

CONNECTION

Sensational Sips

Service with
a Smile



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**VISIT
GREENVILLE**



RURAL CONNECTIONS

By Shirley Bloomfield, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

A Grateful Goodbye

This column is different than the others I’ve written over the years, because it’s my last as CEO of NTCA. When I began working at NTCA nearly 40 years ago, “broadband” wasn’t a household word. “Universal service,” while a longtime national goal, was a concept more than a mission. And “rural America” was too often an afterthought in conversations about connectivity.

Over the course of my career, I have watched the industry transform and a movement grow, powered by NTCA’s small, community-based providers. These providers are determined to bring advanced broadband to the communities they call home, even in places where the maps say it couldn’t be done and the economics didn’t work. Every day they do the extraordinary, proving what is possible when community comes first.

I’ve been honored to witness that perseverance firsthand. I’ve seen providers work through the night after storms so families could reconnect with loved ones. Thanks to their hard work building Smart Rural Communities, students in small towns can access educational opportunities far beyond their county lines. Farmers, small businesses and entrepreneurs use their fiber connections to grow, compete and thrive—without leaving the places they love.

Broadband is about more than technology. It’s access to health care, education, safety and economic opportunities. It’s the ability to stay rooted while reaching outward. And at its core, it’s about people, the NTCA members who make connectivity possible and the customers they proudly serve.

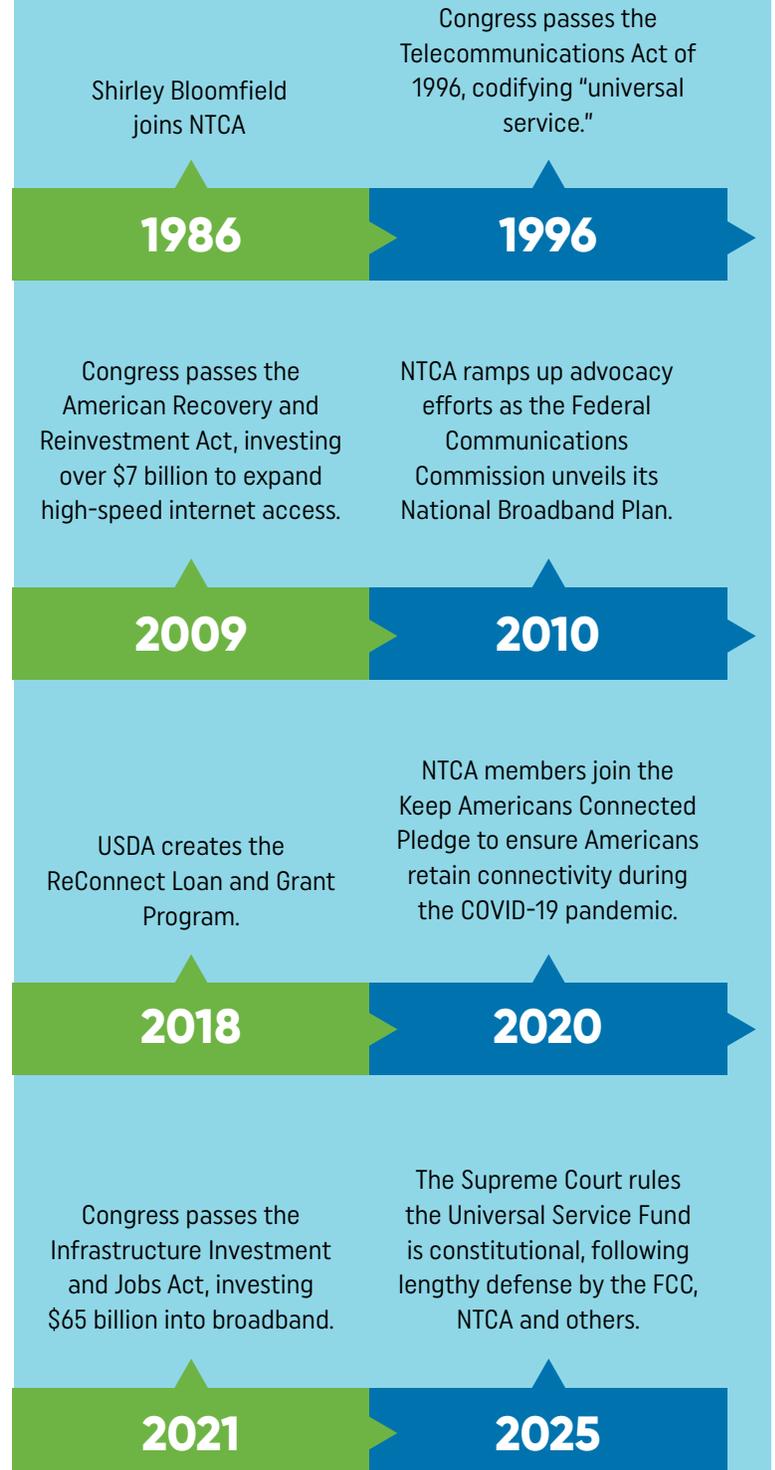
When I reflect on my many years with NTCA, I think about all of the people who shaped not only my journey, but the story of rural America itself. The CEOs who started out on construction crews or at finance desks, the family-owned companies now in their fourth generations, co-op boards that hold community meetings in gymnasiums, NTCA staff who pour every ounce of passion into serving members and the federal partners who understand what makes rural broadband so special.

