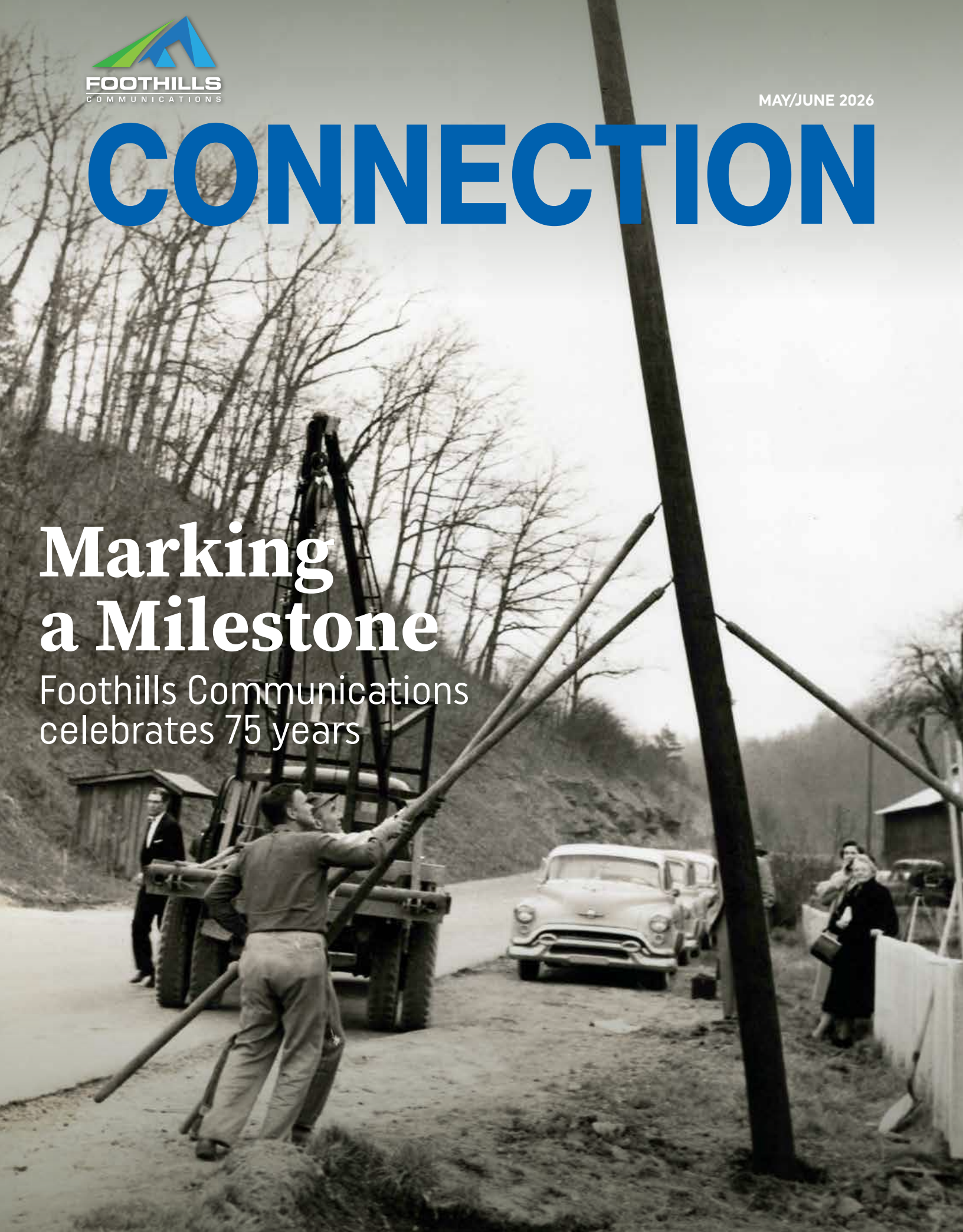


CONNECTION

Marking a Milestone

Foothills Communications
celebrates 75 years



Get the Support You Need and Avoid Tech Support Schemes



Adobe Stock image by keppinon

These days, you don't have to be a technophobe to get fooled by scams. As criminals become more sophisticated, their messages and approaches have become convincing enough to fool anyone.

