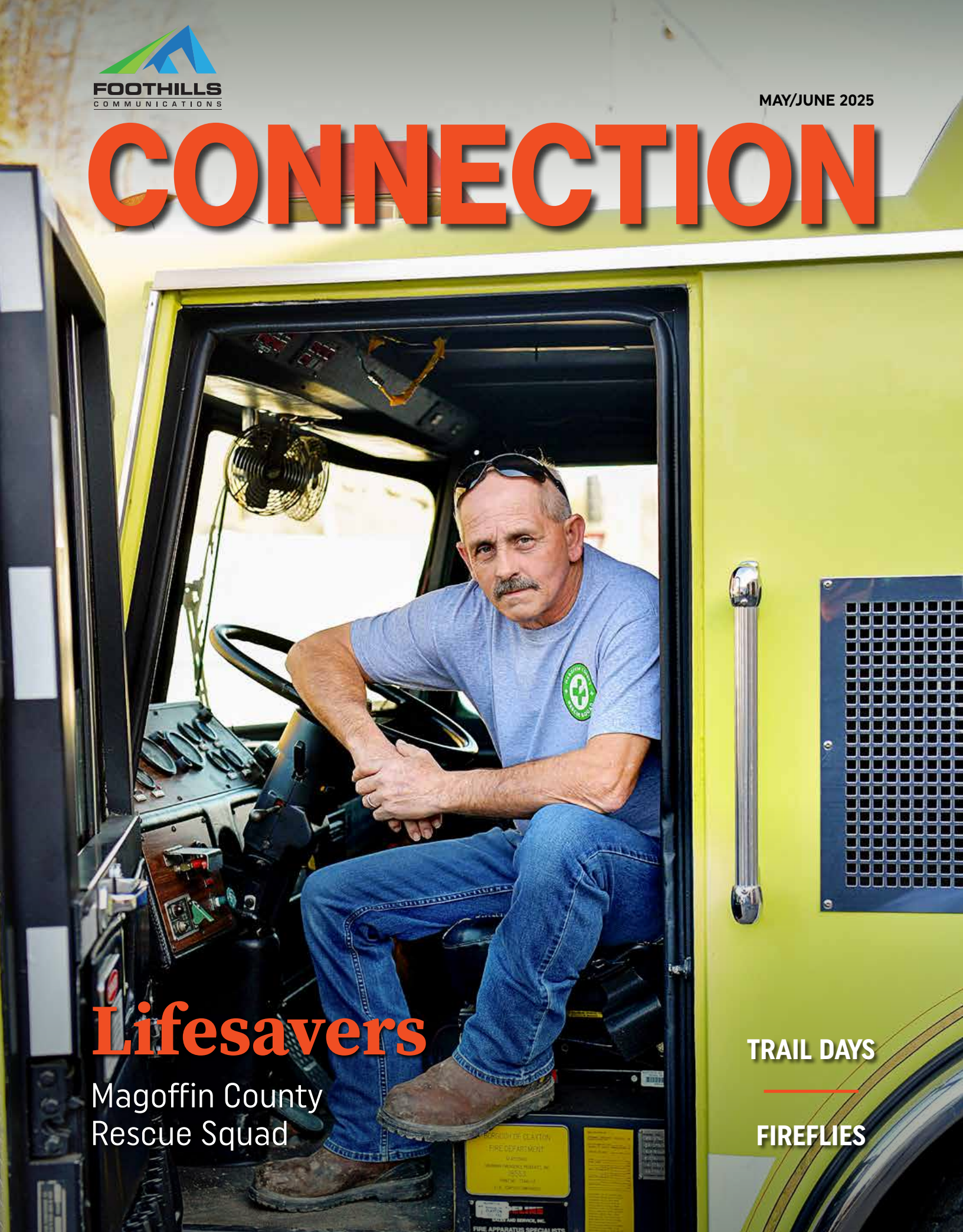


CONNECTION



Lifesavers

Magoffin County
Rescue Squad

TRAIL DAYS

FIREFLIES



By Shirley Bloomfield, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

The Journey to Connectivity


NTCA members create broadband networks so fast and reliable that it's easy to take for granted the effort and expertise needed to bring these services to homes and businesses. These professionals do amazing work, particularly when considering the intricate, multi-step journey to build, expand and maintain a network.

