

West Carolina Tel

JULY/AUGUST 2014

# CONNECTED



## WHAT'S ON TAP?

A look at the future of water service in the region

## DIGITAL DOLLARS

Technology helps GAFCU evolve

## CONNECTING WITH KIDS

TV's Mike Wolfe is helping kid pickers learn about their families and communities



# Cyber Security:

## What small business owners need to know

By MICHAEL RAMAGE

*Editor's Note: In this issue, we introduce a new series focused on helping small business owners deal with the challenges of protecting their operations from cyber attacks.*

In today's global economy, the threat of cyber security breaches is a growing concern for everyone. Nowhere is this more important than in our rural small businesses. According to a recent Symantec report, three out of every 10 cyber attacks target small businesses.

Security controls at small businesses are often weaker than those of larger companies, making them easier to attack. Those same small businesses often have trusted relationships with larger businesses that can also be exploited to attack the larger companies. Take last year's Target breach as an example. The hacker used the existing trust between Target and a smaller vendor to launch the attack, resulting in millions of credit cards and identities being compromised.

A recent survey by the National Cyber

Security Alliance found that most small business owners have a false sense of security when it comes to their company's online safety. Seventy-seven percent of small business owners surveyed said their business was safe from cyber threats such as hackers, viruses and malware. The same survey found that 83 percent had no formal cyber security plan.

To better understand the threats facing your organization while operating online, below is a list of three of the most common threats:

- **TROJANS** – Messages coming to you across the Internet are not always what they appear to be. Emails may look as if they are from a bank, for instance, asking for your account information, when in fact they are actually from a hacker trying to trick you.

**TIP:** *Never click on a link in an email. If in doubt, call the sender and ask if they sent you something.*

- **SOCIAL ENGINEERING** – The easiest way for a bad guy to get your password is to ask for it. Often, cyber criminals

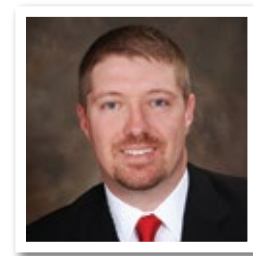
disguise themselves as someone else to request your password — and occasionally small business employees will tell them.

**TIP:** *Talk to your employees about these risks and train them how to respond.*

- **MALWARE** – This is a large, generic category of malicious software that attempts to compromise your system security in some form.

**TIP:** *Though new malware is created every day, by keeping your software up to date you will minimize your risk. Update your operating system, as well as your applications and antivirus software.*

In the September/October issue, I will offer some simple steps any small business owner can take to quickly improve their security. 📞



*Michael Ramage is the Associate Director of the Center for Telecommunications Systems Management at Murray State University.*

## FCC delays implementation of increase in local phone rates

Thanks in part to the unified voice of America's rural telecommunications companies, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has decided to change its approach to an increase in local phone service rates.

Earlier this year the FCC announced a new "rate floor" for rural telecommunications services that, if enacted in full, would have forced some rural companies

to raise their local phone service rates by as much as 40 percent this summer.

NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association filed a notice with the FCC expressing concern on behalf of the nation's rural telecommunications companies and their consumers.

Toward the end of April, the FCC announced a decision to delay implementation of the rate floor increase until January

2015, and to phase in the increase over a longer period.

This increase in the rate floor is intended to bring rates across the country into better balance. To comply with the new minimum, some telecommunications providers would be forced to raise their rates for local phone service by as much as \$6 per month.

We will continue to keep you updated through the pages of our magazine, and to work through NTCA to ensure your voice is heard in Washington, D.C., on important issues that impact telecommunications services across rural America. 📞



## TAKE ACTION: What to do if your child is the victim of a cyberbully

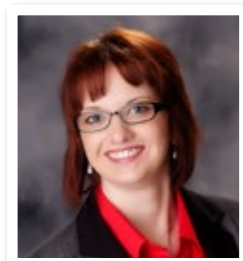
In previous Digital Citizenship articles, I talked about what cyberbullying is and how to recognize if your child is the victim of a cyberbully. Now I am going to give you some ideas about how you can help your child if he or she is a victim of a cyberbully.

- **Ask them to stop.** This seems like an obvious first step, but too many times the victim is afraid or hopes that by ignoring the bully they will go away. Encourage your child to come right out and ask the bully to stop.
- **Unfriend them.** Help your child remove or block the bully from having the ability to contact them. If a bully has trouble reaching out to those they want to torment, they may give it up.
- **Report them.** Use the “Report Abuse” button that most social media sites have. This can be effective in getting a bully removed from a site, even if you aren’t sure who the face is behind the profile.
- **Contact the authorities.** Most states

have harassment laws that protect victims from harassment that includes bullying. Sometimes a knock on the door from a police officer is all that is needed to help straighten kids out.