As I step into my next chapter, I do so with deep gratitude, for the providers who serve with heart, communities that refuse to settle for “just good enough” and Americans who know that high-quality connectivity is not a luxury, but a necessity.

Thank you for reminding me every day why this work matters. [🔗](#)

ADVANCING BROADBAND IN RURAL AMERICA

NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association works to build a better broadband future for rural America, representing about 850 independent, family-owned and community-based telecommunications companies. The tenure of Shirley Bloomfield, named CEO in 2010, highlights a time of significant industry achievement.





Adobe Stock image by Primex Legacy

Keep Your Health on Track

Apps can be a helpful tool for managing medications

Story by MELANIE JONES

People who take just one pill a day may find it easy to remember. Adding in a few supplements makes the process a little more complicated. It's not hard to understand how individuals who take multiple prescriptions may need some help keeping up with it all.

It isn't simply a matter of remembering to take the pills or administer the injection. Some medications need to be taken at certain times of the day, while others require multiple, precisely timed doses. Certain drugs should be taken before eating, other treatments are taken with a meal, and still others instruct patients to take them on a full stomach.

Managing medications correctly is vital to staying healthy and living life to the fullest. Fortunately, there are digital tools that can help. Many of these apps also allow users to keep track of their vital signs and make notes about changes they notice in their health. With all this information at hand, doctor appointments can go much more smoothly.

Several free apps are available that not only remind users when to take their medicine but also offer information on how different drugs interact, track symptoms and even prepare a report for doctors. One warning—because they are free, some apps ask permission to share your data with drug companies so they can research drug compliance and effectiveness.

MY THERAPY

The My Therapy app has attracted attention in the last year, including being featured on ABC and in Wired magazine. The app allows users to set reminders, log when they've taken medicine or skipped it and track weight, blood pressure, blood sugar and other health indicators.

MEDISAFE

In addition to tracking prescriptions, schedules and health indicators and warning about potential drug interactions, Medisafe users can name a "Medifriend," someone who will be notified if a dose is

missed. Users can also keep tabs on their children's or other dependents' medication information separately from their own. When adding medications to their Medisafe profiles, users can specify the shape and color of the drug, helping them keep straight which pill or capsule is which.

DOSECAST

For people who have multiple medications to take at different times of the day, Dosecast may be the best choice. The app assigns a sound to each medication, so users receive prescription-specific reminder notifications. It also keeps track of when it's time to order refills. Like the other apps, Dosecast also allows users to track key health indicators.

All these apps are on Google Play or Apple's App Store. They also can interact with the health apps built into phones to provide a better overall picture of your health. [📱](#)

Spring Cleaning

Practical advice for broadband success

Spring cleaning might mean organizing the garage, getting the yard ready or finally tackling that cluttered closet. It takes a little planning and usually at least some elbow grease.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

But there's another kind of spring cleanup that can make everyday life easier, and it doesn't take much effort at all—a quick digital spring cleaning.

A lot has changed in the past few years about how we use the internet. These days, it's not just for email and web browsing. We rely on it for schoolwork, video calls, online shopping, streaming entertainment, home security systems and artificial intelligence tools and resources.

That's exactly what Foothills was built for—fast, reliable internet that keeps up with your household and grows with your needs. If you want to get the best performance from your connection, here are a couple of quick and easy things you can do:

COUNT YOUR DEVICES

Start by thinking about everything that connects to your Wi-Fi. Phones, tablets, laptops, smart TVs and security systems are the obvious ones, but many smart devices connect too. Even kitchen appliances might use Wi-Fi.