It begins with detailed research and careful planning. The broadband provider must learn exactly how many homes and businesses might want service, as well as the challenges posed by the landscape. Then, a thorough review of the numbers determines if the project makes financial sense. It's a puzzle where the pieces are population density, infrastructure costs and potential demand for the service.

Then there's the engineering—design, build and inspect. Detailed maps identify routes for cables, permitting, environmental regulations and access to land. Some of these projects can take two to four years from the first engineering drawing to the first connection.

The work doesn't stop when the network goes live. These networks require maintenance, technology upgrades and customer support.

These networks are lifelines connecting rural communities to telehealth, education, remote work and cutting-edge technologies. With the help of service providers like yours, we're building broadband to last and ensuring no community gets left behind in our increasingly digital world.

To learn more, check out the Foundation for Rural Service and JSI's latest report, "Delivering Broadband From Beginning to 'End,'" at frs.org/delivering-broadband-beginning-end. 



Safe Searches

Tips to avoid scams

When you need information fast, a quick check of Google is often the first stop. In fact, some people find it easier to search online for everything, including the addresses for a specific website like a bank, trusted repair service or health care provider.

Unfortunately, scammers know this, too, so they sometimes create bogus sites with addresses confusingly close to the real thing.

Google is aware of this trend, and it touts advanced systems that keep users' search results 99% spam-free. The company also offers a few tips for closing the final security weaknesses.

- Pay close attention to the URL—the specific web address—before clicking any unfamiliar link. Typically, in an email, hovering the cursor over the address will show the complete link. Don't click the link if it looks suspicious.
- The three dots next to the search results in Google can be used to find more details about the webpage, store or business you're considering. You can find clues indicating if the site is legitimate before clicking the link.
- When you're looking for official resources, watch out for unusual address formatting. For example, there's typically only one correct customer service number for a larger company. But not all businesses have customer service numbers, and searching for them requires you to be mindful. Watch for strange formatting in the website address, including unexpected symbols or emojis.

A Rockin' RECIPE

Hannah Dasher cooks up an online storm



Performer Hannah Dasher created a countryfied niche for herself on social media.

Photo courtesy of Jeremy Ryan Photography

Story by BRANDI DIXON

Hannah Dasher is a blast of classic country and rock 'n' roll paired with social media influencer. Stepping into the home she calls "Honky-Tonk Graceland" and features on her social media is, as Hannah says, like going back in time to "your meemaw's house."

"Avocado green canisters, gold salt and pepper shakers, brass pots. I love my retro kitchen, and I love that the fans feel right at home," she says, adding that she enjoys entertaining.

Music and songwriting are Hannah's first loves. "I was rehearsing my acceptance speech for best new female vocalist of the year in my mirror at age 10," she says. "I grew up listening to '90s country radio, and knew I wanted to be an entertainer."

Hannah pursued music professionally, taking her big hair and a heaping helping of Southern charm to Nashville, Tennessee. She started out writing songs for other artists, getting some big accolades thanks to collaborations with Brad

Paisley, Lainey Wilson and Ian Munsick, to name a few. She continued performing whenever she had the chance.

STAND BY YOUR PAN

In 2020 during the pandemic, Hannah found herself stuck. "All the stages shut down, and I needed a stage," she says. "Talking with some friends I learned a lot of girls my age couldn't cook, so I stumbled into the world of social media, and it was the perfect storm."

Hannah took to TikTok to share her

family's beloved recipes and a few of her own, all while sprinkling in a bit of her signature rockin' country flavor. The recipe produced the now-viral Stand By Your Pan social media accounts. More than 1.5 million followers join Hannah daily in her retro kitchen.

"I love that this brought country and noncountry music fans together," she says. "It's hard to pigeonhole into just one world, and I'm glad that I can be this representative of the past and the future via a semicelebrity chef." 📺

ALL THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS

When Hannah Dasher isn't cranking out content, she's picking up a guitar and writing music.

"God always sends it from the left side of the sky and out of my mouth," she says of her process. "Sometimes it's melody and lyrics simultaneously, but you just never know, and you always have to be looking for it."

Hannah is on the road this year with her band on The Wanted Tour, featuring stops across the United States, the United Kingdom and Sweden. She encourages fans to spread the word and come see her and her "boys."