Bullying isn’t okay. It isn’t a rite of passage. I know... I was bullied as a child and I’d like to think that I would be the same headstrong person I am today if I wouldn’t have been picked on as a child.

Help your kids stand up for themselves if they are being bullied. After all, the next victim may not be as strong as your child, so you are helping protect others as well as your own family. ☎



*Carissa Swenson is the owner and technology specialist of TechTECS, a technology training, education, consulting and support company.*

## The IP Evolution

*Rural telcos lead the move to an Internet-based society*

Today’s Internet is about so much more than websites and email. The technology behind that connectedness also drives shopping, entertainment and business operations, as well as vital public services and health care delivery.

Rural telecommunications companies have long been leaders in building broadband networks to serve their communities. In fact, small rural carriers had deployed broadband to 92 percent of their consumers as of 2010. “Broadband is the great equalizer in terms of allowing rural consumers to communicate with others and participate in civic and economic activities,” says Mike Romano, senior vice president of policy for NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association. “Rural telcos recognized that, and were early adopters of broadband technologies — trying to deploy networks that were built for tomorrow and not just for today.”

In a petition to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), NTCA has highlighted “IP Interconnection” as part of its recommendations:

“There would be greater incentive to invest in IP-enabled networks,” reads an overview of the petition, “if the FCC were to confirm that the costs of allowing other carriers to use such networks can be recovered consistent with the (Telecommunications) Act.”

Policies such as this will help ensure that customers of rural and independent service providers like us continue to benefit from a robust broadband network. We will keep working on this issue alongside our fellow telecommunications providers. There are nearly 900 independent telcos united through NTCA. These numbers help ensure that rural consumers have input into our nation’s process of fueling a true IP Evolution. ☎

# Net neutrality is a complex issue

The term “net neutrality” has been in the news many times this year. It’s a simple term for a complex issue that concerns how the flow of Internet traffic may some day be regulated. Here are some of the main questions people have about the issue.



**What Is Net Neutrality?** Net neutrality is the idea that the Internet is an open environment where users have the ability to access whatever legal content they choose. Whether you want to watch an action movie on Netflix or a funny video on YouTube, net neutrality says this should be treated the same as checking your email or surfing websites about your favorite hobby — no content should be given preferential treatment across the network, either through more speed or easier access.

**Should Net Neutrality Be Protected?** Those who support net neutrality say it is a matter of personal freedom, and that neither the government nor big businesses should be allowed to limit what content is available to you on your Internet connection. They say a free and open Internet — where no type of service is given a “fast lane” over any other — encourages people to create new technology and business ideas. There is also concern that, without net neutrality, national Internet service providers who also own cable channels could unfairly provide easier access to their own content.

**Should Net Neutrality Be Changed?** Those who believe net neutrality policies should be changed say that the concept actually discourages innovation. They say Internet service providers should be able to charge a fee to high-bandwidth services that place more requirements on their networks, which in turn would allow them to provide consumers with faster access to these services. An example would be giving a fast lane to video services such as Netflix and YouTube (which account for 50 percent or more of Internet traffic), allowing them access into your home at a faster speed than basic Web browsing.

**What Is The Status Of Net Neutrality?** In January, a federal court struck down the net neutrality rules established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 2010. These rules were intended to prevent Internet service providers from giving preferential treatment to different types of content. As a result of the court order, the FCC is now in the process of creating new rules, seeking public input to develop a framework that the agency says will ensure choices for consumers and opportunity for innovators, prevent practices that can threaten the open Internet and expand transparency.

**Is There A Right Or Wrong Approach?** As I said in the beginning, net neutrality is a complex issue, as is the case with many public policies. There are pros and cons to each approach. And the debate is sure to continue no matter what rules the FCC adopts.

The future of the Internet will certainly be written in part by these rules, and that is why rural providers like us remain involved in the process through our combined voice, NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association. There are no quick, easy answers to an issue as complicated as this one; therefore, we are dedicated to closely monitoring the FCC’s rulemaking process while providing information to help keep the needs of all rural consumers in front of the agency. ☎

**JEFF WILSON**  
Chief Executive Officer

is a member-owned cooperative dedicated to delivering advanced telecommunications technology to the people of Abbeville, Anderson and McCormick counties.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lee W. Logan, President  
Due West, Area 4

