

CONNECTION

Willard Speedway

Built for racers,
by racers



LOUISA
PHARMACIES

SUMMER
POTLUCKS

By Mike Romano, CEO
NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association

More Than Service— A Commitment to Community

Before I begin this column, my first in your magazine, I would like to introduce myself. I am Mike Romano, the new CEO of NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association. I look forward to sharing a national perspective on the vital work your broadband provider does, and there is no better place to start than with the connections that work creates. Of course, I'm not only talking about broadband connections, but community connections, as well.



MIKE ROMANO
Chief Executive Officer

Across the country, community-based broadband providers like yours deliver advanced, high-speed networks that keep rural communities connected. But these providers' impact extends far beyond the technology they deploy. They are also active partners in the communities they serve.

Rooted in their hometowns, these providers are invested in helping their neighbors thrive. That may mean hosting workshops to help teach community members how to use new devices or stay safe online, supporting local schools with back-to-school supply drives, sponsoring sports teams and community events, creating good-paying jobs or partnering with local economic development organizations to build stronger communities. Their success is measured not only by network speeds and connections, but by the opportunities those connections make possible.

I am excited to highlight these efforts and the remarkable things happening in rural communities in future columns. When you choose a local provider, you get more than quality high-speed internet. You also have a partner committed to your community's success, today and for years to come. 📶

A LEGACY OF SPEED AND RESULTS

Fast, reliable and irreplaceable, your internet service connects you to essential digital services and resources. The pace of change has been blazing.



1. The Dawn of the Internet (1970s–1980s):

Early computer networks connected universities, researchers and government agencies, laying the groundwork for the modern internet.



2. Bringing the Web Home (1990s):

Internet access entered the home. Connections were slow by today's standards, but suddenly information, email and websites were available—even if it took a noisy modem to make it happen.



3. Always-On Connections (Early 2000s):

Faster, more dependable internet changed expectations. Users could stay connected without tying up phone lines.



4. The Streaming Era Begins (Mid-2000s):

Rising speeds made online video, music and larger file downloads practical for more households and businesses.



5. A More Connected Lifestyle (Late 2000s–2010s):

Internet service became essential, supporting smart devices, online gaming, social media and remote work.



6. High-Speed Homes and Businesses (2010s):

Growing demand drove another leap in performance, enabling high-definition streaming, cloud services and multiple connected devices running at once.

