

CONNECTED

S'MORE SUMMER FUN

Campgrounds are
hot spots for escape



PIONEERING SPIRIT

A sense of adventure fuels
an RV business

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Broadband extends art
beyond the theatre



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Partnering to fend off cyberattacks

In recent years, we've learned even the biggest of corporations, including Microsoft, Target and Marriott, are vulnerable to cyberattack. Then, last year, the pandemic increased the number of remote workers, moving more technology from the office into homes.

"The pandemic gave cybercriminals the opportunity to discover new malware families, successful new tactics and 'double extortion' strategies," says Roxanna Barboza, our Industry and Cybersecurity Policy analyst. "And since then, they have further honed their skills to exploit fear, gather intelligence and attack."

If this sounds like the trailer for a horror film you have no interest in seeing, I promise you, the possible impacts of a cyber breach are much more frightening. So, NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association is working to support the security efforts of internet service providers such as yours.

NTCA initiated CyberShare: The Small Broadband Provider Information Sharing and Analysis Center as a pilot project five years ago. We now have a robust team focused on the critical topic of cybersecurity, and NTCA members are encouraged to join the effort to recognize, analyze and respond to vulnerabilities, threats and other risks.

Also, CyberShare partnerships link us to the owners and operators of critical infrastructure like electric and water systems. More than 90% of CyberShare participants say the information received through the program enhances their ability to combat cyber threats.

It is through programs like CyberShare that we help organizations like your service provider protect consumers by creating a safe, secure digital experience. 📧



Convenience and a seemingly endless supply of options drives online shopping, which is safe as long as you take a few straightforward precautions. The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency offers a few straightforward tips to ensure that no one uses your personal or financial information for their gain.

THE THREATS

1. Unlike visiting a physical store, shopping online opens the doors to threats like malicious websites or bogus email messages. Some might appear as charities, particularly after a natural disaster or during the holidays.
2. Vendors who do not properly secure — encrypt — their online systems may allow an attacker to intercept your information.
3. If your digital device and the vendor's systems aren't properly updated and protected, the risk increases.

PROTECT YOURSELF

- Before providing any personal or financial information, make sure that you are interacting with a reputable, established vendor. In case of trouble, note phone numbers and physical addresses of vendors.
- When shopping, check the address bar of your web browser to be sure the address begins with "https:" instead of "http:" and that it has a padlock icon. These generally indicate a secure site.
- Remember, a legitimate business will not use email to request account information or ask you to confirm a purchase.
- Use a credit card for purchases, which limits your liability for fraudulent charges. Debit cards do not have the same level of protection.
- Keep a record of your purchases and copies of confirmation pages, and compare them to your bank statements. Report discrepancies immediately.
- Before providing personal or financial information, check the website's privacy policy to understand the storage and use of your information. 📧

Summer reading on the go

Before you jump online to order your top picks to round out summer reading, you might consider tapping into what could become your own personal librarian. And you might even keep more money in your pocket.

Most libraries offer free digital resources. So, all you need is a library card, an internet connection and a digital device. Here are a few other resources that could make the digital literary journey for you or the young reader in your family much easier.

OVERDRIVE:

Most libraries buy the digital licenses to book titles they think you would enjoy. Then, you can use your library card to reserve those free e-books. OverDrive can work with apps like Libby so you can send your e-book to a Kindle or other reading device.

overdrive.com

LIBRARY EXTENSION:

If you're crunched for time and enjoy browsing for digital books, Library Extension offers a free browser plug-in so you can see your library's digital book offerings while skimming titles on sites such as Amazon.com.

libraryextension.com

PROJECT GUTENBERG:

The oldest digital library features some of the world's most popular classic literary titles. With more than 60,000 e-books to browse, you can read your favorites online or download them to your device.

gutenberg.org

TUMBLEBOOKLIBRARY:

This interactive reading program takes existing picture books and turns them into talking, animated e-books. It also offers read-along chapter books. And another neat feature is that each book is offered in English, Spanish and French. Many school and public libraries offer the service to students or card holders. There's also a new TumbleBooks app.

tumblebooks.com

SORA:

OverDrive's educational reading app offers students access to e-books and audiobooks in multiple languages through participating school and local libraries. The app allows teachers to track the amount of time students spend reading. Sora makes notes as students read and can share those notes with teachers and classmates.

meet.soraapp.com

SCHOLASTIC SUMMER READING:

If your child needs a more structured summer reading experience, then you might want to check out the Scholastic Summer Reading Program. While mostly web based, it also offers some e-books. You'll have to create a Home Base account for your child through Scholastic. Home Base is a free, kid-safe, online digital community that offers fun reading-related activities.

scholastic.com/site/summer/home.html

NOOK:

The Nook app is another option for finding free e-books for children. Just download it in the app store and look for the "Explore Kids" section. You can scroll through a range of topics to find free digital copies for download. 📖



Uniquely rural

Robust internet service helps us keep pace

I'd like to ask a favor of you. The next time you're driving through our community, take a few moments to reflect on this place we call home. If you're like me, you appreciate the breathing room we have, the natural beauty that surrounds us, our unique small towns and the possibility you might be able to really get to know your neighbors.