Stanley H. Keaton, Vice-President  
Antreville/Lowndesville, Area 5

Jane U. Stone, Secretary  
Donalds, Area 3

Talmadge R. Bussey  
South McCormick, Area 9

L. Ned McGill  
Starr, Area 1

John Michael Thomas  
Iva, Area 2

James T. Hester  
Calhoun Falls, Area 6

William “Billy” Bauman  
Abbeville, Area 7

Westley “Wes” McAllister  
North McCormick, Area 8

West Carolina Tel

VOL. 2, NO. 4  
JULY/AUGUST 2014

# CONNECTED

is a bimonthly newsletter published by West Carolina Telephone, © 2014. It is distributed without charge to all members/owners of the cooperative. West Carolina Telephone 233 Highway 28 Bypass Abbeville, SC 29620 Telephone: 864-446-2111 www.wctel.com

Produced for West Carolina Tel by:  
www.WordSouth.com

## On the Cover:



The Starr-Iva Water team, from left: Randy Pettigrew, Wayne Kinley, Sam Brown, Scott Wooten and Patrick Boykin. See story Page 13.

## Bush family wins Relay golf tournament



Congratulations to the winners of the first West Carolina Relay for Life Golf Tournament. From left to right they are: Bret Bush, Phil Bush and Bennet Bush.

## Two interns learn firsthand with West Carolina Tel

West Carolina Tel is pleased to have two marketing interns working hands on with the cooperative staff this summer to help them learn more about marketing and the business world.

Virginia Harmon was born and raised in Taylors, South Carolina. She is a recent graduate of Erskine College with a degree in Psychology. She says she applied for the internship because she wanted to explore different fields to have a better idea of what she wants to do in the future.

Britnie Waddellow comes from Waterloo, South Carolina. She is currently attending Piedmont Tech and expects to graduate this December with an associate degree in occupational technology with a concentration in advertising. She applied for the internship because she felt it would help move her toward her future career goal of working in advertising.



## Annual Meeting set for Aug. 18 at 3 p.m.

Mark your calendars for the West Carolina Tel Annual Meeting, scheduled for Aug. 18 at 3 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Abbeville Civic Center and is a great way to hear what your cooperative has done over the past year and what's coming in the future.

We hope to see you there!



### At its May 2014 meeting, the West Carolina Tel Board of Directors:

- ✓ Unanimously approved changes to the bylaws. A copy can be found at [www.wctel.com](http://www.wctel.com).
- ✓ Received a clean 2013 audit from the firm of Turlington and Associates.
- ✓ Approved the 2014 Capital Budget of \$3.275 million for upgrades to the network.
- ✓ Voted to support the Fresh Water Coast Community Foundation with \$300,000 over the next 3 years, with funds coming from abandoned and unclaimed capital credits.
- ✓ Set annual meeting for Aug. 18, 2014.



### LIKE WEST CAROLINA TEL?

Then "Like" us on Facebook! The best way to stay up to date on news, events, contests and giveaways from your cooperative is to like West Carolina's page on Facebook and subscribe to the YouTube channel.

➔ [facebook.com/WestCarolinaTel](https://facebook.com/WestCarolinaTel)

➔ [youtube.com/WestCarolinaTel](https://youtube.com/WestCarolinaTel)

# HANDS ON HISTORY

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH, EDITOR

Through a website, a book and a national competition, “American Pickers” creator and star Mike Wolfe is helping kids connect with their families and communities.

The decade of the ‘70s had barely begun when a 6-year-old Iowa kid pulled a discarded bicycle from his neighbor’s trash. The fire of discovery that began burning in Mike Wolfe that day has flamed into a top-rated TV show — and, to Wolfe’s delight, it has also ignited a passion for picking treasures in the hearts of kids across America.

“American Pickers” made its cable channel debut on History in January 2010, becoming the highest-rated non-fiction program of the year. Having spent much of his life traveling the country in search of rare and collectable items, Wolfe knew a show based on the thrill of discovery, nostalgia and the interesting characters he met along the way would attract an audience. “What I never saw coming, and what the network never saw coming, was the connection the show has to children,” Wolfe says.

Indeed, children were calling his Antique Archaeology store in Le Claire, Iowa, sending letters and even stopping by with their families to share stories of their picking adventures. Children were also sending photos to History and posting on the network’s social media channels.

“It’s really made me step back and say ‘wow, this is the way it was when I was a kid.’” says Wolfe. “They reminded me of myself.”

## HELP FOR THE KID PICKERS

Wolfe realized the TV show he created based on his lifelong passion was so popular with kids because it resonated with the sense of wonder that is born in everyone. “When you think about the sense of adventure, the curiosity and wanting to discover, we have that in us,” he says. “But we lose that as we get older a little



Mike Wolfe talks with kid pickers at Nashville’s Antique Archaeology store during last year’s Pick and Tell event.

Photos courtesy of Mike Wolfe

bit. For a child, this show is incredible, because it’s just this huge treasure hunt.”