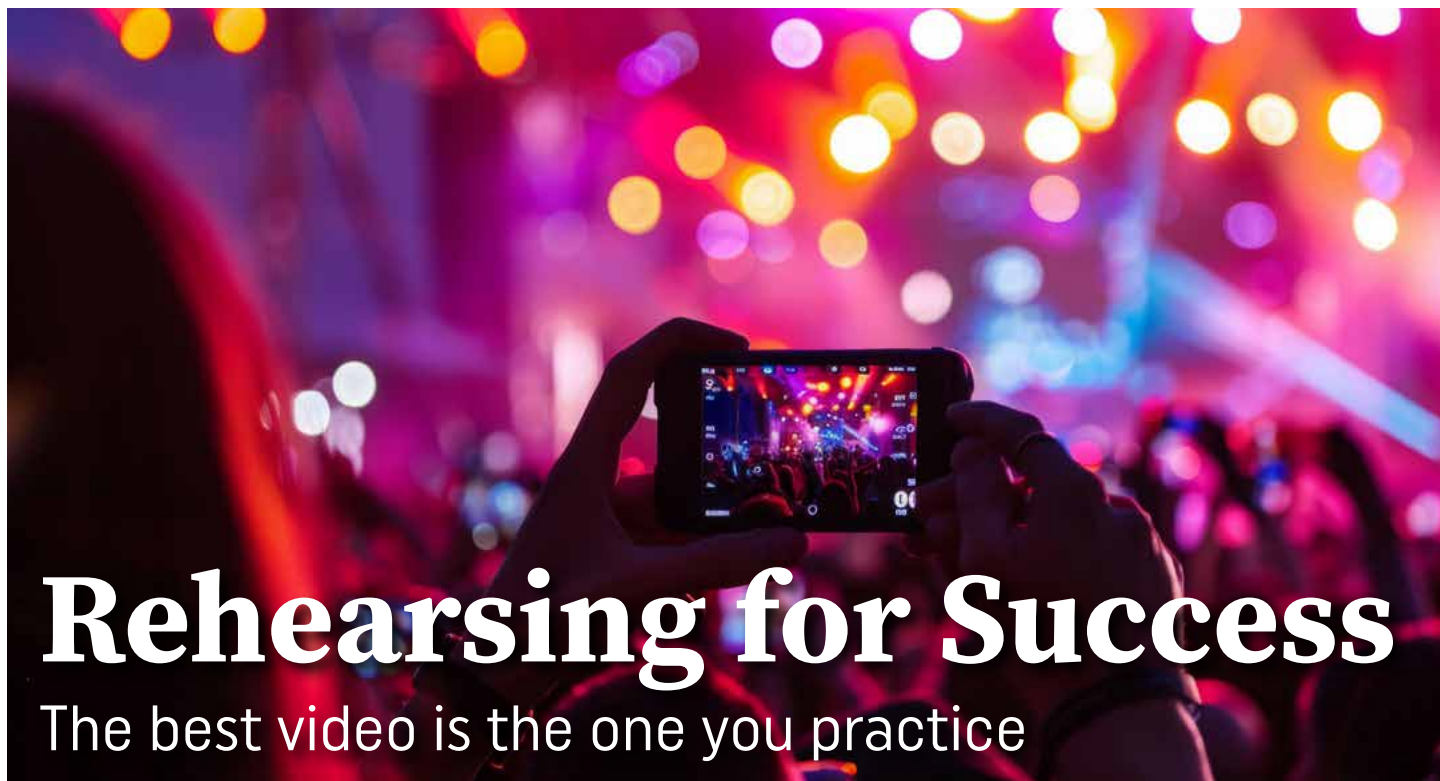


7. Keeping Pace With Demand (2020s–Present):

Today's networks deliver remarkably fast speeds and reliability, powering everything from telehealth and online learning to smart homes and more.



8. The Future Is Unlimited: Thanks to your broadband service, you'll have the speed you need.



Adobe Stock image by Emilia

Rehearsing for Success

The best video is the one you practice

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Smartphones make it easy to capture video of life's important moments. From concert footage of your favorite band to milestone events like graduations and weddings, there are so many special moments worth recording. Don't risk the results by being unprepared.

IN ADVANCE

The video camera on your phone is an amazing tool. And like with any tool, you need to practice to get the most out of it.

- Familiarize yourself with the settings and features to use them effectively. Do test shoots to learn and adjust.
- Holding a phone steady is harder than you think. If you notice your practice videos are shaky, try using a selfie stick, gimbal stabilizer or tripod.
- Take your videos up a notch with editing apps. These apps allow for color corrections and audio adjustments, as well as transitions, cuts and captions to produce an enhanced video.
- Be as prepared as possible by thinking ahead. Start with a full battery. If you are planning to shoot a long video or multiple videos, consider a portable battery pack. Check your phone's available storage capacity. During a shoot is the wrong time to realize you are out of space.

IN THE MOMENT

Once the camera is rolling, be aware of your phone's settings and your surroundings.

- Switch your phone to airplane mode to avoid interruptions from calls or notifications. Make sure your lens is clean.
- Position yourself in the optimal location. It is better to

be closer to your subject than to use the zoom function.

Remember, while filming in landscape mode is best for traditional video, some social media platforms prefer vertical formats. Choose the best approach for your end goal.

- Think about the lighting and sound. Pick a spot that is well-lit and close to the sound. If possible, use a microphone to improve sound quality.
- Tap the record button, then double-check that you are recording.

STORAGE OPTIONS

Now that you've shot that great video, you'll want to store it somewhere safe.

Physical external storage options include USB-C flash drives, SD cards and external solid state or hard drives. External storage means a one-time purchase of a device that gives you full control of your files.