That's especially true if you think your computer might be at risk. Tech support scammers often tell elaborate stories to convince people they need to hand over their financial information or remote access to their digital devices.

The Federal Trade Commission offers advice for times you're unsure about someone claiming to offer technical support and provides steps you can take to protect yourself.

Real tech companies aren't in the habit of reaching out by phone, email or text message every time your computer might have a problem. If someone does, that's a red flag.

Legitimate security pop-ups and messages will never tell you to call a phone number for help. If your computer's security software detects a legitimate problem, it will likely recommend a virus scan and walk you through the process.

Look out for language telling you to move money to "protect it." Scammers may suggest depositing money in a "federal safety locker" or buying gold to give to someone. These protections are fake, and a real government employee will not demand payment in gold or cash. 📧

Plan a StayCation

Taking a break doesn't necessarily mean long drives or booking a flight and a pricey hotel. Often, there are a wealth of adventures close to home, which means there's an affordable summer staycation right outside your door.

Here are a few tips to consider:

BE A TOURIST

Pop online and check out travel sites like TripAdvisor for your area. Are you overlooking destinations closest to you? Make a short list of nearby stops and plan a visit. You may be surprised by what you find.

GEOCACHING

Check your preferred app store for a geocaching app and prepare to enjoy real-world puzzle solving. Often, you'll be guided to a nearby state or national park where clues will challenge you to find hidden caches.

VIRTUAL CONCERTS

Find a cozy spot and enjoy a virtual concert—as a bonus, there are no crowds. Options include YouTube Live Concerts or NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts. Both serve a range of musical tastes. And look for genre

specific options like K-Love OnDemand, which features Christian artists. All are typically free.

A FAMILY OLYMPICS

Do you need to keep the kids moving? Organize a family Olympics. Go to a local park and choose events to suit all ages and abilities. Then, post your results on your favorite social media and challenge family and friends to join the fun. 📧



Adobe Stock image by master1305

Hit the Books

Online troves await digital bookworms

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

There are few better ways to escape the heat and humidity than with a classic summer read. Finding your next great adventure has never been easier with the vast digital libraries available on the internet. Whether you're looking to relax with your favorite e-reader or find an audiobook for a long road trip, you can start reading and listening today.

PROJECT GUTENBERG

Since 1971, a veritable army of volunteer book nerds has been expanding and maintaining this digital archive of classic reads as they enter the public domain. Today, the Project Gutenberg library includes over 75,000 free e-books that you can download and read in a web browser or on most mobile devices. While you won't find the latest best-sellers on Project Gutenberg, it is an excellent place to return to classics like "Pride and Prejudice" or "Moby Dick" without paying a cent.

LIBBY AND HOOPLA

Your library card is already a passport to free reads, but did you know it may also hold the key to a treasure trove of digital books and audiobooks? Apps like Libby and Hoopla let you borrow books and audiobooks from participating libraries around the world simply by linking your card to an account. Check out popular reads on your phone, tablet or browser, but don't take too long. Just like with your local library, you can only borrow them for a limited time.

LIBRIVOX

If you prefer to sit back and let someone read to you, or if you just

don't have the time to sit down with a book, LibriVox is your friend. You can find audiobooks, in various languages, recorded by volunteers worldwide. Much like Project Gutenberg, all LibriVox audiobooks are in the public domain. Audio quality and reading styles can vary widely from one title to the next, but if you're looking for a free repository of classic audiobooks read by real people, LibriVox has you covered.

Whether you want to dig into a timeless classic, settle in with the latest thriller or listen to a new favorite while tidying up, there have never been more ways to find free books online. Happy reading! 📖

THE WIDE WORLD OF PODCASTS

It's easy to see why podcasts have become so popular in the last decade. Most are free, they're easy to find and the variety of topics means you're bound to find something that speaks to you.

If you aren't sure where to start, platforms like Apple Podcasts, Spotify and iHeartRadio host thousands of podcasts that explore science, business, comedy, narrative fiction and so much more. Try top-ranked shows or go searching for deep dives on your favorite topics.

Leveling the Playing Field

Thanks to broadband, opportunities are everywhere

When we talk about broadband, we often focus on the physical pieces like cable in the ground or on poles, the trucks on the road and servers humming in a secure room. While these elements are essential, they don't fully capture the role of broadband in our daily lives.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

Its true impact becomes clear the moment you open your laptop, pick up your phone or power up a tablet. Broadband comes to life when you connect with someone, learn something new or share a part of your day.