The Magic of Technology That Simply Works

There's something truly remarkable about technology that just works—effortlessly, seamlessly, without the need for advanced skills or constant troubleshooting. Take your smartphone, for example. Whether you're searching for a photo of your cat, a breathtaking mountain view or a day at the beach, your favorite photo app delivers results instantly. It just works.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

That's exactly how internet service should be—fast, reliable and hassle-free. And while many providers promise great service, the reality is that not all technologies are created equal. Some services rely on aging copper lines, while others turn to satellites in low Earth orbit, or LEO, promising high speeds but falling short when it comes to consistency, latency and reliability.

With fiber, there's no comparison. Unlike LEO satellite internet, which struggles with congestion, weather-related disruptions and high latency, fiber delivers stable, high-speed performance—no matter the conditions. Rain, storms or heavy usage won't slow it down. Satellite connections, on the other hand, are susceptible to interference and often suffer from unpredictable slowdowns due to network congestion.

Fiber is the gold standard. It offers:

- **Consistently faster speeds**—No bottlenecks, no lag, just reliable performance.
- **Lower latency**—Essential for real-time activities like video calls, gaming, and stock trading.
- **Superior reliability**—No signal loss from bad weather or obstructions.
- **Future-proof scalability**—Fiber networks can handle the growing demand for bandwidth, unlike satellite and older broadband technologies.


Whether you're working from home, attending virtual classes or streaming your favorite content, fiber ensures everything runs smoothly. Have multiple devices connected at once? Rely on video calls? Love competitive online gaming? No problem—fiber delivers an unmatched experience.

Some providers claim their alternative technologies are “good enough,” but why settle? DSL and cable degrade over distance. Fixed wireless and LEO satellites can't guarantee stable performance when you need it most. And while these technologies might work in a pinch, they simply can't compete with fiber's speed, resilience and long-term value.

Unfortunately, not every community has access to fiber. But thanks to years of investment, we've built a network designed for both today's needs and tomorrow's innovations—ensuring our region remains competitive in an increasingly digital world.

At Foothills, we're not just providing fiber—we're delivering a superior, future-ready internet experience. And unlike big providers, we're a team of local professionals committed to ensuring our community stays connected, without compromise.

High-speed internet isn't a luxury—it's a necessity. Whether for telehealth, online education or economic growth, fiber is the key to unlocking opportunities. That's why we're committed to expanding access and making sure no one is left behind.

Thank you for your trust and support. Together, we're building a stronger, more connected future—one that's powered by fiber. 



CONNECTION

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The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2025. 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, Johnson and Lawrence counties, as well as parts of Boyd and Carter counties and Prichard, West Virginia. 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:



Capt. Dewey Marshall, of the Magoffin County Rescue Squad, leads an all-volunteer crew that helps people on their worst days.
See story Page 12.

Photo courtesy of
John Michael Laney



BROADBAND BUILT TO LAST

Universal Connectivity Must Be Sustained

Keeping rural consumers connected is critical

Visit www.ntca.org/universalservice to learn more



Honoring Those Who Gave All

Foothills Communications' staff and board remember and honor those who have lost their lives in military service. Thank you for your sacrifice. Our office will be closed on **Monday, May 26**, in recognition of Memorial Day.



Congrats Class of 2025!

Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have paid off.

The future is yours...
Make it amazing!



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Minor Leagues

MAJOR FUN

Road trip to baseball's most entertaining destinations

Story by JOHN CLAYTON

Ric Sisler admits he misses the annual spring-to-fall marathon of a baseball season. “When it’s in your blood, it doesn’t matter what you’re doing. You’re always going to be pulled toward that industry, and I’m

certainly no exception,” he says. “Going to the ballpark, the camaraderie and being around the yard was just a thrill for me.

“I certainly don’t miss tarp pulls and some of those types of things,”

he says with a laugh, referring to the back-breaking work of getting protective tarps on and off the diamond during rainy weather.

The national pastime is most certainly in Ric’s blood. He played for three

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Marketers and merchandisers will say quite a lot. Creative—some may say outlandish—nicknames, mascots and logos are part of the landscape of minor league baseball. Here are a few of our favorites:

Florida: The Fort Myers Mighty Mussels—The nickname is more about seafood than sinew.

Alabama: Rocket City Trash Pandas—It pairs Huntsville’s role in the space industry with a cute raccoon reference.

Georgia: Augusta GreenJackets—The GreenJackets mascot is

akin to a yellow jacket, but the reference is to Augusta’s long history with The Masters golf tournament, which awards the winner a green jacket.

