also don't require the full attention video does, meaning you can drive to work, answer emails or cook dinner — all while continuing to enjoy your favorite programming.

In the early days of podcasting, following your favorite show meant navigating a technological obstacle course of downloads and synced devices. Today, the process is as easy as downloading an app.

Apps like Apple Podcasts and Stitcher make it easy to search thousands of the latest podcasts and subscribe to your

favorites for free. If you have the Spotify app, you're already set. Just go to the Search tab and choose "Podcasts & Shows" to start adding new discoveries to your list.

Not sure where to start? Here are a few of our favorites to get you going:

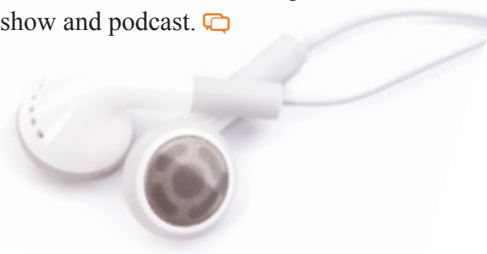
► **"Criminal"** — One of the first true crime hits, even before "Serial" hit the scene, "Criminal" tells the "stories of people who've done wrong, been wronged, or gotten caught somewhere in the middle." Going beyond tales of murder, it takes a critical look at the impact of crime on its victims and perpetrators.

► **"This American Life"** — "This American Life" has been on the air since 1995, so there are plenty of stories to catch up on. Described as little movies for radio, each episode is also a little different. But they all tell the true, entertaining and often surprising stories of the people and events shaping our American lives.

► **"The Big Picture"** — Struggling to keep up with the latest movie releases? Hosts Sean Fennessey and Amanda Dobbins run down all the movies you need to see while also discussing old favorites and interviewing the people behind them twice a week.

► **"Lore"** — Truth is scarier than fiction in this documentary podcast series that explores the dark corners of history. Gather around the audio campfire to listen in on true historical tales, legends and folklore biweekly.

► **"Sound Opinions"** — Chicago music critics Jim DeRogatis and Greg Kot know everyone's a critic. Each week, they get together to discuss music's greats, talk shop with artists and share their opinions on the latest releases on this independent radio show and podcast. 📻







# The newest spectator sport

Streaming platforms like Twitch let gamers build massive followings

Gamers have thriving online communities, including platforms like Twitch, that give millions of fans from around the world a place to share their knowledge and experience, while also providing countless hours of entertainment.

## WHY WATCH INSTEAD OF PLAY?

Staying up to date with the latest and greatest video games can be expensive and time consuming. Sometimes game descriptions and reviews aren't enough — it's better to see a game in action. Avid gamers can check out a Twitch stream to see if a game is right for them, gain insight into a game's features, and find updates and creative fixes to problems. Many people subscribe to Twitch channels just for the entertainment value.

It's also a way to engage with others in the gaming community. Live broadcasts

feature an interactive chat where viewers can talk with the streamer and other viewers. These connections with like-minded people and interesting personalities keep people interested and coming back for more.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF STREAMING YOUR GAMING?

There are many incentives for live-streamers. The revenue potential can be sky high — some streamers have built careers, earning millions and striking deals with game publishers to get exclusive early access to the newest games.

The higher a streaming channel's subscriber count, the more opportunities the streamer has for exclusive marketing partnerships. Viewers can also donate to the channel during the broadcast. The biggest Twitch streamers get most of their income from paid subscription fees. 💬

**While the Twitch website and app are still the most popular, other platforms have sprouted up as well.**

## YouTube

YouTube's gaming section, [youtube.com/gaming](https://youtube.com/gaming), has functions similar to Twitch, and it's gaining popularity with amateur streamers because its optimized search engine makes it easier for a beginner's content to get noticed.

The audience is shared with YouTube, so the potential pool of viewers is vastly greater than on Twitch. For streamers, YouTube has greater potential for earnings from advertisements.

## Facebook Gaming

Facebook Gaming is growing as existing Facebook users check out the video gaming hub that can be easily accessed through the main social media site or [FB.gg](https://fb.gg).

There's also a Facebook Gaming app enthusiasts can download to discover content, connect with other gamers and casually play mobile games. Like the other popular streaming platforms, Facebook allows users easy access to uploads from their favorite streamers. But, like its main site, Facebook Gaming users can join groups and like topics to tailor their timelines to their specific interests.