Using a cloud storage service means that your videos and other files are stored with a third party. Some may offer a small amount of storage free of charge to their users. For example, Google provides 15 GB free for Google accounts. Additional storage is available for a monthly fee, maxing out at 2 TB for \$9.99 per month.

Amazon Prime members have access to 5 GB of free video storage from Amazon Photo. The free level also includes unlimited storage for photos. Additional video storage plans start at \$1.99 a month. iPhone users start with 5 GB of free storage through iCloud. They can upgrade to iCloud+ options, which range from 50 GB up to an impressive 12 TB. 

Preparing for an AI-Powered Future

A generation ago, the internet transformed how we communicate, work, learn and do business. Today, artificial intelligence is poised to create another transformational shift—one that may be even more significant than the arrival of the internet itself.



RUTH CONLEY

Chief Executive Officer

As these technologies evolve, communities across the country will be asking an important question: Are we ready?

For us, I believe the answer is yes.

Artificial intelligence is already becoming part of everyday life. Businesses are using AI to improve efficiency and customer service. Farmers are adopting new technologies to support production and conservation. Healthcare providers are leveraging AI-powered tools to enhance patient care, and students are gaining access to new learning opportunities.

As AI continues to grow, so will the demand for reliable, high-capacity broadband. While much of the national conversation focuses on massive data centers and technology companies,

the benefits of AI can only be realized if homes, schools, farms, healthcare facilities and businesses have the connectivity needed to access these tools and services.

That's where local broadband networks matter.

For years, we have invested in building a fiber network designed not only for today's needs, but for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. As new technologies emerge, not all communications systems will be equally prepared to keep pace. Fiber provides the capacity and flexibility needed to support the growing demands of an increasingly connected world, helping ensure that our communities remain ready for whatever comes next.

That commitment is especially important given the unique geography we serve. Our mountainous terrain presents challenges that many providers never encounter, and much of our network infrastructure is aerial. Maintaining and expanding that network requires ongoing investment, careful planning and a long-term vision. We have embraced that responsibility because we believe the people of our communities deserve the same opportunities as anyone else, regardless of where they live.

In many ways, fiber is a generational investment. The infrastructure we build today will continue serving our communities for decades to come. While the applications and technologies riding across our network will undoubtedly change, the foundation beneath them is designed to evolve right alongside them.

Whether AI transforms agriculture, healthcare, education, manufacturing or industries we have yet to imagine, our goal remains the same—to ensure our members and customers have access to the tools and opportunities that will shape the future.

Technology will continue to advance, and new demands will arise. By investing in resilient, scalable infrastructure today, we are helping ensure that future generations can thrive in tomorrow's connected world.

An AI-powered future is emerging. Thanks to the strength of our network and our commitment to the communities we serve, we will be ready. 📶



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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:



Racing returned to Willard Speedway in the summer of 2021. Each weekend during the season, fans enjoy the excitement of the cars on the dirt track. See story Page 8.

Photo courtesy of
Tackett Photography



IN OBSERVANCE OF
INDEPENDENCE DAY

OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
Friday, July 3rd



*Land of the Free,
Because of the Brave*

FOLLOW US!

For the latest on service updates, outages, scam alerts and hiring notices, follow Foothills Communications on Facebook @FoothillsCommunications.



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Take Family Fun on the Road

Tips for traveling with kids

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Nothing ruins a family road trip faster than an unhappy child. Meltdowns at the museum and refusals at restaurants are the stuff of parents' nightmares. However, with a little planning, family getaways can be enjoyable experiences for everyone.

Consider the ages and tolerance levels of your kids when deciding how many miles you should drive, how many days to stay and what activities to plan. If this is your first family getaway, pick a closer destination and a shorter stay. If everything goes great, you can extend your visit. If things don't go so well, you can end the trip early and be back home quickly.

ON THE ROAD

Pack a few favorite toys and games and bring along plenty of snacks. Keep a supply of over-the-counter medications for cuts and scrapes, upset tummies and motion sickness handy. Look for convenient stops along the way to take short breaks.