North Carolina: Kannapolis Cannon Ballers—The alliteration is nice for the team once known as the Intimidators after the late NASCAR star and Kannapolis native Dale Earnhardt Sr., who was then part-owner of the team. The Cannon Ballers mascot, Boomer, has an uncanny resemblance to Earnhardt.

Kentucky: Bowling Green Hot Rods—The nickname gives the team a link to the nearby National Corvette Museum.



Young fans take in a midseason fireworks display from ground level at PNC Field, home of the Scranton Wilkes-Barre RailRiders.

seasons in the New York Yankees minor league system before running several minor league organizations as a front office executive and as vice president/general manager of the independent South Coast League based in Georgia. His father, Dick Sisler, was a Major League Baseball manager and All-Star player, and his grandfather, George Sisler, is enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Ric, who is still involved in athletics as director of corporate sponsorships at Western Carolina University, says many fans of the game come back season after season.

“Minor league baseball has been part of the fabric of our society in a lot of smaller towns,” he says. “It was kind of a binding agent for folks to come watch baseball with their friends and neighbors and just have a wholesome time.”

While the minor leagues are about family fun and community pride to many fans, the game is a balance of business and player development for the teams and their MLB affiliates. The minors have long relied on fan-friendly, creative promotions and player interactions to sell tickets, and all of that comes with an affordable price tag.

“I think people have always gone to minor league games because it’s

affordable,” Ric says. “You had great entertainment and could see some potential big-league players there at



The Memphis Redbirds offer another reason to visit West Tennessee.

an affordable price. You’re very close to the field and close to the players. It was a different setting from the Major League parks. I don’t want to see that change.”

Planning a trip this summer—or maybe even a baseball pilgrimage? There’s a game, sports history and tradition, as well as a bunch of fun waiting for you. 📺

HISTORIC HOME FIELDS

Some of the oldest ballparks in the country are in the Southeast, and three of them are on the National Register of Historic Places.

That list includes Birmingham, Alabama’s Rickwood Field, which is the nation’s oldest professional baseball park still with its original structure. Opened in 1910, two years before Boston’s Fenway Park, Rickwood was home to the Negro Leagues’ Birmingham Black Barons.

The double-A Birmingham Barons play an annual ceremonial game at Rickwood, and Major League Baseball hosted a game between the St. Louis Cardinals and San Francisco Giants at the venerable ballpark last season, a 6-5 Cardinals victory.

Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach, Florida, was the first ballpark to allow the Brooklyn Dodgers’ African American prospect whose name now graces the stadium to play with white players in the segregated South in 1946. The park dates to 1914 and was originally named Daytona City Island Ballpark.

Spartanburg, South Carolina’s Duncan Park was constructed in 1926 and was home to minor league baseball almost continually until 1994. It was also home to the Spartanburg Sluggers, a Negro League minors team from 1928-52. An estimated 21,000 spectators reportedly crowded in and around the ballpark to attend Game 5 of the 1938 American Legion World Series between Spartanburg and Los Angeles.

The 3,000-seat stadium is currently Spartanburg High School’s home field. The city of Spartanburg is building a new stadium for the Hub City Spartanburgers of the South Atlantic League. The city is the new home of the former Down East Wood Ducks of Kinston, North Carolina.



Choose Your Own Adventure

Johnson County Trail Days offers new ways to explore

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Whether you're into riding all-terrain vehicles, kayaking, boating, biking, horseback riding or plain old hiking, Johnson County has a place to do it.

To highlight its natural bounty, the county will host its fifth annual Trail Days. The two-day event is filled with free activities for people of every age and ability, including an ATV/SUV parade, story walks, craft-making, water obstacle courses, horseback riding, motorcycle rides and much more.

"We have so many different trails in this county, and we wanted to show them off," says Regina McClure, community development coordinator for the county's fiscal court and co-director of the

Paintsville-Johnson County Chamber of Commerce.

THERE'S GOLD IN THOSE HILLS

County leaders designed the event to be fun, but there's a bigger reason to promote the region's trails and lakes, McClure says. Simply put, outdoor tourism pays. Not only does it bring in tourists' dollars, but it also creates businesses and jobs.

"We want to use adventure tourism to make an economic impact," McClure says. "This event lets people know everything we have to offer."

The outdoor recreation economy supports communities throughout the nation, remaining robust in recent years and generating about \$1.2 trillion in 2023, according

to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis.

"The new BEA data highlights outdoor recreation as a cornerstone of our economy, generating jobs, supporting small businesses and providing essential opportunities for Americans to engage with the outdoors for health, connection and quality of life," says Jessica Turner, president of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, an organization devoted to promoting the outdoor industry.