Wolfe saw that young people needed more information on how to pick, and a way to share the stories and lessons they were learning with others their age. He launched KidPickers.com, a social network where children — with guidance from their parents — can post photos and share stories of their finds. It has attracted thousands of kid pickers from across the country. “Am I making any money off that? No,” says Wolfe. “But I feel like it’s important for me to do that.

“I’m on a reality show, he adds. “I created a reality show. But at the end of the day, that’s all it is ... While I’m doing this I want to make a difference. These kids are such an inspiration to me.”

To help kids get the most from picking, Wolfe released a book last year entitled “Kid Pickers.” He was assisted with the project

## A GUIDE FOR ALL KID PICKERS →

Every kid with an interest in adventure, history and treasure hunting should pick up a copy of “Kid Pickers: How to Turn Junk Into Treasure.” In this kid-focused book, Mike Wolfe guides young readers through the exciting hobby of picking, with chapters such as “Picking With a Purpose,” “Every Pick Has a Story,” and “Unlocking Your Past.” The book is available from all major bookstores and online retailers. Ask your local library if they have a copy, too!



by an elementary school teacher he has known since they were both kid pickers themselves in Iowa.

## LEARNING ABOUT FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HISTORY

While some of Wolfe's finds on "American Pickers" can be quite valuable, his book does not stress picking for money. "It teaches children that when they find things, they can learn about their community's history, they can learn about their family's history," he says. "Grandparents tell us that kids come out to their house now and they want to look in their barns, their attics, their basements ... they want to know whose this was, what it was, they want to know more about it. And through this thing that's been in the basement forever, all of a sudden they are learning about their family history. They're getting history the way they want to get it — hands on."

Wolfe has also joined forces with History for the Kid Pickers Pick and Tell National Student Contest, which provides scholarships to contest winners. And in September, Wolfe and the Tennessee State Fair will host a special kid pickers market.

## PRESERVING RURAL USA

While "American Pickers" has been a huge success for Wolfe, he sees it as the vehicle that has allowed him to do something far more important than star on reality TV. "If you look at what's going on with America's small towns and main streets, they are disappearing," he says. "We are on the road all the time and we see it."

Much of this change, Wolfe reflects, happens as communities lose their agricultural base, manufacturing jobs move overseas and new highways bypass downtown areas that once thrived.

"If a child finds things in their community and they learn about their community, then they take pride in their community," he says. "Maybe when they leave, when they go to college and do whatever they're going to do, they will come back and open up a business, because they have roots there in their mind." 📞



The Antique Archaeology store in Nashville (above) has become one of the Music City's most popular tourist draws. The store features items picked by Mike Wolfe (right), the creator and star of "American Pickers" on History.



## ← AN ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR KID PICKERS

Part of what makes picking fun is sharing the stories behind your finds. Mike Wolfe's KidPickers.com website provides a safe environment for kids to interact with others their age who share a love of learning and adventure. The site is only open to kids age 13 and younger, and a parent must be involved in the registration process. Half of the one-time \$5 subscription fee is donated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

≡ DON'T MISS THE ≡

# KID PICKERS FLEA MARKET

## AT THE TENNESSEE STATE FAIR

SEPTEMBER 5-14 • NASHVILLE, TENN.

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.TNSTATEFAIR.ORG](http://WWW.TNSTATEFAIR.ORG)

## MEET THE BOARD:

# Top of the class

Former teachers affirm board's commitment to service and technology

### ► JANE STONE

The capabilities of West Carolina's network really hit home for board member Jane Stone a short time ago when her brother visited from California. He was blown away by the speed of the network and the low price at which Stone could get those speeds.

"He couldn't believe what we had here," Stone says.

Reactions like that make Stone proud to be on the board for West Carolina and reinforce the board's decision to create South Carolina's first large-scale fiber network.

"We're very progressive," says Stone, who has been on the board for 14 years. "The fiber was the biggest thing that any of us have undertaken."

A technology teacher for 22 years, Stone enjoys learning about the ever-evolving



Jane Stone says she's proud of the board's decision to build out West Carolina's fiber network.

telecommunications industry and is a quick student of new innovations.

In addition to the West Carolina board, Stone serves on the Donalds Town Council, the library board and as a member at Greenville Presbyterian Church.

"The service has always impressed me with WCTEL," she says. "Serving on the board has been a learning experience, and I hope to continue to learn what new technologies we can provide. I appreciate the opportunity to serve our members."



### ► STAN KEATON

In the 12 years he's been on the board, Stan Keaton has seen West Carolina Tel continue to evolve from a phone company to a technology company.

"We can provide anything our customers need," Keaton says. "It's exciting to be able to offer Internet, video, phone and security to our members in order to meet their needs. We've got some of the most satisfied customers you could have."