A recent report from the Pew Research Center highlights just how connected we've become. Today, about 96% of U.S. adults use the internet. While that may not be surprising, it holds special significance for rural communities like ours. It shows meaningful progress narrowing the digital divide, allowing more people to participate in the same online spaces, no matter where they live. It means whether you live on a back road, down a gravel driveway or in the center of

town, you can take part in the same digital world as someone in a major city.

Pew's 2025 research also shows that 84% of adults use YouTube, 71% use Facebook, and about half use Instagram. These platforms function as more than just social media, they're modern gathering places where people learn, share and build connections, both personal and professional.

When more than 8 in 10 adults use YouTube, it becomes more than a video platform. It's a how-to guide, a classroom and even a stage. People can learn to fix a broken appliance, plant a better garden or understand a moment in history. They can study photography, practice guitar or follow a cooking lesson step by step. For many, it's a free and accessible library of skills and ideas.

Facebook and Instagram also play a role in helping people stay informed and connected. They are commonly used to share local news and promote community events like school programs. They give small businesses the ability to reach customers beyond their storefronts and allow artists, gardeners and craftspeople to showcase their work to a broader audience. A simple post or short video can help someone miles away.

What begins as a simple post can grow into a conversation. That conversation can grow into a community, and sometimes even into a business opportunity. Broadband makes those moments possible, not just in big cities, but everywhere. It helps ensure that where you live doesn't limit what you can learn, build or achieve.

At Foothills, our role is to maintain, improve and plan for that connection, so it's reliable, accessible and ready for everyone. Because when broadband works the way it should, it helps create a more level playing field where opportunity is within reach for all.

Thank you for the confidence you place in us and trusting us with that responsibility. 📧



CONNECTION

MAY/JUNE 2026

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The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2026. It is distributed without charge to all customers of the company.



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:



Workers install the first Foothills Telephone Cooperative pole at Fritz Arnet's farm on Route 30 in Hendricks in 1955.
See story Page 8.

Photo courtesy of Foothills Communications



WHEN IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT!

Foothills Communications will never ask for your personal information by phone call, text or email.

Unsure if a message claiming to be from Foothills is real? Call us at 606-297-3501. We're always happy to chat.



RV There Yet.

Step off the beaten path at a campground

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

With remote work becoming more mainstream, it has never been easier to hit the road in a recreational vehicle. As more Americans realize the appeal of making their office a national park one day and a beach the next, 16.9 million households are interested in buying an RV in the next five years, according to the RV Industry Association.

“There are so many great things happening this year, from America’s 250th birthday to the World Cup,” says Monika Geraci, a spokesperson for Go RVing. “People are discovering that RVing is one of the best and most affordable ways to be a part of the action and see incredible places across the country.”

GETTING STARTED

When it comes to choosing an RV, there are options. At its most basic, you can pack a car with gear and head out. If you’re ready for more, renting an RV is a possibility. Of course you can also buy your own. About 90% of all RVs produced are towable, which can be an affordable solution.

When planning your first trip, Monika recommends staying close to home. Pick a destination just 30 or 40 miles away so you can learn how to work the water and power hookups in a low-stakes environment. The one challenge new campers shouldn’t stress about is backing up the RV.

“Everyone is a beginner once,” she says. “Most people in the RV community are incredibly helpful. If you’re struggling, a neighbor will likely offer to spot you.”

MAKING CAMP

Once you’re on the road, you’ll have plenty of pit stops to choose from. Deciding where to pull over and stretch your legs will mostly depend on the camping experience you want.

RV parks and resorts: These are the best sites for beginners and families. With amenities like pools, Wi-Fi and full hookups for your utilities, you’ll have everything you need to keep everyone comfortable and happy.

State and national parks: The place to be for anyone looking to get away from it all and enjoy some incredible scenery. Just don’t expect the same amenities and ease of use you’ll find at an RV park.

Off the beaten path: There are plenty of apps and online platforms that can help you find low-cost or even free “boondocking” options, meaning a dry camp without utility hookups. These can range from sites on private and public land to secluded spots that provide truly one-of-a-kind experiences. 📱



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Adobe Stock image by Non

THE 2-2-2 RULE

Burnout on long drives is a real concern for beginners and veterans alike. A good rule of thumb to keep from overdoing it is to travel in twos:

- Drive no more than 200 miles at a time.
- Arrive at your destination by 2 p.m.
- Stay for at least two nights.