JEFF WILSON
Chief Executive Officer

Much of this nation isn't so fortunate. In fact, our lifestyle is increasingly rare. About 83% of our nation's residents live in urban areas. That's up from roughly 64% in 1950, according to a 2020 report by the University of Michigan's Center for Sustainable Systems. If the projections prove correct, by 2050, nearly 90% of the nation will live in communities considered urban.

What does that mean for places like ours? In many ways, not much. Our way of life is tried, true and much loved. We know who we are and why we live here, and most of us wouldn't have it any other way.

There is positive news, too. A couple of years ago, the National Conference of State Legislatures noted an uptick in rural population.

There was an increase of 33,000 residents for the entire nation. It was a positive sign but not overly inspiring. While the pandemic has some wondering if more people would consider leaving densely populated cities for places like ours, that is a story that will require the next several years to play out.

Meanwhile, we can't ignore the trends that seem to indicate our way of living is increasingly rare. After all, the money usually goes where the people are. Federal and state governments gauge the population to determine where to invest in infrastructure. Private businesses look at demographics to decide where to locate stores, restaurants and more. Where there are jobs, there is growth.

So, we need every tool possible to balance the scales, and it's here where we are not only making up ground but where we also have the potential to excel. The foundation of that success is built on the people you see around you as you travel the local roads, enjoy a picnic, pick up groceries ... those day-in and day-out moments of life.

How do I know this? Well, we're already well down the road. This community makes a company like ours possible. Our one mission is to provide communications services to connect you not only to your neighbors but also to the world. We don't serve a corporate board of directors hundreds, or thousands, of miles away. Instead, we answer to you.

That's why we've focused on offering internet services, which form a bridge between you and a world of opportunities that rural areas simply never enjoyed until now.

It's a system you may well not notice as you drive along our roads. But it's there. And its presence is reflected in the success and happiness of those you know because we're doing what we've always done, which is working together to build a better home.

As you enjoy these long summer days, please do take a few minutes to reflect on all we have. Everyone is not so lucky. 

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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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On the Cover:



Local camping spots see a steady increase in families exploring the great outdoors. See story Page 8.

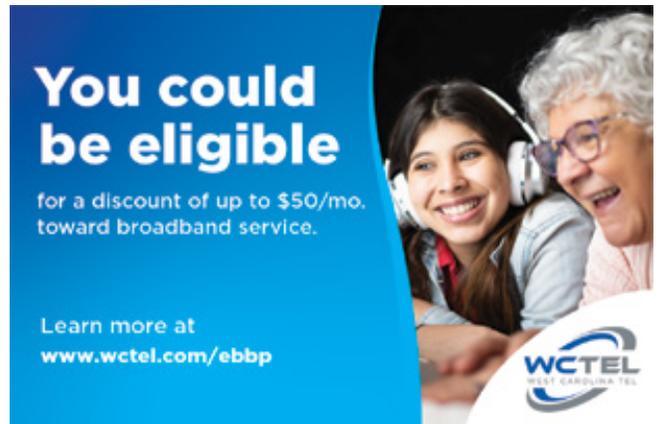
2021 ANNUAL MEETING



Join us Monday, Aug. 16, at 3 p.m.
All WCTEL members are invited.

Abbeville Civic Center | 404 N Main St, Abbeville

Meeting location subject to change. Please check the WCTEL Facebook page for the latest updates.





GORGE-OUS

The exquisite scenery of the Red River Gorge

Story by ANNE P. BRALY

Cliffs dominating the skyline, rushing mountain streams and a landscape chiseled by millions of years of wind and water erosion bear witness to the forces of Mother Nature in Kentucky's Red River Gorge Geological Area.

Nestled largely within Daniel Boone National Forest along the Cumberland Plateau, the gorge encompasses 29,000 acres filled with history, wonder, excitement and adventure.

Matt Vogt, information assistant at Red River Gorge's Gladie Visitor Center, has no problem identifying the No. 1 prominent feature of the gorge — the landscape. "It's the gullies, caves, rock shelters, arches, cliffs and all the natural, rugged, scenic beauty," he says. "And many are drawn to the gorge's naturally formed arches."

Vogt says the gorge has up to 150 such arches, the greatest number east of the Rocky Mountains.

Red River Gorge is a photographer's dream, a paddler's fantasy and a hiker's paradise.

Hidden waterfalls and rock houses — rocky overhangs once used as shelter by native tribes like the Shawnee — are the perfect backdrop for a photo to treasure.

