

West Carolina Tel

MAY/JUNE 2018

# CONNECTED

## FABRIC OF HISTORY

A McCormick museum shares a rich legacy

## IN THE BUILDING BUSINESS

Liberty Storage Solutions awarded Small Business of the Year

## A WAY TO UNWIND

It's finally time to make for the lake





# NTCA THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION

## RURAL CONNECTIONS

BY SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

### Sustaining our rural broadband dollars

It's exciting to see the attention rural broadband has received the past several months. But as we explore ways to extend broadband to unserved rural areas, it is important to consider how those dollars are spent.

The Agriculture and Rural America Task Force in the U.S. House of Representatives held a briefing in March. I was honored to be one of their participants and share insights into rural broadband challenges. We hear a lot about the digital divide, but I spoke with the group about the rural-rural divide — the investments being made by locally-owned broadband providers and the areas where larger carriers are not making the investments their rural communities need.

We have seen several promising steps taken by Congress and the FCC in recent months. Our industry applauded the inclusion of \$600 million for a new rural broadband pilot program to be administered by RUS in the omnibus funding bill that was signed by President Trump. And the FCC recently acted to address some of the immediate budget shortfalls in the commission's High Cost Universal Service Fund (USF), the primary support that allows rural broadband providers to make the business case for sustained deployment and service.

Telecommunications providers like yours have done a great job delivering broadband to rural America with the help of USF. There is still much work to do, and it will take partnerships as well as reliable, sufficient USF funding to ensure the availability and affordability of robust broadband for unserved areas. 📶

# Youthful trends

## A survey spots the habits of rural teens

Participating in social networks, streaming more than five hours of content weekly, and reliance on mobile devices for photos and messaging are some trends defining how rural high school students use modern communications tools and services.

Every two years, participants in the Foundation for Rural Service Annual Youth Tour and applicants to the foundation's College Scholarship Program complete a study about their telecommunication habits.

A total of 1,706 high school students, with 80 percent between the ages of 14 and 19, completed the survey. Here are a few of the conclusions:



### PRICE AWARENESS

**Seventy-two percent** of respondents have their monthly cellphone bill paid by someone else, and **25 percent** have no concept of the size of that bill.

When these young people enter the "real world," they will likely face sticker-shock as they shop for cellphone service.

### STAYING SOCIAL

Participating in social media is, by far, **the most popular online activity** among those surveyed.

While a mobile phone is still important for the basics, such as personal safety and education, the primary draw is the ability to connect to those similar to themselves. Also, online interaction is the preferred means of personal communication, and losing that link is unthinkable to most.



### TEXTING AND DRIVING

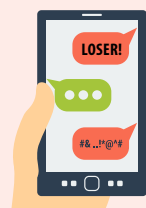
Young people need more convincing about the dangers of texting while driving — **22 percent** of respondents admitted they occasionally texted while driving.

While **95 percent** have seen at least one public service announcement about the dangers of texting while driving, **75 percent** have seen multiple such announcements.

The report concluded that "this informational onslaught needs to continue, and should be supplemented by additional, proven methods of getting this life-saving message across, whether in schools, churches or other places where young people can be counseled."

### BULLYING ONLINE

Cyberbullying is a significant concern, and more than half of all survey respondents know of a cyberbullying incident involving a personal acquaintance. **More than 25 percent** reported being personally affected by cyberbullying. 📱



For more information, visit [FRS.org](http://FRS.org).

# New law aims to improve the quality and reliability of calls made to rural America

BY STEPHEN V. SMITH

**R**ural residents and business owners scored a major legislative victory in February, one that should reduce the rural call completion problems that have long plagued those who live and work in America's small towns and communities.

The Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act was signed into law by President Trump and gives the Federal Communications Commission additional tools to combat call completion failure.

For years, rural citizens have reported problems receiving calls that originate outside their area and from wireless callers. Some calls have poor quality, while other calls simply never come through. A leading cause of these issues is substandard service from third-party, intermediate carriers, known as "least-cost routers," which originating carriers use to route their calls into rural areas. This is done in an effort to lower the costs of delivering a call into a rural community, where terminating costs are higher.

The new law gives authority to the FCC to require providers to register with the agency and to meet quality standards. "I will be working closely with my fellow

commissioners to ensure that rural Americans have what every American expects: a telephone system that works," says FCC Chairman Ajit Pai.

Passage of the act was the result of a bipartisan effort in the U.S. House and Senate. "For too long, rural communities across the country have been suffering from unreliable phone service. Without consistent and dependable service, it is challenging to stay connected to loved ones, run a business, and reach first responders in an emergency," says U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn, who sponsored the bill in the Senate. "Enacting these common-sense standards for providers will ensure that every family can trust that their calls will be completed, regardless of where they live."