Spend some time getting your children excited about the destination before you leave. Check for coloring pages and puzzles from the tourism office. You can also share details about the places you are going to visit to build interest and to set expectations.

AT YOUR DESTINATION

Make sure your plan includes where to stay and where to eat. Pick a family-friendly accommodation close to the places on your itinerary to cut down on time in the car. Do some research in advance to check out restaurant menus, especially if you have a picky eater.

Pace yourself and be flexible because something will likely not work out as planned. Have options in mind if you need to adapt to weather conditions or need to slow things down with a low-key activity. ☺

Adobe Stock image by Halfpoint





Adobe Stock image by AlekseyPavlov

Where to Go

To increase your chances of having a fun family trip, pick some activities you know your children will enjoy. Maybe they are all about dinosaurs, or perhaps they love animals or are obsessed with their favorite sport.

GET PREHISTORIC

In addition to a collection of 70 million-year-old dinosaur bones, the museum also features 40 million-year-old whales and the impressive skull of a saber-toothed cat that was unearthed about an hour's drive from the museum.

The Middle Tennessee Museum of Natural History in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, allows visitors to observe ongoing research while touring exhibits of dinosaur bones and other unique relics from around the world. Cave City, Kentucky, takes the roar outdoors at Dinosaur World, where guests can walk among hundreds of life-sized replicas and enjoy interactive exhibits.

EXPLORE NATURE

If your trip includes a Saturday near Franklin, Tennessee, stop by Noble Springs Dairy for Baby Goat Cuddling Days. During your visit, you can learn about the farm, pet some adorable baby goats and try some amazing cheese. In Cottageville, South Carolina, Bee City Zoo offers animal encounters with hedgehogs, lemurs, sloths and more.

Its reptile center will certainly illicit a few shrieks with snakes, lizards and alligators.

CATCH THE GAME

If your child likes baseball but major league prices aren't in the budget, try a minor league game. The tickets are more affordable, stadiums are smaller, putting you closer to the field, and the atmosphere is relaxed and family friendly with a children's play area at many of the ballparks.

Madison, Alabama, just outside Huntsville, is home to the Rocket City Trash Pandas. Bats are swinging in Tennessee with the Nashville Sounds, Memphis Redbirds, Knoxville Smokies and Chattanooga Lookouts. In Kentucky, the Louisville Bats and Bowling Green Hot Rods take to the diamond. Central Indiana welcomes fans to watch the Indianapolis Indians. Fans in South Carolina cheer for six teams, the Greenville Drive, Hub City Spartanburgers, Augusta GreenJackets, Myrtle Beach Pelicans, Charleston RiverDogs and Columbia Fireflies.

This summer's biggest sporting event is the FIFA World Cup. With 48 clubs playing games in 16 host cities, it's generating a lot of excitement. If your child now has soccer fever, consider a closer-to-home option at an MLS NEXT Pro league match. Huntsville City FC plays its home games in Huntsville, Alabama, and the 2026 season runs through September.





ROOTED in THE

Willard Speedway is run for racers, by racers

Story by LAURA MCGILL

For 30 years, Terry Hicks raced the dirt track circuit while his wife, Erin, and their sons cheered him on from the stands. Now, Terry and Erin are going around in circles at a track of their own. The racing they do today comes from the nonstop work it takes to keep the quarter-mile oval track, the adjacent kartway and the grounds in shape for the busy season.

Willard Speedway originally opened in 1997. The track had several owners before closing at the end of the 2015 season. The property sat idle for several years with fans hoping someone would bring it back to life. In the summer of 2020, Terry and Erin bought the track, and, after a year of hard work, they welcomed back racing fans in July 2021.

Erin describes the decision to buy the speedway as a bit of an impulse. “We had

never owned a track before,” she says.

“But we knew racing from a driver’s point of view. We saw this as an opportunity to run a track for racers, by racers.”

Terry’s years of racing experience play a prominent role in how the track is maintained. “Terry is very picky about his race-track,” Erin says. That pickiness is on full display this year with a new clay surface. The clay installation delayed the season’s opening date, but Terry says drivers will appreciate the upgrade. “It is the good stuff,” he says. “Considering that a brick company was wanting it, you can believe that it is pure for sure.”

