

CONNECTION

Bailey's Furniture

Salyersville
shop is a family
operation

VAN LEAR

SUMMER
FOODS





By Shirley Bloomfield, CEO
NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association

World Wide Web Day

Celebrate decades of digital innovation

World Wide Web Day is Aug. 1. It's a celebration of a 1993 internet milestone that transformed our society, changing everything from work and health care to communications and entertainment.

Before the web, accessing information and resources on the interconnected computers spanning the globe required specific software and skills. Email use was even limited—in business, fax machines still ruled. Then, researchers in Switzerland, including Tim Berners-Lee, developed the World Wide Web. Not only was information easier to share, but the freely distributed tools that made it possible fueled decades of innovation.

Now, rural internet service providers like yours manage the high-speed networks unlocking the modern web. NTCA's 2024 Broadband/Internet Availability Survey Report showed that 89% of rural customers served by providers responding to the survey have access to speeds of at least 100 Mbps.

That's a dramatic change compared to 1993, when connecting was slow and noisy, reliant on dial-up modems and copper lines. Back then, a speed of 14.4 Kbps was great—nearly 7,000 times slower than a 100 Mbps connection today.

Students can now access endless resources online and attend virtual classes. Telemedicine brings services and specialists otherwise unavailable in rural communities. Farmers monitor crops, manage resources and keep livestock healthy with internet-connected tools. And that's only the beginning.

NTCA members across rural America make it all possible. So, let's take a moment to celebrate not only World Wide Web Day, but also the communications professionals in your community.

Thank you for all you do. 📺



Help your community thrive

Local businesses are a cornerstone of the United States' economy, particularly in rural communities. You need to look no further than your local utility providing a fast, reliable internet network. Companies like these are not only committed to providing excellent service but also uplifting their communities.

A report last year by Capital One Shopping, a site operated by the banking and credit card company, highlighted the importance of local retailers.

- In one week, **91% of American consumers** shop at small and local stores.
- **68%, or \$68 out of every \$100**, spent at local stores remains in the local economy.
- American shoppers spent an estimated **\$4.51 trillion** at local stores in 2023, equivalent to **54.3% of all retail sales**.
- The average person **shops locally 213 times per year** or once every **1.7 days**.

Community Benefits to Shopping Local

- **Shopping small** keeps **dollars local**.
- Dollars spent at an independent business may **recirculate** in the local economy **an average of six to 15 times**.
- Small businesses make up to **136% more charitable donations** per employee than businesses with 500 or more employees.
- Residents of communities with more independent businesses **drive three-quarters fewer miles** than their neighbors who have less access to small local shops.





A Sunshine Shield in Your Pocket

Apps to protect your skin

Long days outdoors are a joy of summer. A little sun can even increase your vitamin D levels, which has a range of health benefits. On the other hand, bathing in too much sunlight is not good for the skin, raising the potential for skin cancer. And some people are more susceptible than others.

So, it just makes sense to track and manage sun exposure. Think about all the things we already monitor—steps, sleep and even what we eat. Why not also track exposure to ultraviolet light, the rays produced by the sun?

In fact, your phone's weather app may already offer a forecast for expected sun exposure at your location. Other apps though can ramp up the details. Early UV apps were basically glorified timers with general advice tacked on. Today's versions

are more sophisticated, providing information on everything from cloud cover to how much sun is reflecting off surfaces around you.

These apps often have easy-to-understand color-coded displays that show your risk level. Most will customize their recommendations based on your skin type, which means you're getting advice that's relevant to you specifically.

Some of the more advanced options do more than track UV exposure. They can use your smartphone's camera to analyze your features and suggest proper levels of sun protection. Many will even send timely reminders when it's time to reapply sunscreen based on your activity level and which products you're using.

The more comprehensive sun safety apps don't only monitor UV rays. They

include educational content about sun damage and skin cancer prevention. Some even track vitamin D production, helping you balance protection with healthy sun exposure.

Family-friendly versions allow users to set up profiles for multiple family members with different skin types, making it much easier to manage sun protection during group outings like beach days or picnics.

