



Mountain Telephone

**BROADBAND:**  
HELPING YOU THRIVE



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

# CONNECTION

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

New luxury  
lodge opens  
in Menifee  
County

### LOCAL FOCUS

The force behind  
Channel 2 programs

### A HIGH-TECH LIFELINE

Telemedicine powers up  
rural health care



— By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO —  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

## A good way to start the New Year

**N**TCA members make a real difference in their communities, and in the lives of the people they serve. I was reminded of this a few weeks ago when the Foundation for Rural Service announced it had awarded \$100,000 in FRS Community Grants to groups throughout the U.S. FRS is the nonprofit arm of NTCA that supports rural telecom companies, consumers and policymakers with educational information, products and programming.

Each year, community organizations apply for FRS grants to help them tackle challenges ranging from accessing technology and improving educational offerings to providing telemedicine and first-responder services to rural areas. Applications are sponsored by their local telco.

It was also exciting to see the USDA award several ReConnect grants and loans to NTCA members toward the end of the year. This program represents yet another option for rural broadband funding, as well as an example of public/private partnerships at work to extend broadband to unserved communities.

After all, investments by federal and state agencies, coupled with the commitment of rural broadband providers, are key to our nation's progress in connecting the millions of citizens still without access to fast, reliable internet service.

These programs, as well as the engagement we saw among policymakers at our Telecom Executive Policy Summit in November, provide a strong start to 2020 and give me great hope for a strong new year for rural broadband. ☑



## Are you ready for a telehealth future?

Story by STEPHEN V. SMITH

**T**he presence of reliable broadband service holds great promise for rural America. While it touches many facets of life, broadband's greatest impact may very well be in the area of health care. Consider this statement from the Federal Communications Commission:

“Advances in telemedicine are transforming health care from a service delivered solely through traditional brick and mortar health care facilities to connected care options delivered via a broadband internet access connection directly to the patient's home or mobile location.”

While reliable access to a broadband network is still out of reach for millions of rural Americans, hundreds of cooperative and independent telecommunications companies across the country are delivering world-class internet service, often over a fiber connection. If you received this magazine in the mail, your local telco is one of those leading-edge providers.

If access to broadband is becoming less of the challenge to telehealth's wide-scale availability, what is the greatest challenge? The FCC recently tasked the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee with studying and reporting on telehealth barriers and incentives. The report stated that “people-based” issues offer the most significant challenges to telehealth adoption. While this includes many factors, such as policy and licensing, broadband adoption is a leading concern.

In other words, the technology is there. Now, people need to embrace it.

“Increasing support must be given to rural and disadvantaged communities so that digital literacy and adoption does not exacerbate the digital divide,” the IAC report states. Quite simply, the presence of broadband doesn't mean patients and doctors are ready to put it to use as part of their health care program.

Are you ready? Do you understand the implications of telehealth? What steps can you take toward enjoying its benefits?

Begin by asking your doctor what programs are available. This could include connected medical devices in your home or something as simple as remote monitoring via an app on your smartphone or tablet. Of course, access to telehealth starts with subscribing to broadband service that will support this life-changing technology. And once in place, broadband has the potential to enhance your life in many other ways as well. ☑

# Knowledge is power

Does your digital know-how stand up?



Story by NOBLE SPRAYBERRY

**C**onvenience and power. Internet services bring both. Online bill pay eliminates a tedious task. Social media can keep family ties strong or reconnect you with old friends. Streaming services bring a wealth of music, books and more.

But when it comes to digital tools, knowledge is power, and the Pew Research Center's recent "Americans and Digital Knowledge" report found that a majority of adults in the U.S.

could not correctly answer half of the survey's 10 multiple-choice questions.

Questions touched on security and a general understanding of technology. Here are a few of the queries, edited for clarity, focused on security and privacy — good information to know. The answers do include additional context and tips not included in the report.

**Q If a website uses cookies, it means that the site ...**

**A:** Cookies allow websites to track user visits and site activity. They are common, and you are often tracked across the websites you visit.

**Q Where might someone encounter a phishing scam?**

**A:** Phishing scams can occur on social media, websites, email or text messages. Each form of communication offers an avenue for exploitation. For additional tips to improve your online security, visit [FCC.gov/consumer-guides](https://www.fcc.gov/consumer-guides).

**Q What is the largest source of revenue for most major social media platforms? (Several possible options were listed.)**

**A:** Advertising is the largest source of revenue for most social media plat-

forms. Often advertising is personalized to you by information gathered from not only your activities on a social media site but also your actions on other websites.

**Q When a website has a privacy policy, it means that the site ...**

**A:** Privacy policies are contracts between websites and users about how those sites will use their data. Often long and legalistic, the agreements may outline how your private information can be used to target advertising or whether or not your information can be shared with other companies.