# *A century of* **SERVICE**

Cox Auto Parts  
puts customers first

Story by JEN CALHOUN



**C**ox Auto Parts got its start in the world as a small row of automotive accessories in what was probably an appliance or hardware store that local businessman Benjamin H. Cox began.

When the store opened in 1913, most people in that part of Kentucky still walked or traveled by horse to do their shopping. But as the number of cars and trucks rose through the decades, so did the sales of auto parts.

"The parts started to take up two aisles, then three, then more," says Roxanna Cox, who married Benjamin's grandson, Steve, the store's current owner, in 1981. "So, when they moved the store to Broadway in the 1950s, people said, 'You're crazy. Nobody will ever go all that way!' They thought it was way too far out of town, even though it's only a mile."

## **FAMILY, CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY**

More than 100 years after Benjamin started the business, Cox Auto Parts is still a fixture in Paintsville. It's also still owned and operated by the same family four generations later. In the 1950s, Benjamin's son, Tom Cox, along with his wife, Martha Joe, took

over and built up the auto parts business. Tom then handed it down to Steve, who ran it for decades before passing it down to his son, Steven, the current owner and manager.

Roxanna worked at the store herself for 30 years after marrying Steve. But before all that, she remembers coming to the shop with her father, an auto mechanic. "When I was a little girl, he'd bring me to the store and sit me on the counter while he visited, bought his parts and got coffee," she says. "Who knew I'd grow up to marry Steve and be part of the business? We have so many good memories."

Over the years, the store weathered the Great Depression, wars, recessions and a flood in 1957 that filled the newly opened Broadway store up to the countertops and kept the family out of business for a while. They've made it through the rise and fall of coal, constant changes in the automobile industry and the encroachment of corporate-owned auto parts chain stores.

"People from all over the region come here, and we deliver to the surrounding counties and as far away as West Virginia," Roxanna says. "We sell all kinds of auto parts, including hydraulic hoses, custom paint, rotors and more."





## LEGACY

Today, Cox Auto Parts is one of the few locally owned auto parts businesses in the region and the only one in Paintsville. But giving up has never been an option, Roxanna says. “It’s our legacy. It’s all we’ve ever known. I think we feel the need to help our community — to be of service.”

That commitment to the community is likely one of the reasons Cox Auto Parts is still around, despite the difficulties facing small businesses in recent years. They’ve been known to deliver parts to customers stranded on the side of the road, and sometimes, they help out after hours — something the chain stores don’t do. “Sometimes, it feels like we’re never really closed,” Roxanna says with a laugh. “One time, one of the local electric company’s vehicles broke down. I gave them a key and said, ‘Just write down what you’re taking, OK?’ And he did.”

While that’s an unusual example, the Cox family likes to help where they can. “Making sure our customers get what they need comes first,” she says. “It always has. We appreciate each and every customer. Without them, we wouldn’t be here.”



## A NEW GENERATION

When Steven started with the family business in 2010, he brought with him some new technology. Before that, the store was still operating with handwritten bills, credits, ledgers and an old card catalog system. “We never worried about Y2K,” says Roxanna, referencing the idea in the 1990s that computers would malfunction when the date changed to the year 2000. “We always joked, ‘We are Y2K-ready!’”

With new generations of family come new ideas, and Roxanna says the family is grateful for Steven bringing them into the 21st century. More

ABOVE: From left, Kirk Coakley, Bart Cox, Steve Cox and Justin Ramey put customer service first at Cox Auto Parts in Paintsville.

LEFT: Cox Auto Parts in Paintsville offers a huge selection of automotive parts.

## Family-owned SINCE 1913

The 10,000-square-foot Cox Auto Parts warehouse is at 813 Broadway Ave. in Paintsville. The store specializes in automotive parts and accessories, including hydraulic hoses, custom paint, rotors and more. The store prides itself on friendly, fast and responsive customer service. Visit the Cox Auto Parts Facebook page for more information, or call 606-789-5377.

generations following in the family footsteps would be nice, too. “We hope that maybe one of our grandchildren may come into the business someday,” she says. “That’s a dream of ours.” 📞



# It's time to go LOW AND SLOW



Cooking ribs at a low temperature for a long time tenderizes the meat and adds delightful flavor.