Most of the time, those devices don't use much bandwidth when they're idle. But when everyone's home and several things are happening at once, you might notice a slowdown.

For example, imagine kids gaming in one room, someone streaming a movie in another and a student working on homework down the hall. That's a lot of internet usage at once.

If your household or internet usage has grown, your current plan might not be the best fit anymore. We're happy to help. Just contact Foothills, and we'll match you with the most affordable option for your needs.

MAKE SURE YOUR ROUTER IS IN A GOOD SPOT

Wi-Fi works best when your router is in a central location with as few walls and obstacles as possible.

Think of Wi-Fi as a signal traveling throughout your home. Thick walls, long distances and even appliances like microwaves can interfere with it and affect performance.

If your router placement can't be changed, or if you have a larger home, Wi-Fi extenders or a mesh Wi-Fi system are great solutions to improve coverage and reduce dead zones. And if you're not sure what would work best, we're always here to help you figure it out.

BONUS TIP: TRY A QUICK RESTART

If it's been a while, restarting your router can also help clear up minor connection issues. It only takes a minute or two, and it can make a noticeable difference.

That's it, just a few quick steps.

A broadband spring cleaning doesn't take long, but it helps things run smoothly. The goal is for your internet to just work in the background, so students can focus on school, families can stay connected and streaming and browsing feel easy again.

Enjoy the spring, and please reach out anytime if we can help you get the most out of your service. And thank you for being part of the Foothills family. 



CONNECTION

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Foothills is a member-owned cooperative that has been serving residents and businesses in Eastern Kentucky since 1951. In the early days, we only offered telephone service over copper wires. Over the years, we have expanded our network and now provide broadband internet and cable TV services over fiber optic facilities to much of our service area, which includes Magoffin, Johnson and Lawrence counties, as well as parts of Boyd and Carter counties and Prichard, West Virginia. We love being part of the communities we serve. Our customers are our families, friends and neighbors.

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Foothills Mission Statement

"To provide the latest in communications at affordable prices with exceptional service."

Produced for Foothills Communications by:



On the Cover:



Deja Brew & Sweets Too in Louisa welcomes customers with delicious drinks, tasty treats and friendly service. See story Page 8.

Photo courtesy of
Deja Brew & Sweets Too

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HOLIDAY PRIZE GIVEAWAY WINNERS!

These lucky recipients were automatically entered to win by being enrolled in paperless billing and auto-pay from a checking account. They walked away with a Ring doorbell, Beats headphones and a \$200 gift card!



Kaitlin Minix
Salysersville, KY



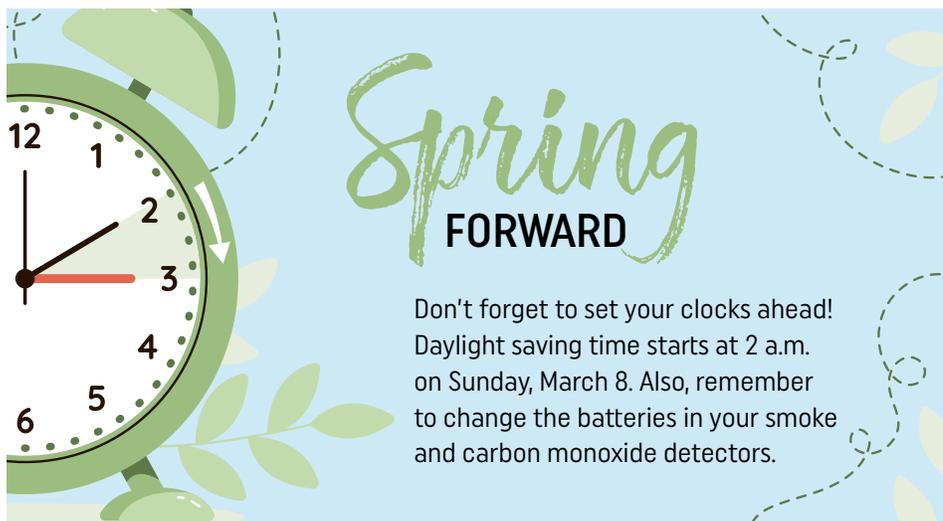
John Warnock
Thelma, KY



Sylvia Simpkins
Ulysses, KY



Foothills Communications wishes you and your family a joyful Easter weekend. In observance of Good Friday, our office will be closed on April 3.