Jeremiah Parsons, executive director of Paintsville Tourism, says outdoor and adventure tourism go hand in hand with the county's cultural draws. These include Butcher Holler, where Loretta Lynn grew up, the U.S. 23 Country



ABOVE: A group of children learns the basics of fishing.

LEFT: Kayakers get ready to take off at Paintsville Lake.

Music Highway Museum and Mountain HomePlace Farm, a historic site.

Trail Days events help cement those bonds. “You’ve got the library that partners, the state parks that partner, our trail towns—this event is everywhere,” Parsons says. “We’re on the water, on the trails, hiking in the mountains and at our museums. It really is a multifaceted approach.”

BETTER TOGETHER

Trail Days began as a single-day event in 2021 to tell locals and tourists about the different outdoor activities Paintsville and Johnson County offer.

By letting the county’s different entities like the library, extension services, schools and more create their own activities, Trail Days took on a life of its own. “It’s been an exercise in how to promote our trails while also creating stronger partnerships,” McClure says. “Everybody’s creating their own event, but we’re all working toward the same goal.”

It also gave the event wings. With community partners’ help, the event quickly grew into two days with various activities.

Johnson Central High School’s fishing team offers a course that teaches fishing basics on the accessible boardwalk of



The entire community comes out for Trail Days.

Paintsville Lake. “If you’re in a wheelchair, you can take part,” McClure says. “Another organization offered a crafting class where people could paint and decorate stepping stones.”

There’s also the Van Lear Night Ride for ATV enthusiasts. The event lets ATV riders take to the trails behind Butcher Holler at night. Another popular event is the Paintsville Lake Pontoon Ride that lets participants take a leisurely ride and learn more about the lake’s origins.

“There’s something for everyone,” McClure says. “It doesn’t matter what your age or what your physical ability is.”

TAKE OFF WITH TRAIL DAYS

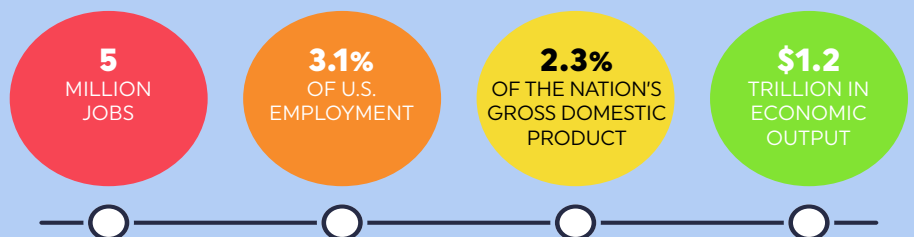
Johnson County Trail Days are June 13-14 this year, with dozens of events on land and water for people of all ages and abilities. Anyone who signs up for at least one event will get one of the ever-popular Trail Days T-shirts.

Also, make sure to mark your calendars for the grand finale on June 14. It will feature live music, food trucks and prize giveaways. For the latest information or to preregister for each event, visit paintsvilletourism.com. Also, make sure to visit and like the Johnson County Trail Day Facebook page.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The economic impact of outdoor and adventure tourism continues to grow across the U.S. Eastern Kentucky, with its many trails, lakes, rivers and state and national parks, is poised to benefit from this continued upswing.

In 2023, recreation accounted for:



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis' Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, November 2024

LOOK TOWARD THE

Light

Whatever you call them, fireflies mesmerize

Story by **SARA DIAMOND PATTERSON**

Catching lightning bugs in a Mason jar with holes punched in the lid is a summer ritual for kids across the country. Watching their light show together is often a time for families to slow down, which is what Lynn Frierson Faust's family began doing in the Great Smoky Mountains during the 1960s.

They marveled for years at the unique light display, as the flying beetles blinked on and off at the same time for several hours after dark. When Lynn heard the August 1991 edition of *Science News* magazine featured an article on fireflies that blink in unison, she figured she would finally find out why and how they made their magic.

"I remember thinking, 'Oh cool, a lightning bug feature. It'll talk about our light show.' Only it didn't mention one thing," she says. In fact,

the authors said the Western Hemisphere had no species of fireflies that blinked synchronously.

Lynn let them know they were mistaken and invited them to come to the Smokies to see the show for themselves. The scientists did and agreed Lynn was right, lighting the way for her life's work.