Keaton, who worked for the Abbeville School District for 30 years including 16 years teaching agriculture, says that satisfaction comes not only from the technology but also from West Carolina employees' commitment to quality service.

Stan Keaton says West Carolina's commitment to service is what sets the cooperative apart.

"We are responsive to what our members want," Keaton says. "It's so unique that we can call someone locally. It's been a pleasure to serve the members."

Keaton represents the Antreville community and the town of Lowndesville. He is a cattle farmer, chairman of the Abbeville Soil and Water Conservation District, member of the Abbeville County Cattleman's and Forestry Associations and member of Main Street Methodist Church in Abbeville.

With the board's investment in South Carolina's first large-scale fiber network, the cooperative is poised to be able to maintain that level of service for years to come, Keaton explains.

"With fiber, we have the opportunity to change with technology because we don't know what the future holds," he says. 📞



# Banking on technology

## Credit Union becomes first member on hosted IP phone service

BY ANDY JOHNS

**C**EO Faye Crocker and the employees at Greater Abbeville Federal Credit Union are busy people.

Managing \$14 million in assets and taking care of 2,800 members is plenty to keep her staff occupied.

So over the years, Crocker has never been happy with phone and Internet providers that took up space and employees' time with required equipment and maintenance.

She therefore jumped at the opportunity when she found out that a high-speed Internet connection and hosted phone system from West Carolina Tel would allow the credit union to store secure data remotely and eliminate maintenance on their end.

"We're not in the business of running a network," Crocker says. "We did not want to maintain that. That's not our business."

### A FIRST FOR PHONES

After already enjoying broadband service from the cooperative, GAFCU took a leap of faith and became the first company to sign up for West Carolina's new hosted IP voice service.

The service is the next evolution of business phone service, syncing office lines, mobile phones, email and text messaging with cutting-edge features. With the options Crocker selected, she can take work calls on her cell phone without giving out her mobile number.

"I love the fact that if I'm traveling, I can still get my calls and voice mails," she says.

She also has her voice mails emailed to her as an audio file that she can listen to on her computer.

"We were able to tweak it and make it fit our needs," she says.

Additional features allow secure messaging and seamless video conferencing.

Best of all for Crocker, there is little equipment to install or maintain. "It was a win-win situation," she says. "Things just fell together and it made great sense."

The system is built to allow additional features to be added as members' needs change or as new technology becomes available.

Crocker says that's a key for operations like GAFCU.

"We'll be able to keep customizing it as we go — which with a small business, that's the way we do business," she says.



A hosted phone system and high-speed Internet connection have allowed CEO Faye Crocker and the GAFCU staff to stay on top of industry trends.

### LOCAL SERVICE

Back when GAFCU had service from a huge, national provider, Crocker wasn't happy with the response from service technicians whenever there was a problem.

Once, when the service went out completely — essentially grinding to a halt any business for the day — the service techs made it clear that Crocker and her staff were not a priority.

"That was 100 percent verification that we needed to switch," she says.

She's been very happy to have local service from West Carolina.

"Anything that we can do locally, we do," she says.

She's on a first-name basis with her account representative, Zac, and she says he's always responsive to questions.

"I can send Zac a text and he responds within one minute," she says.

Crocker says she was happy to find a partner in West Carolina that would make her network its business. "They've been phenomenal," she says. "We're just so excited about the access we have. It created a lot of efficiencies for us." 📞

# Connected Backyard

BY ADAM REID

When it comes to making your home “smart,” the focus is usually on the inside. From smart thermostats to smart light bulbs, it’s an easy task to make the interior of your home more connected. But what about the backyard? How can you use technology to take your next cook-out to a new level? Here are a few products to get you started.

## THE SIGNAL BOOSTER:

The easiest way to make your backyard more connected is to boost your Wi-Fi signal so that you can enjoy its benefits outside. Your Wi-Fi router is a great tool to get your Internet connection to all your devices, but it’s not so great for traveling through walls. The way to make your router stronger is with a Wi-Fi repeater or range booster. There are many options available, but an inexpensive, well-reviewed choice is the **TP-LINK TL-WA850RE** (\$30, Amazon.com). It has one-touch setup with most routers, a signal indicator to let you check on performance and an Ethernet port to make wired devices wireless. This is a great way to ensure you can access your network on your smartphone, tablet or laptop in your backyard.



C2G Granite Speaker System

## EASY LISTENING:

Nothing gets a party going like a great soundtrack, and that extends to a backyard party as well. Whatever outdoor speaker system you choose, you’ll want to make sure it’s Bluetooth capable. Bluetooth will enable you to ditch the wires and make your system “smart.” There are a couple of Bluetooth options for enjoying your music outside: portable and permanent. In the portable category, it doesn’t get much better than the **Braven BRV-1** (\$149, braven.com). The BRV-1 is ruggedized, allowing it to absorb shock from accidental drops or impacts from backyard activities. It’s also IPX5 certified water resistant (which makes it all but submersible). It is safe for use near pools, and protected against accidental spills and inclement weather. It’s also very small at only 3.3 x 5 x 2.2 inches and weighing 12 ounces. All that, and it delivers great sound.