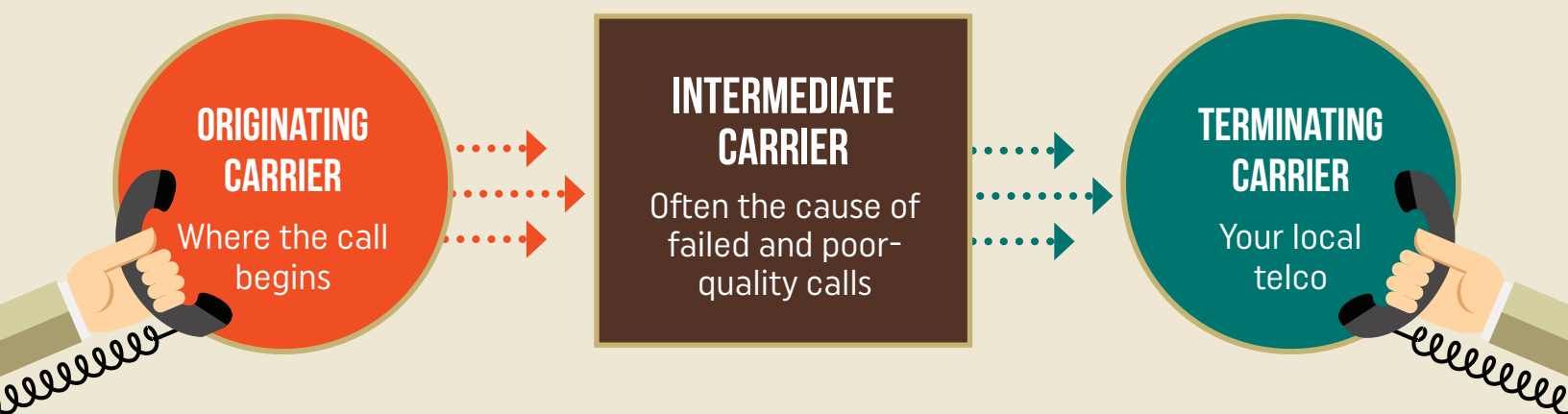
U.S. Rep. David Young, R-Iowa, sponsored the bill in the House. "Improving rural call completion rates and quality

are important to ensuring the survival of small towns and granting Americans the choice to live and thrive in whatever community is best for them and their family, rural, urban, or anywhere in between," says Young.

The legislation came in part due to combined efforts of America's rural telecommunications providers, who have worked the past several years with elected officials and regulators to solve the rural call completion problem. "Passage of this bill reaffirms the power of advocacy," says Shirley Bloomfield, CEO of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, which represents nearly 850 cooperative and independent telcos in rural and small-town America.

"Rural providers do more than deliver technology to their customers; they take their concerns to Washington and educate lawmakers on bills that impact their lives and livelihoods," Bloomfield says. "This measure will bring greater transparency to the call routing marketplace and send a bipartisan message about the importance of on-going efforts to solve call completion problems that threaten the general well-being of countless Americans." 📞

## Legislation targets cause of many rural call completion problems



# Counting on small businesses



**JEFF WILSON**  
Chief Executive Officer

**H**ave you ever thought about what our community would be like without small businesses?

For starters, half of us would be out of work because small businesses employ 48 percent of U.S. employees, according to the Small Business Administration.

On a national scale, without small businesses the economy would grow stagnant. According to estimates, 64 percent of new private sector jobs come from small businesses.

The downtown areas of our communities would certainly look very different if they were completely shuttered, as small businesses make up the heart of most business communities.

And while it may not be so obvious, think of the sports teams, community events and charitable organizations that count on donations and sponsorships from our small-business community.

I would even argue that many small businesses, such as WCTEL, are what help give our communities their identities.

In short, we need our small businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration has declared April 29-May 5 as National Small Business Week. It is a designation that goes back to 1963, aiming at celebrating small businesses locally and around the nation. Please join me in supporting them and commending them for the long hours, dedication and commitment to their customers that have made them a part of the fabric of our communities.

At WCTEL, we're proud to be one of those small businesses, but we're also proud to support many small businesses throughout our region with our advanced broadband network.

As you've seen in the pages of recent magazines, there are plenty of examples where local small businesses rely on a broadband connection to place orders, send emails, interact with customers on social media, improve efficiency in their operation and stay competitive regionally and globally.

Broadband helps make the world a smaller place, which helps small businesses. Did you know that 98 percent of the companies that export products overseas are small businesses? In fact, according to the Department of Commerce, one-third of U.S. merchandise exports are from small and mid-sized businesses. I think it's safe to assume that when small businesses communicate with customers or suppliers overseas, they aren't sending letters — they're using their broadband connection from providers like WCTEL.

A recent report revealed small businesses that access global markets over the internet have a 30 percent higher survival rate than similar businesses that aren't connected.