The many natural features of the gorge can be found along its 77 miles of trails. Take a short day hike or pack your sleeping bag, food and other essentials and

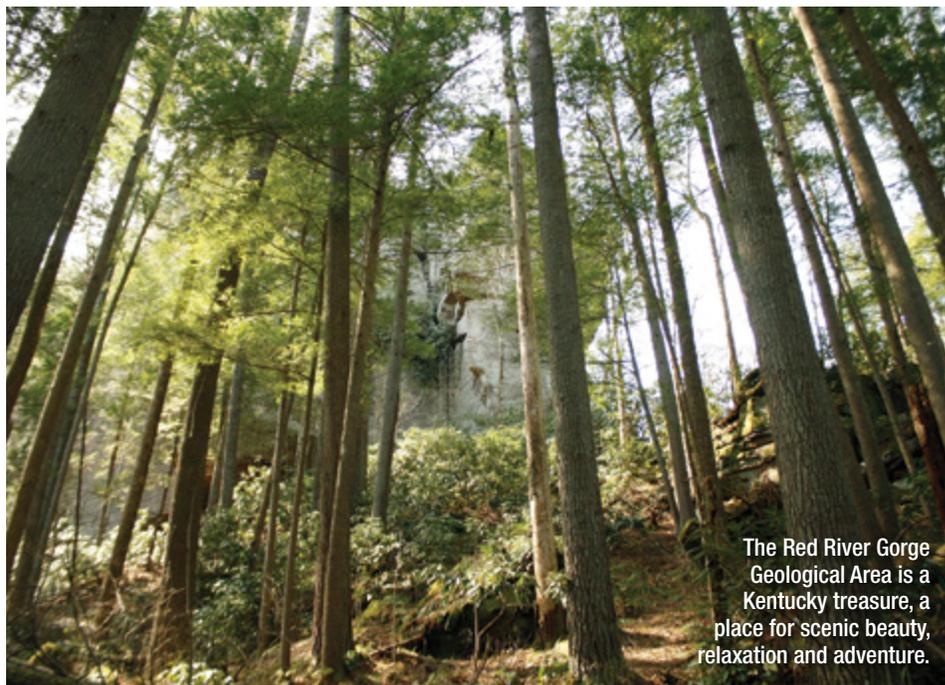
make an overnight, or longer, journey out of it as you explore the thousands of acres of hills and valleys. Campers must have permits for overnight stays, along with proper food storage equipment to keep black bears at bay.

Swift Camp Creek Trail is a good starting point for extended hikes. Descending from the top of the gorge to the lower areas, it's a 7-mile trek that follows Swift Camp Creek. The dramatic scenery includes cascading mountain streams rushing through dense stands of rhododendron and, at one point, flowing under one of the gorge's famous arches.

For even longer treks, the Sheltoewe Trace National Recreation Trail extends 319 miles, starting in Daniel Boone National Forest and ending at Pickett State Park in Jamestown, Tennessee.

At peak season the trails may be busy, but on weekdays and during the colder months you may not run into a soul. The quiet is only broken by a deer foraging through the brush or sipping from a nearby stream.

But there was a time when the raucous sounds of sawmills echoed through Red River Gorge. Early in the 20th century, loggers harvested its hardwood. Sawmills and logging camps sprang up on the hillsides. Railroads snaked through the valleys, and dams were constructed along the Red River and other tributaries to power the sawmills. It was a massive operation. That is, until the gorge was saved, enveloped in the arms of Daniel Boone National Forest in 1937.



The Red River Gorge Geological Area is a Kentucky treasure, a place for scenic beauty, relaxation and adventure.

Photo courtesy of Matt Vogt.

The area also includes Clifty Wilderness, named for its towering cliffs and added to the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1985. The section of the Red River that runs through Clifty Wilderness is a Kentucky Wild River, one of nine such river sections in the Bluegrass State.

Adding to the pristine charm are numerous creeks that rush through the canyons of the gorge and empty into the Red River. The Red River's upper reaches provide Class II and III whitewater canoeing. This Wild Rivers section is generally navigable from December to May, but the Falls of the Red River is a 3-foot drop. Unless you're an expert canoeist, portage your canoe or kayak around them.

Just below the falls is the Narrows of the Red River, which in some places is no more than 6 feet wide and littered with large boulders. This section can also be dangerous when water levels are high. As the Red River continues through the heart of the gorge, it levels out and provides gentle Class I paddling, ideal for beginners. 📷



Points of Interest

You'll find Mother Nature at her finest throughout Red River Gorge, but there are a few places where she really shines.

- ▶ **Chimney Top Rock** is easy to reach — a short, quarter-mile hike — and provides one of the most beautiful overlooks of the Red River as it passes through the gorge.
- ▶ **Sky Bridge** is a mile-long road open to vehicles. It offers several good overlook opportunities. The road ends at a traffic circle and parking lot, where you'll find good picnic spots and the start of a 1.5-mile hike to the largest arch in the gorge.
- ▶ **The Grays Arch Trail** is also very popular and leads to one of the most spectacular arches in the forest. It gets busy in peak season, however.
- ▶ **The Auxier Ridge Trailhead** follows a narrow ridgeline where it ends with views of several outstanding rock formations.