**Q What does it mean when a website has "https://" at the beginning of its URL, as opposed to "http://" without the "s"?**

**A:** "https://" in a URL means that

information entered into the site is encrypted. Look for "https://" before completing any financial transaction on a site.

**Q Many web browsers offer a feature known as "private browsing" or "incognito mode." If someone opens a webpage on their computer at work using incognito mode, who will be able to see their online activities?**

**A:** Private browsing mode only prevents someone using the same computer from seeing one's online activities. In most cases, your internet provider, including your phone wireless provider, can see all digital traffic passing from your device to the internet.

**Want to see the entire report?**

Do a Google search for "Pew Research Center and Americans and Digital Knowledge."

# We've arrived in the future

Welcome to 2020! I sincerely hope you and those close to you had a superb holiday season and that this new year is off to a wonderful start.



**SHAYNE ISON**  
General Manager

Something about starting not only a new year, but also a new decade makes 2020 feel like a year especially full of promise. For so long, the 2020s have seemed like the distant future. Now, we have arrived!

It's entertaining to look back and see what Hollywood, science fiction authors and big thinkers predicted for the future.

While I'm still waiting on the flying car and weekend trips to the moon that science fiction promised us, I catch myself from time to time thinking about how some of the things we take for granted every day would seem so futuristic to us just 20 or 30 years ago.

Here in the future, all of us carry around personal communication devices in our pockets that allow us to make video calls with

people all over the world.

We can instantly download practically any book, movie or song in the world right to our tablets.

While we don't exactly have Rosie from "The Jetsons," we do have robots that vacuum our floors, manufacture products and even help perform surgeries.

We have software that can share photos around the world, alert us to emergencies and order almost anything we need for home delivery. Our watches can help detect heart problems. Our cars can give us directions to anywhere we want to go. And our homes can turn on lights, lock doors and change the temperature with just the sound of our voice.


Many of these things are becoming a normal part of our daily routine, but the 1980 or 1990 version of myself would have seen them as straight out of science fiction.

For those of us at Mountain Telephone, it's rewarding to know our network is what brings the future to our part of Kentucky. Whether it's our broadband service at your home or our network providing vital infrastructure to businesses, we're right at the heart of all of this futuristic technology. We worked hard to make that network and our company even better in 2019. It was certainly a year of meaningful accomplishments and noteworthy milestones for us.

- Earned a Smart Rural Community Award from NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association.
- Earned our 3-Year Safety Achievement.
- Expanded our fiber optic network backbone by adding connectivity to the Atlanta internet exchange.

Turning the page to 2020, we have some significant goals in mind in order to serve you better.

- Continue to educate and help members customize their in-home networks to exceed the demands of today's high-tech homes.
- Promote economic growth and development by always being proactive in an ever-changing, technology-driven world.

Knowing that the only thing certain about the future is change, I think Mountain Telephone is primed to accomplish these things and more. We're thankful for the opportunity to serve you in 2020 — and in the future. 

The Mountain Telephone Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative, © 2020. It is distributed without charge to all member/owners of the cooperative.



## Mountain Telephone

Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc., is a member-owned cooperative dedicated to providing communications technology to the people of Elliott, Menifee, Morgan, Wolfe and a section of Bath counties. The company covers 1,048 square miles and supplies service to nearly 11,500 members.

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On the Cover:



Indian Creek Lodge in Menifee County overlooks the Red River Gorge and offers the latest in modern luxuries and amenities.

See story Page 12.

Photo contributed by Eric Irwin  
Photography



## Mountain Telephone offers scholarships to high school seniors

Mountain Telephone will award scholarships with a value of as much as \$3,000 to students in each of the 2020 graduating classes of Elliott, Menifee, Morgan and Wolfe county high schools who plan to attend Morehead State University. In addition, one scholarship will be awarded to a student in Bath County.\*

High school students in all four counties served by Mountain Telephone will receive scholarship applications by mail and/or may pick them up at the high school guidance counselor's office. Completed applications are due no later than April 15, 2020. The applicant must present evidence of admission to MSU before any scholarship will be awarded. Each scholarship will be paid to MSU for the benefit of the recipient.

These scholarships can be renewed for three years if minimum renewal criteria are met. Scholarship recipients are evaluated each semester for minimum academic progress.

### **To qualify for consideration, a student must:**

1. Be a U.S. citizen and a resident of the Mountain Telephone service area. The parent(s) or guardian(s) must be a current member of Mountain Telephone.
2. Be a 2020 graduate of an Elliott, Menifee, Morgan, Wolfe or Bath County high school.
3. Have a cumulative high school grade point average between 2.0-4.0 on a 4.0 scale. Preference will be given to students with a GPA between 2.5 and 3.5.
4. Have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for 2020-21.
5. Be admitted to MSU for the 2020-21 academic year.