We live in an exciting time when a small startup company or even a longtime family business has access to a local, regional, national and even global market because of broadband.

Our community counts on small businesses, and small businesses count on WCTEL. We are proud to support them with the technology needed to thrive in today's economy. 📶

West Carolina Tel

## CONNECTED

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

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Westley "Wes" McAllister, President  
North McCormick, Area 8

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  
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John Michael Thomas  
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**WORDSOUTH**  
— A CONTENT MARKETING COMPANY —

*On the Cover:*



Teresa Kemp's collection of impressive African-American art, including quilts and other artifacts, can be seen in a McCormick museum. See story Page 12.

**ALWAYS CALL  
BEFORE YOU DIG**



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

Before you start digging or tilling the soil, WCTEL asks that you call 811. Lines could be buried in the yard, and cutting them could mean service outages.

## West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative board member elections for 2018

The annual meeting scheduled for Aug. 20 will have an election for three members for the board of directors. The three seats up for election this year are due to normal rotations as per the cooperative's bylaws and are as follows:

**Area 3 — Donalds**

**Area 5 — Antreville/Lowndesville**

**Area 8 — North McCormick**

The three directors who currently hold these positions all plan on seeking re-election. A nominating committee will be appointed and shall select one or more members from each of these three areas to be nominated to the board. If you wish to notify the nominating committee of your interest in serving on the board, you may provide the company CEO a letter of intent, which can be turned in to any of the company offices during regular business hours no later than 5 p.m. on June 1.

Materials regarding qualifications and how to file are also available upon request from any of our offices. Please remember you must be a member from the area where the vacancy is occurring and meet the other qualifications outlined in the bylaws.

A person not nominated by the nominating committee may file as a petition candidate, which is more specifically described in our bylaws. In accordance with the bylaw requirements, petition candidates will have a period following the nominating committee's meeting to file as a petition candidate and still be listed on the election ballot provided they have met the bylaw qualifications to be a board member. Petitions must be received no later than 5 p.m. July 6.

If you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact the CEO, Jeff Wilson, at 864-446-2111.

This information is for notification of the process for board election only and is not the notice of the annual meeting.

## Don't miss Video on Demand



For a small fee, WCTEL's Video on Demand service gives you access to new releases as many as eight weeks before Netflix or Redbox. To access Video on Demand, press the "VOD" or "On Demand" button on the remote or press the "Menu" button and look for "On Demand."



### **The Greatest Showman**

Hugh Jackman and Zac Efron star in the incredibly popular musical that reflects on Phineas Taylor Barnum, the founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus.



### **12 Strong**

A real-life recount of the heroism and sacrifice of a Special Forces team deployed to Afghanistan to defeat the Taliban.




### **Paddington 2**

The Brown family visits an aunt for her 100th birthday, but must track down a thief that stole their prize gift before the big day arrives.

### **Don't miss these other releases coming soon to Video on Demand:**

- Forever My Girl
- Den of Thieves
- Father Figures
- Writers Retreat
- All the Money in the World





Lake Jocassee,  
South Carolina

# Enjoy a refreshing dip

Southern lakes offer a break from the heat

If you're only looking to the Southern coasts to wiggle your toes in the sand and cool off this summer, you're missing out on glorious watering holes: our lakes. Not only do lakes make the perfect swimming spots with their calm waters, but they're also often ideal for wetting a line, canoeing, kayaking or camping. Try some of the best lakes in the South. Jump on in, y'all.

## Lake Jocassee, South Carolina

Lake Jocassee may not be the largest lake in South Carolina, but what it lacks in size, it makes up for in thrills. Jump off a high cliff, stand beneath a magnificent waterfall, or take a hike along a mountain path. Or, just take it easy and set up your lounge chair on the beach at Devils Fork State Park while the kids swim in water made crystal clear by mountain streams that feed the lake.

"With the clarity of the water, the beaches can resemble the Caribbean," says Ken Sloan, president and CEO of Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau.

To fully appreciate all the lake has to offer, rent a pontoon boat and take the family on a tour. Or, rent a canoe, paddle board or kayak and take off on your own. The primary outfitter for watercraft rentals is Eclectic Sun ([eclecticsun.com](http://eclecticsun.com)).

While the lake is secluded — you gain entrance through Devils Fork State Park — there are several restaurants within a short drive. One of them is Keowee Towne Market, a five-minute drive away, where you can order a pizza or a plate of great barbecue and chow down there or pick up the fixings for a picnic to enjoy along a mountain trail. The state park offers villa-style lodging and two campgrounds for both RV and primitive camping. The lake's clear water also makes it a destination for scuba diving.

**For more information:** [lakejocassee.com](http://lakejocassee.com).

## Douglas Lake, Tennessee

Douglas Lake winds its way through four scenic Tennessee counties — Jefferson, Cocke, Sevier and Hamblen — all in the Smoky Mountains.