Digging the past

Archaeologists have found a treasure trove of artifacts that reveal life as it was 13,000 years ago when Native Americans lived in the Red River Gorge, including pottery, seeds and tools.

In more modern times, the ruins of moonshine stills dotting the hills have been found.

Photos courtesy of Mark Vogt

Weekend wandering

Slowing down to explore local campgrounds

Story by JOHN CLAYTON

It's an old, familiar name to many, but it's a new beginning for Hester's Bottoms Campground.

The property, most recently known as Mt. Carmel Campground, had been shuttered for the past six years. All of that changed when a group of investors decided to breathe new life into the place with a nod to its past, returning the campground to its original name and setting out to make it better than it was before.

Lindsey Jones is part of the group that has leased the property, pouring money and no small amount of elbow grease and sweat into getting it ready for campers in 2021. "It had been closed for six years, and it had obviously overgrown in areas," Jones says. "Some of the areas were dilapidated, but we are slowly but surely bringing it back alive, and we're really excited about it. I think it's going to be a really good thing for our community."

The group scheduled a grand opening ceremony for May 15, and Jones says inquiries about reservations began to roll in by early March. Jones, who camped at the former Hester's Bottoms Campground with her family as a child, says many who hear that familiar name feel a sense of nostalgia and want to return there with their families today.

Jones says Hester's Bottoms was a very "basic" campground in its former life, but that will no longer be the case at the 179-acre facility, which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns. Jones and partners Keith and Melanie Stewart have big plans for 21st-century campers, who want quiet and solitude mixed with modern amenities.

AND THE WATERFRONT VIEWS DON'T HURT, EITHER

"It's wonderful because all of the sites are waterfront, which makes it unique," says Jones, whose group signed a 25-year lease on the property. "We are going to be freshening up everything that was there, and then we are expanding some of the amenities that are going to be offered."

PHASE ONE

Plans include adding an on-site general store, golf cart and outdoor equipment rentals and WCTEL high speed internet service throughout the campground. "Our location is pretty far out, so people will be able to pick up little things they need at the store," Jones says.

Future expansion plans include cabins and "glamping" tents for those who prefer a little luxury over primitive camping. "We're going to have a couple of RVs ourselves that we have here on-site, so if people want to come camp but don't own a camper, we can set that up for them," Jones says.

WCTEL has partnered with Hester's Bottoms and will run high-speed fiber optic internet service throughout the entire property. "Every single campsite will offer WiFi services to our guests," Jones says. "There are so many perks to having it, but to me it's about safety. There's not a lot of great cellphone service, so this will give people the ability to make WiFi calls or send messages. And, yes, in the world we live in today, a lot of people go on vacation, but they still need the ability to check emails and work. This gives them that option."

It will also give families rainy-day or late-night options to stream movies or games during their stay.

MAKING MEMORIES

In addition to the amenities that will gradually become available at Hester's Bottoms, Jones says the vision for the campground includes making it an overall camping and outdoors experience for the entire family with activities everyone can enjoy.

"We want to have something for families every month, ranging from an oyster roast to fishing tournaments to big events during July 4, a Halloween festival and some things around Christmas," she says. "The fishing tournaments are going



WCTEL partnered with Hester's Bottoms Campground to provide Wi-Fi.



Melanie Stewart, left, her husband, Keith, and Lindsey Jones opened Hester's Bottoms Campground this spring.

Photos courtesy of Kathy Bauman

to be fundraisers for local charities.”

From kickball to kayak and paddleboard rentals to cornhole tournaments and safe, easy access to campsites, along with a Savannah River inlet for the young and young at heart, Jones and her partners want to make Hester’s Bottoms the new old name in camping. “We’re really just trying to think of everything to make it an all-inclusive, one-stop shop,” Jones says. ☺



Hester's Bottoms Campground
2926 Fort Charlotte Road, Mt. Carmel
On Facebook: @CampHestersBottoms

Local campgrounds offer quick getaways

Both Abbeville and McCormick counties offer several places to get away, whether campers are looking for spots to pitch a tent or pull up the family RV for a while.

Baker Creek State Park

- » 863 Baker Creek Road
- » McCormick, South Carolina
- » 864-443-2457

The seasonal campground sits on Strom Thurmond Lake and features 34 campsites for RVs or tents. It also has a pavilion and two boat ramps.

A 10-mile hiking/biking trail offers adventures for active outdoors enthusiasts.

Modoc Campground

- » 296 Modoc Camp Road
- » Modoc, South Carolina
- » 864-333-2272

Another campground on Strom Thurmond Lake, this one is located about 5 miles from the Thurmond Lake Visitor Information Center.