ALL IN THE FAMILY

While Terry’s laps around the track now happen with graders, rollers and water trucks instead of in race cars, Erin still has reason to cheer at the races. The couple’s

sons and grandson are following Terry’s taillights and racing their own cars. She admits to worrying about them, even with all the safety features at the track and built into the cars. “I’ve always said that a driver is safer at our dirt track race than out on the highway,” she says. “They wear fire suits and helmets, the cars have roll cages, and we have the fire department and a trauma EMT at every race.”

A typical racing season can span weekends from April through October, with Friday nights at the kartway and Saturday nights at the speedway. Weather permitting, practice days can start in March. It all makes for a lot of work and little time for rest. “We miss out on some special family times,” Erin says. “We haven’t had a vacation since we bought the track.”

Race nights are the visible part of the job, but a lot happens behind the scenes



In this Crate Late Model Class race, A.J. Hicks leads in the No. 64 car, followed closely by T.J. Hicks in the No. 9 car.

before the gates open. From promoting the races and communicating with the drivers to arranging concessions and picking up trash from the last race, Terry and Erin are busy all week long.

RACE-NIGHT ACTION

All that work leads to the high-energy race nights when Terry and Erin are joined by 12 employees. With seating for approximately 2,000 fans, it takes that full crew to manage everything. Gates open at 2 p.m., concession sales begin at 4 p.m., and the drivers meet around 6 p.m. Some fans enjoy coming early to watch the pre-race activity as the cars are unloaded and last-minute work is done on the track.

With the different classes of cars, hot laps, heats and final races in each class, the action can last until midnight. General admission prices are \$5 for ages 2 to 12 and \$15 for ages 13 and older. Pit admission is \$35. “We want to keep our prices as low as possible,” Erin says. “We want everyone to be able to come here and enjoy the races.”

IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS

For many fans, the roar of the cars, the dirt flying and the drama at the finish line are the exciting parts. For Erin, the technical side of the races is just as thrilling. After the Hickses bought the track, they purchased an expensive transponder system to monitor the races.

Transponders are placed on each car in a race. Those devices communicate with a computer to compile accurate information on the race, making the finishes more precise. But early on, the transponders weren’t working. Terry and Erin’s big investment in technology looked like a waste of money.

“Before Foothills Communications brought service to our area, the service we had couldn’t support the transponders,” Erin says. “We had this system that we couldn’t use.” The quality of the family’s internet service at home wasn’t any better. “We couldn’t do multiple things at the same time, like watch TV, make a call and be on the internet.”

WILLARD SPEEDWAY/ WILLARD KARTWAY

2497 EK Mines Branch Road, Grayson

606-474-7223

Follow Willard Speedway on Facebook.



Photos courtesy of Erin Hicks

ABOVE: In the No. 244 kart, Kensleigh Hicks is ready to race.

TOP: Alongside his team, Kendrick Hicks, second from right, gives a thumbs up after a kart race.

Erin recalls seeing a Foothills work truck in the area and stopping to ask how soon the service would be available. “Now that we have Foothills, we can use those transponders,” she says. “The service is reliable, and it costs less than we were paying before.” 📶

Without a Trace

Bigfoot researchers hope to turn myth into reality

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Charlie Raymond knows all the best spots for Bigfoot hunting in Kentucky. As founder of the Kentucky Bigfoot Research Organization, he can tell you where you're most likely to run into the dark-haired Skunk Man or an Anderson County Sasquatch nicknamed Howdy for its habit of waving at spotters.

So, when a group of Girl Scouts visiting from Ohio wanted to go on their own expedition about 10 years ago, he knew Mammoth Cave was the place to take them. Bigfoot sightings at the edge of the park spiked after a park employee reported seeing what he thought was a bear stand up on two legs and run off.

"I told them Bigfoots are curious, so the best thing to do is go out there with no flashlights and just laugh, talk and act natural," Charlie says. "Here I've got two dozen giddy girls, aged 10 to 14. I said, 'You're perfect bait.'"