Of course, no apps replace a proper checkup with your dermatologist, but they do offer daily reminders about a danger we can't always see. So, next time you're heading outdoors for a day in the sun, check the app store for your favorite device and see if there's an app that provides the details you need to stay safe. At minimum, the apps can keep the importance of skin protection top of mind. ☀️

Hearts and Home

Making connections that matter

I always enjoy these long, sunny days, which are perfect for slowing down and spending time with the people who matter most. It's an opportunity to unplug and enjoy the outdoors, and at Foothills Communications we believe the communications services we provide can help connect us in person and online.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

Have you ever noticed how we can all get stuck looking at our phones? Even though our internet connects thousands of homes and businesses, the best connections often happen when we look up and see each other face to face. This summer, I invite everyone to find that sweet spot, using our internet to make your real-life gatherings even better.

Think about that family reunion you're planning. Group texts make organizing easy. Video calls let you chat with relatives who moved away. When everyone finally gets together, your phone can capture precious moments and then store, edit and share those images online. Fast reliable internet makes it all possible.

Similarly, our local markets and festivals thrive because vendors can easily process card payments without the need for expensive and complex systems. And they can keep potential customers updated by posting online about sales and new products. But being out and about shopping is still an opportunity for connections where neighbors meet in person, shake hands and catch up.

Also, thanks to rich and affordable streaming services for music and video, families can gather indoors or outside for movie nights. Perhaps some things that start small can grow into monthly traditions where neighbors become friends.

At Foothills, we don't just support a fast, industry-leading internet service. We believe these resources can create paths to new possibilities. Your stories of connection and success fuel our passion—grandparents who video chat with grandkids, local businesses that ship to customers around the nation or young artists sharing digital creations with the world.

So, this summer, why not put that technology to good use? Start a shared photo album for the whole family. Use social media to organize a neighborhood game night or a group hike. Set up a virtual recipe swap with friends and relatives. Or help your kids create a short video tour of your town to share with faraway family. The Fourth of July is the perfect time to stream patriotic playlists, share fireworks photos or plan an event that brings everyone together—both online and in person.

The best communities blend new technology with cherished traditions. At Foothills, our investment in this community allows us to use technology to make our ties to one another stronger.

As we enjoy summer, remember that our most important connections will always be with each other. We are proud to provide the technology that helps those connections grow. Let's make this a summer of real connection, both online and in person. 📞



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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:



James Bailey started Bailey's Furniture in 1972 with an old pickup and a will to succeed. See story Page 8.

Photo courtesy of
John Michael Laney



HELL Summer

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**HAPPY FOURTH
OF JULY!**

Foothills Communications wishes you a safe and fun Independence Day! In observance of the holiday, our office will be closed on **Friday, July 4.**



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CATCH A WAVE

These water parks are built for thrill, not chill

Story by KATHY DENES

If summer has a signature scent aside from freshly mowed grass, it's the chlorine of swimming pools and water slides. Water parks are the ultimate hot-weather attractions, and some have been popping up lately that go far beyond splash pads and lazy rivers. These parks lure the adventurous with endless waves and whitewater for rafting, kayaking, canoeing and even surfing—no wild oceans or rivers required.

The first of these parks in the country, the U.S. National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, is home to a whitewater river that challenges even the most experienced wave riders. Touted as the world's largest artificial river, its recirculating treated water flows along dual concrete channels offering rapids

varying in intensity from Class II to Class IV.

The sprawling facility is geared to all sorts of outdoor recreation and is still evolving nearly 20 years after opening. Guided rafts and kayakers with whitewater experience ride the same rapids U.S. Olympic athletes use for training and team trials. The Wilderness and Competition channels provide varying intensity and length before ending in the tranquil pool where riders steer their boats onto a conveyor belt and ride back to the start for another go.

"The USNWC was the first whitewater channel specifically designed for family-level fun at an Olympic-standard facility," says course lead designer Scott Shipley, an engineer, kayak champion

and three-time Olympian who holds four world titles. "Until Charlotte, every whitewater channel in the world was an Olympic channel first that was later adapted for commercial rafting. We created a channel for family recreational rafting first and then added a competition channel. We focused on the church and school groups that will be using it as a way to help get them active."

SURF CITY

At Riversport OKC in Oklahoma City, Olympic and Paralympic athletes train in rowing as well as canoe and kayak. In fact, it is slated to be the canoe slalom venue for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Its whitewater center offers rowing, kayaking and surfing lessons,



ABOVE: Progressing from bodyboarding to kneeboarding takes very little time with FlowRider's perpetual waves.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Rafting can get pretty wild on Riverpark Rapids in downtown Oklahoma City.

along with tubing, paddleboarding, high-speed slides and even fun on dry land.