Amenities include hiking trails, developed and primitive campsites, fishing, boating and a playground.

Calhoun Falls State Park

- » 46 Maintenance Shop Road
- » Calhoun Falls, South Carolina
- » 864-447-8267

Calhoun Falls State Park sits on the shores of Lake Russell, one of the least-developed large reservoirs in South Carolina.

The 369-acre property has a little something for everyone – camping, tennis courts, picnic areas, hiking, a playground and seasonal swimming area. The campground has 86 regular sites and 14 tent sites.

Lake Russell is also a popular fishing spot for anglers, boasting large numbers of bass, bream, catfish and crappie.

Hamilton Branch State Park

- » 111 Campground Road
- » Plum Branch, SC 29845
- » 864-333-2223

Deep water anglers will appreciate the spacious, lakefront camping sites with access to two private boat ramps. Hamilton Branch also features the 12-mile Stevens Creek Bike Trail.

Lake Thurmond RV Park

- » 678 Fishing Village Road
- » Plum Branch, SC 29845
- » 864-484-6365

This campground on Lake Thurmond incorporates a relaxing atmosphere for weekend visitors, and long-term stays for contractors and traveling nurses.

Hickory Knob State Resort Park

- » 1591 Resort Drive
- » McCormick, South Carolina
- » 864-391-2450

This full-service resort along Strom Thurmond Lake has a lodge with 70 rooms and meeting facilities in addition to 44 campsites, 16 cabin rentals, the historic Guillebeau House and a barrack-style rental that sleeps up to 10 people.

Activities include golf at the park’s 18-hole Tom Jackson-designed course, skeet and archery ranges, and a restaurant and snack bar.

Hawe Creek Campground

- » 1505 Chamberlains Ferry Road
- » McCormick, South Carolina
- » 864-443-5441

Hawe Creek Campground is located just a mile from the Dorn Sportfishing Facility in McCormick and sits on the shores of Strom Thurmond Lake.

The area is perfect for fishing, boating, hiking and picnicking.

Many WCTEL employees enjoy outdoor adventures and camping experiences, including marketing representative Virginia Smith. “We love Hawe Creek,” she says. “Most of the campsites are secluded, yet have some sort of lake access. So, it really is like we are at our own little escape to paradise.” Smith and her husband, Logan, discovered Hawe Creek last summer, and it’s now their preferred spot for camping adventures.

Weekend escapes are about soaking up the sun and scenery at Calhoun Falls State Park.



Marketing representative Virginia Smith and her husband used an easy-to-transport trailer during their first year camping at Hawe Creek.



Larger campers offer extensive amenities and many of the creature comforts of home.



ON WITH THE SHOW

Virtual platforms keep performances going on and off the stage

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Less than a week before the Northeast Alabama Community College Theatre Department's virtual spring production of "Dear Edwina," the show hit a major snag. With just one dress rehearsal left before the musical's live debut, one of the lead actors had to drop out of the show, leaving assistant director Halle Huber to step in.

It was just one more twist in an already unusual season that saw NACC's Theatre Department in Rainsville, Alabama, put on two virtual productions. Much of the early preparation for "Dear Edwina" occurred over Zoom, an inconvenience that suddenly came in handy when Huber needed to brush up on her part fast.

"Because the video and choreography was already online, I was able to look at those and make sure I understood the correct movements," Huber says. "We even did the vocal rehearsals online, so we had some of those tracks to help me understand what part I needed to sing, as well."

Putting those remote practice sessions together was a challenge for performers used to playing off each other. For Director of Theatre Kayleigh Smith, it often required drawing the movements each

performer needed to make on the back of script pages and holding them up to the screen.

"It's crazy to block a show and do choreography without being on the stage," Smith says. "Once we did get on stage we realized one girl had learned everything backwards. So she had to flip everything around in her head on the fly."

VIRTUAL ESCAPE

The cast's final performance didn't take place in front of an audience but in front of cameras. The entire show was filmed live and made available to stream on demand via the ShowTix4U platform. Additional learning materials for local middle and elementary school students and teachers were also available.

While the remote preparations were a challenge, they forced performers to take an even greater degree of responsibility for their parts. "One of the cast members told me they've never been in a show before where they were this ready and this prepared for the performance," Smith says. "I'm really hoping they carry that with them forever."

With one more virtual show on the schedule this summer, NACC



Photos courtesy of Trey Gilliland and Lauren Cantrell.

A production of "Dear Edwina" by the Northeast Alabama Community College Theatre Department went online to reach its audience.