Following the 2-2-2 Rule can help drivers stay fresh and ensure everyone has time to enjoy the destination, rather than watching the world through a windshield.

CAN'T-MISS STOPOVERS

Anchor Down RV Resort sits on Douglas Lake in Tennessee with views of the Great Smoky Mountains. Full-service sites with access to boating, paddling, fishing and scenic drives make it a perfect base for exploring the area.

If you're longing for something more coastal, don't skip **Topsail Hill Preserve State Park** in the Florida Panhandle. With a combination of dune lakes, beach access and convenient RV hookups, it blends natural beauty with biking, bird-watching and swimming excursions.

Celebrating 75 Years

Foothills embraces its mission to serve the community

Story by LAURA MCGILL

In 1951, the tunes coming from the radio were hits by Hank Williams, Lefty Frizzell and Patti Page. The silver screen featured stars like Montgomery Clift, Audie Murphy and Katharine Hepburn. Here in the Foothills, a group of motivated citizens embarked on an ambitious endeavor to bring a modern telephone system to Johnson, Lawrence and Magoffin counties.

For all of today's lightning-fast technology, the early days of Foothills Rural Telephone Cooperative moved at a much slower pace. Following incorporation on Sept. 10, 1951, General Manager Duell Williams led efforts to clear the first big hurdle—securing enough applications from interested residents to meet the requirements.

By October 1952, the cooperative secured a loan and construction began. Still, the work took a great amount of

time. It wasn't until April 5, 1955, that the first telephone pole was installed on Fritz Arnett's farm on Route 30 in Hendricks. Finally, on Nov. 12, 1955, phone service became a long-awaited reality for 546 locations.

As the 1950s rolled on, more areas were added to the service. By the end of the decade, Foothills had 51 channels in operation to meet the growing demand from residents. A channel refers to the pathway needed to carry one voice call.

These early customers were on an eight-party line system. As the 1960s ended, that system was replaced by a more modern four-party line. By 1982, 27 years after starting phone service, all Foothills customers were on a private line.

If those first three decades felt slow, the 1990s and early 2000s marked a time of accelerated advancements. From cellular and paging services in 1990 to the

introduction of high-speed DSL internet connections in 2001, technology was rapidly evolving.

In 2005, Foothills made history as the first company in Kentucky to connect a customer to fiber optics. Thirteen years later, the cooperative reached the 100% fiber network milestone. In 2022, Foothills was awarded Smart Rural Community and Gig-Capable Provider designations by NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association.

Foothills Rural Telephone Cooperative, now Foothills Communications, has come a long way since those early visionaries knocked on hundreds of doors. Today's music, movies and technology have certainly changed. Seventy-five years later, the mission remains the same: **connect people, strengthen communities, and build for the future—together.** 📞

THE 1951 INCORPORATORS OF Foothills Rural Telephone

Sherman Bailey

J.W. Carpenter

Jim E. Jayne

J. Milton Kitchen

B.E. Mullins

Mort Mullins



Years of hard work pay off in late 1955, as telephone service gets underway.



A lot of planning is happening at this 1982 team meeting.

ears



A 1960s coupe parks in front of the Foothills office.



Foothills Rural Telephone takes part in the 1978 Apple Day Parade.



IN THEIR WORDS

"The hardest thing about starting up Foothills Telephone was getting people to sign up before we could even ask for funds from the REA. We went from one person to the next to get their names on the list."

—The late John Lee Burton, founding member

"In 1959, you'd pick up the phone to dial your number and hope it would go through. We were using open wires at the time, and the wind would give us fits. We enclosed the cable in the 1960s, and that was a great improvement on service. It not only improved service, it cut out some of the noise problems on the line."

—The late Bill Estep, supervisor

"Rural people couldn't get telephone service until Foothills Telephone came into existence. Since then, we've always been the leaders in new services, providing circle digit dialing, custom calling features and other services before the larger companies. FTC's mission has always been to bring technology to rural people."