Riverpark Rapids whitewater rafting and kayaking center is in Riversport Adventure Park, in the Boathouse District along the Oklahoma River. Whitewater kayaking and guided rafting start at the top of the artificial river, reached via a conveyor belt. From there, it's an easy slide into the river to start a memorable ride.

Those ready to Surf OKC can catch a wave, no previous skill needed. Starting with bodyboarding, the staff teaches all the basics to help visitors hang 10. Wipeouts are inevitable, but there are no sharks in the nonstop waters of the FlowRider surf machine. Found all over the world, these compact wavemakers keep endless, shallow water flowing atop a trampolinelike surface.

TEST THE WATERS

Riverpark OKC is open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the summer and on weekends in the late spring and early fall. Day passes and memberships are available. Each Thursday through Aug. 7, Riverpark offers NightWater Evening Rafting from 6-8 p.m. riversportokc.org

The Charlotte Whitewater Center will celebrate Independence Day by hosting a free two-day festival, July 3 and 4, with live music and more. Evening events those days include illuminated rafting



High above Riversport, a young visitor secured with a safety harness navigates one of the six levels of SandRidge Sky Trail.



In the hills above Charlotte, North Carolina, the U.S. National Whitewater Center caters to whitewater enthusiasts ranging from novice paddlers to Olympic athletes.

Photo courtesy of U.S. National Whitewater Center

and kayaking on the river's Competition Channel, but this requires purchase of an activity pass. See the center's website for schedules, pass information and events, plus details about any required gear and skill prerequisites. whitewater.org. 📱

MAKING A SPLASH

Montgomery, Alabama—Whitewater paddlers of all skill levels can enjoy the thrills of rafting or kayaking at Montgomery Whitewater, complete with a 1,600-foot Competition Channel and 2,200-foot Creek Channel. To open its season, Montgomery Whitewater hosted the 2025 Pan American Canoe Slalom and Kayak Cross Championships. It was the site of the U.S. Canoe/Kayak Slalom Olympic team trials for the 2024 Paris games. For more, go to montgomerywhitewater.com.

Sevierville, Tennessee—Before the 2020 opening of Soaky Mountain, surfer Ben Gravy tested its waters, posted his rides on YouTube and declared the park has the "best manmade novelty wave in America—one of the best on the planet." Soaky Mountain is open daily in July and August and on weekends in September.

Check out soakymountainwaterpark.com.

Rock Hill, South Carolina—Two custom lakes at SouthTown Wake Park await wakeboard riders 7 and older, and there isn't a boat in sight. Boarders hold ski ropes pulled by overhead cables. Beginners can sign up for lessons on the smaller lake, while the larger lake is equipped with jump ramps and other features that let advanced wakeboarders work on extreme moves. There's also Aqua Park for paddleboards, as well as an obstacle course on floating inflatables and onshore games.

Get all the details at southtownwakepark.com.



James Bailey, pictured with his dog, started Bailey's Furniture in 1972 after years of working for others.

Photos courtesy of John Michael Laney

Salyersville Establishment Celebrates 53 Years

Owner of Bailey's Furniture looks back on his life

Story by JEN CALHOUN

James Bailey may have been born in 1940, but he likes to say that his life really began in 1969. That's the year he was saved.

"That day changed my life forever," says James, the founder of Bailey's Furniture in Salyersville.

RESTLESS CHILDHOOD

Long before that important day, however, James spent much of his childhood moving between places. He lived the

first four years of his life on Mill Branch Road in Magoffin County. He remembers a rainy day when his father was examined for military service in World War II. He also remembers his mother washing laundry by hand in the backyard and the boards she'd lay across the back door to keep James and his sister from wandering out.

"We had a cookstove with a pipe that ran into the ceiling," he says. "I remember it catching fire once. We were all terrified but, thankfully, it was put out in time and the house didn't burn down."

When he was about 7 years old, the family moved to Northern Indiana so his father could find work. A year later, they moved back to Kentucky, and James attended first through sixth grade in a two-room schoolhouse in Hendricks.