'JUST SO DARN FUN'

As "The Lightning Bug Lady," Lynn is internationally known for her research on the ecology and habits of the more than 125 species of U.S. fireflies, helping

THE LOWDOWN

HOW: Fireflies produce their magical flashes through bioluminescence, a chemical reaction.

WHY: Each of the more than 125 species of fireflies in the United States—2,000 worldwide—has a unique signature flash pattern the males use to attract females of their specific type.

WHERE: Everywhere. Many Western species do not flash or fly, but they're out there.

WHEN: Warm summer nights.

AI-generated artwork by Firefly



LEND A HAND

Pesticides and habitat reduction have taken a toll on firefly populations. Maintaining a “wild” area of your yard with a little water, native vegetation and undisturbed soil will make your home more firefly friendly. But the easiest way to help is simply by turning out the lights during their active period. Visit xerces.org or firefly.org for more tips.

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Photo courtesy of Lynn Frierson Faust



A BBC crew takes a break from filming in 2019. Naturalist Lynn Frierson Faust examines equipment she and Mark Zloba, ecological manager at the Edge of Appalachia, use to gather fireflies at the preserve outside of Cincinnati.

to raise awareness of their unique life cycles and importance within ecosystems.

She scrambles to 14 states each year to catch them emerging during their eight-week active season, usually early June to late July. For 18 years, she has been the worldwide go-to on the subject, serving as on-site scientific consultant for BBC Earth, Discovery, National Geographic and other international film crews. Lynn’s 2017 book, “Fireflies, Glow-worms, and Lightning Bugs,” was the first-ever comprehensive firefly field guide and shared the results of her nearly three decades of research on behalf of museums, universities, state and national parks and nature centers.

“I’m not a scientist per se, but I’ve done the research, a whole lot of research,” she says. “I’m just a regular person obsessed with these and fortunate to have the time and a little knowledge to build on.”

Throughout history, fireflies have symbolized hope and mystery, serving as transient reminders that life is fleeting. In some cultures, people see them as their lost ancestors, a sacred connection between the earthly and spiritual worlds.

When she began, Lynn didn’t have much research to start with. “There were just a bunch of dusty old scientific papers, but that’s about it,” she says. “There’s just not been that much research done on them since they aren’t harmful or helpful to people or crops.”

They are, however, a great indicator species for the health of ecosystems. “When they disappear, we have to know why and where to look.” And

HERE THEY ARE!

No matter where you are, you don’t have to go far to find the magic. You can look for lightning bugs anywhere from your backyard to wildlife management areas or wooded parks, avoiding light pollution and areas that spray for mosquitos.

The Southeast offers the most variety of firefly species. “Generally speaking—and this holds true for almost all living things—as you go south closer toward the equator, you get a greater diversity of species but maybe fewer numbers,” firefly expert Lynn Frierson Faust says. “Whereas when you go north in latitude, you get greater numbers but fewer species.”

The *Photinus carolinus* species in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park of Tennessee and North Carolina are known for their synchronous flashes. You can see them put on a similar show at South Carolina’s Congaree National Park. Thousands of these fireflies emit between five to eight flashes of light all at once followed by eight to 10 seconds of darkness.

Their light shows have become so popular, each year more than 20,000 people enter a lottery drawing at each park for viewing spots during the two-week active period, usually in early June depending on temperatures and soil moisture.

Lynn says they will always serve as a nostalgic reminder of days gone by.

“Lightning bugs are fantastic ambassadors leading people back into nature and to a better understanding of the connectedness of it all,” she says. “Plus, they’re just so darn fun.” 📷

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NAME GAME

Officially known as Lampyridae, worldwide fireflies are called blinkies, glowflies, moon bugs, peeney-wallies, blinkin’ bees, hoturu, fire beetles and candle flies. Here at home, “lightning bug” is more common in the South and Midwest, while “firefly” is typically heard in the West and large cities in the East. Some researchers attribute the differences to weather. While lightning is most active in the South and Midwest, the West sees the most wildfires.



SAVING LIVES

Magoffin County Rescue Squad volunteers to serve

Story by JEN CALHOUN

When the late Carter Conley started Magoffin County’s all-volunteer, not-for-profit rescue squad in 1974, he had little more than a few hundred dollars and a bread truck.

Now, 51 years later, Conley’s legacy lives on, despite the challenges the squad faces when it comes to funding and maintaining a strong volunteer force.