If you don’t want to carry a speaker back and forth, a more permanent solution may be a better fit. One option for you is a faux rock Bluetooth speaker like the **C2G Granite Speaker System** (\$97, newegg.com). It is also water resistant, but it is recommended that you bring it inside during heavy downpours or snow. And as the name implies, you can add more speakers to the system to get your music from all angles wirelessly and conveniently in your backyard.

## GRILLING WITHOUT THE GUESSWORK:

Food may taste best when grilled, but grilling involves a lot of guesswork. Digital grilling thermometers have taken the guesswork and eyeballing out of grilling, but you can still take grilling a step further. The **iGrill Mini** (\$39.99, idevicesinc.com/igrill) and **iGrill 2** (\$99.99, idevicesinc.com/igrill) are digital grilling thermometers that also have companion apps to give you the right temperature for different types of meat, and for determining when your steak is cooked just the way you like it.

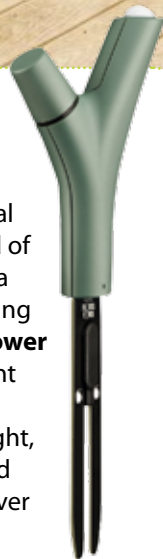


# Wi-Fi enabled devices make the great outdoors even greater



## PLANTING MADE EASY:

Having a green thumb can be tough if you don't know the optimal conditions for your garden. Instead of whipping out the almanac, there's a "smart" way to ensure your gardening isn't fruitless. The **Parrot Flower Power** (\$59, [store.apple.com](http://store.apple.com)) wireless plant sensor measures essential soil data such as water, fertilizer, heat and light, and the companion app will remind you to water your plants so you never forget.



## GETTING THE BIG PICTURE:

How can you make movie night better? Enjoy your movies in a different setting with a night under the stars. Your best bet for enjoying your favorite video content in your backyard is a small, battery operated projector known as a pico projector. There are many pico projectors to choose from, and one of the best is the **3M Streaming Projector Powered by Roku** (\$229, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)).

Other pico projectors have better picture quality or better battery life, but what makes the 3M Streaming Projector a standout is the included Roku Streaming Stick. This gives you a completely wireless projection option that lets you view Netflix, YouTube, Hulu Plus or any of the thousands of channels available on Roku anywhere you wish. And you won't have to worry about a sound source, as the projector has built-in speakers. Project your video onto a wall or sheet and you are ready for your audience.



These are a few ideas for getting your backyard more connected. With these gadgets you'll be sure to take your entertaining to the next level. You'll have fresh veggies, expertly grilled food, music everywhere and a way to watch TV, movies or internet clips outside. It's the perfect outdoor party. 📞

# LIGHTS! CAMERA! LANDMARKS!

## New season of 'Neighbor to Neighbor' puts places in the spotlight

BY ANDY JOHNS

The first two seasons of West Carolina Tel's "Neighbor to Neighbor" show featured episodes on local personalities, but season three is focusing on the special places that make the region great.

"We drive by the places every day and we don't know the history that happened on those spots," says Chuck Nash, Digital Entertainment consultant with West Carolina. "With season three, we hope to bring those stories to our members."

The first three locations to be featured will be the McGowan-Barksdale-Bundy House, the Burt-Stark Mansion and Dorn Mill.

Built in 1888, the McGowan-Barksdale-Bundy House has been owned by two different generals: Confederate Brigadier Gen. Samuel McGowan and U.S. Gen. William E. Barksdale of World War II.

The Burt-Stark Mansion is the site where Confederate generals met with CSA Pres. Jefferson Davis in May of 1865 and convinced him the Civil War was lost.

Dorn Mill in McCormick was built as a cottonseed mill in 1898 before eventually being converted to a grist mill.

Nash says the difficult part will not be finding places to feature, but in narrowing the sites down to six or seven 30- to 60-minute episodes. "We're pretty rich in history around here," Nash says.

Ralph Patterson, the show's host, says he hopes viewers have learned as much from the shows as he has. "It's been an amazing learning experience for me to have spent some time with some very special people in Abbeville, McCormick and Anderson counties," Patterson says. "I look forward to learning more about the places that make this area so unique."