The criteria for selection will emphasize character, leadership, work ethic, potential and financial need. Exceptional cases will be considered upon the strong recommendations of any two teachers who have taught an applicant in his/her senior year of high school.

Certain relatives of Mountain Telephone's board of trustees members and Mountain Telephone's employees are restricted from applying for this scholarship. The restricted relatives are spouses, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, parents, brothers and sisters.

### **\*Bath County applicants for the scholarship must reside in the area of Bath County served by Mountain Telephone and must submit:**

1. A completed application.
2. A transcript of high school work.
3. Two letters of endorsement from counselors, teachers, employers or significant others who know the student's character and performance potential.
4. An essay in the applicant's own handwriting describing the qualities and/or situations that he/she feels make him/her deserving of this award.

**Completed applications for the scholarship must be submitted to Mountain Telephone no later than April 15, 2020.**



# TAKE THE RIDE

## Follow the Hank Williams Trail

Story by ANNE BRALY

The road between Georgiana and Fort Payne along the Hank Williams Trail is a journey lovers of country music should make at least once in their lifetime. It tells a story of one of Alabama's most famous sons, from his beginnings as the child of a railroad engineer who was mostly absent from his son's life to the glamour of stardom and Williams' tragic demise at the young age of 29.

Over the span of Hank Williams' life, he recorded more than 165 songs. Though he could not read a note of music, he was a wordsmith when it came to writing hits that have become part of the American songbook.

The trail is a 250-mile trip through history that includes a visit to Williams' boyhood home and ends at a barber shop where he made one of his last stops before dying in his car in West Virginia on his way to perform at a concert in Ohio. "The Alabama Tourism Department has done an incredible job with the Hank Williams Trail, and it's a great way to experience some of my dad's life story," says his daughter, Jett Williams.

### *Here are some trail highlights*

#### GEORGIANA

Thousands of newspaper clippings, photos of family and friends, record albums and 45s, royalty receipts, clothes, one of Williams' early guitars, the old wooden bench he stood on to sing at Mount Olive Baptist Church in nearby Greenville, Alabama — there are too many items to list, and it will take a couple of hours to take in the scope of the collection at the Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum.

Williams lived here from 1931 to 1934. It was in this house at 127 Rose St. that he played his first guitar, having bought it by selling peanuts and shining shoes at the town depot.

Among the more unusual items in the small house is a stage light used in the Municipal Auditorium for the show "Louisiana Hayride." The Hank Williams Festival is on the grounds the first Saturday each June.

Online: [www.hankmuseum.com](http://www.hankmuseum.com)

#### MONTGOMERY

Montgomery is ground zero for Hank Williams. He called it home from 1937 to 1948 and moved back in 1952. He lived there at the time of his death.



## LAKE MARTIN, ALEXANDER CITY

Hank Williams' Cabin on Lake Martin is a small, white frame affair where Williams and Fred Rose, his friend and a giant in the music publishing business, wrote blockbusters "Kaw-Liga" and "Your Cheatin' Heart."

The cabin is now on the property of Children's Harbor, a camp for sick and disabled children. The two-bedroom building is available for rent.

Online: [childrensharbor.com](http://childrensharbor.com)

## Kowaliga Restaurant, 295 Kowaliga Marina Road

This restaurant, now serving a menu of cheeseburgers and catfish, sits at the water's edge of Lake Martin. Inside, a carved statue of the Indian Kowaliga, whose story was the inspiration for Williams' song "Kaw-Liga" guards the entrance.

Online: [www.kowaligarestaurant.com](http://www.kowaligarestaurant.com)

## BIRMINGHAM

**The Redmont Hotel**, 2101 Fifth Ave. N., is the place where Hank Williams spent his last night in 1952 and is also the oldest hotel in Alabama still in operation. Remodeling a few years ago reconfigured many of the guest rooms, but Williams' room was on what is now the third floor, somewhere around what is now room 304.

Step off the elevator on the third floor and you'll see a wooden plaque with four of Williams' records. This is the only floor displaying any Hank Williams decor and is a silent tribute to one of the hotel's most famous guests.

Online: [www.redmontbirmingham.com](http://www.redmontbirmingham.com)

## FORT PAYNE

On the eve of his death, Hank Williams stopped by Carter's Barber Shop for a haircut and a shave from barber Howard Simpson. He also had a sip or two or three — maybe more — of moonshine while there. When Simpson died, he left the chair that Williams sat in to local barber Alton Beason, who opened his shop at 1719 Gault Ave. It's now on display in a corner of the shop, carefully roped off for all to see but not sit in. ☞



## Chris' Hot Dogs, 138 Dexter Ave.

This shotgun-style eatery is the oldest restaurant in the city and was Williams' favorite place to eat — and drink.