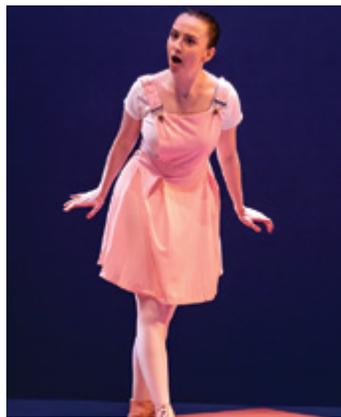
Theatre is on course for its first entirely virtual season. That wasn't the department's ideal plan for the last year but NACC President Dr. David Campbell is impressed with how creatively everyone involved has adapted.

"They have done some outstanding virtual productions that have given our students experience and a way to display their talents, while at the same time, keeping everyone safe through all the COVID-19 prevention techniques," he says.

In addition, the digital format opened the doors to greater accessibility to shows and new opportunities for students interested in film. Smith also hopes that it has provided a respite during the pandemic for people who haven't had the same access to the live experiences they enjoy.

"We were able to provide a little bit of art, and hopefully a virtual escape, safely," she says. "Theater has been healing for us doing it, but also for audiences. I do think it's an escape from what everyone's going through right now and it can be a healing thing." 🗨️

The NACC production of "Dear Edwina" is available to stream on demand through April 19, 2022. Visit showtix4u.com and search "NACC" for more information.



Photos courtesy of Trey Gilliland and Lauren Cantrell.

NEW HORIZONS

For Texas Ballet Theater, digital performances provided an opportunity to expand the horizons of ballet beyond the traditional stage. In its two-part "The Poetry of Expression" series, company dancers choreographed their own pieces specifically for the digital medium, using the entire Dallas-Fort Worth area as their backdrop.

Dancers and choreographers collaborated with local businesses and nonprofits to bring community landmarks and locations with personal significance into the performances. The result was an innovative showcase filmed at familiar locations like downtown Fort Worth, Firestone & Robertson Distilling, the Benbrook Dam and the Kimbell Art Museum. The prerecorded performances were available for streaming in March and April in lieu of the nonprofit dance company's traditional spring lineup.

For more information, visit texasballettheater.org.

"We hope audiences enjoy a new kind of performance experience through these productions," executive director Vanessa Logan says. "They show us all how the beauty and art of ballet can be found anywhere, even in unexpected places."



Digital performances gave the Texas Ballet Theater a new outlet for expression.



SOMETHING NEW

For more information, visit mnopea.org.

More than a year after it put live performances on hold, Minnesota Opera continued to find new ways to connect with its community with the premiere of "Apart Together" in April. The free virtual program featured original performances from members of the opera's Resident Artist Program and the orchestra, ranging from spoken word to piano pieces.

The goal of the project was to give artists a chance to step outside their traditional creative roles within the opera. Resident artists who typically perform pieces composed by others were given the opportunity to pursue their own visions, while audiences could see orchestra musicians perform in a more intimate capacity.

"I really think the future is on the internet, video and how you connect with people through this form we're not used to," says Joey Leppek, resident tenor. "I think getting these kinds of skills in how to create something that's effective on screen is helpful for us, and I hope all artists out there feel permission to get out there and try something new."



HI! I'M AMANDA CLARK

In this column, 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



Synology DiskStation DS220j

If you're interested in going the NAS — network attached storage — route for your backups, you can't go wrong with the Synology DiskStation DS220j. The device allows users to set up their own personal cloud storage to save and share files. You need to add your own storage drives, but it is simple to set up. The cost is \$169.99 from most online retailers.

Back it up

Keep your valuable data safe

With so much of our lives going digital — photos, videos and even financial records — it is critical we keep backups of our most important files. Accidents, loss, theft, natural disasters or equipment failures can quickly destroy valuable records. Yet, according to the folks at World Backup Day, almost a third of us have never backed up our data. Not once.

While you can always manually back up your files, it's very easy to forget to do so, leaving you with incomplete information or outdated versions. Ideally, you want an automatic system you can set and mostly forget.

Safeguarding your information does take some effort, and you will need a separate hard drive, USB drive or high-speed internet access. But if you follow some of these strategies, you'll earn peace of mind.

CLOUD STORAGE

Keeping a copy of your files in the cloud — remote storage accessible through the internet — is the easiest way to back up your data. Popular services such as Google Drive or Dropbox, which many people use to share files across devices or with others, can also be configured to automatically sync folders on your computer to the cloud.

USE YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM

If you have a Windows-based PC, you can go to Settings > Update & Security > Backup and select a separate drive to serve as a backup for your files. This option is easy to use, and you can customize which folders to save and how often. Apple users can use Time Machine, the built-in backup feature for Macs, accessible through System Preferences. For cloud storage options, Windows comes with Microsoft OneDrive, while Apple offers iCloud. Both provide a few gigabytes of free storage, expandable through monthly or yearly fees.