Spring
FORWARD

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead! Daylight saving time starts at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 8. Also, remember to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



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

Walk This Way

Enjoy the pedestrian-friendly side of Greenville

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with unique urban views and abundant natural hues, Greenville, South Carolina, offers plenty of ways to set your own pace. Enjoy a laced-up, fresh-air visit when you create your personal walking itinerary with choices for foodies, art lovers, sports fans, history buffs and nature enthusiasts.

DOWNTOWN DIRECTIONS

Perfect for a stroll, the wide and welcoming sidewalks of Main Street invite

visitors to explore the local scene. Start at NOMA Square and fuel up with a hearty breakfast at Roost Free Range Kitchen. Then it's time to start walking. Venture south to Falls Park on the Reedy to enjoy an urban waterfall. Get the best views from Liberty Bridge. Look up to appreciate the bridge's unique single-suspension construction. Be sure to check the schedule for the Greenville Drive, the High-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox. They play home games on Main Street's Fluor Field, which is modeled after Boston's famous

Fenway Park, complete with its own Big Green Monster left-field wall.

TRAIPSING THE TRAIL

With design and etiquette guidelines to safeguard children and those with mobility challenges, the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail provides 28 miles of natural beauty for all fitness levels. Take a casual walk, a jog or a bike ride to discover area parks, attractions, shops and eateries. Didn't bring a bike? No problem. Greenville has several bike rental options.

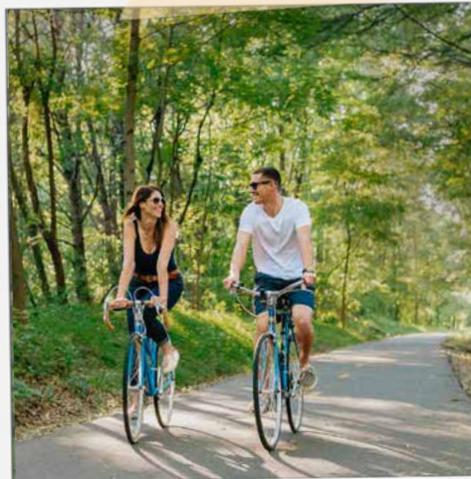


Photo courtesy of VisitGreenvilleSC/Chelsey Ashford Photography

Wide shady pathways beckon cyclists to explore.



Photo courtesy of VisitGreenvilleSC/Kris Decker - Firewater Photography

Covering more than 28 miles, the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail Network is a favorite for walking, running and cycling.



Photo courtesy of VisitGreenvilleSC

Middle Wildcat Falls is a quick and easy hike from the roadside lower portion. Continue upstream with some moderate hiking to view Upper Wildcat Falls.

Urban waterfall at Falls Park

Plan to spend several hours at Cleveland Park, home to the Greenville Zoo, Rock Quarry Falls and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Treat yourself to a scratch-made pastry and a craft coffee at Swamp Rabbit Cafe & Grocery, a popular spot along the trail.

FUN FESTIVALS

Celebrate scientists, chefs, pitmasters and painters. On April 4, iMAGINE Upstate STEAM Festival spotlights science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Remember to grab extra napkins to savor the dishes at Southern

Roots: A BBQ Reunion on April 11. The culinary experiences continue April 16-19 at Spring Fest with a series of foodie events. Catch your breath and get ready for Artisphere, May 8-10, featuring the works of visual artists representing many different mediums.

WONDERFUL WATERFALLS

Within an hour's drive from downtown Greenville, enjoy the beauty of six more waterfalls. Easy views can be found at Wildcat Wayside Falls, a roadside pull-off. The middle portion of those falls is an easy hike, while the upper section calls

for moderate hiking. For those who are feeling energetic, the 1,200-foot change of elevation at Rainbow Falls offers a strenuous hiking challenge.

Greenville-area waterfalls are part of the Blue Ridge Escarpment, a geological feature where the Blue Ridge Mountains dramatically drop 2,000 feet to the Piedmont below. In total, the area is home to more than 50 waterfalls.

Plan your Greenville, South Carolina, trip at visitgreenvillesc.com or on Facebook @visitgreenvillesc.

Adobe Stock image by Olenna



Photos courtesy of Deja Brew & Sweets Too

Owner Devin Derifield, center, and the Deja Brew crew are all smiles and ready to welcome customers.