Much like the skeptical Scout moms who joined them, Charlie didn't really expect the group to run into Big Mo, the name of the Bigfoot living in the area, according to local legend. But Charlie showed the girls how to knock trees with a baseball bat and make whooping noises, which he believes the creatures use to communicate.

Then, they heard a distant knock and whistle in response. Shortly after, there was a loud bang as something big struck the boardwalk they were standing on. The entire group was so startled that Charlie recalls one of the moms making a break for the parking lot, leaving the girls behind.

"I think it thought we were another Bigfoot calling for help, then it stomped or jumped on the boardwalk as kind of a bluff charge," Charlie says. "But I heard when they drove back to Ohio, those girls didn't talk about putt-putt or riding horses. All they talked about was that night."

MYTH AND MEMORY

Charlie is just one of many Bigfoot researchers around the country hoping to find definitive proof of the legendary elusive creatures. Driven by true believers, skeptics and gawkers alike, the ongoing hunt has produced hit TV shows, museums and even festivals that bring people together from all corners.

Robert Dobler, a senior lecturer at the Indiana University Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, says the lasting power of these creatures is fundamentally human.

"I think it's human to need to think about things outside of the everyday or the mundane," he says. "We're interested in these creatures that exceed language as often as they exceed categories. These stories are how we can take something that is unknown and unknowable and still find ways to talk about it."

That sense of the unknown is often inseparable from the creatures themselves. For Bigfoot or his Florida cousin, the Skunk Ape, it might be the wilderness of the forests or swamplands where they're believed to reside. In West Virginia, the dangers of munitions dumps often conjure sightings of the Mothman. Similarly, in Texas, stories of the Chupacabra are more likely to swirl when anxieties about uncontrollable livestock loss due to disease are at their height.

But that doesn't mean those stories are entirely false.

"A lot of skeptics think these claims are made for attention," Robert says. "But the reality is most people know they are vulnerable and subjecting themselves to potential ridicule. So, they're usually reluctant to talk about it and kind of careful about who they tell."

David Bakara, who owns the Expedition: Bigfoot museum in Blue Ridge, Georgia, has had much the same experience when people share their stories. Some people are still terrified of their experiences. Others are driven by curiosity. But they are all trying to confront something they know shouldn't exist.

"Almost all the Bigfoot researchers I know used to be just normal people that watched football and cooked ribs in the backyard. Then they saw one of these things, and it kind of happened on accident," David says. "Some things, the more you dig into them, the more boring they are. But that's not the case here. The more you look into Bigfoot, the more interested you become."

UNTAMED PLACES

That allure of the unknown is one of the reasons Charlie helped start the Red River Gorge Bigfoot Festival, which takes place in Stanton, Kentucky, each May. The idea originated with a drive-in screening of "The Legend of Boggy Creek," a 1972 docudrama about the Fouke Monster, a Bigfoot-like creature spotted around Fouke, Arkansas.

Now, the festival is an opportunity to gather researchers and cryptozoologists to speak to believers and naysayers alike. The celebration is one of many across the country focused on Bigfoot and other local cryptids that give enthusiasts a chance to gather without fear



Photos courtesy of Charlie Raymond



Photos courtesy of David Bakara

Sheepsquatch

A Southern variation on Bigfoot, Sheepsquatch is reportedly a large beast with shaggy white fur and curled horns similar to a ram's. The creature has been spotted in remote forests and hollows along the Appalachian Mountains and is said to be distinctive for its sulfuric odor.

If you would like to report a Bigfoot or cryptid sighting, in Kentucky or beyond, you can contact Charlie Raymond and the Kentucky Bigfoot Research Organization at info@kentuckybigfoot.com.

AI-generated image by Brandon Pomrenke/ChatGPT



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Charlie Raymond carries along a bat on Bigfoot investigations in hopes of communicating with the creatures through tree knocks. Charlie's wife, Lyndsey, is a fellow Bigfoot investigator and a police officer with experience in forensics and fingerprint analysis. David Bakara opened Expedition: Bigfoot in Blue Ridge, Georgia, in 2016. David built the museum in the style of the roadside attractions he loved as a kid.

of judgment. But Charlie's hope is that the experience can also open more people's minds and encourage them to ask questions.