Soon after that, however, the family returned to Indiana, where James attended seventh and eighth grades. It was the first time he'd gone to a school with separate classrooms for each grade. It was also the first time he'd eaten in a cafeteria or ridden on a school bus. It was scary for the Kentucky kid, but he



Beds and mattresses are for sale at Bailey's.

gained a little courage on the first day when he was the only student to answer a math question correctly.

Other good things came from the family's second time in Indiana. James and his father spent a summer working at the state game reserve, scaring birds away from the seedling trees. They worked from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. James

earned 80 cents an hour, while his father earned 90 cents.

When James' great-grandmother wrote for her family to return to Kentucky, however, they did. They arrived back home in late 1954, bringing with them two cars, a revolving shelf refrigerator and some furniture. James brought a bicycle, a wristwatch and \$100. His father got a job driving a truck.

James met his future wife, Ethel, after returning to school. They married in 1958, and their first home was an 8-by-10-foot room in his parents' house. James got a job working at Slone's Kentucky Food Store for \$48 a week. His boss at the time told him something that would stick with him forever: "Son, never worry about your competition—just worry about your customers."

BAILEY'S FURNITURE

When James got saved in 1969, he was working at an IGA. But his life and his outlook had permanently changed, and the grocery store no longer felt like a good fit. He wanted his own business.

He quit and opened a small produce stand where he sold fruits and vegetables sourced from Knoxville, Tennessee. Still,

his desire for something of his own—a business of his own—led him to take even more chances.

Sometime in the early 1970s, James and Ethel took off for Cincinnati in an old pickup truck to buy used furniture from a thrift shop. By that time, they were raising five children, and taking on a new business was a big risk. "We'd leave at 3 a.m.," he says. "We'd pack breakfast—egg and sausage sandwiches and tomato soup."

They would come back loaded down with furniture, if they were lucky and empty-handed if they weren't. Sometimes, however, they got really lucky.

"One Christmas, we went not knowing if we'd get anything," he says. "No other truckers were there, so they let us take whatever we wanted. We even brought home a big box of stuffed toys. We ate dinner at a restaurant as snow began to fall. It was magical."

As the years went on, business grew. They moved the store into larger and larger buildings until 1986, when James bought the land on Gardner Trail where the store still sits today. A few years later, he bought another property where Bailey's Carpet & Hardware stands.

Eventually, James turned over the business to his three sons, who bought out the shares of his two daughters. Ethel died in 2020. "We were married 61 years," he says. "There couldn't have been a better wife, to be honest with you."

These days, James enjoys spending time reflecting. He says he now understands the Bible verse in Ecclesiastes 1:14-18, "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

"I don't mean that in an ungrateful way," he adds. "But in knowing what truly matters. Psalms says, 'We spend our years as a tale that is told.' And this is mine." [📄](#)



The furniture store got its start with an old pickup truck and a load of used furniture, founder James Bailey says.

BAILEY'S FURNITURE

Bailey's is at 330 Gardner Trail in Salyersville. To find out more about the store's latest deals, visit Bailey's Furniture & GE Appliances Facebook page.

THE KIDS ARE

How teenagers navigate digital communication

Story by DREW WOOLEY

Born into the world of smartphones and social media, today's teenagers spend more time communicating online than any of their predecessors. While that familiarity with the online world builds skills with digital platforms, it also affects how they experience adolescence.

"We see that a lot of their development is shaped through their interactions with technology," says Kaitlyn Burnell, director of research for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Winston Center for Technology and the Developing Mind. "It's not just reflecting those aspects of development but also fundamentally changing how they're going through those experiences."

Experts say the key to making sure those changes are positive is understanding how teens are communicating online and giving them the knowledge to shape their own experiences.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is often the most public form of online communication for young people and an easy way to communicate on a large scale. While social status and approval from peers has always been important for adolescents, Burnell says that influence is amplified by social media's ability to track those reactions in real time.

"Adolescents place a lot of importance on the number of likes and the quality of the comments they're getting," she says. "There's no real counterpart of that in the past. The best thing I can come up with is maybe the number of yearbook signatures or something old school like that. But it's very, very different."

That isn't always a bad thing. While image-heavy platforms like Instagram can lead some to struggle with body image, recent studies show a well-curated social media feed can inspire young people more than discourage them. Many teens understand how their feeds work.