“The way I look at it is that God gave us a gift, and we use it to help people,” says Capt. Dewey Marshall, the squad’s leader. “We just like helping people.”

FILLING A NEED

The squad’s 38 volunteers take shifts to answer many of the county’s emergency calls. The territory they cover does not include Salyersville, which has its own emergency resources.

For 2022 to 2023—the latest numbers available—the squad’s



volunteers answered about 850 rescue calls and provided 739,281 service hours. In addition, they logged 2,452 hours of training time.

Calls can include everything from responding to wrecks to performing water rescues, searching for lost hikers and more. Marshall says the squad maintains six vehicles, three boats and various equipment for rescues.

“This place floods a lot, so we do work those,” Marshall says. “And if someone gets lost, we’ll go look for them.”

HEROIC BEGINNINGS

At the time Conley founded the Magoffin County Rescue Squad in the ’70s, the areas outside of Salyersville had little in the way of emergency services. He also contributed to establishing the county’s 911 system.

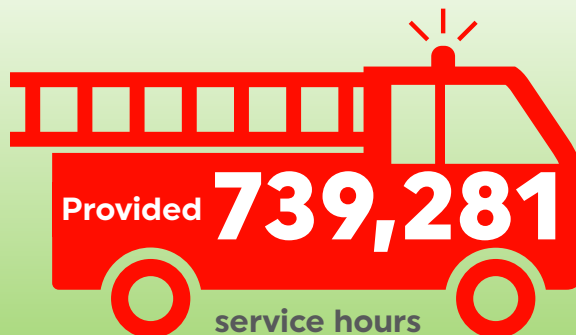
When Conley died in 2021 from COVID-19 at the age of 71, the community celebrated his generosity and decades of service.

During the 2022-23 year, Magoffin County’s all-volunteer rescue squad

Answered

850

rescue calls



Logged

2,452

hours of training time





Photos courtesy of John Michael Laney

ABOVE: A memorial wall in the Magoffin County Rescue headquarters honors Carter Conley, the late founder of the squad known for serving the community.

LEFT: Seven of the rescue squad's 38 volunteers gather at the station.

HELPING THE HELPERS

Magoffin County Rescue's annual Media Auction happens May 2-4. The event serves as the all-volunteer rescue squad's biggest fundraiser of the year, and it pays for vehicle maintenance, insurance and supplies. The auction is covered by WRLV radio station 106.5 FM, Howard's Cable Channel 15, Foothills Channel 2 and the local newspaper, the Salyersville Independent. For more information, including times, check local media.

Capt. Dewey Marshall says the squad responds to nearly all the emergency calls in the county with the exception of Salyersville. Calls might range from a wreck to a water rescue to a lost hiker. For more information on the organization, as well as emergency updates for Magoffin County, follow Magoffin County Rescue Squad's Facebook page.

in Emmitsburg, Maryland, according to a report from the Salyersville Independent. He was one of 226 firefighters in the country honored during the event and one of 13 from Kentucky.

On the NFFF website, the tribute to Conley says: "Carter always lived by the standard of a true servant. His motto was, 'If you're stuck in a car, we'll get you out. If you're lost, we'll find you.'"

CARRYING ON

Marshall says the Magoffin Rescue Squad members volunteer their time, their energy and their strength to make sure others get the help they need. "It feels good to help," says Marshall, whose father was a firefighter. "That's what got me into it."

To raise money, the rescue crew will hold its annual Media Auction May 2-4. The auction is the squad's largest fundraiser. The squad also receives money from the Magoffin County Fiscal Court, individual donations and Magoffin County Community Day, an annual fundraiser for nonprofit civic organizations in the county.

The money helps keep the rescue crew going, Marshall says. Without the squad, he's not sure what would happen. "To be honest with you, I think the county would be in trouble," he says. 📞



The squad maintains six vehicles, three boats and various equipment for rescues.

All county government offices were closed on the day of his funeral so his friends and colleagues could attend.

"He had a vision, and he turned his vision into reality ... a reality that benefited us all," read a post on the Magoffin County Sheriff Department's Facebook page at the time. "We will miss his dedication. We will miss his presence. We will miss him. We have lost one of our own ... we have lost one of our best."

Another friend and colleague, Justin Williams, told a WLEX television reporter that Conley touched countless lives. "I think when you think of Carter, you think of a servant," Williams says. "I think if we come to the end of our lives and people think of us the way we think of Carter, then we've lived a blessed life."