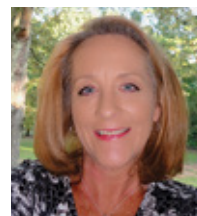
The aroma of smoke wafting through the air as meat slowly cooks goes hand in hand with a lazy summer afternoon. Smoking is not the same as grilling. There's a science to it that scares off some cooks, but break it down step by step, and you can become quite adept at making tender briskets and fall-off-the-bone ribs.

Smoking, more commonly known as barbecuing, takes time and patience. Defined simply, the technique takes a tough piece of meat and cooks it slowly over indirect heat for extended periods — often 12 to 16 hours and sometimes even more — while the smoke flavors the meat and gives it its mouthwatering flavor and texture. Any expert will tell you that the key to the best barbecue — that kind that wins competitions — is cooking it low and slow.

Cooking over high heat tends to dry the meat out very quickly. Any moisture within the meat is essentially blasted out, leaving it tough, dry and difficult to chew. Smoking meat slowly at a low temperature, on the other hand, keeps the moisture from evaporating too quickly, allowing you to achieve the perfect combination of tenderness and juiciness.

Here are two recipes that are good for beginners.

The 3-2-1 rib recipe is one many home smokers use. This method is easy and generally foolproof, creating ribs that are so tender you can pull the meat off the bone with your fingers. And pork butt is basically a no-brainer. Just rub it down with your favorite blend of seasonings or use the recipe that follows. Place it on the smoker and within just a few hours, you'll have tender pork perfect for sandwiches. Add a side of beans and some potato salad, and you'll have the makings of a beautiful, tasty summer dinner.



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## 3-2-1 RIBS METHOD

1 rack of ribs  
Your favorite rub  
Your favorite barbecue sauce

### STEP THREE:

Liberal coat the ribs with rub and allow them to “marinate” while you bring the smoker to 225 F. Place the ribs in the smoker, and add whatever wood chunks you want — cherry or hickory are popular. Smoke the ribs for 3 hours, maintaining the 225 F temperature. If you are smoking thinner back ribs, you may want to smoke them for just 2 hours. Any longer, and you may find the ribs dry out too much.

### STEP TWO:

The second stage is when the

meat tenderizes. Remove the ribs from the smoker and wrap them tightly in foil. This steams the meat and the result is tender, juicy ribs. Just before closing each rack of ribs in the foil, put a little bit of beer or apple juice in with the ribs. This helps the steaming process. Put the ribs, wrapped in foil, back in the smoker for 2 hours at 225 degrees.

### STEP ONE:

This final stage is when you sauce the ribs. Use your favorite barbecue sauce to liberal coat the ribs on both sides before placing them back in the smoker for a final hour. The result should be a rack of ribs you'll never forget.



## SMOKED BUTT

*Smoked pork butt is a good one for beginners. The meat is not expensive, and the result is a mouthful of summer.*

- 1 (7-8 pound) bone-in pork butt
- Olive oil
- Water

### Dry rub:

- 1/4 cup light brown sugar packed
- 2 tablespoons black pepper, coarsely ground
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dried minced onions
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

### Spritz:

- 1/4 cup apple juice
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

**Prepare the smoker:** Fill the hopper of your smoker with wood pellets, applewood, hickory, pecan or cherry. Start the smoker on the smoke setting for 5 to 10 minutes. Increase heat to 250 F.

Fill a small baking dish with water and set aside.

**Prepare the pork butt:** Place all dry rub ingredients in a small bowl and stir with a fork to combine. Place pork butt on a baking sheet and rub the entire butt with olive oil. Sprinkle the seasonings over it and rub them in, covering every bit of the butt.

Place the baking dish filled with water on the grate on one side of the smoker.

Fill a small spray bottle with the apple juice and apple cider vinegar and set aside.

Place pork shoulder on the grate and close the lid. Keep the smoker temperature around 250 to 275 F while smoking during these first several hours. Smoke for approximately 4 hours, spritzing with the spray bottle every hour.

Check the internal temperature of the pork using a meat thermometer. By this time, the pork should be at least 145 F.

Completely spritz the pork one last time and carefully wrap it in aluminum foil. Place pork back into the smoker and lower temperature to 225 F. Smoke pork about



A perfectly cooked pork butt is a great start to a summer sandwich.

another 4 hours, but do not spritz during this stage of cooking.

Check the internal temperature of the pork shoulder using a meat thermometer. You're looking for your pork shoulder to be about 200 F. Anywhere from 195 to 205 F is a good range. Remove pork from the smoker and let rest for at least 20 minutes but up to 2 hours. Shred or chop as desired. 🍴



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