"To adolescents' credit, they're pretty sophisticated in tailoring their algorithms," says Michaeline Jensen, University of North Carolina at Greensboro associate professor. "If they're not liking what they're getting, they game it—unfollow some stuff or press the thumbs down to try and steer toward different content. They're pretty sophisticated with trying to make their online spaces a place that's affirming and positive for them."

DIRECT MESSAGING

Direct messaging is reserved for more personal interactions. Private messages are the go-to way to express love, get emotional support or just check in with a parent.

"It's how they talk to people who really matter to them," Jensen says. "Things like day-to-day logistical stuff can make parenting easier, so you can check in and get work done. But it does seem like when teens have those more emotionally supportive conversations over text, those seem to be perceived positively by the kids."

Written chats proved to be more popular than video chats even during periods of separation like the coronavirus pandemic. While video calls can be an authentic way to communicate with faraway family, the interface can prove distracting when talking to other teens.

"Hypothetically, video communication should be more enriching because it's as close to a face-to-face conversation as you can get," Burnell says. "However, the problem that we've identified is that



online

the default for most software is that you see yourself and that isn't always great. If you're occupied with how you look, then that's going to impede those social benefits."

SOCIAL GAMING

Teens often spend social time gaming online, whether with local friends or players across the world. While there are concerns about this hurting offline relationships, Sophie Janicke-Bowles, an associate professor at California's Chapman University, found the opposite can be true.

"When it comes to kids hanging out with friends, social gaming is taking that over," she says. "And it can actually increase both the online and offline connection when hanging out with friends. So, it can be a contributor to more social interaction rather than less."

Gaming spaces can still expose players to coarse language or bullying. An awareness of how those platforms are used and who they are exposing adolescents to is crucial for creating a positive experience.

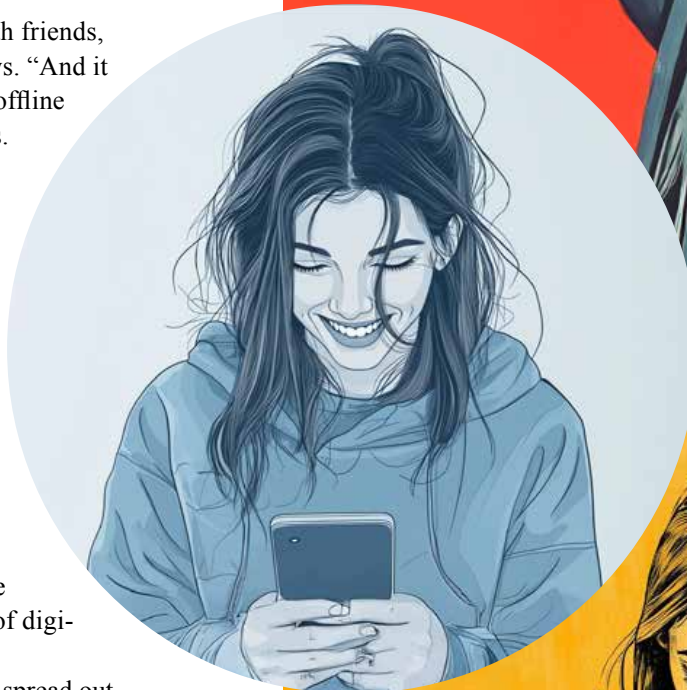
RURAL CONNECTIONS

Building digital literacy can be challenging in rural areas, where the digital divide is closing but schools may not have resources to teach how to make the most of digital communication.

"It makes sense that if families are more spread out from each other you can't just go next door and hang out with your friend," Jensen says. "There might be greater reliance on digital technologies in order to facilitate those social connections, and we don't yet know how kids will adjust to that."

But the upside for rural kids can also be much greater. Digital communication can help them stay in touch with local friends who do not live miles away or even find communities around their personal interests that do not exist nearby. The key is staying aware of how they use those tools, even as they are rapidly changing.

"We know that for everyone, these forms of digital communication are just embedded within our daily lives," Burnell says. "Everyone relies on digital forms of communication for social support. So, it's important to remember it's not just good or bad. It depends on the content, it depends on the person, and it depends on what they're doing." 📱



Adobe Stock (altered) AI-generated illustrations by LucyJ

FESTIVAL OF FUN

Van Lear Town Celebration marks 40 years

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Fans of country music legend Loretta Lynn almost always know she was born a coal miner's daughter in a cabin on a hill in Butcher Holler. But what they don't always know is that Butcher Holler is part of a small coal-mining town called Van Lear.