—Paul Preston, former general manager

"As a cooperative, Foothills was founded with the mission of connecting everyone in our region to high-quality communications services. We knew it would be difficult to bring fiber to every member, but we also knew broadband internet service is so essential to modern life that we couldn't leave anyone behind."

—Ruth Conley, CEO



From left, Foothills Director Fred Arrington looks on as General Manager Duell Williams chats with David Hamil, Rural Electrification Administration administrator, while B.E. Mullins, Foothills attorney, stands by.

Photos courtesy of Foothills Communications

Wiener take all!

Dash to a dachshund race for a howling good time

Story by SARA DIAMOND PATTERSON

Can you see a wiener dog and not smile? Most people can't. With their extra-long bodies, wide smiles and constantly wagging tails, dachshunds just look silly. And they know it.

"Dachshunds make people smile because they're tiny dogs with huge personalities," says Debbie Kiker, dachshund enthusiast and director of Alabama's Hueytown Chamber of Commerce. "Watching them waddle and wiggle, it's impossible not to laugh—it's pure happiness on four short legs."

Developed in Germany to hunt badgers, dachshunds' powerful, slinky build, strong jaws and distinctively loud voices were perfect for that calling. Some 300 years later, they're more adept at burrowing into the covers and hunting down snacks. Today they're seeing success in a different sort of sport.

SPEED DEMONS

When you think of dachshunds, speed likely doesn't come to mind, but they can run up to 15-20 mph for very short distances. Some folks in Australia noticed this, and in the 1970s began what evolved into today's dachshund racing.

More chaos than competition, there's no official standard, but most race-courses are 50-100 yards long. Each dog has a two-person entourage. One handler waits at the starting line with a pup to send flying to the other, who motivates the racer with a squeaky toy, snack or just love at the finish line.

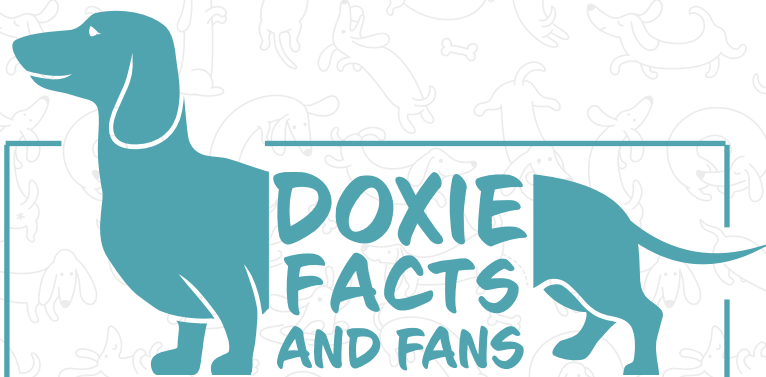
The Hueytown Chamber brings the doxies to town as part of PAW Palooza, a full day celebrating all things canine.

"What I love best about the weenie dog races is the smiles, and it brings the community together," Debbie says. "The dogs steal the show, and it's all just good, lighthearted fun. Just being involved is the fun of it all, seeing the dogs run, or wander, and the crowd cheering. Everyone is just enjoying the moment. Some dogs sprint, and some stop and sniff. Every run is a surprise."

The chamber is considering moving PAW Palooza to April, as September can be a little steamy for tiny-legged racers so close to the ground. For updates, find PAW Palooza & Wiener Dog Race on Facebook. [📱](#)



AI-generated image by Brandon Pomrenke/FreePik



DOXIE FACTS AND FANS

National Dachshund Day is June 21, the longest day of the year.

Napoleon Bonaparte was very fond of his dachshunds. The last four he owned are reportedly buried with him in the four pedestals holding his sarcophagus at Les Invalides in Paris.

John Wayne's dachshund, Blackie, alerted his family to a house fire in 1958 in Encino, California, while the actor was filming on location in Japan.

"Being the owner of dachshunds, to me a book on dog discipline becomes a volume of inspired humor. Every sentence is a riot."

—"Charlotte's Web" author E.B. White

"Nothing will turn a man's home into a castle more quickly and effectively than a dachshund."

—Queen Victoria

FAMOUS DACHSHUNDS

Crusoe

A miniature black and tan from Canada, Crusoe enjoys internet fame for his pet blog, New York Times' bestselling book and YouTube videos in homemade costumes. More than 3 million people follow him and his brother, Oakley, on Facebook.