"He'd order two hot dogs all the way — mustard, sauerkraut, onions and Chris' famous chili sauce — and a Budweiser and a shot of Jack," a server said when asked about Hank Williams' favorite dog. Williams' seat isn't marked, but it was one of 12 stools along the counter. There are also booths and tables, so it's not hard to find a seat and eat where the Hillbilly Shakespeare once dined.

Online: [www.chrishotdogs.com](http://www.chrishotdogs.com)

## D'Road Cafe, 121 Montgomery St.

This cafe, the former location of the Elite Cafe, is worth at least a drive-by to see where Williams made his final public performance just four days before he died. The Elite opened in 1911 and was a Montgomery institution before it closed in 1990. Now reopened as the D'Road Cafe, the restaurant allows visitors to sit in the place where Williams last performed.

Online: [droadcafe.com](http://droadcafe.com)

## Hank Williams Museum, 118 Commerce St.

This museum is the tell-all of Williams' life — both public and private. The collection includes thousands of pieces of not only his, but also of his wife's, Audrey's, past — furniture from their house in Nashville and suits, including several handmade Nudie suits. There are guitars, bills and other receipts, and artwork. The collection is massive, but its crowning jewel is the baby blue 1953 Cadillac in which Williams died. It's on loan from his son, Hank Williams Jr.

Take your time touring the museum, but when you're done, browse the gift shop — ticket and shop sales and private donations fund the museum.

Online: [hankwilliamsmuseum.net](http://hankwilliamsmuseum.net)

## Hank Williams Gravesite, 829 Columbus St.

On your way out of town is Oakwood Cemetery. It's here, high atop a hill, that Hank and Audrey Williams are buried. Inscriptions at the base of Hank's headstone remind visitors of his most well-known songs, such as "Kaw-Liga," "I Can't Help It" and "Jambalaya."

Chris' Hot Dogs in Montgomery, Alabama.

# The gift of life

## Heart transplant recipient shares her story

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by WILLIAM LEMASTER

Joyce Cantrell was in her 30s back in the 1980s when she first learned she had heart troubles. Her heart beat fast and irregularly, and her blood pressure was high.

“I finally decided to find a cardiologist,” says Cantrell, a West Liberty resident honored as a heart ambassador at the American Heart Association’s Go Red for Women event at the University of Kentucky’s Heritage Hall in November.

After about 30 years of various medications and other treatments, Cantrell’s condition worsened. In late 2017, her heart stopped, and a defibrillator doctors had installed earlier kicked in to save her life. The muscle was damaged, and she suffered from congestive heart failure.

Not long after, a new cardiologist told her she needed to consider a heart transplant. “It was a shock, and I really wasn’t prepared for the news,” she says. “I waited a few months. I didn’t decide to go on the transplant list until March of 2018.”

### TRANSPLANT LIST

Wait times for a healthy donor heart can take six months or longer, depending on availability and various other circumstances. But the University of Kentucky Hospital in Lexington called late one night in May to tell her to come quickly.

“They had a heart,” Cantrell says. “But I was a backup for it, which they said was seldom done. The other recipient needed both a heart and lungs. If the donor couldn’t provide all of the organs, then I would get the heart.”

The next afternoon, Cantrell learned she didn’t get the heart. “It was bittersweet,” she says. “But after I learned more about the young woman who did receive the heart and lungs, I was glad for her.”

### SECOND CHANCES

The donor heart Cantrell was waiting for showed up in October 2018. She arrived at the hospital around midnight. Before she went into surgery, she experi-

enced a reaction to an anesthesia and went into cardiac arrest.

Hours later, the surgical team replaced Cantrell’s heart, but recovery was rough. Her physician stayed with her for hours in an effort to stabilize her. Soon after, she went into delirium. A few months later, she suffered from a staph infection.

Still, Cantrell pushed through the problems. Today, she’s stronger than ever. “My church held a special prayer for me when I was in delirium,” she says. “Others were also praying for me. In my heart, I know that’s how I made it through. All those prayers — all those people sending their prayers — I want to thank them.”



Joyce Cantrell underwent a heart transplant in October 2018.

Joyce Cantrell, of West Liberty, says a heart transplant changed her outlook. She is pictured with her grandson, Dillon; her son, Kevin; and his wife, Stephanie.

### HEART ATTACKS AND STROKES IN WOMEN

For more information on signs and symptoms of heart attacks and strokes, visit the American Heart Association’s website [goredforwomen.org](http://goredforwomen.org).



Photos contributed by William LeMaster.



# Behind the camera

## Mountain Telephone's Channel 2 team keeps it local

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by MELISSA GAINES

When Johnathan Keeton films footage for a Mountain Telephone TV production, he hears the same thing over and over again: “Keep up the good work.”