NETWORK ATTACHED STORAGE

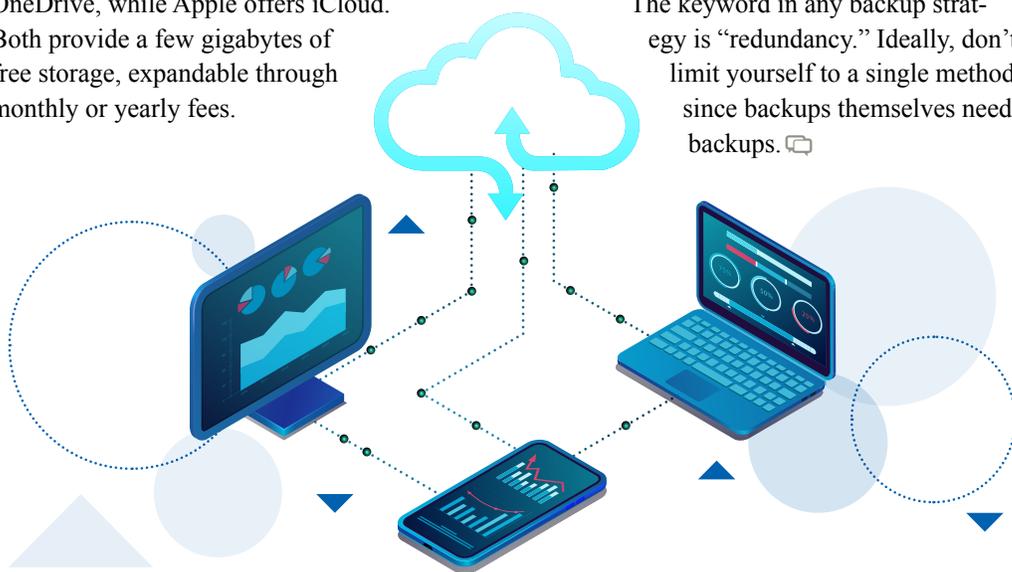
Also known as NAS or a home server, this device is connected to your network so all users can take advantage. The best options come with software that allows you to automatically back up files from most of your devices, and you can configure them to provide as much storage as you need and to allow remote access through the internet when you're away from home.

HARD COPIES, SAFE PLACES

You can always print important files or photos. Also, if you have digital files that don't need to be updated, you can copy them to a DVD, CD, USB drive or external hard drive and put that in a safe place. Just remember to periodically check that whatever media you keep your files on is in working order.

ONE LAST THING

The keyword in any backup strategy is “redundancy.” Ideally, don't limit yourself to a single method, since backups themselves need backups. ☞



Adventure awaits

Masters RV Centre celebrates over 50 years of helping others explore the great outdoors

Story by JOHN CLAYTON

Before Terry and Elaine Masters started their family business back in 1970, their own personal camper was a local curiosity.

Neighbors would drop by to take a look at their RV, which was a rare sight. Before long, the Masterses thought they might be onto something, with their close proximity to campgrounds all around Lake Greenwood. It was Elaine's pioneering spirit that led the couple into the RV business.

"We started to get campers to sell in 1970, so we worked there at our home for eight or nine years," Terry Masters says, recalling the humble beginnings of Masters RV Centre. "We had 5 or 6 acres of land there on the road to the lake, and there were boat dealers down that way, so it was a pretty good location."

But living on-site with the business, which quietly celebrated 50 years in Greenwood in 2020, could be trying, so in the early 1980s, Masters RV Centre moved out to its current location at 104 Highway 246 South.

Masters RV continues to draw customers from Greenwood and surrounding areas like Anderson, Greenville and Spartanburg and Augusta, Georgia. "It seems like we're an hour away from everybody, and we're in the Lakelands, so it's a pretty good location," Masters says. He says the customer service end of the business has remained the same over the past 50 years, but campers and camping have changed all around it.

An RV is no longer simply a pop-up tent on wheels or a long, bullet-shaped trailer to cram family and friends into for the weekend. Campers and camping have become high-tech and luxurious with king-sized beds, big-screen televisions and full bathrooms.

"It's morphed into some of the biggest stuff in the world – you can get into the 50-footers now," Masters says. "It's a changing trend, but it's modified. They've put bells and whistles in to make people more comfortable. It's almost like a hotel on wheels."

Masters also says that while camping has traditionally involved families looking for weekend getaways, another generation of buyers is looking for more than

a couple of days at the lake. "We have a lot of seniors who now have seen their children and grandchildren go through the system, and now they want to sell their homes and get out and travel and see the country," he says.

Both Elaine and Terry continue to share the day-to-day management of their successful business. Masters RV Centre uses WCTEL's business telephone system and high-speed internet services to stay in contact with customers and potential buyers. Masters says he can simply plug in the multiline business phone system at home to make and receive business calls without being at the office. "We're able to monitor the phone at home, and it's helped us in that respect," he says. "It's probably the best we've had in many years or ever." 📞



Masters RV Centre has many repeat customers who upgrade as their families grow.