Less than 20 percent of the 40-plus miles of shoreline have been developed, making the lake a paradise for boaters and water skiers. It is one of the most popular lakes in the country for fishing for crappie and largemouth bass.

Jump in from your boat for a deep swim, or take the family to the sandy beach at Douglas Dam Headwater Campground on the western side of the lake. It not only has more than 60 campsites with water and electricity, but it also boasts a public swimming beach. About 30 acres of hardwood forest back up to the beach and campground. Trails lead to views of the dam, birding areas, wildflower-strewn meadows and limestone sinkholes. There are restrooms and picnic tables at the beach.

With the close proximity to Dollywood and Gatlinburg, your restaurant and hotel choices are numerous. However, there are also lake and mountain cabins for rent by the night or the week, allowing you to make your own meals and save some cash.

**For more information:** [www.douglaslakeinfo.com](http://www.douglaslakeinfo.com) or [visitsevierville.com](http://visitsevierville.com).

## Lake Guntersville, Alabama

Lake Guntersville is an ideal aquatic playground close to home for Northeast Alabama residents.

With 67,900 acres and nearly 900 miles of shoreline, the lake is known for its fishing, but it also offers activities such as pleasure boating, kayaking and eagle watching.

Guntersville Lake Hydrofest, a popular power boat racing event expected to attract thousands to the area, is set for June 22-24. Visit [www.guntersvillelakehydrofest.com](http://www.guntersvillelakehydrofest.com) for more information.

Lake Guntersville State Park, a 6,000-acre natural playground, offers camping, lodging, hiking, horse trails, boat rentals, zip lines, fishing, swimming at the beach and an 18-hole golf course.

The park lodge — with a full-service restaurant, hotel rooms and convention center — overlooks the lake and provides a beautiful view.

Goosepond Colony Resort near Scottsboro has two 18-hole championship golf courses, lakeside cottages, a lodge, a waterfront campground and a full-service marina. The Docks, a popular restaurant at Goosepond, features waterfront dining. Guntersville's Top O' The River is known for some of the best catfish around.

**For more information:** [www.alapark.com](http://www.alapark.com).

## Lake Texoma, Texas

The name alone will tell you that this favorite lake lies in two states — Texas and Oklahoma — making it one of the largest reservoirs in the country, as well as one of the most developed. And with a spread of 89,000 acres, there's room for the more than 6 million people who head to its shores each year. Eisenhower State Park's beach, tucked away in a beautiful cove surrounded by cliffs, is the ideal spot for swimming.

Fish for more than 70 species, golf at one of several nearby courses or sail on an 1800s-style pirate ship. Hike or watch wildlife at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, one of two refuges along the lake.

When you get hungry, there are a number of restaurants — some on the waterfront — as well as eateries at most of the local marinas. When it's time for bed, overnight choices range from cabins at marinas to hotels and resorts dotting the lake.

Lake Texoma is an hour's drive north of Fort Worth.

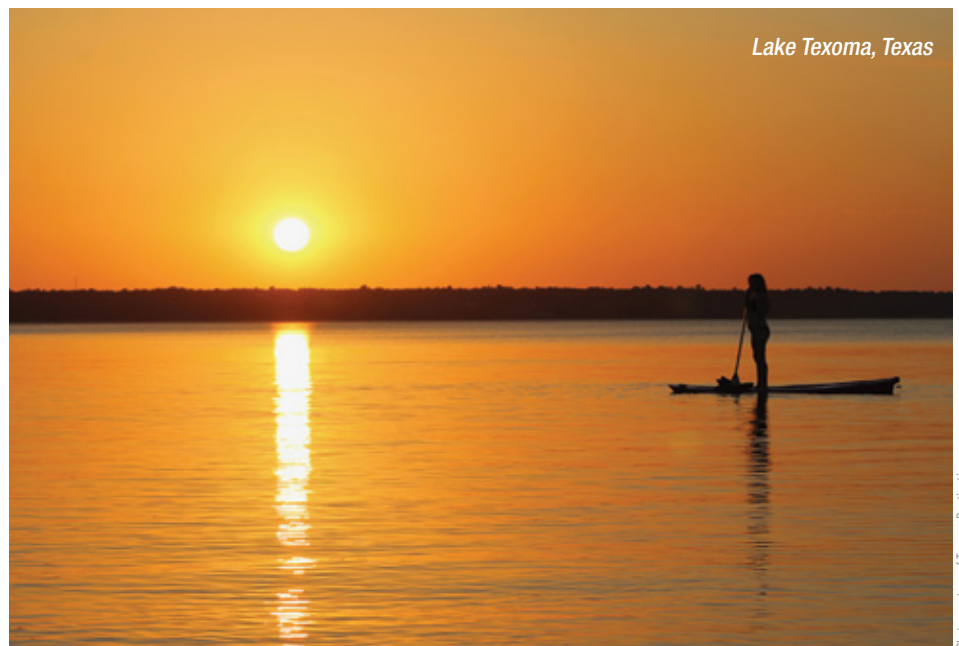
**For more information:** [www.laketexomaonline.com](http://www.laketexomaonline.com).