“They say it pretty much every time they see us,” says Keeton, a media assistant for the company. “I have so many people coming up to me saying they love what we do. Some people say it’s one of the main reasons they choose MTTV. They love all the local content.”

### LOCAL COVERAGE

For many in the region, Mountain Telephone’s Channel 2 has become one of the go-to TV stations for catching sports, graduations, music festivals and special events in Elliott, Menifee, Morgan and Wolfe counties. The channel also offers the televised swap show “MTrade TV,” cooking shows and a program that features regional artists, musicians and craftspeople.

“We hope to keep expanding our content,” says Keeton, who helps film Channel 2 shows with two other media assistants, Andrew Bailey and Nick Salyers. “We’re always looking for new content and ways to improve. In my opinion, we can always get better.”

### HOOP TV

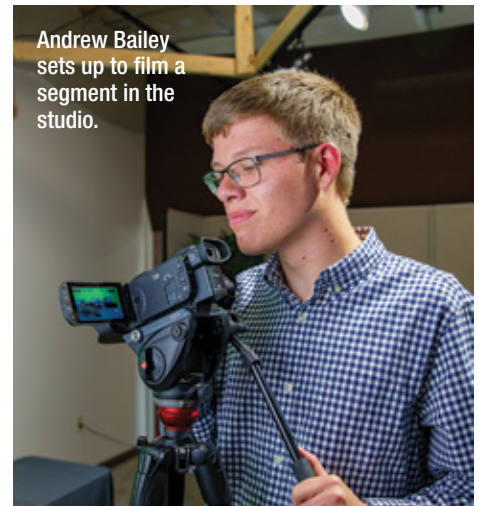
One of the biggest draws for Channel 2 is its local sports. For years, the station has televised the boy’s and girl’s varsity basketball games of local high schools. But the original production values were fairly basic out of necessity and a lack of resources, Bailey says. “When we started a few years back, we were only using one camera,” he says. “Now, we are using 2-3 cameras, an announcer and commercials. We’ve even added a scoreboard, and we have the capability to stream the games live.”

During the 2018-19 basketball season, Keeton estimates that he and the other media assistants filmed a total of about 50 high school basketball games for the four counties, including all-day tournaments. In addition, the original cooking shows, “From Field to Plate” and “In the Kitchen,” are gaining strong followings, Salyers says. “Larry Lewis on ‘From Field to Plate’ will go out catfishing with someone, and we’ll film that,” he says. “Then, he’ll come back to our kitchen here and make catfish sandwiches, and we’ll film that.”

Lisa Fannin, director of marketing and public relations at Mountain Telephone, says the station’s reputation for programming continues to grow. “We’re getting a lot of requests now,” Fannin says. “Word’s getting out.”

### MTTV productions

Check out the latest Mountain Telephone TV offerings on Channel 2. Whether you’re looking for local basketball games, cooking shows, music festivals or farmers markets, this station has it covered. You can also find back episodes on the Mountain Telephone TV Productions channel on YouTube. Recipes from episodes of “In the Kitchen” and “From Field to Plate” are on the company’s website at [www.mrtc.com](http://www.mrtc.com).



Andrew Bailey sets up to film a segment in the studio.



Johnathan Keeton, Andrew Bailey and Nick Salyers edit a video package to air on MTTV.



# Telemedicine changes the health care landscape

## Broadband makes a difference daily

Imagine a world with greater health care accessibility, as convenient as contacting a physician from your home. Or consider a medical system where rural communities can easily connect in real time with specialists based dozens, if not hundreds, of miles away.

Broadband technology provides the key link between you and medical providers needed to make those innovations and others possible. That more convenient, healthier world is becoming a reality for rural communities across the nation.

The systems are not yet what they one day may become, but every day more and more people are receiving the benefits of telemedicine. And the results are often profound.

Kentucky veterans have easier access to important care. Changing laws in states such as Texas allow greater access to telemedicine. Telestroke programs in Minnesota and North Dakota save vital minutes when patients most need care. And those are just a few examples of broadband technology changing health care for the better.

### KENTUCKY VETERANS

In rural Kentucky, getting to and from an appointment at any medical specialist can often require hours of travel. But when you're a veteran trying to get to a Veterans Administration Medical Center in a metropolitan area, travel times can increase even more. And a veteran might need multiple doctors and have multiple appointments scheduled on different days.

An innovative pilot program in a mountainous section of eastern Kentucky is helping to change that. The Virtual Living Room program, which started in 2017 in McKee, offers vets a comfortable and private room in their local library complete with high-speed internet access to visit with VA health care providers located more than an hour's drive away.

The program, available for setup at other qualifying sites, not only illustrates the potential of telemedicine but also shows the efforts being made to create a system capable of benefiting as many people as possible.