Service with a Smile

Cheerful staff awaits at Deja Brew & Sweets Too

Story by LAURA MCGILL

In Louisa, just off Old U.S. 23, nestled at the end of the Food City Plaza, Deja Brew & Sweets Too beckons with a cheerful pink gingham sign. Once inside, patrons are greeted by the tempting aroma of coffee, sweet treats like cookies and doughnuts and friendly employees.

Friendliness is as much part of the job as knowing how to blend the latest drink craze, according to owner and operator Devin Derifield. “I believe one of the most important things you can offer your customers is good customer service,” she says. “It sets the whole mood of the customer interaction. Something as simple as a kind word or a smile can make someone’s day. We want to have that

impression on our customers because we couldn’t do this without them!”

GETTING STARTED

Today Deja Brew & Sweets Too is a bright and welcoming place, but it hasn’t been that long since it was only a dream. Devin was already busy as the co-owner and operator of the Louisa location of Giovanni’s Pizza when she saw this location become available. “I’ve always loved coffee drinks and thought having a coffee business would be fun,” she says. “When I realized that this spot had a drive-thru window, I knew it was the perfect place.”

After months of hard work creating the cheerful coffee shop and passing all the

necessary inspections, the doors opened in February 2024.

THE DAILY GRIND

It varies by season, but on average, Devin employs 10 people at Deja Brew & Sweets Too. She attributes many of the creative drinks on the menu to her team. “If they have a new idea for a drink, we try it and critique it,” she says. “We may play around with different flavors until we come up with the perfect new drink and flavor combo. Customers love our variety.”

That variety can be seen on the menu board throughout the year with fun seasonal offerings. The most recent menu showcases the newest flavor of Alani Cherry Bomb,



with rich espresso. The omnipresent pumpkin spice can be found in fall favorites like the Pumpkin Waffle Latte, which adds in French toast and maple cold foam. Christmas gets a boost with Meet Me Under the Mistletoe, a colorful blend of green apple, cherry and Alani Cherry Slush.

For those feeling adventurous, Devin promises the Blueberry Cheesecake Red Bull is an unexpected flavor combination that really works.

AND SWEETS TOO



The perfect sip needs the perfect pairing. Devin’s team makes sure customers have plenty of sweet treat options. Look for a rotating menu with tempting strawberry-filled Danishes, peanut butter fudge and red velvet cookies. The display case is also filled with glazed, iced and filled delights such as the Churro Mega Donut and the Dubai doughnut filled with pistachio cream, with chocolate and Kataifi pastry on top. For a sugar-free choice, the shop carries items from Chrissy’s Creations, a popular specialty bakery in Portsmouth, Ohio.

When summer heats up, the ice cream and milkshake menus take center stage. Flavors include classics like vanilla and butter pecan and trendy options like birthday cake batter for ice cream and popular cereals like Lucky Charms in the milkshakes.

If all this sounds like more than enough to keep the staff busy, it is. But the shop also offers a weekday lunch menu featuring Italian pasta salad, white

DEJA BREW & SWEETS TOO

4373 Kentucky 2565, Louisa
606-244-5333

Follow Deja Brew & Sweets Too on Facebook.

Hours

Monday-Friday: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Closed Sunday

chicken chili and more. And somewhere in the mix they manage to handle business deliveries and offer specialty items designed for Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day and teacher appreciation.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Devin and her team recently launched a dirty soda menu, allowing customers to enjoy their favorite sodas with flavored syrups, cream and other add-ins. She hints at going mobile with a coffee truck at some point in 2026. As she juggles the challenges of running and expanding a business, well, two businesses, Devin points to time management as her biggest challenge.

She finds balance in the joys of the job. “The biggest reward has been knowing that we are delivering a quality product to our customers with a kind word and a smile,” she says. “Positivity and kindness say so much in today’s world.”

GETTING THE WORD OUT

To keep Deja Brew & Sweets Too connected to its customers, Devin relies on Foothills Communications for phone and internet services. The phone stays busy with call-in orders, and the internet comes into play when Devin posts updates on Facebook and fun videos on TikTok.

To stay in the know about the latest drink flavors, selection of sweet treats and current weekday lunch menu, follow Deja Brew & Sweets Too on Facebook. Keep an eye out for specials like Deja Brew Twos-day BOGO, Wild Wednesday and Tickle Me Thursday. ☎

ABOVE: So many choices in the doughnut case make it hard to pick just one.