"Neighbor to Neighbor" and West Carolina Tel's other local programming



Photo by Andrew Kincannon

is available through the VOD, or Video On Demand, function on your remote control. In addition to all three seasons of "Neighbor to Neighbor," VOD archives also include local high school sports and coverage of events like the Abbeville Spring Festival. 📺

The new season of "Neighbor to Neighbor" will focus on the McGowan-Barksdale-Bundy House and other local landmarks. The series is available through the VOD menu on your set-top box.

### GENTLEMEN, START YOUR TELEVISIONS!

Local racing from Anderson Motor Speedway is now available for viewing on WCTEL's VOD. Full coverage will be available after the completion of the race with commentary by Devon Holder.



# WATER WORK

## Technology helps utility district

BY ANDY JOHNS

When Randy Pettigrew started at Starr-Iva Water District, people were excited that the local infrastructure allowed them to get water and sewer service in rural parts of Anderson County.

Forty-six years later, the local infrastructure allows Pettigrew to log in with a computer to check the level in water tanks and open or close valves miles away.

“Starr-Iva Water has come a long way,” says Pettigrew, the district’s general manager. “Things are changing every day.”

In April 2012, the utility district upgraded to a new SCADA system, moving operations into the digital world.

“We can start and stop the pumping system remotely,” Randy says. “It saves a bunch of time.”

Additional upgrades including automatic meter readers are also coming soon to the district.

The billing side of the operation has also become more efficient by allowing customers to pay their bills online. The new payment option has been popular with customers.

“It’s growing every month,” says Tracy Simpson, one of the district’s office managers.

To handle the new demands, Starr-Iva Water needed a faster Internet connection and worked with West Carolina Tel to increase their flow of information.

“It’s making a big difference,” says Office Manager Susan Pettigrew.

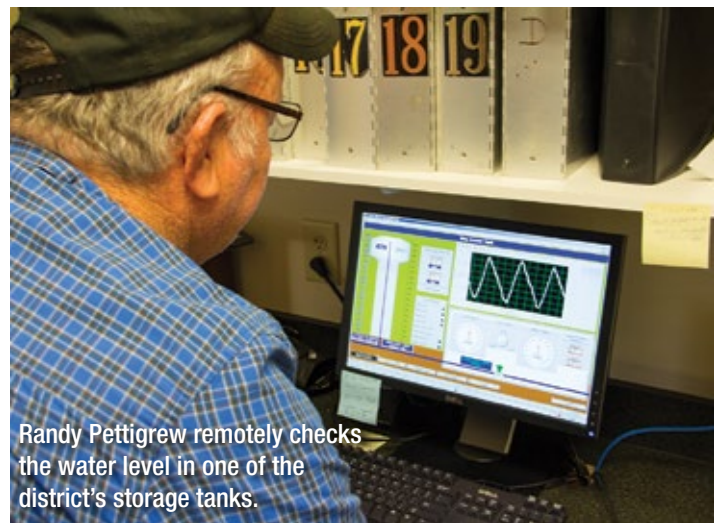
With only six people maintaining a system that includes more than 200 miles of pipe connecting 4,000 customers spread over 147 square miles, the district runs lean. “Most everything we do around here is about saving manpower,” Randy says.

The improvements will certainly help as the staff will soon be stretched even farther. The district is expanding to cover parts of Abbeville County.

“People in part of Abbeville County had been wanting water, but we weren’t set up for it,” Randy says. “Now, we’re ready. This system was built for the future.” 📞



Assistant Manager Scott Wooten works on a valve in the shop behind the Starr-Iva Water office.



Randy Pettigrew remotely checks the water level in one of the district’s storage tanks.

## STARR-IVA WATER BY THE NUMBERS

1,000,000

Gallons of water in the new storage tank



700,000

Gallons of water in the two previous storage tanks combined



208

Miles of water mains in the system



4,000

Customers connected to the system



15,000

People in the service area



1.3 MILLION

Average gallons of water used by customers each day



6

Employees running & maintaining the system



# Buzzing ABOUT HONEY

It was the taste of honey that sent Dr. Larry Lawson on a search for the best from local hives. It was his fascination with the intricacies of honeybees that encouraged him to start his own honey of a hobby.

Semi-retired from his Abbeville, South Carolina, dental practice, Lawson has nine hives and manages three other nearby colonies. He is president-elect of his local beekeepers association and serves on the executive committee of his state's association.

Lawson's honey comes from chance encounters with bees as they buzz around his neighborhood feeding on wildflowers to produce honey with a subtle flavor distinct to his region.

"My wife and I sweeten our coffee with it each morning," he says, adding that when the grandkids come to visit, it's used as syrup for their pancakes.

"We've found eating local honey every day has a pronounced effect on our allergies, too," he says.

According to the National Honey Board, honey is also great for sore throats, is a natural energy booster and, when a drop or two is mixed with your moisturizer, works to better hydrate your skin.