The McKee Virtual Living Room is a collaboration among four organizations: the VA, NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, the rural telecom provider Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative and the Jackson County Public Library. The VA has provided telehealth services for several years, but it can't happen if vets don't have access to high-speed internet connections either in their homes or nearby.

"The rest of the country, like us, really admires our veterans," says Keith Gabbard, chief executive officer of PRTC. "Before the project, we saw veterans spending the day in a waiting room at the hospital, and when they live an hour and a half away, it's pretty much an all-day event for a veteran to get health care."

Fast fiber optic internet networks make telemedicine a realistic option for more and more communities, and the cooperative was a leader in establishing the Virtual Living Room at the Jackson County Public Library.

"We've done a lot to promote it, and the library staff and the veterans are really proud of it," Gabbard says. "It's a source of pride for our community, and it continues to grow. The Virtual Living Room is a beautiful area where veterans, even



◀ From left, Veterans Donald Barrett, Jim Bryant, Mike Montgomery, Bobby Lakes and Danny Robinson attend the ribbon cutting for Virtual Living Room in McKee, Kentucky.

if they don't have a doctor's appointment, can go and read a book. It feels like it's their home."

### CHANGING LAWS

While faster internet may provide the foundation for telemedicine services, the legal and regulatory framework of each state can play a role in determining the effectiveness of the programs.

In May 2017, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed a bill into law that leveled the playing field for telemedicine physicians and doctors who work in traditional office settings. In part, the law eliminated a requirement for a patient to first visit a physician in person before receiving care through telemedicine.

"The bill removed a lot of barriers, and we've seen an increase in queries about telehealth," says Becky Bounds, program manager for the TexLa Telehealth Resource Center in Lubbock, Texas. The federally funded center works to provide resources and technical assistance to telehealth programs in Texas and Louisiana.

Bounds says the internet-based tools offer key services. For example, Lubbock is home to the Timothy J. Harnar Regional Burn Center, which often receives patients injured while working in the industries of West Texas. After treatment and returning home, follow-up visits to Lubbock could require drives of five to six hours. However, a telemedicine-equipped clinic on the campus of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in El Paso allows patients to virtually visit with specialists in Lubbock.

"About 12% of the state's population lives in West Texas, and telehealth matters,"

Bounds says. "We are producing cotton, beef, oil and more, and we need health care for the workforce producing those products for the rest of the state and the nation."


### THE GOLDEN HOUR

When it comes to treating a stroke, doctors have a saying: Time is brain. It's a reminder that every minute that passes between the event and treatment can lead to irreversible damage. Fortunately, telemedicine technology already gives doctors a fighting chance to begin treating patients before the critical "golden hour" passes.

One of the leaders for this technology in the Midwest is Essentia Health, which established telemedicine capabilities in each of its 17 hospitals, 70 clinics and eight nursing homes throughout Minnesota and North Dakota. With its telestroke program, emergency medical technicians can identify stroke patients on the way to the hospital and even begin treatment.

Essentia Director of Telehealth Services Laurie Hall recalls an ambulance picking up a rural patient nearly 90 minutes from the nearest hospital. In the past, serious brain damage would have been a near certainty for such a patient. But thanks to telestroke technology, EMTs diagnosed a stroke and began treatment about 45 minutes after the stroke occurred.

"The goal is to shorten that window from the time the patient has the event to the time they actually get those

clot-busting medications or the clot is removed," Hall says. "Getting that done so quickly is profound when you think about the injury that could happen from just those few extra minutes. It helps these patients get out of the hospital much quicker and to get on with their normal lives." 



# ALMOST HEAVEN

New Menifee County luxury lodge offers sweeping views of the gorge

Story by JEN CALHOUN

The Red River Gorge has long been a world-class destination for rock climbers from all over the world, families looking for an outdoorsy retreat and friends needing a natural getaway. But there's a whole new group of visitors coming to the gorge these days, and they're looking for a little more luxury and a lot more tech.

That's why Ian Teal, owner of Red River Gorge Cabin Rentals, decided to build Indian Creek Lodge, a three-story, eight-bedroom megacabin about 15 minutes from Frenchburg and about 30 minutes from rafting, climbing, hiking, sightseeing and other popular activities. The lodge, which overlooks a stunning section of the gorge, sleeps about 32 guests and offers the kind of experience usually only seen on TV shows about the rich and famous.

## GROWING TOURISM INDUSTRY

Indian Creek Lodge is the first of many lodges and cabins that are expected to spring up in Menifee County as tourism



Indian Creek Lodge in Menifee County sleeps about 32 guests and offers luxury amenities.

Photos contributed by Eric Irwin Photography.

from the gorge continues to grow, says Tony Charles, who helps manage Red River Gorge Cabin Rentals' Menifee County properties alongside his wife, Terri.