TOP: A positive message and delicious drinks help the Deja Brew crew deliver great customer service.

mixed with cherry and vanilla syrups topped with a Coca-Cola cold foam to create the Coke-Kissed Cherry.

Spring features have included a Peeps Latte, which blends vanilla and caramel

ALWAYS PREPARED

Scouting America readies kids to protect themselves online

Dozens of Scouts attend a Department of Homeland Security event about online safety.

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

In his days as a Scout, Justin Williams was always drawn to outdoor skills. He excelled at building fires and tying knots. He struggled more with identifying plants, and, even today, he says he still hasn't picked up the knack for it. But as he got older, the leadership skills he was learning every step of the way stood out to him.

"Those are all important skills, but the thing we're really coaching is how to work within a team, be good citizens for the future and make good, ethical decisions," he says. "I thought I was just having fun. But I was really learning a lot of leadership skills that have benefited me throughout my life."

Today, as scout executive for Scouting America's Palmetto Council in South Carolina and den leader for a group of second graders, Justin is amazed at the technology available to young children. There's even technology that could have helped him identify plants as a Scout.

As a result, while Scouting America, formerly the Boy Scouts of America, still emphasizes the importance of getting outside and working with others, the organization is increasingly recognizing the need to meet kids where they are with technology.

Just last year, it introduced its first merit badges for cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. Others, like the Know2Protect badge, are specifically aimed at teaching Scouts about the importance of personal safety online.

"While we know there are a lot of benefits to technology, we also know that, unfortunately, there are people online who do not have our kids' best interest at heart," Justin says. "We need to help our kids recognize who is an ally, who is trying to do them harm and what to do when they encounter those types of people."

THE NEW NORMAL

For Scouting America's Chief Safeguarding Officer Glen Pounder, that work starts with the adults around each Scout. His office in Irving, Texas, provides training for all Scout leaders around the threats kids may face online—from cyberbullying and body image issues to pornography and sexual exploitation.

"One of our key mottoes is be prepared for life. There's no life these days without the online space," he says. "Our new normal as an organization is we have to be comfortable always looking for what is next, particularly with technology. I think it's about landing the message in a way that is not creating fear. That this is just part of preparing for life."

Starting from kindergarten, Scouting America encourages parents of new Scouts to have their own conversations with their children about general safety practices. As kids earn their annual ranks, they must complete six core components, one of which is additional safety training. Starting in fourth grade, that training includes lessons on what information they should not give out in online settings.

In addition, Scouting America partnered with the Department of Homeland Security in 2024 to build an awareness campaign about the risks kids face online. Scouts and their families can join in-person training sessions and activities or online presentations to learn how to prevent and report online abuse, earning them an exclusive Know2Protect patch.

Glen's hope is that more widespread awareness and training within Scouting America troops can even help protect kids who are not part of the program.

"There's a ripple effect outside of scouting. Each Scout has

friends, siblings and other non-Scouts around them that they share things with,” he says. “So, if you’ve got a million trained Scouts out there it makes it much harder for anyone who’s thinking about abusing their position of trust to get away with it.”

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

While preventing these abuses from happening in the first place is the top priority, Glen emphasizes it is just as important for kids to feel comfortable speaking with an adult, whether it’s a parent or a Scout leader, if they do find themselves in one of these situations. If not, the outcome can be tragic.

Justin cites the example of an Eagle Scout in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in the last few years who took his own life. He had connected with someone online and shared compromising photos, only to have those photos used to exploit him.

“He didn’t think there was any other option, so he decided to take his own life,” Justin says. “When you think about the perfect kid, this is the kid that would come to mind. So, this isn’t something that only targets dysfunctional families. Criminals are getting smarter every day, and we just can’t take anything for granted.”

For Glen, that comes down to preparing kids for dangerous situations, trusting them to use the tools available to them and offering understanding if they find themselves in trouble.

“If we haven’t empowered these kids correctly, then the fear stays with them. We need to take that fear away,” he says. “Our focus is on prevention first. But then, if something happens, take a breath and then we’ll move forward. We know what to do, we’re going to get there. You’re not alone in this.” 📱

BADGE OF HONOR

Scouting America badges aren’t just for archery and pioneering anymore. Here are a few tech-savvy badges and patches today’s Scouts are collecting.

Cybersecurity Merit Badge

Introduces Scouts to various cyberthreats, including viruses, worms, social engineering and denial-of-service attacks. They learn to protect themselves with strong passwords, firewalls, antivirus software and encryption.