The growing interest in buying local honey, plus a decline in the honeybee population due to Colony Collapse Disorder, a problem that threatens the health of all honeybees in the United States and whose cause is still unknown, has brought renewed interest in bees and pollination,



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



Dr. Larry Lawson enjoys sharing the flavor and health benefits of the local honey he produces.

Lawson notes. As a result, more people are going into the honeybee business, he says.

Bee pollination is responsible for more than \$15 billion in increased crop value each year, according to the USDA. About one mouthful in three in our diet directly or indirectly benefits from honeybee pollination. Commercial production of many specialty crops like almonds and other tree nuts, berries, fruits and vegetables are dependent on pollination by honeybees. These are the foods that give our diet diversity, flavor and nutrition.

Beekeeping is not for the faint of heart. Lawson says he's been stung more times that he can count. Winter months are the most demanding, requiring Lawson to maintain equipment and feed the bees when there are no blooms on which they can feast. But the rewards, Lawson says, are many, including sharing honey with friends, and watching as the bees dance in and out of their hives.

"It's fascinating," Lawson says, "to watch how they live and care for each other." 🐝



- Honeybees are responsible for 80 percent of all insect pollination in the U.S.
- Their honey is worth more than \$14 billion to U.S. agriculture.
- Bees from a single hive fly up to 55,000 miles to make a single jar of honey.
- A queen bee can lay up to 3,000 eggs per day.
- One hive may hold up to 80,000 bees.

Source: International Pollinator Systems

# BE SWEET AND COOK WITH HONEY!

## BARBECUE SPARERIBS

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
  - 2 garlic cloves
  - 1-1/2 cups ketchup
  - 2 tablespoons vinegar
  - 1/2 teaspoon salt
  - 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
  - 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
  - 2 tablespoons thick steak sauce
  - 1 cup honey
- Spareribs

For the sauce, mix all ingredients except ribs and cook over low heat for 5-6 minutes; set aside. Simmer ribs for 1/2 hour in water with 2 tablespoons of salt. Place drained ribs in shallow baking pan, pour sauce over ribs and bake at 400° for 45 minutes or until tender, basting every 10-12 minutes with sauce. They may also be cooked on a grill over hot coals.

*Note: This sauce is equally good on chicken.*

## RICH HONEY GINGERBREAD

- 1-1/4 cups sifted flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1 egg, well beaten
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup milk or water
- 4 tablespoons melted shortening

Sift dry ingredients together 3 times. Mix egg, honey, milk and shortening. Combine liquid and dry ingredients and beat thoroughly. Pour into greased, 9- by 12-inch pan and bake in middle of oven at 350° for 30-35 minutes. Delicious by itself, or serve



Honey is one of the most popular varieties of barbecue sauce. From ribs to chicken, the sweet taste is the perfect accent to any smoked meat.

with your favorite topping, such as caramel sauce or lemon cream cheese frosting.

## CARAMEL SAUCE

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup heavy cream or half-and-half
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

Mix butter, brown sugar, cream and salt together and simmer over low heat while gently whisking for 6-7 minutes, until slightly thickened. Add vanilla and cook another minute or so to thicken further. Pour over warm gingerbread and top each slice with a dollop of whipped cream, if desired.

## LEMON CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 3 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Beat cream cheese with butter until light and fluffy. Gradually add sugar alternately with lemon juice. Chill for 1 hour or until of spreading consistency. Makes about 1-1/2 cups.

## HONEY NUT GRANOLA

- 3 cups uncooked oatmeal
- 1/2 cup shredded or flaked coconut
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1 cup dried cranberries

Combine all ingredients, except dried cranberries, in bowl, mixing well. Preheat oven to 350°. Spread mixture on large shallow baking pan and bake until golden brown, about 30 minutes, stirring twice. If desired, let the granola stay in oven for a bit longer after turning off to give it a dryer texture. Upon removal from oven, add dried cranberries. Delicious on yogurt, ice cream or oatmeal. 🍯

Make memories with  
**WestCarolinaTel**<sup>SM</sup>  
YOUR TECHNOLOGY COOPERATIVE

**EARN UP TO \$100 IN VISA GIFT CARDS**  
WHEN YOU ADD OR UPGRADE INTERNET / TV



**Order today!**  
446-2111 | [www.wctel.com](http://www.wctel.com)

**Abbeville: (864) 446-2111 / McCormick: (864) 852-5000 / Iva: (864) 348-6111**

Some restrictions apply. Offer and trip contest ends July 31, 2014. Offer: One \$50 Visa per service. Two-year commitment. Early termination fees apply. Credit approval required. Trip Contest: One entry per service ordered. No purchase necessary. Contact WCTC for entry details.