"I don't know if many people are aware of the potential in this Indian Creek area," he says. "There will probably end up being between 30 and 50 cabins here.

That's the goal." Charles says Teal chose the location, which is about 40 minutes from Slade, because of its spectacular views. "He found about 200 acres on the Menifee County side of the Red River Gorge. When he drove out on the end of these ridgelines, he saw the views looking down into the gorge and thought it would be a great place for a cabin."

Indian Creek Lodge sits secluded atop a cliff.



But Teal also wanted to meet the growing demand for more vacation properties, Charles says. “The demand for rental cabins near the gorge is greater than the supply, even though there are hundreds of cabins for rent,” he says. “The tourism in the area seems to be increasing substantially. A lot of weekends we had calls through our reservation teams, but the rentals we have were already booked.”

### LUXE LIFE

Also in demand are larger and more luxurious accommodations with higher-tech amenities. “We keep having groups of people call us — families who want to throw reunions, corporate groups, wedding parties and church groups,” Charles says. “They all want to stay under the same roof. Historically, we never really had a place where they could all be together like that, so they would end up renting several cabins.”

Indian Creek Lodge and the other cabins coming to Menifee County fit that bill. All eight bedrooms at Indian Creek Lodge have private, full bathrooms, and there is an extra half-bath and laundry on



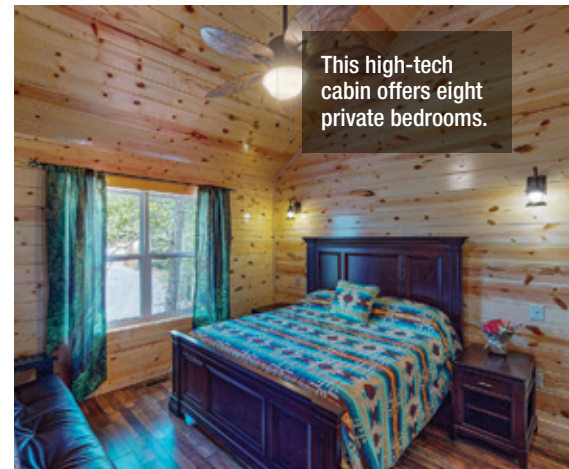
The main gathering room in the lodge gives groups a wide-open space to socialize.

the main floor. Each of the lodge’s three levels features a deck, two of which span the length of the lodge. The decks offer sunrise and sunset views of the gorge, and one of the decks offers two large hot tubs. Additional amenities include bunks in the third-floor center loft, a foosball table, a pool table, several gathering rooms and a fully equipped kitchen.

“Originally, when we built this lodge, we were envisioning that it would be a nice place for a small wedding,” Charles says. “We still think that will happen, but since we opened in June, most of our events have been business or corporate functions, like team-building events.”

One of the nonnegotiable features of the lodge, he says, is the super-high-speed fiber internet connection from Mountain Telephone. A fast internet connection is no longer an option but a necessity, Charles says. Whether businesses or wedding parties are using the lodge, most guests depend on high-speed internet service and Wi-Fi in nearly every aspect of their day-to-day lives.

“It’s really an essential,” he says. “It’s almost as essential as water. I mean, all of our guests want high-speed internet. And Mountain Telephone has worked very well with us to supply the broadband everyone needs for every one of our locations. All our cabins have incredible internet service. In Indian Creek Lodge, all the TVs are streaming televisions, and the broadband connection is strong enough to power several devices, including laptops, phones and tablets, all at once.”



This high-tech cabin offers eight private bedrooms.

### UNSPOILED EDGE

Another one of the lodge’s greatest attributes is its location. Perched on a cliff, visitors can check out a view of the gorge that few get to see. The spot is also secluded, so guests get to experience a quiet and private retreat away from the crowds. Over the last few years, more people started coming to the gorge to escape the high volume of traffic in other popular mountain getaways like Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge in Tennessee.

“Even some of our cabin owners are moving away from the Smokies,” Charles says. “It’s not for economic reasons but because they’re just tired of the traffic congestion. It’s another reason our guests at Indian Creek Lodge are loving it here.”

### BEING THERE

To find out more about Indian Creek Lodge, visit [redriversgorgecabinrentals.com](http://redriversgorgecabinrentals.com)

# Ooey gooey chewy — Pizza

Warm up a cold day with a perfect slice



Chris Stone and Andrea Clark make the Lookout Mountain Pizza Company a dining destination.

**P**izza is one of those foods where when a craving hits, nothing else will do. It's been an American favorite for decades. And now, people in the Rising Fawn area of Lookout Mountain, Georgia, are satisfying those cravings at Lookout Mountain Pizza Company.