Slinky Dog from 'Toy Story'

Part metal, part dog, all heart, Slinky Dog is quite possibly the most famous doxie of all, introducing generations of children to the breed.

Lump

Pablo Picasso was, by all accounts, smitten with his dachshund, Lump, and incorporated the pup into many of his later pieces.

Remembering 75

Foothills Telephone Cooperative was incorporated on Sept. 10, 1951. In 1952, FTC secured a \$398,000 loan to construct lines and install equipment. The following year, FTC bought Magoffin County Telephone Company. And those milestones were only the beginning.



In 1969, the eight-party line system was replaced by a four-party line. In 1971, FTC secured an \$817,000 loan to bring direct distance dialing, install additional lines and build an expansion of the Staffordsville office. In 1977, planning began to convert to single-party lines. The following year, construction started on new digital switching equipment. By 1982, all FTC subscribers had private lines.



Foothills Long Distance launched in 2000, the same year FTC surpassed 6,000 long-distance customers. DSL high-speed internet followed in 2001. In 2005, Foothills introduced Digital TV and became the first company in Kentucky to connect a customer's home with fiber using BPON technology.



1955-1959

1969-1982

1990-1998

2000-2005

2009-2013

FTC erected its first pole on Fritz Arnett's farm. The first dial telephone was installed by Woodrow Ferguson at Edgar Paul Howard's home on Route 30. On Nov. 12, 1955, service began with seven employees and 546 telephones in operation. The Blaine, Fallsburg and Chapman exchanges were added in 1956, and all exchanges switched to dial service. In 1959, Flat Gap and Royalton exchanges were added. FTC's 51 channels—pathways for voice calls—met the growing demand.



With the start of a new decade, in 1990, FTC formed Cellular Service Inc., which along with its partners in the East Kentucky Network, began offering cellular and paging services to customers. In 1995, internet service was added to the list of offerings. Progress continued in 1996, when 240 miles of fiber optic cable were run to FTC's wire centers and offices in the field. Also, caller ID was introduced. In 1998, voicemail became an available feature.



In 2009, Foothills completed its first GPON deployment, which brought a major boost in internet performance. That same year, FTC deployed a Class 5 softswitch to modernize its network systems. By 2013, the legacy Class 5 switch was fully decommissioned. This milestone meant operations were streamlined, and service reliability was improved.

Years

FTC began publishing the bimonthly Connection magazine in 2014 to celebrate community stories and to increase communication with members. In 2015, the new Foothills Communications name was announced to reflect the range of services offered. One of those services was watchTVeverywhere, which made customer-subscribed TV channels available on computers and mobile devices.



In 2019, the last customer was upgraded from copper to fiber, marking a major step forward in network performance and reliability. In 2020, Foothills purchased Lycom Communications, a Louisa-based cable TV company. Following the acquisition, Foothills began upgrading the Louisa system by overbuilding the cable-based network with a fiber-to-the-home network capable of delivering gigabit internet. In 2022, Foothills received the Smart Rural Community and Gig-Capable Provider designations from NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association.



In 2025, a new website was launched to provide enhanced account management. Foothills also continued expanding their reach, bringing reliable, high-speed service to more communities in the surrounding area. Today, Foothills continues to look to the future while proudly acknowledging 75 years of hard work and dedication.

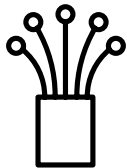
2014-2015

2017-2018

2019-2022

2023-2024

2025-2026



In 2017, Foothills completed the transition from BPON to GPON technology—delivering internet speeds several times faster than before—and launched IPTV service. In 2018, 13 years after the first fiber connection, Foothills completed construction of a 100% fiber network providing speeds up to 1 Gbps. The same year, the decision was made to expand the network into Paintsville.



In 2023, Foothills began deploying next-generation XGS-PON technology, capable of delivering speeds many times faster than earlier fiber systems. By 2024, the network was fully overlaid with XGS-PON, paving the way for widespread Multi-Gig service. During this time, Foothills also expanded its network into parts of Boyd, Carter, Floyd and Martin counties in Kentucky, as well as Wayne County, West Virginia. Progress continued in 2024 with the introduction of a 2 Gigabit internet package, and the eBill app was released.