Artificial Intelligence Merit Badge

Helps Scouts explore what AI is, different types of AI and how to use it in everyday life. They are also challenged to discuss issues around data privacy, bias in AI systems and the ethics of this new technology.



Know2Protect Patch

Serves as a symbol of the Scout’s commitment to online safety and digital citizenship through participation in the Department of Homeland Security’s Project iGuardian training. The training provides knowledge and skills to protect themselves against online abuse.



A Scout tries on a Homeland Security investigations vest.

Photos courtesy of Scouting America

SIGNS of the Times

Copy Cats' small team makes a big impact

Story by ANDREA AGARDY

Business success often hinges on relationships. Across industries, companies excel when they're trusted by customers and the community.

Jerry Daniels, owner of Copy Cats Signs & Printing, knows that from experience. "I play well with others, as they say," he says. "I've gotten a lot of customers by just being dead honest with people, and my staff does the same thing."

'STEPPED OUT ON FAITH'

Early in his professional life Jerry, an electrician by trade, worked in sales with

Red Bull energy drinks. In 2014, he broke his neck in an accident. "After all my surgeries I couldn't go back to what I was doing, so they said they were going to rehabilitate me so I could find a different job," he says.

After about a week of physical therapy assistant classes, Jerry realized that wasn't his path. He had prior experience in the sign business, so he decided to study graphic arts at Big Sandy Community and Technical College. There he met Natasha Caldwell, now Copy Cats' graphic designer and print manager.

"Right before I graduated, I bought all the equipment I needed to start a sign company—against my wife's will," Jerry says. "I wasn't going to go work for someone else. I stepped out on faith, financed all the equipment and never went back. I started in my garage. About a year into it, I hired Natasha."

What's now Copy Cats opened in the mid-1970s as TMC Printing. In 2013, Debbie Stepp bought it and changed the name. During a bustling election season, Jerry approached Debbie about working together on printing jobs he couldn't

The Copy Cats team, including, from left, Jerrika, Vicky and Jerry Daniels, Natasha Caldwell, Lexi Niese and Ruger, the company mascot, enjoys making sure their customers get the most for their money.



complete in his garage. “She told me no,” he says. “She didn’t trust me because someone else messed her over. She’s outgoing, but when it comes to business, she’s tough.”

Jerry needed to build a relationship with Debbie, and that’s exactly what he did. “It

took a long time,” he says. “She started giving me better deals, and after a while she was one of my best friends. We still have a great relationship today.”

The two became so close that when Debbie decided to retire at the end of 2020, she called Jerry. “She said, ‘I want you to have the company,’” he says. “God was good. I have to give him all the glory on that. At that time, I was looking at getting a storefront. Deb priced it so low, I had to jump on it. What a blessing, I couldn’t believe it.”

FULL-SERVICE PRINTING

The Copy Cats team—including Natasha, General Manager Lexi Niese and Jerry’s daughter, Jerrika, who works part time—offers a full range of design and printing services. They design logos and print business cards, handle huge printing jobs for nationwide beverage companies, and they even tinted the windows at the Johnson County Courthouse. The list of services extends to vinyl vehicle wraps, printing of invoices and other forms, wedding invitations, custom hats, T-shirts, window cling signs and much more. “We’re just a small, little shop that gets things done,” Jerry says.

Foothills’ fast and reliable broadband is vital to every aspect of the operation. Copy Cats relies on the internet for its cash register, accessing design software, cloud storage, billing, emails and more. “We hardly ever have a problem with Foothills, but when we do, they’re always

COPY CATS SIGNS & PRINTING

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606-789-6835

Follow Copy Cats Signs & Printing on Facebook.

right on it,” Jerry says. “Their customer service is awesome.”

Customers’ needs and best interests come first at Copy Cats—an approach that earns the shop a lot of repeat business. “People talk a lot about upselling things, but most of the time I downsell it,” Jerry says. He advises new business owners to pace themselves. “Why go spend \$10,000 here when you might not be open next month?” he says. “Once you get a bit farther into it, then we’ll go full force. I hope you’re here for the next 20,000 years, but why spend the money when we can do it a little bit down the road?”

A CARING COMMUNITY

While that approach has earned Jerry the thanks of grateful customers, he sees it as looking out for his neighbors. There’s a lot of poverty in the area, he says, and many folks are trying to build better lives by starting businesses. While that enthusiasm is inspiring, Jerry works to counterbalance it with caution.