A pilot for American Airlines for 32-plus years, Chris Stone jettisoned himself into a new career as a pizza maker. And it's not just any pizza. It's the artisan pizza that brings people from as far away as Atlanta and Birmingham, and as close by as Chattanooga and Mentone, Alabama. "It's really become a little destination place," Stone says.

When asked how he jumped from piloting to pizza, Stone says he's always loved to cook. "Before 9/11, I was based in Washington, D.C., but after 9/11, I ended up in New York for about five years, and one night, I ended up taking a pizza class."

He was hooked then, although he waited to turn it into a career. "It took me about 10 years to figure out exactly what I wanted to do with it," he says. Stone continues to fly European routes weekly Monday through Wednesday. On Thursdays, he's home to open his pizzeria with the help of a well-trained staff. They know how to make the pizza dough from scratch and heat up the wood-fired pizza oven to

its optimum heat: 750 F at its base and 1,000 degrees at its dome. The oven bakes pizza to perfection in under two minutes.

The class he took in New York, under renowned bread baker Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery, taught the art of making Roman-style pizza crusts. On his many trips to Europe — Italy is on his route — he learned about Neapolitan pizza and began working with the dough at home. "I ended up building a pizza oven in my kitchen at home," he says.

In 2016, he found a location for his pizzeria, an old building that had housed an art shop, church and mechanic's shed at different times through the years. After spiffing the place up with some paint, a new roof and other renovations, he opened Lookout Mountain Pizza Company in July 2017, and it quickly became the place for pizzas that feature quality ingredients like wheat flour from Naples, Italy, along with canned tomatoes from a town near Italy's Mount Vesuvius and Wisconsin cheese. "It's not the cheapest pizza to make, but you need to use good ingredients to make a good pizza," Stone says.

The dough is a simple mixture of flour, water, salt and a little yeast. The pizza sauce is made from scratch. Onions roast in the wood-burning oven and function as a topping for pizzas named after Italian women. Sophia is the house favorite, with

## Here are some helpful hints for home pizza cooks:

- Use a good flour, such as King Arthur. "Some people use bread flours with plain flour and stuff like that, but I've found it really makes no difference. But you'll need to add a little oil to the dough to get it to brown up," Stone says.
- Do not overwork the dough. You want the dough to "pop," and overworking it will make it tough. You want the dough to be airy. Pizza dough is a very dynamic thing. It changes with the humidity and temperature. The texture won't be the same from one day to the next.
- Get your hands on a copy of Lahey's book, "My Pizza: The Easy No-Knead Way to Make Spectacular Pizza at Home," and watch some of his cooking videos on YouTube.

wood-roasted onion tomato sauce, fontina cheese, Italian sausage and Peppadew peppers. The Maria, with pepperoni, onions and portobello mushrooms, is another top seller. All pizzas are 13 inches and have a marvelous crispy, blackened edge to the dough that softens as you reach the center.



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



## Artisan Pizza

*Though this is not Lookout Mountain Pizza Company's recipe, it's a good one for beginners.*

- 3 cups plus 3 tablespoons lukewarm water (100 F or below)
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon granulated yeast
- 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 7 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Combine warm water, olive oil, yeast and salt in a 5-quart bowl, preferably a lidded, but not airtight, plastic container. Measure the flour using a "scoop and sweep" method. Reach into the flour bin with your measuring cup, scoop up a full measure all at once, and sweep it level with a knife. Mix until all of the

flour is incorporated (kneading is not necessary) using a wooden spoon or a food processor with a dough attachment. Cover with a non-airtight lid. Allow to rise at room temperature for 2 hours. Do not punch down. You want to retain as much gas in the dough as possible. A reduction in gas will make your pizzas and flatbreads dense. Refrigerate and use over the next 14 days. Refrigerate at least 3 hours before using.

**To make:** A half-hour before you're ready to bake, place a pizza stone in the bottom third of the oven and heat it at your oven's highest temperature. Prepare and organize your toppings. Dust a pizza peel or a large cutting board/flat cookie sheet with enough flour or cornmeal to easily transfer the pizza over to the hot stone. Pull up and cut off a

1/2-pound (orange-size) piece of dough. Using a little flour (enough so it won't stick to your fingers), stretch and shape the dough into a ball. Sprinkle your work area with a little flour. Using your hands or a rolling pin, roll out and stretch the dough until it is approximately 1/8-inch thick and 12 inches wide.

Place the finished dough onto the prepared pizza peel. Then, add the toppings of your choice. Carefully slide the pizza onto the hot stone. If it isn't sliding, sprinkle more flour or cornmeal between the pizza and the pizza peel until the pizza moves. Check for doneness after 8-10 minutes — it may take a few minutes longer. Turn the pizza around if one side is browning faster than the other. Allow to cool slightly on a wire rack before serving. 📌



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