In May 2024, Conley was honored at the 43rd Annual National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's Memorial Service

Fantastic Frying

Flavorful chicken with the finest sides

Many say munching on piping-hot, crispy fried chicken is a joy like no other. Whether it's juicy white meat from the breast or the wings or the deep, engaging flavors of the dark meat found in thighs and legs, when it comes to fried chicken, most everyone has a preference. But there are a few things that good pieces of fried chicken have in common—the skin must stay on, and it must be crispy.

That's not too much to ask, but it's something that many cooks cannot achieve. There's a knack to it that may take a few extra steps, but the endgame is well worth it.

Serve the chicken alongside a big spoonful of potato salad and finish with a bowl of banana pudding and you have a meal fit for a beautiful summer evening.



**Food Editor
Anne P. Braly
is a native of
Chattanooga,
Tennessee.**

Photography by *Mark Gilliland*
Food Styling by *Rhonda Gilliland*

CRISPY FRIED CHICKEN

- 1 (4-pound) chicken, cut into pieces
- 1 cup whole milk buttermilk
- 2 cups all-purpose flour for coating
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 quarts vegetable oil for frying

Dry chicken with paper towels. Put the flour in a large plastic bag. Let the amount of chicken you are cooking dictate the amount of flour you use. Season the flour with paprika, garlic powder, salt and pepper to taste. Paprika helps to brown the chicken.

Dip chicken pieces in buttermilk then, a few at a time, put them in the bag with the flour, seal the bag and shake to coat well.

Place the coated chicken on a cookie sheet or tray, and cover with a clean dish

towel or waxed paper. Let sit until the flour reaches a paste-like consistency. This step is important to ensure that the skin will be crispy and adhere to the chicken.

Fill a large skillet (cast iron is best) about 1/3 to 1/2 full of vegetable oil. Heat until very hot.

Put in as many chicken pieces as the skillet can hold. Brown the chicken in hot oil on both sides.

When browned, reduce heat and cover the skillet. Let cook for 30 minutes (the chicken will be cooked through but not crispy). Remove cover, raise heat again and continue to fry until crispy. Drain the fried chicken on paper towels. Depending on how much chicken you have, you may have to fry it in a few batches. Keep the finished chicken in a slightly warm oven while preparing the rest.



LOADED BAKED POTATO SALAD

- 4 pounds russet potatoes
- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3/4 cup sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 12 ounces bacon, cooked, cooled and chopped
- 6 green onions, whites and green parts, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place cleaned potatoes on a baking sheet and pierce four to five times with a fork. Lightly coat with olive oil, sprinkle with kosher salt and cook for 50-60 minutes or until easily pierced with a cake tester or skewer. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes. When cool enough to

handle, peel the potatoes and cut into 1-inch chunks, discarding the potato skins. The potato flesh may crumble and get shaggy, and that's OK—transfer it all to a large mixing bowl. While still warm, sprinkle the potatoes with the apple cider vinegar. Set aside for 15-30 minutes or until the potatoes are cooled.

Meanwhile, cook the bacon in a large skillet or in the oven, drain and let cool. Crumble into bite-size pieces.

In a small bowl, mix the mayonnaise and sour cream. Season with the kosher salt and pepper.

When the potatoes are cool, pour the mayonnaise mix over them with the crumbled bacon, green onion and cheddar cheese. Gently fold the ingredients together. Season with more salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate for 3 hours up to overnight before serving. Store in the refrigerator for up to four days.

NUTTER BUTTER 'NANA PUDDING

- 8 ounces softened cream cheese
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 (3.4-ounce) boxes instant vanilla pudding
- 2 3/4 cups cold milk

- 8 ounces whipped topping divided
- 1 (1-pound) package Nutter Butter or other peanut butter sandwich cookies
- 5-7 ripe bananas, sliced



In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened cream cheese until smooth. Add the condensed milk and mix until there are no lumps.

In a second bowl, mix the pudding mix and milk together until smooth. Pour the pudding into the cream cheese mixture and mix until completely combined. Fold in half of the whipped topping.

Line the bottom of a trifle dish with a layer of Nutter Butter cookies. Add a layer of banana slices on top of the cookies. Spread a layer of the pudding mixture evenly over the bananas. Repeat 1-3 times, depending on the size of your dish.

Spread the remaining whipped topping on top of the pudding. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours but overnight is best.

Crush a few Nutter Butters on top of the whipped topping immediately before serving. 🍪



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