“Community means everything to me,” he says. “I want to see our town thrive and every business in our town. We’ve got to support each other.”

When it comes to emotional support around the shop, Ruger, Jerry’s Anatolian doodle—a cross between an Anatolian shepherd and a standard poodle—has that covered. “He’s got more customers and friends than we do,” he says of the Copy Cats’ mascot. “People bring him snacks, ice cream, doughnuts. Everyone loves Ruger.”

Jerry credits the support of his family, including his wife, Vicky, his team and the community with Copy Cats’ ongoing success. “I have to thank the Lord for blessing us with the opportunity to do what we do,” he says. 🐾



Photos courtesy of John Michael Laney

ABOVE: Natasha and Jerry met while taking graphic design classes at Big Sandy Community and Technical College, and they’ve now worked together for years.

BELOW: Copy Cats Signs & Printing specializes in designing logos and vehicle wraps like this trailer for Gracefully Made, a Paintsville doughnut shop.



Photo courtesy of Copy Cats Signs & Printing

Treat Yourself

WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

Rich desserts shouldn't cost a fortune

For many Americans, going to the grocery store can be stressful since prices don't seem to be coming down. But we still want to have our cake and eat it too. So, it's nice—and entirely possible—to treat ourselves to something sweet at the end of the meal without breaking the bank.

There are some tricks to keep in mind to help you stay on budget while still satisfying your sweet tooth. For example, if a recipe calls for pecans, walnuts, a less expensive alternative, can be substituted. And use store brands whenever possible—a cost-saving practice that always saves pennies.



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

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

CHOCOLATE BANANA BARS

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter | 1 teaspoon baking powder |
| 1 cup sugar | 1 teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 egg | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla | 1/4 cup baking cocoa powder |
| 1 1/2 cups mashed banana | 1 cup chocolate chips |
| 1 1/2 cups flour | |

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Mix the butter, sugar, egg, vanilla and banana. Then add the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Put half of the mixture into a separate bowl and add the cocoa powder.

Grease the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch pan and pour in the cocoa mixture. The mixture will be thick, just try and spread a thin layer across the bottom. It will rise and make a beautiful, thin bar. Use a smaller pan if you want a thicker bar, however, it will need to bake longer to get the middle done.

Spread the rest of the batter on top of the cocoa mixture. Sprinkle the top with as many or as few chocolate chips as you like.

Bake for about 30 minutes or until the top is browned and a toothpick comes out clean.



BLUEBERRY COFFEECAKE

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup plus 10 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup pecans
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar for dusting

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Grease and flour a 9-inch Bundt pan.

Beat sugar and butter together in a large bowl with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in sour cream and vanilla extract. In another bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Stir into butter mixture until just blended. Fold in blueberries.

Spoon half of the batter into the prepared pan. Combine brown sugar, pecans and cinnamon in a small bowl. Sprinkle half of the mixture over the batter in the pan.

Spoon remaining batter on top, then sprinkle on remaining pecan mixture. Use a knife or thin spatula to swirl the mixture into the cake.

Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes. Let cake cool in the pan for 15 minutes before inverting. Invert carefully onto a serving plate. Dust with powdered sugar just before serving.



TROPICAL TWISTER

- 2 cups frozen pineapple chunks
- 4 ounces pineapple juice
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. If it's too thick, add a bit more pineapple juice. Scoop into bowls and, if desired, garnish with additional chopped pineapple and a dollop of whipped cream. Serve immediately. Makes 3 servings.

STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM PIE

- 1 prepared 9-inch pie shell, graham cracker or pastry crust, baked and cooled
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup whipped topping, thawed
- 4 cups fresh strawberries, washed, hulled and halved
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon shortening

Bake crust at 350 F for 15 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool completely.

In a large bowl, beat the softened cream cheese until it is fluffy. Gradually add the sugar and almond extract, beating until fully combined. Gently fold the whipped topping into the cream cheese mixture until smooth.

Spread the cream cheese mixture evenly into the cooled pie crust. Arrange the strawberry halves, cut side down or pointed side up, over the filling.

In a small, microwave-safe bowl, combine the chocolate chips and shortening. Microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring in between, until the chocolate is melted and smooth. Drizzle the melted chocolate over the top of the strawberries and cream filling.

Refrigerate the pie for at least 1-2 hours or until it is set and chilled before serving.



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