Redemption Recipes

Childhood dinner villains return as comfort-food heroes

Brussels sprouts, kale and other greens, peas, mushrooms or pickled beets. There's a long list of foods that grossed us out as kids. Sprouts were squishy. Greens were bitter. Peas were pushed to the side. Pickled beets were vinegary, and mushrooms were just strangely mushy.

So why is it that as we age, some of us grow to love those foods?

"As infants and children, we are born preferring sweet tastes," says registered dietitian Danielle Townsend. "As we age, our other taste senses develop, which opens up our palette to foods that we didn't like before."

Here are some ideas using those once-hated ingredients in dishes that just might become part of your regular dinner rotation.



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

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

TUSCAN SPINACH CHICKEN

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| 1 | tablespoon olive oil | 1 | cup cherry tomatoes, halved |
| 4 | boneless skinless chicken breasts | 1 | teaspoon garlic powder |
| | Sea salt, to taste | 3 | cups baby spinach |
| | Ground black pepper, to taste | 1/2 | cup heavy cream |
| 1 | teaspoon oregano | 1/4 | cup Parmesan cheese, grated |
| 3 | tablespoons butter | | Lemon wedges, for serving |

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and season with salt, pepper and oregano. Cook until browned on both sides, about 8 minutes per side. Remove from the skillet and set aside.

In the same skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add cherry tomatoes and season with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Cook until the tomatoes begin to soften, then add the spinach and cook until it starts to wilt.

Stir in heavy cream and Parmesan and bring mixture to a simmer. Reduce heat to low and simmer until sauce is slightly reduced, about 3 minutes. Return chicken to skillet and cook until heated through, 5 to 7 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges.





PEA SALAD WITH SMOKED ALMONDS

- 2 16-ounce packages frozen peas
- 6 ounces smoke-flavored almonds, finely chopped
- 1/2 sweet onion or more to taste, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise or reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream or light sour cream
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2-1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Place frozen peas in a colander and rinse under cold water until thawed. Drain and transfer to a large bowl. Add almonds and onions. Mix well. Fold mayonnaise, sour cream and black pepper into the pea mixture until evenly coated. Transfer to a serving container and top with shredded cheese. Cover and refrigerate until serving.

ROASTED BEET PANNA COTTA WITH CANDIED WALNUTS

- 1 pound beets, scrubbed with stems removed
- 1 teaspoon powdered gelatin
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 cups heavy cream, divided
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

CANDIED WALNUTS

- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 1/4 cup maple syrup

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Wrap each beet loosely in foil and roast on a baking sheet for 1 hour or until tender. Remove beets from the oven and set aside to cool.

Stir the gelatin and water together in a small bowl. Let soak for 5 minutes.

Peel and discard the beet skins and place flesh in a blender along with 1 cup heavy cream. Puree until smooth.

Combine the remaining cream with the sugar and lemon juice in a large pot over medium heat. Warm until the cream becomes hot to the touch, but not boiling. Add the softened gelatin, remove from heat and stir until dissolved. Add the pureed beet mixture to the pot and stir until combined. Pour into a desired vessel, such as a pie plate. Let chill completely before serving, at least 4 hours.

For the walnuts: Combine the walnuts and syrup in a saute pan over medium heat and cook the nuts, stirring constantly, until the sugar dries and crystallizes, about 5 minutes. Set the nuts aside to cool.

To serve, spoon the panna cotta into individual serving dishes and garnish with candied walnuts.



CHEESY BAKED BRUSSELS SPROUTS



- 5 slices bacon
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 small shallots, finely chopped
- 2 pounds Brussels sprouts, halved
- Kosher salt
- Cayenne pepper, to taste
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup Swiss or Gouda cheese, shredded
- 1/2 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded



Preheat oven to 375 F.

Cook bacon in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until crispy, about 8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon,

transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and let cool slightly. Discard bacon fat.

Return the skillet to medium heat and melt butter. Add shallots and Brussels sprouts. Season with salt and cayenne. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, transfer bacon to a cutting board and finely chop.

Remove skillet from heat and drizzle with cream. Top with Swiss cheese, cheddar and bacon. Bake the casserole until the cheese is bubbly, 12 to 15 minutes.

NOTE: If the cheese isn't nicely browned, broil, watching closely, for about 1 minute.





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