That's where Debbie Burton and the rest of the Van Lear Historical Society come in. "Loretta Lynn is our most famous citizen here," Burton says. "She's really what brings people here. They want to see how she lived, and coal mining is a big part of that. We want people to know more about that history. It's important for us to keep it alive."

One of the ways they do that is with the Van Lear Town Celebration—an annual summer festival that combines great food, live music, ghost tours, games and a singing competition in the style of "American Idol." This year, the event marks its 40th anniversary.

"It's basically a reunion," Burton says. "Everybody comes in. Family members come in because they can come down here and see all their old neighbors and schoolmates. It's just a fun time to be around friends and family."

CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES

Festivities for the Van Lear Town Celebration start Thursday,



Visitors to Van Lear's annual festival can compete in everything from hay bale throwing to cornhole.

July 31, with a Rook tournament at the museum at 6 p.m. Friday's events kick off with a soup bean dinner from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., followed by opening ceremonies.

Other activities include many contests, including a skillet-throwing event, cornhole competitions for men and women, kids' games with prizes, lawn bowling and more. In addition, the festivities feature a car show and breakfast, as well as the Van Lear Town Celebration Parade.

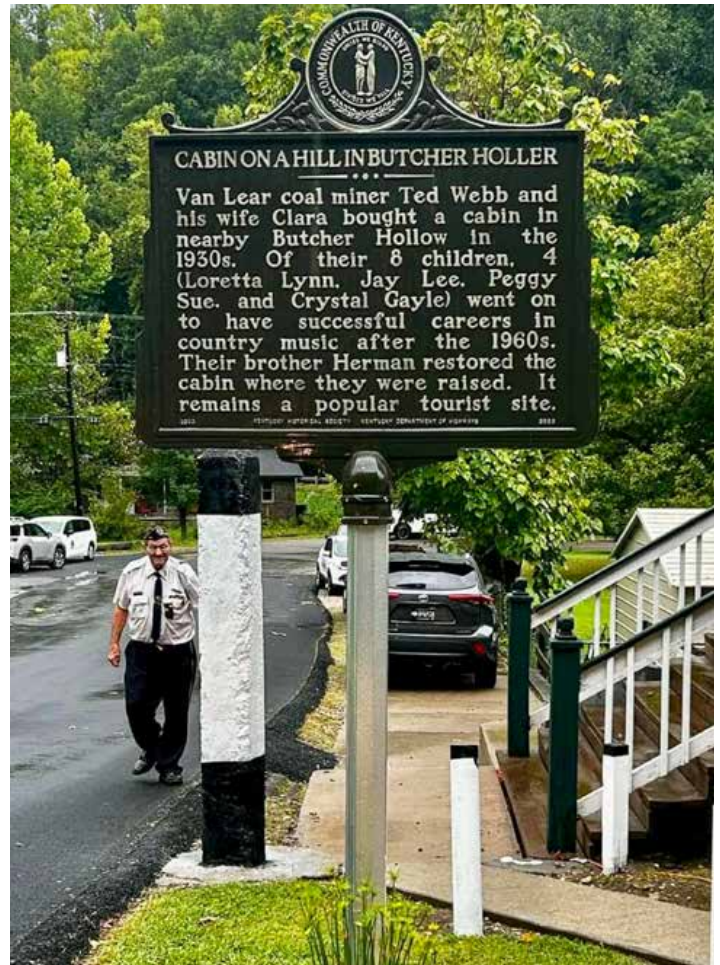
Throughout Friday and Saturday, the Coal Miners' Museum stays open to the public free of charge. "We keep it open so people can walk through and see everything," Burton says. "The museum has four floors, and there's something different on each floor."

The building was donated to the historical society around the time of the society's formation, she says. It once held the town's post office and a doctor's office, among other community touch-points. Over the years, it's gained attention for more than just its



COME ON OVER!

The Van Lear Town Celebration kicks off Thursday, July 31. The multiday event is free to enter, and concessions will be sold. Registration for the Van Lear Idol contest will take place at the event. For more information, visit the Van Lear Historical Society Coal Miners' Museum Facebook page.