Barring that, it's an opportunity to step away from technology and gain a better appreciation for all wildlife, whether it's the creatures we know or those yet to be discovered.

"There are lots of things in this world we don't know about. A lot of animals we discover every year," he says. "We like to say, 'Leave only footprints. Pick up your trash, stop and smell the flowers every now and then and respect the wilderness.' Just like Bigfoot." 🐾



Original AI-generated image by James Middleton/Adobe Stock

ON THE HUNT

Ready to track down your own Bigfoot sighting? The Bigfoot Mapping Project has you covered. The site tracks reported encounters all over the country, with filters for locations where footprints, vocalizations and tree knocks are part of the accounts. Visit bigfootmap.com to find the location of your next adventure.

A Prescription for a Health

Louisa Drug Store and Riverview Pharmacy strive to serve

Story by LAURA MCGILL

After graduating from Lawrence County High School in 1988, Ty McCreary wasn't planning to follow his father's path and become a pharmacist. Instead, he headed to the University of Kentucky to pursue a degree in civil engineering.

However, after returning home on his first summer break and working at his father's pharmacy, Louisa Drug Store, he changed direction. He graduated from UK's pharmacy school in 1995.

Today, Ty can be found working at that same drugstore. He is one of its owners, along with Dustin Kingsmore and Lewis Michael, both of whom are 2008 graduates of Lawrence County High School.

GETTING STARTED

What is now a hometown fixture began in 1972 when Ty's father, Sheldon, joined three physicians—Drs. Phillip Carter, Bill Jim McNabb and Art Richards—to open Louisa Drug Store. In the late 1970s, the group welcomed another partner, Laban Young. “Dad owned his share of the pharmacy from its opening in 1972 until his retirement in 2013,” Ty says. “He was the only full-time pharmacist until Laban Young became a pharmacist in 1978.”

Sheldon was not originally from the Louisa area. He and Ty's late mother, Charlotte, were from Tompkinsville. Art recruited Sheldon to move to Louisa and join them in opening the pharmacy. “Louisa was quite a distance from where they grew up, but they decided to give it a good-faith effort for a year to see if it worked out,” Ty says. “The community welcomed them with open arms, and soon they were happy to call Louisa home.”

Business continued to grow at Louisa Drug Store, and in 1982 Sheldon and Laban bought a share of nearby Riverview Pharmacy. Today, Riverview is owned by a partnership of Ty, Dustin, Lewis, Teresa Carter, Beth Goble and Andrew Goble. The two locations operate as separate businesses, but they share staff and use the same pharmacy software. Together, they employ six full- and part-time pharmacists and 16 full- and part-time pharmacy technicians.

SERVING LOUISA

Ty has seen his share of changes in the pharmacy industry over the years. He recalls using a dial-up internet connection to submit insurance claims online. These days, it's rare for a customer to walk in with a handwritten prescription. Ty estimates that more than 95% of prescription orders are sent electronically.

Even though the two pharmacies are independently owned, they still offer customers some of the same conveniences as the big chains. One such feature is the RxLocal app, available through the drugstores' pharmacy software vendor, PioneerRx. It allows customers to manage their prescriptions and send messages to the pharmacists. “We do still have a real person answer the phones during business hours,” Ty says. “It is important to us to keep that small-town connection.”

The software the pharmacies use keeps the focus on patient safety with alerts on allergies and possible interactions. “It takes good-quality high-speed internet to keep the software performing,” Ty says about the Foothills Communications' service. “We are thankful for the federal, state and local leadership that had the foresight to bring this technology to rural areas like Louisa.”

Ty is joined at work by his wife, Jennifer, who is also a pharmacist. The couple met in pharmacy school. “She moved with me from Central Kentucky and fell in love with the beauty and people of Appalachia,” Ty says.