## Rough River Lake, Kentucky

The lake at Rough River Dam Resort State Park is open to all during the warm months of summer. The name, Rough River, may sound scary, but fear not. The waters are mostly calm with gentle waves rolling in thanks to a nice breeze on most days. There is a bathhouse open for public use. When hunger strikes, the park restaurant, Grayson Landing, serves massive plates of catfish and other local Kentucky dishes.

The neighboring woods offer birding and hiking, or you can wet a line in the lake — the fishing is great this time of year. Overnight accommodations include lodge rooms with views of Rough River Lake and two-bedroom cottages near the lake and in the woods. Resort guests have use of the pool overlooking the lake, too.

**For more information:** [parks.ky.gov](http://parks.ky.gov). 



Lake Texoma, Texas

Photo courtesy of Texoma Destinations.



# Hot tunes on the go

## Streaming services unlock music riches

From backyard barbecues to picnics at the beach, no summer memories are complete without a sizzling soundtrack. While there's a certain nostalgia to waiting by the radio for that perfect song, high-speed broadband and our mobile devices now allow us to skip the wait and focus on the fun.

Here are some of the best ways to stream your favorite music. All services offer free trials and are available for iOS and Android devices. Ease of integration varies, but most services can play through digital assistant devices such as the Amazon Echo, Google Home and Apple HomePod.

### SPOTIFY

While there is an ad-supported free version limited to a "shuffle-only" mode on phones, the paid version of Spotify is where the service shines. For \$9.99 a month — \$4.99 for college students or \$14.99 for the family plan — you can listen to a catalog of more than 30 million songs, build and share playlists, and download music to play offline.

### PANDORA

Perfect for those looking to discover new music, Pandora takes your preferred song, artist or musical style and builds a station around it that matches your taste. The free version is like ad-supported radio. Plus — \$4.99 monthly — removes ads. For \$9.99 monthly, Pandora Premium lets you listen to any song from a library with 40 million titles and includes downloading for offline use.

### APPLE MUSIC

If you have an extensive iTunes music


library, then Apple Music is a good choice.

The service integrates your existing music to the service's catalog of 45 million songs. Apple Music also supports Siri voice commands and song downloads. There is no free option, but new users get three months at no charge. Afterward, pricing is similar to Spotify, starting at \$4.99 for students.

### GOOGLE PLAY

For \$9.99 a month, users get access to more than 40 million songs, as well as any music you upload to Google's cloud. The service also includes access to YouTube Red, the paid version of the video streamer that features exclusive content and ad-free videos.

### AMAZON

The online sales giant offers two services. For listeners who pay the \$99 annually for Prime membership, Prime Music offers access to a library of about 2 million songs. Amazon Music Unlimited (\$7.99 monthly for Prime members and \$9.99 monthly for non-Prime users) is comparable to other streaming services in content and features. It is a good option for users of Alexa-enabled devices. 



### HI, I'M AMANDA CLARK!

In this column, in each issue, you'll learn about technology and read simple tips to get the most out of your electronics. For more tips or help with your devices, be sure to read this column in future publications. I'm always happy to help!

### DEVICE OF THE MONTH

#### Fugoo Style-S Bluetooth speaker



Take your music anywhere with the Fugoo Style-S Bluetooth speaker. Dustproof, waterproof and shockproof, it can live through almost any summer adventure. The speaker combines great sound quality, battery life up to 15 hours, and a stylish cover that can be swapped out for other colors. Available for \$119.99, or two for \$199.98, at [fugoo.com](http://fugoo.com).





## LIBERTY STORAGE SOLUTIONS

**Owners:** Arlan and Abner Riehl, Mike Yoder and an investment group

**Year Founded:** The company was formed at the end of 2014 and started doing business in January 2015.

**Description:** Liberty Storage Solutions of South Carolina builds portable storage buildings, workshops and garages. An offshoot of the company, Cripple Creek Cabins, builds tiny homes and cabins. All products are made in the Due West Plant and sold throughout the state. Retail locations are in Gaffney, Spartanburg, Central, Anderson, Due West, Greenwood, Newberry, Lexington, Columbia, Lugoff and Pontiac.

**Location:** 2491 Highway 184 W. Due West

**Phone number:** 864-379-3333

**Website:** Liberty Storage Solutions — [libertybarns.com](http://libertybarns.com); Cripple Creek Cabins — [cripplecreekcabins.com](http://cripplecreekcabins.com).