Photos courtesy of Van Lear Historical Society

historical significance. It's also known for its paranormal activity, and it's been featured on YouTube by a paranormal group out of Lexington.

Because of that, the town celebration features ghost tours in addition to its regular events.

"Some people say if you sit down in the place where the doctor's office was, you can feel a baby in your lap," Burton says. "I've been pushed twice myself inside the museum. I finally realized that I better move. Something wanted me to move out of the way."

COMPANY TOWN

Despite its slightly ghostly reputation, the town prides itself on its long history of hardworking people—many of whom came to the hills from all over the country to work in the mines.

Van Lear formed in the early part of the 20th century around

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A historical marker in Van Lear references the home where Loretta Lynn and her siblings were born; a skillet-throwing contestant winds up during one of the many events at Van Lear Town Celebration; visitors filter into the Van Lear Historical Society Coal Miners' Museum for a ghost tour. Some believe the historic building is haunted.

the Consolidation Coal Company. The business built five mines, a few miles of railroad into the town, housing and more. "Van Lear was pretty much built by coal," Burton says.

After the coal mines closed, the town suffered. But that doesn't mean it's gone, Burton is quick to point out.

"We're trying to let people know our history," she says. "We want them to know about the five coal mines that ran constantly, 24/7 and fueled all these places. It's just important for us to keep our history going." 🗨️

Burger Bliss

Create a meal perfect for summer

Few things in life are better than a big juicy burger in the middle of summer. Mouths water at the thought. And it takes just a few ingredients to reach perfection.

There's more to making the perfect burger than hand-patting the beef, though that's an excellent start. But before you do that, add a little salt and pepper, a dash of Worcestershire sauce, an envelope of onion soup mix and mayonnaise. Yes, mayo. Ignite the fire, add your burgers to the grill and get ready for a taste explosion.

And since it's summer, add a watermelon salad and finish the meal with a big scoop of easy-to-make peach ice cream—no churning required—and you have a meal fit for a summertime feast.



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

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

MAYO BURGERS

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup plain bread crumbs
- 1 envelope onion soup mix
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 8 hamburger buns

Combine mayonnaise, bread crumbs and soup mix in bowl.

Mix mayonnaise mixture into ground beef. Shape into 8 patties. When forming

hamburger patties, make a shallow indentation or dimple in the middle of each patty. This divot will keep the center from bulging up as it cooks so that the patty will stay flat and even. Even cooking and heat distribution will keep each patty juicy and consistent. Grill or broil until done. Serve burgers on buns with desired condiments.



WATERMELON SALAD WITH BALSAMIC REDUCTION

- 2/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 7- to 8-pound watermelon
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 2/3 cup crumbled feta cheese

In a small saucepan set over medium-high heat, combine the balsamic vinegar and sugar. Bring the mixture to a boil and continue cooking, stirring and scraping down the sides as needed, until it has reduced and is the consistency of syrup,

about 5 minutes. It will thicken as it cools and only yield a few tablespoons. Set it aside to cool while you prepare the salad.

Cut the watermelon into cubes or use a melon baller to scoop it into balls. Put the melon pieces in a large bowl.

In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice and olive oil with a pinch of salt and pepper. Pour the dressing over the watermelon, add the chopped mint and feta cheese, and toss to combine. Drizzle the salad with the balsamic syrup and serve immediately.

SUMMER PEACH NO-CHURN ICE CREAM

- 1 pound fresh peaches, peeled, pitted and sliced
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 8-ounce block of cream cheese
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Using a food processor, pulse the

peaches until they are pea-size chunks. Alternatively, dice the peaches by hand and, in a large bowl, lightly mash them to release juices. Cover with a towel and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl or a stand mixer, mix the sweetened condensed milk, cream cheese, heavy whipping cream and vanilla on a medium-high speed until stiff

peaks form. Gently fold in the peaches until just combined.

Pour the mixture into a freezer-safe container. Cover with plastic wrap, allowing wrap to lie directly on top of the ice cream mixture. This will keep the ice cream from forming crystals on the top. Freeze at least 4 hours for soft-serve ice cream or 6 hours to overnight for firmer ice cream, then scoop away! 🍦





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