Photo courtesy of Masters RV Centre.



Trailers come in a range of sizes and may have sliding compartments to expand the interiors.



A fresh angle on catfish

Catch the secret to a wonderful meal

Catfish holds a special place in the heart of a Southerner, but take a little care to make sure you get the tastiest results.

Bad catfish can be mushy and have a funny, almost metallic flavor. Good catfish is sweet, with firm, flaky flesh. But, go ahead and give your fillets a bath in some buttermilk before cooking to help neutralize any fishy odors. And to ensure even cooking, choose fillets that are meaty with an even thickness from end to end.

No fish dinner screams Southern flavor more than a platter of fried catfish, complete with sides of coleslaw and hush puppies. No well-rounded collection of recipes is complete without a good catfish option, such as this one from Whole Foods Market.



Fried Catfish



FRIED CATFISH

- 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 4 catfish fillets
- Canola oil, for frying

Tartar sauce:

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 small dill pickle, chopped very small (3 tablespoons)
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste
- 1 tablespoon capers, chopped, optional
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Hot sauce (optional)

Combine the cornmeal, flour, paprika, salt and both peppers in a shallow bowl or pan.

Coat the fillets with the mixture on both sides, shaking off excess.

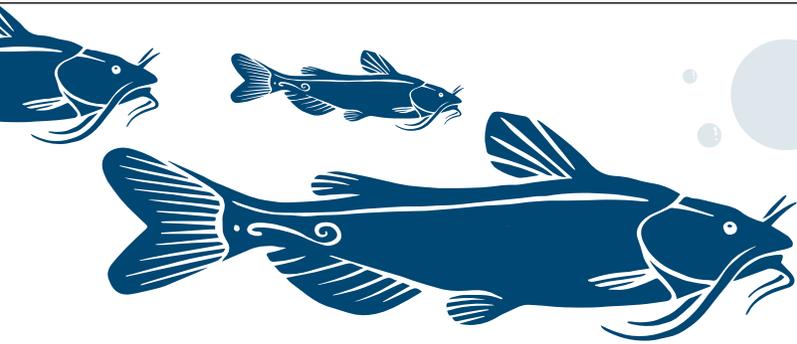
Fill a heavy skillet or large frying pan with about an inch of oil. Heat the oil to 350 F (ready when a small piece of the fish will bubble and rise to the top).

Add the catfish fillets, two at time, and fry until golden, 5 to 6 minutes, turning once. Remove and drain on paper towels. Serve with tartar sauce and a dash of hot sauce, if desired.

To make tartar sauce: Combine the mayonnaise, pickles, lemon juice, capers, dill, Worcestershire sauce and mustard in a small bowl and stir until well blended and creamy. Season with salt and pepper. Taste, then adjust with additional lemon juice, salt and pepper.



FOOD EDITOR
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CATFISH WITH LEMON PASTA

Lemon pasta:

- 1/2 pound fettuccine pasta
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1-2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped (or 1 tablespoon dried)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper



Catfish:

- 4 catfish fillets
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon dried, crushed red pepper flakes
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup dry white wine (or chicken broth)
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley (or 1 tablespoon dried)
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil (or 1 tablespoon dried, crushed)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crushed

Cook the pasta in salted water until tender but still firm. Meanwhile, whisk oil, cheese, lemon juice, lemon zest and basil to blend. Drain the pasta, but reserve 1 cup of the water. Toss the pasta with the lemon blend. If needed, add some of the reserved pasta water. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Season the fish with salt and red pepper flakes. Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the fish and saute, rounded side down, for 3 minutes; turn and saute 3 minutes or until cooked. Transfer the fish to a plate and set aside.

Add the chopped onion to the same skillet and add 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil. Saute until translucent.

Add the undrained can of tomatoes, wine (or chicken broth), garlic, parsley, basil and oregano. Simmer until the sauce is reduced slightly, about 10 minutes.

Gently return the fish and any juice to the tomato mixture to absorb the spices, then spoon it over the pasta. Makes 4 servings.



Catfish With Lemon Pasta

SPICY CHIPOTLE CATFISH SANDWICH

- 4 catfish fillets
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 regular or multigrain sourdough rolls
- 4 slices sweet onion
- Chopped cabbage or Romaine lettuce

Chipotle mayonnaise:

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- Half of chipotle mix

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Mix the lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic and chipotle pepper. Divide equally into 2 bowls.

Rub a small amount of olive oil on the fish. Top the fish with half the chipotle-lemon mixture, then sprinkle it with salt and pepper.

Bake for 8 minutes or until done.

While the fish is baking, make the chipotle mayonnaise by combining the mayonnaise, capers, paprika and half the chipotle-lemon mixture.

Assemble sandwiches with fish, chipotle mayonnaise, onion and lettuce or cabbage. Makes 4 sandwiches.

— Courtesy of Catfish Institute



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