*"Our entire community benefits from small businesses like Liberty Storage Solutions. Their efforts show why locally owned businesses matter so much, and we are happy to name them our Small Business of the Year."*

**—Shannon Sears  
WCTEL director of  
commercial operations**



WCTEL Director of Commercial Operations Shannon Sears presents the Small Business of the Year award to the Liberty Storage Solutions team.

# Liberty Storage Solutions: An energetic business keeps growing

## WHAT LED YOU TO START THIS BUSINESS?

"I was in the storage-building industry for years already with my brother in Texas," says Mike Yoder. He started Liberty Storage Solutions of South Carolina and Cripple Creek Cabins with partners Arlan and Abner Riehl, as well as an investment group. "When I moved out here, the opportunity came up.

God brought all these pieces together, and we knew it was the right thing to do."

## WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

"The best part is the people I work with," Yoder says. "We've got so many good guys here at the plant and on the sales force — just so many good people. It's just fun coming to work here."

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SHOP LOCAL?

"We are big supporters and believers in the local economy," Yoder says. "The more we can keep money circulating in our county, the better off everybody will be."



## CELEBRATING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

April 29-May 5, 2018, is National Small Business Week. America's 28 million small businesses account for about half of all jobs in the private sector. WCTEL is proud to celebrate their contributions by spotlighting our Small Business of the Year. Congratulations to **Liberty Storage Solutions** and to all the small businesses we are honored to serve!



# LIFELINE SERVICE

**Lifeline is a government assistance program that can help pay a portion of your telephone, mobile phone or internet bill each month. Consumers are allowed only one Lifeline program benefit per household.**

## DO YOU QUALIFY?

**Stay connected with a Lifeline discount.**

**Apply today!**

## LIFELINE IS A FEDERAL PROGRAM TO HELP LOW-INCOME AMERICANS PAY FOR PHONE OR BROADBAND SERVICE



### How much will Lifeline save me?

If you qualify for Lifeline, you will receive a credit of \$9.25 each month on your bill.



### What services are covered by this credit?

You have the choice (where applicable) of applying your benefit to one of three types of service offerings:

- Fixed or mobile broadband
- Fixed or mobile voice-only
- Bundles of fixed or mobile voice and broadband

NOTE: Lifeline can only be used for one source of communication from the list above.



### Can I receive more than one Lifeline credit?

No, consumers are allowed only one Lifeline program benefit per household.



### How do I qualify?

You are eligible for Lifeline benefits if you qualify for and receive one of the following benefits:

- SNAP
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- The Veteran's Pension or Survivor's Pension benefit.

Additionally, consumers at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines will continue to be eligible for a Lifeline program benefit. (State determinations of income will no longer be accepted.) There are no changes to the eligibility criteria for Tribal programs.

**NOTE: Some states have additional qualifying programs, allowances and stipulations. Check with your local telecommunications provider for information about benefits that may be available in your state.**



### How do I enroll in the Lifeline program and start receiving this benefit?

To find out whether you qualify for Lifeline assistance, please visit [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org) or call your local telecommunications provider.

**NOTE:** Your telephone company is not responsible for determining who qualifies for these programs or who receives assistance. Consumers must meet specific criteria in order to obtain assistance with their local telephone and/or broadband service, and qualifying is dependent upon government-established guidelines.



# Web Crafty

Try online tools for creative hobbies

I have been sharing my stories of technology and doling out advice on how to be more tech-savvy. I hope you feel as if you have gotten to know my family and me during the past couple of years. So now it only seems right to admit the other side of my personality that you may not guess. Whenever I have a free moment, I am usually at my sewing machine working on a quilt, bag or purse. I may also be working away on a cross-stitch wall hanging or embroidering a household item. I'm an old-fashioned, low-tech crafter whenever I get the opportunity.

So, how does that fit into this technology column? Well, I suspect many of you reading this article may have similar hobbies. If it isn't sewing, it may be baking, woodworking or jewelry-making. What I've been discovering is there are lots of websites, apps and technology tools available to help you create and sell your masterpieces! Here are some of my favorite "crafty" websites and why I love them:

## CRAFTSY

Craftsy is one of my newest favorites, accessible through both a website and an app. It gives you access to patterns for



many types of crafts but also includes video instructions. I'm working on a project that takes me step by step with video, written instructions and a pattern. This is a wonderful site if you are looking to learn something new. You'll find instructions on lots of topics, such as sewing, painting, cooking, cake decorating, photography, gardening and much more!

## CUSTOM MADE

I've promoted this site for many years. If you are looking to sell your craftwork, or if you are looking to buy a very

specific, specially made item, I encourage you to take a look at this website to see if it would be a good fit for you to sell your skills to potential buyers.

## CRAFT GOSSIP

Craft Gossip is a website that hosts a collection of blogs from crafters in all sorts of categories. You can find fun ideas for oodles of projects no matter what your skill set is. You can also find projects based on holiday themes. New content is added all the time, so you can always find a new project.