The longevity of the two pharmacies has been a team effort. “We have been blessed with a wonderful staff who have provided great customer service and have been key to any success that we have had over the years,” Ty says. That team includes



Riverview Pharmacy also serves as a UPS shipping location.

y Community

pharmacist Braxton Hensley, a 2014 graduate of Johnson Central High School.

The team has also experienced a great loss. During the COVID-19 pandemic, an outbreak at Riverview Pharmacy led to the death of pharmacist Jeff Goble, who at the time was also a partner in both businesses. “He is still missed by all,” Ty says.

OFFERING ADVICE

Ty looks back on working alongside his father during that first college summer break as a turning point in his life. And he credits Laban for his guidance. “Much about what I have learned about pharmacy practice and business ownership I owe to him,” he says. “He has always been, and will continue to be, like a big brother to me.”

Throughout the years, Louisa Drug Store and Riverview Pharmacy have offered internships to give other young people the chance to experience the industry. Ty has seen those efforts come full circle with some interns going on to become pharmacists, nurses and doctors.

His advice to current high school students thinking about a career in pharmacy is “to take all of the STEM courses available to you, and to try to shadow at different pharmacy locations to get a feel for what the job entails.”



From left, pharmacists Lewis Michael, Braxton Hensley, Dustin Kingsmore and Ty McCreary care for customers at Louisa Drug Store.



The Louisa Drug Store team is all smiles. From left, are Karissa Jude, Kellee Crawford, Loretta Marcum, Melanie Radcliff, Selena Browning, Brynn Thompson and Ty McCreary.



The Riverview Pharmacy team includes, from left, employees Kailey Prince, Minnie Taylor and Brittany Goble.



From left, pharmacists Dustin Kingsmore, Jennifer McCreary and Andrew Goble serve customers at Riverview Pharmacy.

Photos courtesy of John Michael Laney

Summer Potluck Staples

Reliable, affordable dishes perfect for warm-weather sharing



Potlucks call for recipes that can handle travel, sit happily on a table and please a wide range of tastes.

These summer-ready dishes rely on ingredients readily available in July and August, use straightforward techniques and are developed for home cooks. All are budget-conscious, and none require special equipment. 🍴

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

OVEN-BAKED BARBECUE CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

- 3 pounds chicken drumsticks
- 1 1/2 cups barbecue sauce
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 F. Pat chicken dry and season with salt and

pepper. Toss with oil and arrange on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake 30 minutes, turn, brush generously with barbecue sauce and bake 15 minutes more until cooked through and sticky. Serve warm or at room temperature.

EASY PEACH CRISP

- 6 cups fresh peaches, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

TOPPING:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, melted



LEMON HERB ORZO SALAD

- 1 pound orzo pasta
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 cups English cucumber, diced
- 1/3 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped

DRESSING:

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Cook orzo in salted water until tender.

Drain and rinse with cold water. In a large bowl, combine orzo, tomatoes, cucumber, onion, feta and parsley. Whisk dressing ingredients and toss with salad.

Chill at least 30 minutes before serving.



SLOW-COOKER PULLED PORK SLIDERS

- 4 pounds pork shoulder or pork butt
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 12 slider buns

Season pork with salt, pepper and paprika. Place in slow cooker and add broth. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours until very tender. Shred meat with forks, discard excess fat and stir in barbecue sauce. Serve warm on slider buns.



WARM DILL AND MUSTARD POTATO SALAD

- 3 pounds small red or Yukon Gold potatoes
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 cup celery, finely sliced
- 1/3 cup red onion, finely diced
- 1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Boil potatoes in salted water until fork-tender. Drain and cut into bite-size pieces while still warm.

In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, mustards and sugar. Add warm potatoes, celery and red onion, tossing gently so the potatoes absorb the dressing. Season with salt and pepper. Fold in dill just before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Preheat oven to 375 F.

Toss peaches with sugar and lemon juice and spread in a baking dish. Mix topping ingredients and sprinkle evenly over fruit.

Bake until golden and bubbly, about 40 minutes. Cool slightly before serving.





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