I believe that technology is

going to help revive the craft and hobby lifestyle. So many of these skills, once passed down through the generations, have been abandoned or forgotten. Now, one person can share his or her skills with millions by putting the instructions online. So try something new today! 📱



**CARISSA SWENSON**  
IS A TRAINING  
AND EDUCATION  
CONSULTANT  
FOR CONSORTIA  
CONSULTING.



Don't forget about the most common sites, such as **YouTube**, **Pinterest** and **Etsy** for tutorials, patterns and craft buying and selling. These sites are frequented by crafters for a reason!



Teresa Kemp has spent a lifetime preserving historic quilts and artifacts that are now on display in the SC Wild's Heritage Center of Plantation Quilts.

# SHARED HISTORY

## SC WILD'S HERITAGE CENTER BRINGS THE PAST TOGETHER

BY JEN CALHOUN

**T**eresa Kemp has a story to tell. In fact, she has thousands of stories to tell. They are tales of war and peace, slavery and freedom. But there are also stories of people helping each other through life, no matter their backgrounds or ethnicities.

Kemp gives these stories a voice at SC Wild's Heritage Center of Plantation Quilts in the Historic McCormick Train Station. The center, which opened in 2016, features antique quilts, textiles, military history exhibits and thousands of artifacts and records.

The Heritage Center also maintains a history of the many people and narratives that made the South what it is, Kemp says.

"I like to highlight little-known history and show that all people did great things," she says. "All people have been persecuted against, discriminated against and mistreated, so we make a point to make sure you leave there feeling as if you're charged to change humanity, to do good things for all people, to step out of your comfort zone and learn about other cultures."





## IF YOU GO

Interested in seeing all the history and heritage at SC Wild's Heritage Center of Plantation Quilts? The center, housed in the Historic McCormick Train Station, offers a collection of plantation quilts and textiles, as well as other history-related items and activities. The station is at 201 S. Main St. For more information, pricing and hours, go to [www.plantationquilts.com](http://www.plantationquilts.com). To schedule group tours, call 803-618-2250. You can also email [SCWilds@PlantationQuilts.com](mailto:SCWilds@PlantationQuilts.com) for more information.

### MOVING TO MCCORMICK

Kemp, who is in her 60s, was born in Germany, where her military father, Lt. Col. Howard Wilson, was stationed. Her mother, Serena Strother Wilson, was born in Edgefield, South Carolina.

Every summer for nearly 50 years, Kemp would come to McCormick County to spend time on her family's farm. But it wasn't until 2015 that she decided to move there permanently.

"My grandson wanted me to open a zoo and a museum," she says. "He was 8 at the time, and now he's 12. My family's property had been sitting there for so long, so I came back to look at it to see if it was possible."

And while the zoo hasn't launched, Kemp was able to find a spot for the museum. Her goal, she says, was to change the way people see other cultures by giving them a glimpse into the traditions that intertwined to make us who we are.

"At the center, you'll see things that would be at your grandmother's house if you're over 50," she says. "It's filled with wonderful, colorful quilts with photos of all types of people because my family is black, white, Native American, African and Hispanic. We have the history of everybody in these rooms."

### THE SECRET OF THE QUILTS

The stars of the show at the Heritage Center are a group of quilts Kemp collected and preserved. She says they were passed down through five generations on both sides of her family. Other quilts and textiles acquired through the years are also on display.

Kemp says the quilts and textiles help visitors learn about the theory of quilt code, a secret messaging system that may have been used by abolitionists with the Underground Railroad to guide runaway slaves to freedom.

"The quilt codes would let slaves know if it was safe to come to a certain place and whether or not that place had the resources

they needed, like clothing or bolt cutters," Kemp says. "They'd hang the quilts out on bushes or fences or over railings on balconies."

### CIVIL WAR EXHIBIT

The quilts are just part of the Heritage Center's offerings. Kemp also shares her multiracial background, which includes plantation owners, slaves and Native American family members. She wrote a book about one segment of her history, "The Keeper of the Fire: An Igbo Metalsmith from Awka."

"I'm probably related to 400 different surnames in the five counties near McCormick County, both black and white," she says.

The Heritage Center's Civil War Exhibit highlights this history, she says.

"I celebrate National Confederate Month because I have 160 ancestors in my family who served with the Confederacy," she says. "I also have 58 white ancestors who served in the Union. So many families went to war against and with one another during that time. I have 1,076 Civil War records that tell a totally different story of the Civil War. Visitors get to see that family was everything from colonels to infantry members to deserters."

By studying her own ancestral ties, Kemp says she discovered that all civilizations have done great things along with the bad. Members of a diverse population worked together to make Southern culture, music and art some of the most celebrated in the world.

"I want people to realize that it's OK for all people to have done great things," she says. "I'm not there to say that one civilization was better than the others and that every other one is not." 📞



# The art of low and slow

## BBQ Boot Camp grads now smoked-meat experts

There are few foods as American as barbecue, and for true meat lovers, the only question is how to save room for seconds. But when firing up the grill this summer, let's get one thing straight: Merely throwing meat on a grill does not produce barbecue. Newcomers to the grill may believe that anything covered in barbecue sauce counts, but the real thing is cooked in a smoky universe for a really long time, and that factor, says Chris Huffman, is key to smoking meats.

"The name of the game is patience," he says.

Huffman is executive chef at Blair House Inn, a charming bed-and-breakfast in Wimberley, Texas. The inn offers intensive, three-day cooking classes every month, drawing both experienced cooks and novices into the kitchen. They work to improve their culinary skills at barbecue, as well as cuisines from around the world, depending on the month they choose.

Barbecue varies by region, and in Texas, it's all about the beef. "Brisket is big around here in the Hill Country," Huffman says.

But side dishes are also a regional thing in Texas, he adds. "My wife is from South Texas, and her family serves pico de gallo, borracho beans and Mexican rice," he says.

A recent BBQ camp at Blair House Inn drew folks with varying backgrounds from all around, but all came with a common interest: to learn how to properly smoke meats.

"I'm going to make barbecue sumo wrestlers out of you, so pace yourselves," Huffman told the class during their first few minutes in the kitchen. "I want you all to come and do all of this yourselves. It's not a dog and pony show."



Chef Chris Huffman's monthly three-day cooking classes provide an intense introduction to the techniques that make barbecue a favorite dish throughout the country.

The menu for the three-day class included eggs Benedict with smoked pork tenderloin as well as cherry cola-glazed pork ribs and other meats. Sides included chayote and jicama salad with mango vinaigrette and warm potato salad with bacon and mustard.

BBQ camp began early each morning with students taking on a different element of each recipe, working as a team to prepare their daily meals. "This class is all about me showing you how to make things and having you go home and play and

experiment and have many happy accidents," Huffman says.

Students started out as strangers in the kitchen and ended as friends in the dining room, sharing meals and stories.

The next BBQ camp is scheduled for June 18-20 and again Aug. 6-8. Here are some of the recipes you may learn to make at home.

### CULINARY CREATIONS

Interested in learning more about cooking classes at Blair House Inn? For a complete list of classes offered, as well as other information, log on to [blairhouseinn.com](http://blairhouseinn.com).



FOOD EDITOR  
**ANNE P. BRALY**  
IS A NATIVE OF  
CHATTANOOGA,  
TENNESSEE.





“Brining is an important first step for your smoked meats. It imparts flavor and tenderness to chicken and pork.”

—Chris Huffman

## ALL-PURPOSE BRINE

- 1 gallon water
- 1 cup sea or kosher salt
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- 2 cloves
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Place all ingredients in a large, nonreactive pot and bring to a boil over medium heat while stirring. Reduce heat to simmer, and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool. After cooling, stir well to ensure that all ingredients are evenly mixed. Make sure meat or poultry is completely

submerged, weighing it down with a plate if necessary. Let soak for at least 2 hours but no more than 8. Lightly rinse meat before placing in smoker.

## SMOKED BRISKET

- 1 (12-pound) brisket
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons black pepper
- 1 tablespoon granulated garlic

Prepare smoker, heating to 225 F. Rub spices on brisket and place fat side down in smoker for 8 hours. Add wood chips and more charcoal as needed. Remove from smoker and wrap in heavy-duty aluminum foil; return to smoker or place in 225-degree oven, fat side up, for 8 more hours. Let brisket rest for 30 minutes before slicing. Slice against grain of meat. Makes 8-10 servings.

## CHERRY COLA-GLAZED PORK RIBS

- 2 racks of ribs
- 4 (12-ounce) cans cherry cola

- 2 cups cherry jam
- 2/3 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce

Remove silver skin from underside of ribs, if desired. Salt and pepper ribs. Boil cherry cola in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat until reduced to 1 1/2 cups, about 45 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients, reduce heat to medium, and simmer for 5 minutes. Makes about two cups of glaze. Place ribs onto smoker rack. Do not stack directly on top of each other. Fill the smoker pan with wood chips and bring to 270 F. Smoke for one hour. Brush the ribs with the glaze and continue doing so every 30 to 45 minutes until the meat is no longer pink and begins to shrink back from the bones, 3 to 4 hours. Brush the sauce on the ribs for the last time 30 minutes before the ribs are ready to be taken off the smoker. Once the ribs are done, wrap them in aluminum foil and allow to rest 10 to 15 minutes to allow juices to reabsorb into the meat and make the ribs moist. 🍷





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